Routledge International Handbook of Contemporary Social and Political Theory

Second Edition

Edited by Gerard Delanty and Stephen P. Turner

Routledge International Handbook of Contemporary Social and Political Theory

The triangular relationship between the social, the political, and the cultural has opened up social and political theory to new challenges. The social can no longer be reduced to the category of society, and the political extends beyond the traditional concerns of the nature of the state and political authority.

This *Handbook* will address a range of issues that have recently emerged from the disciplines of social and political theory, focusing on key themes as opposed to schools of thought or major theorists. It is divided into three sections which address:

- the most influential theoretical traditions that have emerged from the legacy of the twentieth century;
- the most important new and emerging frameworks of analysis today;
- the major theoretical problems in recent social and political theory.

The second edition is an enlarged, revised, and updated version of the first edition, which was published in 2011 and comprised 42 chapters. The new edition consists of 50 chapters, of which seventeen are entirely new chapters covering topics that have become increasingly prominent in social and political theory in recent years, such as populism, the new materialism, postcolonialism, Deleuzean theory, post-humanism, post-capitalism, as well as older topics that were not covered in the first edition, such as Arendt, the gift, critical realism, anarchism. All chapters retained from the first edition have been thoroughly revised and updated.

The *Routledge International Handbook of Contemporary Social and Political Theory* encompasses the most up-to-date developments in contemporary social and political theory, and as such is an essential research tool for both undergraduate and postgraduate students as well as researchers working in the fields of political theory, social and political philosophy, contemporary social theory, and cultural theory.

Gerard Delanty is Professor of Sociology and Social and Political Thought at the University of Sussex, Brighton, UK. His most recent publication is *Critical Theory and Social Transformation* (2020) and, as editor, *Pandemics, Society and Politics* (2021).

Stephen P. Turner is currently Distinguished University Professor at the Department of Philosophy, University of South Florida, USA. His books include *Liberal Democracy 3.0: Civil Society in an Age of Experts* (2003) and essays collected in *The Politics of Expertise* (2013). He has also written extensively on Max Weber, especially on politics, on Carl Schmitt, and on the politics of science and science policy.

Routledge International Handbooks

ROUTLEDGE HANDBOOK OF DIGITAL MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION
Edited by Leah A. Lievrouw and Brian D. Loader

ROUTLEDGE INTERNATIONAL HANDBOOK OF RELIGION IN GLOBAL SOCIETY
Edited by Jayeel Cornelio, François Gauthier, Tuomas Martikainen and Linda Woodhead

THE ROUTLEDGE HANDBOOK ON THE INTERNATIONAL DIMENSION OF BREXIT
Edited by Juan Santos Vara and Ramses A. Wessel; Assistant Editor, and Polly R. Polak

ROUTLEDGE HANDBOOK OF CRITICAL FINANCE STUDIES
Edited by Christian Borch and Robert Wosnitzer

ROUTLEDGE HANDBOOK ON THE GOVERNANCE OF RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY
Edited by Anna Triandafyllidou and Tina Magazzini

THE ROUTLEDGE HANDBOOK OF CRITICAL EUROPEAN STUDIES
Edited by Didier Bigo, Thomas Diez, Evangelos Fanoulis, Ben Rosamond and Yannis A. Stivachtis

HANDBOOK ON ARCTIC INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN THE ARCTIC
Edited by Timo Koivurova, Else Grete Broderstad, Dorothée Cambou, Dalee Dorough and Florian Stammler

ROUTLEDGE INTERNATIONAL HANDBOOK OF CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL AND POLITICAL THEORY: SECOND EDITION
Edited by Gerard Delanty and Stephen P. Turner

Routledge International Handbook of Contemporary Social and Political Theory

Second edition

Edited by Gerard Delanty and Stephen P. Turner

Contents

Contents

Contents

Tables

Contributors

Frank Adloff is a Professor of sociology and the co-director of the Centre for Advanced Studies "Futures of Sustainability" at the University of Hamburg. He focuses on theories of gift-giving, conviviality, on social theory, civil society, and sustainability. His latest book in English is *Gifts of Cooperation, Mauss and Pragmatism* (Routledge, 2016).

Albena Azmanova is Associate Professor of Social and Political Thought at the University of Kent's Brussels School of International Studies. Her research and publications span justice and judgment, political epistemology, and the critique of capitalism. She is founder and co-editor of *Emancipations: A Journal of Critical Social Analysis*.

Patrick Baert is Professor of Social Theory at the University of Cambridge and a Fellow of Selwyn College, Cambridge. Amongst his recent publications are *The Existentialist Moment; The Rise of Sartre as a Public Intellectual* (2015); *Conflict in the Academy; A Study in the Sociology of Intellectuals* (with M Morgan, 2015); *The Sociology of Intellectuals* (with S Susen, 2017); *The Dark Side of Podemos; Carl Schmitt and Contemporary Progressive Populism* (with J Booth, 2018); and he co-edited *Ideas on the Move in the Social Sciences and Humanities; The International Circulation of Paradigms and Theorists* (with G Sapiro and M Santoro, 2020).

Peter Beilharz is Professor of Critical Theory at Sichuan University in China. He has been affiliated with Latrobe, Curtin, Yale, Harvard, Leeds, and Stellenbosch universities. His most recent books are *Intimacy in Postmodern Times - a Friendship with Zygmunt Bauman* (2020) and *Circling Marx – Essays 1980–2020* (Brill). He has edited the journal *Thesis Eleven* for 40 years.

Richard Bellamy is Professor of Political Science at University College, London. His books include *Political Constitutionalism: A Republican Defence of the Constitutionality of Democracy*, Cambridge University Press, 2007; and *A Republican Europea of States: Cosmopolitanism, Intergovernmentalism and Democracy in the EU*, Cambridge University Press 2019. He is currently co-editing, with Jeff King, *The Cambridge Handbook of Constitutional Theory* for Cambridge University Press.

B.B. Bieganski is Ph.D. student at the University of South Florida. He writes on postmodernism, hermeneutics, and 20th-century political thought, focusing on the works of Foucault and Adorno. He is published in *Phenomenological Reviews*. He is interested in the project of critique, and how figures from the 20th century understood critique and attempted to apply it to social and cultural thought.

Charles Blattberg is a professor of political philosophy at the Université de Montréal. His publications include *From Pluralist to Patriotic Politics: Putting Practice First* (Oxford University Press, 2000); *Shall We Dance? A Patriotic Politics for Canada* (McGill–Queen's University Press, 2003); *Patriotic Elaborations: Essays in Practical Philosophy* (McGill–Queen's University Press, 2009); and the novel *The Adventurous Young Philosopher Theo Hoshen of Toronto* (Angst Patrol Books, 2013).

Paul Blokker is Associate Professor in political sociology at the Department of Sociology and Business Law, University of Bologna, Italy. He is also research coordinator at the Institute of Sociological Studies, Charles University Prague, Czechia. His research focusses on the sociology of constitutions, constitutional politics, democratic participation, and populism. Amongst his recent publications are: 'Building democracy by legal means? The contestation of human rights and constitutionalism in East-Central Europe', in: *Journal of Modern European History*, 2020; 'Varieties of Populist Constitutionalism: The Transnational Dimension', 20/3, *German Law Journal*, 2019; 'Political and Constitutional Imaginaries', in: S. Adams and J. Smith (eds.), *Social Imaginaries: Critical Interventions in a Paradigm-in-the-Making*, Rowman and Littlefield, 2019; *Sociological Constitutionalism* (edited with Chris Thornhill), Cambridge University Press, 2017.

Monica Brito Vieira is Professor of Politics, Department of Politics, University of York, United Kingdom. Her overlapping areas of interest are the history of political thought, contemporary political theory, and intellectual history. Amongst the topics she has covered in her writings and teaching are the history and theory of democracy, theories of the state and political authority, natural law, theories of justice, theories of rights, constitutionalism, canon formation, and approaches and methods in social and political theory. In addition to book chapters, she has published articles in several international scholarly journals, such as the *American Political Science Review*, *Journal of the History of Ideas*, *History of Political Thought*, *Hobbes Studies*, *Political Studies*, and *Constellations*.

Filipe Carreira da Silva is a Senior Research Fellow at the Institute of Social Sciences of the University of Lisbon. He is also a Fellow of Selwyn College, Cambridge. He has held visiting positions at Harvard, Chicago, Yale, and at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. He has written over thirty articles and several books on classical and contemporary sociological theories. In 2010, his book *Mead and Modernity* was awarded the American Sociological Association Distinguished Book Award (History of Sociology). He is the general editor of the series Theory Workshop: New Frontiers in Social and Political Theory (Brill). His latest book, *The Politics of the Book*, was published by Penn State University Press in 2019. The present chapter was undertaken within his most recent research project – POPULUS: Rethinking Populism – which is funded by the FCT and revolves around the question of why there is no populism in Portugal.

Daniel Chernilo is a Professor of Sociology in the School of Government at Universidad Adolfo Ibáñez in Santiago and a Visiting Professor of Social and Political Thought at Loughborough University in the UK. His books include *A Social Theory of the Nation-State* (Routledge, 2007), *The Natural Law Foundations of Modern Social Theory* (CUP 2013), and *Debating Humanity. Towards a Philosophical Sociology* (CUP 2017).

Stewart Clegg is a Distinguished Professor at the University of Technology Sydney Business School. He is the author of many books and papers that deal with power, most notably *Frameworks of Power* (1989) and is also the co-author of *Power and Organizations* (2006). A sociologist, his interests in organizations have led to many contributions to the literature on management and organization studies.

Alasdair Cochrane is Senior Lecturer in Political Theory at the University of Sheffield. He has been a prominent scholar within the field of 'animal politics', authoring four books on the topic: *An Introduction to Animals and Political Theory* (Palgrave, 2010); *Animal Rights without Liberation* (Columbia University Press, 2012); *Sentientist Politics* (Oxford University Press, 2018); and *Should Animals Have Political Rights?* (Polity, 2020).

Claire Colebrook is Edwin Erle Sparks Professor of English, Philosophy and Women's and Gender Studies at Penn State University. She has written books and articles on contemporary European philosophy, literary history, gender studies, queer theory, visual culture, and feminist philosophy. Her most recent book is Twilight of the Anthropocene Idols (co-authored with Tom Cohen and J. Hillis Miller).

Patricia Hill Collins is Distinguished University Professor of Sociology at the University of Maryland, College Park. Her books include *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment* (2000), Intersectionality as Critical Theory (2019), *Race, Class, and Gender: An Anthology, 7th ed.* (2010) edited with Margaret Andersen and *Black Sexual Politics: African Americans, Gender, and the New Racism* (2004). In 2008–9 she served as the 100th President of ASA, the first African American woman to hold this position in the organization's 104-year history.

Jay Conway holds a PhD in Philosophy from the University of California, Riverside, and teaches history of philosophy at CSU Los Angeles. He is the author of *Gilles Deleuze: Affirmation in Philosophy (*2010). His treatment of Deleuze's books on Hume is featured in *Current Continental Theory and Modern Philosophy* (2005); his account of Deleuze's philosophy of art is found in *Intensities & Lines of Flight: Deleuze/Guattari and the Arts* (2014). He writes in memory of Colette.

Brian D. Cook is currently the Director of Assessment and Evaluation at the Division of Institutional Research and Decision Support (IRDS) at Stanford University where he conducts research for the university related to student success and related matters. His past research focused on social and political transitions in places like South Africa and the monitoring and evaluation of international aid organizations and their role in conflicts. He did his graduate work at Oxford and Stanford University.

Karen S. Cook is the Ray Lyman Wilbur Professor of Sociology and Director of the Institute for Research in the Social Sciences (IRiSS) at Stanford University. She conducts research on trust, social exchange, and social networks, including Internet-based activities. She is an elected member of the National Academy of Science and the American Philosophical Society. She has written and edited a number of books and journal articles including as Co-Editor of the Trust Series at the Russell Sage Foundation.

Sérgio Costa is professor of sociology at Freie Universität Berlin and co-director of the Maria Sibylla Merian Centre Conviviality-Inequality in Latin America. His most recent book publications are *A port in global capitalism* (co-authored with Guilherme L. Gonçalves, Routledge, 2019, also available in Portuguese, Boitempo, 2020), *Entre el Atlántico y el Pacífico Negro* (Between the Black Atlantic and the Black Pacific), co-authored with Manuel Góngora-Mera and Rocío Vera Santos, Iberoamericana/Verwuert, 2019), and *Global Entangled Inequalities* (co-edited with Elizabeth Jelin and Renata C. Motta, Routledge 2018, also available in Spanish, Siglo XXI, 2020).

Gerard Delanty is Professor of Sociology and Social & Political Thought at the University of Sussex, Brighton, UK. He has been a fellow and visiting professor at York University, Toronto; Doshisha University, Kyoto; Deakin University, Melbourne; Hamburg University; the Federal University of Brasilia; and the University of Barcelona. His most recent publication is *Critical Theory and Social Transformation* (London: Routledge, 2020). Other publications include *The Cosmopolitan Imagination* (Cambridge University Press, 2009), *The European Heritage: A Critical Re-Interpretation* (Routledge 2018). He has edited many volumes, including the *Routledge International Handbook of Cosmopolitan Studies*, 2nd edition 2019) and, with Stephen P. Turner, the *Routledge Handbook of Contemporary Social and Political Theory* (2011). He is also the Chief Editor of the *European Journal of Social Theory*.

Donatella Della Porta is professor of political science, dean of the Faculty of Political and Social Sciences and Director of the PhD program in Political Science and Sociology at the Scuola Normale Superiore in Florence, where she also leads the Center on Social Movement Studies (Cosmos). Among her very recent publications are*: with Mario Diani, Social Movements: An Introduction*, 3rd edition (Blackwell, 2020); *Can Social Movements Save Democracy?* (Polity, 2020), *Die schoene neue Demokratie. Ueber das potentiale soziale Bewegungen* (Campus Verlag, 2020), with Lorenzo Cini and Cesar Guzman, *Contesting Higher Education* (Bristol University Press, 2020), with Pietro Castelli Gattinara, Andrea Felicetti, Konstantinos Eleftheriadis, *Discursive Turns and Critical Junctures*, Oxford University Press, 2020), *Legacies and Memories in Movements* (Oxford University Press, 2018); *Movement Parties in Times of Austerity* (Polity 2017); *Where did the Revolution go?* (Cambridge University Press, 2016)*; Social Movements in Times of Austerity* (Polity 2015), *Methodological practices in social movement research* (Oxford University Press, 2014); *Can Democracy be Saved?* (Polity Press, 2013); *Clandestine Political Violence (*Cambridge University Press, 2013).

Thomas Docherty Thomas Docherty is Emeritus Professor of English and of Comparative Literature at Warwick University, having previously held chairs in Trinity College Dublin and in Kent. He is the author of many books, including *Postmodernism* (Columbia University Press), *After Theory* (Edinburgh University Press), *Criticism and Modernity* (Oxford University Press), *Alterities* (Oxford University Press), *Aesthetic Democracy* (Stanford), *Literature and Capital* (Bloomsbury), *Political English* (Bloomsbury), *The New Treason of the Intellectuals* (Manchester University Press). *Political Realism* will appear in 2021 from Bloomsbury.

Natalie J. Doyle is Adjunct Senior Research Fellow in the Faculty of Arts of Monash University, Melbourne. Australia. She is a specialist of Marcel Gauchet's work and has published *Marcel Gauchet and the Loss of Common Purpose. Imaginary Islam and the Crisis of European Democracy* (Lexington Books, December 2017), the first substantial discussion of the French philosopher's theories in English, and so far the most extensive published anywhere.

Dave Elder-Vass is an Honorary Fellow at Loughborough University, UK. His latest book *Profit and Gift in the Digital Economy* (Cambridge University Press, 2016) theorizes appropriative practices, economic diversity, and their implications for social theory and politics. He has also published extensively on social ontology and social theory from a critical realist perspective, including *The Causal Power of Social Structures* (Cambridge University Press, 2010) and *The Reality of Social Construction* (Cambridge University Press, 2012).

Thomas Faist is Professor of Sociology at the Department of Sociology, Bielefeld University. He directs the Center on Migration, Citizenship and Development (COMCAD). His research

interests focus on transnational relations, international migration, citizenship, and social policy. Thomas Faist held visiting appointments at Malmö University and the University of Toronto. His most recent book is *The Transnationalized Social Question: Migration and the Politics of Social Inequalities in the Twenty-First Century* (Oxford University Press, 2019).

Marcel Fournier is Full professor, Sociology Department, Université de Montréal, Canada. The supervisor for his Doctorate (PHD) in sociology (E.P.H.E.-Sorbonne, Paris) was Pierre Bourdieu. His main fields of interest are social theory and history of sociology, sociology of higher education, and research and sociology of culture. He has edited and published many articles and books, mainly the biographies of Marcel Mauss (1994) and Émile Durkheim (2007), which have been translated in many languages. Marcel Fournier has received many prizes and distinctions: Member of the Royal Society of Canada, Palmes académiques (Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale, France), Prix Léon-Gérin (Prix du Québec), Ordre national du Québec, Doctorat Honoris Causa (Université de Bordeaux), American Sociological Association- Carreer achievement award 2020.

Steven Grosby is Professor Emeritus of Religion, Clemson University, USA. He is the author of *Nationalism: A Very Short Introduction*, *Biblical Ideas of Nationality: Ancient and Modern*, and other books and numerous articles. He is currently completing a book-length manuscript *Hebraism in Religion, History and Politics: The Third Culture*, and working on another book, *Nations and Nationalism in World History*.

John G. Gunnell is Distinguished Professor Emeritus in the department of political science at the State University of New York at Albany and later Visiting Distinguished Professor and Research Associate at the University California, Davis. He specializes in political theory and particularly the philosophy and history of social science. His latest book is *Conventional Realism and Political Inquiry*: *Channeling Wittgenstein*, University of Chicago Press, 2020.

Neal Harris is Lecturer in Sociology at Oxford Brookes University. His research focuses on Frankfurt School Critical Theory. He has work published in the *European Journal of Social Theory* and *Social Science Information,* and he has work forthcoming in *Thesis 11* and *International Sociology*. He is currently working on a monograph on Critical Theory and Social Pathology for Manchester University Press.

David Inglis is Professor of Sociology at the University of Helsinki. He holds degrees in sociology from the Universities of Cambridge and York. He is an Academician of the UK Academy of Social Sciences, current President of the Westermarck Society, the Finnish national sociological association, and founding editor of the journal *Cultural Sociology*. He writes in the areas of cultural sociology, historical sociology, and social theory, applying these to contemporary social challenges. He has written and edited various books in these areas. His current research concerns globalization, cosmopolitanism, (de)civilizing processes, and the sociological analysis of wine, considered historically, globally, and in the Nordic context.

Joel Isaac is Associate Professor of Social Thought in the John U. Nef Committee on Social Thought at the University of Chicago. He is the author of *Working Knowledge: Making the Human Sciences from Parsons to Kuhn* (2012), and editor, with Gary Gerstle, of *States of Exception in American History* (2020). He is currently completing a book on the history of social sciences after World War II.

Byron Kaldis is Professor of Philosophy and Head of the Humanities Department at the National Technical University of Athens. He has previously taught at Universities in the UK and USA and has served as Distinguished Professor at Universities in China. He works and publishes in the areas of ontology, the philosophy of the social sciences and their relation to natural sciences, the ethics of technoscience, as well as on the relationship between ethics and political philosophy. He is on the Editorial Board of the Springer Academic Book Series *Studies in the Philosophy of Sociality,* was the General Editor of the *SAGE Encyclopedia of Philosophy and the Social Sciences* (2013), and has co-edited the volumes *Wealth, Commerce, and Philosophy* (The University of Chicago Press, 2017), *The Routledge Companion to Business Ethics* (2018).

Ruth Kinna is a political theorist specializing in the history of anarchist ideas and contemporary anarchism in the School of Social Sciences and Humanities at Loughborough University. She is the author of *The Government of No One* (Penguin, 2020) and *Kropotkin: Reviewing the Classical Anarchist Tradition* (Edinburgh, 2016). She is the co-editor of the journal *Anarchist Studies.* A collection of short sketches of prominent historical figures *Great Anarchists* is soon to be published with Dog Section Press.

Krishan Kumar is University Professor and William r. Kenan, Jr., Professor of Sociology at the University of Virginia, USA. He was previously Professor of Social and Political Thought at the University of Kent, England. Among his publications are *Visions of Empire: How Five Imperial Regimes Shaped the World* (2017) and *Empires: A Historical and Political Sociology* (2020).

Daniel Levy is Professor in the Department of Sociology at Stony Brook University in New York. As a political sociologist, he is interested in issues of globalization, collective memory studies, and comparative-historical sociology. Among his books related to memory studies are *The Holocaust and Memory in the Global Age* (Temple University Press 2006). *Memory and Human Rights* (Penn State University Press 2010), both with Natan Sznaider. *The Collective Memory Reader* (Oxford University Press 2011 – with Jeffrey Olick and Vered Vinitzky-Seroussi).

Moya Lloyd is currently Professor of Politics at the University of Essex. She has published widely in the area of contemporary political theory and gender theory. Selected books include *Beyond Identity Politics: Feminism, Power, Politics* (Sage 2005), *Judith Butler: From Norms to Politics* (Polity 2007), and the edited volumes *The Politics of Radical Democracy* with Adrian Little (Edinburgh University Press, 2009) and *Butler and Ethics* (Edinburgh University Press, 2015). Her current work explores the idea of who counts, the 'human', vulnerability, the body, and resistance.

Timothy W. Luke is University Distinguished Professor, and Chair, Department of Political Science at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, Virginia. He writes about political economy and ecology from analytical perspectives grounded in critical theory, environmental politics, and social theory on issues in global governance, political economy, environmental management, and sustainability.

Raffaele Marchetti is Deputy Rector for Internationalization and Professor in *International Relations* at the Department of Political Science and the School of Government of LUISS. His research interest concerns global politics and governance, hybrid and city diplomacy, transnational civil society, (cyber-)security and political risk, and democracy. Among his recent publications are *City Diplomacy*, forth., University of Michigan Press. *Africa-Europe Relationships:*

A Multi-Stakeholder Perspective, Routledge, 2020. *Government-NGOs Relationship in Africa, Asia, Europe and MENA,* Routledge, 2018. *Partnership in International Policy Making: Civil Society and Public Institutions in Global and European Affairs*, Palgrave, 2017, ed. *Global Strategic Engagement: States and Non-State Actors in Global Governance,* Lexington Books-Rowman & Littlefield, 2016.

Aurea Mota is currently a post-doctoral researcher at the Open University of Catalunya in the the GlobaLS research group. She has previously worked on the ERC Project Trajectories of Modernity at the University of Barcelona. She has published (with Peter Wagner) *Collective Action and Political Transformations: the entangled experiences in Brazil, South Africa and Europe* (2019). Aurea has also published articles and books about Latin American modernity from a historical sociological point of view.

Sheila Nair is a Professor of Politics and International Affairs at Northern Arizona University. She is co-editor of *International Relations and States of Exception: Margins, Peripheries, and Excluded Bodies*, London/New York: Routledge, 2010; and *Power, Postcolonialism and International Relations: Reading Race, Gender and Class*, London/New York: Routledge, 2002/2004. She has published numerous journal articles and chapters and has several others in the works including on the topic of memory and mass violence in Cambodia and Vietnam, and postcolonialism and the Indo-Pacific.

Saul Newman is Professor of Political Theory at Goldsmiths University of London. His research is in continental political and social theory. He has written widely on radical political thought, especially anarchism and postanarchism, as well as human rights and political theology. His most recent book is *Political Theology: a Critical Introduction* (Polity 2019).

William Outhwaite, Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences, taught at the universities of Sussex and Newcastle, where he is an emeritus professor of sociology. He is the author of *Understanding Social Life: The Method Called Verstehen* (1975, 2nd edn. 1986), *Concept Formation in Social Science* (1983), *New Philosophies of Social Science: Realism, Hermeneutics and Critical Theory* (1987), *Habermas* (1994), *The Future of Society* (2006), *European Society* (2008), *Critical Theory and Contemporary Europe* (2012), *Social Theory* (2015), *Europe since 1989: Transitions and Transformations* (2016), *Contemporary Europe* (2017), *Transregional Europe* (2020) and (with Larry Ray) *Social Theory and Postcommunism* (2005).

Geoff Pfeifer is Associate Professor of Philosophy and International and Global Studies at Worcester Polytechnic Institute in Massachusetts. In addition to a number of book chapters, his work can be found in *Philosophy and Social Criticism, Globalizations, Human Studies, The European Legacy, Crisis and Critique, Continental Thought and Theory, Contemporary Perspectives in Social Theory*, and *The Journal of Global Ethics.* He is also the co-editor (with West Gurley) of *Phenomenology and the Political* (Roman and Littlefield International, 2016) and author of *The New Materialism: Althusser, Badiou, and Žižek* (Routledge, 2015).

Larry Ray is professor emeritus of sociology at the University of Kent. His research interests include critical social theory, post-communism, the sociology of violence, Jewish studies, and visual sociology. Recent publications include *Violence and Society* (Sage, 2018, second edition), *Boundaries, Identity and Belonging in Modern Judaism* (Routledge, 2016, with Maria Diemling), and articles on Hannah Arendt, Marx at 200, disputed Holocaust memory in Poland and politics and aesthetics in photography.

Saskia Sassen is the Robert S. Lynd Professor of Sociology and former Chair, Committee on Global Thought, Columbia University. Her books include *Expulsions: Brutality and Complexity in the Global Economy* (Harvard University Press, 2014; translated into 12 languages); *Cities in a World Economy,* 5th fully updated edition (Sage)*; Losing Control: Sovereignty in an Age of Globalization,* The Schoff Memorial Lectures, Columbia University Press 1995.

Jeremy Shearmur was educated at the London School of Economics, where he then worked for eight years as assistant to Karl Popper. He taught philosophy at Edinburgh, political theory at Manchester, was a Research Associate Professor at the Institute for Humane Studies at George Mason University, and subsequently taught political theory and then philosophy at the Australian National University. He is currently an Emeritus Fellow of the ANU but is living in Dumfries in Scotland.

Georg Sørensen is emeritus professor of political science at Aarhus University, Denmark. His books include: *Rethinking the New World Order*, London: Palgrave, 2016; *A Liberal World Order in Crisis. Choosing Between Imposition and Restraint,* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011; *Democracy and Democratization. Processes and Prospects in a Changing World*, Boulder: Westview, Dilemmas in World Politics, 3rd ed. 2008; *Changes in Statehood: The Transformation of International Relations*, London: Palgrave, 2001; *Introduction to International Relations. Theories and Approaches* (w/R. Jackson and J. Møller), Oxford: Oxford University Press, 8th edition, 2022.

Krithika Srinivasan works as Senior Lecturer in Human Geography at the University of Edinburgh. Her research and teaching interests lie at the intersection of political ecology, human-animal studies, and nature geographies. Her work draws on empirical research in South Asia to rethink globally established concepts and practices about nature-society relations and multispecies justice. Krithika's research and teaching are deeply rooted in long-term field engagement and praxis in India.

Yannis Stavrakakis studied political science at Panteion University (Athens) and Essex, where he completed his doctoral thesis at the 'Ideology and Discourse Analysis' PhD Programme. He has worked at the Universities of Essex and Nottingham and is currently Professor at the School of Political Sciences, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. He is the author of *Lacan and the Political* (London: Routledge, 1999) and *The Lacanian Left* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press/Albany: SUNY Press, 2007), co-editor of *Discourse Theory and Political Analysis* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000) and *Lacan & Science* (London: Karnac, 2002) as well as editor of the *Routledge Handbook of Psychoanalytic Political Theory* (New York: Routledge, 2019).

Piet Strydom, retired from the Department of Sociology, University College Cork, Ireland in 2011. His research interests range from critical theory, social theory, and cognitive sociology, through the philosophy and history of social science, to substantive areas like rights, risk, responsibility, cosmopolitanism, environment, and the human mind. His publications include *Contemporary Critical Theory and Methodology* (2011), *New Horizons of Critical Theory: Collective Learning and Triple Contingency* (2009), *Risk, Environment and Society* (2002), and *Discourse and Knowledge* (2000). He also edited *Philosophies of Social Science* (2003, with Gerard Delanty).

Robert B. Talisse is W Alton Jones Professor of Philosophy and Professor of Political Science at Vanderbilt University. He specializes in democratic theory, egalitarianism, and political

epistemology. He is the author of over one hundred academic articles and thirteen books, the most recent of which are *Overdoing Democracy: Why We Must Put Politics in Its Place* (Oxford University Press 2019) and *Sustaining Democracy: What We Owe to the Other Side* (Oxford University Press 2021).

Peter Wagner is Research Professor of Social Sciences at the Catalan Institute for Research and Advanced Studies (ICREA) and the University of Barcelona. Currently, he is also project director at Ural Federal University, Yekaterinburg. His recent book publications include *Collective Action and Political Transformations. The Entangled Experiences of Brazil, South Africa, and Europe*, with Aurea Mota (2019); *European Modernity: A Global Approach*, with Bo Stråth (2017); *The Moral Mappings of South and North* (ed., 2017); *Progress: A Reconstruction* (2016).

Philip Walsh is Associate Professor at York University on Toronto. His research interests include classical and contemporary sociological theory, the philosophy of the social sciences, the sociology of knowledge, and the sociology of emotions. His recent publications include *Arendt Contra Sociology: Theory, Society and its Science* (Routledge, 2015) and *The Anthem Companion to Hannah Arendt* (Anthem, 2017).

Gary Wickham is Emeritus Professor of Sociology at Murdoch University, Perth, Australia. He has published several books on social and political thought and has published in numerous areas, including Hobbes' social philosophy, Foucault's political thought, critical theory, and cultural sociology. Some of his books include with K. Harley, *Australian Sociology: Fragility, Survival, Rivalry* (Palgrave Macmillan 2014), with J. Goddie *Legal and Political Challenges of Governing the Environment and Climate Change: Ruling Nature* (Routledge, 2013), and, with G. Kendall, *Understanding Culture: Cultural Studies, Order, Ordering* (Sage, 2001).

Iain Wilkinson is a Professor of Sociology in the School of Social Policy, Sociology and Social Research. He is the author (with Arthur Kleinman) of *A Passion for Society: How We Think about Human Suffering* (2016, University of California Press).

Guanjun Wu is University Professor, Dean of the Department of Politics, and Director of the Institute for Continental Political Philosophy at East China Normal University in Shanghai. He has published many monographs including *The Great Dragon Fantasy: A Lacanian Analysis of Contemporary Chinese Thought* (World Scientific, 2014), *Love, Death, and the Posthuman* (Shanghai Publishing House of Literature and Art, 2019).

Mehdi Zakerian is Professor of International Human Rights Law, Associate Professor, Faculty of Law and Political Science, Islamic Azad University, Sciences & Research Branch, Tehran (Iran). A former visiting professor, School of Law, Pennsylvania University, fellow at the Hague Academy of International Law; visiting professor fellow at the International Institute for the Study of Islam in the Modern World (ISIM), Leiden; professeur invité, faculté de Droit, Université Paris II Panthéon-Assas, an associate member of the Centre for Iranian Studies, SOAS (London, United Kingdom, 2012 to the present) and President of the Fondation internationale sur les dialogues et les études mondiales, FIDEM as well. As the first president of the Iranian International Studies Association for four consecutive years, he serves as an Editor-in-Chief of the International Studies Journal (ISJ), and Journal of International Criminal Law (JICL). The author of 40 books and 200 articles in English, Persian, Arabic, and French, his recent book entitled as *Islamic Law, Society and Human Rights* in 2020.

Preface to the second edition

The second edition is an enlarged, revised and updated version of the first edition, which was published in 2011 and comprised of 42 chapters. The new edition consists of 50 chapters. There are 17 entirely new chapters that cover topics that have become increasingly prominent in social and political theory in recent years, such populism, the new materialism, postcolonialism, Deleuzean theory, post–humanism, post–capitalism as well as older topics that were not covered in the first editions, such as Arendt, the gift, critical realism, anarchism. The chapters retained from the first edition have been revised and updated.

The volume retains the three-fold structure of the first edition, Living Traditions, New and Emerging Frameworks, and Emerging Problems.

<div align="right">

Gerard Delanty and Stephen P. Turner,
January 2021

</div>

Introduction: social, political, and cultural theory since the sixties

The demise of classical Marxism and liberalism, the new reality of the welfare state, resistance, and the loss of epistemic innocence

Stephen P. Turner and Gerard Delanty

The publication of John Rawls' *A Theory of Justice* in 1971 coincided with a complex set of changes in the political situation of the west, the role of intellectuals, the state of the social sciences and humanities, and in the development of the welfare state itself (Rawls 1971). These changes provided the conditions for the creation of a body of thought quite different from the one the sixties had produced, and a significant change from the discipline-dominated thinking of the period after the Second World War. The immediately relevant events included the effective demise of Parsons' systems theory, the waning of the passions of 1968, and an enrolment crisis in universities' humanities and social science departments as economic fear drove students into professional programs, creating a sharp downturn in demand for faculty. The optimism that had characterized disciplines in these fields during the 1960s quickly faded. The idea that sociology was soon to become a "science," the source of the positivism dispute of the sixties, faded along with it. Logical Positivism as a coherent movement collapsed under the weight of the problems of the theory-observation distinction (Suppe 1977 [1974]: 45–50). At the same time Political Theory, which had been taught largely as a historical study – a history of error, as Leo Strauss described the standard textbook of the time, George Sabine's *A History of Political Theory* (1961), or as a continuation of the mood of *Kulturpessimismus*, as in the writings of Sabine's critic, Leo Strauss – revived, partly in response to the stimulus from the success of Rawls, partly in response to new ideas about participatory democracy rooted in the experience of the sixties. Social theory also changed: the role that Parsons had played as a focus of theoretical discussion was replaced; the work of Jűrgen Habermas, particularly his *Theory of Communicative Action* (1984–87 [1981]), reassessed and re-appropriated the classical theoretical tradition in social theory to replace Parsons' synthetic account, and this work coincided with a

systematic reconsideration of the classic social theorists, especially Weber. An additional source of new thinking came from the "dependent" periphery, as thinkers such as Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe (Laclau 1977; Laclau and Mouffe 1985) emancipated Socialist theory from received dogmas about class struggle and recognized the centrality of other antagonisms and the need for open democracy.

This comprehensive rethinking of the areas of social and political theory had many startling results, especially when it combined with new social movements, and the seventies produced a series of them. The student movement of the sixties was followed by one even more powerful, the Women's Movement, which asserted its issues within each of the relevant fields and created a new field of Women's Studies, with a new model of activist scholarship and identity politics. Marxism took a cultural turn. New thinkers who were unclassifiable in disciplinary terms, such as Michel Foucault and Stuart Hall, emerged as fashionable. "Cultural studies" became a rubric under which humanistic Marxists could gather. Ironically, it also became a rubric under which followers of Parsons, such as Clifford Geertz, could replace the Parsonian conception of society dominated by a central value system with an equally "cultural" image of "the mind full of presuppositions" provided by cultural codes (Geertz 1973: 89, 112–113). The content and subject matter of these theories also changed to account for greater contestation and new perspectives beyond the established western ones. The sociology of the mid-twentieth century was concerned to a significant extent with "professionalization" as a major social transformation replacing class and class antagonism. Foucault produced a startling inversion of this paradigm. The practicing theories which governed and justified the work of the "professionals" who had taken over such things as the care of the mad and criminal, usually under the flag of progress and humanitarian reform, were treated by Foucault as ideological constructions which represented their own form of rule. The paradigms of incarceration and punishment established in the nineteenth century were the prime example of this (Foucault 1977). Foucault broadened this treatment into a more encompassing critique of governmentality (Foucault 1991 [1978]) as the underside of liberalism – the enabling practices of dominance and exclusion from power that liberal political theory had largely ignored in favor of abstract theories of representation, but which was undeniably a large part of the way liberal democratic regimes actually governed.

The generation of these new perspectives and radical variations on old perspectives was accompanied and justified by a new set of meta-theoretical ideas. "Structuralism," an idea associated with disciplines, especially anthropology, was followed by post-structuralism, which soon morphed into deconstruction, and postmodernism – an even more encompassing idea which spread throughout the humanities and social sciences. Anthony Giddens's structuration theory, which drew on Norbert Elias, was another such modification. The same emphasis on discourse, and the idea that the institutions of society and politics rested on ideological constructions, appeared in such forms as the idea that history should be understood as a system of rhetorical structures rather than as a science-like study of the facts, the recognition that different disciplines constructed the world in incommensurable ways, and deconstruction, the recognition that construction was an active process of discursive activity which could itself be reconstructed. Identities, which were contested by the social movements that flourished in the seventies and after, were themselves understood in these terms: the social construction and contestation of identities became the subject of the politics of the street. The world appeared as a set of interpretations, or "texts," which could only be interpreted rather than treated as facts. These ideas came to be called "postmodernism," and, by the eighties, this name came to be applied to the period itself as well as the critique of post-industrial capitalism, as in the work of Jean-François Lyotard and David Harvey.

Disciplinary projects and the new form of theoretical discussion

Postmodernism produced its own reaction. The relativism of postmodernism became old news. But the period left behind a strong sense that the ideas that had been contested so strongly in the 1960s – positivism, Marxism, and the various disciplinary projects that had been defined in retrospect as "modernist" were impossible to return to or take seriously in the form that they had presented themselves – namely as projects grounded in a uniquely valid methodology, a uniquely true grand narrative, or a unique connection to reality. The idea that one could play a philosophical trump card in favor of one set of descriptions of the social world – a characteristic feature of the lengthy and inconclusive methodological debates of the 1950s and 60s – was seen as a product of a kind of intellectual innocence that was now lost.

The loss of innocence had consequences for what followed. New projects emerged, and flourished, but these projects derived their legitimacy from their relation to problems that had emerged from the inadequacies of past projects: the failure, for example, of traditional organic and juridical conceptions of state and society to account for such central facts of their own domain as citizenship or sovereignty in the face of the phenomenon of globalization. The new projects understood themselves to be trafficking in the domain of constructions. These new projects were intrinsically concerned with connections between domains that had traditionally been divided into the categories of social, political, and cultural. Cosmopolitanism, to take an example from the globalization literature, was simultaneously a cultural and social as well as a political phenomenon at the level of interstate legal relations, just as the national identities with which it competed were cultural constructions (Delanty 2009; Zolo 1997). The properties of cosmopolitanism could not be confined to a single discipline (see Inglis's chapter in this volume). Mass entertainment was consumed across the world and constructed for world markets. The agents of globalization included a highly internationalized elite that exercised influence in national politics. States were often juridically irrelevant to the settlement of issues of international business, which took place by arbitration in lawyers' offices, with the effect of creating new forms of global law.

These phenomena and many more depended on the theoretical structures of the past – notions of sovereignty as part of international law, for example – in order to be formulated, but the loss of innocence meant that the validity of these theories as a source of the language of description could no longer be taken for granted. The prior ideological formulations of the nature of the state and of law were built into the conduct and practice of the state: to account for conduct and practice there is no alternative to accounting for this ideology and placing it in a larger and different perspective from the one which originally produced it and validated it. The new theories and theoretical approaches were thus not new grand narratives, but rather meta-narratives. As part of their own project of analyzing new forms of sociality, politics, and cultural life they incorporated, and at the same time accounted for, the limitations of past conceptualizations.

This new form of theory – interdisciplinary, meta-theoretically aware, skeptical of grand narratives, recognizing the role of social and ideological construction in the creation of its subject matter – has not been without its opponents. The reactions have taken various forms, but the central element of each is the reassertion of disciplinary boundaries. In the case of philosophy, we now have "philosophical social theory," which is concerned largely with the affirmation of the doctrine of collective intentionality. This concept, which has been taken up in ethics and in some contexts of metaphysics, and had been used by John Searle as a means of accounting for the ontological status of social institutions and making the social world (Searle 1995, 2010), is a self-conscious rejection of explanations from other disciplines which undermine conventional

philosophical claims. Philosophical arguments deriving concepts (such as "collective intentions") from other concepts, such as the use of "we" and "together" in ordinary language (Gilbert 1989, 1990, 1996), can be performed apart from empirical issues, such as the question of whether anything explanatory about the real social world is added by reference to collective intentions (cf. Turner 2010). The goal is to get an ontology of the social that avoids skeptical conclusions of the kind associated with postmodernism. The result is a form of intellectual conservatism that makes some preferred set of terms immune from "external" criticism.

The "philosophical" version of social theory also wants it both ways: to claim a specialized knowledge of ontology, but also to have these results accepted as true in a sense relevant to other concerns. But the "authority" of philosophy in the case of collective intentionality rests on nothing more than the bankrupt project of analytic philosophy based on the idea that linguistic usage tells us what the contents of the world are. The "meaning" that matters is the meaning in common life: the political meaning. Similarly, in sociology, one finds the rejection of interdisciplinary social theory, theory which is not wedded to the relatively narrow range of "facts" of concern to empirical sociology, on the grounds that social theory ought to preserve a close relation to empirical sociology (Joas and Knöbl 2009: xi). Implicitly, this simply means that "sociological" social theory may reject or ignore "philosophical" theories, political theories, and the like, and refer only to disciplinary concerns, while at the same time asserting intellectual authority over "the social" and speaking to the common life. But the authority derives from nothing more than the equally bankrupt project of extracting a science of social life from the kind of data that sociologists traditionally have preferred. Neither claim to authority is credible: these concepts belong to no fields, but to the common life itself.

Apart from these defensive disciplinary reactions, however, contemporary social and political thought is largely free from the kind of compartmentalization that marked the era of disciplinarity in the early and mid-twentieth century. The kinds of new approaches and new problematics discussed in this volume depend neither on disciplinary identities, and therefore authority, nor on the aspiration to be the scientific last word. They typically depend on and incorporate, but critically or at a meta-level, the ideological constructions of the past: one cannot understand issues of citizenship, marginality, and the like without references to the historical concept of citizenship as it is built into the institutions and laws of the nation state and international law. Any meaningful alternative understanding must also be an understanding of these institutions and facts. To go beyond Freud in a Lacanian way is to incorporate Freud. To focus on the underside of the liberal order as in Foucault is also to recognize and reinterpret the liberal order.

The new problem of the welfare state

The sixties left a rich but ambiguous legacy. Some of the changes that occurred early in the period after the sixties were rooted in the sixties or earlier; some of them were reactions to the events of the sixties and the successes and failures of the Old and New Left during that period. But the publication of Rawls' *Theory of Justice*, and its astonishing impact, reflected an important shift in the political concerns of academic social and political thinkers. The publication of this book coincided with struggles over the welfare state, which was consolidated throughout the west in the 1960s. By the 1970s, it was evident that the changes produced by the welfare state were irreversible – that opposition to the welfare state in the future would concern marginal issues of policy and philosophy and questions about the extent of its reach and its goals. But the basic fact of a larger, more intrusive, and more powerful state had become a taken for granted premise, still poorly understood and undertheorized, across the political spectrum.

The welfare state in Europe was rooted in a political lesson. The lesson that had been learned in the 1930s was that the price, and risks, of open class conflict were impossible for modern societies to bear, that the working class needed to be taken care of in the framework of a caring state, and that the traditional, and traditionally hazy, idea of socialism as the property-free brotherhood of man was neither achievable nor, perhaps, desirable. In Europe, the threat of Soviet Communism and fear of the defection of the working class drove the right to accept the compromises that led to the welfare state. The Left, for its part, accepted (often tacitly) that without the recovery of industry and business there would be nothing to redistribute.

The effect of the welfare state, ironically, was to eliminate the traditional working class as a meaningful political category and force. In the 1930s, and even into the 1950s, the working class was a distinct group, with its own culture and amusements: class difference was pervasive, especially in Europe. By the 1980s, and in most societies earlier, these distinctions – which were originally highly visible, for example in modes of dress – were largely submerged, or had vanished. New media and public education produced a common culture. New wealth produced common patterns of consumption.

The 1970s saw threats to, and a building reaction against, the welfare state. Not everyone shared fully in the benefits of the new order. The remnants of the older Left that had not been raised up in the economic expansion of the 1950s and 60s – miners, in Britain, for example – faced off against the government, producing scenes of violence, and disrupting the economy. The least attractive forms of labor were taken up by immigrants and minority members. The means open to the state to include the least advantaged were often unpopular. Affirmative action programs for minorities, for example, threatened the traditional working-class supporters of the Left. And Left governments came to represent austerity and economic malaise. At the same time, and not unconnected with this, the core loyalists of the Left became public employees – teachers, for example – rather than industrial workers.

The Left of the past is now seen through the powerful distorting lens of these changes. The figures we now celebrate from this period, the Frankfurt School and the critical social theory tradition generally, including cultural critics such as Walter Benjamin and Alexandre Kojève and the *Collège de Sociologie*, Antonio Gramsci, and George Lukaćs, were minor players at the time. The dominant Left of the 1930s was very different: concerned with such ideas as comprehensive "planning": of the economy, and life generally – even the planning of values, in the writings of Karl Mannheim (1940). The language of rights, prior to 1945, was largely disdained as bourgeois ideology. The state was a subject of no interest: in theory, it was to wither away once socialist revolution swept away class antagonism and property. Relations between states were to become pacific once class vanished, so international relations were of no interest. Neither were the traditional ideas of political theory: sovereignty, the idea of the state as resting on the exchange of protection for obedience, legality, legitimacy, and so forth.

The face of the old Left was firmly fixed on the socialist future and its benefits: the present was interregnum or purgatory; the practical realities of socialist governance as seen in Stalin's Soviet Union were misrepresented, as they were in the writings of the Webbs (1942), Webb and Webb (1936) and John Desmond Bernal (1939), or ignored – a pattern which continued long after the war, especially in the writings of French intellectuals such as Jean Paul Sartre (Judt 1992). The Hungarian revolt of 1956 put an end to this for many intellectuals on the Left, but not all of them, and not the Communist parties of Europe: as a result, the issue of defending the Soviet Union continued to paralyze the old Left well into the 1960s.

Yet this period also saw an evolution on the Left. The language of human rights, extended to social rights, was embraced, however cynically, by the Soviet Union in the context of such documents as the United Nations Charter. And the Left in the west loudly asserted its liberal rights to

speak freely in support of illiberal regimes in which these rights did not exist. The fifties saw the spectacle of McCarthyite persecution of former Communists who asserted their rights under law, and their innocence under law, to admiring audiences, despite being, in several important cases, compromised by the fact of their participation in espionage. Similarly, in Eastern Europe, prominent intellectuals on the Left who proclaimed their intellectual independence were sometimes involved with the security apparatus itself.

Freedom: The new solution

The New Left of the sixties freed itself from these contradictions, but at a cost to intellectual and political coherence. It was a short step from the assertion of liberal rights against McCarthyism to the unqualified affirmation of these rights, and to freedom – the Free Speech Movement in Berkeley is an example – against the security regime of the state generally. But freedom in the here and now was not part of the Old Left's program. The language of freedom itself both relied on the cold war dichotomy of communism and freedom and radicalized it. And in doing so it made freedom, eventually transformed into emancipation, into a value as powerful and important as equality itself.

Rawls represented a powerful intellectual response to this conflict: freedom was reconcilable with equality and there was a rational means, something approaching a metric, for balancing the two. The basic idea was that once the rules of the game in society were fair, meaning that they led to egalitarian outcomes, people should be free to act within these rules. His conception of "the basic structure of society" was sociological, rather than legal or ethical: "the way in which the major social institutions fit together into one system, and how they assign fundamental rights and duties and shape the division of advantages that arises through social cooperation" (Rawls 1993: 258). These were open to manipulation to shape the division of advantages to produce the greatest well-being consistent with fairness of distribution. The principle of fairness was that the arrangements should benefit the worst off in society first.

This was a justification of the welfare state not merely as a problematic compromise, short of true socialism and scarcely better than capitalism, but as a positive order based directly on fundamental considerations of justice itself, considerations grounded directly in moral reason. Whatever reservations they had about the details of Rawls' highly technical argument, among academics in the social sciences and humanities at least, with the exception of economists, the general thrust of these arguments was accepted (for a recent appraisal, see Katrina Forrester 2019). The goal of equality was grounded in justice; justice was grounded in reason. Moreover, these were ideals that did not imply the use of revolutionary violence, outright expropriation, or terror. The means available were means familiar to modern states. Moreover, the ideal of justice was understood to be implicit in common morality. Thus it could function as a critical standard that was implied by the basic moral commitments underlying the society and the state itself: still critical because the state and society characteristically fail to live up to their own implicit aspirations, but, nevertheless, grounded in the morality of the citizens rather than an imposition from outside or on high.

This form of argument put Marxism in a peculiar position. Rawls did not need to appeal to the historical mission of the working class to bring about Communism through revolution, a dead letter by this time, nor indeed to appeal to history at all. The goal of equality, something that was a powerful motivator for socialism but not the whole of it (brotherhood, the abolition of the exploitation of man by man, human dignity, and the end of property were more traditional goals), was now ordained by reason directly. Freedom as a normal part of a fair social arrangement was a useful ideal. Concerns about "more" freedom could be dismissed as, by definition, attempts to preserve unfair advantages, and an obsession of right-wing cranks. Whatever reservations one might have about the details of Rawls' arguments paled: it showed that there

could be a powerful defense of the present state that pointed in a "progressive" direction of improvement that preserved the values of liberalism that deserved preservation.

It is important to understand the peculiar double-edged character of this argument. On the one hand, it was a defense of the existing order. On the other, it was the source of a form of critique that had no natural limits and could be varied extensively. No actually existing welfare state lived up to the idea of justice in Rawls. This was the simple form of the critique, and it was the source of much of the attraction of Rawls: as Richard Rorty often said, it represented the best extant account of what a good society should aspire to be which happens also to fit the prejudices of the faculty at Harvard. But the nature of the critique had much more radical implications. The fact that existing social arrangements were not "just" in Rawls' sense raised questions about the political forms, including the form of liberal democracy itself. If they failed to produce justice, there was something wrong with them, or with the citizens who voted in them. And these flaws might be rooted more deeply, in, for example, a flawed culture, a flawed social order that produced false consciousness, or something else.

The project of the defense of the welfare state thus shaded into the critique of liberal democracy as such, and then into anti-liberalism. Both the extension of the idea of equality and the issue of the failure of liberal democracy to bring about genuine equality could tap into a vast well of non-standard Left criticism, including the critiques developed by the Frankfurt School. The welfare state as it actually existed of course had its own problematic history – the paternalistic mental health and prison institutions created in the early period of liberalism, however "reformed," were integral to the actual welfare state. And its subjects could be understood also as its victims. Similarly, forms of inequality not countenanced by Rawls, especially forms of inequality that excluded people, degraded them, stigmatized them, or otherwise defined them in institutional ways which conflicted with their own identities, could be made the basis for new forms of critique. Racism, sexism, and other symbolic and tangible forms of harm were themselves sources of inequality, and therefore of the liberal democratic order that produced them and by extension the welfare state in its present form.

The project of constructing a defense of the welfare state has continued unabated in various forms other than Rawls' own. These approaches constitute a major part of the contemporary literature in social and political thought and are well represented in this volume. Critical Theory as presently practiced represents a development of the same project of reconciling egalitarianism to liberal ideas, notably the idea of civil society. Republicanism is an attempt to give an account of freedom other than the liberal account and at the same time justifies the welfare activities of the state, including its assertion of paternalistic powers. Communitarianism is another. The return of interest in such traditions as pragmatism, which was on the Left, in Dewey's hands, but opposed to the dominant Left of T. H. Marshall ([1964] 1977) and John Desmond Bernal ([1982] 1980), is in part an attempt to find a philosophical account of the social sciences and the modern welfare state order that is consistent with the lessons of the postmodern revolt against modernism, but which is nevertheless positive and not merely relativistic. The discussions of racism, of the Foucaultian state, "recognition" in the thought of the Frankfurt School, as well as the revival of the discussion of notions of sovereignty, reflect the use or plundering of the received conceptual tradition in order to make sense of the new reality of the modern state.

Social democracy vs. liberalism

One important issue that underlies this discussion could be put as follows: despite serving as an ideal that much of academic thinking accepts without reservation, "social democracy" has been opposed, or rejected in its details, by electorate after electorate. People have not, it appears, acted

in accordance with the demands of reason. But at the same time, the welfare state, or at least many of its institutions, is popular. People fiercely defend the benefits of the welfare state when they are threatened by austerity programs. But they do not want to pay for them. Moreover, they have acted against their own interests by rejecting forms of redistribution that would benefit them and which "reason" justifies. This problem – which is a problem only under the assumption that reason in fact justifies the order in question – runs through the literature. Is there something intrinsic to the nature of public discussion, the psychological formation of people, or culture, or in the hidden or overt power of the opponents of redistribution, that gets in the way of reason and prevents the realization of the kind of social order that reason demands? There is, in short, an analog to the Marxian problem of false consciousness produced by the failure of the ideal of social democracy to be realized.

False consciousness is not the only model for this question. One of the great puzzles of twentieth-century politics is the fact that liberalism, which in its political as well as economic forms, brought enormous benefits, both economically and in terms of rights, also produced an extraordinarily fierce opposition. Fascism, Nazism, and the Left generally rejected liberalism as an ideology and a practice, and in the most vitriolic terms. The history of liberalism in the twentieth century is largely a history of struggles against liberalism, and the affirmation of anti-liberal ideas against the hidden ideologicals grounds of liberalism. The terms sovereignty, recognition, and the like are each terms that liberalism either rejects or ignores or redefines.

The case of "social democracy" is similar: it produced its own reaction, or more accurately its own discontents, though some of these discontents were very powerful. On the Left, these discontents involved the excluded and the issues of equality that the simple economic model of the distribution of wealth left unaddressed – issues arising from ingrained race and gender biases in the law, in policy, and the like, as well as issues involving the status of previously despised groups, such as gays, the disabled, and ethnic minorities. Here the opposition is less fierce, but the reasoning is nevertheless fundamental: the very existence of these claims on the state calls into question the idea of blind justice derived from reason alone.

Liberalism itself fought back, both at the level of electoral resistance to the welfare state and intellectually. For liberals, the problem of freedom was no more resolved by Rawls than the problem of the nature of equality itself. Robert Nozick, in a famous text of the 1970s, *Anarchy, State, and Utopia* (1974), made the point that Rawls had conveniently omitted consideration of the ways in which the distribution of wealth was the product of the free choices of individuals, and ignored the rights they had to the disposition of the wealth that they had acquired through their own effort. Even Marx accepted the idea that there was some deep connection between work and the control of the products of work. He merely rejected the institution of alienable private property as the proper form of this relation.

The problem of liberalism is rooted in the political compromises that produced the welfare state itself. Writers like Carl Schmitt (1988 [1923]), Albert Venn Dicey (1962 [1914]), and Joseph Schumpeter (1950 [1942]) had questioned whether democracy and liberalism were themselves compatible: in the end, they thought, the temptation of the working class to overturn property arrangements and impose not only direct egalitarian socialism but an authoritarian regime to enact it would be too great. The restraints on political action implied by the idea of the self-limited state, and the rule of open discussion of the use of the limited powers of the state, would soon fall under the pressure of the misguided desire to kill the golden goose of capitalism and expropriate the wealth of those who ran it. Along with it, the liberal idea of government by discussion would also vanish.

The philosophical form of these ideas produced a similar conflict with liberalism. If it was indeed the case that reason demanded an egalitarian regime, what was the point of liberal

discussion or representative institutions other than to provide legitimacy or symbolic acquiescence to the dictates of reason? Kant's followers, and Hegel, had already faced this implication of the idea that politics was justice grounded in reason: they concluded that the role of the representative was to act in accordance with reason on behalf of those who were represented (Bluntschli 2002 [1869]). It followed that "consent" was genuine only when it was in accordance with the dictates of reason. Liberal discussion was tolerable if it led to the acceptance of reason. Michael Beresford Foster, in his classic discussion of Hegel and Plato, characterized this as "the pitiless domination of reason" (1968 [1935]: 85).

If one believes that reason does not dictate the solution to political questions, "reason" is being used by these thinkers as a warrant for the exercise of authoritarian power – a means of usurping power in the name of reason and of controlling and eliminating politics and contestation in the name of the end of justice grounded in reason. This is a conflict that is present today in the writings of Chantal Mouffe in response to the Habermasian idea of political reason in a fully realized civil society (Mouffe 1999). And it is posed, in a practical way, by the question of the role of intellectuals in society: if they are the representatives of reason, and have the role of bringing about the public acceptance of reason, they are either – depending on one's choices in the face of this conflict – merely instruments of public enlightenment and servants of reason or active political agents promoting ideological solutions to the problems of the present.

The new resistance

The idea of "justice" based on egalitarian reason and produced by the welfare state did not produce the consensus and stability its authors expected. Instead, the patterns that have emerged in the 21st century have been cases of largely under-theorized resistance. The world-wide response to the Black Lives Matter movement, the George Floyd killing, the election of Donald Trump, Brexit, as well as populist movements in Eastern Europe and resistance to mass immigration in much of Europe have shown that there is considerable resistance, from multiple directions, to the enlightened vision of a liberal democratic welfare state that so much theorizing had been devoted to. New forms of injustice were the subject of resistance, and new grievances – latent but newly actualized – came to dominate public protests. Political discourse was slow to respond and continues to vacillate in the face of these changes. The available theoretical resources, such as Critical Race Theory and Post-Colonial Theory, have provided an intellectual framework for some activists. But much remains elusive. Campaigns to defund the police, punish racist microaggression, cancel opponents of redefinitions of gender, "Occupy" protests with little developed ideology, or policy, and a general revulsion against income inequality, have revealed the existence of deeply felt issues, without pointing the way to a coherent or consistent political program. We will see the beginnings of a theoretical response to these new social, political, and cultural sources of disquiet in the chapters that follow. Many of them will be concerned with the question of what kinds of revisions of received ideas are needed, and which of the resources of the existing body of theory can be used to address these new issues.

The present and the past

In one way or another, the chapters in Part 1 of this volume deal with issues with liberal democracy and the welfare state, and with the need to replace, supplant, analyze, or extend and transform the images of the individual and politics inherited from liberal political thought, and with the responses to these attempts. The responses take two basic forms: a "French" critique, which understands liberalism as a form which organizes hidden means of distinction, suppression, and

harm in the name of universalism and equity. The other, the "German" critique, is an attempt to consider the conditions for the full realization of the liberational aspirations contained in the original liberal impulse. There is also a kind of American variation on these in the form of pragmatism, and a critique originated from liberalism itself, as well as still living traditions of European liberalism transplanted into the Anglo-American universe, and a resurgence of interest in Republicanism as an alternative to liberalism that allows in an unproblematic way for an extensive welfare state.

The "French" critique follows Foucault's basic thought that we are complicit in our own oppression as a result of accepting forms of thought and practice that serve to oppress us. These forms acquire a kind of autonomy. They are controlled by no one but enacted by everyone. "Liberal democracy" is made up of these bodies of practice – they are the underside of the liberal democratic state, and the true significance of the seemingly neutral practices of the liberal state is concealed in these practices, which are the means by which citizens are disciplined, punished, labeled, excluded and included, and the like. Concentrating the project of reform on the refinement of these practices and modes of thought, their equal application, or the production of fair outcomes, as in Rawls' procedural liberalism, misses the point fundamentally: the procedures themselves are the source of the oppressive power by which people are excluded, suppressed, labeled, and controlled.

This was a powerful idea. It avoided the problem of identifying power with a ruling class or elite – a project which in the 1950s and 60s had produced numerous efforts, which tended to discover beneficiaries of the system and people who maintained it, but few examples of classes which could "rule." We ourselves, with our complicity in the basic arrangements of such things as the liberal penal and justice system, were the source of its power. Moreover, our complicity was unconscious: part of the fact of an order of practices of this kind is the fact that they supply our own mental apparatus for thinking about these things: conceptual practices.

As Gary Wickham and Brian Bieganski point out, this idea, along with Foucault's array of technical terms, was eagerly absorbed, especially in the Anglo-Saxon world, where it represented a way of continuing critique despite the disappearance of the most overt forms of the traditional Marxist form of class conflict. It fits nicely with anti-totalitarianism, and indeed had the effect of reimagining liberal democratic regimes, including the welfare state itself, as totalizing institutions embodying ideologies of control. Power is about repression in both totalitarian and liberal regimes. But liberal regimes repress in covert ways, ways that are covert even to the repressors, who simply see themselves as dealing with the damaged or deranged and defending society, rather than as taking sides in a conflict. The task of the analyst is to identify and make visible these practices of power.

This was a mode of reasoning that applied widely and applied at the point that procedural liberalism was especially vulnerable: the problem of minorities and those who are excluded or harmed by the procedural order of liberalism, and the hidden injuries which the welfare state produced when it managed these populations. Indeed, the history of feminist thought in this period (as well as thinking about race) reproduces the transition from a kind of procedural liberalism, or a faith in the use of ordinary political and legal processes to attain justice and equality, to a recognition that the issues of racism and sexism, and the kinds of repression and inequality that they generate, are intrinsic to the order of practices themselves, "systemic," and require new forms of theorizing.

Foucault's topics ranged from madness to sexuality, and typically were concerned with the grand historical sweep – the turning points in which new orders of repression were created, usually in the distant past, and the long process of their playing out and development by largely unwitting administrators and minor thinkers. His focus, typically, was on the organizing ideas

behind these systems, the ideas which provided their practitioners with ways of thinking about their subject. Pierre Bourdieu, who derived his own thought from the same general French tradition, but was more deeply rooted in the social sciences, carried out an analogous project but concentrated on the more immediate range: systems of education which conferred and decided academic distinction, the organization of the relation between inside the house, the domain of women, and the outside, the domain of men, in the Algerian household, and so forth.

As Marcel Fournier notes, these studies had their own dramatic effects. In the case of schooling, the perception of schools as relatively autonomous "Republican" institutions was changed: Bourdieu exhibited them as systems for the reproduction of hierarchy, which operated in subtle ways to exclude the poor and advantage the beneficiaries of current hierarchies. And they did so precisely by the adherence to practices, which Bourdieu labeled with the distinctive term "habitus," that had unconscious distinction-producing effects which the analyst could reveal. Bourdieu, as Fournier shows, was able to do something that Foucault did not: to create an academic corps of followers and collaborators. Foucault's legacy appeared more open ended, especially after the posthumous publication of the lectures at the Collège de France.

Bourdieu is in some ways the symptomatic figure of the transformation of the discussion of the newly secured welfare state and its political order. He recognized that the old questions of class were no longer determinative and that the possibility of struggle now resided in the realm of the symbolic, against symbolic power and distinction based on symbolic power, and also recognized that the new class to which an appeal needed to be made was the class of government workers created by the expanded welfare state. His main audience and following was among teachers, who were frequently members of the French Communist Party. Bourdieu's intellectual and ideological problem was to think through the problem of culture and cultural practices – the locus of hierarchy in the new society produced by the welfare state. This required the development of such notions as symbolic violence, which, as Fournier notes, he used to analyze male domination. However, while Bourdieu opened up the symbolic to notions of struggle, the result was somewhat unpolitical in that his whole approach really did not account adequately for social transformation: his concern was ultimately with the reproduction of the social world from generation to generation.

But the thinker with the most distinctive approach to these issues is Jacques Lacan. As Stavrakakis shows in his chapter on Lacan and his influence, his radicalization of Freudian analysis and his terminology of the real, the imaginary, and the symbolic run through thinkers like Cornelius Castoriadis (1998) and Slavoj Žižek (1989) to represent a particularly powerful means of deconstruction and critique of ideology. For Lacan, as Stavrakakis notes, the realm of the symbolic is, as it is for Bourdieu and Foucault, the precondition for interaction, including the interaction out of which collectives and individuals are formed – thus this realm is the starting point and subject of analysis. However, in this respect he went far beyond Bourdieu and, arguably too, Foucault as regards political consequences.

For Lacan, this concern with the symbolic was not merely a talking point: it was the basis for a replacement of the notion of the autonomous desiring individual of liberalism with a conception of subjectivity that makes desire into the attempt to overcome a lack, and doing this through such means as consuming or identifying with a political ideology. The lack, however, is never possible to overcome – the autonomous individual never happens, and the solutions to the lack are themselves in the realm of the imaginary. It is this lack that powers capitalism, which provides consumption products that address this lack, including such things as prestige goods that confer identity. But the process never ends. And this endlessness generates its own response in the form of ascetic rationalism, as in Weber, in which pleasure is deferred. Present consumerism is a response to, and of course a rejection of, deferred pleasure in favor of consumption. But

it is intrinsically doomed to fail to produce the fulfillment it promises, and constrains us to seek our pleasure in the channels provided by a consumer economy.

These thinkers were each influenced by, or identified with, Marxism. But at the end, appeals to Marx in France came to have little meaning beyond the ceremonial. The larger fate of Marxism, however, is more complex. Peter Beilharz examines the complex later life of Marx and Marxism. Marx, he notes, can be read in many ways, but at the core of his thought was the critique of political economy, especially its disembodied notions of labor. The early Marx had a romantic image of work as a freely given contribution to a collective whole. This image, which made sense only in characteristically rural settings, was set aside when he recognized that the industrial order was here to stay. He expected capitalism to collapse of its own accord. When Marxism became an official ideology of the Social Democratic Party it came to be accepted that socialism could be produced through voting. But the rhetoric of revolution was still employed, both as a motivator for the working classes, and as a promise of a radically changed future. The far Left rejected this cynical strategy, which in any case ended in grief – the revolutionary rhetoric and the far Left itself so terrified the voters that only the least threatening socialist parties attained power. Those that were wedded to this rhetoric were suppressed by force when the opportunity arose – as it did in Austria, for example.

The great exception to this was Russia. Lenin developed an un-Marxian doctrine of the vanguard party that justified party rule in the name of the proletariat. The Russian revolution succeeded: it became a model for intellectuals in developing countries and was imposed on Eastern Europe. It retains its power in the poorest parts of the world as a solution to backwardness. In Europe, it was recognized more or less explicitly by the Left to be deeply flawed, but the principle of refusing to denounce socialist regimes prevented these flaws from being discussed except in the form of a complex theoretical code. In France, because of the influence and omnipresence of the Communist party, this necessity vanished: one could either operate within the limits of the official party, which many intellectuals were willing to do, or one was free to invoke Marx in a wide variety of ways. The same could not be said for Germany or German Left socialist thought, where an unwillingness to explicitly reject the Soviet Union went hand-in-hand with a willingness to criticize with respect to such matters as aesthetic theory, and the development of a code which allowed for an alternative Left critique.

The Frankfurt School was the master of this kind of encoded discussion and used it to develop a form of Marxism that had its roots not only in Marx and Hegel but also in Max Weber, the theorist of western rationalization and bureaucratization. As Beilharz puts it, they combined a Marxist critique of commodification with Weber's dystopian critique of rationalization. The product of this marriage was a socialist humanism concerned not so much with capitalism as with the characteristic forms and products of modernity itself, including the Soviet state. Louis Althusser and Etienne Balibar (1970) and Nicos Poulantzas (1987 [1975], 2001 [1978]) provided a strongly "for Marx" critique of this body of thought, exposing the distance it had come from Marx himself. The collapse of the Soviet sphere in 1989 and the death of both leading figures put an effective end to this line of thought.

The Marxian impulse lives on in various forms. The model pioneered by the Frankfurt School when it added Weber, interpreted through Lukacs, to Marx (and Freud to Marx) continues to be a method of prolonging the life of Marxian ideas: Lacan, Schmitt, deconstruction, and other ideas can be combined with Marx to generate a "position." And the basic anti-capitalist animus of Marx also takes ever new forms: as a source for the critique of globalization, the current financial crisis of the west, austerity and precarity, and so forth. But these Marxisms are all post-Marxisms: the proletariat as a revolutionary force exists only in the romantic rhetoric of far Left politics, and not in the realm of social and political theory. As Albena Azmanova and

other contributors to this volume show, the future of progressive politics has shifted to new social forces, and to a search for new paradigmatic alternatives to capitalism as a mode of social organization.

The problem of race is a central example of the difficulties for traditional theorizing posed by the new sources of resistance. The problem of race is not only one of exclusion and margin-alization, but diversity is also a source of pluralism – a central obstacle to the kind of solidarity reformers have typically aspired to. Race is also closely bound up to inequality and injustice, and presents special problems for reform. The most direct challenge to the problem of race is Critical Race Theory, as Patricia Hill Collins shows in her chapter in this volume. Racial thinking both has a scientific lineage and serves as a kind of working theory that serves to harm the subjects of its theorizing. It is thus a natural target for critical theory – for a critique that not only rejects it, which she calls traditional theory with a critical intent, but also shows the hidden racial assump-tions of universalistic accounts, and goes beyond this to identify what she calls "contemporary racial formations of social injustice," meaning the racially unjust meaning of social formations which appear to have nothing to do with race. Justice, in the case of race, requires not just equal-ity, or the elimination of a harmful form of thought, but the recognition and elimination of these hidden, harmful, racial significances. The nature of the harms, however, is not obvious, so one task of critical race theory is precisely that of theorizing these harms: harms based on systems in which people have a strong stake and that produce powerful resistance movements to preserve them. Paradoxically, racialization is both an object of critique and a source of power for move-ments of resistance to "Whiteness" as a form of domination.

Critical race theory takes every institution as its subject because every institution is inveigled in the racial ordering of society. The same kind of case can be made for gender. As Claire Mary Colebrook points out, one form of feminism would be an extension of the basic language of liberalism, the language of rights and free choice, as well as the language of equality, to domains that were of special concern to women: reproductive rights and sexual rights. And the same "feminization" could be performed on other theories and approaches so that one could con-struct a feminist variant of Marxism or post-modernism. But this would keep the forms of theory intact. The larger claim and promise of feminism is that the form of theorizing can and should itself change: that the present form of theory is itself masculine in character, and could be replaced by something with a preference for inclusion and empathy and a rejection of the notion of individual autonomy as a part of masculine ideology. As she notes, the notion of inclu-sion, both in theory and political practice, opens up realms of experience to theoretical discus-sion that not only undermine the liberal model of the individual, but raise questions about the notions of sexual difference that the feminist critique of liberalism assumes, and thus about the sexual binary, and ultimately about the notion of difference itself.

If we question, or deconstruct, the very basis of our distinctive form of critique, is this decon-struction tantamount to a kind of political quietism? This is a question that is raised by Judith Butler's rhetorical analyses of gender difference talk discussed by Colebrook, and Butler's famous slogan "everyone is in drag." Thomas Docherty discusses this problem in terms of the infusion of ideas from literary criticism into social theory, especially in the form of Jacques Derrida's philosophy of decentering and his critique of the philosophy of presence. As Docherty notes, the kinds of analysis of difference promoted by thinkers like Derrida does indeed dissolve the naïve binaries that "political" critiques by academics often depend on. Nevertheless, he points out, this has led, in the thought of such philosophers as Gilles Deleuze, to a quest for a stopping point beyond these distinctions and binaries, such as "the event" and the idea of "becoming" as a way of getting beyond the fixity of difference thinking. In this respect this new turn of thought resembles the response of *Lebensphilosophie* to the rigid categories of neo-Kantianism. But in the

hands of thinkers like Alain Badiou this critique becomes a form of the critique of ideology and false consciousness which opposes forms of consciousness to an engagement which cannot be reduced to forms.

Habermas, the embodiment of the second generation of the Frankfurt School, began his career close to Marxism, but like the first generation his thought was motivated in large part by the question of false consciousness, the question which originally was "why did the proletariat fail to fulfill its historical mission?". But Habermas pursued it in the updated form of the question of why people did not vote for Social Democracy, and specifically for the Social Democratic Party in Germany, which in the early years of the German Federal Republic was unable to achieve a parliamentary majority. Habermas, in his classic work on *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (1992 [1962]), inverted the analysis of the Weimar Republic and its "sham parliamentarism" produced by Carl Schmitt. Schmitt argued that the possibility of genuine rational discussion and persuasion – the precondition of liberal democracy – had been made impossible by the emergence of anti-liberal "totalizing parties," such as the Communists and Nazis, and by extension also the largely ideological SPD, which aimed to absorb the state into its own encompassing ideology and viewed parliamentary action as only a means to advance this ultimate objective: the absorption of the state by the party and the subordination of the state to the exclusive ideology of the party. Habermas argued that the public sphere itself was a sham in the conditions of modern liberal democracy because the kind of rational discussion that should motivate political choice was undermined fatally by the false "news" and sham discussion among peers that actually decided elections. Eventually, this argument turned, as suggested above, in the direction of a positive argument for a particular as yet unachieved public sphere in which uncoerced rational consensus would prevail.

Delanty and Harris in their chapter argue that the legacy of critical theory in the end resides in a concept of critique that is both normative and explanatory. It was inspired by a Hegelian understanding of "reason," a commitment to a connection between philosophy and social research, the diagnosis of social pathologies, the disclosure of false consciousness, and an immanent-transcendent methodology. In some of its earlier incarnations, this goal seemed to involve a comprehensive social and historical account which would provide its possessors with the means of identifying, from an epistemically privileged and theoretically grounded vantage point, instances of false consciousness in terms of an account of the stages of historical development of capitalism. It is clear that what is needed is a more modest notion of critique which is nevertheless consistent with the project of a progressive politics: critical theory as a form of inquiry consistent with a democratic politics in which a plurality of voices is not only heard but incorporated into critical inquiry itself. Such a re-direction of critical theory will inevitably have to engage with other traditions of critique (post-colonialism, post-structuralist, etc.). This kind of inquiry also contrasts to technocratic, expert-driven inquiry of the kind criticized by Habermas and is often seen to entail a commitment to pragmatism, as in the tradition of C. S Peirce.

Pragmatism, however, as Robert Talisse explains, does not speak in a univocal way about the correct methods: he identifies four distinct "pragmatist" approaches to the social and political, including Dewey's perfectionism, Rorty's ironism, Cheryl Misak's deliberativism, and Elizabeth Bird's non-perfectionist revision of Dewey. Misak's approach, perhaps combined with Dewey's slogan that democracy is a way of life, comes closest to the conception of pragmatism in K.-O. Apel and Habermas, which emphasizes convergence. For Dewey as for Habermas, as for Apel, deliberation leads to solidarity and a recognition of common values. The role of the state is to facilitate moral and political development in this direction, a direction whose destination is not fixed in advance, as socialist thinking ordinarily assumed. But as Talisse notes, this is one conception of human flourishing among others. Elizabeth Bird's revision of Dewey emphasizes

experimentalism together with democratic means of assessing experiments, fallibilism, and the need for democratic course corrections rather than a democratic common end.

Richard Rorty faces up to the relativism of conceptions of the human good, and sees the message of pragmatism in its openness to improvement and willingness to experiment with new forms of flourishing. He accepts the need to stand unflinchingly for our values in the face of the reality that there is and can be no grounding for them in philosophy, reason, nature, and the like – echoing in this respect Isaiah Berlin, Schumpeter, and Weber. In contrast, Mishak, taking her pragmatism from Pierce, argues that deliberation is the right model for democracy because it is the right model for epistemology. For her, responsiveness to reason – and willingness to listen to others – as an interpersonal norm is the basis for the necessary social institutions for democracy, including schooling and free speech. Elizabeth Anderson takes up Dewey's experimentalism, and envisions democracy as the pooling of intellectual resources that takes advantage of social diversity through inclusive discussion, together with feedback mechanisms,

As these references make clear, there is a conception of democracy that does not rely on classical liberal philosophy, but which is nevertheless liberal. Weber is one crucial representative of this kind of liberalism, and Schumpeter is another. In each case, these liberals operate with minimal assumptions about human nature, and are reluctant to appeal to any kinds of transcendental assertions, whether they are about "rights" or "democracy." But they are particularly immune to appeals to collective entities – society, race, and the like – and to assertions about the rationality of political values. Jeremy Shearmur discusses two thinkers in this category, Karl Popper and Friedrich Hayek: each of them anti-utopians who applied their arguments to the Marxism of their time, but whose arguments remain relevant. For them, the attempt to assert values as truths leads more or less directly to tyranny: either the market, in Hayek's case, should decide, or, for Popper, a politics of piecemeal reform which concentrated not on the good life, about which we can never be expected to agree, but on the elimination of bad things about which we can agree. What they share is both a respect for the way in which our institutions and practices, including but not limited to the market, actually work to provide what a population with diverse goals and values actually wants and needs, and a sense that these institutions and practices can be tweaked to do a better job of doing so in the face of changing circumstances, and changing wants and needs.

The Frankfurt School is now in its third "generation." With the work of Axel Honneth, it has returned to a somewhat anti-liberal concept: recognition. The key to the concept is that recognition, unlike, for example, the distribution of goods in Rawlsian distributive justice, cannot be generated by ordinary procedures of liberal democracy, by universal law, by government mandates, and the like. It is something that is achieved in history by struggle, by demands. It is a pre-political concept, in the family of the concept of honor, which is a condition for a certain kind of politics, rather than its product. As Delanty and Harris discuss, for Honneth this level is fundamental to social life. For Honneth the concept of recognition is a return to the true social order – an order of reciprocal claims and demands whose mutual acceptance does such things as allow the individual to appear in public without shame, without hiding aspects of their identity. It arises in the sphere of community life and in such forms as maternal love. A positive form of this mutual recognition affirms ones identity and makes possible successful self-realization in general. Honneth takes reciprocal recognition and affirmation to be a condition for the kind of subjectivity that allows genuine democratic political participation. In its critical form, as an account of failure of recognition and the processes that prevent recognition, this account is a novel form of the false consciousness problem itself, though for Honneth the problem now takes the form of asking what failures of recognition stand in the way of is genuine "social democracy" with genuine democratic participation. However, as Delanty and Harris argue, the

recognition framework may be an unnecessary limitation of the scope of critical theory since not all social and political challenges can be posed in the language of recognition.

It is easy enough to dismiss the emphasis on recognition as a form of political romanticism, in Schmitt's sense, and to point to the affinities of the idea of recognition with the totalitarianism of the Soviet Union, the totalizing parties of the European Left in the interwar years, and to fascist and Nazi doctrine: the fascist idea of the idea of duty, and therefore of the soldier as its exemplary instance, as a model for the new order and the Nazi concern with the dignity of the working man in the face of his capitalist bosses and with considerations of honor more generally. The association of these ideas and identity politics in general with the notion of race – with the Mexican immigrant *party La Raza* as the exemplary party of identity politics – is also difficult to avoid. Nevertheless, it is clear that there are elements of the notions of human belongingness and attachment that lie beyond the sparse formal liberal legal forms of citizenship, legal rights to due process, the vote, and the relations of the market.

The question is what role these elements should play. Are they "private" and politically irrelevant? Or are they the secret essence of all politics and of realized human life? There is a sharp division over this. Liberalism has an affinity with the Protestant idea that human dignity and the like are ultimately irrelevant and a distraction: the true test for salvation is the individual's relation with God, a god who is "no respecter of persons," as the market and the liberal legal state are. For liberalism, they are private. Against liberalism, both on the Right and the Left, is the idea that true human life is possible only in the context of the rooted, the participatory, and the ecstatic communal: without this humans are atomized Hobbesian individuals incapable of genuine human relations. Liberalism, from this point of view, imposes atomization in the name of freedom and procedural justice, and employs the public–private distinction to suppress and reject the desire for recognition that those whose being is rooted in ethnic, class, gender, and communal identities wish to see acknowledged in order for them to participate as bearers of these identities.

Communitarianism brings these issues into the open. Is there a fundamental conflict between liberalism, including liberal justice in the rather abstract form originally advocated by Rawls, and the kinds of human relations that make up actual communities? Do well-being and social solidarity require more than a neutral framework in which we each pursue our individual ideas of the good? Is liberalism itself not so much neutral as an ideology of its own that contains a conception of the good that is itself problematic? Charles Blattberg points out that these issues are difficult for liberals to answer if they reduce liberalism to a very spare notion of the good, such as autonomy, define liberalism in terms of people's freedom to pursue their autonomously chosen ends, and add to this the idea of value-pluralism and the claim that there is no rational ground for choice between these ends, we implicitly exclude the possibility of various forms of human relation – such as those captured by the notion of recognition – and replace these possibilities with the possibility of a society based on the much different notion of toleration.

Republicanism has emerged as an alternative to liberalism that preserves freedom, but does so by redefining it, and allows the state to act in a non-neutral manner in terms of values – a key condition for the defense of the modern, intrusive, welfare state as it actually operates. Richard Bellamy shows how republican arguments serve to avoid the kinds of problems detailed by Blattberg's chapter, replacing liberalism with a notion of political community in which interventions that liberalism would treat as violations of freedom can be justified in terms of the values of the community itself. This kind of interference – such as interfering in ways that protect a person from self-harm – is neither arbitrary nor an expression of domination.

Moreover, the republican political community can (and to have a genuine community must) intervene to protect its members from the domination of others. Liberalism, in contrast,

permits certain forms of domination by shielding it under the heading of rights – the right, for example, of a druggist to arbitrarily deny a drug to a purchaser on the basis of their personal beliefs, or for no reason at all. Political discourse which protects the right to be heard is the key to the prevention of domination: even a minority whose views might otherwise be ignored by the political process can have their voices heard and enter into political coalitions to secure their wishes.

Non-domination, like recognition, is a fact in the social realm. Liberalism secures rights against the state; non-domination is a social condition assured by the state as a means of securing the conditions for genuine democratic participation. What counts as domination, and what kinds of interventions by the state are warranted, are determined by the democratic process itself. But it is a democratic process undistorted by the relations of domination that liberalism allows. Thus republicanism incorporates the idea of assuring recognition and protecting community as these pre-political conditions relate to the integrity of the political process of discussion and exchange itself – and this can allow for very extensive interventions, which produce a *de facto* egalitarianism.

Natalie Doyle describes developments in French political thought that go in what is in some respects the opposite direction. Doyle points to a thinker who has developed the thinking of Claude Lefort and Cornelius Castoriadis in the direction of a broader understanding of neo-liberalism as the product of a long-term process of disenchantment or the *artificialization* of the human world. This is in large part the product not of capitalism but of the practices of regulatory governance which put the individual – with the individual's formal rights and subjective experience, for example of domination – at the center of political life. Neo-liberalism is an ideological framing of this larger process of artificialization which obscures the collective conditions for individual freedom and thus erodes them in favor of a political self-understanding that is focused only on the present, within the parameters set by the economy, the law, science, and the overriding fact of global competition. The past, from this point of view, is no longer a resource but is instead parochial and discredited.

This kind of more fundamental rethinking of the nature of liberal democracy as an achievement is relevant to the understanding of the political development of Latin America. The early leaders of Latin American republics were also characteristic modernizing intellectuals of the kind that in the twentieth century, in the decolonizing world, looked to Marxism as an alternative path to development. As Aurea Motas points out, they reasoned that liberal democracy was not possible with the populations of their country and the Spanish legal and social inheritance, so they opted for more of a Napoleonic model, which gradually settled, in the nineteenth century, into a practice of state centralism. But these nations were also, for the most part, artificial, sometimes highly heterogeneous constructions which concealed a vast collection of minorities. These minorities typically politically excluded and regarded as a nuisance, as the chapter points out.

In the twentieth century, the ideas of the Left had a special influence: the compromises that made for the welfare state in Europe did not take place in Latin America, and the poor remained a decisive political reality – appealed to both by Left, and, in the case of Perón in Argentina, by the populist Right. Theorizing about the problem of the poor developed in contact with political movements of various kinds which sought to assert minority rights and regional demands. The possibility of a stable liberal constitutional order was always under threat by these movements. Yet a gradual development of a kind of liberal constitutionalism nevertheless took place, and the preponderance of military dictatorship diminished.

The Latin American experience is a mirror of western European modernity – both a challenge to the standard model of development, which raises questions about its universality, and a

reminder of the conditions of its achievement – conditions such as relative ethnic and linguistic homogeneity. It is also a challenge to the notion of democratic participation, which takes on different and problematic meanings when the participation occurs under the flag of collective identities. Liberalism depended on effacing these identities: the price of recapturing them is to render the ordinary liberal politics of discussion more difficult.

Deliberation, reason, and critique, to the extent that they become the basic content of politics, place intellectuals in a special position. Although there is a long tradition of discussing intellectuals as a social category in social theory, little of the earlier discussion reflected on the phenomenon of the public intellectual itself. From the time of Zola to the present, however, the forms of public intellectual assertion and presence have evolved, and a more serious discussion of the bearers of public reason, if that is what they are, is needed. Patrick Baert and Joel Isaac point to Bourdieu as an example of a thinker who was a public political intellectual who also theorized about public intellectuals and to some extent thought reflexively about the role of the public intellectual. Behind him was always the example of Sartre, the consummate public intellectual, who had discredited himself as a public thinker by his devotion to the Communist party line. Much recent writing on intellectuals in sociology has been concerned with careerism – how an intellectual makes it. But there are other strands: the philosophy of expertise, the contextualist approach in the history of ideas, and an ongoing literature on the conflict between devotion to intellectual goals and political commitment. This is clearly a topic that requires more effort, but which is ready to emerge from its somnolence.

Hannah Arendt is a difficult to classify thinker, whose work is relevant to the rest of social and political thought in various ways, both for her substantive contributions and her critiques. Phillip Walsh takes up one of her central concerns, power, and her discussion of its relation to violence – a crucial distinction given the familiar claim of Mao Zedong that "Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun," and Weber's similar remarks identifying the state with the territorial monopoly of legitimate violence. As Walsh explains, Arendt sought to distinguish power and violence, and to apply these arguments to actual political situations. She offended many of her readers by her stances, but Walsh argues that there was an important underlying consistency. She rejected both the liberal bromide of enlightened self-interest as refuted by reality, and the romanticization of violence by such figures as Franz Fanon. Her argument was partly definitional: that "power," "strength," "force," "authority," and "violence" referred to distinct things. The different "things" are ontological, not merely conventional, for Arendt: deriving from distinct kinds of human activity. Violence is instrumental, an instrumentality carried to extremes in totalitarian societies and defining them Power, in contrast, is the capacity to act in concert in groups, and reaches its highest expression in nonviolent action. Authority is a power to command believed to rest on some transcendental force.

Arendt posed as a critic of modernity and its version of public life, seeing the collapse of these categories into one another, for example by the substitution of violence for authority, as forms of political failure. Her applications of these distinctions to such phenomena as bureaucracy, where no one is responsible, are indicative of a sensibility that does not easily fit into the usual political categories. Yet they are revealing of an image of human activity and politics as an activity rooted deeply in the Western tradition, and in the Greek polis, that challenges the categories themselves. The challenge is to modernist reductionisms of all kinds, including such things as Habermas's reduction of politics to discursive collective will formation. But as Walsh's account shows, Arendt's perspective not only allows for, but forces a re-evaluation of contemporary political preferences and biases. The problem of going beyond critique and finding alternative conceptions of social and political life will be the concern of the next section. The problem of violence that Arendt identified will be the concern of a chapter by Larry Ray.

New and emerging frameworks: plurality, contingency, relationalism, and transformation

Part 1 covers a range of theories that in very different ways have emerged out of the crisis and transformation of liberal political thought over the past three decades or so. As we have seen, developments within the French and German traditions opened up entirely new perspectives on the fate of the political in a period of major social and political change. The topics under discussion in Part 2 of this volume are less defined in terms of major schools of thought than by frameworks that have emerged around specific themes. The chapters concern topics that in part represent continuity with the older traditions of social and political analysis, but mostly they deal with topics reflecting new and emerging frameworks of analysis. Many of the topics covered here are not easily positioned within what have now become established theoretical traditions, though they have been clearly influenced by post-Foucauldian theory, constructivism, and inter-pretivism. The topics under discussion in Part 2 are largely concerned with challenges to social and political theory that have arisen from the crisis of the very understanding of the social that has come as a result of issues that are often summed under the heading of globalization or, in other words, the crisis of late modern or global society. Some of the more specific problems that this concerns are discussed in the third part of the volume.

A striking feature of current theorizing is the persistence of some of the central questions of social and political theory which escape normative closure. Indeed the very possibility of a normative critique of society, which was taken for granted in the classical traditions of modern social and political thought, is increasingly questioned – though rarely rejected – in these new approaches. The older assumptions about the objectivity of society, or the reality of the social, and the possibility of an alternative politics have been supplanted by approaches that appear to foreground plurality, contingency, relationalism, and transformation. Until recently cultural theory, under the more general rubric of postmodernism, provided a framework of analysis that challenged the core of classical or modern social theory. As the approaches discussed in this part illustrate, culture is now no longer a domain outside the social and the political but is constitutive of the social world. But we need to go beyond a notion of culture as such to an understanding of the different processes that it entails. In many ways, the post-modern challenge has been normalized around a view of the social world as a site of conflicting interpretations. With this comes a return to some of the older questions and themes, but in new theoretical guises. These chapters cannot be located in a disciplinary field of social science. Most, if all, the chapters are also good illustrations of the merging of the concerns of social and political theory around conceptions of social life that stress plurality, contingency, relationalism, and transformation. In different ways these four conceptions of social life are emphasized in the chapters in Part 2.

Traditionally, the most radical rejection of received views of society and the state has gone under the label "anarchism," a term that has recently been revived by protestors, notably the Occupy movement and the anti-police movements. The concept has, however, as Ruth Kinna explains, its own tradition that is interwoven with the rest of social and political theory. Anarchists provided their own social theoretical account of the state that anticipates the present concern with decolonization, by recognizing that the effects of state power extend far beyond the mere fact of administration, to produce domination based on the acceptance of organizational practices that form the culture itself, Although the development of anarchist thinking has been discontinuous, there are significant continuities from Rousseau's "man is born free, but is everywhere in chains" to the present, and anarchism can be revealed as implicit in a multitude of current forms of critique.

Finding alternatives to the idea of society and the individualism-holism binary, for example in terms of networks, has been a recurrent theme of recent thinking. As Jay Conway explains, a major contributor to this effort has been Deleuze, who, together with Félix Guattari, developed the concept of "assemblage." Like other efforts in this search for alternatives, part of the aim was to avoid speculative mentalizing of social concepts in order to make them "empirical" or based on external facts, such as speech acts, bodies, desire, and their arrangement in relation to one another, which is creatively assembled and reassembled.

Critical Realism, introduced by Dave Elder-Vass, is another, but quite different, attempt to avoid basing social theory on assumptions about the consciousness of the people acting in the social world without falling into a naïve positivism. Critical Realism attempts to recognize the value of interpretation without granting the idea that interpretations, such as those of social constructionism, exhaust the causal processes operating in society, and also without accepting that the causal processes are on the surface, accessible by collecting correlations between "variables." Critical Realism seeks a means of discussing underlying social processes and their causal force but does so through the theoretical construction of the source of this force in social entities that are hypothesized as "real" and irreducible to individual action.

The theory of power and the legitimation of authority, the subject of Stuart Clegg's chapter, has been a theme in sociological theory since Weber. Since Steven Lukes' introduction of the third dimension of power in his seminal 1974 publication, which highlighted a conception of power as product of systematic delusion about interests on the part of those who power was exercised over. However, Lukes' analysis was beset by the problem of objective interests and the assumption that the theorist might know what these are. Clegg's chapter shows how current theorizing on power goes beyond Lukes' own radical theory of the third dimension of power with greater emphasis on transformative processes at work in situations of power. Noteworthy in this regard is consciousness-raising through the conversion of practical consciousness knowledge into discursive consciousness knowledge. Practical consciousness is a tacit knowledge used in everyday life while discursive consciousness is knowledge that is more reflexive, critical, and is potentially transformative. These two forms of knowledge are not entirely separate, but social order – and that is to say the legitimacy of social institutions – often depends on its separation. In other words, people have experiences of power but also have the capacity to understand these in ways that might cast light on their situation in a way that will allow them to challenge power. Alternative discursive consciousness is possible but this will depend on alternative definitions of what had been taken for granted and the capacity to make claims on the basis of such new understandings of the world. Real interests can only be discursively articulated in the generation of new ways of seeing the world. They do not reside in objective truths.

The analysis of society in terms of risk has been at the forefront of social theory since Ulrich Beck's theory of the risk society. Risks are assessments – and thus they are interpretations – of problems in the objective order of the world, and they are the site of new political controversies. The risks may be entirely products of the risk discourse, which itself has the capacity to shape much of contemporary social life and public policy. Tim Luke's chapter explores the important linkages between risk and the environment as contested topics in social and political theory in the more advanced industrial societies. His chapter reflects a certain distance toward social constructionist accounts of risk while at the same time not following a simplistic view of risk as reducible to objectively measurable dangers. Risks are real but real in different ways. The embedded necessities of living with risky technologies have become so routinized by expert managers and economic conditions that few question this inescapable fact of life. Much of government is about the reduction of potential risks in conditions of contingent complexity. Nonetheless, the very same energy-intensive systems of mass consumption, which make a high

standard of living possible, also arguably are responsible for the increasing endangerment of even living at all well amidst today's environmental crises. As the noxious greenhouse gases generated by fossil fuel use have been identified by the scientific community as the most likely cause of global warming, the many important linkages between risk and the environment clearly need to be more fully explored, particularly with regard to the inequalities behind their initial creation as well as their ultimate impact. This chapter explores how risk becomes widespread as both naturalized abnormality within a society as well as routinized irrationality in the economy. The effect of this is to create a new normality, in which co-existing complex systems, with their unintended irrationalizing consequences become normalized and treated as achievements of modernity. The challenge this raises for social and political thinking becomes apparent when these consequences of complex systems include the alteration of the environment itself: this is the new condition of the Anthropocene.

The radical contingency of the social world and the plurality of interpretations are the themes of Peter Wagner's chapter on theories of modernity. The term "modernity" expresses the need for a new language for interpreting the contemporary socio-political condition in light of a situation that cannot be fully explained in terms of postmodernity. A range of new theories of modernity aimed at re-assessing that the older sociological concept of modern society in view of experiences that were increasingly seen in terms of major societal transformation. But modernity, which cannot be theorized today as a universal or unilinear condition, should also not be pluralized to a point that it ceases to refer to anything common. His argument, which is developed around a critique of the varieties of modernity literature, is that the main features of modernity consist of a "limited set of basic problématiques" that all human societies need to address. These are the questions as to what certain knowledge a societal self-understanding is seen to rest upon; how to determine and organize the rules for the life in common; and to how to satisfy the basic material needs for societal reproduction. Modernity is not a universal condition; against what recent approaches might suggest, it is a condition in which certain questions are posed such that the answers to them are not externally given but need to be always open. As with the previous chapter on power, contestation of the validity of existing answers and arrangements is always possible. But here greater emphasis is given to plurality. Thus the plurality of modernity consists of a plurality of possible answers to the problems that all modern societies are faced with.

The legacy of the Enlightenment and modernity is everywhere present. The vision of a social order based on legitimate authority as opposed to violence constituted the basis of the very possibility of society in classical social theory. In this vision, human beings armed with reason, which comes with the advancement of knowledge, could create a political order that makes possible the progress of freedom. To do this they had to conquer both the social world and the natural world. The fact that they were unable to do so fully gave rise to the problem of modernity. As Wagner argues, modernist social and political thought problematized in different ways the tension between the pursuit of freedom and rational mastery, on the one hand, and on the other side the often unintended, collective outcome in the form of major societal institutions. This tension resides in the heart of the very conception of power, as domination and as legitimate authority, as Clegg shows. The fragile condition of modernity and the kinds of power that it creates is in many ways encapsulated as a problem of trust.

Karen Cook and Brian Cook explore the problem of trust in an analysis that distinguishes between social and political trust. Political trust is about the belief in the reliability of the legitimacy of government. Social thrust refers to more practical concerns, which are often discussed in terms of the capacity for social capital to be mobilized; it concerns not only confidence in the institutions and organizations but also trusts in other individuals. The problem of trust becomes

acute in modernity due to the world-wide growth of democracy and increase in human agency and interconnectedness leading to the need for new bonds but ones that cannot be reduced to either force or domination. Complex societies need to find ways to make cooperation possible. The existence of uncertainty and risk is what makes the act of trusting another significant. Trust and risk are inextricably connected. If there is no risk of something going wrong, then there is no real need for trust to be an issue. The act of trusting another party, person, or institution places one at risk. This is the condition of radical contingency that defines the predicament of modernity. Trust is not a psychological state, but it is relational and contingent on the terms of the relation. So trust, like much of the condition of modernity, is not underpinned by an objective reality. Much of the interest in trust is about exploring what factors facilitate cooperation under varying conditions. But, and it is the key point, modernity may not simply give rise to more trust – in so far as this is a general condition – than a desire for trustworthiness. If we want anything, it is likely more trustworthiness: we cannot always trust that our interests will be served by societal norms alone. Thus, trust networks, especially in high-risk contexts in which distrust rather than trust may best characterize the social situation often lead to a more limited application of trustworthiness. Trust is highly fragile and contingent; it is inextricably bound up with risk.

Performativity, like network theory, has emerged as one of the most important theoretical approaches of recent times, with an extraordinarily varied take-up. The starting point for many contemporary discussions of performativity in social and political thought is J. L. Austin's *How to Do Things with Words* (1962). The key idea in this work that was later taken up by social and political theorists is that language is action upon, rather than a description of, the world. The implication of this is that language is potentially transformative. The idea that words could do things – that communication is a mode of action – was to prove hugely influential. It gave rise to one of the main fault-lines within contemporary theories of performativity: between those treating performativity as a formal property of language, such as Habermas, and those, such as Butler and Alexander, treating it as a social or cultural practice. As Moya Lloyd shows, a division began to emerge in theories of performativity with the ideas of Derrida and Bourdieu, who took up different notions of performativity, marked between those conceptualizing it as a linguistic phenomenon and those defining it as a social practice. The formal pragmatics of Jürgen Habermas, who brought performativity into his theory of communicative action, signalled a further level of complexity in the concept. But the most influential approach is Judith Butler's argument that gender is performative. The controversial account of symbolic action as social performance developed by Jeffrey Alexander *et al.* is yet another illustration of the diversity of appropriations of this notion. For Lloyd, if it is to operate as an effective social and political theory, a theory of performativity has to be capable of explaining both the reproduction and perpetuation of relations of power (gendered, capitalist, racial, and so on) and how those relations can be contested. The nature of performance is that it may be a failure or a success. Performative success is thus reconceptualized by Bourdieu as a function of social power, dependent upon the "symbolic capital" of a particular actor, and performative failure of their lack. This reasoning, Lloyd argues, allows the concept of performativity to be transformed from a purely linguistic phenomenon into one concerned with the social conditions, including gender and class, that impact language use.

Many of these writers attempt to go beyond the traditional concept of society, which is associated, however problematically, with the idea of the people who make up a nation-state. But instead of withering away, the nation-state has proved to be resilient, both as a social form and as an object of political passion and contestation. The chapters on nationalism and empire in different ways attest to the continued relevance of these geopolitical forms. and much of recent social

and political theory has engaged extensively with the legacy of the modern nation-state. Steven Grosby argues that nationality poses a number of significant problems for social and political theory, and that, in turn, the insights of social and political theory can importantly contribute to clarifying the character of nationality. However, in order to make that contribution, social and political philosophy will have to put aside the antiquated schema of the historical disjunction between *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* – a contrast that still largely dominates theoretical investigations into nationality.

The question of empire is rather more complicated. As Krishan Kumar shows in his chapter, empires have existed throughout much of recorded history but imperialism, as an ideology and practice, is relatively recent. This chapter looks at the interaction of empire and imperialism. It analyzes the concept of empire, distinguishing between land and overseas empires, and examines the relation between empires and nation-states. It traces the rise of imperialism, as a European phenomenon, and its reflection in largely critical accounts of empire, in the works of Hobson, Lenin, and others. Kumar shows the persistence of empire in the twentieth century, despite increasing resistance, and argues that nation-states have lived for much of their time in the shadow of empire. He also considers the condition of empire after the great decolonizations of the second half of the twentieth century, including the fall of the Soviet Union. Is empire now dead? This seems a premature judgment, in the light of the persistence of the "American empire" and the widely held view that the nation-state is in crisis. Empires not only have an after-life in the cultures of colonizers and colonized alike, but may also be instructive for thinking about possible forms beyond the nation-state.

Whatever forms political community might take beyond the nation-state, the imperial form is unlikely to be Alexandrian, that is embracing cosmopolitan cultures covering the entire earth in a single ecumene. Contemporary cosmopolitan theory is largely post-imperial and, too, post-universalistic. David Inglis's chapter on cosmopolitanism discusses the multi-faceted dimensions of this concept in recent social and political thought. Cosmopolitanism refers to a perspective on the world that stresses openness to others. This can be reflected in political, economic, and cultural forms depending on the claims being made. The prevalence of cosmopolitanism in recent times has much to do with globalization and the rise in transnationalization more generally. However, it is not directly a product of globalization and in many ways it expresses a normative critique of globalization, especially a demand that it not be limited to trade and political co-operation. In this respect, cosmopolitanism reflects the themes of pluralization and transformation that mark much of recent theorizing on the social. Cosmopolitanism is a concept that refers both to normative criteria – one's world as a dwelling-pace or the belief in the moral primacy of human unity and love of humankind – and to empirical phenomena that reflect normative principles. The latter is increasingly associated with notions of vernacular cosmopolitanism or rooted cosmopolitanism, grounded in the realities of everyday life, where an ethos of multi-perspectivism has become embedded in peoples' interactions. For this reason cosmopolitanism is often taken to be an analytical approach in recent social science.

The concerns of cosmopolitanism are also reflected in postcolonial theory in terms of going beyond the analytical categories of much of modern social and political thought. As Sergio Costa shows in his chapter, new ways of questioning the dominant forms of knowledge production have emerged from the perspective of what he calls *minorized groups*: migrants, indigenous people, blacks, LGBTQ, and different actors from the Global South. The vocalization and empowerment of these groups, which in many cases constitute the majority of the respective national population, opens up new approaches and theories. While some postcolonial theorists prefer to see a fundamental break with modern social and political theory, Costa explores productive relations between social theory and postcolonialism. In his analysis of the field, postcolonial

theory revitalizes social theory. In fact it is not only possible, but has been doing so for decades, especially in relation to the regime of knowledge production in the social sciences, research on modernity, and cultural theory.

The next four chapters deal with emerging frameworks of analysis relating to issues that go beyond the traditional scope of social and political theory. These concern cognitive theory, neuroscience, and socio-biology, all of which point toward the naturalization of the social. Byron Kaldis addresses developments of the relation between the natural and the social by charting the epistemological and social-theoretic standing of human sociobiology. The general idea of the relationship between nature and society is delineated in a discussion that shows what is involved when social theory is attempted to be derived from natural–scientific discourse. The most celebrated and most vilified such attempt, sociobiology, has, along with evolutionary psychology, advanced theses about the nature of society and the evolutionary origin of ethics. Much of this amounts to a strong naturalism, a scientific reduction of the study of human thought and action and economic behavior, to its biological basis. This has all led to the return in a new guise of determinism and reduction, with the twist that human freedom is now only a matter of enhancing evolution by the most suitable forms of technology. The result is that social theory is forced into a normative critique of claims made in the name of science, which has taken on a counter-normative force based on the alleged capacity of evolutionary biology to explain social life in all its facets.

Piet Strydom's chapter opens with an argument in favor of a weak naturalistic rather than either a strong naturalistic or a strong idealistic conception of the cognitive approach. Against this background, it seeks to clarify this approach by identifying the principal mechanisms operative in the process of constitution and organization of society: generative (new ideas and claims-making), relational (association), transformative (collective learning), and context-setting mechanisms (state, economy, civil society). The mechanisms are illustrated by way of a cognitive reconstruction of social and political theory as it reflexively ran parallel to the unfolding of modernity through its three major historical phases: from the early modern, through the modern, up to the currently emerging transnational constellation. Central to the account is the dialectical conception of the cognitive which is immanent in social life and the metacognitive reflexively available in context-transcendent cultural models. It allows a critical analysis of the way in which context-transcendent normative guidelines − e.g., the idea of a democratically self-governing society − can and do play a positive role in structuring immanent social orientations and relations, but are often deformed or even blocked by the interference of context-setting political, economic and cultural factors which themselves have a significant cognitive component. Deformations and/or blockages of this kind blighted modern society by way of such pathologies as authoritarianism, ideologization, marketization, instrumentalism, repression, and obfuscation, and some of these are in danger of being reproduced in a new form and on a new scale under transnational conditions. A vital aspect of the constitution and organization of the emerging world society in an adequate form is to be found in subject formation, the formation of a subject appropriate to the emerging constellation. On the basis of this analysis the task of a cognitively inspired contemporary social and political theory is restated. This task, Strydom argues, is the practically meaningful one of studying and critically analyzing the constitution and organization of the emerging world society so as to contribute to the mitigation, if not avoidance, of unjustifiable interferences in the process and their undesirable pathogenic and pathological consequences.

Strydom's rejection of both strong naturalism − for instance, some notion of biological determinism − and of social constructionism with its relativistic implications, is also reflected in the chapter by John Gunnell on neuroscience. A difficulty with cognitive theory is the diversity

of approaches and what often enters into social science is in fact philosophical speculation by neuroscientists. Nevertheless it is now widely recognized that it has important implications for social and political theory. Gunnell makes the point that one impetus behind the contemporary interest in cognitive science has been declining interest in rational choice theory. One of the implications of cognitive neuroscience is a new significance for the role of the emotions and social interaction. This relates very much to the relational conception of the social discussed earlier but in a much more extensive manner. The key concept is connectionism, which, as Gunnell explains, seeks to explain a wide range of human capacities by reference to neural processes. Neuroscience attests to "social areas" in the brain, but which cannot be reduced to determinism: it is rather a weaker form of naturalism and cannot also be explained in the universalistic terms of a Noam Chomsky. However, it does show that consciousness is not something entirely subjective, and thus purely relativistic conclusions are not valid. Emotions have a neural basis. Thinking and feeling is multilayered, with biology mixed into the social. In this context, he refers to William Connolly's (2002) notion of a "deep pluralism" as an outcome of neuroscience. The resulting neuropolitics draws attention to how political choice and action may be in part shaped by neural processes. In many respects, these approaches continue the rejection of the idea that social and political phenomenon can be adequately treated by reference to assumed "internal" or mental facts. As Gunnell quotes Wittgenstein, "the psychological verbs to see, to believe, to think, to wish, do not signify phenomena" (1967: 471).

Daniel Chernilo takes up the recurrent problem of what "human" means, a question given a new impetus by the fact of Artificial Intelligence. The recent social theoretical discussion of this problem can be traced to the philosophical anthropology of Max Scheler and Ernst Cassirer, and was taken up by a series of other German thinkers. This turned into a discussion of the human condition, which in turn produced answers having to do with choice and the existential condition of having to choose, and the fact that people are oriented to Being – to something that lies beyond the routines of life. The term Humanism came to signify the former, and was derided for its anthropocentrism, which came to be blamed, as a characteristically "Enlightenment" concept, for the atrocities of the century, which increasingly became associated with "modernity" and "progress." The critique of these ideas led to the post-humanist turn of the nineties, which attacked not only older doctrines of the human but such human-centered intellectual movements as feminism and post-colonialism. The most developed form of this critique came from Bruno Latour, who had already spent years in his network theory treating things and organisms as *actants*, quasi-agents, and treating humans in the same way. In his later work he wanted to give animals and objects rights and political status in a post-human political order which would reflect the concept of planetary life, in which scientists would "represent" the non-human. At the same time, there has been a movement to ground notions of human well-being in science, but to seek a general concept of human capacity and potential.

The final chapter in Part 2 deals with relatively new perspectives in contemporary social and political theory beyond the horizons of the established approaches in western thought. Guanjun Wu's chapter is addressed to new Chinese political thought since the break with the Maoist period (1949–78). The post-Maoist Chinese period saw the rise of intellectuals as a leading group in Chinese society. Whereas it was the Party leadership that had previously set the tone of cultural and intellectual life, academics and independent scholars have increasingly become involved in Chinese social and political thought as this develops in the public sphere. His topic concerns the rise of public intellectuals in contemporary China and the "May Fourth Enlightenment" which emerged in the 1980s but which consolidated in the wake of the Tiananmen student protest after 1989 and gained further momentum after 1992 the easing of censorship on intellectuals. This movement invoked an earlier opposition to Confucianism, going back to the

early twentieth century, but today it is defined against Maoism and one of the new ideas that has emerged is a new thinking around Confucianism. However, as Wu argues, these ideas were largely confined to cultural critiques as opposed to political ones. As an example of more political orientations within recent Chinese thought, Wu refers to the movement known as "critical intellectuals," including the prominent thinker Wang Hui, as this took shape in the late 1990s. A key idea is that it is not modernity but China's premodern past that may offer a resource for new ideas today. His work can be seen as an attempt to find a new intellectual framework for social and political critique on China's path to modernity and its place and role in the global context. Such attempts to reconstruct Chinese modernity are frequently linked with the revival of classical Confucian thought and serve as a reminder to alternative conceptions of modernity beyond the western experience.

Emerging problems

The chapters collected in Part 3 of this volume concern emerging problems and are closely related to the new frameworks of analysis discussed in Part 2. These reflect a sense of crisis, in particular the fragmentation of the social and the political order of modernity. Much of this is related to the consequences of globalization, which has forced a re-assessment of many of the presuppositions of modern social and political thought. But we also find in these chapters the exploration of alternative scenarios to the discourse of the end of modernity that pervaded some of the earlier theories of postmodernity. As discussed also above, the chapters collected here cannot be so easily located within the context of the cultural turn in the social and human sciences. Many of the topics can be seen as revitalized classical themes addressing major social and political transformations relating to economy and state. These are topics that have been relatively marginalized by the cultural turn, which saw a general turning away from the analysis of large-scale processes such as capitalism and the state as well as a relative neglect of the material world. These chapters can be summed up under three broad thematic fields: the crisis of sovereignty and new conceptions of the political, the consequences of transnationalism for political community and social justice, and changes in the constitution of subjectivity and social values.

Sheila Nair discusses how sovereignty, sovereign power, *homo sacer*, and the ban coincide in the making of "the state of exception" and "the camp" as developed in Giorgio Agamben's work. She explores how Agamben exposes the ways in which sovereign power depends upon and is sustained by the exception, and how bare life – suspended in a zone of indistinction – is exemplified in the modern camp. While disrupting established notions of sovereignty and security in international relations, and drawing attention to their exclusions, these characterizations of the exception are nevertheless seen by some critics as limiting. The chapter then turns to a discussion of the postcolonial exception, governmentality, the coronavirus pandemic, and sovereignty in the context of critics' claims that Agamben does not properly account for imperial and colonial narratives in his arguments. Her conclusion is that a postcolonial counter-narrative should matter in the framing of arguments round the exception.

The next chapter offers a case for the continued relevance of the state despite some of the claims made about its demise as a result of globalization. For Georg Sørensen, there are three major modalities of state in the present international system; they are those of the postmodern states in the OECD world, the weak postcolonial states mostly in Sub-Saharan Africa, and the modernizing states, mainly in Asia, Latin America, and parts of Eastern Europe. They display new patterns of violence and conflict: large-scale violent conflict is now within weak states while advanced states face an increasing number of transnational bads. In the political sphere, democracy is challenged; modernizing states are not on any secure path toward stable democracy, weak

states lack the preconditions for democratic rule, and advanced states face a number of new challenges emerging from cross-border integration. In the economic realm, global capitalism is not in existential crisis, but a stable liberal economic order with benefits for all is not in the cards. As regards common values and identities, there is no strong trend toward the emergence of common liberal values on a global scale. Processes of modernization and processes of decay both help produce more nationalistic or fragmented and divisive responses in terms of identity. Finally, the institution of sovereignty remains in place, but it is being transformed in ways that exposes it to significant challenges. The conclusion is that the sovereign state is alive and well. By no means has it been obliterated by the forces of globalization. But it has been transformed in significant ways and it will continue to change. These changes may not always be for the better. The major types of states discussed here all face considerable challenges to which they have so far not found very good answers. Many observers are too optimistic when they consider processes of political and societal change; the outcome of such processes may not always be development; it might well be decay.

The following chapter by Paul Blokker addresses a key feature of the modern polity: the constitution. The abstract idea of a written constitution as the foundational basis of modern democratic societies is a largely undisputed element in much of social, political, and legal theory. At the same time, the nature, form, and distinct functions of the constitution in, and increasingly also beyond, modern democratic societies is an ever more frequent object of dispute. Notwithstanding the identification of a global trend, of the last half-century or so, of convergence to an "amplified" form of modern constitutionalism around a form of "new constitutionalism," more recent trends of pluralization seem to provoke profound changes in the nature of modern constitutionalism and its theorization. While the trends in some ways seem to amplify legalistic and monistic tendencies, they also indicate strong corrosive and diversifying implications for the modern constitutional template. The trends discussed are the fragmentation of sovereignty, cultural pluralism, and substantive or interpretative pluralism. Blokker's argument is that the challenges of complex pluralism undermine many of the constraining features of modern constitutionalism. In some cases forms of autonomy and democratic participation are strengthened, in many others, constitutional pluralism tends to further compromise the democratic dimension of constitutionalism. In a normative sense, the chapter critically discusses a number of theoretical reflections on these challenges, and in particular emphasizes those approaches that search for the potential reinforcement of participatory, open-ended, and inclusive dimensions in the current constitutional predicament as well as a reactions to transnational constitutionalism.

The EU is clearly a major example of state formation and of constitutional experimentation. As William Outhwaite demonstrates, Europe has been transformed from an order of largely independent nation-states to an integrated order with some capacity to rule in the name of all. The European integration process has resulted in a set of institutions premised on a complex mixture of supranational, transnational, and intergovernmental principles. It is difficult to understand how this could have happened voluntarily when the Union lacks important enabling conditions, such as a collective European identity based on a common language and culture. The pragmatist approach depicts cooperation as a response to problematic situations, and institution formation as a response to the indirect consequences of such, which increasingly catches on and has polity consequences. The effect is more legal regulation, which triggers claims to democracy. The integration process is to a large degree driven by contestation and opposition. The chapter also addresses "the nature of the beast." What could the EU possibly amount to? A *regional subset* of an emerging larger cosmopolitan order or a specifically European route? It is however difficult to draw the conclusion that the EU is itself cosmopolitanism, though it could be seen as creating certain conditions for the emergence of cosmopolitics.

The next two chapters are more explicitly addressed to the consequences of transnationalism. Saskia Sassen's chapter is concerned with the micro shifts that are amounting to a new immigration reality. Central to this is are changes in the position of the state in a world that is not only increasingly interdependent but also one where the national is itself being partly denationalized. States create distinction between nationals and non-nationals, members and non-members. But the de-nationalization of the state means the erasure of this distinction of inside and outside, by developments such as the institutionalizing of the human rights regime and claims for rights made by unauthorized immigrants in all major immigration countries. According to Sassen, the significance of immigration goes beyond immigration policy narrowly defined. The theme of power returns in this chapter which demonstrates that the powerless can challenge the state. Even the most powerful states can reach limits in getting their way in the world and as a consequence they have to negotiate with the powerless who become empowered as a result. The reality she describes does not quite fit into either postnationalism or transnationalism. It assumes neither the end of the state nor does it extend beyond the territory of the state. For this reason the notion of the de-nationalization of the state may be more relevant as a characterization of the phenomena she discusses.

The theme of contestation is the focus of the next chapter but the concern here is rather with transnationalist activism and the emergence of a global justice movement. Donatella della Porta and Raffaele Marchetti examine the conceptual innovations for social and political theory that have been inspired by transnational activism. These constitute significant bridges between empirical and normative research on civil society and social movement and concerns mobilization around collective claims that pertain to global issues. They argue the global justice movement has redefined major political issues around global justice. Unlike the new social movements of the 1980s, which were largely products of societal change in western countries, the global justice movement incorporates elements of diverse movements — gender, class, race, religion, environment — and is not therefore a single issue movement. Under the heading of global justice diverse elements of various cultures are combined in a movement based on transnational activism. Della Porta and Marchetti see the global justice movement as an expression of subaltern and rooted cosmopolitanism and characterize it around the following principles: it is placed based as opposed to be located in global space, it affirms autonomy, diversity, and solidarity. The following chapter by Thomas Faist takes up the theme of transnationalism in a discussion of social question. In his view, the point of departure for a discussion of the new transnational social question is a growing awareness of cross-border interdependence along crucial issues of social inequalities and the implications not only for so-called developing countries. The contention around inequalities takes recourse to international conventions declaring social rights, moral convictions, and actually existing social standards. To survey the theories able to capture the new transnational question yields insights into the framing of social inequalities. Current theory raises the question whether concepts such as social rights and citizenship are adequate to describe contemporary social inequalities. While such concepts arose in the context of the geopolitical framework of modernity, we do not have adequate terms to capture the current situation. It would appear that cosmopolitan currents are largely oppositional and in support of transnational social rights.

A theme running throughout all these chapters concerns changes in the constitution of subjectivity and the generation of new social values. This is present in the cosmopolitan current in the previous chapters on social justice and the transformation of political community. It is particularly present in the following chapters. Iain Wilkinson offers an overview of "social suffering" both as a term of analysis and as an inter-disciplinary field of study that has been widely adopted in social science to refer to lived experiences of pain, damage, injury, deprivation, and

loss. He offers some explanations for the gathering of interest around the topic of "social suffering" in contemporary social science and outlines the contribution of figures such as Pierre Bourdieu and Arthur Kleinman to this development. The critical praxis of "social suffering" is explored in terms of its contribution to contemporary discourse on human rights and the politics of humanitarianism. In this setting, "social suffering" is identified as a critical concern wedded to a new politics of sensibility. This revisits some longstanding ethical debates over the virtue "fellow-feeling" and its bearing upon the establishment of social ties and social commitments to care for others. These are set within a new analytical frame that aims to pay heed to intensifying forces of "mediatization," "commercialization," and "rationalization" within late modern society.

The experience of suffering is mirrored in another major theme in recent social and political theory: temporalities, especially those that are connected with trauma and collective memory. Both memory and suffering and other related concepts are not static concepts that can be easily defined. Their meaning is rather defined in its historical and social contextualization. Daniel Levy explores the significance of memory for political, social, and cultural theory. Rather than viewing memory as epiphenomenal, he argues that memory is an integral and constitutive part of theory. The contemporary preoccupation with memory is reflected in terms of a commemorative boom and the concomitant emergence of memory studies. Memory is omnipresent as it is situated in social frameworks (i.e., family, nation, and personal experiences anchored by symbolic markings), manifested in cultural practices (i.e., externalized into archival repositories such as memorials and museums), and shaped by political circumstances (i.e., wars, catastrophes, and debates generating lasting meanings of these events). Social frameworks and historical circumstances change over time and with them the aforementioned alignments of temporalities (e.g., the discourse of progress in modernity). Studying (and theorizing) memory allows us to shift our focus from time to temporalities, and thus to understand what categories people, groups, and cultures employ to make sense of their lives, their social, cultural, and political attachments and the ideals that are validated – in short, the political, cultural and social theories which command normative attention. Levy's chapter connects memory with the theme of cosmopolitanism reflected in other chapters in this volume. He makes the point that particular orientations toward the past need now to be re-evaluated against the background of "global memory scapes." The upshot of this is not the decline of national collective memories but the pluralization of memory combined with the cosmopolitan impulse toward the critical engagement with past injustices.

Imagining alternatives to capitalism has always presented problems for theorists on the Left. Marx was famously vague. The dictatorship of the proletariat was supposed to follow the proletarian revolution and then abolish itself. But alternatives to state direction of the economy have not emerged. But the normal solutions to the problem have been utilitarian, based on the provision and distribution of needed goods, and on the replacement of competition and profit by planning. Frank Adloff discusses the idea that an anti-utilitarian alternative, rooted in different norms, would potentially provide another way of organizing economic life. The idea has been pursued by the MAUSS group based loosely on the model of gift exchange described in Marcel Mauss's famous essay on the gift and found in a variety of cultures. The modernized form of this idea stresses the role of reciprocity, recognition, care, and independence as an alternatives to the ethics of utilitarianism, as well as to the alternatives of individualism and holism.

Albena Azmanova provides an overview of developments in post-capitalist thinking in the period following the cultural turn in critical theory, to its focus on redistribution, recognition, and participation. The issues, she suggests, are bound up with one another, because exclusion is a major source of inequality. The solutions proposed include participatory socialism, through such means as the creation of a capital endowment for citizens through increased taxation, worker

representation on company boards, and similar reforms. These proposals reflect the sense that the time is not ripe for the elimination of private ownership of capital, and in addition the recognition that present problems, such as environmental collapse, would not be eliminated with the elimination of private capital. What many of these analyses miss, however, are the structural features of neo-liberal capitalism that produce suffering in the form of alienation, the intrusion into the sphere of intimacy, and the loss of the ability to find meaning in life: what she calls the demise of democratic subjectivities. Analyses that stress these issues are more pessimistic about the prospects of reform. She suggests that the abolition of profit itself through the levers of capitalism, based on the concerted actions of all the social forces that have been negatively affected by the current state of capitalism, which she notes would include strange bedfellows, might allow for the de facto transcending of capitalism without either a crisis or a revolution.

The present bedfellows of forces of change would need to include or deal with the phenomenon discussed today under the heading of populism. Filipe Carreira da Silva and Mónica Brito Vieira provide an analysis of this movement and the wave of discontent it represents. They distinguish the original American nineteenth century form of populism from the populisms of Latin America in the middle of the twentieth-century and present populisms, especially in Europe. Populism as a concept and practice is closely related to democracy, but the concepts are distinct. Populism arises as a reaction of "democratic resentment" of failures of democracy in which "the people" are treated as inferior, are excluded, and in which suffering is blamed on elites, leading to a call to a return to the original sense of democracy as the rule of the people. They describe a literature on populism that seeks its "essence," and one that focuses on particulars. They conclude that the relation between populism and democracy is one in which populism is a permanent possibility within democracy. The idea of rule by the people – a literal impossibility – paradoxically implies both self-rule and resentment over being ruled. The actualization of popular resentment in a movement can have the role of restoring democracy when it is threatened by undemocratic elites.

Marxism has vacillated between the material and the spiritual, between the idea that there are material facts that drive history and the minds and hearts follow, and a concern with the minds and hearts themselves, in the form of ideology, alienation, and false consciousness. Recent writing on the Left in the guise of a new "materialism," summarized in the chapter by Geoff Pfeiffer, has moved away from human agency as a central concept and also away from the base-superstructure model. The various approaches associated with this diffuse movement have little in common, but they characteristically have redefined the notion of "material" to include that which is external to the individual and in which the individual is embedded, such as social institutions, and to treat these external things as real, or even as having their own kind of agency. Subjectivity, rather than being sovereign, is itself produced by the arrangements the subject is embedded in, and because these arrangements are open to change, changing them provides a path to radical change that does not depend on persuasion or overcoming false consciousness by overt ideological change. Indeed, objects, from some of these perspectives, are themselves agential, and their changes produce new subjectivities.

As we saw in relation to Arendt, as well as in such thinkers as Gauchet, there is a religious or transcendental aspect to political authority. The field or category of thought that addresses this aspect directly is "political theology." Nominally it is concerned with asking the question "What about God?" in relation to politics, and treats not only particular theological views of the earthly order of authority but also the denial of God as "theology" that has a foundational role in relation to our understanding of political order, especially in relation to ideas of legitimate authority. As Carl Schmitt observed, political ideas, such as sovereignty, are thinly disguised theological ones. In his chapter, Saul Newman provides an introduction to this tradition and

shows its vitality and potential in relation to issues about climate change and social justice, each of which also appeals to transcendental justifications.

The chapter on Arendt introduced violence as a crucial topic in relation not only to the state but more broadly in social life. The term, however, apparently simple in the paradigm cases, is full of ambiguities when it is extended. Larry Ray provides an account of these various extended uses, from Bourdieu's notions of symbolic violence and structural violence, to Rene Girard's revision of Freud's account of primal violence as the basis of human society, which also makes violence and the response to violence formative for society. The idea of sacred violence, and the association of violence with the sacred, has been a recurrent concern of twentieth-century social thought, from Benjamin to Fanon. Ray shows that violence is not exceptional, but is ubiquitous in social life and, paradoxically, produced and depended on by the very practices designed to contain it. It is thus not surprising that it is a rich source of, and impetus for, mythologization, ritual, and the sacralizing impulse.

One of the central practices designed to contain violence is the concept of universal human rights. It should be no surprise that it is entangled with the issues of political theology. Mehdi Zakerian discusses one of the chief ideological responses to the concept of universal human rights, from Islamists. In a historical sense, human rights are an expression of Western, Christian culture, and the imposition of its standards as universal is a form of imperialist domination. But the standard expression of the concept in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights agreed at the founding of the United Nations was signed by non-Western countries, including countries with large or predominant Islamic populations. These rights became, over time, entrenched in many constitutions and international agreements. Yet in the early 1990s some countries, including one of the original signatories, Iran, began to object to the claim of universality, on the grounds that it failed to deal correctly with the concept of religion and was being used as a weapon by the strong, the West, against the weak. They called not for the rejection of the concept of rights, but for the rules to evolve by taking into account and showing respect for the divergent cultural values, legal systems, and standards of the countries of the global south. Some of these theorists argue that rights themselves should be understood as inherently culturally relative, and that respecting this is a necessary condition of the granting of human dignity, which is itself the basis of rights. This way of thinking has also been recognized in European courts, which acknowledge that in practice the application of rights concepts must accept that its terms must mean different things in different contexts.

Alasdair Cochrane and Krithika Srinivasan explain the new interest in animals in social and political theory and the roots of their neglect in the older tradition of distinguishing humans from animals in terms of some special rational essence. In part this derives from animal ethics concerns which are already apparent in Jeremy Bentham, who extended his utilitarian calculus to include the suffering of animals. But more recent concerns with animal ethics have extended this discussion into social and political theory, in terms of notions of rights, inequality, and the kinds of relations of empathy and care we share with animals. This has paralleled work done under the influence of Bruno Latour on animals and objects as parts of networks with agent-like properties. The two streams of thought converge to challenge, in ways that have yet to be developed, traditional human-oriented social and political theory.

Conclusion

Liberalism and the socialist Left, as well as European Conservatism and Fascism, presented simplified but compelling images of society which were integrated into the subjectivity and self-reflective activity of the people whose activity created their politics and society. The modern

welfare state struck a balance between the claims produced under these images, to justice, free-dom, and stability. This balance is now becoming undone. In response, contemporary social, politi-cal, and cultural theory is not so much a continuation of this project as the continuation of the reflective activity of the people who experience modern society. As with past social theory, this reflection is aided and stimulated by social movements and counter-movements. But for the most part it is not concerned with inventing new simplifications or claiming external authority – from God, Science, or Reason itself – for new simplifications. Instead, it is focused on the problem of understanding what is and what is not comprehensible in terms of these past images.

Critics on the Left sometimes complain nostalgically about the loss of utopia in modern social theory, and the complaint is well-founded. The thinkers and problems discussed in this volume, and the new approaches that have been made to these problems, are for the most part dealing with obdurate facts that the old utopian self-images of society no longer can be claimed to fit. Globalization, cosmopolitanism, the problems of statelessness, border existences between cultures and identities, suffering beyond the reach of the bureaucratic practices of the welfare state, all anomalous from the point of view of traditional images of societies as contracts, as inclusive hierarchic orders, as caring bureaucracies, and so forth. Even the most ingrained legal and political ideas, such as modern constitutionalism, are problematic in the face of these new facts and the forms they have produced.

Understanding these phenomena needs new approaches: to the memories that constitute new identities, to the generation of new values such as global justice in these new or previously ignored situations, to the networks, new transnational formations and what connects them, to the extension of such things as hospitality and trust, to the mediatized environments in which subjectivities arise and are sustained, and so forth. At the same time, social and political theory cannot rely on the older kinds of philosophical anthropologies, invented images of humanity, that traditional liberalism and collectivism created. The image of humanity is itself challenged by biology and neuroscience, as well as by the de-stabilizing approach to subjectivity found in Lacan and in theories of the performative.

Finally, contemporary social and political thought has come to recognize that modernity itself is not one thing, produced in one process. The modernities being produced in China, the alternative forms generated in Latin America, and the weak-state chaos of much of the post-Colonial "developing world" remind us that the western welfare state is itself increasingly oper-ating by making "exceptions" to the practices of governance that originally defined it. Today the "normal" of the welfare state itself is not normal. The challenge of contemporary social and political thought is to understand what has changed, and to address the question of whether the modern inheritance of democratic forms of deliberation and decision can be extended to deal with these changes.

References

Althusser, L. and E. Balibar (1970) *Reading Capital*, trans. Ben Brewster, London: NLB.

Austin, J. (1962) *How to Do Things with Words*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bernal, J. D. (1939) *The Social Function of Science*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Bernal, M. (2010 [1982]) *All that Solid Melts into Air: The Experience of Modernity*. London: Verso.

Bluntschli, J. C. (2002 [1869]) "What Is a Political Party?", in S. E. Scarrow (ed.) *Perspectives on Political Par-ties: Classic Readings*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 75–81.

Castoriadis, C. (1998) *The Imaginary Institution of Society*, trans. Kathleen Blamey, Cambridge: MIT Press.

Connolly, W. (2002) *Neuropolitics*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Delanty, G. (2009) *The Cosmopolitan Imagination: The Renewal of Critical Social Theory*, Cambridge: Cam-bridge University Press.

Dicey, A.V. (1962 [1914]) *Law and Public Opinion in England during the Nineteenth Century 2nd edn.*, London: Macmillan & Company.

Forrester, K. (2019) *In the Shadow of Justice: Political Liberalism and the Remaking of Political Philosophy*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Foster, M. B. (1968 [1935]) *The Political Philosophies of Plato and Hegel*, Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Foucault, M. (1977) *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison,* trans. Alan Sheridan, New York: Pantheon Books.

Foucault, M. (1991 [1978]) "Governmentality", trans. Rosi Braidotti and revised by Colin Gordon, in G. Burchell, C. Gordon and P. Miller (eds.) *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 87–104.

Geertz, C. (1973) *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays*, New York: Basic Books.

Gilbert, M. (1989) *On Social Facts*, London: Routledge.

Gilbert, M. (1990) "Walking Together: A Paradigmatic Social Phenomenon", *Midwest Studies in Philosophy*, *VI*, 1–14.

Gilbert, M. (1996) *Living Together: Rationality, Sociality, and Obligation*, Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Habermas, J. (1984–87 [1981]) *The Theory of Communicative Action*, trans. Thomas McCarthy, vols *1* & *2*, Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

Habermas, J. (1992 [1962]) *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, Cambridge: Polity.

Joas, H. and W. Knöbl. (2009) *Social Theory: Twenty Introductory Lectures*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Judt, T. (1992) *Past Imperfect: French Intellectuals 1944–1956*, Berkeley: University of California Press.

Laclau, E. (1977) *Politics and Ideology in Marxist Theory: Capitalism, Fascism, Populism*, London: NLB.

Laclau, E. and C. Mouffe. (1985) *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics*, trans. Winston Moore and Paul Cammack, London: Verso.

Mannheim, K. (1940) *Man and Society in an Age of Reconstruction: Studies in Modern Social Structure*, New York: Harcourt, Brace & World.

Marshall, T.H. (1977 [1964]) *Class, Citizenship, and Social Development: Essays*, Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

Mouffe, C. (1999) *The Challenge of Carl Schmitt*, London: Verso.

Nozick, R. (1974) *Anarchy, State, and Utopia*, New York: Basic Books.

Poulantzas, N. (1987 [1975]) *Political Power and Social Classes*, trans. Timothy O'Hagan, London: Verso.

Poulantzas, N. (2001 [1978]) *State, Power, Socialism*, London: Verso.

Rawls, J. (1971) *A Theory of Justice*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Rawls, J. (1993) *Political Liberalism: The John Dewey Essays in Philosophy*, New York: Columbia University Press.

Sabine, G. (1961) *A History of Political Theory*, New York: Holt, Rhinehart & Winston.

Schmitt, C. (1988 [1923]) *The Crisis of Parliamentary Democracy*, trans. Ellen Kennedy, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Schumpeter, J. (1950 [1942]) *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*, New York: Harper & Row.

Searle, J. (1995) *The Construction of Social Reality*, New York: Free Press.

Searle, J. (2010) *Making the Social World: The Structure of Human Civilization*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Suppe, F. (ed.). (1977 [1974]) "The Search for Philosophic Understanding of Scientific Theories", in *The Structure of Scientific Theories*, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 3–241.

Turner, S. (2010) *Explaining the Normative*, Cambridge: Polity Press.

Webb, S. (1942) *The Truth about Soviet Russia. With an Essay on the Webbs by Bernard Shaw*, New York: Longmans, Green.

Webb, S. and B. Webb. (1936) *Soviet Communism: A New Civilization?* New York: C. Scribner's Sons.

Žižek, S. (1989) *The Sublime Object of Ideology*, London: Verso.

Zolo, D. (1997) *Cosmopolis: Prospects for World Government*, Cambridge: Polity Press.

Part I

Living traditions

Foucault and the promise of power without dogma

Gary Wickham and B. B. Bieganski

Foucault's work on power, governance, and society holds out the promise of power without dogma. To help the reader understand the allure of such a promise, we will begin with a sketch of Foucault's reception in the Anglophone academy (those wanting a sketch of Foucault as especially a French thinker, operating in a French and broader European context, would do well to consult Tribe 2009), especially in the twenty-first century, decades after Foucault's death. The sketch, then, is from the perspective of someone who first encountered Foucault in the late 1970s and for the others, much later, who have only ever dealt with him in translation, who are still fans, but now have serious doubts about many aspects of his legacy.

Like many other Anglophone academics who took up Foucault, I (Wickham) first came across him as a mysterious figure lurking on the fringe of what then seemed, for some reason, a vital debate.[1] This debate sought to find a way to advance Marxist thinking in light of the obvious fact (obvious to many, but not all) that the Marxism of Marx was not particularly relevant to people living in advanced Western democracies like Britain, the United States, Canada, and, in my case, Australia. I was, this is to say, spending a lot of time wondering whether thinkers like Althusser on the one hand and the British Cultural Marxists on the other (people like Raymond Williams and Stuart Hall, themselves working closely with translations of the work of Antonio Gramsci) offered a genuine alternative to the dogmatic Marxism that I, along with many others, had never been keen to take up.

The name 'Foucault' was first spoken to me in dark, conspiratorial tones, as if he were a threat to the then-alluring project of combining Althusser's ideology-centred thinking and the British 'culture-and-hegemony' thinking. Foucault, along with Weber, Popper, Berlin, and many others (the list was a tiresomely long one), had to be rejected, or so I was told. My mind was soon to change on that score. The exciting work of Barry Hindess and Paul Hirst (see esp. Hindess and Hirst 1975; Hindess 1977), who had worked through the Althusser and British Cultural Marxist possibilities more thoroughly than anyone else I had then read about (or have read about since), indirectly opened up the idea that Foucault was not only *not* a threat to the best-alternative project I shared with hundreds of others but was the key to that project's success.

At last, here was a thinker who could treat power seriously yet undogmatically, someone who could relate power to society without making it read like the script of a prison movie. I was hooked. I tried my best to understand (or to sound like I understood) all the methodological

innovations that came with the Foucault package – 'archaeology', 'genealogy', 'discourse', 'episteme', and so on. My excitement reached its peak when, using these tools, Foucault appeared to have succeeded in crafting an entirely new approach to the study of government, under a term of his own invention, 'governmentality'. But, as so often happens in life, the peak of excitement turned out to be the moment when doubts emerged. These doubts became stronger, eventually leading me to think that Foucault's works from this period too often pronounce and too rarely argue from the historical evidence.

We will return to this point in the conclusion. We wish to spend most of this chapter in a positive voice (remember, we are still fans), trying to capture what was and still is so attractive about Foucault's work on power–governance–society. To put this in another way, while we are nowadays often irritated by the vast fields of governmentality investigations being grown around the world, many of which give the impression that projects of governing one's self or one's tennis club or one's university are equivalent to the government of nation-states, we are nonetheless still attracted to the project Foucault launched, especially by work – whether by promising young scholars or by one or another of the 'old hands' – which uses Foucault's thinking on power in novel and productive ways. An example of such work by a young scholar is Ryan Walter's determination to treat Foucault as a historian of the formation of the modern state, alongside but different from Quentin Skinner (see esp. Walter 2008b). In this quest, Walter is respectful of Foucault but by no means slavish, arguing, for instance, that he and his governmentality followers are weak on 'the constitution of an economic terrain', because they mistakenly focus on 'the general use of liberal understandings of agency' (Walter 2008a: 95).[2] An example of such work by an old hand is Keith Tribe's sympathetic yet incisive reading of two of the books in the series of Foucault's lectures at the Collège de France (Tribe 2009), a piece in which Tribe provides some wonderful detail about what Foucault was reading in the 1970s and, more importantly, what he was not reading. Some have attempted to use Foucault in ways that make his work relevant to contemporary social problems, such as Deborah Cook, who sees Foucault (and the Frankfurt School theorists) as a way of combatting institutionalized inequality (Cook 2018), and Judith Butler, who argues that Foucault recognizes the myth of originary, radical freedom but offers a path for forming and governing ourselves from within (Butler 2004). Speaking of these lectures, we are also impressed by the unflagging energy of Foucault's scholars in bringing all of Foucault's lectures at the Collège (right up to those given in 1984, the year in which he died) to the attention of both the Francophone and Anglophone reading publics. The dedication and scholarship involved in finding taped versions of the lectures and in, so diligently, transcribing, editing, and, in the Anglophone case, translating them are highly laudable (details of this project, and many other things Foucault, can be found on the website founded by Clare O'Farrell: Michel-Foucault.com). Many of Foucault's lectures at the Collège de France have appeared in print and translated for Anglophone readers in the past decade or so, finally giving us access to Foucault's analyses on punishment, abnormality, governmentality, and subjectivity as he was developing them.[3] In addition, despite his death, over forty years ago, new primary texts from Foucault are surfacing, including a fourth volume of *The History of Sexuality*, edited by Frederic Gros and translated by Robert Hurley (2021).

Foucault's power-governance-society work as a positive contribution to social and political theory

Three of the four main things about Foucault's power–governance–society body of work that made it (and still make it) so appealing are its marked differences from Marxism[4]; the tools Foucault fashioned to help make it so; and the way in which he made the transition from power

analysis *per se* to a study of governmentality. We will deal with these three strengths first, one at a time. The fourth strength runs through all of these and cannot be separated from them. It is the dramatic and exciting way in which Foucault put so many of his points, not just in his books but especially in his many interviews. Not since Marx, paradoxically, has a major theorist ever written so well that one might want to read the work for the writing alone, even if one had no interest in the ideas.

A feasible alternative to Marxism

Here, for example, Foucault is summarizing his account of power and, in doing so, encapsulating the differences between him and the Marxists:

> Power is not something that is acquired, seized, or shared, something that one holds on to or allows slip away; power is exercised from innumerable points, in the interplay of nonegalitarian and mobile relations …. Power comes from below; that is, there is no binary and all encompassing opposition between ruler and ruled at the root of power relations …. One must suppose rather that the manifold relations of force that take shape and come into play in the machinery of production, in families, limited groups, and institutions, are the basis for wide-ranging effects of cleavage that run through the social body as a whole.
>
> *(Foucault 1998: 94)*

Power is within society, Foucault is telling us, working as a part of its fabric, not imposed upon it from the outside. It can be repressive, but this is not its main face. It is productive more than it is destructive, positive more than it is negative:

> If power were never anything but repressive, if it never did anything but to say no, do you really think one would be brought to obey it? What makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that is doesn't only weigh on us as a force that says no; it also traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse. It needs to be considered as a productive network that runs through the whole social body, much more than as a negative instance whose function is repression.
>
> *(Foucault 2001b: 120)*

Or, in an oft-quoted line from *Discipline and Punish*:

> We must cease once and for all to describe the effects of power in negative terms: it "excludes," it "represses," it "censors," it "abstracts," it "masks," it "conceals." In fact, power produces; it produces reality; it produces domains of objects and rituals of truth. The individual and the knowledge that may be gained of him belong to this production.
>
> *(Foucault 1995: 194)*

Foucault's achievement in so quickly building such an enthralling account of the operation of power in society is all the more remarkable when one remembers the dominant hold that Marxist and neo-Marxist accounts had in the Anglophone academy in the 1970s and even into the 1980s. The key to his success probably lies in the fact that he did not initially present his insights in abstract terms but instead allowed them to emerge from his painstaking histories of various knowledge endeavors, or sciences, particularly psychiatry, psychology, penology, and sexology.

Without bludgeoning his readers with dense, abstract concepts, Foucault allowed them to see mostly power where others would see mostly science. For example:

> Tuke and Pinel opened the asylum to medical knowledge. They did not introduce science, but a personality, whose powers borrowed from science only their disguise, or at most their justification. These powers, by their nature, were of a moral and social order; they took root in the madman's minority status, in the insanity of his person, not of his mind.
>
> *(Foucault 1971: 271–272)*

This is a wonderful feeling for the reader, as anyone who has taught Foucault to undergraduate or graduate students will attest, giving them a sense of discovering power, as if for the first time. And the magic is multiplied by the fact that Foucault insists that he himself did not at first see power where he later came to see it, that he too was initially blinded by the claims of knowledge and science:

> When I think back now, I ask myself what else it was that I was talking about in *Madness and Civilization* and *The Birth of the Clinic*, but power? Yet I'm perfectly aware that I scarcely ever used the word and never had such a field of analyses at my disposal. I can say that this was an incapacity linked undoubtedly with the political situation in which we found ourselves. It is hard to see where, either on the Right or the Left, this problem of power could then have been posed. On the Right it was posed only in terms of constitution, sovereignty, and so on, that is, in juridical terms; on the Marxist side, it was posed only in terms of the state apparatus. The way power was exercised – concretely, and in detail – with its specificity, its techniques and tactics, was something that no one attempted to ascertain…. This task could only begin after 1968, that is to say, on the basis of daily struggles at grass-roots level, among those whose fight was located in the fine meshes of the web of power. This was where the concrete nature of power became visible, along with the prospect that these analyses of power would prove fruitful in accounting for all that had hitherto remained outside the field of political analysis. To put it very simply, psychiatric internment, the mental normalization of individuals, and penal institutions have no doubt a fairly limited importance if one is only looking for their economic significance. On the other hand, they are undoubtedly essential to the general functioning of the wheels of power.
>
> *(Foucault 2001b: 117)*

It might be, of course, that the dazzling prose prevented most readers (including both of us) from noticing that sometimes Foucault was saying things that were in fact not all that far from what the Marxists of the time were saying, as can be glimpsed in the above quote when he uses the phrase 'daily struggles' and when he dismisses 'the Right's' obsession with sovereignty and state, but we will leave that matter for now and move on to the second thing that made (and still makes) this body of Foucault's work so appealing, its use of very particular and seemingly quite exotic tools of analysis.

Foucault's exotic tools for power analysis

There is room only for a brief discussion of archaeology, genealogy, and discourse (see Wickham 2002, which itself owes a debt to Kendall and Wickham 1999, for a more in-depth analysis of these concepts). This means that we are leaving aside things like *dispositif*, event, and a host of others, though we will touch on *episteme* in dealing with discourse. In developing these tools,

Foucault did not, of course, start from scratch, nor did he claim to; the tools may be exotic but they are not totally new. He readily acknowledged the influence on his thinking of a number of others, most especially Canguilhem, the historian of science; Nietzsche, the philosopher/historian; and Blanchot and Bataille, who resist easy classification (Gane 1986).

Archaeology's main task is to describe statements in the archive (Foucault 1972: 131), statements covering the sayable and the visible (as, for example, in the invention and maintenance of the asylum or the prison). Foucault thinks of the archive as 'the general system of the formation and transformation of statements' (Foucault 1972: 130). His main concern in using this tool was developing a 'general' history (Foucault 1972: 164), by which he meant a history that captures a broad range of features of power without being overwhelmingly 'total' or 'essentialist', that is, without having to insist that every historical tidbit be viewed in the terms of the battle between capital and labor or some other such 'grand' battle. In particular, he wanted archaeology to describe: regularities of statements in a non-interpretive manner (content to remain at the level of appearances, eschewing any quest to go 'beyond' this level in search of 'deeper meanings'); statements in a non-anthropological manner, as a means to avoid the habit of seeking meaning in human beings themselves; the relation between one statement and other statements; 'surfaces of emergence' or places within which objects are made objects of discourse; the institutions that acquire authority and provide limits within which discursive objects may act; and the 'forms of specification' in which discursive objects are targeted (for more on the complexities of Foucault's use of archaeology, see esp. Bevis, Cohen, and Kendall 1989; Brown and Cousins 1986).

There has been some dispute within the secondary literature as to whether Foucault's use of genealogy marks a complete break with his use of archaeology, with some claiming that genealogy was the tool Foucault invented to explicitly explore power because he felt that archaeology was not up to the job. In this way it is said that archaeology is a pale academic tool, whereas genealogy, with more blood in its veins, is archaeology plus power, a sort of archaeology on speed. We do not intend to go into the details of that dispute, because for us there is no dispute. When Foucault says, alluringly, 'what else it was that I was talking about in *Madness and Civilization* and *The Birth of the Clinic*, but power?', we take him to mean that he thinks he was doing power analysis all along, he just didn't realize it. As such, genealogy can be understood as a slightly adjusted form of archaeology – adjusted to acknowledge power's importance – not a break from it. The main difference involved is that in using genealogy, Foucault makes more effort in linking his careful histories to the present, but this is not really all that much of a change. In truth, any assiduous reader would all along have been doing this with those analyses marked 'archaeology'. Stressing that genealogy is a route to a 'history of the present' certainly helped Foucault to get across his point that the knowledge endeavors (or sciences) he was investigating, especially psychiatry, had 'disreputable origins and unpalatable functions' (Rose 1984). This is a perfectly sensible way of putting this point, but it is not really saying anything new. After all, which history is not, at least in some sense, a history of the present? Let us just say that genealogy entails a more overt attempt to answer problems about the present than does archaeology and leave it at that.

Discourse is an altogether more difficult tool for Anglophone readers to come to grips with, mainly because Foucault did not use the term in the same way in which it is normally used in English, which is to describe formal speech. However, inasmuch as this widely used English meaning does allow the term to be extended to include formal writing, Foucault's usage should not be entirely foreign to an Anglophone audience. Perhaps herein lies the source of the difficulty – that Anglophone readers respond to Foucault's usage of the term 'discourse' as if it is a simple extension of the English usage, when, we suggest, he meant it to be doing much more work than it is usually asked to do in English.

For Foucault, language is only one component of a discourse. To think of English words like 'institution', 'procedure', and 'practice' might help the novice to come to grips with what Foucault was trying to do when he used this tool, but to gain a stronger command of it, it is necessary to grapple with his proposition that a discourse has no 'inside' and no 'outside'.[5] The first step on the road to doing so is to understand that in Foucault's hands, a discourse is primarily about production. In this way, discourses about sex, for example, produce the very category 'sexuality' and, in doing so, produce particular 'types of person', such as 'homosexual', 'heterosexual', 'deviant', etc. This does not mean, of course, that Foucault is proposing that before the existence of these discourses, none of these things existed. As he makes clear in the first volume of his *The History of Sexuality* project (1998), discourses on 'sexuality' emerged in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, not out of thin air but as more or less dramatic refinements of certain kinship ties, certain Christian 'sins of the flesh', certain ancient but long-lasting techniques of 'self-mastery', etc. Foucault is not suggesting, this is to say, that sex 'itself' exists in a 'pure' non-discursive place and time. While we can reasonably think of the 'raw materials' of Foucault's discourses – in this case, bodies, sex, death, etc. – as non-discursive, we cannot gain access to this realm without discourse. The relation of the discursive to the non-discursive is therefore always fraught and complex.

By insisting that discourses have 'no inside', Foucault is insisting that there is no hidden mechanism or 'core' that makes discourses work – nothing we should be digging for beyond or behind the use of words and symbols that make their use possible. All we need for discourse analysis, by Foucault's way of thinking, is what is right there in front of us.[6] If we remember that when Foucault was invited to name his Chair at the Collège de France, he chose 'Professor of the History of Systems of Thought'; it should help us understand discourses in terms of visible 'systems of thought'. This will help, for it makes clear that 'thought' is not a special domain, not the product of a higher order of existence called 'thinking', it is simply the name given to the 'surfaces of appearance' involved in the operation of various institutions, procedures, apparatuses, etc., all of them quite public and visible.

By saying that discourses have no 'outside', Foucault is, in an important sense, simply expanding his argument that discourses have no 'inside'. If we accept that Foucault is right that discursive surfaces are all that we have to work with and is right that we need no more than this, then we are accepting that there is nothing 'outside' them, nothing that somehow guarantees their existence and operation. This is to say, we need not trouble ourselves by trying to anchor discourses in 'the world', or in some other such supposedly fixed point of reference.

Finally, the best way to understand Foucault's notion of *episteme* is to think of an *episteme* as a large, loose collection of discourses built up over time and space. Foucault writes

> … I would define the *episteme* retrospectively as the strategic apparatus which permits of separating out from among all the statements which are possible those that will be acceptable within, I won't say a scientific theory, but a field of scientificity, and which it is possible to say are true or false. The *episteme* is the 'apparatus' which makes possible the separation, not of the true from the false, but of what may from what may not be characterised as scientific.
>
> *(Foucault 1980: 197)*

Epistemes are not in any way determinate of discourses; rather, the term is used by Foucault to allow his readers to occasionally consider the vaguely co-ordinated operation of discourses over certain time periods and in certain places: 'Sometimes he treats the discourses separately; at other times, he looks at their contribution to the possibility of each period having an overall view of the world (which he calls "the Western episteme")' (McHoul and Grace 1992: 32).

Power analysis becomes governmentality analysis

It would be reasonable to say that Foucault's late-1970s turn from power, as it exists in the 'smallest elements of society' and as it operates through various knowledge endeavors, to power as it operates specifically as a form of governing was simply another stage in his long-term quest to capture the complexities of the relations between power and knowledge. Indeed, in making this turn, Foucault was so concerned about emphasizing the links between his long-term stress on power's intimate connections with knowledge and his later governing-focused body of work that he coined the term 'governmentality', to stress the 'knowing' aspects of governing.

It would be reasonable to say this, but if one were to stress it too strongly one might miss the crucial fact that what is now called governmentality analysis was forged as much by Foucault's followers – initially in Britain and Australia but soon spreading to New Zealand, Canada, and the United States – as much as it was forged by Foucault himself. Foucault provided the raw materials, particularly in his seminal essay 'Governmentality' (1979), and then both he and his followers made it into a new way of dealing with questions concerned with the way societies and individuals are governed, including the way individuals govern themselves.

The raw materials were a set of connected propositions, focusing first on the emergence, in the sixteenth century or before (Foucault's periodisations are rarely exact), of a distinctive way of thinking about the state, which allowed the state to be treated as an entity *sui generis,* as opposed to an entity entirely under the control of God. Once that development had occurred, Foucault argues, 'reason of state' thinking then produced a special object of governing, 'the population', which in turn spawned special sciences, such as political economy and statistics. These sciences allowed governments to govern in terms that dealt with both whole populations and, increasingly, with the different individual members of the populations, leading to various 'liberal' technologies of rule, whereby individuals achieve 'more' freedom by governing themselves.

As with his earlier work, these propositions – all of them interesting in themselves – were made compelling by the way in which Foucault put them. Here, as a first example, is Foucault explaining the emergence of reason of state:

> To put it very schematically: the art of government finds at the end of the 16th century and the beginning of the 17th its first form of crystallisation: it organises itself around the theme of the reason of State, understood not in the negative and pejorative sense we attribute to it today (namely as that which infringes on the principles of law, of equality and humanity in the sole interests of the State), but in a full and positive sense: the State is governed according to rational principles which are intrinsic to it and which cannot be derived solely from natural or divine laws or the principles of wisdom and prudence; the State, like Nature, has its own proper rationality, even if this is of a different sort. Conversely, the art of government instead of seeking its foundation in transcendental rules, cosmological models or philosophical–moral ideals, must find the principles of its rationality in that which constitutes the specific reality of the State.
>
> *(Foucault 1979: 14)*

And here, as a second example, is Foucault explaining the crucial role played by the notion of population:

> [I]t was thanks to the perception of the specific problems of the population, related to the isolation of that area we call the economy, that the problem of government finally came to be thought, reflected and calculated outside of the juridical framework of sovereignty …

prior to the emergence of population, the art of government was impossible to conceive except on the model of the family and in terms of economy conceived as the management of a family; from the moment when, on the contrary, population appears as absolutely irreducible to the family, the latter becomes secondary with respect to the population, comes to appear as an element internal to population, no longer that is to say as a model, but as a segment … [T]he family becomes an instrument rather than a model: the privileged instrument for the government of the population … [P]opulation comes to appear above all else as the ultimate end of government, that is the welfare of the population since this end consists not in the act of governing as such but in the improvement of the condition of the population.

(Foucault 1979: 16–17)

While we are not convinced, as mentioned in the introduction and will say in more detail in the conclusion, that Foucault achieved with this body of work anything like what he seemed to be claiming for it, or anything like what his followers have claimed for it, we can see why it was attractive at the time and why it remains attractive. The followers were given a wonderful opportunity to insist on the differences between Foucault's approach to questions of government and those traditional approaches that worked with traditional understandings of state and sovereignty. The followers took this opportunity with both hands and have built an impressive framework for future studies (if not, for us, a convincing one). Two examples of what this group of Foucault's followers achieved will have to suffice, one from Mitchell Dean and one from Pat O'Malley. Dean (1999: 10–16) argues that the key to understanding Foucault's governmentality analysis is to understand Foucault's break with 'the characteristic assumptions of theories of the state', a break, Dean says, which freed him to think about government in a new way, as 'the conduct of conduct', yet without severing all links with some familiar figures from the canon of social theory:

It deals with how we think about governing, with the different mentalities of government…. The notions of collective mentalities and the idea of a history of mentalities have long been used by sociologists (such as Emile Durkheim and Marcel Mauss) and by the *Annales* school of history in France…. For such thinkers, a mentality is a collective, relatively bounded unity, and is not readily examined by those who inhabit it…. The idea of mentalities of government, then, emphasizes the way in which the thought involved in practices of government is collective and relatively taken for granted … the way we think about exercising authority draws upon the theories, ideas, philosophies and forms of knowledge that are part of our social and cultural products.

(Dean 1999: 16)

In an attempt to define the term itself still further, O'Malley, writing for a legal audience in the late 1990s, provides some useful background to the way in which governmentality analysis developed as a separate approach as well as part of existing approaches:

There is a considerable literature exploring and developing this approach … advanced primarily in recent years by British and Australian scholars. The journal *Economy and Society* has been a principal site for the development of this approach, which is frequently referred to as the "governmentality" literature. While "governmentality" refers to a particular technology of government that emerges in the eighteenth century, the term is more generally used to refer to the approach adopted in its study. The approach is characterized by two primary

characteristics. The first is a stress on the dispersal of "government," that is, on the idea that government is not a preserve of "the state" but is carried out at all levels and sites in societies – including the self-government of individuals.... The second is the deployment of an analytic stance that favors "how" questions over "why" questions. In other words it favors accounts in terms of how government of a certain kind becomes possible: in what manner it is thought up by planners, using what concepts; how it is intended to be translated into practice, using what combination of means? Only secondarily is it concerned with accounts that seek to *explain* government – in the sense of understanding the nature of government as the effect of other events.

(O'Malley 1998–1999: 679, n7)

Conclusion

The focus in this chapter has been on the attractiveness of Foucault's work on power–government–society as a contribution to social and political theory, as broadly understood. As well as offering a basic summary of the direction of this body of work, we have tried to make plain why it became such a force within the domain of social and political theory. In doing these two things, however, we have not attempted to hide the fact that we share with a number of other scholars considerable disquiet about the trajectory of some of the arguments Foucault put so well and helped to make so influential. In this conclusion, we wish to summarize the arguments behind these doubts (for fuller versions of these arguments, see esp. Wickham 2006, 2008), though we will not let these harsher words be our final words.

We can begin the critical commentary with a point introduced earlier that in formulating his insights on the operation of power, Foucault's propositions often differed little from standard Marxist pronouncements of the day. To give just two examples, both of which fly in the face of his aforementioned caution against over-emphasizing the repressive nature of power:

[I]t is in the nature of power – particularly the kind of power that operates in our society – to be repressive, and to be especially careful in repressing useless energies, the intensity of pleasures, and irregular modes of behaviour.

(Foucault 1998: 9)

Panopticism is … a type of power that is applied to individuals in the form of continuous individual supervision, in the form of control, punishment, and compensation, and in the form of correction, that is, the moulding and transformation of individuals in terms of certain norms.

(Foucault 2001a: 70)

As well as being a clue to Foucault's residual Marxism, we suggest that these two snippets also provide an indication that while Foucault explicitly said that he was keen not to be seen to be a theory-for-its-own-sake type of theorist, in the sense of a priest-like figure making pronouncements from on high about the operation of power in society – 'The aim of the inquiries that will follow is to move less toward a "theory" of power than toward an "analytics" of power: that is, toward a definition of the specific domain formed by relations of power, and toward a determination of the instruments that will make possible its analysis' (Foucault 1998: 82) – he sometimes was precisely such a theorist. This tendency is most marked in his theory-driven distinction (as

opposed to a distinction driven by historical evidence) between governmentality-power and an older style of power built around sovereignty and law, and in his theory-driven insistence that governmentality-power replaced 'outmoded' sovereignty-law-power:

> [A]s long as sovereignty remained the central question, as the institutions of sovereignty remained fundamental and as the exercise of power was conceived as the exercise of sovereignty, the art of government could not develop in a specific and autonomous manner.
>
> *(Foucault 1979: 15)*

As David Saunders (1997: 103) puts it, in the essay in which Foucault offers these points, he also imposes on history 'perfectly antithetical ways of exercising power' and in doing so ignores 'inconvenient' historical specificities, most notably the fact that religion had inspired over a hundred and fifty years of civil war in Europe, a bloody period which was only brought to an end by a certain combination of forces featuring sovereignty and law, a combination that was no less important in the late twentieth century, when Foucault was writing, than it was in the eighteenth century (the supposed birthing period of governmentality) or than it is in the twenty-first century (though it has to be admitted by those of us writing in the early twenty-first century that we have the 'advantage' of working in the wake of 9/11, which made it easier to see the importance of this combination of forces, an advantage Foucault did not have).

This theory-as-pronouncements-from-on-high problem, in leading him to underestimate the importance of sovereignty and law, also led him to underestimate the ongoing importance of the state. For example:

> [T]he State is no more than a composite reality and a mythical abstraction whose importance is a lot more limited than any of us think. Maybe what is really important for our modern times, that is, for our actuality, is not so much the State-domination of society, but the "governmentalisation" of the State.
>
> *(Foucault 1979: 20)*

Ian Hunter goes so far as to suggest that Foucault's governmentality 'theory' is a type of Kantian philosophical theory. The 'governmentality schema', Hunter argues, 'seems to have much in common with post-Kantian philosophical history in that it portrays an inappropriately objectifying reason being replaced by one less inclined to impose its cognitive will on the immanent order of things' (Hunter 1998: 246).

In making these various critical points, we are not proposing that Foucault should lose his place in the social and political theory hall of fame. He undoubtedly deserves his berth (as well as deserves what all the other inductees have won as a right: the right to be constructively criticized). We are not even suggesting that Foucault's writings on power are tainted by the problems highlighted. Certainly, many of his pronouncements about surveillance, for instance, along with the examples offered above, look overblown now. The fact that the model of the panopticon was not taken up on should have alerted more readers (including us) to this at the time his main power pieces were being published, as should have the fact that the 'eye of power' arrangements of hospitals, schools, factories, and so forth (see esp. Foucault 1980: 146–165) were more a matter of architectural fashion, among other things, than they were an attempt to enhance the surveillance of subjects. But making claims that now look overblown is not a serious criticism; it was the 1970s after all (now 50 years ago!). We think that in this context, we should dismiss that charge as trivial and concentrate instead on the fact that the second and third volumes of *The History of Sexuality* project (both published posthumously: Foucault 1986a, 1986b) – books

in which the problem of 'theorising' stressed above is totally absent – were inspirational to Peter Brown in producing some of the most exciting and convincing work on power produced in the last thirty years (see esp. Brown 1988). This is both Foucault on power *and* Foucault at his very best: 'the author of descriptive genealogies – "grey, meticulous and patiently documentary"' (Saunders, quoting Foucault, 1997: 105–106).

Notes

1. This chapter was originally written by Gary Wickham and was later revised for the second edition by B. B. Bieganski.
2. Walter's work reminds me of the early work of Gavin Kendall, who used his training as a classicist to respectfully correct some errors in Foucault's historical treatment of the ancient world while simultaneously promoting the value of Foucault's approach to the study of power and society (see esp. Bevis, Cohen, and Kendall 1989).
3. See Foucault (2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2016a, 2016b, 2019a, 2019b) for the translations of the Collège de France lectures that have been published recently.
4. Foucault, of course, was fond of saying that he was moving away from phenomenology as much as he was moving away from Marxism. I suggest that for those interested in his power–governance–society work, the main break was with Marxism.
5. The following discussion of a discourse's lack of an 'inside' and lack of an 'outside' owes a considerable debt to Hunter (1984).
6. Andrea Rossi argues that one element of Foucault's analysis of power attempted to demystify resistance as an exterior, metaphysical principle but rather as a philosophical ethos that we take up in an attempt to resist various forms of power (Rossi 2017).

References

Bevis, P., Cohen, M. and Kendall, G. (1989) 'Archaeologizing Genealogy: Michel Foucault and the Economy of Austerity', *Economy and Society*, *18:3*, pp. 323–345.

Brown, P. (1988) *Power and Persuasion in Late Antiquity: Towards a Christian Empire*, Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press.

Brown, B. and Cousins, M. (1986) 'The Linguistic Fault: The Case of Foucault's Archaeology', in M. Gane (ed.) *Towards a Critique of Foucault*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, pp. 33–60.

Butler, J. (2004). 'What is Critique? An Essay on Foucault's Virtue', in S. Salih and J. Butler (eds.) *The Judith Butler Reader*, Oxford: Blackwell.

Cook, D. (2018) *Adorno, Foucault and the Critique of the West*, New York: Verso.

Dean, M. (1999) *Governmentality*, London: Sage.

Foucault, M. (1971) *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*, trans. R. Howard, London: Tavistock/Routledge.

Foucault, M. (1972) *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, London: Tavistock.

Foucault, M. (1979) 'Governmentality', *I & C*, *6*, pp. 5–21.

Foucault, M. (1980) *Power–Knowledge*, ed. C. Gordon, New York: Pantheon.

Foucault, M. (1986a) *The Care of the Self*, trans. R. Hurley, New York: Pantheon.

Foucault, M. (1986b) *The Use of Pleasure*, trans. R. Hurley, New York: Pantheon.

Foucault, M. (1995) *Discipline and Punish*, trans. A. Sheridan, New York: Vintage.

Foucault, M. (1998) *The Will to Knowledge: The History of Sexuality*, Volume *1*, trans. R. Hurley, Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Foucault, M. (2001a) 'Truth and Juridical Forms', in *Power*, ed. J. Faubion, trans. R. Hurley, Harmondsworth: Penguin, pp. 1–89.

Foucault, M. (2001b) 'Truth and Power', in *Power*, ed. J. Faubion, trans. R. Hurley, Harmondsworth: Penguin, pp. 111–133.

Foucault, M. (2010) *The Birth of Biopolitics*, ed. M. Senellart, trans. G. Burchell, New York: Picador.

Foucault, M. (2011) *The Government of Self and Others*, ed. F. Gros, trans. G. Burchell, New York: Picador.

Foucault, M. (2012) *The Courage of Truth*, ed. F. Gros, trans. G. Burchell, New York: Picador.

Foucault, M. (2013) *Lectures on the Will to Know*, ed. D. Defert, trans. G. Burchell, New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Foucault, M. (2016a) *On the Government of the Living*, ed. M. Senellart, trans. G. Burchell, New York: Picador.

Foucault, M. (2016b) *The Punitive Society*, ed. B. E. Harcourt, trans. G. Burchell, New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Foucault, M. (2019a) *Penal Theories and Institutions*, ed. B. E. Harcourt, trans. G. Burchell, New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Foucault, M. (2019b) *Subjectivity and Truth*, ed. F. Gros, trans. G. Burchell. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Foucault, M. (2021) *Confessions of the Flesh*, ed. F. Gros, trans. R. Hurley, New York: Pantheon.

Gane, M. (1986) 'Introduction: Michel Foucault', in M. Gane (ed.) *Towards a Critique of Foucault*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Hindess, B. (1977) *Mode of Production and Social Formation: An Auto-critique of Pre-capitalist Modes of Production*, London: Macmillan.

Hindess, B. and Hirst, P. Q. (1975) *Pre-capitalist Modes of Production*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Hunter, I. (1984) 'Michel Foucault: Discourse versus Language', unpublished MS, Griffith University, Brisbane.

Hunter, I. (1998) 'Uncivil Society: Liberal Government and the Deconfessionalisation of Politics', in M. Dean and B. Hindess (eds.) *Governing Australia: Studies in Contemporary Rationalities of Government*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 242–264.

Kendall, G. and Wickham, G. (1999) *Using Foucault's Methods*, London: Sage.

McHoul, A. and Grace, W. (1992) *A Foucault Primer: Discourse, Power and the Subject*, Melbourne: Melbourne University Press. www.michel-foucault.com/.

O'Malley, P. (1998–1999) 'Imagining Insurance: Risk, Thrift and Industrial Life Insurance in Britain', *Connecticut Insurance Law Journal*, *5*:*2*, pp. 676–705.

Rose, N. (1984) *'The Formation of the Psychology of the Individual in England 1870–1939'*, unpublished PhD thesis, University of London.

Rossi, A. (2017) 'Foucault, Critique, Subjectivity', *Journal for Cultural Research*, *21*:*4*, pp. 337–350.

Saunders, D. (1997) *Anti-lawyers: Religion and the Critics of Law and State*, London: Routledge.

Tribe, K. (2009) 'The Political Economy of Modernity: Foucault's Collège de France Lectures of 1978 and 1979', *Economy & Society*, *38*:*4*, pp. 679–698.

Walter, R. (2008a) 'Governmentality Accounts of the Economy: A Liberal Bias?', *Economy & Society*, *37*:*1*, pp. 94–114.

Walter, R. (2008b) 'Reconciling Foucault and Skinner on the State: The Primacy of Politics?', *History of the Human Sciences*, *21*:*3*, pp. 94–114.

Wickham, G. (2002) 'Foucault and Law', in M. Travers and R. Banakar (eds.) *Introduction to Law and Social Theory*, Oxford: Hart, pp. 249–265.

Wickham, G. (2006) 'Foucault, Law and Power: A Reassessment', *Journal of Law and Society*, *23*:*4*, pp. 596–614.

Wickham, G. (2008) 'The Social Must Be Limited: Some Problems with Foucault's Approach to Modern Positive Power', *Journal of Sociology*, *44*:*1*, pp. 29–44.

2

Pierre Bourdieu and his legacy

Marcel Fournier

Pierre Bourdieu (1930–2002) was a distinguished and prolific researcher and the author of some of the most seminal works of the twentieth century. His influence in France and elsewhere in the world is almost beyond measure: if the number of times he has been cited by other academics is any indication, he is probably the best-known sociologist in the world. Pierre Bourdieu always recognized his indebtedness to other thinkers, yet it is true to say that his own theoretical stance was both original and ambitious. His goal was to combine a theory of action (with notions of practice, habitus, capital, and strategies), a theory of society (with the concepts of field, domination, reproduction, and symbolic violence), and a theory of sociological knowledge (that included a theory of the role of intellectuals in the public place). Bourdieu's status as a sociologist, therefore, puts him on the level of Durkheim, Marx, Weber, or Parsons.

Durkheim and Bourdieu shared several similarities in their professional and intellectual lives: they both studied philosophy and were awarded the *agrégation*; they became professors and worked with a group of collaborators and disciples; they published a form of manifesto (*Les Règles de la méthode sociologique* and *Le Métier de sociologue*), they became publishers (Bibliothèque de l'Année sociologique, Alcan, and "Le Sens commun", Éditions de Minuit) and both founded an interdisciplinary journal (*L'Année sociologique* and *Les Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales*). They were, however, dissimilar in two important aspects of their careers. Durkheim taught at the University of Bordeaux and then at the University of Paris (Sorbonne), while Bourdieu taught first at the University of Lille and then mainly at the École Pratique des Hautes Études (later to became the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales) and at the Collège de France where he held the Chair of Sociology, as had Marcel Mauss in the 1930s. Pierre Bourdieu recognized his debt not only to the uncle (Durkheim) but also to the nephew (Mauss) in a conference paper he gave in 1997 entitled, "Marcel Mauss Aujourd'hui" (Bourdieu 2004b) in which he wrote short commentaries on such quotations from Mauss as: "Everything in society is nothing but relations"; "In point of fact, everything social is both simple and complex"; "People talk first and foremost to act and not only to communicate"; "Sociology is simply the principal means of educating society, not the way to make people happy".

Pierre Bourdieu was not *stricto sensu* a Durkheimian. As is clear from *The Craft of Sociology* (1968), a work that included a wide selection of short texts ranging from Bachelard to Wittgenstein, his theoretical perspective was eclectic enough to accommodate Durkheim, Marx, and

Weber. When he defended sociology as a science, he meant science that dealt with an object that could speak and had an observer who was part of that object (society). His approach was both epistemological and sociological, with a strong defense of the sociology of sociology. Later, Bourdieu developed the idea of "participative objectivation" and in place of a radical relativism he proposed a more nuanced position inviting every scholar to produce his own auto or reflexive sociology. The theme of his final lecture at the Collège de France was "Science de la science et réflexivité" (Bourdieu 2001).

Bourdieu's work can be divided into three great areas of investigation: (1) the progression from an epistemological reflection to a sociology of science (and of sociology); (2) the development of an ethnology of Kabyle society to a theory of practice; (3) the evolution from a sociology of education and cultural practices to a sociology of the fields of symbolic production. His two most ambitious scientific projects defended a new conception of sociology (with Jean-Claude Chamboredon and Jean-Claude Passeron)[1] and developed a theory of practice around the famous notion of habitus (as a set of cultural dispositions).[2]

Pierre Bourdieu enjoyed polemical debate (as illustrated by his opposition to Levi-Strauss, structural Marxism, symbolic interactionism, and, later, postmodernism), defended eclecticism (in Marx, Durkheim, and Weber, for instance), and supported interdisciplinarity (in disciplines such as anthropology, linguistics, economics, history, and political science). He also rejected canonical dichotomies (such as determinism/liberty, subjectivism/objectivism, and structure/history). In order to identify his own theoretical perspective, Bourdieu used the term "structural analysis" (different from structuralism), with the central notion of field. As we can see in *La Reproduction* which offered a systematization of his theoretical perspective with the notions of symbolic violence, cultural capital, cultural arbitrary, and habitus, the perspective is structural in the sense that it gives primacy to the structure of social positions between social groups and classes. Bourdieu also liked to define his approach as a kind of constructivism or structuralist constructivism, the method he used in his analysis of the relationship between fields, which was based on the principle of "structural homology" first introduced by *architecture gothique et pensée scolastique* (Panofky, 1967).

A research group, a journal

While he certainly had philosophical leanings (as had Merleau-Ponty and Wittgenstein) and epistemological concerns – as his work shows – Pierre Bourdieu never disconnected his theoretical reflections from the study of concrete problems or objects (as seen in his examination of matrimonial strategies in the Béarn, workers in Algeria, European museums, photography, and the French school system).

His first "laboratory" was his weekly session with his PhD students at the École Pratique des Hautes Études in the rue Varennes in Paris. It was the pedagogical formula he preferred most of all: a seminar where he would present new ideas to a relatively small group of students and young researchers and test new hypotheses. Always careful to have a page of written notes in front of him, he nevertheless liked to improvise, introducing questions and injecting comments into his own work. Reflexivity was very much a part of his work. His objective was to transmit to his students the habitus of the researcher: intellectual rigor, seriousness, and teamwork, moving back and forth from theory to empirical investigation. He liked to say that the sociologist walks shod in a pair of sabots and that most of his own experiences dealt with things that appeared visible and obvious. Many of his first collaborators were his own students such as Luc Boltanski whose doctoral thesis was published as *The Making of a Class: Cadres in French Society* and Monique de Saint-Martin whose doctoral work was entitled "Les fonctions sociales

del'enseignement scientifique supérieur''. Bourdieu co-authored many articles with them and other close collaborators.

For Pierre Bourdieu, research was a collective enterprise that needed an institutional basis (seminars, research centers, grants).[3] He was director of the Centre de sociologie européenne, founded by Raymond Aron, and founder of his own Centre de sociologie de la culture et de l'éducation. Many of his first books were the result of inquiries carried out with the help of assistants and colleagues, first in Algeria[4] and later in France. One of his main collaborators was Jean-Claude Passeron. Together they published *Les Étudiants et leurs études* (1964, with the collaboration of Michel Éliard), *Rapport pédagogique et communication* (1965, with Monique de Saint-Martin,[5] *Academic Discourse. Linguistic Misunderstanding and Professorial Power*) and two other important books, *Les Héritiers* (1964, *The Inheritors*) and *La Reproduction* (1970, *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture*), which changed the perception contemporary Western societies had of schools: schools that enjoy relative autonomy or independence are not mainly a means of social mobility but a mechanism of reproduction for social classes.

As his title indicated, *The Inheritors: French Students and Their Relation to Culture*, Bourdieu had a strong interest in the cultural tastes and practices of students (reading matter, music, movies, etc.). During those same years he carried out two extensive pieces of empirical research, one into the uses of photography, *Un art moyen: essais sur les usages sociaux de la photographie* (1964, with Luc Boltanski, Robert Castel, Jean-Claude Chamboredon, Gérard Lagneau, and Dominique Schnapper), and the other into the type of people who visit museums, *L'amour de l'art: les musées d'art européens et leur public* (1966, with Alain Darbel and Dominique Schnapper). The central question concerned the democratization not only of schools but also of culture, a question that received considerable attention in France at the end of the 1960s at the time of the May 1968 social movement. Bourdieu proposed a sociology of symbolic power that addressed the important topic of the relationship between culture, social structure, and action and analyzed the logic of distinction that for him was the fundamental dimension of social life.[6]

In almost all of his books, Bourdieu used empirical data that had been collected by his collaborators and students and had benefited from the technical assistance of a documentalist (Rosine Christin) and of a computer specialist (Salek Bouhedja): *La Distinction, Homo Academicus, La Noblesse d'État, Les Règles de l'art*, etc. The methodological approach he preferred was the most qualitative among quantitative methods: data analysis, a kind of factorial analysis devised by J.-P. Benzécri.

The first issue of the *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* was published in January 1975. It had a director, Pierre Bourdieu, but no editorial board. The journal was innovative in its objective (to present research in action with working papers, different kinds of documents, data, and archives) and its graphic design: large format, photographs, and the use of comic strips (Boltanski 2008). The stated theme of the issue was the social hierarchy of objects and the main articles were written by Bourdieu and his close collaborators: i.e. Pierre Bourdieu and Yvette Delsault ("Le couturier et sa griffe: contribution à une théorie de la magie"), Luc Boltanski ("La constitution du champ de la bande dessinée"), Francine Muel, ("L'école obligatoire et l'invention de l'enfance anormale"), and Claude Grignon ("L'enseignement agricole et la domination symbolique de la paysannerie"). This was more than just the formation of a new research group – it was the birth of a new school of thought.

It is possible to identify different circles, sub-groups and generations among his collaborators. The first group comprised A. Sayad, Jean-Claude Passeron, and Jean-Claude Chamboredon (who, as *caïman*, or teacher, at the École normale supérieure, would "lure" into sociology a group of young philosophy students, Jean-Louis Fabiani, François Héran, and Pierre-Michel Menger, all of whom were fascinated by the strength of Bourdieu's intellect). The second group

came together when Bourdieu was made Director of Studies at the EPHE: Luc Boltanski, Monique de Saint-Martin, Francine Muel-Dreyfus, Jean-Claude Combessie, Patrick Champagne, Christophe Charle, and others. The third one formed after he had been elected to the Collège de France: Gisèle Sapiro, Franck Poupeau, Frédéric Lebaron, and others. Bourdieu agreed to hand over the direction of the Centre de sociologie européenne to some of these collaborators: Monique de Saint-Martin, Jean-Claude Combessie, Rémi Lenoir, and Gisèle Sapiro. The Bourdieu School quickly acquired an international influence, in the first instance thanks to some of his former students: Sergio Miceli in Brazil, Marcel Fournier in Canada, Yves Winkin in Belgium, and Loïc Wacquant in the USA.[7] The journal *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* now has an editor (Maurice Aymard), an editorial board (including Pierre Bourdieu's son, Jérôme), a scientific committee (with many American scholars including Rogers Brubaker, Craig Calhoun, Aaron Cicourel, Robert Darnton, William Julius Wilson, etc.) and more than fifty associated members (*rédacteurs associés*).

The collection "Le Sens commun" to Liber-Raisons d'agir

Bourdieu's influence extended to the choice of sociological texts published by the publisher Éditions de Minuit where he was given charge of the series "Le Sens commun". One of his most important and original contributions to his field of research was the publication in this collection of many American, English, and German authors: Panofsky, Cassirer, Bateson, Goffman, Labov, Bernstein, Richard Hoggart, Marcuse, Ralph Linton, Edward Sapir, Joseph Schumpeter, and Radcliffe-Brown.

Further books appeared with the creation of a new publishing venture, Liber–Raisons d'agir. Bourdieu's last great collective enterprise was his *La Misère du monde*, an impressive work of monumental size (1993): more than twenty collaborators[8] conducted a series of interviews with people about "their lives and the difficulties they had encountered". The aim was "to understand the conditions of production of the contemporary forms of social suffering (*misère sociale*)". It was a huge success and was adapted several times for the theatre.

Debates

Each one of Bourdieu's individual and collective works gave rise to considerable controversy inside and outside academic circles in France and around the world. Leaving aside the epistemological debate about *The Craft of Sociologist* and the later question of relativism in science, we can identify one major theoretical debate on the theory of practice (the notion of habitus, etc.), two more specific debates on education and culture, and a final and more general one at the end of his life concerning his political "interventions".

All these debates have structured the French sociological field setting up oppositions between schools of thought and scholars: the opposition between Bourdieu and Baudrillard was the opposition between scientific research/essay; between Bourdieu and Boudon it was holism/individualism; between Bourdieu and L. Althusser or N. Poutantzas it was structural-Marxism/critical sociology; between Bourdieu and Touraine it was order/change and agents/actors; between Bruno Latour and Bourdieu it was the opposition between two conceptions of science, one more relativist and the other more objectivist, etc. We can see the result of some of this opposition in the reactions that Bourdieu's publications on education provoked. There was the Marxist perspective (Christian Baudelot and Roger Establet, *L'École capitaliste en France*, 1971), and there was the Rational Choice Theory (Raymond Boudon, *L'Inégalité des chances*, 1973). Boudon's theory of action, methodological individualism, clearly placed him at

odds with Bourdieu's theory of practice. Alain Touraine, the expert on collective movements whose theoretical perspective had been set out in his *Sociologie de l'action* (1965),[9] reacted to *La Reproduction* by publishing *The Self Production of Society*. The opposition between Bourdieu and Touraine was further exacerbated when they both competed in 1981 for the Chair of Sociology at the Collège de France.

In the 1960s, Bourdieu and Passeron were among the first sociologists to take a critical look at public policy and its implications for the democratization of education and culture. Their sociological analysis showed that, in spite of adopting formal meritocratic practices, schools enhanced rather than attenuated social inequalities. Their attack was against what Bourdieu called the "ideology of gift", by which he meant the ideology of the institution and of its members who understandably were reluctant to accept a theory that appeared to them to offer no chance of change. The Left accused them of not being sufficiently Marxist while the Right accused them of criticizing the meritocratic system. Bourdieu was also accused of attacking elitism when he published his *Homo academicus*, a strong structural analysis of the French academic system characterized by the dichotomy between the universities and the Grandes Ecoles (institutions that cater to the power structure of the state and recruit their students in large measure from the upper classes of society).

There was a similar reaction when Bourdieu published *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (1979). This book earned him a huge audience outside the academic world in France. Defining social class position in terms of the volume and structure of various forms of capital (economic, cultural), he marked his proximity to (notion of domination) and his distance from Marxist class analysis that explains everything by means of the social relations of production and class struggle. Class struggle is not just economic; it also has a cultural and symbolic dimension. On the other side, some sociologists criticized the thesis of the homologous relations between social milieu and cultural consumption. In France, where every four years the government conducts a survey of the cultural practices of the total population, Olivier Donnat (2004) used the data to distinguish different systems of practice and taste or "cultural worlds" that are not directly dependent on social backgrounds: from exclusion to eclecticism.[10]

Philosophers and art specialists were irritated by the "bourdieusian" sociological approach deeming it to be "reductionist" in the sense that it reduces taste to a question of social status: tell me what your social background is and I will tell you what you read and what kind of theatre you like. Where is the freedom for each of us to acquire the information and skills we are looking for to build our own system of taste? In general, in philosophical circles and the world of art, there was strong resistance against Bourdieu's sociology of art for presenting the field and not the individual artist as the "creator": "In France I have lots of enemies but no opponents, a term I use for people who carry out the necessary research to propose a refutation of my own position" (Bourdieu and Chartier 2010: 16).

Bourdieu provoked a similar reaction (as did Durkheim more than a century earlier) when he proposed a sociological theory of (scientific) knowledge. He summarized his analysis in a few provocative sentences: "The subject, the agent of science, is not the individual but the field"; "Reflexivity is not the cogito, it is the field. So it is collective". It is understandable why philosophers were angry with him and often remain so. His objective was to reconcile two opposing theoretical positions: historicism and rationalism. The title of one of his last books read *Méditations pascaliennes, Éléments pour une philosophie négative* (1997).

Masculine Domination, which was developed from an article of the same name published in *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* in 1990 is one of Bourdieu's shortest and one of his most controversial books (Bourdieu 1998a). The power of masculine domination is analyzed as a symbolic violence: in the way it is imposed, this domination is "the prime example of this

paradoxical submission" through which "the most intolerable conditions of existence can so often be perceived as acceptable and even natural". Some scholars regretted that the only "data" that inform this study come from anthropological information about the Kabyle that Bourdieu gathered in the 1960s. Others criticized his decision to ignore almost all of the work of the French feminist theorists. The counter-attack has been instant and two questions have been central to this debate. One, more personal: is this analysis a "masculinist" point of view? The other, more theoretical: is the masculine domination only a symbolic violence?

Divergences[11]

Both inside and outside Bourdieu's research group, as is normal in all dynamic research groups, discussions continued unabated. It was a "collective enterprise" (de Singly 1998) with a great deal of collaboration and exchange. Bourdieu would often rewrite his collaborators' articles or reanalyze the data they had collected. These debates led to differences of opinion and divergences that eventually spilled over into the public space. The first example was the debate about the notion of popular culture when Bourdieu published *Distinction*. Is it a dominant culture? Do people have the resources to resist it (the dominant culture)? Jean-Claude Passeron and Claude Grignon (1989) strongly denounced the "misérabilisme" and the populism in sociology and literature in their *Le Savant et le populaire*. Passeron distanced himself geographically (he moved from Paris to Marseilles) and intellectually from his friend Bourdieu and worked with other sociologists, Jean-Claude Chamboredon, Robert Castel, Claude Grignon, and Raymonde Moulin, who were also close to Bourdieu. His main interest then became the sociology of culture and the arts which led to the publication of an important book entitled *Le Raisonnement sociologique* (Passeron 1991). This epistemological reflection on the social sciences re-evaluated the position he had defended with Bourdieu in *The Craft of Sociology* by returning to Max Weber's epistemological dualism (historical sciences/natural sciences): sociology adopts a scientific approach but is not a science in the sense of a "science réfutable" (*dixit* Karl Popper). Admiration and criticism were the two attitudes that linked Passeron to Bourdieu: "With Bourdieu but against Pierre Bourdieu" summarizes his position.[12]

Another example: the theory of practice

The notion of habitus gave rise to feelings both of fascination and rejection and set many sociologists against him: they considered his theory to be too deterministic, allowing little place for freedom of choice or the capacity for action and lacking a fully comprehensive dimension. How can one demonstrate that habitus is class habitus? How can one explain why two people with the same habitus do not think or act alike?

The 1980s were characterized by two things: first, the *retour du sujet* ("the subject is back", as Touraine's book, Le retour de l'acteur announced), and a subject who, by definition, had the skill to account for his actions; second, the (re)discovery of pragmatism. The title of a new journal launched in the 1990s was *Raison pratique*, and the theme of the first issue was "Les formes de l'action: sémantique et sociologie" (editor: Patrick Pharo). The central idea was that the social actor is plural. The title of a François Dosse (1995) work on the new spirit of the human sciences was *L'Empire du sens*.[13]

Luc Boltanski, who had been seen as Bourdieu's *dauphin*, shifted position, his so-called "pragmatist turn", and placed himself at some considerable critical distance from his *maître à penser*, abandoning the notions of habitus and field and developing a totally new theoretical perspective with new objects (forms of injustice, controversies) and new concepts (*cités*, or regimes of

argumentation; *épreuves*, or trials). He established a close collaborative relationship with an economist and published a "programmatic" book, *On Justification* (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006), and set up a research group, the Groupe de sociologie politique et morale, where he worked with students and collaborators (Élizabeth Claverie, Bernard Conein, Nicolas Dodier, and Cyril Lemieux). His most ambitious work was his *Le Nouvel esprit du capitalisme* (1999) with Eva Chiapillo. One of his objectives was to develop not a critical sociology but a sociology of criticism.

In a move to distance himself from Bourdieu's research group, Boltanski agreed to link up with Bruno Latour's group, the Centre de sociologie de l'innovation, that was strongly opposed to Bourdieu's social theory. His research group welcomed researchers who kept themselves at arm's length from Bourdieu – people such as Nathalie Heinich, an active sociologist of art at the Centre National de Recherches Scientifiques (CNRS); this former Bourdieu disciple became, as she said so herself, "a renegade" (Heinich 2007). Sometimes, the distancing of oneself turned into an excessively aggressive rebellion against Bourdieu, as happened in the intellectual trajectory of Jeannine Verdès-Leroux (1998) who described Bourdieu as a "terrorist" in sociology.

"What use can we make of great men?" asked Robert Castel, a former collaborator of Bourdieu. His answer was "Keep them at a safe distance", by which he meant that it was possible to work with Bourdieu but it was advisable not to become his disciple. Bernard Lahire has adopted a similar position though his critical opposition to Bourdieu's theory of cultural legitimacy is less clear-cut: there is, he claims, a plurality of legitimate cultural orders and considerable variations between individuals. The title of one of his books, *La Culture des individus: dissonances culturelles et distinction de soi* (Lahire 2004) gives a clear idea of his distance from Bourdieu.

Another work, *Le travail sociologique de Pierre Bourdieu: dettes et critiques* (Lahire 1999), a collaborative affair edited by Lahire, brought together a number of researchers prepared to engage in critical dialogue with Bourdieu's work. Among them were Philippe Corcuff, Jean-Louis Fabiani, Cyril Lemieux, Emmanuel Ethis, and Alain Viala. Fabiani, a former Bourdieu student and author of *Les philosophes de la République* (1988), edited *Le goût de l'enquête* (2001) as a tribute to Passeron who had been his colleague at the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales in Marseille. In *Le Monde* he wrote a hard-hitting review (entitled "Sociologie et télévision, arrêt sur le mage") of Bourdieu's book *Sur la television*, a small red book which has been a bestseller. Fabiani slated it for being poorly documented and resembling a pamphlet in that it insulted journalists among others and relied on quick generalization rather than on rigorous research (Fabiani 1997). Fabiani published in 2016 a well-documented and mainly positive evaluation of Bourdieu's work: *Pierre Bourdieu. Un structuralisme héroïque* (Fabiani 2016).

The intellectual

There are two public images of Bourdieu. The first is that of the rigorous and sophisticated sociologist who defended the "craft of sociology", a profession requiring a long and difficult training, as demanding as a high-level sport. The second is that of the public sociologist or committed intellectual who presented sociology as a martial sport: Pierre Carles' (2001) film *La sociologie est un sport de combat: Pierre Bourdieu* showed Bourdieu mobilizing workers at the Gare de Lyon in Paris and discussing issues with young Arabs in a Paris suburb.

Were there two Bourdieus, the one before and the one after 1990, more specifically after December 12, 1995 when he took up a megaphone and addressed striking railroad employee at the Lyon train station rally (Swartz, 2003)? From the outset of his career, Bourdieu was preoccupied by political questions (the independence of Algeria, etc.) but in the 1970s and 1980s, he strongly advised his students not to enter politics (Fournier 2003). Those who worked or studied with him all agreed on two things: first, the most important thing was to defend academic

freedom from all outside intrusion; and, second, the best way to change the world was to understand it, and the only way to achieve more freedom was to discover the constraints limiting that freedom.

After publishing his best-selling *La Misère du monde* (l993), Bourdieu became even more active in politics, criticizing the media (in particular television) and politicians. He founded his own series of books, the Liber-Raisons d'agir, helped create a Parliament for writers, supported the anti-globalization movement ATTAC, and published many short political essays (Bourdieu 1998b) that attacked neoliberalism and globalization and defended the necessity of criticizing contemporary societies (Bourdieu 2002). Pierre Bourdieu was an intellectual, not an ideologue. While striving to achieve the status of Jean-Paul Sartre, he was markedly different from him in two ways. His political interventions as an intellectual (his model was Michel Foucault) came in areas where he had a specific competence (in the field of education, for example), when he spoke out on behalf of science, or when acting as part of what he termed as the "intellectual collective".

His activism on the left of the Left irritated many colleagues and some former students who, for one reason or another, disapproved of his public stance or took exception to some of the positions he adopted on political matters. But he attracted a wide audience beyond the narrow confines of the academic world and came to be recognized as a critical sociologist, opening up his work to new interpretations and appealing to a younger generation of social scientists. Some of them became more radical than Bourdieu, presenting themselves as "researcher-militants", and writing a manifesto, *Manuel indocile* (Fondation Coppernic, 2019). It is interesting to observe that Luc Boltanski who has published a joint paper with Bourdieu, entitled "La production de l'idéologie dominante", in *Les Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales*, gave the title *De la critique: précis de sociologie de l'émancipation* to one of his recent books (Botltanski, 2009). Was this a comeback? His new move was to rehabilitate the notion of domination and to defend a more pragmatic and critical approach to sociology.

Conclusion

What has happened in the few years since Bourdieu's death? The sociology of the intellectual and scientific fields can teach us something about the way a research group reorganizes and a field restructures after the death of a *maître à penser*, a predominantly inspirational figure. First, there was a period of collective celebration: the publication of posthumous papers and books (Bourdieu 2004a), the publication of a first biography of Bourdieu (Lescourret 2008), the edition of many collective books on the legacy of Pierre Bourdieu (Pinto, Sapiro, and Champagne 2004; Coulangeon and Duval, 2014; Medvetz and Sallaz 2018), the creation of the Fondation Pierre Bourdieu (*Pour un espace des sciences sociales européen/For* a European Research Space in the Social Sciences) with more than 125 members. One of the most important initiative has been the organization of an international European research project, "Cooperation in the SSH (INTERCO-SH)" under the direction of Gisèle Sapiro and the publication of series of four collective books in the collection *Socio-Historical Studies of the Social and Human Sciences* under the direction of C. Fleck, J. Heilbron, M. Santoro, and G. Sapiro, *Ideas on the Move in the Social Sciences and Humanities* (2020); *Experts, Social Scientists, and Techniques of Prognosis in Cold War America* (2020); *Shaping Human Science Disciplines* (2018); *The Social and Human Sciences in Global Power Relations* (2018) (https://www.palgrave.com/gp/series/15409). Finally, the eagerly awaited *Dictionnaire international Bourdieu* was published (Sapiro, 2020).

Second, there was a quarrel among the members of the group over the inheritance – who were the real heirs apparent? – with the group dividing into different sub-groups, some orthodox, others less so. The orthodox group was then viewed as a sect composed of epigones rigidly

defending the original theory. If further innovation is to come, will it be from the "center" or from the edge, and who are likely to be the innovators? To answer this question and to explain why since Bourdieu's death there has been no generalist sociologist (*stricto sensu*) in the Collège de France, an empirical study of the French sociological field (and of other academic fields, linguistic, political, etc.) over the past decade is needed. Pierre-Michel Menger, was elected in 2013 and appointed to the chair "Sociology of creative work".

There will always be strong opposition between the "old" schools of thought or research groups: Bourdieu's school, Boudon's research group, and the Touraine–Wievorka's research groups. But there are new research groups and new schools of thought (Boltanski–Latour, MAUSS. or the Antiutilitariian Movement in Social Sciences, etc.). And, what is more important, the structure of the sociological field is changing with the reorganization of research: the creation of large research centers that are federations of research groups (e.g. the new Centre européen de sociologie et de science politique which is the merger of the Centre de sociologie européenne and of the Centre de recherches politiques de la Sorbonne), and the beginning of the Agence nationale de recherche and of the European system of grants. Research activities are more specialized and also more interdisciplinary, and the centers of scientific research are not so much "laboratories" as networks, both national and international. Each network has its intellectual leaders and organizers and a group of autonomous researchers, as for example in the sociology of art with Raymonde Moulin (+), Jean-Claude Passeron, Jean-Louis Fabiani, Alain Quemin, and Pierre-Michel Menger or in the sociology of family with François de Singly, Jean-Claude Kaufmann, Agnès Pitrou, and Irène Théry. All these changes have had an impact on the organization of teaching (professional specialization or masters) and also of the profession (the new Association française de sociologie, founded in 2002, with its online journal, *Socio-Logos*, and its many networks and thematic groups).

In this new context, there is no doubt that Bourdieu's work remains vibrant and may even be more relevant than ever since the results of his research are used or discussed in many different fields of teaching and research (health, sport, art, literature, and education). Pierre Bourdieu was an innovative thinker and an avant-garde intellectual. As such he deserves to be considered as one of the great sociologists of all time, and our last classical sociologist.

Notes

1. *Le Métier de sociologue*, 1968 (The *Craft of Sociology: Epistemological Preliminaries*).
2. *Esquisse d'une théorie de la pratique*, 1972 (*Outline of a Theory of Practice*), *Le Sens pratique*, 1980 (*The Logic of Practice*).
3. See Pierre Encrevé and Rose-Marie Lagrave (2003).
4. *Travail et travailleurs en Algérie* (1963, with Alain Darbel, Jean-Paul Rivet, and Claude Seibel) and *Le Déracinement: la crise de l'agriculture traditionnelle en Algérie* (1964, with Abdelmalek Sayad). Bourdieu also published a short work, *Sociologie de l'Algérie*, in the "Que saisje?" collection (1958, Presses Universitaires de France).
5. In the appendix, there is a study by Christian Baudelot of a library in Lille.
6. See David Swartz (1997).
7. For the international diffusion of Bourdieu's works, see the series of papers in the Italian electronic journal *Sociologica*.
8. F. Bonvin, É. Bourdieu, P. Champagne, R. Christin, J.-P. Faguer, R. Lenoir, F. Muel-Dreyfus, M. Pialoux, L. Pinto, A. Sayad, L. Wacquant, etc.
9. Touraine founded two research centers, the Centre d'études des mouvements sociaux and the Centre d'analyse et d'intervention sociale, and carried out research and published books with his students and collaborators: F. Dubet, Z. Hedegus, and M. Wieviorka.

10. Richard A. Peterson and Kern (1996) in the USA introduced the notion of "omnivorous cultural consumption" by which they meant that people can like things or activities that can extend from the fine arts to popular and folk expressions. For an evaluation of *The Distinction*, thirty years on, see Viviana Fridman and Michèle Ollivier (2004).

11. It would be interesting to analyze the reception of Bourdieu's thought in the USA. Paul DiMaggio (1977, 1982), professor at Princeton University, published Bourdieu-inspired articles. Loïc Wacquant, professor at the University of California, Berkeley, played an active role in translating Bourdieu's papers and co-authoring with Bourdieu (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992), *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology*. Michèle Lamont's position has been more ambiguous, at the same time using and criticizing Bourdieu's theoretical perspective. Now a professor at Harvard University, she has progressively moved away from Bourdieu to become closer to the Boltanski–Thevenot group (Lamont 2010) but always keeping some links with the Bourdieu's network (Lamont 2012). One of the harder-hitting American critics to have published an attack on Bourdieu's work is the sociologist Jeff Alexander who was close to the Touraine research group (see Alexander 1995).

12. See Encrevé and Lagrave (2003). Shortly before Bourdieu died, it seems that the two friends who had closely worked together were reconciled.

13. On the "new spirit", see Corcuff (1995).

References

Alexander, Jeffrey (1995), "The Reality of Reduction: the Failed Synthesis of Pierre Bourdieu", in *Fin de Siècle Social Theory: Relativism, Reduction, and the Problem of Reason*, London: Verso, pp. 128–217.

Boltanski, Luc (2008), *Rendre la réalité inacceptable*, Paris: Éditions Demopolis.

Boltanski, Luc (2009), *De la critique: précis de sociologie de l'émancipation*, Paris: Gallimard.

Boltanski, Luc and Luc Thévenot (2006), *On Justification*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Bourdieu, Pierre (1998a), *La Domination masculine*, Paris: Seuil, coll. Liber.

Bourdieu, Pierre (1998b), *Contre-feux: propos pour servir à la résistance contre l'invasion néo-libérale*, Paris: Seuil, coll. Liber.

Bourdieu, Pierre (2001), *Science de la science et réflexivité*, Paris: Raisons d'agir.

Bourdieu, Pierre (2002), *Interventions l961–2001, Science sociale et action politique, Texts edited by Franck Poupeau and Thierry Discepolo*, Marseilles: Agone and Comeau & Nadeau, Montréal.

Bourdieu, Pierre (2004a), *Esquisse pour une socio-analyse*, Paris: Raisons d'agir.

Bourdieu, Pierre (2004b), "Marcel Mauss, aujourd'hui", in M. Fournier (ed.) *"Présences de Marcel Mauss", Sociologie et Sociétés 36* (*2*), Fall, 15–23.

Bourdieu, Pierre and Loïc Wacquant (1992), *An Invitation to a Reflexive Sociology*, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Bourdieu, Pierre and Roger Chartier (2010), *Le sociologue et l'historien*, Paris: Agone & Raisons d'agir.

Corcuff, Philippe (1995), *Les nouvelles sociologies: constructions de la réalité sociale*, Paris: Nathan.

Coulangeon, Philippe and Julien Duval (eds.) (2014), *The Routledge Companion to Bourdieu's 'Distinction'*, Routledge.

de Singly, François (1998), "Bourdieu: nom propre d'une entreprise collective", *Le Magazine littéraire 369* (October), 39–44.

DiMaggio, Paul (1977), "Social Capital and Art Consumption: Origins and Consequences of Class Differences in Exposure to the Arts in America", *Theory and Society 5*, 109–132.

DiMaggio, Paul (1982), "Cultural Capital and School Success: The Impact of Status Culture Participation on the Grades of U.S. High School Students", *American Sociological Review 47*, 189–201.

Donnat, Olivier (2004), "Les univers culturels des Français", *Sociologie et Sociétés 36* (*1*), 87–103.

Dosse, François (1995), *L'Empire du sens: l'humanisation des sciences humaines*, Paris: La Découverte.

Encrevé, Pierre and Rose-Marie Lagrave (eds.) (2003), *Travailler avec Bourdieu*, Paris: Flammarion.

Fabiani, Jean-Louis (1997), "Sociologie et télévision, arrêt sur le mage", *Le Monde*, 12 February.

Fabiani, Jean-Louis (2016), *Pierre Bourdieu. Un structuralisme héroïque*, Paris: Seuil.

Fondation Copernic (Ed) (2019), *Manuel indocile des sciences sociales*. Pour des savoirs résistants, Paris. Éditions La Découverte.

Fournier, Marcel (2003), "Pierre Bourdieu: la sociologie est un sport de haut niveau", *Awal, Cahiers d'études berbères 27* (8), 55–69.

Fridman, Viviana and Michèle Ollivier (eds.) (2004), "Tastes, Cultural Practices and Social Inequalities: In Fashion and Out", *Sociologie et Sociétés 36* (*1*), Spring.

Heinich, Nathalie (2007), *Pourquoi Bourdieu*, Paris: Gallimard-Le Débat.

Lahire, Bernard (ed.) (1999), *Le travail sociologique de Pierre Bourdieu*, Paris: Éditions la Dévouverte.

Lahire, Bernard (2004), *La Culture des individus: dissonances culturelles et distinction de soi*, Paris: Éditions la Découverte.

Lamont, Michèle (2010), "Looking Back at Bourdieu", in E. Silva and A. Warde (eds.) *Cultural Analysis and Bourdieu's Legacy: Settling Accounts and Developing Alternatives,* London: Routledge.

Lamont, Michèle (2012), "How Has Bourdieu Been Good to Think with? The Case of the United States", *Sociological Forum* 27 (1), 228–237.

Lescourret, Marie-Anne (2008), *Bourdieu, vers une économie du bonheur*, Paris: Flammarion.

Medvetz, Thomas and Jeffrey J. Sallaz (2018), *The Oxford Handbook of Pierre Bourdieu*, Oxford.

Passeron, Jean-Claude (1991), *Le Raisonnement sociologique: l'espace non-poppérien du raisonnement naturel*, Paris: Nathan.

Passeron, Jean-Claude and Claude Grignon (1989), *Le Savant et le populaire, misérabilisme et populisme en sociologie et en littérature*, Paris: Seuil.

Peterson, Richard. A. and R. Kern (1996), "Changing Highbrow Taste: From Snob to Omnivore", *American Sociological Review 61*, 900–907.

Pinto, Louis, Gisèle Sapiro, and Patrick Champagne (eds.) (2004), *With the collaboration of Marie-Christine Rivière, Pierre Bourdieu, sociologue*, Paris: Fayard.

Sapiro, Gisèle (ed.) (2020), *Dictionnaire international Bourdieu*, Paris: CNRS Éditions.

Swartz, David (1997), *Culture and Power: The Sociology of Pierre Bourdieu*, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Swartz, David L. (2003), "From critical sociology to public intellectual. Pierre Bourdieu and politics", *Theory and Society* 32 (5/6), 791–823.

Verdès-Leroux, Jeannine (1998), *Le Savant et la politique: essai sur le terrorisme sociologique de Pierre Bourdieu*, Paris: Éditions Grasset.

Lacanian theory

Ideology, enjoyment and the spirits of capitalism

Yannis Stavrakakis

Every attempt to use psychoanalytic categories and logics in social and political theorization and analysis inevitably raises the specter of psychological reductionism. Yet, already from the early days of the psychoanalytic movement, every new realization of the limits of mainstream socio-political explanations – especially of the rationalistic and deterministic tendencies implicit in them – shifted attention to the insights psychoanalysis could offer. It was to psychoanalysis the Frankfurt School turned in order to account for the unexpected lure of Nazi ideology and the 'failure' of the Enlightenment project it signaled. Likewise, in the 1960s, it was to psychoanalysis that Louis Althusser turned in order to grasp the role of ideology in producing docile social subjects and in limiting the scope of resistance. The Lacanian Left, an expanding group of critical theorists and philosophers appreciative of the work of the French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan and determined to explore its numerous socio-political implications, is today shaping this orientation with a dynamism similar to that of the Freudian Left,[1] but with very different preoccupations and priorities.

At the forefront of this new trend in social and political theory, Slavoj Žižek has put forward what he often describes as an *explosive combination of Lacanian psychoanalysis and Marxist tradition* in order to question the very presuppositions of the circuit of capital. For his part, Alain Badiou has re-appropriated Lacan in his radical *ethics of the event*. Pointing out that 'Lacanian theory contributes decisive tools to the formulation of a theory of hegemony', Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe have included Lacanian psychoanalysis in the list of contemporary theoretical currents necessary 'for understanding the widening of social struggles characteristic of the present stage of democratic politics, and for formulating a new vision for the Left in terms of radical and plural democracy' (Laclau & Mouffe 2001: xi). Obviously, Lacanian theory is not used in the same way by all these theorists and philosophers. Nor is politics and the Left understood by all of them in an identical fashion. Yet the mere possibility of formulating these different positions clearly presupposes the slow emergence of a new theoretico-political horizon: this broad horizon is what I have called the 'Lacanian Left'.[2]

This category is proposed not as an exclusive or restrictive categorization, but as a signifier capable of drawing our attention to the emergence of a distinct field of theoretical and political interventions seriously exploring the relevance of Lacan's work for the critique of sedimented social processes and contemporary hegemonic orders. At the epicenter of this emerging field

one would locate the enthusiastic, if increasingly idiosyncratic, endorsement of Lacan by Žižek; next to him, one finds the Lacan-inspired insights of Laclau and Mouffe; at the periphery – negotiating a delicate balancing act between the outside and the inside of the field, often functioning as its intimate 'others' or adversaries – one would have to locate the critical engagement of thinkers like Cornelius Castoriadis and Judith Butler. Drawing on the work of such theorists – especially Žižek and Laclau – I will try, in this short text, to familiarize the reader with the most basic Lacanian logics and conceptual innovations and to briefly sketch some of their implications for social and political theory and the analysis of culture, as well as for reflecting on the cultural, political and ethical dimensions of the recent economic crisis.

Lacan emerges, for the first time, as a distinct post-Freudian theorist, in the 1930s and 1940s, with his work on the image and the 'mirror stage' as foundational aspects of both subjective self-recognition and alienation: identifying with an external image introduces the prospect of a stable identity for the newborn, but the irreducible externality of this image entails the cost of an unavoidable alienation. Registering the linguistic and cultural turns in the social sciences, Lacanian theory will become, in the 1950s and 1960s, an integral part of the structuralist revolution, formulating a new, anti-humanist understanding of subjectivity, now focusing on language and culture as the terrains in which identity is simultaneously constructed and negated, formulated and alienated. Yet, Lacan's theoretical boldness will allow him to successively question, throughout his teaching but especially in its final part, the all-encompassing role of both *Imaginary* and *Symbolic* representation; hence his insistence on the importance of what he calls *the Real*, of a radically alienating and inaccessible fullness beyond-representation, in accounting for the complex dialectic between symbolic and affect, language and enjoyment, that sustains and/or dislocates social and political identifications, cultural dynamics, ethical and economic orders. It is precisely these aspects of Lacan's work that are today highlighted and further developed by the Lacanian Left. Not least because they allow a non-reductionist and thoroughly illuminating confluence between psychoanalysis and socio-political theory.

From individual to subject, from subject to other, from wholeness to lack

The very different but equally fascinating journeys of the Freudian and the Lacanian Left would not make sense and would never have happened if the individual and the social were autonomous, self-sufficient realms. Indeed, the fact that they have actually took place seems to corroborate the observation of a great sociologist, Norbert Elias, that categories like 'individual' and 'society' do not refer to *a priori* different objects 'existing separately', but rather to 'different yet inseparable' sides of the same object, 'of the same human beings' (Elias 1983 [1968]: 228–229); their 'autonomisation' can only be the result of a contingent process of historical – and/or intellectual – construction and sedimentation and not of any kind of analytical or empirical necessity. In a similar vein, in his famous *Rome Discourse* (1952), referring to the relation between psychoanalysis and history and to his use of historical concepts and examples in the illumination of clinical problems and challenges, Lacan denies the need for the slightest conceptual displacement, 'translation' or adaptation: there is no need to carry these remarks into the analytic domain 'since they are there already' (Lacan 1977: 52). It is, thus, far from surprising that as we enter his highly sophisticated work of the 1960s and 1970s, the distinction between individual and collective itself becomes the object of a relentless deconstruction. From a Lacanian point of view, such a distinction *does not exist*; it cannot claim any validity beyond its artificial elevation within Enlightenment's self-understanding in scientific and political discourse. It is not a coincidence,

then, that Lacan's major conceptual innovations are always articulated at the threshold between individual and collective, subjective and objective. Categories such as the *real*, the *symbolic* and the *imaginary* are neither individual nor collective. They are both or, rather, they are located beyond such conventional distinctions.

This is, after all, the paradox revealed in the psychoanalytic clinic, the major source of inspiration for psychoanalytic theory. The clinic is not about an extra-social encounter that between analyst and analysand conceived as pre-constituted individual, if not solipsistic, entities or personalities. On the contrary, the analytic relationship itself is made possible through the mediating role of social institutions such as discourse and language, without which no social bond can be established. The symbolic universe of civilization and culture provides the terrain within which the analytic relation – the so-called 'talking cure' – acquires its (inter-subjective) meaning and from which it draws its material. No wonder, then, that an 'individual' symptom – if the formulation of such an abstraction is momentarily allowed – is never alien to what Freud calls *discontents in civilization*. Indeed, what initially appears as purely individual is always implicated within a social dynamic. And *vice versa*: every social regulation and political command calls for its subjective inscription, its embodiment. Without them it remains powerless, impotent. For example, isn't it the case that, in modernity, individuation and individualism have progressed hand in hand with state sanctioned disciplinary and biopolitical techniques and the massification of culture? Isn't it the case that, already from the historical beginnings of capitalism, the idea of individual interest as the central axis of human behavior was posited as a social duty?[3] And isn't today the drive to individual consumption functioning as a social force *par excellence*, which sustains the whole economic, social and political edifice of late capitalist societies?[4]

This constitutive and continuous dialectic between individual and collective/social is, of course, not entirely new. If one goes back to Hegel and Kojève, for example, (s)he will encounter the classical Hegelian intuition that human desire is never purely individual. According to Kojève (1980 [1947]: 5), 'Human Desire must be directed toward another Desire':

> anthropogenetic Desire is different from animal Desire … in that it is directed, not toward a real, 'positive', given object, but toward another Desire … it is human to desire what others desire, because they desire it. Thus, an object perfectly useless from the biological point of view (such as a medal or the enemy's flag) can be desired because it is the object of other desires. Such a Desire can only be a human Desire, and human reality, as distinguished from animal reality, is created only by action that satisfies such Desires; human history is the history of desired Desires.
>
> *(Kojève 1980 [1947]: 6)*

We can see now how private acts of consumption are inextricably linked to an inter-subjective conditioning sustaining particular types of economic, social and political ordering. It is here that the full socio-political potential of Lacan's famous dictum is revealed, anticipating the emphasis on *homo symbolicus* and the plasticity of desire in sociological analyses of late capitalist consumer society: 'man's desire is the desire of the Other' (Lacan 1977: 78).

Simply put, even when psychoanalysis insists that the role of the subject needs to be taken seriously into account in social and political analysis – or, rather, precisely then – this call does not imply a return to an individual level marked by some intrinsic essentialist features of humanity. Subjectivity marks, above all else, the site where all such features evaporate, where they fail and falter. It marks an ontological gap, always implicated in a dialectic of civilizational, social and political dynamics. Moving beyond banal individualism – which, today, is more likely to be found in mainstream social science currents like the rational choice paradigm, rather than

in psychoanalytically inspired social and political theory – Lacan stresses the importance of the subject as *lacking*. Now, we can locate the origins of this understanding in the Freudian notion of *Spaltung* (splitting). This notion is important because it shapes Lacan's conception of the subject, in which this split appears as an ontological condition of subjectivity as such. According to Lacan, ignoring the implications of this constitutive split would amount to a betrayal of psychoanalysis: '[I]f we ignore the self's radical ex-centricity to itself with which man is confronted, in other words, the truth discovered by Freud, we shall falsify both the order and methods of psychoanalytic mediation' (Lacan 1977: 171). The subject of psychoanalysis is thus the ex-centric subject, a subject structured around a radical split, a radical lack. It is this specific understanding of subjectivity that creates the conditions necessary for a productive confluence of psychoanalytic theory and socio-political inquiry.

Indeed, there are several benefits that accrue to such a conceptualization. If objectivist versions of (social) science foreclose the subject, psychoanalysis is determined to pursue a different path. However, such a path does not legitimate simplistic or reductionist accounts of subjectivity because it avoids attributing to subjectivity a positively defined essence (such as a privileged notion of true interests/needs, a certain type of inherent rationality or a humanist foundation). Most crucially, by moving beyond individualism, by conceptualizing subjectivity in terms of lack, we can also achieve a thorough grasping of the socio-symbolic dependence of the subject: owing to the centrality of lack in the Lacanian conception of the subject, subjectivity becomes the space where a whole 'politics' of *identification* takes place. Simply put, the idea of the split subject cannot be separated from the recognition that the subject is always attempting to cover over its constitutive lack, to achieve some integration, a semblance of wholeness, through continuous identification acts. Lack stimulates *desire* and thus necessitates the constitution of every identity through processes of identification with socially available objects of identification, such as political ideologies, patterns of consumption and social roles. And this is what creates a truly *symbiotic* relation between subjectivity and the social world.

Such a radical questioning of individualism is also consistent with developments in social and political theory. We have already alluded to the work of Norbert Elias, but this is also the case in the study of ideology, discourse and the social imaginary. In fact, Marxism had already emphasized the limits of the traditional 'atomised, contained subject which ignores the latter's socio-economic formation and, for some, its determination by external forces' (Williams 2002: 24). Marxism, however, has often relied on reductionist models of identity incapable of grasping a more complex dialectic of social institution and reproduction. Althusser, Foucault and Castoriadis try to offer more sophisticated critiques of individualism. Althusser pictures the human subject as an ideological effect rather than a self-constituting agent (Althusser 1984; Howarth 2000: 94), whereas in Foucauldian discourse analysis the individual is likewise seen not as the source, the producer of discourse, but as a 'function and effect of discourse' (Howarth 2000: 53). As Cornelius Castoriadis has formulated it, the social–historical is what 'shapes' individuals (Castoriadis 1991: 84). A variety of (anti-humanist) traditions in social and psychoanalytic theory seem to converge on that: the individual cannot be constituted outside 'society'; he or she should, rather, be seen as a product, an ideological effect of the social conditioning of human existence. This social conditioning is revealed not as something that simply erodes individuality and individual freedom but as what has historically constructed it, not as an obstacle to individual desire but as its (intersubjective) condition of possibility.

Yet, for Lacan, this is not the end of the story. Obviously this construction is never complete; this social conditioning is never total, and social and political structures are ultimately unable to fully determine identity and fix desire. This is where, from a psychoanalytic point of view, a moment of subjective freedom emerges, precisely because, as Lacan has repeatedly highlighted, it

is not only the subject that is lacking: the socio-symbolic framework of reality is also incomplete, marked by a somewhat symmetrical 'lack in the Other'. As a result, the relationship between subjectivity, society and politics can be theorized only as a function of political identification within a horizon of ontological impossibility, leading to a picture characterized by a complex play of (ultimately failed) identifications, dis-identifications and renewed identifications.

Ideological domestications of lack: between language and enjoyment

As we have seen, the inability of identification acts to produce a full identity by subsuming subjective division (re)produces the radical ex-centricity of the subject and, along with it, a whole (negative) dialectics of partial fixation. At the same time, this radical alienation constitutes the condition of possibility of our (partial) freedom. Subjectivity, then, in Lacan's work, is linked not only to lack but also to our attempts to eliminate, domesticate or, at any rate, negotiate a relation with this lack that, for better or worse, does not stop re-imposing itself. One question that emerges here concerns the precise grasping of the level at which identification and identity (and its failure) matters, under what conditions and in what contexts. For instance, can socio-political analysis remain at the level of meaning or signification? If not, how should one theorize the 'material' irreducible to signification? Here, one needs to stress the productivity of the Lacanian distinction between the 'subject of the signifier' and the 'subject of enjoyment (*jouissance*)', marking Lacan's trajectory from structuralism to post-structuralism and beyond: beyond imaginary and symbolic representation.

Let us discuss these issues with reference to a crucial debate in social and political theory, the one surrounding the category of 'ideology'. From a Lacanian point of view, 'ideology' would connote all our attempts to manage subjective lack and the 'lack in the Other' through discursive articulations of reality promising to restore wholeness, to guarantee integration and harmony. The critique of such ideological fantasies would then be recast as an effort to deconstruct ideological discourse, traverse its impossible promise of utopian wholeness and fullness, and ethically register ontological lack. Lacanian theory has a lot to offer on all these fronts.

First of all, it can help us develop the tools necessary to analyze this reality as a symbolic construction. Lacanian semiology, for example, and especially such concepts as the *point de capiton*,[5] have influenced immensely the way discourse analysis deconstructs ideological signification – providing the impetus behind the conceptualization of the *nodal point* as the point of reference necessary in every articulation of meaning (Laclau & Mouffe 1985: 112): 'At first sight it could seem that what is pertinent in an analysis of ideology is only the way it functions as a discourse, the way the series of floating signifiers is totalized, transformed into a unified field through the intervention of certain "nodal points"'(Žižek 1989: 124). Indeed, this approach has been employed extensively in the analysis of a variety of contemporary ideologies. Thus, to refer to a concrete empirical example, Green ideology can be seen to comprise an articulation of differential positions, of distinct ideological moments with no *a priori* Green meaning (direct democracy, decentralization, non-violence, post-patriarchal principles, etc.). What retroactively transforms this aggregate of largely pre-existing principles into a coherent ideological chain, what stops their ideological sliding, limits re-signification and (partially) fixes their meaning, is the intervention of the nodal point 'Green', of 'Nature' as a discursive principle of organization. Following this intervention – and the ideological process of re-naming it initiates – direct democracy becomes 'Green democracy', the subordination of women is linked to the exploitation and destruction of nature, and so on.[6]

As Slavoj Žižek has cogently pointed out, this is a crucial first step in the analysis of ideological constructions. Yet, the appeal of ideological discourse and the depth of ideological

identification cannot be explained solely on ideational or semiotic grounds (Žižek 1989: 125). Ideological investment and hegemony seem to presuppose a particular relation to ideas that cannot be adequately explained with reference to ideas themselves and their rhetorical manipulation. Due to Freud's and Lacan's determination to conceptually encircle the beyond-representation, psychoanalytic theory is eminently qualified to illuminate this non-ideational aspect of ideological identification. A conceptual apparatus drawing on theorizations of libido, affect, fantasy and enjoyment (*jouissance*) can provide valuable insights in analyzing this dimension. In the words of Slavoj Žižek:

> the last support of the ideological effect (of the way an ideological network of signifiers 'holds' us) is the non-sensical, pre-ideological kernel of enjoyment. In ideology 'all is not ideology (that is, ideological meaning)', but it is this very surplus which is the last support of ideology. That is why we could say that there are also two complementary procedures of the 'criticism of ideology':
>
> – one is *discursive*, the 'symptomal reading' of the ideological text bringing about the 'deconstruction' of the spontaneous experience of its meaning – that is, demonstrating how a given ideological field is a result of a montage of heterogeneous 'floating signifiers', of their totalization through the intervention of certain 'nodal points';
>
> – the other aims at extracting the kernel of *enjoyment*, at articulating the way in which – beyond the field of meaning but at the same time internal to it – an ideology implies, manipulates, produces a pre-ideological enjoyment structured in fantasy.
>
> *(Žižek 1989: 124–125)*

Hegemony and ideological attachment cannot be fully explained at a formal level, the level of discursive articulation and signification. The *force* of a discourse, its hegemonic appeal, cannot be reduced to its *form*. Form and force need to be conceptually distinguished, and this is something Ernesto Laclau forcefully registers in his later work:

> For what rhetoric can explain is the *form* that an overdetermining investment takes, but not the *force* that explains the investment as such and its perdurability. Here something else has to be brought into the picture. Any overdetermination requires not only metaphorical condensations but also cathectic investments. That is, something belonging to the order of *affect* has a primary role in discursively constructing the social. Freud already knew it: the social link is a libidinal link. And affect …. is not something *added* to signification, but something consubstantial with it. So if I see rhetoric as ontologically primary in explaining the operations inhering in and the forms taken by the hegemonic construction of society, I see psychoanalysis as the only valid road to explain the drives behind such construction – I see it, indeed, as the only fruitful approach to the understanding of human reality.
>
> *(Laclau 2004: 326)*

Enjoyment: a political category

It is necessary, at this point, to say a few words about the concept of enjoyment (*jouissance*) Lacan uses, which differs markedly from notions of pleasure or satisfaction currently used in socio-political reflection, ranging from the rather banal (Breslin 2002) to the more sophisticated (Foucault 1998). Indeed, Lacan posits *jouissance* as always-already lost, as the part of ourselves that is sacrificed, castrated, upon entering the world of language and social norms. The prohibition of *jouissance* – the nodal point of the Oedipal drama – is exactly what permits the emergence

of desire, a desire structured around the unending quest for the lost, impossible *jouissance*. When subjectivity is conceived in terms of lack, then, this lack can be understood as a lack of *jouissance*. The fact that this *jouissance* is always-already lost, however, does not mean that it does not influence the fate and structure of identification processes. On the contrary, it may even be possible, starting from this ontological premise, to introduce a complex typology of the modes of interaction between enjoyment and the dialectics of socio-political identification.

For a start, it is the imaginary promise of recapturing our lost/impossible enjoyment that provides the fantasy support for many of our political projects, social roles and consumer choices. For example, a good portion of political discourse focuses on the delivery of the 'good life' or a 'just society', both fictions (imaginarizations) of a future state in which the current limitations thwarting our enjoyment will be overcome. The politics of utopia provides the exemplary case of the structure described here.[7] In Green discourse, to return to our previous example, this role is played by the utopian vision of a 'sustainable society' in which the harmonious balance between humanity and nature will be fully restored, simultaneously resolving all other socio-political imbalances.[8]

But this is not the full story. What sustains desire and motivates our acts of identification at an affective level is not merely reducible to some abstract fantasmatic promise of fullness. This desire and motivation are sustained also by the subject's limit-experiences linked to a *jouissance* of the body. Without such experiences, our faith in fantasmatically inflected political projects – projects which, after all, never really manage to deliver the fullness they promise – would gradually vanish. Celebratory practices associated with the defeat of a national enemy, even the success of a national football team, are examples of such experiences of enjoyment sustaining national(ist) identifications.

Yet, all these experiences remain partial, to the extent that the enjoyment experienced never equals the enjoyment promised and anticipated: '"That's not it" is the very cry by which the jouissance obtained is distinguished from the jouissance expected' (Lacan 1998 [1972–1973]: 111). Its momentary character, unable to fully satisfy desire, fuels dissatisfaction. It reinscribes alienation and lack in the subjective economy, the lack of another *jouissance*, thereby reproducing the fantasmatic promise of – and desire for – its recapture. Nevertheless, this persisting deficit has to be persuasively explained if an ideology is to retain its hegemonic appeal. Thus, very often, ideologies attribute this failure to encounter the promised harmony and enjoyment to the action of a localized enemy (the Jews, who always plot to rule the world; the immigrants, who steal our jobs; the national enemy, etc.).

Indeed, oftentimes the cause of the lack of enjoyment is attributed to someone who has 'stolen it'. Romantic national(ist) histories, for example, are frequently based on the supposition of a golden era (Ancient Greece and/or Byzantium for modern Greek nationalism, the Jewish kingdom of David and Solomon in many versions of Jewish nationalism, etc.). During this imagined golden age, the nation was prosperous and happy, only to be later destroyed by an evil 'Other', someone who deprived the nation of its enjoyment. Typically, national(ist) narratives are rooted in the desire of each generation to try and heal this (metaphoric) castration, and give back to the nation its lost full enjoyment. The identity of the evil agent who prevents the nation from recouping the enjoyment it has lost shifts as a function of historical context. In this view, the obstacle to full enjoyment shifts depending on the specificity of the fantasmatic narrative at stake, but the formal logic remains the same. The important point is that *fantasy* fosters the solidarity of the national community, consolidates national identity and animates national desire. It does this by structuring the social subject's partial enjoyment through a series of collective practices (celebrations, festivals, consumption rituals, etc.) and by reproducing itself at the level of representation in official and unofficial public discourse (both as a beatific narrative of

future harmony and as a traumatic scenario of 'theft of enjoyment') (Žižek 1993; Stavrakakis & Chrysoloras 2006; Machin 2020).

Facing such ideological mechanisms and utopian desires, a democratic political ethics can only point to the traversing of fantasy and the need to institutionalize social lack. Inscribing again and again the unbridgeable distance between our ideological/utopian reality and an always escaping *real*, which is impossible to control fully and represent, it challenges us to embrace the partiality of enjoyment, moving in a post-fantasmatic direction.

The 2008 crisis and its spirit

From a Lacanian point of view, the *symbolic* of discursive articulation: simultaneously enabling and alienating, the *imaginary* of fantasies: both harmonious and castrating and the *real* of enjoyment: fantasmatic and partial, are always dialectically implicated in producing and sustaining ideological identifications and socio-political orders. But what about the economy? For example, what can the Lacanian framework offer to an attempt to grasp the implications of the global crisis rocking the international system, state structures and subjective trajectories, at least since 2008?[9] The majority of analyses circulating in the public sphere have remained on a largely technical level, as if the economy was a predominantly technical problem for economists and technocrats, independent of any social, political and cultural context; as if economic behavior was taking place in a vacuum. Yet, this crisis was not merely a financial crisis; it was also a social, a political and an ethical crisis, above all else a *spiritual* crisis – provided, of course, that 'spirit' is used here in its Weberian sense, where it implies a particular form of obligation, a distinct ethical mode, a type of categorical imperative (Weber 2006: 45, 267). Indeed, one cannot understand economic behavior without mapping its spiritual, ethical and cultural framing; without exploring the multiple ways in which the symbolic attempts to regulate affect, libido, enjoyment. This leads us directly to the debate around the 'spirit of capitalism' initiated by Max Weber and revisited by Boltanski and Chiapello (2006) and others. It also demands that we understand the economy, first of all, as 'symbolic economy' (Goux 1990), 'affective economy' (Elias 1983), 'libidinal economy' (Lyotard 1993). And here Lacanian theory has a lot to offer.

From such a viewpoint, the 2008 crisis should be discussed against the background of a broad cultural and ethical transformation, which took place after World War II. In a nutshell, what I have in mind is the gradual dislocation of the so-called *society of prohibition*. What emerges in its place is a *society of commanded enjoyment*, as Lacanian social theorist Todd McGowan has put it (McGowan 2004: 2). While more traditional forms of social organization 'required subjects to renounce their private enjoyment in the name of social duty, today the only duty seems to consist in enjoying oneself as much as possible' (McGowan 2004: 2). This is the call that is addressed to us from all sides: the media, advertisements, even our very own friends and family.

Societies of prohibition – including early capitalist society – were founded on an idealization of sacrifice, of sacrificing enjoyment for the sake of social duty. In its initial phases, with its reliance on 'work ethic' and delayed gratification, 'capitalism sustained and necessitated its own form of prohibition' (McGowan 2004: 31). According to this perspective, the classical bourgeois attitude – and bourgeois political economy – was initially based on 'postponment, the deferral of jouissances, patient retention with a view to the supplementary jouissance that is calculated. Accumulate in order to accumulate, produce in order to produce' (Goux 1990: 203–204). This is the *first spirit of capitalism*, associated with a sense of professional duty based on 'rational asceticism' – a gradually secularized version of protestant asceticism – and the concomitant tabooing of enjoyment, conspicuous consumption (in Thorstein Veblen's sense) and luxury (Weber 2006: 149). One of the nodal points of this framework of sacrifice is 'saving': 'In the form

of the first spirit of capitalism that dominated the nineteenth century and the first third of the twentieth, saving constituted the main means of access to the world of capital and the instrument of social advancement. It was, in large part, by means of inculcating an ethic of saving that the values of self-control, moderation, restraint, hard work, regularity, perseverance, and stability prized by firms was transmitted' (Boltanski & Chiapello 2006: 152).

In our societies of commanded enjoyment, with the increasing hegemony of a *second spirit of capitalism*, 'the private enjoyment that threatened the stability of the society of prohibition becomes a stabilizing force and even acquires the status of a duty' (McGowan 2004: 3). Hence the domination of consumerist hedonism, of the endless pursuit of 'individual' enjoyment at any cost (financial, social, ecological, etc.). Isn't today's crisis a crisis of this model and of its 'spirit'? Doesn't it bring us face to face with limitations, paradoxes and contradictions deeply inscribed in the fabric of the ethical and cultural constitution of late capitalist societies? Even though the 'society of commanded enjoyment' describes itself ideologically as a *liberating* society, elevating the consumerist quest for enjoyment into the central regulative principle of the social bond does not mean that we actually enjoy more, that we can experience the fullness and wholeness promised by advertising discourse. The fantasy of a perfect, final enjoyment may stimulate our desire for consumption, but as soon as the desired product, our *object-cause of desire*, comes into our possession a first momentary experience of partial enjoyment is followed by discontent and a second moment of alienation. Once more, it seems, that the *jouissance* obtained is no match for the *jouissance* expected.

In societies of commanded enjoyment, enjoyment makes sense predominantly as a duty: 'duty is transformed into a duty to enjoy, which is precisely the commandment of the superego' (McGowan 2004: 34). The seemingly innocent and benevolent call to 'enjoy!' – as in 'Enjoy Coca-Cola!' – embodies the violent dimension of an irresistible commandment. Lacan was perhaps the first to elaborate on the importance of this paradoxical hybrid when he linked the command 'enjoy!' with the superego: 'The superego is the imperative of *jouissance* – Enjoy!' (Lacan 1998 [1972–1973]: 3). He was, indeed, one of the first to detect in this innocent call the unmistakable mark of power and authority. Thus Lacan is offering a revealing insight on what has been described as the 'consuming paradox': while consumerism seems to broaden our opportunities, choices and experiences as individuals, it also directs us towards predetermined channels of behavior and thus it 'is ultimately as constraining as it is enabling' (Miles 1998: 147).

The command to enjoy is nothing but an advanced, much more nuanced – and much more difficult to resist – form of power. It is more effective than the traditional model not because it is less constraining or less binding but because its violent exclusionary aspect is masked by its fantasmatic vow to enhance enjoyment, by its productive, enabling *facade*: it does not oppose and prohibit but openly attempts to embrace and appropriate *the subject of enjoyment*. Not only is this novel articulation of power and enjoyment hard to recognize and to thematize; it is even harder to de-legitimize in practice, to dis-invest consumption acts and dis-identify with consumerist fantasies. However, without such a dis-investment and the ethical cultivation of alternative (post-fantasmatic) administrations of *jouissance* no real change can be effected. This is the challenge, both political and subjective, that the 2008 crisis seems to have addressed to each and every one of us. Notwithstanding the political upheaval(s) that followed, the emergence of new movements (for example, the Indignados in countries like Spain as well as the Occupy movement in the US), parties (like PODEMOS or the Bernie Sanders presidential candidacies) and governments (like the SYRIZA coalition in the Greek context), not much has changed, precisely because no major shifts in the psycho-social structure of enjoyment have been accomplished. One might have thought that the COVID-19 crisis and the lockdown measures implemented in many countries globally

could have a greater potential to effect such a change (especially whenever the social and political implications will become clearer). But this still remains to be seen.[10]

Conclusion

If it is today possible to speak about a Lacanian Left, if Lacanian theory constitutes one of the most dynamic resources in the ongoing reorientation of social and political theory, it is because Lacan's re-elaboration of Freudian psychoanalysis has allowed a non-reductionist formulation of subjectivity. The subject, marked by a constitutive lack, becomes the locus of a complex politics of identification. Lack stimulates *desire* and thus necessitates the constitution of every identity through processes of identification with socially available objects. Ideology constitutes precisely such an object of identification. Incorporating but, simultaneously, moving beyond the effects of the 'linguistic turn' on social and political theory, a Lacan-inspired approach to ideology and discourse highlights the two axes on which every identification operates: semiotic and affective/libidinal, discursive articulation and administration of enjoyment, form and force.

Indeed enjoyment, Lacan's *jouissance*, emerges here as a central political category. It refers to what is sacrificed through the socialization process, to the castrated part of ourselves that, as lacking, does not stop conditioning our desire. It is the imaginary promise of recapturing this lost/impossible enjoyment that provides the fantasy support for many of our political projects, the most obvious case being utopian constructions. Such fantasmatic promises, however, cannot sustain their hegemonic appeal without partial experiences of enjoyment and, most crucially, without blaming someone else for their ultimate inability to restore subjective wholeness and social fullness, for the 'theft of enjoyment'. It is here that the other side of the pursuit of harmony is revealed: hatred, demonization, persecution.

Far from being a technocratic issue beyond social and political control, the economy is also conditioned by the dynamic dialectic between the *symbolic* level of ethical command, the *imaginary* of fantasy and the *real* of (partial) enjoyment. In late capitalist *societies of commanded enjoyment* this dialectic leads to the hegemony of a duty to enjoy that conceals its violent constraining aspect behind its fantasmatic vow to enhance enjoyment, behind a liberating promise securing our 'voluntary servitude'. How will it eventually become possible to bring this into consciousness and to explore alternative post-fantasmatic forms of ethical, socio-political and economic ordering?

Notes

1. An earlier 'movement' that included Marcuse, Reich and Roheim; see Robinson (1969).
2. For a detailed account of the Lacanian Left and a critical presentation of the most prominent figures associated with this orientation, see Stavrakakis (2007).
3. See, for a paradigmatic articulation of this argument, Hirschman (1977).
4. We shall return to this question in the final section of this text.
5. A concept originating from the Lacanian theorization of psychosis; see Lacan (1992 [1955–1956]: 267–268).
6. This analysis of Green ideology is elaborated in detail in Stavrakakis (1997a).
7. For an analysis of utopian discourse along these lines, see Stavrakakis (1999, especially Chapter 4).
8. This argument is developed in more detail in Stavrakakis (1997b).
9. See, as an introduction to a psychoanalytic take on the economy, Tomsic (2015); Vighi (2016); Tomsic (2020), as well as Walkerdine (2020).
10. For a first commentary from a partly Lacanian view, see Žižek (2020).

Yannis Stavrakakis

References

Althusser, L. (1984) *Essays on Ideology*, London: Verso.

Boltanski, L. and Chiapello, E. (2006) *The New Spirit of Capitalism*, London: Verso.

Breslin, Th. (2002) *Beyond Pain: The Role of Pleasure and Culture in the Making of Foreign Affairs*, Westport: Praeger Publishers.

Castoriadis, C. (1991) *Philosophy, Politics, Autonomy*, New York: Oxford University Press.

Elias, N. (1983 [1968]) 'Appendix I: Introduction to the 1968 Edition', in *The Civilizing Process, vol. 1: The History of Manners*, Oxford: Blackwell.

Foucault, M. (1998) *The History of Sexuality, vol. 1: The Will to Knowledge*, London: Penguin.

Goux, J.-J. (1990) *Symbolic Economies*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Hirschman, A. (1977) *The Passions and the Interests*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Howarth, D. (2000) *Discourse*, Buckingham: Open University Press.

Kojève, A. (1980 [1947]) *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Lacan, J. (1977 [1966]) *Écrits: A Selection*, London: Tavistock/Routledge.

Lacan, J. (1979 [1964]) *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*, London: Penguin.

Lacan, J. (1993 [1955–1956]) *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan. Book III: The Psychoses, 1955–56*, London: Routledge.

Lacan, J. (1998 [1972–1973]) *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan. Book XX: Encore, On Feminine Sexuality, The Limits of Love and Knowledge, 1972–3*, New York: Norton.

Laclau, E. (2004) 'Glimpsing the Future: A Reply', in S. Critchley and O. Marchart (eds.) *Laclau: A Critical Reader*, London: Routledge.

Laclau, E. and C. Mouffe (2001 [1985]) *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, London: Verso.

Lyotard, J.-F. (1993 [1974]) *Libidinal Economy*, London: Athlone Press.

Machin, A. (2020) 'Nationalism', in Y. Stavrakakis (ed.) *Routledge Handbook of Psychoanalytic Political Theory*, New York: Routledge.

McGowan, T. (2004) *The End of Dissatisfaction? Jacques Lacan and the Emerging Society of Enjoyment*. Albany: SUNY.

Miles, S. (1998) *Consumerism – As a Way of Life*, London: Sage.

Robinson, P. (1969) *The Freudian Left*, New York: Harper and Row.

Stavrakakis, Y. (1997a) 'Green Ideology: A Discursive Reading', *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 2(3), 259–279.

Stavrakakis, Y. (1997b) 'Green Fantasy and the Real of Nature: Elements of a Lacanian Critique of Green Ideological Discourse', *Journal for the Psychoanalysis of Culture and Society*, 2(1), 123–132.

Stavrakakis, Y. (1999) *Lacan and the Political*, London and New York: Routledge.

Stavrakakis, Y. (2007) *The Lacanian Left*, Albany: SUNY Press.

Stavrakakis, Y. and N. Chrysoloras (2006) '(I Can't Get No) Enjoyment: Lacanian Theory and the Analysis of Nationalism', *Psychoanalysis, Culture and Society*, 11, 144–163.

Tomsic, S. (2015) *The Capitalist Unconscious: Marx and Lacan*, London: Verso.

Tomsic, S. (2020) 'Capitalism', in Y. Stavrakakis (ed.) *Routledge Handbook of Psychoanalytic Political Theory*, New York: Routledge.

Vighi, F. (2016) 'Capitalist Bulimia: Lacan on Marx and Crisis', *Crisis & Critique*, 3(3), 415–432.

Walkerdine, V. (2020) 'Neoliberalism', in Y. Stavrakakis (ed.) *Routledge Handbook of Psychoanalytic Political Theory*, New York: Routledge.

Weber, M. (2006 [1905]) *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, Athens: Gutenberg (in Greek).

Williams, C. (2002) 'The Subject and Subjectivity', in A. Finlayson and J. Valentine (eds.) *Politics and Post-structuralism: An Introduction*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Žižek, S. (1989) *The Sublime Object of Ideology*, London: Verso.

Žižek, S. (1993) *Tarrying with the Negative*, Durham: Duke University Press.

Žižek, S. (2020) *Pandemic! COVID_19 Shakes the World*, Cambridge: Polity.

4

The Marxist legacy

Peter Beilharz

What is the fate of Marxism, 150 years after its original inception at the hands of Marx and Engels? The results of this story are mixed and contradictory. On the one hand, Marxism seems completely exhausted, expired, perhaps returned to the mainstream as the renewed common sense that capitalism is the central world power and protean agent of creative destruction. We are all Marxists now, perhaps again, especially after the Global Meltdown. On the other hand, the status of Marxism is newly marginal, at least in the hands of transatlantic university radicals, for whom Marxism remains the truth. For Marxism became the *de facto* consciousness of a good part of the global radical or university left into the 1960s, and its residual influence is still apparent but often unworldly.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, it was apparent that Marxism had some significant influence in civil society, at least in countries such as Germany, where the Social Democratic Party claimed to enshrine Marxist values. But the SPD was, infamously, a society within a society, and socialism has long acted historically as the counterculture of modernity. At the end of the twentieth century, the picture was unrecognizably different. After the Russian Revolution, which no one had expected in 1900, Marxism became the ideology of Soviet state power. After 1989, the world power that was Soviet communism had disintegrated, and Marxism was presented in the media a museum piece. But then there was globalization, and Marxism again became a presence, as the mistranslated image of *The Communist Manifesto*, 'all that is solid melts into air' was rediscovered as the *urtext* of the creative destruction process itself. For the other side, meantime, for the opponents of Marxism, Marx could be portrayed as the evil genius who somehow was vitally responsible for the Soviet disaster itself.

How do we find a way through all these trails and clues, to begin to make sense of the Marxist legacy today? This chapter makes five moves in this direction. The first, on Marx, addresses the moment of theoretical establishment. All discussion here must still begin from the question of the nature of Marx's project. The second section addresses the theoretical mainstreaming of Marxism after Marx. Often referred to as the period of classical Marxism, this centres on the experience of the German Social Democrats and the challenges they faced in seeking to reconcile reformist practice with (often) revolutionary rhetoric. But this moment was lost to vision, in effect, when the Bolsheviks seized Russian state power in the name of Marx, and Marxism henceforth was identified with Soviet state power, a political and historic elision from which the emancipatory project of Marx would never recover. The third phrase discussed here involves the revival of the Marxian

legacy, often via the heritage of critical theory, into the 1960s. Humanist Marxism reemerged in this period, only to be suppressed again in a fourth phase, here referred to as the Return of the Hard Left. Under the influence of Louis Althusser and his followers, Marxism took a scientific and renewed Bolshevik, first pro-Soviet, then pro-Chinese turn. Fifth, and finally for our purposes there, there is the intriguing and divided phenomenon of post-Marxism, itself formed in the wake of the postmodern. The post-Marxist moment bifurcates into two streams, one of which is fundamentalist and revivalist, the other of which wears its Marxism as a light cloak.

Marx's project

Did Marx have a project, or is this a category we impose on his work, like that of others, after the fact? There are many ways to read Marx, or various Marxes available to us. If we begin from the necessary sense that Marx is the starting point, then we also need to accept that we are all after Marx, and in this sense we are all post-Marxists, literally after Marx and after Marxism, the latter understood as the world-historic project of transforming the world announced by Marx in his Theses on Feuerbach.

Marx can be read as poet, follower of world literature, journalist, revolutionary, historian, or philosophical anthropologist. These days we often classify him as a sociologist, though that thought would never have occurred to him. One way to identify the unity of his thought is to read it as the critique of political economy. This is one arc that holds together the major instalments of his work, from the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* (Marx 1844) to the *Grundrisse* (Marx 1973 [1858], *Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* (Marx 1859) through to its culmination in *Capital* (Marx 1867).

If economics was to become the dominant discipline into the twentieth century, political economy was already making this claim to hegemony a century earlier. Of course, its ambit was broader than that of economics. Political economy was a moral philosophy, that discourse which enquired into the origin of new wealth and its social consequences. Marx's original critique of political economy was based on its failure to historicize. Rather than explaining capital as private property, political economy universalized it. Rather than viewing capital as a process, it viewed capital as the effective cause of labour, whereas in fact, Marx claimed, it was the other way around: labour produced capital, capital was only dead or stored-up labour. As he was later to suggest, capital was like the vampire or the werewolf that consumed labour up without mercy. And this was to become a significant part of Marx's style, or dramaturgy, where images of magic, enchantment, and the supernatural all jostled together, where capitalism was a phenomenon like the world of the sorcerer's apprentice. The spells that had let loose these demonic forces could no longer easily be controlled or reversed. This, in turn, becomes a significant tension throughout Marx's work, where humans both have agency to change the world and are simultaneously entrapped within processes beyond their ken and influence. But can we be both, at the same time, or only one or other?

Marx's early critique of political economy asserted the centrality of alienated labour to capitalism. The object of socialism, then, would be the pursuit of the autonomous or creative capacity to labour, to make the world through expression. This is what pitted Marx against 'primitive communism'. Socialism, for Marx, could only be imagined as the freely achieved results of the collective labourer. In this, while Marx is often pictured as the man of Enlightenment, he is also the best son of Romanticism (Beilharz 1994). For like Schiller, and differently, Rousseau, Marx dreams of a human wholeness, of a world before the division of labour and its cult of fragmentation. Marx's original utopia, concealed behind his and Engels' public disdain for writing recipes for the cook shops of the future, is plainly rural and romantic (Beilharz 1992). Marx's utopia only becomes grey, rather than green, as he himself adjusts to the sense of industrialism's permanency,

its non-reversibility. While the younger Marx identifies freedom or autonomy with this sense of return to control over the labour process, the later Marx concedes that perhaps freedom may be found only outside labour, in the creative space mode available by the free time afforded by automation. This is part of the fascination of Marx's work, that it changes colour irreversibly across the opening phase of the cultural revolution of modernity.

Marx and Engels confuse this situation by insisting that their position is that of communism, not socialism (Beilharz 1992). This is proleptic, for as Durkheim showed in his Bordeaux lectures on socialism, the commune is passed; socialism, understood rather as the response to scale, complexity, and the need for regulation is modern, whereas the idea of communism historically rendered is indeed premodern. Marx and Engels sought what we would now call product differentiation or at least distinction for their views. They wanted to insist not only that their view was distinct from that of the crackpot dreamers (seas of lemonade, etc.) of utopia, but also that their socialism was in some sense or other necessary or scientific, evolutionary, the necessary consequence of feudal and capitalist development and its crowning glory. Marx thus built his project on an unresolved tension between the need for action, revolutionary or other, and the dull compulsions of material life, where the working class had no alternative but to sell their labour in order to survive. His hopes for revolution were pinned on various possibilities, some voluntary, and some structural. He believed that the association of labourers on the factory floor itself would encourage socialism; that it was necessary actively to change the world, not just to interpret it; that capitalism would collapse under the weight of its own contradictions, such as the tendency of the profit rate to fall; and that socialism would be the next, best evolutionary form for capitalist dynamism to take. He believed all these things at once, or at different moments of his life, or more precisely he left a series of hints as to possible sources of change without ever developing a coherent theory of revolution (Draper 1977).

Marx projected revolutionary capacity onto the proletariat itself. Socialism became the world-historic vocation of the proletariat. But the wage-slaves remained tied to the wheel, and then later, after the post-war boom, their political and labour representatives became the best lieutenants of capitalist expansion (Bauman 1972). One thing, however, that Marx did not do, in all this, was develop a theory of the vanguard party. The essential revolutionary sympathy of Marx is with the idea of working-class self-activity or capitalist collapse leading to socialism. Very few Marxists, Russians included, believed in the combat communist party, the object of which was to seize state power, before 1917. Even Trotsky was still sympathetic to Menshevism, or the reforming stream in Russian Marxism. The idea of the combat or conspirational party, 'one wise man worth a hundred fools', arrived only with Lenin (1902) in *What Is to Be Done?* Even Lenin (1899) adhered to the principles of classical Marxism in his greater achievement, *The Development of Capitalism in Russia*.

Marxism after Marx

Marx died in 1883. It was only after his death that Marxism became identified with a party, or movement: the German Social Democratic Party. Karl Marx called himself a communist, but he was no Bolshevik. He would have called himself a revolutionary, but he was no putschist.

Engels died in 1895. By that stage, Engels had conceded the possibility of an electoral or parliamentary road to socialism. Indeed, if the proletariat made up the vast majority of the population, why should they not simply vote socialism in, once the popular franchise had been sufficiently expanded? This was the context for the formation of classical Marxism.

The SPD combined any number of political tendencies, but it is conventional to differentiate between three (Beilharz 1992). One was represented by Rosa Luxemburg, a spontaneist

revolutionary in the spirit of Marx, an opponent of what she called 'barracks socialism' but a revolutionary all the same. By the dawn of the new century, the status quo in the SPD was predictable but embarrassing. It was a party of reform, but with revolutionary credentials. It worked through the networks of civil society, generating a thick, alternative culture of clubs, societies, mutual aid facilities, and so on. But it never put away the Sunday china which called for Revolution. This is where the standard jokes about pragmatic socialists come from parlour pinks, or else like radishes, red on the outside, white on the inside. Luxemburg's revolutionary response was to demand that the SPD's politics be brought into line with its rhetoric. If it claimed to be revolutionary, then the SPD should be prepared to behave in a revolutionary way. The best representative of the second view, the reformist, or right-wing alternative, was Eduard Bernstein. Bernstein called not only for reform, for the adjustment of rhetoric towards the reformist practice of the SPD, but also for revision, for the rejection of Marx's axioms about class bipolarization and the alleged decline of the middle class. As far as Bernstein could see, the middle class was expanding. Marxism or social democracy would need to factor this vital change into its worldview and practice if it was to have a significant effect on the world locally, in Germany.

The third dominant position in the SPD, which in a sense was hegemonic, was associated with the views of the 'Pope of Marxism', Karl Kautsky. Kautsky was happy to sit on the contradiction, to argue for the necessity of maintaining revolutionary rhetoric and reformist practice. Comrades could live with contradiction. 'We are a revolutionary, but not a revolution-making party'. Kautsky held onto the automatic theme in Marx, wherein the fullness of time socialism would emerge, later. Always later. As August Bebel, another Social Democratic father put it, socialism would drop into our laps like a ripe fruit. And this, indeed, was widespread Marxist common sense until the political arrival, later in Italy, of Antonio Gramsci. Gramsci's great realization was that, left to itself, the way the world worked was that the other guys won; or to put it more precisely, whoever mobilized hegemony successfully would win. Gramsci returned Marxism, in a sense, to its 1840s inflexion in Marx's project. Here, will was everything; necessity was a theological category, and the idea that socialism would necessarily arrive by itself was a political disaster, an invitation to reaction or at least to the reactionaries at the door.

The achievement of German Social Democracy was thus an extraordinary combination of institution- and culture-building in this world held together with the redemptive or religious belief in the coming of the new world. This German culture in turn dominated that of the Second International. The Second International collapsed in August 1914, after German SPD parliamentary representatives voted for war credits, and the hope of internationalism foundered on that great emergent reality of the twentieth century, nationalism. But the dominance of the SPD in the world socialist movement was really punctured only in October 1917, when the Russian Bolsheviks took state power.

Enthusiasm for the Russian Revolution was initially widespread. After all, the Bolsheviks had done something, whereas the grand old men of social democracy only ever talked about it. While Gramsci was not a hard Leninist, he too enthused for the radical and voluntarist nature of the breach they had entered into. Gramsci (1918) indicated this in an essay entitled 'The Revolution Against Capital'. His argument was twofold. The Russian Revolution was a revolution against capital, but it was also a revolution against the complacency that had followed *Das Kapital*. Waiting for the revolution had finally been shown as the sham it was; the Bolsheviks had shown the will to act, to lead.

Gramsci's own enthusiasm got the better of him. The Russian Revolution was not a Revolution against Capital, but a revolution against a decadent feudalism which held some major nodes of capitalist development developing within it. This was precisely Gramsci's later insight, that while it was courageous the Bolshevik Revolution really just pushed over a rotting Tsarist

edifice. This meant that the enormity and ultimate impossibility of the task that the Bolsheviks had set themselves only slowly became apparent. After Lenin's death in 1924 and Trotsky's exile in 1927, Stalin set out to build the primary accumulation of capital in the Soviet Union by coercion and terror of a kind that made the Enclosure Acts pale into insignificance in their own levels of violence and destruction. Gramsci's insight shifted into the sense that, again contra Marx, the presenting issue for Marxists now was not the anatomy of political economy but the power and persuasion of civil society.

The banner and beacon of revolutionary Marxism, meanwhile, was taken on by the lonely figure of Leon Trotsky. Originally in sympathy with the spontaneism and anti-Jacobinism of Rosa Luxemburg, Trotsky in power became the best of Bolsheviks (Beilharz 1982). Marginalized, expelled, and finally murdered by Stalin in Mexico City in 1940, Trotsky became the leader of the loyal opposition, and a major intellectual influence on the post-war left (Beilharz 1987). Always full of revolutionary optimism, Trotsky remained convinced that the conditions for world revolution were ripe, that all that was lacking was the appropriate kind of Trotskyist leadership. His advocacy of the idea and slogan of Permanent Revolution also indicated a doubling. One aspect of the Permanent Revolution was the claimed inevitability of socialist revolution; whatever form a revolution initially now took, it would consequently grow over into socialist revolution. But second, all revolutions would spread globally; revolution could no longer be contained at national borders, except by the treachery of Stalin's 'socialism in one country'. Many of the finest left-wing minds came to follow this position of Trotsky's, from Isaac Deutscher to Ernest Mandel, C. L. R. James, Raya Dunayevskaya, Perry Anderson, and *New Left Review* more generally. The sticking point, for this tradition, was to be found in the question of the nature of the Soviet Union, and whether the traditional categories of Marxist thinking could explain it. Was the Soviet Union, by the 1930s, still recognizably socialist? Should it rather be called capitalist, or state capitalist? Only the more innovative of thinkers, from Bruno Rizzi and James Burnham to Heller, Fehér, and Markus could step outside of the conventional Marxist categories in order to argue that Soviet societies were a new kind of modernity *sui generis* (Fehér, Heller, and Markus 1982). Whether analytically or politically, the Soviet Union had become a kind of fatal attraction for Marxists the world about. Yet some, from Kautsky on, had always refused the possibility that socialism could be built in the USSR. They were right, and Marx would have agreed with them. Socialism would come after capitalism, or it would not come at all.

The Marxian legacy

If we understand Marx's project as the critique of political economy, a social-philosophical critical theory with an emancipatory intention, then its ethical distance from Bolshevism, let alone Stalinism, will be apparent. Yet the elision of these differences, and the careless identification of Marx and Bolshevism, remains. Marx is widely, and quite mistakenly viewed as a totalitarian. But even viewed simply as an historical trend, totalitarianism is twentieth century, Marx nineteenth, and while culture is fundamental, ideas do not themselves have this kind of causal effect. Marx wanted to change the world, or that we should ourselves change it, but what he bequeathed us intellectually was a critical theory with an emancipatory intent.

The idea of critical theory, in the context of the history of Marxism, is usually associated with the Frankfurt School for Social Research. In terms of its reception, critical theory is often reduced to the cultural pessimism associated with works such as Horkheimer's and Adorno's *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (Adorno and Horkheimer 1944) and Marcuse's (1964) *One-dimensional Man*. The Frankfurt School achieved much else besides (Wiggershaus 1994), but its main theses did indeed include this idea of modernity as entrapment, Marx plus Weber, as it were in the

early period spirit of Kafka's *Metamorphosis*. Critical theory can indeed be viewed as Marx plus Weber, commodification plus rationalization. Two earlier intellectual links helped to make this bond, well before *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, and long before critical theory became a kind of household word for radicals.

The first significant link in this process was provided by Georg Lukács, in his 1923 essay 'Reification and the Consciousness of the Proletariat' (Lukács 1971). Lukács was a Hungarian Marxist taken in by Weber to his Sunday circle. His essay was a brilliant synthesis of Marx's and Weber's themes of commodification and rationalization, the more remarkable as it anticipated the motifs of Marx's Paris writings, unavailable in any language until 1932. Lukács' work anticipated the work of Karl Löwith, who in that year (1932) pinned Weber and Marx together in his brilliant essay *Max Weber and Karl Marx*. Löwith viewed Marx and Weber not as combatants, as in the infamous image of Weber as 'the bourgeois Marx', but as social philosophers with a primary interest in the human condition in modernity. The difference between them, according to Löwith, was that they characterized this condition differently – Marx through the image of alienation (the Paris writings now having become available), Weber through the master-image of rationalization (Löwith 1932). Obviously, there remained significant differences between Marx and Weber, not least those of disposition, over the ethics of responsibility versus the ethics of ultimate ends, the respective weight given to material and ideal factors in history, and so on. Yet Marx's revolutionary rhetoric became hollow when read against the fatalistic logic of the argument concerning commodity fetishism. The problem, for Marxists, seemed now to be that we were stuck with capitalism and that things only got worse when hothead Bolsheviks tried to short-circuit history by barging into 'socialism' now.

For the critical theorists the scenario was different. The German working-class movement had failed to rise to the moment into the later 1920s. Even without the disastrous experience of fascism, capitalism had shown enormous resilience and integrative capacity. This argument was revived into the 1960s when Marx's early work became available in English, and student radicalism peaked. Its best exemplification was in Marcuse's *One-dimensional Man* (1964). By this stage, the idea of totalitarianism, further popularized by Orwell's *1984* (1948), had spread to the west. The inmates of modernity, or at least their radical representatives, began to fear that totalitarianism was not specific to Stalinism or Nazism, but was endemic to capitalism, even to modernity itself. The iron cage was everywhere; conformism was abundant. The United States was bombing the daylights out of Vietnam, and governments such as that in Australia had reintroduced military conscription. It may not have been totalitarian, but on some days it seemed hard to tell.

Critical theory was sometimes teased for its aristocratic components, its disinclination to praise popular culture, jazz or Americanism, its sometimes overwhelming sense of cultural pessimism, and all these sentiments echo the larger and older traditions of aristocratic radicalism, for which the old world, in general, was better than the brashness and shock of the new. The European critique of modernity was born as a critique of the mass, mass society, mass production, mass migration, the mass man, the image of life based on the factory, on its regimentation and yes-men, the conformism of following orders. This was also Marcuse's anxiety into the 1960s – that the ludic or erotic components of being had been submerged into dull regimes of compliance, consumption, and getting on. Perhaps this was the moment when sociology began to shifts its focus from the realm of production to that of consumption. Gramsci had already anticipated the cultural turn in Marxian 30 years earlier.

Marcuse was not the only high-profile critical theorist, though the fact that he remained in the USA after Horkheimer and Adorno returned to Germany placed him strategically to be more significantly influential into the 1960s. More, he wrote in jeremiad form, unlike the laconic and dense Adorno, anticipating, in this sense, the later popularity of Zygmunt Bauman,

another critical Cassandra figure. The second generation of critical theory became associated especially with the work and figure of Jűrgen Habermas, who turned back to the inspiration of Kantian universalism. Where Marcuse saw systemic closure and frustration, Habermas saw possibilities for change, reform, and democratization. His early work drew together Marxian and Weberian themes and filaments, again seeking a critical theory with a practical or emancipatory intention in the manner of Marx.

Critical theory simultaneously began to pluralize in the East European regimes which had been established as extensions of the Soviet empire after World War II. Into the 1960s dissident forms of humanist Marxism were emerging in Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Poland. In Hungary the students of Lukács formed the Budapest School, who like others held the radical principles of Marx against the state which claimed to rule in the name of Marx. Its leading figures – Agnes Heller, Ferenc Fehér, Ivan Szelenyi, George, and Maria Markus – left to seek exile in Australia, where they made significant contributions to the critique of Soviet-type societies, among other things. Leading dissidents in Poland, including Zygmunt Bauman, Leszek Kolakowski, and Wlodzimierz Brus, were 'allowed to leave' in 1969. The Yugoslav movement gave birth to *Praxis* and then to *Praxis International*. Of all these, Bauman perhaps became the most significant follower of the critical theory of modernity. His most influential mid-career book, *Modernity and the Holocaust*, both builds on and extends the classical Frankfurt tradition of *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (Bauman 1989). Here modernity also turns back and feeds upon itself (Beilharz 2000).

These kinds of developments were more influential in the United States than in Britain. British Marxism, powerfully influenced by *New Left Review*, began with some sympathy for radical humanism but soon cashed this in for the harder edge and stiffer scientific claims of Althusserian Marxism. Journals like *Telos*, whose earlier sympathies were for phenomenological Marxism, gave the critical theory a better reception across the Atlantic, while purpose-built or dedicated journals like *New German Critique* also promoted critical theory and its co-currents and trends. *Telos* also further promoted the work of Gramsci, which was kick-started in Australia by Alastair Davidson in 1968, three years before *Selections from the Prison Notebooks* became available (Davidson 1968; Gramsci 1971). Finally, *Telos* and then *Thesis Eleven* helped to profile the work of Cornelius Castoriadis, where the Marxian project was reformed as the project of autonomy. As Howard (1977) showed in his *Marxian Legacy*, there was a libertarian line that ran from the young Marx through to Rosa Luxemburg, then later to Castoriadis. Dunayevskaya (1958) had anticipated this lineage earlier, in significant period works such as *Marxism and Freedom*. For these thinkers, socialism would be democratic or it would not be at all. Only this urging failed sufficiently to contemplate its own outcome: that it would not be at all.

The hard left

Humanism was a sitting duck for those with harder heads. What did it mean, to say that because we (or our forebears) had made this world, we could remake it, make it anew? Were there not harder structures or systems which would bounce back, fail to respond to hippie enthusiasms and the wash of good intentions? The hard left was not given to endorsing Marcuse, but they often seemed to share his sense that the beast of modernity (or rather, capitalism) would not respond to suggestion, or to the ballot box. Something more forceful, more revolutionary, would be required. The work of Louis Althusser offered the necessary toolkit. Althusser wanted Marxism to be a science, and its politics to be revolutionary, the latter at least until the French events of May 1968, when revolution was made by Althusser to look more like a good idea than a practical project. Althusser intervened powerfully into a dispute which now likely looks arcane, but kept Marxologists in work for a long time. This was the dispute over the Young versus the Mature Marx.

Into the 1960s the new Marx, the newly discovered Marx, was the Marx of the Paris Manu-scripts. These are, as Marx once wrote to Engels in their later years, green, in contrast to the later grey of theory and the dull industrial culture of factory civilization which it sought to explain. Reading the young Marx was fun, more or less; reading *Capital*, in contrast, was hard work. Althusser sternly took on the duty of reading *Capital*, writing a very serious book called *Reading Capital*, and insisting that we should all read *Capital* seriously, in its multiple volumes, preferably in the original (Althusser and Balibar 1970). The early Marx was Marx before he was Marx, foreplay rather than the real action. *Capital* was taken to represent a new form of knowledge, building upon a significant epistemological break or rupture. We all became epistemologists. Nobody seemed to notice that this was a step away from practice, rather than towards it. But these were times of great seriosity, and high illusions, as well as very serious scholarship.

Yet there was something important in this mission. Marx's early writings give us the perspec-tive of his laboratory. We can watch him thinking, and it can be an exhilarating experience. But his life's work was *Capital*, and the architectonic of that work repays serious close reading. Rightly or wrongly, Marx had become convinced that the mode of presentation of this work was crucial; that there was a best way to explain capital, and that he had sorted it out. He was also convinced that capital was the privileged category, to be accessed via the logic of the commodity form. It did seem something of an irony that none, or few, of the Marxists had read Marx, because it was too hard. And this was part and parcel of the story of the fate of Marxism. Engels, Kautsky (the pope of Marxism), then Lenin, and finally Stalin had reduced Marx's theory to a series of axioms or platitudes about surplus value, historical and finally dialectical materialism. Marxists got by reciting these axioms in their daily denunciations of capitalism. Marxism had become its own caricature.

Althusser blew the whistle on this state of affairs. After Althusser, it was inadmissible for Marx-ists to cut corners. They were now compelled to deal with their own theoretical heritage. A few clichés concerning the ubiquity of alienation and the need for revolution would no longer do.

Some followed Althusser slavishly, replacing old clichés with new. Others such as Nicos Poulant-zas took more interesting paths. Poulantzas picked upon some of the staples of Marxist sociology, such as class and the state, and history, with reference to the problems of fascism and dictatorship. But all of this ended badly. Poulantzas committed suicide, leaving a fine book, *State, Power, Socialism* (Poulantzas 1979) which also responded to the legacy of Rosa Luxemburg. Althusser murdered his wife, and himself died a sad and lonely death (Althusser 1993). Althusser flirted with Maoism; Poulantzas with the then significant European trend called Eurocommunism.

Across the Channel, Althusserianism had the peculiar echo-effect apparent in the work of Hindess and Hirst. They took on the period interest of Marxist historians and anthropologists in modes of production. Their initial purpose was to generate a non-historical theory of history. As their collaboration eased, Hindess turned via Foucault to matters of political philosophy, Hirst to broad problems of radical English ideas, Thatcherism, and the critique of globalization-talk.

One of the ironies of the Althusserian experiment was that while it was dismissive of history, in contrast to theory, historians drank here as well. Marxist history had been steered hitherto by humanists such as Thompson (1978), who bombed Althusser in *The Poverty of Theory*. Marxist historiography nevertheless became more sophisticated in dialogue with Althusser, as is evident in the work of the *Radical History Review* or *History Workshop Journal*. Stronger Marxist views like those of Immanuel Wallerstein, mediated by the work of the *Annales* School and Fernand Braudel, became highly influential as world-systems analysis via the Braudel Centre's *Review*. Althusserian Marxism remains influential still today in journals such as *Rethinking Marxism*.

Alternative positions had been sketched out by culturally sensitive thinkers such as Henri Lefe-bvre in Paris and Stuart Hall in London. Marxism's influence spread out through the cultural turn, into cultural studies and later into geography and urban studies. The work of Castells helped

to carry it through into work on networks, globalization, and the information society. The stiff edge of structural Marxism shifted into the school called analytical Marxism, where analytical logic was taken to be the vital supplement which would fill Marx's deficit or add the newly necessary ingredient. This is indeed one way to view the history of academic Marxism, especially with its institutionalization in western universities after World War II. Marxists often respond to their predicament in an additive or supplementary manner. Some add phenomenology, some add structuralism. Some add epistemology, some add analytic logic or psychoanalysis or mathematics. Some seek to add culture, following Gramsci. The difference between this way of thinking, often fashion-prone and sometimes smelling of desperation, and the tradition of Critical Theory is that when Weber meets Marx the result is transformative, a synthesis of both theoretical perspectives. For critical theory, the contribution of Weber is not regional, but fundamental. It is not catalytic but is itself transformed in the process. This might be one reason explaining its persistence.

Post-Marxism

After Marx, there are the Marxists. Karl Marx famously denied that he was a Marxist. Then, after the Marxists, there are now the post-Marxists. All this is historically necessary. We are all, now, after Marx, and in a different sense we are also after Marxism, in its classical form. As a theoretical legacy, classical Marxism in the manner of Kautsky persists. But in a historical sense, the classical Marxism of the German Social Democrats is eclipsed by the victory of the Bolsheviks, who successfully appropriated the name of Marxism for themselves. Into a bipolar, and then Cold War world, it suits both protagonists, American and Soviet alike, to identify Marxism and Stalinism. Marxists, of course, persist, not least as the bearers of the Trotskyist illusion, that they are the true inheritors of Lenin and the loyal opposition. Castoriadis, himself momentarily a Trotskyist in the 1940s, later called Trotskyists 'the Stalinist bureaucracy in exile'. But while the remnants of Marxism in this form still persist, there are also further developments, often characterized as post-Marxism.

Post-Marxism makes sense; if we are after Marx, we are also after Marxism. The phenomenon bifurcates, however, and in this it follows the postmodern, whose semantics it extends from the realm of modernism and modernity into that of Marxism.

Debates about the postmodern often split over the relative weight given to each term (Beilharz 1994, 2010). As Bernard Smith (1997: 159) put it, postmodern enthusiasts often mistook the tail for the kite. The modern was the kite, the postmodern its tail, rather than the other way around. In some arguments, the post was valued above the modern, which was now presented as archaic. In others, the post was merely the appendage, representing cultural forms in aesthetics and architecture which emerged after the collapse of the Long Boom. Similar differences in possibility emerge with the idea of the post-Marxist.

All this takes on a different light, in addition, after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the subsequent collapse of communism. A post-Soviet world is also, in a particular sense, a post-Marxist world, though the subsequent triumph of capitalism also called out the revival of a kind of generalized Marxism in the anti-WTO movement. Globalization, ironically, revived the analytical fortunes of Marxists, as did the GFC and the return of the Spectre of Depression. In a perverse, historical sense Marx's triumph was best exemplified by the Chinese experience, where a residual kind of institutional Marxism in the form of the Chinese Communist Party went together with the victory of Chinese quasi-capitalist productive forces.

To be post-Marxist, then, is in a sense now unavoidable. Some of the best Marxists have been historians, such as Bernard Smith and Eric Hobsbawm, or sociologists such as Stuart Hall, differently geographers such as David Harvey or critical theorists such as Fred Jameson who have worn their categories lightly, combined interests in the critique of culture and power, taken technology

as seriously as cultural development. Different radical journals, from *New Left Review* to *Thesis Eleven*, have worked the field after Marxism in distinct ways. Other bodies of work, such as those associated with Laclau and Mouffe, have followed versions of the additive approach indicated above: add psychoanalysis, add Wittgenstein, add Schmitt. The exemplary, or foundational, text here was *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* of Laclau and Mouffe (1985), where Marxism and other intellectual currents are juxtaposed, perhaps, rather than integrated. But the predominant influence in post-Marxism globally has been more stridently Marxist, less post- than Marxist.

The two most influential post-Marxist contributions come from Zizek, and Negri and Hardt, respectively. Both have developed cult-followings, and blockbuster sales, and in the case of Zizek, cults of personality (try YouTube). Zizek's approach has also been additive: add Lacan, in particular, but also comedic: add Hitchcock, and jokes about Lenin. Zizek's approach is also contrarian, essentially provocative. Sometimes this style is defended as a kind of agonism; often it is simply offensive, as in Zizek's claim that Lenin (now without humour) was basically a nice guy who strayed into politics (Zizek 2002). This is reminiscent of the Woody Allen joke in which Albert Speer is surprised to discover that Hitler was a Nazi.

Zizek's Marxism is a kind of post-Bolshevism rather than post-Marxism, where the semantic weight falls on the Bolshevik rather than the post. In some circles he has been called a Bolshevik clown, though here the weight is on the adjective more than the noun (Zizek 2002; Beilharz 2005). Where Lenin in 1917 calls for socialism as electrification plus Soviets, Zizek today calls for socialism free Internet access plus Soviets. Neither seems especially likely.

Negri and Hardt offer a different kind of post-Marxism, which perhaps is really best defined as neo-Marxism, for its purpose is to renew and refresh the old, stale revolutionary project. Negri connects back to the Italian ultra-left tradition of the *autonomista*, where, in contrast to Castoriadis' more open and ontological use of the idea, it is workers' autonomy or *autogestion* that matters (Wright 2002). Negri also connects back to the notion of Engels, adopted by the Trotskyists C. L. R. James and Dunayevskaya into the 1950s of 'the invading socialist society', for which the most powerful trend towards socialism apart from autonomous proletarian struggle is the internal evolution towards socialism within the heart of capitalism itself. Where others, earlier, viewed capitalism as doing socialism's work via the internal socialization of capital, Negri and Hardt project this capacity onto globalization. In contrast to the dominant, reactive mood of most radical critique of globalization, their book *Empire* (Negri and Hardt 2000) returns to the axioms of automatic Marxism, only Empire now itself lays the ground for socialism. Socialism, once again, is imagined as the egg or embryo of socialism within late-capitalist developments. Immaterial labour, exemplified in the new communications technology, represents the promise of socialism *in nuce*. Little wonder that *Empire*, with or without the later added enthusiasm for the idea of the Multitude, should have been such a hit with a needy residual left. For it works like a kind of mosaical or magical Marxism, reinstalling both spontaneism and revolutionary guarantees at the same time, bringing the millennium closer in ways that echo Cecil B. DeMille more than Karl Marx. The problem with this kind of automatic Marxism is precisely that it is too Marxist, too orthodox in its millennial hope and desire to inscribe the future of socialism within the path of capitalist development. Yet again, it results in a combination of public militancy with a long-term strategy of waiting for the revolution.

Conclusion

What then, finally, was Marx's legacy? The specificity of the question is important. Marx's legacy: not Lenin's, or that of Bolshevism, or Marxism–Leninism. What is the Marxian legacy?

Marx is the proverbial son of the Enlightenment, but also of romanticism. As Berman shows, his project is deeply imbued with the modernist spirit, of embracing the whirlwind of creative

destruction (Berman 1984). Yet Marx also longs for a gentler, slower Renaissance world. The moment of his intellectual formation, in the Roman–French town of Trier, connected him to these European legacies and also meant that he could imagine modernity as reversible (a prospect we have now well and truly lost). Marx elaborates on Schiller's critique of fragmentation in developing his youthful theory of alienation. He develops a critical theory with an emancipatory intention. He learns to historicize, to think, and explain the new world in terms of drama, dramaturgy, ghosts and spirits, fetishes, mythologies, masking, in images as powerful as that of the sorcerer's apprentice. He proceeds via the critique of political economy to theorize power and culture, to centre on technology as a culture.

The power of Marx's diagnosis of modern times is not equalled by his prognosis. Marx shows a fundamental weakness in his attraction to populism, the image of two fundamental working classes, especially early. He installs the proletariat as the motor of history, an imputation which the proletariat never quite understands correctly. His sense of the permanent revolution of capital spills over into the telos of guaranteed socialism, which it never is. He was a powerful critic of capitalism as modernity, who understood the centrality of capital as a relation and as a self-naturalising illusion. He was a dreamer. His intellectual origins were before modernity, but the scope of his vision was beyond it. His legacy is best imagined as what Ernst Bloch called the warm stream of Marxism.

Was he an original? Yes, and no. The power of Marx's work lies in the brilliant synthesis that he generated from the work of others, working within the critical horizons of both the streams we conventionally separate as Enlightenment and Romanticism. Perhaps, in our own times, the fate of his thought is to return to the cultures from which it was initially created, as avant-garde returns, finally, to the mainstream.

Aftermath: The Marx revival

The last ten years have been witness to two main trends affecting this field, one intellectual, the other political. What are they, and how are they connected?

First, the Marx Revival. Centenaries bring out reassessments, in intellectual and publishing life. 2018 marked two centuries since the birth of Marx (Gupta, Musto, and Amini 2019). The last decade has generated some of the best Marx scholarship ever. There have been at least seven new biographies. Each adds its own sense of fresh detail, for there remain new things to be discovered about Marx. But these books also often bring a new sense of theoretical sophistication, so that they truly push forward the notion of life and times, but they also add philosophical value. A key added dimension is that this work, two decades after the fall of the Berlin Wall, is finally able to free Marx from under the shadow of Stalin.

There remain tensions here of course, for Marxism will ever be the terrain of contestation. Some, like Sperber, seek to save Marx by sealing him into a box clearly marked the nineteenth century (Sperber 2013). This opens an interesting tension, which can now be said to characterize both Marx Studies and Gramsci Studies alike: do we read for textual accuracy, or to help address our own times, today? Stedman Jones also works in this zone, in his massive biography, which seems perhaps to mirror Marx's work in that it is also incomplete. Marx here is a necessary failure, partly because of his excessive intellectual ambition in *Capital*, partly because he fails to adjust to the revisions of actually emerging capitalism in his later years (Stedman Jones 2016). But this also boxes Marx into the past. Liedman offers a fascinating view from Scandinavia, connecting Marx more closely to science beyond Darwin, especially agriculture and chemistry (Liedman 2018). There is important new work on Marx and ecology from Saito, which renews the pioneering earlier work of John Bellamy Foster (Foster 2000; Saito 2017). Further strong and distinct biographies have appeared from Gabriel (2011), Hosfeld (2013), Barker (2018), and Avineri (2019).

Some of the finest new work on Marx comes from Marcello Musto, in two studies of Marx's life and thinking early and late (Musto 2018, 2020). Other work of superior philosophical sophistication includes that by Kouvelakis (2018) and Heinrich (2019). There is even a book called *Circling Marx* (Beilharz 2021). Both with reference to Marx and Marxism, the *Historical Materialism* project has established a field of its own, marked by both the quality of its scholarship and its commitment to socialism. In political economy, this includes the fine scholarship of Mosley (2016a, b), Day and Gaido (2018), Van der Linden and Hubman (2018) (and see Beilharz 2016). There is a clear revival of interest in Luxemburg, Lukacs, and Gramsci, alongside Althusser, Marcuse, and Fromm, if not Korsch; in the work of the Budapest School and Bauman. Marxist philosophy persists, not least in France.

What might all this activity and enthusiasm add up to?

Second, in terms of the politics of everyday life, not much, this not least as pressingly new issues of crisis and apocalypse now seem to be upon us. A signal exception here might be the widely influential work of Thomas Piketty (2013), itself echoing Marx in his own *Capital*. For the Marx Revival in scholarship runs in parallel with a groundswell of resistance to capital the world about, from *Occupy* onward. The rise of authoritarianism, or differently what Gramsci called the interregnum, militates against the revival of Marxism on the ground, even as it calls out mass protest. Renewed state violence may beget radical violence in return, but this is suggestive of ongoing sporadic civil war rather than room for progressive politics to move, except perhaps on the most local levels of counterculture. In the heartlands of capital, the complexity of electoral politics and economic life along with the ongoing irrationality of rationality make the hopes of classical Marxism, or even a more robust Social Democracy, seem beyond hope. The power of possessive individualism, reinforced by the new power of consumption and compliance afforded by screen and algorithm, false news, and deception may serve to put all Marxist hopes in a box, until further notice. For the new tyrants will also fall. Perhaps we are still with Gramsci, a century later, awaiting 'The Revolution Against Capital'. That mainstream looks more divided than ever; and the intellectual power of Marxism remains uncoupled from mass movements of any significance. The Marx Revival does not signal anything like a revival of Marxist politics, however conceived. For it remains the case that Marx's diagnosis of capitalist crisis is unmatched by revolutionary prognosis. The need for interpretation, and change persist.

References

Adorno, T. and M. Horkheimer (1944) *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, London: Allen Lane.
Althusser, L. (1993) *The Future Lasts a Long Time*, London: Chatto & Windus.
Althusser, L. and E. Balibar (1970) *Reading Capital*, London: New Left Books.
Avineri, S. (2019) *Karl Marx*, New Haven: Yale University Press.
Barker, J. (2017) *Marx Returns*, Washington, DC: Zero.
Bauman, Z. (1972) *Between Class and Elite*, Manchester: Manchester University Press.
Bauman, Z. (1989) *Modernity and the Holocaust*, Oxford: Polity.
Beilharz, P. (1982) 'The Other Trotsky', *Thesis Eleven*, 3, 106–114.
Beilharz, P. (1987) *Trotsky, Trotskyism and the Transition to Socialism*, London: Croom Helm.
Beilharz, P. (1992) *Labour's Utopias: Bolshevism, Fabianism, Social Democracy*, London: Routledge.
Beilharz, P. (1994) *Postmodern Socialism: Romanticism, City and State*, Melbourne: Melbourne University Press.
Beilharz, P. (2000) *Zygmunt Bauman – Dialectic of Modernity*, London: Sage.
Beilharz, P. (2005) 'Postmarxism', in G. Ritzer (ed.), *Sage Encyclopedia of Social Theory*, London: Sage.

Beilharz, P. (2010) 'Modern and Postmodern', in J. Hall, I. Grindstaff, M.-C. Lo (eds.), *Handbook of Cultural Sociology*, London: Routledge.

Beilharz, P. (2016) 'From Marx to Gramsci to Us', *Thesis Eleven*, 132, 77–86.

Beilharz, P. (2021) *Circling Marx*, Leiden: Brill.

Berman, M. (1984) *All that is Solid Melts into Air*, New York: Knopf.

Davidson, A. (1968) *Antonio Gramsci – The Man, His Ideas*, Sydney: Australian Left Review.

Day, R. and D. Gaido (2018) *Responses to Marx's Capital*, Leiden: Brill.

Draper, H. (1977) *Karl Marx's Theory of Revolution*, 5 volumes, New York: Monthly Review.

Dunayevskaya, R. (1982 [1958]) *Marxism and Freedom*, Sussex: Harvester.

Fehér, F., A. Heller, and G. Markus. (1982) *Dictatorship Over Needs*, Oxford: Blackwell.

Foster, J. B. (2000) *Marx's Ecology*, New York: Monthly Review.

Gabriel, M. (2011) *Love and Capital: Karl and Jenny Marx and the Birth of a Revolution*, New York: Little Brown.

Gramsci, A. (1971) *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*, London: Lawrence & Wishart.

Gramsci, A. (1975 [1918]) 'The Revolution Against Capital', in Cavalcanti and Piccone (eds.), *History, Philosophy and Culture in the Young Gramsci*, St Louis: Telos.

Gupta, S. Musto, M. and Amini, B. (2019) *Karl Marx's Life, Ideas and Influences*, London: Palgrave.

Heinrich, M. (2019) *Karl Marx and the Birth of Modern Society*, New York: Monthly Review.

Hosfeld, R. (2013) *Karl Marx, An Intellectual Biography*, New York: Berghahn.

Howard, D. (1977) *The Marxian Legacy*, London: Macmillan.

Kouvelakis, S. (2018) *Philosophy and Revolution*, London: Verso.

Laclau, E. and C. Mouffe (1985) *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*, London: Verso.

Lenin, V. I. (1899) *The Development of Capitalism in Russia*, Progress: Moscow.

Lenin, V. I. (1902) *What Is to Be Done?* Progress: Moscow.

Liedman, S.E. (2018) *Marx – A World to Win*, London: Verso.

Löwith, K. (1932) *Max Weber and Karl Marx*, London: Allen & Unwin, 1982.

Lukács, G. (1923 [1971]) 'Reification and the Consciousness of the Proletariat', in G. Lukács (ed.) *History and Class Consciousness*, London: Merlin.

Marcuse, H. (1964) *One-Dimensional Man*, Boston, MA: Beacon.

Marx, K. (1975 [1844]) 'Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts', in L. Colletti (ed.), *Marx – Early Writings*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Marx, K. (1973 [1858]) *Grundrisse*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Marx, K. (1970 [1859]) *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, Moscow: Progress.

Marx, K. (1867) *Capital Volume One*, Moscow: Progress.

Mosely, F. (2016a) *Money and Totality*, Leiden: Brill.

Mosely, F. (2016b) *Marx's Economic Manuscript of 1864 – 1865*, Leiden: Brill.

Musto, M. (2018) *Another Marx: Early Manuscripts to the International*, London: Bloomsbury.

Musto, M. (2020) *The Last Years of Karl Marx: An Intellectual Biography*, Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Negri, A. and M. Hardt (2000) *Empire*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Piketty, T. (2013) *Capital*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Poulantzas, N. (1979) *State, Power, Socialism*, London: New Left Books.

Saito, K. (2017) *Karl Marx's Ecology*, New York: Monthly Review.

Smith, B. (1997) *Imagining the Antipodes: Theory, Culture and the Visual in the Work of Bernard Smith*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sperber, J. (2013) *Karl Marx – A Nineteenth Century Life*, New York: Liverwright.

Stedman Jones, G. (2016) *Karl Marx – Greatness and Illusion*, Cambridge, MA: Belknap.

Thompson, E. P. (1978) *The Poverty of Theory and Other Essays*, London: Merlin.

Van der Linden, M. and Hubmann, G. (2018) *Marx's Capital – an Unfinishable Project?* Leiden: Brill.

Wiggershaus, R. (1994) *The Frankfurt School: Its History, Theories and Political Significance*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Wright, S. (2002) *Storming Heaven: Class Composition and Struggle in Italian Autonomist Marxism*, London: Pluto.

Zizek, S. (2002) *Revolution at the Gates*, London: Verso.

5

Critical race theory

Patricia Hill Collins

Theorizing about race has long occupied a peculiar position within the Western academy. For one, racial knowledge remains scattered across several academic disciplines, often as an unmarked signifier attached to some other concern, e.g., racial identity as a dimension of identity formation or racial inequality as a form of social inequality. Despite the ubiquity of race as a topic across multiple academic disciplines, theory itself has been similarly distributed, such that theorizing about race itself has not been central to the *theoretical* concerns of Western social theory. This organization of knowledge has created significant blind spots concerning the ongoing problem of systemic racism, in particular, the centrality of systemic racism within colonialism and imperialism, as well as racism within academic discourses and practices.

For another, Western theorizing about race has ignored the significance of resisting systemic racism, instead choosing to explain prevailing racial orders (Emirbayer and Desmond 2015). In contrast, Indigenous peoples, people of African descent, Latinx populations, Asians, and similarly subordinated groups have theorized about reforming, transforming, dismantling, or abolishing systemic racism. Critical analytical work on race, racism, and anti-racism generated outside the parameters of Western social theory, especially when done by scholars of color, shows a strong predilection to change racial hierarchies, not defend them. Yet traditionally, this work rarely makes it into the journals, graduate syllabi, monographs, and thematic conferences that reproduce the canon of Western social theory.

There are many explanations for why this happened, but here I focus on the trajectory of critical race theory (CRT) within academia. Quite simply, CRT is a body of knowledge that uses theoretical tools to criticize the social and political practices of systemic racism. The term "critical race theory" appeared in conjunction with CRT as a specific discourse that was advanced by legal scholars in the academy in the 1990s (Crenshaw et al. 1995). Yet the reality of critical race theory that analyzes and opposes systemic racism has a much longer history and broader institutional reach than the specific case of contemporary CRT in academia. Broadly conceived, critical race theory is an interdisciplinary, historically situated way of theorizing and resisting systemic racism that has taken various forms both inside and outside the academy.

Because neither critical race theory nor the intellectuals who may be its practitioners fit comfortably within Western conventions of what counts as social theory, and in fact, have historically challenged these standards, surveying this body of knowledge and epistemological

criteria that shape it requires different analytical tools. Such tools must consider how the demographics of intellectual communities and the placement of such communities within power relations inform both the content and processes of critical race theory in all of its many expressions.

Critical race theory in the academy

A more expansive understanding of critical race theory's objectives raises fundamental questions about its content and methodology: how is critical race theory produced? By whom? And for what purpose? Scholars who work exclusively within traditional academic disciplines typically look to one another for answers to these questions. As a result, they typically find a short list of thinkers who do racial theory and an even shorter list of scholars who claim *critical* race theory. Yet the most creative and compelling works of critical race theory do not occur within academic disciplines but traverse disciplinary and academic boundaries. This should be no surprise. Historically, the people who were most negatively affected by systemic racism were more likely to engage in critical race theorizing, ironically, such theorizing did not necessarily occur within academic venues or using standard methodological criteria, primarily because practices of systemic racism excluded scholars of color from academia.

The emergence of Critical Race Theory within US legal scholarship in the 1990s illustrates this navigating of academic borders, signaling a coming out, as it were, of CRT in the academy as anti-racist analysis and praxis. CRT benefitted from the growing number of intellectuals of color in the academy whose presence provided a necessary political and interpretive context for anti-racist legal scholarship. Critical Race Theory was an institutional beachhead for critical analysis, as it were, resembling prior institutional initiatives such as the Birmingham School of Cultural Studies in the 1960s, and the Atlanta School of Sociology in the 1920s. CRT constitutes one particular site within a more comprehensive, historically grounded, cross-cultural constellation of critical racial projects that take different forms in response to the social conditions that surround them. For Critical Race Theory, theorizing how racial inequality persisted despite seemingly colorblind policies that were dedicated to its eradication was a core question for the field. In guiding concern, African American, Latinx, Asian American, and progressive white legal scholars found common cause in their different experiences with systemic racism. Their diagnoses of racism aimed to advance a framework that incorporated a strong focus on social justice within the rights-based conceptions of distributive justice in legal practice. For example, the corpus of work by Derrick Bell, a founding figure of CRT, illustrates CRT's impetus to use CRT in service of legal reforms and racial justice. Bell was one of the first scholars to break rank with the consensus that colorblindness, the agenda of the Civil Rights Movement, had in fact benefited African American children (Bell 2004).

While grounded in law, CRT's core focus on social justice drew on multiple disciplines and theoretical traditions that fostered richer analyses of systemic racism. Breaking down barriers between the use of social science research and in law and the literary and narrative traditions of storytelling from cultural studies, many critical race theorists advanced innovative arguments to combat systemic racism. Recognizing that race and racism work with and through gender, ethnicity, class, sexuality, and/or nation as systems of power, contemporary critical race theory often relies upon and/or investigates these intersections. For example, Mari Matsuda's classic analysis of considering the victim's story as a central component of addressing hate speech valorizes the testimonial authority of people of color and women as agents of knowledge about their own treatment (Matsuda 1989). Kimberlé Crenshaw's analysis of how race, gender, and citizenship shape violence against women illustrates how the construct of intersectionality that permeated

African American women's social movement activism entered into the legal canon. In this way, Crenshaw illustrates the synergy between two seemingly disparate critical racial projects, namely, intersectionality of Black feminism and critical race theory of the legal community (Crenshaw 1991). These works among others demonstrate how CRT was simultaneously interdisciplinary and attentive to intersecting power relations.

Several distinguishing features characterize the special sensibilities that intellectuals of color brought to critical race theory in the 1990s. Critical race theorists wrote for multiple audiences, namely, legal scholars, practicing attorneys, law students, women's studies scholars, among others as well as for a wider public. Because CRT addressed multiple audiences and did not meet the disinterested criteria of traditional theory, it was often not immediately recognizable as theory. Yet writing for multiple audiences catalyzed self-reflectivity concerning its own practice, especially how critical theory accounts for change within society and within its own knowledge base; as well as an awareness of how interdisciplinary and societal power relations affect both the social location of critical race theorists and practitioners and their subsequent intellectual production. Via its efforts to examine and affect racial practices, CRT demonstrates a sensibility: that critical race theory recognizes and takes into account its own participation in creating the society that it allegedly studies and an adherence to an ethical framework that aspires to better society by transforming it.

Critical race theory has had an important influence on contemporary racial scholarship and practice, but its visibility in the 1990s was prefigured by critical analyses of scientific racism. Earlier work that analyzed the racial subtexts of Western social theory within distinctive academic disciplines laid the groundwork for CRT and similar synthetic, interdisciplinary, and transdisciplinary scholarship. Criticizing traditional racial theory that advanced narratives of white supremacy was no small feat. Several well-known monographs do an excellent job of analyzing these practices within the discourse of scientific racism (Gossett 1963; Gould 1981; Stepan 1982). Prior to World War II, eugenics was widely recognized as normal, legitimated science. The term eugenics may have disappeared across a range of academic disciplines and within varying national traditions. By the time that CRT emerged, this discourse of color-conscious racism had seemingly been discredited with the seeming demise of eugenics. Yet the legacy of eugenics thinking continued to influence new forms of systemic racism (Duster 2003).

Similar critical interventions populate the narrative and interpretive traditions of the humanities. Recent revisionist work in the humanities has reclaimed the racial philosophy of African American philosopher Alain Locke (Fraser 1998; Molesworth 2012), and the groundbreaking theoretical work of queer Chicana writer Gloria Anzaldua (Anzaldua 1987). Critical racial scholarship in the humanities has advanced understanding of themes such as stereotyping (Gilman 1985) and controlling images (Collins 2000, 69–96). One of the most significant developments of the past several decades has been unmasking how the "fiction" of race underlies the fiction of universality (Appiah 1992). Recasting seemingly universalistic narratives as inherently racial narratives challenges the assumed neutrality of Western social theory. For example, *Orientalism,* Edward Said's groundbreaking work of literary criticism within postcolonial studies, presents the provocative thesis that the West's understanding of Orient was in actuality a projection of the West's racialized (if not racist) fantasies about the racial Other (Said 1978).

Such work challenges the universalistic language of political discourse to reveal both how ideas of freedom, democracy, and justice require a racial subtext but also how the organization and practices of Western social institutions reflect these racialized meanings. The corpus of work by philosopher David Theo Goldberg, as illustrated in his volume, *The Racial State*, is exemplary in this regard (Goldberg 2002). Goldberg traces how discourses of freedom advanced by liberal, democratic states only made sense in contrast to the non-freedom of people of color, both

within such states and in the colonies. What made such states "racial states" was less their explicit racial policies (which were certainly present), but rather how issues of race made a broad range of policies comprehensible, many of which did not appear to be about race at all.

This theme of racial subtext that underlies overt racial practices and policies creates a framework for analyzing both color conscious and colorblind racial formations as central to relations of power. Substantial racial scholarship examines constructs of nation, nationalism, and the nation-state as racialized constructs that intersect with ethnicity, gender, and class (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1992; Yuval-Davis 1997, 2011). Etienne Balibar's essay "Racism and Nationalism" presents a model of racism as having internal and external expressions that correlate with internal political mechanisms, (the racism of anti-Semitism) and external political mechanisms (the racism of colonialism and imperialism) (Balibar and Wallerstein 1991). Essays such as these lay the foundation for a theory of global racial formations that situates the nation-state as an important unit of racial analysis. Illustrating the interdisciplinary and increasingly transnational nature of CRT, Wallerstein and Balibar engage in a similar project to examine the racialized nature of seemingly universalistic processes, not with the state as was the case with Goldberg's projects, but rather with world systems theory (Balibar and Wallerstein 1991).

This ongoing investigation of how race inhabits the constructs and guiding questions of Western social theory highlights the significance of setting definitional boundaries that decide what counts as critical race scholarship and then positioning critical race theory within those parameters. Drawing the definitional boundaries too narrowly overlooks the potential contributions to CRT of well-known works of social and political theory that seemingly are not explicitly about race. For example, Zygmunt Bauman's volume *Modernity and the Holocaust* can be read as a book about the internal contradictions of modernity, anti-Semitism, as well as the centrality of bureaucracy to the Holocaust, yet Bauman's book is less often analyzed as a book of racial theory. This is odd, especially since Bauman titles two of his chapters "Modernity, Racism, Extermination I and II" (Bauman 1989). Hannah Arendt's *The Origins of Totalitarianism* is a racial analysis that does focus on racial theory (Arendt 1968). Arendt is typically read as a political theorist, yet her analysis of power in this volume analyzes anti-Semitism, imperialism, and totalitarianism, all three important constructs for CRT. Works such as these may not be immediately recognizable as critical race theory because they are routinely be classified as something else.

Neither Bauman nor Arendt would categorize their work as critical race theory, suggesting the need for a revised reading of analyses of power within all Western scholarship where race seems to be absent or play a minor role. In this regard, the corpus of work by French philosopher Michel Foucault provides a provocative case of Western social theory that, on the surface, does not appear to be about race at all. Foucault's work on biopower created provocative new directions for the study of the body and sexuality as sites of disciplinary power. Yet the translation and publication of his 1975–1976 lectures in *Society Must Be Defended* that were translated from French and published in the early 2000s suggest a substantial overlap between his discussions of biopower in his earlier work (Foucault 2003). Despite the fact that Foucault died before he could develop an analysis that synthesized race into his work on knowledge/power relations, it seems clear that Foucault's analyses of biopower, in particular, invoked an implicit racial analysis.

As this work by the CRT legal scholars, Bauman, Arendt, and Foucault suggest, it is quite possible to advance critical analyses of race and racism within the parameters of traditional Western social theory. Yet this chapter asks a more fundamental question: "what is "critical" about critical race theory?" The answer lies in a closer look at the epistemological contours of CRT itself.

The epistemological contours of critical race theory

In *The Epistemology of Resistance,* philosopher Jose Medina posits that epistemic oppression stems not just from the content of knowledge, but also from the very rules that govern its creation (Medina 2013). This suggests that critical race theory cannot simply rely on the seemingly universal standards of knowledge creation in the academy that claim to be fair and unbiased. The epistemological rules of social theory may seem to be objective and fair, yet as scholarship on the racial subtexts of seemingly unbiased Western knowledge suggests, systemic racism may be hard-wired into the rules governing research. CRT that is inattentive to the epistemological and political conditions of its practice potentially colludes with systemic racism. Conversely, this attentiveness can yield a different outcome, namely, resisting both the content of and processes that reproduce systemic racism (Collins 2019, 126–131).

In this context, sharpening the distinctions between traditional and critical theory within prevailing Western social theory is one way to address these epistemological concerns. The Frankfurt School is routinely attributed with advancing critical theory, often taken as a useful template for all theories that criticize some aspect of modernity (Collins 2019, 57–65). Max Horkheimer's 1937 essay "Traditional and Critical Theory" provides a useful jumping-off point, but not a point of origin, for examining the meaning of being "critical" within Western critical theory (Horkheimer 1982). Writing within the intersection of the sciences and the humanities, Horkheimer rejects binary thinking that defines critical theory in opposition to traditional theory. Instead, he examines points of convergence and divergence between traditional theories, primarily the positivism of Western science as a signature discourse of the Enlightenment, and the critical theory of the Frankfurt School as influenced by Marxist social theory. Many works explore this distinction, yet Horkheimer's essay highlights the epistemological distinctions that inform critical race theorizing.

Within Western sciences and social sciences, the definition of theory is straightforward. For most researchers, theory consists of the sum-total of propositions about a subject that are linked with each other such that a few remain basic and the rest derive from them. The fewer primary principles there are in any given theory, the better the theory. Containing conceptually formulated knowledge on the one hand and the facts to be subsumed under it on the other, traditional theory evolves by trying to ensure that the derived propositions remain consonant with the actual facts. If theory and the so-called facts contradict each other, one or both must be re-examined because either the scientist has failed to observe correctly or something is wrong with the principles of the theory (Horkheimer 1982, 188).

Horkheimer argues that traditional theory can exercise a positive social function in bringing informed scientific knowledge to bear on important social issues. Social theory in its traditional form engages in the critical examination of data with the aid of an inherited apparatus of concepts and judgments. Taking Western science as the framework for social science suggests that a scientific field makes substantial contributions to human well-being when its traditional theory concentrates on the problems raised within its own internal technical development and addresses these problems by either changing its theoretical assumptions and/or by searching for new data (Horkheimer 1982, 205). In this sense, traditional theory can be profitably applied to social problems, for example, racially discriminatory housing policies or the effects of racial hate speech on public discourse as social problems. Yet Horkheimer also suggests that traditional theory's problem-solving tools are limited, primarily because its internal epistemology views political or emotional involvement by scientists as introducing bias into the theoretical enterprise.

Horkheimer offers critical theory as both a complementary and alternative form of social theory that draws from the strengths of traditional theory yet avoids its limitations. Traditional

theory typically ignores the epistemic rules that legitimate its findings, e.g., assumptions of universality, and political context in which scholarship is done, e.g., the demographics of scholarly communities. Within the rules of traditional theory (for positivist science), the research process removes bias by training researchers to view themselves as raceless, genderless, human beings who should analyze the match between research findings, the data used to determine those findings and determine which theoretical propositions are upheld or challenged in the process. Traditional racial theory has typically avoided questions of politics and ethics, steering a seemingly apolitical course through science. In contrast, critical theory makes the rules of theorizing central to the project itself. Critical theory would question both the processes of theorizing as well as the entire enterprise of constructing knowledge in the first place.

When it comes to theorizing critical race theory, or critical race *theorizing*, three epistemological criteria that distinguish critical theory from its more traditional counterpart might be especially useful (for an expansive discussion of these themes, see Collins 2019, 57–65). First, because critical theory aims to change social relations, it implicitly or explicitly advances a distinctive *theory of social change*. For CRT, the imagined change is for a more socially just society. Significantly, this epistemological rule introduces political analysis into research itself, rather than trying to bracket it out as a source of bias. There are theoretical implications for this focus on social change. As Horkheimer describes it, "theory has a historically changing object which, however, remains identical amid all the changes" (Horkheimer 1982, 239). Stated differently, critical theory views change as inherent to society; it also posits that all societies contain certain core principles that remain the same even though they may change form and expression. Critical race theorizing aims for a theory of social change concerning the use of race, racism, and anti-racist discourse and practice within society and as well as within its own knowledge base. Within this logic, systemic racism constitutes a *changing same* social formation grounded not in linear, evolutionary processes where colorblind racism replaces color conscious practices, but rather one where forms of racism influence one another.

Second, critical theory expresses a *reflective accountability* concerning how individual and group location within power relations shapes the processes of theorizing as well as social theory as a product. Horkheimer offers a useful analysis of this dimension of critical theory: "critical thinking is the function/neither of the isolated individual nor of a sum-total of individuals. Its subject is rather a definite individual in his real relation to other individuals and groups, in his conflict with a particular class, and, finally, in the resultant web of relationships with the social totality and with nature" (Horkheimer 1982, 210–211). This attentiveness to social location highlights the significance of interpretive communities as a factor in shaping knowledge construction (Collins 2019, 121–154). It also mandates that critical race theorizing as the production of critical race theory should consider how its social location within the power relations of systemic racism potentially affects all aspects of its project. In *Decolonizing Methodologies,* Maori scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith examines how reflexive accountability should shape research on indigenous peoples. Smith contends that the methodologies need to be attentive to the expressed needs of indigenous peoples as well as methodologies that they consider to be credible (Smith 2012). Her work suggests that seeing CRT as situated within the power relations of systemic racism makes intellectuals and researchers accountable for our work. Significantly, this methodological claim brings an ethical dimension to the process of critical race theorizing or doing critical race theory.

Third, critical theory replaces the seeming value neutrality of traditional theory with a situated ethics that recognizes that, either by choice or by default, critical theory takes a stand. These ideas add an ethical component to critical theory that views critical theorizing as a form of praxis necessary for social transformation. Scholars who live and work in Latin America, Africa,

and other locations of the Global South theorize differently, often through praxis. For example, Brazilian educator Paulo Freire's classic book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed,* which theorizes about social inequality, via an innovative theoretical analysis of education for oppressed peoples, is easily applied to racial inequality. His goal is not to explain the racial order, but rather to take a principled position with his scholarship to problem solve (Freire 1970). This work theorizes through praxis and is not a work of theory first and an application second.

Working outside the epistemological conventions of Western social theory and/or trying to change those principles is fraught with conflict. Because knowledge can be marshaled for oppressive or emancipatory purposes, questions of ethics permeate all scholarship. critical race theory that criticizes systemic racism can never be safe because it sees how it is embedded in its own subject matter. In theorizing its ties to its object of investigation, CRT would recognize that its own knowledge-claims and practices were not benign, but instead contributed to and reflected the systems of racial power in which it was situated. For CRT, part of its critical mandate is to analyze the changing same nature of both racism and anti-racism, express a degree of self-reflexivity concerning how its social location affects its methodology, and consider how ethics permeates all aspects of its design.

Each of these three epistemological criteria can be found either singularly or in combination in important examples of critical race theory For example, Michael Omi and Howard Winant's racial formation theory resonates with all three epistemological principles of critical theory and as such, provide a useful template for CRT. They note

> We define *racial formation* as the sociohistorical process by which racial categories are created, inhabited, transformed, and destroyed. Our attempt to elaborate a theory of racial formation will proceed in two steps. First, we argue that racial formation is a process of historically situated *projects* in which human bodies and social structures are represented and organized. Next we link racial formation to the evolution of hegemony, the way in which society is organized and ruled. Such an approach, we believe, can facilitate understanding of a whole range of contemporary controversies and dilemmas involving race, including the nature of racism, the relationship of race to other forms of differences, inequalities, and oppression such as sexism and nationalism, and the dilemmas of racial identity today.
>
> *(Omi and Winant 1994, 55–56)*

Rather than viewing systemic racism as fixed and unchanging, racial formation theory accounts for changing patterns of systemic racism, thereby providing an important construct for analyzing CRT both in the academy but also for critical race theory and methodological practices that do not fit comfortably within academic practices and epistemologies. The construct of a racial formation sees systemic racism as materially and historically grounded – slavery, colonialism, colorblind racism, and similar racial formations are sociohistorical processes, not just ideological constructs or discourses that can be accepted or rejected at will. Significantly, racial formation theory rejects evolutionary explanations for social change – the Western linear progress model – in favor of a recursive model that centers on human agency. According to Omi and Winant, "A *racial project is simultaneously an interpretation, representation, or explanation of racial dynamics, and an effort to reorganize and redistribute resources along particular racial lines* [italics in original]. Racial projects connect what race *means* in a particular discursive practice and the ways in which both social structures and everyday experiences are racially *organized*, based upon that meaning" (Omi and Winant 1994, 56).

This construct of racial projects offers an important set of analytical tools for explaining how competing racial projects aim to influence the meaning of democratic societies. For example,

the appearance of Far-Right white nationalist political projects that rose to power within Western democratic advanced a rhetoric of white supremacy that was neither sudden nor new. Instead, these racial projects remained muted until the created the conditions for resurrecting and reframing longstanding white supremacist ideology seemed right. And the social movement responses to such projects also have a long and storied history.

The construct of racial projects also offers fertile ground for explaining demonstrated changes in racial attitudes, behaviors, policies, and practices. Critical race theory has been invaluable for analyzing color-conscious racial formations of racial apartheid and racial segregation. It has also grappled with contemporary colorblind racism as a new racial formation, as well as colorblind ideologies that uphold it. These changes did not occur through a natural or evolutionary process. Rather, they reflect the actions of multiple racial projects who through action or inaction advance competing racial agendas to sustain white supremacy or deepening racial equality.

Critical race projects

Racial formation theory provides important tools for rethinking the kinds of racial projects that have been historically advanced by people of color both inside and outside the academy. Much of the intellectual energy that has animated critical race theory did not initiate within the Western academy. Instead, the core ideas of CRT have been aligned with anti-racist and anti-colonial political projects that recognize the need for critical social theory that can guide their political praxis. The corpus of Frantz Fanon's work illustrates this recursive relation between critical race theory that informed racial projects of liberation and decolonization (Collins 2019, 72–81). Frantz Fanon's *Wretched of the Earth,* for example, was widely read by intellectuals of color, not only for its critical and radical content, but also because Fanon wrote this volume in the context of the critical racial project of Algerian struggles for independence (Fanon 1963). This particular work of Fanon, whose arguments inspired theortical work across multiple disciplines, illustrates the significance of audience in deciding what counts as social theory, let alone *critical* theory, let alone critical *race* theory. Because white, Western social theorists were not Fanon's target audience – despite his involvement in the the French academy, he was not aiming to reform it *The Wretched of the Earth* has been difficult to incorporate into the canon of traditional Western theory. The emphasis on violence proves highly threatening to many social theorists. But Fanon was not writing to French intellectuals. Instead, he theorized for a different intellectual community that brought different questions and concerns to theorizing race, racism and resistance. Fanon's work illustates how decolonization struggles and anti-racist social movements have been important catalysts for critical race projects precisely because such theory is taken up by people who are involed in trying to bring about change. Critical race project advanced by people of color are rarely just about ideas.

William E. B. Du Bois's lifelong intellectual engagement with Black freedom struggle in the United States and in a Pan-African context shows a similar sensibility. William E. B. Du Bois was certainly aware of the limitations of early-twentieth century racial theories within Western disciplines that viewed the inferiority of people African descent as natural, normal, and inevitable. But as one of the first African-American intellectuals with impeccable academic credentials, he launched a critique of the findings of Western science from *within* Western science. His ambitious program of empirical work on African Americans criticized the then-normal science of eugenics that saw people of African descent as biologically and culturally inferior. Yet Du Bois eventually left the academy to continue critical racial theorizing outside the academy.

DuBois's trajectory as an intellectual who engaged in critical race theory not only illustrates the challenges of doing such work in academic settings, but also why so many scholars

of color leave the academic because it remains inhospitable to doing critical race theory. Then as now, scientific fields provide ample opportunities to use race as a variable, or even to study racial hierarchy as a structure, but have been far more resistant to critical theoretical race scholarship that criticizes the racial order. Scholars of color in the academy often generate critical intellectual work that is misunderstood as being purely empirical (and therefore not theoretical enough); or as theoretical only when it is *not* about race; or worse yet, as *not* theoretical because it is seen as being too political and therefore biased and non-objective. Despite these epistemic obstacles, African American scholars, many of whom struggle to sustain careers in their respective disciplines, have managed to do critical theoretical work that has relevance today. Du Bois masterful theoretical analysis, *Black Reconstruction*, offers a textbook analysis of a racial project of blacklash against the legal gains of African American at emancipation (Du Bois 1969). Oliver Cox's important analysis of global racism *Caste, Class & Race* (1948) both prefigures intersectional analyses of racism as well as the increasing emphasis on caste (see, e.g., Wilkerson 2020). Fanon, DuBois and Cox did not give up on the possibilities of theorizing racism using the tools of sociology, history, politics, and economics. Their work raises important questions about the unfinished racial project of excavating and rewriting the canon of critical race theory so the broad array of work in this tradition is recognizable and accessible.

With so many ideas within critical race theory in the academy influenced by anti-racist praxis, what effects might contemporary CRT have on such praxis? Do ideas flow only one way, or does Gloria Anzaldua's ideas about the richness of borderland space for theorizing both injustices and new democratic possibilites offer a path out of stale academic debates(Anzaldua 1987)? Increasingly, critical race theory traverses national, disciplinary and acdemic borders, finding new constituencies within digital space. Postcolonial theory, an imporant global companion project to the more domestic focus of critical race theory, increasingly focuses on decolonizing rather than reforming academic knowledge (Mignolo and Walsh 2018). Through such decolonial projects, a growing list of intellectuals of color from and working within the Global South theorize about the changing same nature of global social inequality that falls so heavily on people of color, thereby bringing vital sensibilities about class, gender, age, sexuality, ethnicity, religion to the project ofcritical race theory. Bonaventura de Sousa Santos's claim that *Another Knowledge Is Possible,* is not necessarily written as critical race theory, or even identified as a critical race project. Yet because Santos reclaims and shares the knowledges advanced by people who are most harmed by global racism, his work informs anti-racist, social justice projects generally, and CRT in particular (Santos, Nunes and Meneses 2007). In *Afrotopia*, Senegalese philosopher Felwine Sarr offers a clarion call for Africans to draw upon the continuum of their lived experiences to imagine a "future in need of thinking … [one where] what is urgently needed is the elaboration of new social and political theories that reflect the social dynamics underway in African societies" (Sarr 2019, 22). Ugandan sociologist Sylvia Tamale has taken up this task, offering in *Decolonization and Afro-Feminism* a volume that illustrates one way of developing Sarr's vision (Tamale 2020).

Critical race theorizing is a site of agency and activism. There is no neutral place to develop critical race theory outside of systemic racism. Within racial formation theory, Western theory is itself a racial project writ large, that is situated within and complicit with a broader, overarching *racial* project of colonialism, and that has often denied the terms of its participation in the racial formations that it helps reproduce. But it is also a specific racial project via its actions within the academy. Criticisms of Western social theory as being abstract, irrelevant, and the like have often been dismissed as part of a broad anti-intellectualism of the public, and of people of color in particular. Yet public criticisms of theory may be less a rejection of rationality *per se*, than a critique

of how the Western valorization of reason, the bedrock of theory, has been placed in service to racial theories that explained, justified, planned, and justified global systemic racism. How does one separate Western social theory from the history of its collusion with racism, colonialism, and imperialism? How does one democratize Western theory by bringing in subordinated people and their oppositional analyses of social reality as they see it without the claims that such democratization waters down theory? Questions such as these raise uncomfortable issues concerning the degree to which "theory" is implicated in contemporary global racism. These are the challenges that confront critical racial theory as it aims to be a project for social justice.

References

Anthias, Floya and Nira Yuval-Davis. 1992. Racialized Boundaries: Race, Nation, Gender, Colour and Class and the Anti-Racist Struggle. New York: Routledge.

Anzaldua, Gloria. 1987. Borderlands/La Frontera. San Francisco: Spinsters/Aunt Lute Press.

Appiah, Kwame Anthony. 1992. In My Father's House: Africa in the Philosophy of Culture. New York: Oxford University Press.

Arendt, Hannah. 1968. The Origins of Totalitarianism. New York: Harcourt.

Balibar, Etienne and Immanuel Wallerstein. 1991. Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities. New York: Verso.

Bauman, Zygmunt. 1989. Modernity and the Holocaust. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Bell, Derrick. 2004. Silent Covenants: Brown V. Board of Education and the Unfulfilled Hopes for Racial Reform. New York: Oxford University Press.

Collins, Patricia Hill. 2000. Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment. New York: Routledge.

Collins, Patricia Hill. 2019. Intersectionality as Critical Social Theory. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Cox, Oliver C. 1948. Caste, Class & Race: A Study in Social Dynamics. New York: Modern Reader Paperbacks.

Crenshaw, Kimberlé Williams. 1991. "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color." Stanford Law Review 43(6), 1241–99.

Crenshaw, Kimberlé Williams, Neil Gotanda, Gary Peller and Kendall Thomas, eds. 1995. Critical Race Theory: The Key Writings That Formed the Movement. New York: The New Press.

Du Bois, William E. B. 1969. Black Reconstruction in America: An Essay toward a History of the Part Which Black Folk Played in the Attempt to Reconstruct Democracy in America, 1860–1880. New York: Atheneum.

Duster, Troy. 2003. Backdoor to Eugenics. New York: Routledge.

Emirbayer, Mustafa and Matthew Desmond. 2015. The Racial Order. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Fanon, Frantz. 1963. The Wretched of the Earth. Translated by R. Philcox. New York: Grove Press.

Foucault, Michel, ed. 2003. Society Must Be Defended: Lectures at the College De France, 1975–1976. New York: Picador.

Fraser, Nancy. 1998. "Another Pragmatism: Alain Locke, Critical 'Race' Theory, and the Politics of Culture." Pp. 157–75 in The Revival of Pragmatism: New Essays on Social Thought, Law, and Culture, edited by M. Dickstein. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Freire, Paulo. 1970. The Pedagogy of the Oppressed. New York: Herder and Herder.

Gilman, Sander L. 1985. Difference and Pathology: Stereotypes of Sexuality, Race, and Madness. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press.

Goldberg, David Theo. 2002. The Racial State. Malden, Mass.: Blackwell.

Gossett, Thomas F. 1963. Race: The History of an Idea in America. Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press.

Gould, Stephen Jay. 1981. The Mismeasure of Man. New York: W. W. Norton.

Horkheimer, Max. 1982. "Traditional and Critical Theory." Pp. 188–243 in Critical Theory: Selected Essays, edited by M. Horkheimer. New York: Continuum Publishing.

Matsuda, Mari J. 1989. "Public Responses to Racist Speech: Considering the Victim's Story." Michigan Law Review 87(August), 2380–81.

Medina, Jose. 2013. The Epistemology of Resistance: Gender and Racial Oppression, Epistemic Injustice, and Resistant Imaginations. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Mignolo, Walter D. and Catherine E. Walsh. 2018. On Decoloniality: Concepts, Analytics, Praxis. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Molesworth, Charles, ed. 2012. The Works of Alain Locke. New York: Oxford University Press.

Omi, Michael and Howard Winant. 1994. Racial Formation in the United States: From the 1960s to the 1990s. New York: Routledge.

Said, Edward W. 1978. Orientalism. New York: Vintage.

Santos, Boaventura de Sousa, João Arriscado Nunes and Maria Paula Meneses. 2007. "Opening up the Canon of Knowledge and Recognition of Difference." Pp. xvix–lxii in Another Knowledge Is Possible: Beyond Northern Epistemologies, edited by B. d. S. Santos. New York: Verso.

Sarr, Felwine. 2019. Afrotopia. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minneapolis Press.

Smith, Linda Tuhiwai. 2012. Decolonizing Methodologies, Second Edition. London: Zed Books.

Stepan, Nancy. 1982. The Idea of Race in Science: Great Britain, 1800–1960. Hamden, CT: Archon Books.

Tamale, Sylvia. 2020. Decolonization and Afro-Feminism. Ottawa, Canada: Daraja Press.

Wilkerson, Isabel. 2020. Caste. New York: Random House.

Yuval-Davis, Nira. 1997. Gender and Nation. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Yuval-Davis, Nira. 2011. The Politics of Belonging: Intersectional Contestations. London: Sage.

6

Feminist social and political theory

Claire Colebrook

One way of understanding feminism as a movement, in general, is to see it as a social and political claim for women's justice and equality; one might then see feminist theory as a means for justifying and effecting such claims. (Theory would have the sense of being a second-order or reflective process following on from practice.) Feminism would, on this account, proceed from a certain political grouping or class and may, in turn, provide a specific perspective from which one might evaluate and redefine the nature and proper functioning of the traditional polity. If, for example, one begins from the modern liberal claim that a proper polity is composed of equal and self-legislating persons, then it not only follows that women ought to be included in such an egalitarian state (so that feminism would follow on from liberalism); it may also be the case that feminism adjusts or reconfigures liberalism. Perhaps, one might need to regard political rights as not only those of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness but also rights to care for others or to determine one's own bodily being (reproductive rights and sexual rights). Feminism would operate in two directions: as a claim that proceeds from an already existing political body, it would *extend* the duties, rights, obligations and norms of the polity. If women were granted rights suitable to their specific being then rights may have to be modified beyond the classic rights of non-interference. But feminism would also be more than *extension* of already existing social-political theories, for it may alter the very nature of political theorizing by asking about both the nature of the subject who theorizes and the nature of the polity.[1] Radical separatist (or second-wave) feminists, for example, deem the liberal paradigm of equality and non-interference to be both inadequate (for women should not be seen as equal *to* men but as bearing their own values and qualities), and also to be implicitly masculine:[2] the ideal of individuals as self-determining subjects who act in their own interests precludes traditional female virtues of care, nurturance, empathy and emotive reasoning (Ruddick 1989). On the one hand, then, feminism is a movement with primarily practical goals – of achieving a better condition for women – and this movement would deploy political and social theory accordingly. On the other hand, it could also be the case that the very nature of women as a group might require new modes of theorizing and new modes of political grouping. I will turn to this second mode of feminism in the final part of this chapter.

Feminist liberation, theory and praxis

For the first part of this chapter, I will be considering this initial possibility: that women exist as a group within a polity, that the polity theorizes itself and that women contribute to and extend this self-constitution of the social whole through their own modes of political engagement. One could therefore begin from various modes of social theory – liberal, Marxist, social-constructivist, communitarian, ecological, postmodern – and these, in turn, would have feminist variants. We can consider these in turn, for each of these modes of political theory would seem at once to lead inevitably towards the justification of feminism *and* yet also be required to change for the sake of feminist claims. If liberalism begins from the recognition that no single individual possesses power or superior knowledge over any other, then there can be no basis for excluding any subject from the formation and legitimation of law and social forms. It is because there is no divine or eternally prescribed order of the world that law must be constituted; the only justifiable laws would be those that would be agreed upon by any participant whatsoever. Liberalism proceeds from a commitment to reason: one cannot accept any social norm or political arrangement without justification, and the only justifiable social form is one that would appear to be just for any subject whatever (Rawls 1972). It would follow, then, that if the only rational social order were to be one of equality, rights and continued justification and legitimation then women would necessarily be included. To exclude women, or any other group capable of reason would be to make an irrational exception. This was, indeed, how Mary Wollstonecraft in *Vindications of the Rights of Woman* (1792) argued for female emancipation: she did not present women's claims as being those of a specific interested group, but as the consequence of accepting the norms of rational humanity.[3] If we are all blessed with reason then it follows that women, too, have the right to education and political involvement; it also follows that any social body (say, of men) that dominated another body of rational individuals (women, slaves) would be impeding its own rational power (Wollstonecraft 1992). For Wollstonecraft, women's rights were human rights, and humanity could not arrive at full rationality as long as it tyrannically (or irrationally) precluded some of its members from participation in political discourse. But if liberalism led to feminism it also seemed to demand, immediately, some form of feminist critique.

The ideal of the liberal individual – a self-determining, self-interested, resource-calculating and ideally disembodied reasoner – would be challenged by later liberal feminists who suggested that the seeming gender neutrality of this liberal self actually privileged a traditionally male subject. If we imagine selves as isolated and self-determining individuals, whose role in the polity is one of self-furthering calculation (limited by the imperative to avoid interfering with others), then we preclude a consideration of those social selves (typically women) who are either biologically or culturally bound to others, through child-rearing, care for elderly family members or reproduction. Even in the workplace women are more often than not charged with duties of care or 'affective' labour (Oksala 2016). The inclusion of women in the liberal polity would at once be demanded by the very principles of liberalism (equality, reason, universalism) and yet would also place pressure upon those very principles: once we include all individuals and grant rights of participation to all, the very definition of an individual may change.

From practice to theory

Feminism may begin then by extending a theory – extending liberal rights and freedom to *include* women – but would then have an effect on the theory's inclusive principles. Once women have rights of self-determination and participation then the very concept of self and rights would be modified. The self may have to be expanded, for how else could we consider

a pregnant body if we did not revise our concept of autonomy? And how could we consider the rights of a self who is capable of reproduction if we did not somehow render the individual agent more complex than the isolated self? More importantly, the very nature of the political process may also come under pressure. For many liberal feminists, including Mary Wollstonecraft, granting women rights, equality before the law and political participation, did not entail denying women's traditional domestic roles. It did, though, lead to the inclusion of domestic labourers and carers into the polity. This would, in turn, mean the political process could not be as easily split into public and private spheres. If women were granted the rights to reason and education then domestic relations would change, for marriage would not be a relation of possession but one of conversation and negotiation. It is possible that political relations may alter also, if women's orientation towards childcare and reproduction would transform the modes of political conversation. Liberalism's inclusion of women within the polity would therefore follow from liberalism's commitment to universal equality, and yet the way in which equality would be achieved would need to be redefined. One could not, for example, assume a level playing field – that one enters the political arena as a neutral subject – for some subjects (by virtue of biological and cultural inflections) are already entwined with the rights of others.

Nowhere is this more evident than in the one domain in which liberal feminism has had the most practical consequences. In pro-life versus pro-choice debates, the discourse of rights operates in two directions, right to life and right to choice or self-determination. This indicates that the very *rights* that allowed women to be included also put the very concept of rights under pressure. For the most part, at the practical and political level, the discourse of rights and liberalism has simply been sustained while harboring this contradiction. Women who are pro-choice appeal to their rights, and their opponents appeal to rights to life. But these practical problems are, for many post-liberal feminists, indicative of a deeper problem of liberalism. The supposedly neutral political individual, who has no norms or values other than those that are freely chosen, is in actuality neither politically nor sexually neutral. Critics of liberalism, in general, have suggested that there is a presupposed capitalist norm in the idea of the self who has no qualities other than those that are freely chosen, and who relates to others in the mode of free and unimpeded competition. Liberalism presupposes *possessive* individualism (Macpherson 1962), and assumes that one can be a self without somehow already being defined by shared norms and debts to others (MacIntyre 1981). There are also specifically feminist criticisms of liberalism that follow from Marxist, ecological, psychoanalytic, postmodern and communitarian perspectives. As I have already suggested, such criticisms of the liberal paradigm go beyond feminist corrections of the ideal of the political subject and political process and start to radicalize the very nature of what counts as 'the political' – if such a notion is still sustainable after feminism.

Liberalism, after all, is perhaps the general mode of political theory, proceeding from the modern acceptance that there is no natural and divine order, that social relations are created politically – through the interaction of individuals who are not determined in advance by norms that derive from a transcendent source beyond political life. Various pre-modern paradigms, such as Platonism or Aristotelianism, at least in part proceed by subjecting the political to other criteria: debate among individuals ought to be governed by those who possess wisdom and logic (Platonism) *or* by the processes of human reason that can discern first principles (Aristotle). Modern forms of Aristotelianism, despite first appearances, nevertheless insist that one does not begin with politics (or free and open debate) but must already be part of a community with norms and values, *from which* those norms and values might be evaluated and revised. The notion that politics can be at least thought of as the creation of a social order by individuals begins with modernity, either through the competition among individuals that would lead to the acceptance of a limiting social order (Hobbes) or by the acceptance that individuals have a propensity

towards social virtues and justice simply through the demands of living and working in common (Hume, Rousseau) (Dumont 1986). This modern point of view would then be further intensified and radicalized if one pointed out, critically, that one can never *know* the nature of some supposed pre-social individual and that one must proceed *as if* deprived of any foundation: the choices one makes are always in line with the absence of any knowledge of human nature or ultimate foundations, so that one acts as if one's own choices could be chosen by any imagined other. (This is the modern reading of Kant, put forward by O'Neill 1989; Korsgaard 1996). One might say that there is a modern ideology of individualism in general, that regardless of one's specific philosophy one nevertheless begins political questioning from the absence of any transcendent ground or foundation. This seeming neutralization of the political which also makes politics the ultimate ground precisely because all we have is the arena of debate and legitimating, has, as we have seen, two modes of implication for feminism. First, women can no longer be excluded on the grounds of natural hierarchy or nature. Second, feminism may also – having benefited from modernity's commitment to neutrality – question the supposed neutrality of the modern subject. Indeed, one might argue that this supposedly neutral individual, who faces the world with no qualities other than those that are chosen in his relations with others, is not only indebted to the capitalist paradigm of free choice in a market environment (especially, today, when markets include choosing one's lifestyle and personality), he is also far from being gender-neutral. The isolated self-determining individual is associated culturally with masculine values (whereas women are deemed to be tied more to domestic virtues of care, other-directedness, emotional connectedness and feelings of embodiment) (Lloyd 1984). He is also, as Sylvia Wynter has argued, the *homo economicus*, whose being is premised on a capacity to manage and master mere life – a definition of 'man' that excludes most of humanity (Wynter and McKittrick 2015).

It would follow, then, that one of the first manoeuvres that might be undertaken by modern feminism is a distinction between sex and gender, with sex being one's natural biological being and gender being the way in which nature is determined and interpreted by culture (Oakley 1972). The sex/gender distinction is at once a natural consequence of the modern ideology of liberalism: whatever one's natural or pre-social being may be – whatever one's sex – all we can really negotiate politically is one's gender or the meaning and values one attributes to sex. It would follow from liberalism's suspension of private, partial and inscrutable values – those of one's body – in favour of shared determinable qualities (such as one's role and social identity) that politics can only concern gender or the ways in which one's body takes on a cultural and political sense. Theorists in the liberal tradition have therefore insisted on a distinction between private norms and values (those of the family, the private sphere, sexuality and one's own taste), and political values, or those that can be discussed and negotiated in common (Elshtain 1981). But the distinction between public and private, and one's natural and social being, is precisely – though crucial for feminist criticism in its early phase – one of the key stumbling blocks for developing a feminist political theory. For the very idea that one's natural and biological being is somehow outside the domain of political negotiation harbours two problematic assumptions: it grants the body or nature a certain apolitical timelessness, and it precludes political discussion from taking hold of issues of the body and private social relations (Gatens 1996).

After liberalism

Second-wave, radical or post-liberal feminism proceeded from a criticism of the public/private distinction and did so by politicizing the body. Perhaps the most concise way of approaching this intervention was through Kate Millett's claim that the 'personal is political,' which is also to say that the private sphere is already public, and that the way in which one lives one's own

supposedly natural body is already determined by history and politics (Millett 1970). Feminists of this second wave went beyond claims for inclusion and equality and aimed to transform the very nature of political formation – no longer assuming the norm of the pre-political individual who subsequently enters politics, and no longer assuming the distinctly public nature of the political arena that would not be already inflected by gendered norms. Such a reaction against, or extension of, liberal feminist demands worked from (and also transformed) other theoretical paradigms. Whereas first-wave or liberal feminism had assumed that political formations and the assumptions of humanism would benefit and emancipate women, second-wave or radical feminism sought to rework political processes and their accompanying norms. Indeed, one might begin to question *the political*, the idea of a domain of ideally free speech where norms are negotiated and legitimated; for one might begin to think of processes beyond the polity – processes of bodies, passions and figures and timelines beyond those of the scope of calculative reason.

Marxism, like liberalism, enables a greater inclusion of women in the political process, and yet (again like liberalism) requires reformulation once women are included as political individuals. The basic premise of Marxism is that what appears to be natural and universal is ultimately – ideologically – determined by social and economic relations that allow labour to be exploited by those who possess capital or the means of production. It would follow then that the demystification of natural subjection would lead to women's emancipation. If it is the case that social and political formations follow on from the ways in which labour is divided among those who produce and those who own the means of production, then it could no longer be the case that one simply accepts one's position in the social order. For Marxism in its most traditional form it would be workers or the proletariat, precisely because they labour and are responsible for the transformation of the natural world into a cultural world, who would be the best poised to understand that the world is never given simply and naturally but always through the relations of production. On the one hand, this basic Marxist criticism of liberalism's notion of the pre-political individual would enable feminism to historicize and politicize myths of nature so that they could contest the ideal of the competitive, market-oriented, atomized individual from which liberal theory had launched its claims for rights. On the other hand, it was because of Marxism's attention to conditions of labour and social production that it would remain blind to sexual exploitation and the conditions of reproduction. Marxism's point of departure for explaining social relations was the labouring individual, working upon a world that had been presented as so much raw material for transformation; it is the worker who, in negating the world as it is, is directly tied to historical materialism.

There are two problems for feminism in such a starting point. First, the worker can only sell his labour and enter the public sphere if there has already been a sexual division of labour (Pateman 1988). Here, women take on domestic labour and reproduction in order to allow men to enter a public sphere where labour is exchanged for money and, in turn, commodities. Second, it is the productive individual, rather than those who reproduce, who becomes the exemplary political agent. Feminists, therefore, argued that before there could be a political revolution in which workers seized the means of production, creating a communist utopia in which one had a direct relation to production and social relations not mediated by money and commodities, there needed to be a sexual revolution in which reproduction would not be confined to the private sphere and in which women were not assumed to occupy a natural position within the family, subjected to men who would be workers. Carole Pateman argued that before any social contract, where men agree to subject themselves to law for the sake of social stability and efficiency, there would need to have been a *sexual contract* through which men become free and labouring individuals only if women take over the labour of the private sphere (Pateman 1988). Radical feminism in the Marxist tradition, even more than liberal feminism, evidenced

the power of feminist thought not only to extend the bounds of a political theory by including women but also to revolutionize the founding concepts upon which political paradigms were based. Liberal feminists argued that the free individual of modern democracy only appeared as a rational, disembodied and autonomous subject if certain qualities and roles associated with women, such as child-rearing and childbirth, were consigned to a pre-political private sphere (Okin 1989). If liberalism were to continue while taking account of feminist concerns then it would need to take accept that there cannot be an assumed level playing field or neutral subject as long as the private sphere and domestic labour were left out of play. If, however, certain social reforms were to occur – such as adequate child-care and access to employment and education – then the egalitarian ideals and assumptions of liberalism might be achieved.

But liberalism's desire for equality raises the question of 'equal to whom'? And this would also be the (second major) problem for any revolutionary Marxism oriented toward emancipating humanity in general. Should the political sphere be adjusted so that 'we' can all share the same rights and privileges, or do the defining norms of humanity need to be reconsidered to include the differences of (and among) women? Marxist feminists, in general, were critical of the norm of labour as defining social individuals – repressing, as it does, the reproductive and domestic labour of women. Other forms of radical feminism suggested that the differences between men and women were not only politically relevant, and needed to be addressed in order to achieve a just polity; such differences may also be irreducible, suggesting an irresolvable split in the polity (Daly 1978). Rather than modifying or extending liberal and Marxist traditions various forms of radical feminism would *begin* with sexual difference. There is no 'man,' no 'subject,' without the familial divisions that create sexual binaries. This is the founding idea of psychoanalysis, where the self begins in a distinction from the mother's body, creating a subject who is *other than* feminine matter. This, for radical feminists working in the psychoanalytic tradition, is the difference that begins all other difference.

Perhaps no theory has been more audacious in its claims for the relation between sexual difference and political theory than psychoanalysis. At first glance Freudian theories of sexual difference might appear to be the last place feminists might look for understanding political relations; even Freud himself declared that femininity was a mystery. Freud also argued that women would be less capable of morality (for what threat would castration pose to them?), have less defined ego boundaries (for they would not define themselves in opposition to their mothers so much as identify with the position of mothering), and would be inherently narcissistic having never learned to direct their attention away from the figure of woman towards the social constraints of law (Freud 1965). Freud's model of psycho-social development, in which the child abandons attachment to the mother and submits to the law for fear of castration, makes sense only on a *phallic* model of subjectivity. Either one takes castration literally – where the boy child sees a girl lacking a penis and assumes that there is a threat of castration if he does not obey the social laws that are associated with abandoning his infantile attachment to his (pre-social and unrestrained) oedipal desires; *or* the phallus is symbolic and structural.

The condition of being subjected to law – the brute human condition of being compelled to speak and live in common – leads to the assumption that there *must have been* a point prior to prohibition, and that there is, therefore, someone who prohibits my enjoyment, along with a prohibited object of enjoyment. This second, structural, notion of psychoanalysis would regard sexual difference less as a literal event – to do with the brute nature of bodies – and would regard the ways in which bodies become sexed through culture as the fundamental question of psychoanalysis. One could, therefore, either dismiss Freud's oedipal account of a subject socialized through the threat of castration as being yet one more way in which women were deemed to be essentially less capable of subjectivity than men, or one could see the Freudian account as

descriptive rather than prescriptive, providing – finally – some way of understanding the persistence and resilience of patriarchy.

There has been a long-standing tradition in feminism of seeing Freud as simply and symptomatically sexist. Others have seen Freud's theory of difference as crucial to explaining the long-standing structures of masculine power. Why, one might ask, even after women have been granted rights and suffrage is there continued inequality, and why do women themselves seem to be complicit in the continuation of sexual difference, being less competitive, less directed towards power and domination? This was the question that motivated Juliet Mitchell's (1975) work: only if we see that political subjects are formed through subjection to a law that is figured to be paternal, castrating and *other than woman*, will we begin to be able to negotiate the longevity of sexual difference (and its accompanying injustice). Mitchell's work was deeply indebted to Jacques Lacan whose 'return to Freud' was highly critical of the notion that psychoanalysis should direct itself to helping individuals form healthy egos. The ego, or the idea of the self as a unified individual, was a lure or misrecognition of the subject's necessarily alienated structure. We become subjects only through speech or relation to others; we are, therefore, never self-present wholes who then have either acceptable or unacceptable desires. Rather, in the beginning is our condition of being oriented to an other – the other who is imagined (Oedipally) as being a feminine 'all' who will fulfil our desire. But that supposed full enjoyment is imaginary and can be lived only *as prohibited*. Being a subject is, therefore, essentially a predicament of desire, not need. All our speech, all our orientation to objects and others, all our relations even to our own body – all these take place through a system of already articulated differences (language and structure). We are forever displaced from ourselves, forever subjected to desire, and never capable of living at the level of mere need, as mere bodies. This, for Lacanian feminists, means that sexual difference is structural: as subjects subjected to the order of speech we imagine that there must have been a maternal plenitude or Woman from which we are now distanced or prohibited. Sexual difference is not so much a biological fact as a structural symbolic condition; it is the way in which our relation to (and the possibility of) facts is lived. There are, therefore, 'formulae' of sexual difference: either the masculine position, in which I imagine that there must be one object that is outside the domain of possible enjoyment, the prohibited object (Woman) that would answer my desires; or, the feminine position in which there is at least one for whom prohibition does not apply, at least one (mythic) being not subjected to the symbolic order (Copjec 2002). For Juliet Mitchell psychoanalysis, via Lacan, accounted for the inability for liberal or even Marxist reformist approaches to address the predicament of patriarchy. The women's movement would require a consideration of the very structure of the psyche.

One of the challenges, after liberalism and liberal feminism, has been to recognize that feminism is not a question of negotiating sexism or even prejudice but that there may be problems of sexual difference that go beyond, or go deeper, than social and political equality. Psychoanalysis and Marxism have the virtue of allowing us to think of the ways in which the seemingly basic unit of the pre-social individual is not only already determined through political and cultural forces, but also sexually inflected. If individuals are defined through production, then it matters whether their relation to production is direct – in the world of commodities, wages and labour – or indirect, where women maintain the family unity that enables men to compete in a market setting. Psychoanalysis does not only look at the ways in which the structure of the family enables political participation, it argues for the ways in which political and social comportments are determined by the uniquely human predicament of being other-dependent from birth. The first human relation is not to the world but to an other. Psychoanalysis also takes non-Freudian or post-Freudian forms that insist on desire and relations as prior to 'the subject,' but reject the nuclear or oedipal family. Those feminists who follow the work of Gilles Deleuze and Felix

Guattari argue that desire *precedes* the family; desire can be collective, inhuman, mystical or cosmic – with non-Western cultures having a sense of the self that is connected to the earth well beyond the private sphere of the family. Sexual difference between men and women was the foundational difference for second wave and radical feminism, but once desire and difference became foundational and formative of the self, sexual difference could be conceived beyond male and female binaries (Braidotti 2016).

Second-wave or radical feminism in general was, therefore, both an extension and refutation of liberal assumptions; it maintained the practical political force of feminism – a dissatisfaction with the basic units of political theory – and yet argued that liberalism's desires for equality and wider participation would only reinforce, rather than reform, political norms that were not in women's interests.

Liberal and radical feminism today

Contemporary arguments in the popular political domain tend to assume both liberal and psychoanalytic notions: first, that the political sphere is ideally one of equal representation and that there should, therefore, be at least some women in power and government, but also, second, that somehow there is a women's perspective or mode of sociality – less aggressive, more conciliatory, more other-directed – that would alter the mode of political procedures. Some feminists accepted the Freudian model of psycho-social development and suggested that there were indeed different models of psychological development. Nancy Chodorow (1978) and Carol Gilligan (1982) argued that women's orientation to other persons and to morality would be less rule-bound, legislative and calculative and more empathetic, other-directed and mindful of singular nuances. This assumption that women were essentially more attuned to workable models of social cooperation characterized the feminism of the 1970s, which often went as far as separatism, either for feminist utopias, or arguing that women's traditional virtues of care, empathy, embodiment and emotive rather than aggressive approaches provided a better model of sociality in general. This notion has been maintained, more recently, in arguments for ecological forms of feminism, in which the traditionally masculine figuration of the self and its relation to the world (a relationship of subject to object) is replaced by traditionally feminine qualities of care, nurturance, other-directedness and a deep sense of the spirit of *place* (rather than the neutral and calculative attitude to space) (Warren 2000).

The often-narrated three 'waves' of feminism – from demands for equality, to claims for difference, and then to problematizations of the very notion of sexual binaries – is best not thought of as a linear sequence so much as an ongoing enrichment and problematization. Claims for equality (before the law) and difference (or the right to define one's own self, outside models of masculine humanism) have not disappeared or become out-dated. The third wave of feminists pointed out that sexual binaries were themselves problematic and required not so much elimination (liberalism) or justification (radical difference) but complication. Luce Irigaray is perhaps exemplary of French feminism insofar as she accepted the problem of psychoanalytic difference – that subjects come into being in their relation to an other, who can only be desired and never known (Irigaray 1996). Yet Irigaray argued for the strong sexual difference of this relation. She did not merely suggest that there were historically and culturally embedded figures of sexual difference – with masculine and feminine qualities being an effect of social and symbolic orders. Such a notion – that we are produced through culture, or that the body is neutral sex that becomes overlaid by gender – is itself a gendered notion. The masculine subject position is that there is a world of passive matter that awaits ordering and synthesis by an active mind, a mind that is subject opposed to object. Irigaray suggests another comportment of sexual difference,

one in which the definitive orientation is not subject to object, but subject to subject. This much had already been suggested by Lacan and psychoanalysis more generally, but Irigaray went further and argued that the Lacanian formula for sexual difference – one figured through prohibition of the Woman as Other – was only one side of the equation. In the feminine comportment the relation is not one of representing or mastering an other, but of feeling oneself affected by an other who is also given to the self only in their mode of affect. To accept that sexual difference is not about formulae relating to a mythic prohibited Woman, but that there is indeed something like 'Woman' even if her modes of relation are not those of the *subject*, would lead to radical notions of 'sexuate' rights – forming new notions of what it is to be a political subject.

Irigaray's project does not by any means exhaust third-wave feminism, but the way in which she poses the problem of sexuality is exemplary. One needs, her work suggests, to shift the very problem of sexuality away from the subject, away from the self who speaks or acts, towards the potential relations of speaking or acting *from which* subjects are constituted. Because Irigaray suggested, also, that different bodies would possess different modes of potentiality (and would be oriented towards otherness differently) her work was at once third-wave, in its demystification of already given male-female boundaries, and *post*-third-wave in its challenging of the very concepts of subject and difference.

For Irigaray, and for many who were influenced by her work, political subjects are sexual subjects: sexual not because they are gendered (or divided between male and female) but because they are who they are through the desiring relations that constitute their being. Such an understanding of politics must, therefore, go beyond the third-wave questioning of sexual structures, in order to question the notion of structure as such. As long as one accepts that the condition for politics is *structural* – that we can speak or act only *as* this or that recognized (sexed, raced) subject – then politics will always be a negative labour. The condition for speaking and acting is (supposedly) that one take part in current systems of sex, gender, race and class, and yet all the while recognize that such systems can be destabilized or challenged from within. But what if the idea of a world or reality that is given only through structure were itself a sexed model? What if the idea of a mute and passive reality that can be lived only through systems were typical of modern, masculine, heterosexual, white and Oedipal subjects? How, we might ask, did 'we' come to think of ourselves as effects of 'a' system of signification or difference in which 'we' must take up some specific sex or gender? What if this model – of a subject who 'is' only insofar as he speaks in relation to others who are similarly subjected – could be displaced by thinking about sexuality or difference beyond *the subject?*

This new mode of thinking has taken feminism's deepest and defining problem – of the power of sexual difference – and has taken it beyond sexuality. Perhaps the two key figures in this movement were Michel Foucault and Gilles Deleuze, but it is perhaps only through feminism that one can really grasp the force and range of their work (Braidotti 1991). For Foucault the concept of sexuality, far from being a domain of questioning that would (finally) release us from the constitutive prohibition of culture, was itself a normalizing concept (Foucault 1978). The idea that 'we' possess a sexuality that can be read in order to discover the secret of our being is entwined with what Foucault refers to as an 'ethics of knowledge' – where our capacity to read, monitor and interpret our own being would yield some proper politics. At its most normalizing this yields bio-politics: we no longer see politics as a domain of decision and relations among competing forces but seek to ground politics on the truths of life. Politics becomes the management of populations, the maximization of life. The turn to life or matter is also tied to the racialization of the body; even though Foucault and Deleuze focused on freeing desire from the normality of the subject in general, their work has enabled critical accounts of the ways in which sexual normativity and regulation was bound up with race, and the ways in which race

and sexuality were bound up with forming borders between humanity and animality. Alongside feminist theory's exploration of sexual difference *between* men and women there has also been an interrogation of the borders between human and non-human, precisely because the norm of 'humanity' often relies upon the white man of reason, and the long history of colonization and slavery. This history of feminist counter-humanism goes back at least as far as Donna Haraway's 1985 'Cyborg Manifesto,' where she ties sexual reproduction and difference to broader global relations of labour and argues that decolonization of feminism will require new relations to the non-human things and beings that make human existence possible. In the twenty-first century, feminist counter-humanism continues with Haraway's work but also flourishes in feminisms that take account of various forms of the non-human (Chen 2012).

Third-wave feminism, in general, defined itself against the primacy and supposedly binary nature of sexual difference: how could we assume the difference between male and female without a questioning of the genesis of that binary? There were two paths (at least) offered for feminism beyond Foucault's work, both of them resisting any simple assumption of sexual duality and the Freudian assumption of the oedipal family triangle as the ground for explaining life and knowledge in general. It might at first appear as though Foucault's criticism of sexuality as some normalizing ground would preclude any notion of the politics of sexual difference, and that his critique of sexuality would open the politics of identity to other fields of power, such as race, class, ethnicity and queer theory. Certainly, Foucault's emphasis on fields of knowledge and social relations and the *positive* nature of power led to an emphasis on the ways in which selves were made possible, rather than repressed, by the social, cultural and (usually) heterosexual matrices through which they performed as subjects. Judith Butler, whose work was at once influenced by Foucault and Lacan (despite their paradigmatic differences), argued that 'sex' (as the ground of one's cultural gender) was an effect of social and cultural performance: sex is not the ground of our being, but what appears *as original* after culture and social norms have been performed by individuals who, also, are effects rather than origins of performance (Butler 1990). The distinction between natural/biological sex and cultural gender was, following thinkers like Butler, deemed to be an intensification of the subjection of politics to some normalizing foundation. For Butler the way forward would neither be to do away with constructed genders for the sake of a 'real' sexuality, nor to see identity as nothing more than construction, but to look at the relation between subjectivity and subjection. We become who we are through a process of performance that creates an identity where (we imagine) *there must have been* a self who is other than the systems and signifiers through which action is possible. Materiality, for Butler, is not some prior ground for politics but is a process that splits some supposed material or prior sex, from its supposed social or cultural effect.

Butler's problematization of 'sex' is not, however, the only way in which one can avoid the naturalization of sexual binaries. Another would be to see Butler's theory (that sex is an effect of power, heterosexual norms and systems of signification) as itself part of the modern era of biopolitics and enslavement to familial Oedipalism. Why should we see the relations between bodies and sexed qualities to be one of subjection? Why would the self or body only be individuated through a system or structure that operates by negation, with sex and life being only known as *other than* (or falsely prior to) cultural identity and recognition?

Feminist philosophers, including Luce Irigaray, Julia Kristeva, Elizabeth Grosz and Rosi Braidotti, sought to consider sexual difference beyond the normalizing binaries of the standard male-dyad and as positive. Sexual difference, considered positively, is not − as in Butler − an effect of differential systems. Rather, there are forces or potential *to differ*. These forces are sexual because they take on the identity that they do only *in relation*, and this requires us to rethink − in a way different from Butler − the relation among sex, gender and politics. Political formations and familial structures, including the male-female dyad, are not ways of differentiating a life,

materiality or sexuality that can only be known ex post facto. On the contrary, life is anything but a neutral unsexed substance; it is sexual in its capacity to create differences, but to do so – sexually – through encounters among powers that proliferate distinctions (Grosz 2004). Returning to Irigaray's criticism of traditional essentialism and constructivism: it is not that there are two substances (male and female) that come into some relation, nor some blank passive matter that is then represented as male or female by some active and differentiating culture. Sexual difference commits us to differing modes, styles or manners of relation. Any two bodies take on the sex or autonomy that they have only through their encounters with other (different, encountering) bodies. The oedipal figure of the family – that a child takes on its identity in relation to its male and female parents – is a narrowing of a social political, cultural and racial field. Sexual differences are also always racial, cultural, class and political differences – all forces are potentials *to differ* that occur in a specific milieu. The idea that there is something like 'humanity' in general with something like 'a' sexuality only belies the complex relations of forces and powers that cannot be reduced to the modern family.

This does not mean, of course, that we are now post-feminist and that race, sexuality, ethnicity and class displace questions of gender. On the contrary, the problem that has always mobilized feminism – which from its beginning was whether something like humanity could really be imagined outside the narrow range of the white, western man of reason – has intensified. It is only if we think of forces *beyond man* that we will arrive at a point beyond the stultifying notion of the polity as nothing more than a gathering of rational selves whose only consideration is life as it is already known and lived.

Feminist 'new' materialism is perhaps the dominant theoretical force of the twenty-first century, not because it marks a decisive and unified turn back to matter but because it is a multiple and contested approach that refuses to see matter as a passive foundation for human cultural and historical development. New materialism can take the form of looking at the affective or emotional forces that compose feminist life (Ahmed 2017), the ways in which matter is something that produces knowledge and bodies as much as it is produced by scientific disciplines (Barad 2007), or the ways in which sexual difference precedes the human and can be explored in an evolving and vibrant ecology of animal existence (Grosz 2004). What makes new materialism 'new' is that matter remains as a problem. Even with matter no longer providing a foundation or determinism (or the forms of biological reduction that have so often produced racial and sexual hierarchies) there have still been objections to feminist new materialism. Jordy Rosenberg argues that new materialism repeats the typical colonizing gesture of finding matter as so much stuff available for appropriation: 'the urge towards objects comports itself in a very particular fashion, one that will be familiar to scholars of colonialism and settler-colonialism, and that calls to mind any number of New-World-style fantasies about locations unmediated by social order' (Rosenberg 2014). Critical race theorists have also drawn attention to the ways in which a turn to 'matter' (however vibrant and 'new') deflects attention from the racialization of matter, the erasure of black women's bodies and the dependence of the humanist and *post*-humanist enterprises on a unified history of being that denies and erases black existence – *before* the understanding of bodies that matter (Douglass 2018; Bilge 2020).

Notes

1. It was in this respect that Deleuze and Guattari distinguished between majoritarian or 'molar' politics – women as a group, with a range *extending* to include all women – and minoritarian or *intensive* politics, where the inclusion of individuals alters the very nature of what counts as an individual (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 321).

2. Wittig's (1975) claim that 'lesbians are not women' aims to think beyond women as they are defined in relation to men, and deploys the category of 'lesbian' as a placeholder for a different mode of subject. Other radical feminists embraced the traditional figure of 'woman' more positively, stressing the value of women's emancipation from male power (Firestone 1970), while deconstructive feminists accepted the term 'woman' while acknowledging its provisional and almost ironic distance from any actual woman (Cornell 1991). Feminists working in critical race theory have rejected the natural unity of 'woman' as a category that would apply across racial and cultural difference, and have insisted that sexual difference needs to be situated in relation to other difference, generating an intersectional feminism critical of the universalism of white feminism (Jackson 2016).

3. Even today if the norms of rationality are extended to include forms of sympathy, imagination and passion that are not those of traditional reason (Nussbaum 2010), it can still be the case that there is one reasoning norm for all humanity that will include men and women – even if the task of discovering this universal humanity will be a distant ideal (Benhabib 1992).

References

Ahmed, Sara. 2017. *Living a Feminist Life*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Barad, Karen. 2007. *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Benhabib, Seyla. 1992. *Situating the Self: Gender, Community, and Postmodernism in Contemporary Ethics*. New York: Routledge.

Bilge, Sirma. 2020. 'The Fungibility of Intersectionality: An Afropessimist Reading,' *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 43.13: 2298–2326.

Braidotti. Rosi. 1991. *Patterns of Dissonance: A Study of Women in Contemporary Philosophy. Trans. Elizabeth Guild*. New York: Routledge.

Braidotti, Rosi. 2016. 'Becoming Woman: or Sexual Difference Revisited,' *Theory, Culture & Society* 20.3: 43–64.

Butler, Judith. 1990. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. New York: Routledge.

Chen, Mel. 2012. *Animacies: Biopolitics, Racial Mattering, and Queer Affect*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Chodorow, Nancy. 1978. *The Reproduction of Mothering: Psychoanalysis and the Sociology of Gender*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Copjec, Joan. 2002. *Imagine There's No Woman: Ethics and Sublimation*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Cornell, Drucilla. 1991. *Beyond Accommodation: Ethical Feminism, Deconstruction, and the Law*. New York: Routledge.

Daly, Mary. 1978. *Gyn/Ecology: The Metaethics of Radical Feminism*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

Deleuze, G. & Guattari, F. (1987) *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Douglass, Patrice D. 2018. 'Black Feminist Theory for the Dead and Dying,' *Theory & Event*, 21.1: 106–123.

Dumont, Louis. 1986. *Essays on Individualism: Modern Ideology in Anthropological Perspective*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Elshtain, Jean Bethke. 1981. *Public Man, Private Woman: Women in Social and Political Thought*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Firestone, Shulamith. 1970. *The Dialectic of Sex*. New York: Morrow.

Foucault, Michel. 1978. *The History of Sexuality*. Trans. Robert Hurley. New York: Pantheon Books.

Freud, Sigmund. 1965. *New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*. Ed. James Strachey. New York: Norton.

Gatens, Moira. 1996. *Imaginary Bodies: Ethics, Power, and Corporeality*. London: Routledge.

Gilligan, Carol. 1982. *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Grosz, Elizabeth. 2004. *The Nick of Time: Politics, Evolution, and the Untimely*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Haraway, Donna. 1991. 'A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century,' in *Simians, Cyborgs and Women: The Reinvention of Nature*. New York: Routledge: 149–181.

Irigaray, Luce. 1996. *I Love to You: Sketch for a Felicity within History*. Trans. Alison Martin. New York: Routledge.

Jackson, Sarah J. 2016. '(Re)Imagining Intersectional Democracy from Black Feminism to Hashtag Activism,' *Women's Studies in Communication*, 39.4: 375–379.

Korsgaard, Christine. 1996. *The Sources of Normativity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lloyd, Genevieve. 1984. *The Man of Reason: 'Male' and 'Female' in Western Philosophy*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

MacIntyre, Alasdair. 1981. *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press.

Macpherson, C. B. 1962. *The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism: Hobbes to Locke*. Oxford, Clarendon Press.

Millett, Kate. 1970. *Sexual Politics*. New York: Doubleday.

Mitchell, Juliet. 1975. *Psychoanalysis and Feminism*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Book.

Nussbaum, Martha C. 2010. *From Disgust to Humanity: Sexual Orientation and Constitutional Law*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Oakley, Anne. 1972. *Sex, Gender and Society*. San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row.

Okin, Susan Moller. 1989. *Justice, Gender, and the Family*. New York: Basic Books.

Oksala, Johanna. 2016. 'Affective Labor and Feminist Politics,' *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 41.2: 281–303.

O'Neill, Onora. 1989. *Constructions of Reason: Explorations of Kant's Practical Philosophy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Pateman, Carole. 1988. *The Sexual Contract*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Rawls, John. 1972. *A Theory of Justice*. Oxford, Clarendon Press.

Rosenberg, Jordy. 2014. 'The Molecularization of Sexuality: On Some Primitivisms of the Present,' *Theory & Event* 17 (2).

Ruddick, Sara. 1989. *Maternal Thinking: Toward a Politics of Peace*. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

Warren, Karen. J. 2000. *Ecofeminist Philosophy: A Western Perspective on What It Is and Why It Matters*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Wittig, Monique. 1975. *The Lesbian Body*. Trans. David Le Vay. New York: Morrow.

Wollstonecraft, Mary. 1992. *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Wynter, Sylvia and Katherine McKittrick. 'Unparalleled Catastrophe for Our Species? Or, to Give Humanness a Different Future: Conversations,' in *Sylvia Wynter: On Being Human as Praxis*. Ed. Katherine McKittrick. Durham, NC: Duke University Press: 9–89.

Accidental conditions

The social consequences of poststructuralist philosophy

Thomas Docherty

Much of the most invigorating social theory in recent times has its origins in the ostensibly unpromising field of literary criticism. The advent of structuralist and then poststructuralist work in literary theory provoked what became known as the 'theory wars' in university literature departments. Among literary theorists, one of the most abiding arguments in recent decades was that described by Paul de Man in his 'The Resistance to Theory' paper, originally written in 1982. Surprisingly, that paper argues that the greatest resistance to theory comes not from the avowed opponents of theoretical criticism (usually caricatured as 'common-sense empiricists'), but rather from within theory itself. Key to the logic of the piece is a consideration of the vexing question of linguistic reference: that is, the question of how it is that linguistic *signs* map on to the nonlinguistic *material* of history and reality. That question, at first glance one that is of purely literary interest, actually contains a major theoretical problem for social and political theory. Here is what de Man writes:

> It would be unfortunate, for example, to confuse the materiality of the signifier with the materiality of what it signifies. This may seem obvious enough on the level of light and sound, but it is less so with regard to the general phenomenality of space, time or especially the self; no one in his right mind will try to grow grapes by the luminosity of the word 'day,' but it is very difficult not to conceive the pattern of one's past and future existence as in accordance with temporal and spatial schemes that belong to fictional narratives and not to the world. This does not mean that fictional narratives are not part of the world and of reality; their impact upon the world may be all too strong for comfort. What we call ideology is precisely the confusion of linguistic with natural reality, of reference with phenomenalism.
> *(de Man 1986: 11)*

This – a problem of linguistic reference that becomes the problem of ideology – is a major issue for poststructuralist philosophy. In what follows, I shall show how it also informs social theory.

For many on the political left, poststructuralism has little to offer social theory, and it has much less to yield that will be of use for socio-cultural practice. In one fairly prevalent view, poststructuralist thought, specifically in the form of its deconstructive turn, leads to a crippling political indecisiveness and consequent quietist inaction. The logic here is straightforward, but it

is based on a caricature of Derrida's practices of deconstruction. At the core of deconstruction is a realization that all our thinking is organized around conceptual oppositions: to make meaning at all – and to live as we do, socially, culturally, politically – we need a structural opposition between (for examples) up and down, left and right, inside and outside, male and female, work and leisure, and so on. The logic of deconstruction is that the hierarchy that governs the opposition (and that would propose one polarity of the opposition as normative, against a deviant or abnormal secondary term) becomes, in Derrida's preferred term, 'undecidable'. This may be best explained by an example, one that is by now well-rehearsed in the literature.

Consider how we make sense of our society in terms of gender. For the most part, we operate as we do and live as we do thanks to (among many other structural and conceptual oppositions) a meaningful opposition between male and female. There is nothing 'essential' about this opposition: rather, it is simply one way that we have of making one particular sense of our world. It is not essential or 'natural' that we deploy such a structural and signifying opposition, but the opposition allows us to structure the world and how we move in it in a particular way. It is useful in that it helps us to organize whatever socio-sexual arrangements we may find congenial, for example; and, in this way, sexual activity can become meaningfully regulated for us. Now, for whatever reason (and, as far as deconstruction is concerned, the reason need not be clarified), the society that we currently live in and through proposes a hierarchical organization of that opposition, such that the male pole is often or usually proposed as normative, and the female is seen as derivative or secondary as if 'female' meant 'not quite fully male'. We usually call this organization either 'sexism' or 'masculinism'. Deconstruction argues that the opposition, its intrinsic alleged hierarchy, and (perhaps most significantly) its consequential value-system (in this case, a system based on masculinism) is not stable, but rather 'undecidable'.

In the sexist logic and value-system described above, we ask how we would define 'male'; and, typically, the answer comes back along the lines of 'in possession of a phallus'. In this, 'female' is defined by absence or lack, specifically the lack of a phallus 'possessed' by the male. Deconstruction argues, however, that, in order to define the male in the first place, we have clearly had to have recourse, for comparison and contrast, to some entity that *lacks* the phallus: the *presence* of the phallus in the male is only meaningful – indeed only conceptually perceptible – once we are aware of its *absence* elsewhere. If no creature was marked by the absence of the phallus, then we could not use the phallus as a marker of gender, and we would thus still not be able to identify one entity as 'male'. Thus, says deconstruction, it turns out that if a woman is defined by her *lack* (the alleged absence of the phallus), then man, paradoxically, is defined by *lack to the second degree*, because in order to define itself, the male turns out to be lacking its opposite (woman), which is itself defined by lack (the absence of the phallus). Far from the female being an incomplete male, the male, it turns out, is but a special case of the female – provided we are defining these in terms of lack, in terms of the presence or absence of the phallus.

The alleged hierarchy, therefore, in which male is a central norm and woman but a special case of maleness (the male who supposedly lacks the phallus), is reversed. We might be inclined to call this answer to sexism something like 'feminism'. *However* – and here is the problem with deconstruction and, indeed, all poststructuralist thought, for those on the political left – we still have a structural opposition (this time between, say, 'new man' and 'emancipated woman' or some such); and that opposition, as an opposition that governs our concept of gender, is available for further deconstruction and indeed *must*, in turn, be deconstructed. From this, we will also turn to yet another, more sophisticated opposition – trans set against cis, for example – but the point is twofold: first, we now live out our social, cultural and political worlds in terms of this new opposition; and second, we therefore still have a structural opposition that, in turn, calls for further deconstruction. In this sense, with an analysis that is potentially interminable, we reach

a position where the hierarchical organization between male and female remains, in the end, *radically undecidable*. This is not much use for those who would wish to change actual gender relations, say, as in the example. Nor, in politics, does it help shift the terms of property relations on which capitalism is built (worker against owner of the means of production, say); nor does it help those who would wish to legitimize the revolutionary potential of the claim that the proletariat should overthrow the ruling class.

It is unsurprising, then, that many on the political left have construed poststructuralism as being, at best, a mode of thought that is in conformity with liberal bourgeois idealism or, at worst, a practice that is complicit with, even encouraging of, a quietist nihilism that has given the field of practice over to dangerous right-wing tendencies, tendencies that masquerade under the ostensibly harmless terms of 'common sense'. The argument would be that poststructuralist logic takes us ever further away from material reality or history and into the realm of signs; and, indeed, this was explicitly Edward Said's argument when he favored the work of Foucault over that of Derrida, seeing deconstruction as something that took us deep into the text, certainly, but preferring Foucauldian analysis as something that took us deep into textuality but also brought us back to the realm of reference again (Said 1984: 183). In what follows here, I shall attempt to nuance this concern about poststructuralism's legacy for social theory more fully, and to re-assert the power of poststructuralist thinking for a progressive and emancipatory social theory.

First, I shall consider the relation between, on one hand, linguistic and conceptual *form* (the ways in which we literally formulate thought), and, on the other hand, the brutal historical realities of *force* (as something that is not amenable to straightforward formalization). Second, I shall explore the relations of force to matters of desire, including the desire for social change; and here, the work of Deleuze will be of importance. Finally, I will examine how a very specific *play of forces* can shape history. The play of forces I have in mind here is that which we usually associate with love, itself an abiding issue in social theory and philosophy at least since Plato's *Symposium* and *Republic*, and one that has been revived as a major concern in the thought of Badiou.

The origins of the problem: force

In what we should regard as a key founding document of poststructuralism, the review essay 'Force and Signification', Derrida realizes that the great strength – and also the great limitation – of the prevailing structuralist thought that emerged in the late 1950s is its ability to deal with matters of *form*. Structuralism, with its ability to consider all things under the terms of *sign* and *signification*, is able to give a full understanding of what de Man, in the passage I quoted at the start of this piece, would come to call 'linguistic reality'. Yet, Derrida already finds, in this 1963 piece, that structuralism *as such* is complicit with ideology; and this is all the more true precisely at those moments when it believes it is actually unmasking ideology in the name of critique because it confounds the understanding of form or of linguistic reality with the understanding of phenomena themselves. As he puts it in his review-essay, '*Form* fascinates when one no longer has the force to understand force from within itself. That is, to create. This is why literary criticism is structuralist in every age, in its essence and destiny' (Derrida 1978: 4–5). In short, structuralism triumphs when one reduces force to signification, reducing the material physicality of force to mere descriptions or signs of force. 'Force' here is, as it were, Derrida's term for phenomenalism or for the material reality of history; and the key theoretical issue that is relevant to our present concern is the issue of *representation*.

Structuralism, in these terms, reduces the fact of history to the merest 'signs of history', shifting attention from ontology to epistemology as it were (McHale 1987: 10–11); and thereby, it evacuates the history of its material content. The argument becomes focused on re-presentations

of history, and not on the factual presence of historical events in their specificity. This, with its attention to the relation between presence and representation, is akin to the kind of argument advanced much earlier in the last century by Walter Benjamin in his much-cited 'Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction' essay. There, Benjamin indicates that, prior to the age of mechanical reproduction, the work of art is characterized by an aura, the 'unique phenomenon of a distance' (Benjamin 1973: 224) given to it by its absolute singularity (its absolute 'otherness' from us), its location at the nexus of a specific play of forces that made the production of the artifact not only possible but also somehow necessary. When we consider such a work of art, what we become aware of is the struggle – the tensed play of forces, if you will – that inhabits and informs or shapes the work, the play of tensions that concretize or realize themselves in the work. The work of art is, as it were, the momentary arrest of those forces, their arrangement into a form, or their illusory 'freezing' into a material reality a 'now-time' or *Jetztzeit*, as Benjamin has it (Benjamin 1973: 263, 265; Agamben 2005: 2 and *passim*).

By contrast, in the age of mechanical reproduction, where we have multiple copies of the work, we lose the specificity of that uniqueness, the specificity occasioned by our realization of the work's absolute alterity or the fact that it does not care about our conscious perception of it; and instead, we have what can be described as the purely *aesthetic* form of the work, a *form* devoid of the *content* that is a historical struggle, or force. When the work is not designed primarily to be *available* to our consciousness, then, paradoxically, its value becomes *determined* by our consciousness; and we call this 'aesthetics'. Attention is diverted away from the forces that shape material history, and instead directed inwards to the 'linguistic' or signifying shaping – the form – of the work 'in itself', as it were. For Benjamin – as later for Derrida – the real task of the critic is to find a way to re-awaken the force of that singularity in all its telling force, to 'understand force from within itself'.

This, though it may sound abstruse, has a profound contemporary relevance. Recent years have witnessed the rise of a managerialist class in most of the advanced economies, which now organize themselves according to the logic of what Adorno and Horkheimer called a culture 'brought within the sphere of administration' (Adorno and Horkheimer 1974: 131), or, as it is more commonly known, the 'administered society'. Less philosophically, it is now a commonplace that the political class no longer *represent* people, but rather *manage* them; and, as for politics, so also for all aspects of social life. We are all managers now, either managing other people or managing ourselves according to bureaucratically established norms and expectations, sometimes called 'projects', 'targets', 'personal goals', 'outcomes', 'journeys' or 'life-stories'. For the ascendant managerialist class, historical specifics matter little: instead of an attention to the specific details or content of any problem or issue, they inspect instead the form of dealing with it, or matters of process. In project management, it matters little what the project actually is ('running the economy', as a project, becomes functionally equivalent to 'organizing the school-run'): all that matters is the process by which we arrive at the conclusion whereby we show that we have, in the cliché, planned the work and worked the plan (we have 'run the economy', say – well or badly, it matters not).

In this state of affairs, we essentially establish two orders of being. The first of these is that which we might call material historical reality (running the economy well or badly), while the second is the level at which we *represent* that reality (the bald fact of running the economy, tables and spreadsheet figures to hand). Increasingly, the representation has supplanted the original, such that material historical realities now lead a rather clandestine existence, sometimes even becoming invisible, as if wished or magicked away. This is easily exemplified by the recent world financial crisis, in which the representation of wealth and profit in spreadsheets supplanted the actual debt and poverty – the actual sufferings of individual people – that the representation

had occluded. Or, in an equally chilling example, we can have inquiry after inquiry into the Iraq War, all of which turn out to be inquiries into the procedures that are followed in order to arrive at and manage decisions – and thus we evacuate our inquiry of any matters pertaining to the actual *content* of those decisions, instead merely confirming that the *forms* by which decisions were made were adhered to. This is what we can call fantasy politics: the politics of 'I wish it so, therefore it is so'. In crude terms, it is what journalists refer to as the triumph of spin over substance; but, as fantasy politics, it is much more dangerous than just 'spinning' the news, for, as in other fantasies, real hurts – real forces – can be ignored.

It is worth remembering what is at stake in this: for Benjamin, such a thinking is complicit with an ideology of fascism. As he put it, 'The masses have a right to change property relations', but 'Fascism sees its salvation in giving these masses not their right, but instead a chance to express themselves' (Benjamin 1973: 243). For Benjamin, writing in the shadow of the 1929 Crash and the rise of a European right-wing scenting power, this aestheticization of the political leads inexorably to war and to fascism; and his response is that we must politicize aesthetics. For poststructuralist thinking, the tendency is much the same: the ignoring of content under the signs of form leads to a situation where we have two separate realms, the world of material force, where people suffer pain; and the world of the forms of these things – which we usually call 'government'.

Of desire, accident and death

Seeing representation as an issue, some philosophers and commentators look for a way of addressing, as directly as possible and without the fall into mere signification, something that is profoundly historical; and they find it in the irrevocability of the fact of death. For Baudrillard, for example, death was a kind of liminal point that calls into question the very possibility of 'symbolic exchange' (Baudrillard 1976: *passim*). For many, it is in a profound sense 'unthinkable' in that it is structurally impossible to re-present one's own death, if we construe representation as something that is dependent upon the priority of something really occurring, something 'present': one would need to survive one's own death in order to represent it, and, by definition, that is impossible. There are large consequences of this fact.

The first of these is that death becomes linked to a kind of radical and absolute 'singularity', to something that is unamenable to representation and that therefore falls out with the structural impasse given to us by the 'ideological' thinking that I outlined above. As Derrida has it:

> Death is very much that which nobody else can undergo or confront in my place. My irre-placeability is therefore conferred, delivered, "given," one can say, by death…. It is from the site of death as the place of my irreplaceability, that is, of my singularity, that I feel called to responsibility. In this sense only a mortal can be responsible.
>
> *(Derrida 1995: 41)*

Death, thus, becomes a theoretical test-case for our attempt to come to grips with the absolute singularity of the historical event. If history can be defined as that which eschews repetition (Blumenberg 1983: 596), then death becomes its central element. Yet, as Derrida has indicated, with this singularity comes the call for an ethical responsibility. Thus, in the first place, death as that which is inevitable becomes aligned with a force of history that can be described, as in ancient classical tragedy, as conditioned by *Ananke*, necessity. Yet also, in the second place, death calls us forth to answer the fundamental question governing all social theory and social practice, 'What shall I do?' or 'How shall I live?' The logic of poststructuralism, remember, has made this a major problem, given that it has rendered us into the realm of the undecidable.

In the face of this, Deleuze offers us a series of major possibilities. The subscription to history-as-necessity is complicit with the prioritization of the formal structures of history over the specifics of the material content: events. For Deleuze, the event is absolutely central. In brief, the major turn that he gives to poststructuralist thinking is one that re-establishes the centrality of the event, in all its evanescence, to any radical thinking. Yet this is not the material event as we usually think it; that is, it is not a definite something that is occasioned or brought about in a world of supposed 'exteriority' by an 'interiority' of consciousness that allegedly determines material conditions in the world. The world 'as such' does not exist, in fact: rather, there are only *arrangements of forces* that are episodic, radically singular, and productive of desire.

History as it is lived does not feel like the living out of a formal story, the fulfilling of a pattern. For Deleuze, this fact is important: although he is very aware of Derrida and other philosophers who find their sources in Hegel, Husserl and Heidegger, Deleuze works instead through an ontology derived largely from Bergson and Spinoza. From Bergson, what he takes as central to his thought is the importance of *time* and of *movement*. Considering Bergson's notion of duration, however, he already gives it his own inflection, arguing that duration 'is a becoming that endures, a change that is substance itself' (Deleuze 1988a: 37) In Spinoza, he finds a very specific sense of *difference* and of *singularity*. In this, Deleuze indicates the 'scandal' of Spinoza as the scandal that essentially dismisses any notion of a world of duality: 'According to the *Ethics* …. what is an action in the mind is necessarily an action in the body as well, and what is a passion in the body is necessarily a passion in the mind. There is no primacy of one series over the other' (Deleuze 1988b: 18). Deleuze's ontology is not a philosophy of being but rather a philosophy of becoming and, indeed, a philosophy of *accidental becoming*. This, and specifically the role of the accidental, is of lasting importance in social theory.

There are overlaps with deconstruction. Deconstruction and associated forms of poststructuralist thought base themselves on a notion of *difference*, deriving largely from the linguistics of Saussure. Saussure famously argued that language is a system of differences without positive terms: meaning is produced through differential structures. Thus, we see a structuralist world based on binary oppositions; and, in Derrida, we move from the restricted economy of this simple opposition to a generalized economy of difference as such. However, in all these cases, there remains a notion of difference *as opposed to* identity: in short, within difference, there lurks a remnant of *substantive identity* as such. Deleuze takes this in another and contrary direction.

In Spinoza, he finds a notion of what we might call absolute or primary difference: not difference that defines itself in opposition to something else, something 'self-same' or self-identical; but difference, rather, as an absolute condition of the very possibility of identity, so to speak. Spinoza begins his *Ethics* with a meditation on the substantiality of God; and his case is that God is at once infinite (and thus containing an infinity of possible attributes) while at the same time unique (and thus not amenable to re-presentation): 'God is both unique and absolute' (Hardt 1993: 61). For Deleuze, this offers a consistency with his reading of time and movement in Bergson, for it offers a version of substance that is *intrinsically different*: not 'different from' something else, for there is no something else (God is infinite), and not differing from itself in time (God is one thing). Rather, this is pure difference as constitutive of the substance of being.

The result, for Deleuze, once the theological issue is removed from the equation, is that one is never in a state of being (a being that would allow me to give an account of 'my identity'), but only becoming (in which 'I' never quite coincide with myself, since my temporal condition precludes any such possibility, and since the 'I' is a product of the movement or arrangement of forces). Being would equate with death, and it is therefore negative; becoming is equivalent to living and is affirmative, joyful.

This means, though, that all things are necessarily always in flux. In fact, it is even more radical than that: anything that we might want to identify as a specific 'somewhat' (or some 'thing') is nothing more than a pure instantiation of a play of forces that makes the somewhat as it 'is', an interruption in the otherwise continuous flow of becomings; yet more, the perceiver of this 'somewhat' is herself, himself, or themselves but an accident of the play of forces that phenomenologically brings the perceiver into line, however momentarily, with the perceived. To perceive is momentarily to arrest the flow of becomings, the play of forces that constitutes history, as it were. Within this, therefore, any 'event' – such as the event of perception – is itself an 'accidental condition' of history.

There is, thus, no 'I' other than the play of forces that allows me, at whatever moment, to pretend to arrest the flow of becoming. This has a massive effect on the notion of agency, and beyond that, of freedom. This is a way of describing how Deleuze thinks of 'events'. At one level, events are what constitute history; but, according to Deleuze, we must be careful to distinguish events from spectacle. The event takes place in what he thinks of as *'le temps mort'*:

> …. the event is inseparable from dead time. It's not even that there is dead time before and after the event, rather that dead time is in the event, for example the instant of the most brutal accident confounds itself with the immensity of empty time in which you see it arriving, as a spectator of that which has not yet happened, in a long suspense. … Groethuysen said that every event was, as it were, in the time when nothing happens.
>
> *(Deleuze 1990: 218; my translation)*

Now, the event, therefore, is not something that is determined or even predetermined by a consciousness; rather, the emergence of the consciousness is that which comes about precisely as a result of the encounter that *is* the event itself, the play of forces that constitutes this 'dead time', a time that is taken out of formal narrative but that allows for the constitution of a subject.

In many other philosophies or social theories, especially those based either upon forms of psychoanalysis or upon forms of 'identity-politics', the subject is often typically characterized and described by her, his or their desire. For Deleuze, such desire is not a matter of exerting a will upon exteriority, much less a matter of 'choice', either consumerist or existentialist – in short, the desire does not 'bring something about'. Again, the desire is that which is produced through the encounter that, in the first place, is constitutive of both subject and object, and constitutive of them *as* subject and object. What Deleuze is trying to do is to find a way of addressing movement as the fundamental form of ontology, but ontology considered as the conditions of our becoming rather than as being.

The result is the production of what we can call the accidental conditions of consciousness or of desire. It is important to note that we are not here talking of desire as a set of 'wants' or 'choices' based on lack or need or wish. Rather, this desire is a way of describing the product of force. The play of forces or the arrangement of forces that constitutes becomings-in-time is something that is itself in constant flux; and it thus produces desire simply as the condition of producing yet more arrangements, more becoming. In this way, desire can be thought of as a pure 'affirmation', the affirming of positive becoming; and the significance of this is that it flies directly in the face of most radical 'critical' thinking that derives from Hegel or from any notion of criticism as negation. Desire, here, is what philosophy – and, by extension, radical social theory – should be about: it is about the production of more becoming, more *concepts*. This – the 'production of concepts' – is indeed, Deleuze's answer to the great question, 'What is philosophy?' (Deleuze and Guattari 1991: 8).

It will be seen, though, that the affirmation that is desire nonetheless leaves us with some practical difficulties. If there is no I determining of exteriority, then it follows that we have a difficulty with the very idea of conventional historical agency. Further, if we have such a difficulty, then we have a corollary problem concerning freedom. Deleuze and Badiou (most especially this latter) have some ways of considering this that are helpful; and, interestingly, some of these answers return us to some foundations of poststructuralist philosophy.

Accident and the encounter that is love

The question of agency, and with it the attendant issue of human freedom, is an abiding concern for all social theory. If we put together poststructuralism's legacy, in which we can think of ideology as a problem concerning the confounding of linguistic with phenomenal orders of being (what I called 'fantasy politics' above) with the emergence of a desire that is not based in the negating power of an individuated human consciousness (Deleuze's implicit critique of individualism), then we reach, in a very different inflection, a concern expressed by Marx. In his eleventh thesis on Feuerbach, Marx famously argued that 'Until now, the philosophers have only interpreted the world. The point, however, is to change it' (Marx 1976: 65). Yet he also knew that such change was not a matter easily brought about, for in *The Eighteenth Brumaire*, just five years later, he points out:

> Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered and inherited from the past. The tradition of all the generations of the dead weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living.
>
> *(Marx 1978: 9)*

In this, he is actually rather close to Deleuze, except that Marx, unable completely to avoid Hegelian dialectic, and valuing therein the power of critical negation, believes that change can be 'chosen', as it were. For Deleuze, taking seriously the realization that history, material history, is 'event', we cannot stand aside from the flow of history and make such choices: 'we' – the very idea that there is a communal 'we' in the first place – are but an accident of flows and arrangements of forces.

History becomes what it really is: encounter, encounters that produce subjects, however fleeting, and that enable further encounters through the fact of desire, now better construed simply as ongoing Bergsonian motion. In this final section, we should consider what is at stake in the issue of the encounter, and try to discover what remains of agency or freedom after these recent philosophical turns.

In recent times, Badiou has placed considerable emphasis on the question of the encounter. Indeed, he places the *amorous* encounter, along with a philosophy of number, at the center of his philosophy. Deriving from set theory, Badiou's mathematics argues that there is no grounding or foundational 'one' from which we can establish ordinal or cardinal amplitude or difference; rather, the difference is again basic, for set theory shows that 'There is no "one"'; rather, there are multiples 'and every multiple is itself a "multiple of multiples"' (Badiou 1988: 37). In Badiou, any 'singularity' approximates to Deleuzian 'substance', and specifically the substance of an encounter. Where, for Derrida, the question of singularity emerges with a contemplation of death, for Badiou (and for Deleuze) singularity emerges from the encounter we call love.

To explore this, let us return to the problem given to us by poststructuralism: the problem of reference. This is also a problem regarding truth. In many cases, we test the truth–claim of a

linguistic proposition by measuring it against some nonlinguistic reality: if I say 'it is raining', then I can test the truth of my statement by feeling the rain on my skin when I step outdoors. What happens if you do not believe me? In this case, truth is conditioned by an ethical demand: while avoiding coercion and while remaining purely disinterested (i.e., wanting only to test the claim), I must try to persuade you. In most existing philosophies or social practices, what this amounts to is the erection of a philosophy of identity, of identity-politics: 'you' must be 'I', in that you must see things as I see them. You must identify your own statement with mine (we call it agreement, or a *sensus communis*); and thus you and I are the same, identical, equal.

Behind this, there lurks a fallacious notion of an intrinsic or possible 'equality' among the participants in a dialogue. It is fallacious because it presupposes the division of the world into interiority (my feeling or opinion) and exteriority (the rain). It is misleading also because it is based upon the idea that difference can be resolved into sameness or identity, that difference is not 'really' difference but simply two variant representations of an underlying sameness. It is false because it believes that two different views can be one; false in terms of equality because it believes that it can occlude differences of power in the arrangement of forces between you and me through something called agreement or consensus. This is why 'common sense' is ideological through-and-through.

Against this, let us simply consider the encounter in a more neutral fashion. Let us tie it certainly to truth; but, now, following Deleuze, we can have truth not as something epistemological to be tested by what will turn out inevitably to be an ideological claim for verification by assenting to an alleged real. Rather, let us present truth as the eruption of an event. Further, let us consider the event that is the encounter; and let us characterize that encounter with desire's ethical variant, love.

Badiou rejects the notion that love is a fusion of different entities. Against the kind of claim that suggests that love is a coupling (a two-becomes-one) that can form the basis of the social, Badiou writes instead that 'Love is not that which, from a Two supposedly given structurally, makes the One of an ecstasy…. Love is not the deposition of the Same on the altar of the Other …. love is not even the experience of the other' (Badiou 1992: 255–6; my translation). Instead, Badiou sees love as an experiencing of the world, by the world: it is not simply the experiencing by a pre-existing 'One', distinguished from other 'one's, of some equally pre-existing 'Other'. Love, in this encounter, becomes the production of truth; but truth as an event, as a something-that-happens, and thus as historical fact.

For Badiou, truth is intimately tied to events. A truth is not a validated knowledge-claim, as it were, for 'knowledge-claims' presuppose the divisibility of events into consciousness and exteriority. A truth, for Badiou, is something that happens, an irruption into the existing order of things. In Marxist terms, Badiou's truth is a changing of the world instead of a mere knowing or interpreting it.

He turns to the amorous encounter, that shocking changing of the world that we can experience and that shocks us into truth. The argument goes as follows:

1   Assume two positions of experience (Badiou calls them 'male' and 'female', but stresses that this has no biological or essentialist overtones);
2   Recognize that these two positions, insofar as they cannot be identical with each other, are in fact radically disjunctive with respect to each other (they are what Lyotard might have called incommensurables);
3   Now realize that this disjunction cannot be the object of a knowledge for either of the two positions, for, to assume such a knowledge is to assume a third position outside of the encounter itself. It is also to assume an identity between that third position and either the

male or the female and, by definition, that would be a modification of the male or female position in the first place. In any case, finally

4   There is no third position in the encounter. This final point is crucial for Badiou's purpose, for, given the lack of such a 'transcendent' or third position, it is impossible to *know* that there are two positions in the first place; rather, the encounter in question is not at all the object of a *knowledge* at all. Instead, it is an *event*. We move from love as epistemology (and all that it entails: the whole idea of criticism as taste, or as preference for this over that), to criticism as ontology.

Now, Badiou also claims that truth must be 'transpositional'; that is, not simply dependent upon point-of-view. How can truth – the truth of this love, say – be transpositional, given the absolute and radical disjunction of man/woman in his formulation? The usual answer is to claim that there is a masculine science (or knowledge) and a feminine one; or, more fundamentally for social theory, that there is a bourgeois science and a revolutionary science. Such a view will always resolve itself into the dialectic whereby difference is reduced to identity, for we will have to adjudicate between competing truth-claims; and, in this, we will always have a situation whereby one consciousness (or individual) exerts its authority over another, claiming not only truth but also a greater legitimacy than the individual who 'loses the argument'. Instead of such a neo-Hegelian master/slave scenario, Badiou begins from his paradox: truth is transpositional, and yet there remains a radical disjunction between positions *within* this truth. Love, he claims, is the arrangement in which this paradox is treated: love does not rid us of the paradox but gives it to us as an event that must be engaged with.

Conclusion

The legacy of poststructuralist thought, especially in the hands of late Derrida, Deleuze and Badiou, is one where we must review our relation to knowledge, to ideology and, perhaps above all, to democracy. Democracy as we usually consider it is based on a struggle, between competing 'opinions'; but that struggle occludes the deeper struggle between an alleged world of exteriority and that of a supposed interiority. Any such arrangement is condemned to live in the fantasy of ideology. Against this, say these thinkers, we have a duty to explore multiplicity, radical becoming, and the accidental conditions or truths of love.

References

Adorno, Theodor, and Horkheimer, Max, 1974: *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (trans. John Cumming; London: Verso).

Agamben, Giorgio, 2005: *The Time that Remains* (trans. Patricia Dailey; Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press).

Badiou, Alain, 1988: *L'Etre et l'événement* (Paris: Seuil).

Badiou, Alain, 1992: *Conditions* (Paris: Seuil).

Baudrillard, Jean, 1976: *L'Echange symbolique et la mort* (Paris: Gallimard).

Benjamin, Walter, 1973: *Illuminations* (London: Fontana).

Blumenberg, Hans, 1983: *The Legitimacy of the Modern Age* (trans. Robert M. Wallace; Cambridge, MA: MIT Press).

de Man, Paul, 1986: *The Resistance to Theory* (Manchester: Manchester University Press).

Deleuze, Gilles, 1988a: *Bergsonism* (trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam; New York: Zone Books).

Deleuze, Gilles, 1988b: *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy* (trans. Robert Hurley; San Francisco, CA: City Lights Books).

Deleuze, Gilles, 1990: *Pourparlers* (Paris: Editions de minuit).

Deleuze, Gilles, and Guattari, Félix, 1991: *Qu'est-ce que la philosophie?* (Paris: Editions de minuit).

Derrida, Jacques, 1978: *Writing and Difference* (trans. Alan Bass; London: Routledge).

Derrida, Jacques, 1995: *The Gift of Death* (trans. David Wills; Chicago, IL, and London: University of Chicago Press).

Hardt, Michael, 1993: *Gilles Deleuze: An Apprenticeship in Philosophy* (London: UCL Press).

Marx, Karl, 1976: 'Theses on Feuerbach', in *Frederick Engels, Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy* (Peking: Foreign Languages Press).

Marx, Karl, 1978: *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (Peking: Foreign Languages Press).

McHale, Brian, 1987: *Postmodernist Fiction* (London: Methuen).

Said, Edward, 1984: *The World, the Text, and the Critic* (London: Faber & Faber).

Critical theory today
Legacies and new directions

Gerard Delanty and Neal Harris

Today, the term 'critical theory' is often used in an expansive manner, applied to traditions as varied as Foucault's biopolitics, Debord's psychogeography and Lacanian psychoanalysis (Simons, 2004). While these authors have undeniably expanded the reach of critical theory, this chapter focuses on the primary ideas of the core Frankfurt School theorists based at the Institute for Social Research. In this regard, the signifier 'critical theory' is best read as a euphemism for 'Marxian-inflected social research'. This is not to suggest that there is a pure Marxist kernel of 'critical theory' which today risks being tainted by exposure to post-structuralist and deconstructionist currents. On the contrary, an open, interdisciplinary sensitivity is central to the Frankfurt School's approach. Rather, as shall be argued in this chapter, the Frankfurt School's iteration of critical theory retains its coherence through its development of ideas rooted in German Idealism, a coherence, which at times, is stretched by some of its more divergent contemporary practitioners.

The names of Theodor Adorno, Max Horkheimer, Herbert Marcuse, Walter Benjamin and Erich Fromm are thus those most familiarly associated with the critical theory of the Frankfurt School. These authors were steeped in the left-Hegelian tradition, which, to varying degrees, they synthesised with a distinctly Western Marxism and variations of Freudian psychoanalysis. The canonical texts of this 'First Generation' include Adorno and Horkheimer's (1979 [1944]) *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, Adorno's (2005 [1951]) *Minima Moralia*, Marcuse's (1964) *One Dimensional Man*, Benjamin's (2008 [1935]) *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction* and Fromm's (1941) *The Fear of Freedom*. A central concern unifying the work of this first generation was the rise of fascism, and the increasingly totalising, 'one dimensional' nature of capitalist, and Soviet state-capitalist,[1] societies. In *Dialectic of Enlightenment* and *Negative Dialectics* Adorno (1990 [1966]) outlined a darkly negative account of modernity, in which the development of conceptual thought itself was connected to the fascist terror. Despite the depth of Adorno's scholarship, the 'first generation' is often read as writing itself into a dead end; unable to offer tangible possibilities for emancipation beyond the paralysing injunction to 'live life less wrongly' (Freyenhagen, 2013).

Jürgen Habermas' (1972) *Knowledge and Human Interests* sought to overcome this impasse, by grounding critical theory in a notion of 'human interests', distanced from both contemporary positivist philosophy and historicist hermeneutics. While *Knowledge and Human Interests* offered

new foundations for critical theory, it was Habermas' (1984 and 1987 [1981]) *Theory of Communicative Action* which offered a substantive normative reorientation of the critical theoretical project, imbibing aspects of analytic philosophy, pragmatics, hermeneutics and developmental psychology. Leading on from Habermas' post-metaphysical and intersubjectivist turn, Axel Honneth's critical theory of Recognition is held to represent a 'Third Generation' of critical theory. Returning to the young Hegel's Jena writings, Honneth's (1995) *The Struggle for Recognition* centred the subject's feelings of 'disrespect', or of 'misrecognition', as an immanent entry point for social critique. In his subsequent work, including *Reification* (Honneth, 2008) and *Freedom's Right* (Honneth, 2014), recognition retains a centrality in Honneth's account. Increasingly, one may even hear of a "Fourth generation" of critical theory built around Rainer Forst's work. The particularities of each generation are outlined in the first section of this chapter.

Despite their differences, each generation retains, to varying degrees, a commitment to certain shared core concepts of critical theory, notably: a Hegelian understanding of 'reason', a commitment to a connection between philosophy and social research, the diagnosis of social pathologies, the disclosure of false consciousness and an immanent-transcendent methodology. These core themes are explored in the second section of this chapter.

It is nearly a century since the Institute for Social Research was founded in 1923, and today's intellectual, political and societal challenges have transformed substantially. As we shall argue, while the central ideas of critical theory continue to offer exceptional potential for social research today, the tradition faces multiple challenges which require serious consideration. In particular, critical theory needs to engage openly with decolonial and post-colonial theory and non-Western experiences. While it is entirely understandable in the aftermath of the Holocaust that explaining the Nazi terror was accorded a centrality, a recurring blind spot for critical theorists has been the role of Imperialism and centuries of slavery and dispossession beyond Europe. Yet, as critical theorists embrace new traditions to help explore these crucial vectors of domination, it is essential that an intellectual coherence is retained. Finally, critical theory must fight to retain its distinctive relationship between philosophy and social research in the face of the ascent of Honneth's increasingly ideal-theoretical scholarship.

Three generations of critical theory

At first encounter, critical theory might seem a particularly daunting prospect to capture, requiring a basic understanding of key tenets of Kantian and Hegelian philosophy, Freudian psychoanalysis, Marxian theory, Schmitt's political theory, and twentieth-century history. Yet, by breaking down the development of the various 'generations' and key influences, one can rapidly see the coherence of the broader project as a development of German Idealism into a critical theory of society.

Origins in left-Hegelianism

In his *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant (2007 [1781]) focused his analysis on transcendent metaphysical ideas, which were discernible *a priori*, not derived from the subject's lived experiences. Hegel's analysis of reason marked a substantial change from Kant's; for Hegel, Reason was unfolding historically within both the natural and the social world. While Kant's critique of reason was timeless and noumenal, Hegel's approach framed reason as distinctly historical and social. The critique of reason, with Hegel, became a critique of social reality. While critical theory retains a primary fidelity to Hegelianism, Kant's legacy also remains present today, especially within the work of Jürgen Habermas and others such as Rainer Forst.

Most extensively outlined in *Phenomenology of Spirit* (Hegel, 1970 [1807]) and the *Science of Logic* (Hegel, 2015 [1816–1818]), Hegel's somewhat nebulous concept of 'Reason' refers to the dominant ideas within the world which shape both social reality and our perception of it. In *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Hegel focuses on how the developing understanding of Freedom is central within this process. For Hegel, Freedom was more than a 'concept' or an 'idea', it was a crucial part of the modern world; as our understanding of 'freedom' shifted society worked through its latent contradictions. Yet, this process was not seamless: hence the requirement for the *critique* of Reason: Reason was held to be incomplete, not fully formed, not evenly developed. The rational critique of irrationality was thus essential.

While 'right-Hegelianism' adopted Hegel's paradigm to offer a conservative justification of the present order as the optimal manifestation of the unfolding of freedom, left-Hegelian scholarship focused critically on the gulf between the idea of freedom and its manifestation in the social world. As Marcuse framed it in *Reason and Revolution,* '…. Hegel did not declare that reality is rational (or reasonable) but preserved this attribute for a definite form of reality, namely, *actuality*. And the reality that is *actual* is the one wherein the discrepancy between the possible and the real has been overcome. Its fruition occurs through a process of change, with the given reality advancing in accordance with the possibilities manifest in it' (Marcuse 1977 [1941]: 153; our emphasis). In addition to emphasising the critical and progressive manner in which Hegel's ideas were adopted by left-Hegelians, this quote from Marcuse also demonstrates the distinctive immanent-transcendent approach which typifies critical theory. As Marcuse outlines, the possibility for attaining Freedom, and a more Rational society, lies in the latent contradictions which exist in the social world being worked through. Reason thus refers not just to ideas that transcend the social world, rather it refers to the possibilities which are yet to be manifest that are latent within it. In contrast to the conservative reading of the *Doppelsatz*,[2] left-Hegelians hold that 'the real is not yet "Actual"', but is at first only the possibility of an actual' (Marcuse, 1977 [1941]: 156). Reason is thus held to be immanent within the social world. Similarly, Axel Honneth, current director of the Institute for Social Research, frames left-Hegelianism as the 'general thesis that each successful form of society is possible only through the maintenance of its most highly developed standard of rationality' (Honneth, 2007: 23). Reason thus forms the basis of Hegel's social ontology, and the dynamic working through of latent social contradictions is its defining feature.

First generation

This social and historical understanding of reason featured centrally in Horkheimer's famous opening lecture in 1931 as Director of the Institute in which he demarcated between 'Traditional and Critical theory' (Horkeimer, 1971). In contrast to the 'savants' of traditional theory who believed themselves objective masters of timeless truths, discovered through the impartial majesty of the positivistic sciences, Horkheimer outlined a programme for research in which the intrinsically *political* nature of the researcher was emphasised. Developing the left-Hegelian themes outlined above, Frankfurt School research was to be explicitly aware of the impact of the social world on the social researcher. Yet Horkheimer did not simply wish to advance a neo-Hegelianism: the framework presented in his signal lecture outlined a new synthesis of Marx, Freud and Weber in addition to the strong left-Hegelian foundations. Drawing on these diverse influences, critical theory was to offer a form of immanent critique which was diagnostic, normative and reconstructive. It was 'normative' and 'critical', insofar as it was built upon the basis of an imagination of an alternative, more rational society, even if the specifics of which remained elusive. The approach was diagnostic insofar as it sought to identify the existing deep-seated

pathologies of the social world, rather than merely seeking to identify manifestations of injustice or illegitimacies. The reconstructive nature of critical theory re-centres Hegelianism; drawing on Hegel's *Phenomenology,* critique is more than just the denouncement of negative tendencies within the social order, rather immanent critique seeks to identify the emancipatory rational ideals extant, yet latent, within the social order (Strydom, 2011).

The role of Marxist theory in Horkheimer's formulation is complex. On the one hand, critical theory sought to move beyond a preoccupation with social justice, a central concern of classical Marxism. Instead, critical theory targeted the broader categories of 'domination', 'irrationality' and 'unfreedom'. Yet in contrast to the idealism of Hegel's thought, critical theorists closely followed Marx's materialist inversion of the Hegelian dialectic: social reality is held to be the site of the unfolding of contradictions, and the possibilities for a better world latent within the present. Yet, following Marx, the normative ideals of modern society were unable to be actualised due to the negative consequences of capitalism, which had slowed societal development. The future possibilities were occluded by the power of capitalist ideology and the reified forms of consciousness it induced. Frankfurt School theorists thus argue for the importance of transformation of the individual psyche as well as socio–structural transition. Critique was thus central to the political nature of the research project, for it was through critique that a critical sociology could identify the possibilities for independent, or critical, thought. Such possibilities for critical thought were extant, merely latent, and needed to be reconstructed through sociological investigation. The overcoming of 'false consciousness' is thus of centrality to the Frankfurt School project. Critical thought remained possible, yet it was inhibited by the deformation of the subjects' cognitive capacities by the dominant forms of Reason within the social world. Thus, critical theory was never a form of ideal theory, seeking to produce a 'theory of justice' from which the social order could eventually be measured and criticised. Rather, critical theorists sought to identify possibilities within the present which could further the development of critical consciousness and enable the possibilities for freedom to be actualised. The critique of the reified consciousness induced by capitalism was thus a central objective, for which Frankfurt School theorists marshalled developmental psychology and psychoanalysis. Marcuse's *One Dimensional Man* and Fromm's *The Fear of Freedom* typify this productive dialogue between Weberian, Marxian and Freudian ideas. Yet, while the first-generation authors produced exceptional diagnoses of the reified present, they failed to provide an accessible emancipatory alternative. Their effective mobilisation of negativity to produce a powerful critique of the present ultimately led to a paralysing impasse where the identified opportunities for liberation became increasingly esoteric. Adorno notably saw the possibilities for non-subsumptive rationalities to exist in forms of context-transcending modern art and the atonal compositions of Alan Berg. To the *soixante-huitards*, Adorno especially came to appear out of touch, patrician and self-indulgent. These tensions were further exacerbated by Adorno's repeated excoriating condemnations of mass culture, his contempt for Hollywood, and his explicit rejection of jazz as pregnant with fascistic tendencies. Frankfurt School critical theory risked falling into detached Ivory Tower irrelevance.

Habermas

Habermas' mature scholarship sought to restore critical theory within the sociological tradition and to return to the original connection between anti-positivist social research and philosophy. While his first attempt, *Knowledge and Human Interests,* succeeded in presenting alternate foundations for critical theory, and pointed beyond the Adornian dead-end, Habermas' early work remained highly normative and failed to provide a clear relationship between social theory and epistemology. While Habermas' (1989 [1962]) *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*

embraced the central Adornian theme of the decline of non-instrumental rationality, by the time of his 1981 *Theory of Communicative Action,* Habermas was presenting a genuine paradigm shift in critical theory. Once again, critical social theory had a demarcated research objective: seeking to identify opportunities for immanent-transcendence within the existing structures of communication. For Habermas, unlike Adorno, communicative action remained as much a part of modernity as instrumentality. While Weber, Adorno and Horkheimer focused on instrumental reason, this remained, for Habermas, just one part of the complex social whole. Communicative rationality remained equally central in Habermas' framing, which he saw reflected in the nature of socialisation, social institutions, identity constructions and intersubjective experiences. It is important to stress the divergence between Habermas' *Theory of Communicative Action* and Adorno's *Negative Dialectics*. While the possibilities for immanent-transcendence were held to be fading for Adorno, Habermas saw modernity as the accumulation of a normative potential within communicative exchange. As such, immanent critique was no longer to be dependent on a radical negativity, rather the possibilities for societal transformation were to be located within the existing forms of intersubjective praxis. As a result, critique was repositioned as more forward-looking, and connected to developments in the subject's and society's self-understanding. Habermas' account thus directs critical theorists to perform empirical research on sites of contestation where possibilities for progressive development exist.

Habermas' work is also notable for bringing critical theory into conversation with pragmatist ideas, drawing especially on the work of Karl-Otto Apel (1980). Partly as a result of this dialogue, Habermas' work rejected the radical negativity of the first-generation. For Habermas, the objective condition of society is not held to be solely one of domination; there are forms of intersubjective exchange which point beyond the current social world, with its manifest irrationalities, and which serve to challenge existing logics of domination. Habermas' later work identified such possibilities within legal and democratic institutions, sites Habermas himself saw as saturated with instrumentality in his earlier writings.

Habermas' project sought to move beyond the impasse of first-generation scholarship. To this extent, he must be credited, especially for his work on social learning processes and his ability to productively work across multiple traditions. However, with the rise of digital platforms, his work on communicative rationality seems dated. Twitter, WhatsApp, Bumble, Tinder and Facebook Chat all merge the boundaries of communicative and instrumental rationalities. Contemporary scholarship increasingly serves to challenge the idea of separate 'systemic' and 'lifeworld' domains, central to Habermas' social theory (Feenberg, 2017; Fuchs, 2018; Seymour, 2019). Further, while Habermas succeeded in moving beyond the paralysis of late first-generation thought, this can be read to have come at the cost of the distinctive critical potency of earlier Critical Theoretical research. The centrality of a distinctly Marxian-Weberian analysis seems to have been lost. Most problematically of all, authors such as Michael J Thompson (2016) have questioned the extent to which communicative exchange offers the possibilities for immanent transcendence which Habermas purports. For Thompson (2016), the idea that there exists a moment of intersubjective praxis which is immune from the reifying effects of neoliberalism seems to present a form of untenable 'neo-Idealism'.

Honneth

Further developing the intersubjective turn in Habermas' work, Honneth (1995) sought to locate the possibilities for immanent-transcendence within the subject's experience of suffering and of disrespect. In Honneth's formulation, the individual subject is given vastly more importance than in first-generation critical theory; the individual's experiences of denied recognition

serve as an entry point for social critique. As such, Honneth's approach remains a form of imma-nent critique, it seeks to identify the disconnect between the subject's expectations of recogni-tion (emotional, legal and social) and experiences of their denial. As such, Honneth, particularly in his earlier work, served to draw critical theory in the direction of micro-analysis. Yet, while Honneth's approach focused more on the specifics of the individual's affective experiences, his work presents a surprising uniformity which has been much criticised: for Honneth seemingly *all* social pathologies are a result of problematic recognition relationships (Harris, 2019). While recognition may offer an important insight into some of the dynamics in care work, or of racial or sexual discrimination, for example, Honneth has been criticised for his insistence that the recognition framing is capable of capturing the totality of social pathologies. In their dialogue *Redistribution or Recognition: A Political-Philosophical Exchange* (Fraser and Honneth, 2001), Nancy Fraser comments on the problems induced by Honneth's 'perspectival monism'. For Fraser, Honneth's recognition approach fails to explain the irrationalities and contradictions of capital-ism. For example, she comments on the structures and dynamics which lead to the laying off of skilled, respected workers due to standard capitalist events, i.e. a corporate merger. Fraser rightly comments that such commonplace capitalist dynamics cannot be satisfactorily understood through a recognition lens. Furthering this theme, Lois McNay (2007), in *Against Recognition*, suggests Honneth has fallen victim to a 'scholastic epistemocentricism', by which she means he has damagingly prioritised the purported universality of his preferred concepts (i.e. recognition) to the clarity and consistency of his argumentation.

As such, Honneth's work has divided contemporary critical theorists. He has undeniably suc-ceeded in producing a framework which has been able to impact sociology beyond the narrow con-fines of Frankfurt School hagiography and his work is lauded by many, particularly by those within the Essex and Jyväskylä School traditions. Yet, in a further extension of Habermasian themes, one may question the extent to which Honneth's account remains compatible with the original *politi-cal* objectives as expressed in Horkheimer's inaugural lecture as director of the Institute for Social Research. For example, in Honneth's (2014) *Freedom's Right*, his normative reconstructive method is marshalled to identify the positive, emancipatory features which are present, and not merely latent, within the market order. For Thompson (2016), this is not merely an incidental moment of unthinking capitalist-apologia, rather Honneth's approach is held to have fundamentally split from critical theory's Marxian–Weberian heritage. To support Thompson's account, one cannot imagine Adorno receiving *Freedom's Right* positively. Honneth should thus be held as a significant thinker in the development of the Frankfurt School, both for his development of a highly influential critical theory of recognition, but also for his potential transition to a more liberal politics and increasingly to ideal-theoretical methodologies in his later work, especially *Freedom's Right*.

A fourth generation?

Critical theory has not reached a conclusion with Honneth's Recognition Theory. On the contrary, there are a variety of alternative and divergent themes emerging, with critical theory being pulled in competing directions. Rainer Forst's (2012) critical theory of Judgement devel-ops the intersubjective and Kantian themes in the Habermasian-Honnethian trajectory, and he is often cited as representative of an emerging 'fourth generation'. In this regard, Forst presents the clearest continuity with recent Frankfurt School thought. Yet, counterposed to Forst's work lies a range of alternate theorists, who increasingly seek to engage with a plurality of alternative traditions; consider the work of Nancy Fraser (2001), Rahel Jaeggi (2019), Amy Allen (2016) and Andrew Feenberg (2017). We return to this theme in the third section, where we discuss challenges facing critical theory today.

Key themes in critical theory

While there are clear differences between the generations of critical theory outlined above, the following broadly remain unifying features.

Reason

The importance of Hegelian ideas to critical theory cannot be overstated. Despite their very real differences from first-generation scholarship, the work of Forst and Honneth retains a clear German Idealist, and particularly left-Hegelian, orientation. Indeed, the Hegelian understanding of 'Reason' remains the most distinctive feature of critical theory and it is what gives form to its particular notion of critique. Reason is held to be not merely a cognitive capacity but is understood as being manifest within the social world. As such, the critique of reason necessitates both ideology-critique and the analysis of contradictions within societal organisation. It is this focus on the critique of reason which connects the vastly diverging *Dialectic of Enlightenment* to Honneth's *Freedom's Right*. While Adorno and Horkheimer provide a vast macro-structural analysis of the development of Enlightened thought, and Honneth provides a normative reconstruction of the dominant social and economic spheres, both are animated by an engagement with the forms of rationality manifest within the social world.

Immanent-transcendence

Closely connected to the Hegelian account of reason is the immanent-transcendent methodology. Critical theorists analyse the contradictions present within the social world to identify the superior (less-contradictory) forms of rationality which are latent within the social world. As such, critical theorists offer a form of immanent critique which seeks to point beyond the limitations of the present social formation. This approach, expressed famously by Horkheimer, remains present in Honneth's work. For Honneth, the subject's experience of disrespect points to a normative order which is latent within the present, which is not being attained by current social relations. As such, the disconnect between the subject's desire for respectful intersubjective relations, and their experience of their denial, serves as an immanent entry point for his critical theory of Recognition.

The immanent-transcendent methodology also crucially situates psychoanalysis within the critical Theoretical tradition. As Honneth (2009) writes in *Pathologies of Reason,* it is the subject's anxiety response to unsolved contradictions which connects critical theory's interest in social transition to the subject's biological, lived reality. For example, the neuroses induced by the Victorians' stifling attitudes to sexuality are held to be disclosing of the pathological nature of the social formation (Marcuse, 1955). Yet, it is not merely that the current social order is held to be sub-optimal, rather, it is the knowledge that there remains, extant, yet latent within the social world, a kernel of a more rational, less oppressive form of social organisation. The possibility for transcendence is crucially derived from the social world itself.

Philosophy and social research

Critical theory thus retains a distinctive position as a form of philosophically undergirded social research, for the identification of contradictions within the normative order necessitates a form of anti-positivist methodology. Further, critical theory has always been identifiable by its strident interdisciplinarity in its social research. The possibilities for immanent transcendence are not held to be isolated to one social domain, and can be located within the economy, film, music,

poetry, architecture, even deep within the psyche. Critical theory is thus distinctive in that its uniting approach and concerns do not prescribe a particular disciplinary persuasion. Hence the canonical works of critical theory elide disciplinary bracketing: *Dialectic of Enlightenment,* for example, connects discussion on Greta Garbo and Odysseus, de Sade and Hegel. Despite recent moves towards analytic philosophy (for example, Habermas' engagement with Rawls), critical theory retains aspects of this interdisciplinary-sociological focus.

A further distinctive feature, particularly pronounced in first-generation texts, is the use of disclosing critique (Honneth, 2000). Recall that critical theorists seek to identify contradictions within the dominant forms of social rationality. This poses a pedagogical-methodological challenge: how can one clearly articulate the idea that thought itself is increasingly reified, when the delivery of this message requires a certain degree of communicative rationality to exist within the lifeworld. How does one communicate that our capacity for communication is impaired? *Minimia Moralia* and *Dialectic of Enlightenment* are thus particularly distinguished through their unorthodox presentation; seeking to 'disclose' the profits of their social research through allegory, chiasmus and exaggeration. This is not to suggest these texts lack an 'argument'. Rather, the submission is presented in such a manner to appeal to the remaining 'un-reified' sensibilities of the reader.

Social pathology diagnosis

While liberal social and political philosophy, typified by John Rawls's (1971) *A Theory of Justice*, focuses on the production of ideal-theoretical 'theories of justice', critical theoretical research commences by analysing the existing social world. Critical theory is further distinct from the liberal tradition in that it does not focus on identifying instances of 'injustice' or of 'illegitimacy'; rather it seeks to identify and diagnose social pathologies. This curious signifier captures the normatively 'thicker' diagnostic objective of critical theory (Neuhouser, 2012); unlike liberal scholarship, critical theorists seek to identify the plethora of obstacles which impede subjects' self-realisation. Thus, Honneth's critical theory of recognition is deployed to diagnose 'Pathologies of Recognition'. While there is increasing debate on the optimal framing of social pathology among critical theorists (Harris, 2019), there is widespread agreement that the heuristic enables a form of diagnostic and normatively weighty critique which can capture a plethora of social problems, many of which are inaccessible to liberal approaches. In *Pathologies of Reason*, Honneth has convincingly presented 'pathology diagnosing critique' as the 'explosive charge' of critical theory; the social theoretical heuristic that enables critical theorists to explore a variety of social maladies.

False consciousness

One might view the ultimate thread connecting the above themes to be the attempt to disclose, and thus transcend, false consciousness. While Marx and Engels primarily used the term 'ideology' to refer to the distorted beliefs individuals held about their society; those who reproduced such ideologies are understood by Frankfurt School scholars to be suffering from 'false consciousness'; in other words, they were held to be 'deluded about their own beliefs' (see Eyerman, 1981: 43). False consciousness can thus be understood as the subject's systemised self-denial of the origin of their cognitive contents: both their norms and values, but crucially also the conceptual manner through which they engage with the world. Drawing heavily on Gramsci and Lukacs, Frankfurt School scholars view false consciousness to be the 'form of consciousness produced in the very life practices of capitalist society' (Eyerman, 1981: 49). An extension

of Marx's writings on commodity fetishism, Gramsci's analysis of hegemony of paradigm, and Lukacs' work on reification; 'false consciousness' came to stand for the totality of processes which alienated the subject from their life-world. As Fromm (1941) and early Frankfurt School theorists presented it, in a fusion of Weberian, Marxist and Freudian analysis, false consciousness connected the worker's experience of capitalist society, their false understanding of their location within it, and the 'naturalisation' of their reified sense of self. False consciousness thus sits as a primary social pathology, yet the institute's social research agenda offered the possibility of disclosing the contradictions existing between the subject's reified consciousness and the objective realities of the social world.

Contemporary challenges facing critical theory

While Critical theory continues to offer a distinctive approach for conducting social research today, the tradition faces multiple challenges. While far from an exhaustive listing, these could be grouped as (i) the challenges of engaging with non-Western experiences and decolonial scholarship, (ii) the risk of losing intellectual coherence as rival approaches proliferate and (iii) the threat of the central social research focus being diluted with the embrace of more ideal-theoretical and liberal ideas.

Eurocentrism and decoloniality

Recently, Amy Allen's (2016) *The End of Progress* brought critical theory's Eurocentrism into sharp relief. Despite the increasing prevalence of post-colonial and de-colonial scholarship within the wider academy, today's dominant critical theoretical approaches remain rooted in a largely western perspective and focus overwhelmingly on the historical condition of a distinctly 'Western' modernity. Coulthard's (2014) *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition* sits in steep contrast to the dominant critical theory of recognition advocated by Honneth. A central presumption of many recognition theoretical accounts is that the modern nation state facilitates legal recognition through its juridical systems (see Honneth's *Freedom's Right*). From such perspectives, struggles for recognition can successfully culminate with inclusion and acceptance within state institutions. As Coulthard (2014), McCarthy (2009) and Steinmetz (2006) object, in contexts of centuries of slavery and systemic racism, such amicable reconciliation with the state is both inadequate and untenable. Rather, as Coulthard argues, instead of facilitating equitable, peaceful co-existence, a politics based on mutual recognition often serves to reproduce forms of coloniality. A politics based on intersubjectivity and recognition is insufficient; in the language of the Fraser-Honneth debate, redistribution must take primacy over recognition. This is increasingly manifest in demands for the return of historic water and land rights (Coulthard, 2014).

While this particular criticism is directed at the dominant recognition account, critical theory's failure to engage with non-Western experiences is not a recent phenomenon. As Edward Said (1994: 278) commented, it is noteworthy that the Frankfurt School's penetrating critique of modernity did not comment on the centuries of colonial oppression and genocide. Of course, the proximity to the Holocaust, which was held by many Frankfurt School theorists to be the culmination of modernity, partially explains the focus on the European experience of barbarism and totalitarianism. But it remains curious that the analysis of anti-Semitism did not rapidly connect to the analysis of non-Western experiences of coloniality and racism (Delanty, 2020).

Two distinct issues arise as critical theory slowly dialogues with decolonial thought. First, sits the question of focus as discussed above – why weren't the horrors of colonialism engaged

with previously, and how can conceptual tools be developed to facilitate social research on their legacy today? Yet Allen's (2016) work presents a more foundational challenge to critical theory, suggesting the dominant *concepts* themselves are complicit in colonial and racialising projects. This criticism would suggest that Critical theory requires new normative foundations and a radically different conceptual apparatus. While there is broad agreement on the need for critical theorists to engage with vectors of domination beyond the narrow European frame of reference, Allen's broader claim, that the foundational left-Hegelian heritage of critical theory requires revaluation, remains contested.

Coherence

As critical theorists engage with these important concerns from different directions, pre-existing fault lines inevitably start to become exposed. As alluded to in the introduction, critical theory today has increasingly come to stand for 'progressive social and political thought'; its German Idealist heritage slowly fading in this new construction. As such, many authors and schools which sit beyond the left-Hegelian tradition are increasingly classified as 'critical theorists', such as Bourdieu's critical sociology, Boltanski's critical pragmatism, French post-structuralism, post-colonial and de-colonial theory and critical realism. The cross-fertilisation of traditions this has precipitated has brought many successes: consider Allen's (2016) work drawing together Foucault and Adorno, or Feenberg's (2017) syntheses of Marcuse and Simondon. As a recent volume demonstrates, critique today requires a systematic reappraisal in light of changed historical circumstances and many other traditions of critique, for example, Foucault's (1997) lecture, 'What is Critique?' (Fassin and Harcourt, 2020).

While the limitations of the canonical texts of critical theory are increasingly apparent in the light of decolonial scholarship, this frenetic synthesis of divergent traditions risks substituting a problematic Eurocentrism for an even more problematic total incoherence. With left-Hegelian concepts slowly being displaced by a plurality of divergent traditions, critical theory risks lacking a coherent theory of society. Many approaches which critical theorists draw on today are simply incompatible and are allied to divergent understandings of political praxis and critique. As Allen demonstrates, Foucault's work can be of real merit to critical theory; yet his methodological and political commitments are fundamentally divergent from Frankfurt School approaches (see Zamora and Beherent, 2016). We thus argue that for critical theory to remain coherent as a political and social research project, a gentle self-correction towards left-Hegelianism would be of merit. Productive dialogue is essential to keep traditions fresh and to facilitate critical theorists in engaging with troubling lacuna which has been problematically negated. Equally, this must be done cogently, with coherent social theoretical, philosophical and political commitments.

Social research

In the original research programme outlined in Horkheimer's signal lecture, 'Traditional and Critical Theory', sociology and philosophy were to be closely integrated. Today, critical theory has become an increasingly philosophical project, with most of its famous practitioners being philosophers, rather than sociologists, or psychoanalysts. Despite notable attempts from Rahel Jaeggi (2018) to return to this sociological-philosophical spirit, philosophy seems to be rapidly colonising the critical theory tradition. Notably, Honneth's *Freedom's Right* is presented as outlining a 'theory of justice', a project which is both distinctly liberal and philosophical, in contrast to Horkheimer's original figuration. For Delanty (2020), this demise of the distinctly sociological-philosophical critical theory should not be read merely as a result of a retreat into

philosophical abstraction and ideal-theory. Rather, sociology as a discipline has failed to engage adequately with macro-sociological considerations for several decades; the relative silence of critical theoretical sociology should be seen as fitting into this broader dynamic.

The original first-generation project of identifying avenues for transcendence latent within the social world was a social research endeavour. Despite the entirely valid criticisms presented towards critical theory today, outlined above, such an immanent-transcendent methodology, far from being discredited, remains a sophisticated and coherent model for conducting anti-positivist social research. The challenge is thus partly for sociology to embrace progressive social research and partly for critical theorists to return to their original social research programme (Schecter, 2019).

Conclusion

Throughout this chapter, we have sought a measured appraisal of the strengths of critical theory today. While we hold that the concepts offered by Frankfurt School critical theory remain of use for furthering contemporary social research, for the tradition to remain of relevance it must make a concerted engagement with its critics. Axel Honneth remains the dominant name within contemporary Frankfurt School theory. Honneth's critical theory of recognition has succeeded in integrating critical theory within more mainstream sociology. Yet, as Thompson (2016) and Kouvlekais (2019) argue, the sacrifice required for inclusion within the liberal academy has been the surrender of core Marxist-Weberian themes, central to the Frankfurt School programme's potency. As such, the possibility of critical theorists splintering into ever smaller, rival camps seems a serious prospect. While the future of a distinctly Frankfurt School critical theory is uncertain, there remains ample scope for a potent interdisciplinary research programme, built upon its core left-Hegelian concepts and methodology.

Notes

1. A term introduced by the work of Friedrich Pollock, one of the founder members of the Institute for Social Research.
2. The *Doppelsatz* is a famous passage in Hegel's *Philosophy of Right* (20/14.14) which often forms the basis of debates between left and right interpretations of Hegel. The passage reads, 'What is rational is actual; and what is actual is rational'.

References

Adorno, T. W. 2005. [1951] *Minima Moralia: Reflections from Damaged Life*. London: Verso.

Adorno, T. W. 1990. [1966]) *Negative Dialectics*. London: Routledge.

Adorno, T. W. and Horkheimer, M. 1979. [1944] *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. London: Verso.

Allen, A. 2016. *The End of Progress: Decolonizing the Normative Foundations of Critical theory*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Apel, K.-O. 1980. [1973] *Towards a Transformation of Philosophy*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Benjamin, W. 2008 [1935] *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*. Translated by Underwood J. A. London: Penguin.

Delanty, G. 2020. *Critical theory and Social Transformation: Crises of the Present and Future Possibilities*. London: Routledge.

Eyerman, R. 1981. False Consciousness and Ideology in Marxist Theory. *Acta Sociologica*. 24(1–2): 43–56.

Fassin, D. and Harcourt, B. (eds.) 2020. *A Time for Critique*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Feenberg, A. 2017. *Technosystem: The Social Life of Reason*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Forst, R. 2012. *The Right to Justification: Elements of a Constructivist Theory of Justice*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Fraser, N. and Honneth, A. 2001. *Redistribution or Recognition: A Political-Philosophical Exchange*. Translated by Golb J., Ingram J. and Wilke C. London: Verso.

Fraser, N. and Jaeggi, R. 2018. *Capitalism: A Conversation in Critical Theory*. Cambridge, MA: Polity.

Freyenhagen, F. 2013. *Adorno's Practical Philosophy: Living Life Less Wrongly*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Fromm, E. 1941. *Escape from Freedom*. New York: Farrar and Rinehart.

Fuchs, C. 2018. *Digital Demagogue: Capitalism in the Age of Twitter and Trump*. London: Pluto Press.

Foucault, M. 1997. 'What is Critique?' In: *The Politics of Truth*, Lotringer, S. (ed.). Los Angeles: Semiotext(e).

Habermas, J. 1989. [1962] *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Habermas, J. 1972. [1968] *Knowledge and Human Interests*. London: Heinemann.

Habermas, J. 1984 and 1987. [1981]) *The Theory of Communicative Action*, vols 1 and London: Polity.

Harris, N. 2019. Recovering the Critical Potential of Social Pathology Diagnosis. *European Journal of Social Theory*. 22(1): 45–62.

Hegel, G. W. F. 1970 [1807] *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Translated by Miller A. V. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hegel, G. W. F. 2015 [1816] *Science of Logic*. Translated by Di Giovanni G. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Honneth, A. 1995 [1992] *The Struggle for Recognition*. Translated by Anderson J. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Honneth, A. 2000. The Possibility of a Disclosing Critique of Society: The *Dialectic of Enlightenment* in Light of Current Debates in Social Criticism. *Constellations*. 7(1): 116–127.

Honneth, A. 2008. *Reification: A New Look at an Old Idea*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Honneth, A. 2009. *Pathologies of Reason: On the Legacy of Critical Theory*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Honneth, A. 2014. *Freedom's Right: The Social Foundations of Democratic Life*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Horkheimer, M. 1971. [1937/1968] Traditional and Critical Theory in *Critical Theory: Selected Essays*. New York: Herder and Herder.

Jaeggi, R. 2019 *Critique of Forms of Life*. Cambridge, MASS.: Harvard University Press.

Kant, I. 2007 [1781]. *Critique of Pure Reason*. London: Penguin.

Kouvelakis, S. 2019. *La Critique Défaite. Emergence et domestication de la Théorie Critique*. Paris: Éditions Amsterdam.

Marcuse, H. 1977. [1941] *Reason and Revolution*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Marcuse, H. 1955. *Eros and Civilization*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Marcuse, H. 1964. *One-Dimensional Man*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

McNay, L. 2007. *Against Recognition*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Neuhouser, F. 2012. Rousseau und die Idee einer pathologischen Gesellschaft. *Politische Vierteljahresschrift*. 53(4): 628–745.

Rawls, J. 1971. *A Theory of Justice*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Schecter, D. 2019. *Critical Theory and Sociological Theory: On Late Modernity and Social Statehood*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Seymour, R. 2019. *The Twittering Machine*. London: Indigo Press.

Simons, J. 2004. *Contemporary Critical Theorists: From Lacan to Said*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Strydom, P. 2011. *Contemporary Critical Theory and Methodology*. London: Routledge.

Thompson, M. J. 2016. *The Domestication of Critical theory*. New York: Rowan & Littlefield.

9

Pragmatism and political theory

Robert B. Talisse

Pragmatism is the name of an unruly philosophical family. The first pragmatists – Charles Peirce, William James, and John Dewey – disagreed over fundamental philosophical issues; and when post-Deweyan pragmatists, such as Sidney Hook, C. I. Lewis, Nelson Goodman, W. V. O. Quine, Hilary Putnam, Richard Rorty, Robert Brandom, Richard Posner, and Susan Haack are included, the discord becomes more pronounced. Perhaps the most that can be said is that pragmatists hold that philosophical theories must not only be tethered to practice but are also to be evaluated according to their capacity to guide practice. Hence, throughout the pragmatist tradition, one finds as a common line of criticism the charge that certain long-standing philosophical problems should simply be abandoned because they have no practical relevance.

One should expect a philosophical program that demands practical relevance to be closely focused on political questions. Surprisingly, such matters were not among the central concerns of Peirce and James. It was Dewey who placed politics at the core of pragmatist philosophy, and much of the subsequent pragmatist theorizing follows from or is a reaction to Dewey's views. In what follows, I will explore four main trends within pragmatist political philosophy: John Dewey's perfectionism, Richard Rorty's ironism, Cheryl Misak's deliberativism, and Elizabeth Anderson's revision of Deweyan democracy. After providing a brief description of each, I will sketch a few of the leading problems that each approach must face.

Dewey's perfectionism

The core of Deweyan political philosophy can be stated in the slogan that is popular among contemporary Deweyans: *democracy is a way of life*. This slogan is intended to convey two main commitments. First, democracy is not merely a kind of state or a procedure for collective decision, but a *moral ideal* of human flourishing. Second, the moral ideal that is democracy can be pursued and fulfilled only under certain kinds of social arrangements. In short, democracy is a way of life in which each individual exercises and cultivates his unique capacities in a way which contributes to the flourishing of the whole society.

In this way, Deweyans reject the common separation between ethics and politics. For him, the good life for humans can be achieved only within a certain kind of social order; democracy is the intrinsically social project of achieving a "truly human way of living" (Dewey 1969–91,

LW11: 218) for all individuals. According to Dewey, human flourishing necessarily involves participation in social life; and this involves *communication* among citizens with regard to matters of shared concern. Consequently, Dewey held that the "heart and guarantee of democracy is in free gatherings of neighbours on the street corner to discuss back and forth what is read in uncensored news of the day" (Dewey 1969–91, LW14: 227); by engaging in communication, citizens may "convince and be convinced by reason" (Dewey 1969–91, MW10: 404) and thus come to realize "values prized in common" (Dewey 1969–91, LW13: 71).

Dewey thought that such communicative processes were fit to govern the whole of social association. Thus, according to Dewey, democracy is a mode of social organization that "must affect all modes of human association, the family, the school, industry, religion" (Dewey 1969–91, LW2: 325). In this way, Deweyan democracy is a moral ideal that reaches into the whole of our lives, both individual and collective, aimed at human flourishing, what Dewey called "growth" (Dewey 1969–91, MW12: 181).

Employing some of the current verbiage, we can say that Deweyan democracy is a species of *perfectionism*. Perfectionists hold that it is the job of the state to promote or cultivate among citizens the dispositions, habits, and virtues requisite to human flourishing. The perfectionist is to be contrasted with the *neutralist*, who holds that, since people disagree about what human flourishing or the good life consists in, the state must be *impartial* with regard to such matters. According to the neutralist, politics is concerned strictly with the protecting rights of individuals to life, liberty, and property, not their moral development, happiness, or flourishing.

Unlike other forms of perfectionism, which hold that the project of forming citizens' dispositions is a task only for the state, Deweyan perfectionism holds that the perfectionist project is a task for *all* modes of human association (Dewey 1969–91, LW2: 325). Dewey held that "The struggle for democracy has to be maintained on as many fronts as culture has aspects: political, economic, international, educational, scientific and artistic, and religious" (Dewey 1969–91, LW13: 186). He saw the task of democracy to be that of "making our own politics, industry, education, our culture generally, a servant and an evolving manifestation of democratic ideals" (Dewey 1969–91, LW13: 197). For Dewey, then, *all* social associations should be aimed at the realization of his distinctive vision of human flourishing. And this aspiration is found throughout Dewey's corpus; in his writings on politics, education, psychology, religion, culture, and art, we are told that growth is the ultimate and proper end.

Perfectionist conceptions of politics face serious difficulties, and Deweyan perfectionism is no exception. Perfectionist views hold that the state (and, in the Deweyan case, all other forms of social association) must endeavour to promote some specified moral end, such as growth; consequently, perfectionism is rooted in the judgment that we *know* what it is for humans to flourish, and thus that further philosophical disputation over the question of human flourishing is superfluous. This is especially evident in the case of Deweyan democracy, for, as we've seen, the Deweyan wants to structure *all of society* around his own view of human flourishing. One must have a markedly high level of confidence in the correctness of one's conception of human flourishing if one is to prescribe it *for everyone*.

But it is hard to sustain the requisite level of confidence. When we survey the fields of philosophy, economics, theology, psychology, sociology, and biology, we find *several* competing conceptions of human flourishing. Similarly, when we canvass our fellow citizens, we discover a plurality of conceptions of what is best in life, what is most important, and what it means to live well. What's more, we find that, for the most part, each of these varied visions of human flourishing has its distinctive strengths and weaknesses; there are several competing conceptions of human flourishing that are philosophically viable, and it is hard to declare any clear winner among them.

Hence the difficulty: Before we propose to organize society around any conception of human flourishing, in particular, we had better be sure we have the right or best one, for it is clear that a state which imposes on its citizens a *false* or *defective* conception of human flourishing inflicts serious moral harms on them. The difficulty is especially pressing in the case of Deweyan democracy, which, as we have seen, envisions a society in which *all* modes of human association are aimed towards the promotion of Dewey's conception of flourishing.

Of course, the Deweyan contends that since he has the *correct* conception of human flourishing, he needn't worry about this difficulty. But how can he be so sure? Is his confidence warranted? How could he know? Deweyans like to reply that they embrace an *experimental* attitude towards these and every other question. They say that we should judge the appropriateness of the Deweyan conceptions of growth by the results which follow from implementing it.

But this response seems insufficient. For one thing, it is a stubborn fact that social and political institutions, once enacted, are difficult to dissolve and can be revised only very slowly. The Deweyan attitude of "try and see" seems fully appropriate for inquirers in a laboratory, or even for individuals pursuing their own life plans, but when it comes to designing institutions to govern the whole of social association, we must be cautious. Mistakes are morally costly to the lives of others. It is one thing to prescribe to individuals that they each should adopt an experimental attitude towards their own life, but it is quite another to say that we collectively should see each other's lives as things to be collectively experimented with. One might remind the Deweyan: My life is not *your* experiment!

Deweyans might reply that the democratic way of life is proposed as an *ideal* for human society, not as a requirement for individuals. They may say that in a democratic society, individuals are free to opt out of the Deweyan ideal. They may even say that there are distinctive goods that can be realized in non-Deweyan lives. The Deweyan hence comes to see Deweyan democracy as a "way of life" in a *personal* sense, and not something fit to be woven into the very fabric of our entire society.

But to personalize Deweyan perfection in this way would be to *abandon* Deweyan democracy to a very significant extent. A personalized Deweyan would have to reject the claim that all modes of human association should be organized around the aim of growth. But this commitment seemed to be the fulcrum of Deweyan democracy. The challenge facing Deweyan perfectionists, then, is to provide a conception of democracy robust enough to count as a "way of life" fit to govern all of society while also recognizing the fact that Dewey's conception of human flourishing is but one among several distinct but philosophically defensible conceptions about how human life – socially and individually – is best ordered.

Rorty's ironism

Perhaps in response to the overwrought nature of Deweyan democracy, Richard Rorty proposes a view rooted in a more casual view of the task of political philosophy. According to Rorty (1999), political philosophers ought to seek to inspire "social hope" and "national pride" (Rorty 1998); that is, according to Rorty, political theorists should tell "inspiring stories" (1998: 3) which "[clear] philosophy out of the way" and "let the imagination play upon the possibilities of a utopian future" (1999: 239). Rorty (1998: 11) holds that it is through inspiration, not argumentation – through appreciation of the lives of Walt Whitman and John Dewey not through engagement with the arguments of philosophers – that citizens come to see themselves as "part of a great human adventure" (Rorty 1999: 239).

Whereas thinkers such as Locke, Kant, Mill, and Rawls sought after philosophical principles which could provide the groundwork for a democratic order, Rorty (1988: 178) insists that

democracy "can get along without philosophical presuppositions." In keeping with the general character of his pragmatism, Rorty (1989: 196–7) holds that we should give up the idea that democracy is "subject to the jurisdiction of a philosophical tribunal"; he contends that the traditional hunt for a philosophical justification for democracy is merely a "distraction" Rorty (1996: 335).

Importantly, Rorty sees the traditional aspiration of political philosophy as a distraction because he rejects the very idea of philosophical justification. He insists that the attempt to justify democracy is futile because it is couched in an obsolete philosophical paradigm. According to Rorty (1987: 42), "There is no way to beat totalitarians in argument" because there is no non-question-begging way to defend the premises about human nature and freedom from which democratic commitments follow. He continues that "attempts to ground a practice on something outside the practice will always be more or less disingenuous" (Rorty 1996: 333). The lesson we must learn is that "human beings are historical all the way through" (Rorty 1988: 176), that there are no facts about "human nature," "rationality," or "morality" which supply a case for democracy. Accordingly, he claims that any proposed argument for democracy will inevitably be "just a hypostatization of certain selected components" of existing democratic practice (Rorty 1996: 333–4).

Rorty offers a "circular justification" for his favoured view of democracy that "makes one feature of our culture look good by citing still another" and unabashedly compares our culture with others "by reference to our own standards" (1989: 57). By promoting a particular vision of his community, Rorty does not provide "philosophical backup" for those aspects of his community that he most admires. Rather, he is "putting politics first and tailoring a philosophy to suit" (Rorty 1988: 178). He insists that the purposes of democracy are *better served* by his strategy.

In Rorty's (1983, 1989: 53) ideal "post philosophical" and "poeticized" culture of "postmodernist bourgeois liberalism," citizens would openly acknowledge that their loyalties to democratic ideals are not based on philosophical arguments, but are the products of purely contingent facts about history, geography, and socialization. Yet they will not see this as a failure of any kind. They will nonetheless "stand unflinchingly" (Rorty 1989: 46) for their commitments *despite* the acknowledgement of their contingency. This "unflinching courage" (Rorty 1989: 47) in the face of radical contingency is the essence of what Rorty calls "ironism." His view, then, comes to this: there is no way to philosophically justify democracy, and those of us who favour democracy can offer only question-begging defenses of it; but in a properly pragmatic society, the absence of justification is no matter, because the very idea of justification is nonsense. The point of political philosophy in a democracy, then, is to encourage and inspire citizens to retain their devotion to democracy *despite* the fact that they recognize that there is no sense in which democracy is better than oligarchy or tyranny. We stand up for democracy despite having given up on thinking that democracy is best. That's Rortyan ironism.

There are many lines of criticism that could be pursued. But one of the interesting features of Rorty's view is that many of the obvious criticisms can be easily dismissed. For example, the charge of relativism is met by Rorty with the claim that "relativism" is a category that makes sense only against the backdrop of a philosophical model which admits of a distinction between the "relative" and the "objective"; these categories are rejected by Rorty. So let us consider Rorty's contention that democracy is better served by ironism. This, after all, seems like an empirical question.

Suppose that Rorty's ironic vision of democracy has been widely accepted. Imagine that the political theorists of the world no longer see their opponents as misguided and mistaken, but simply enchanted by different political visions. The contest between these different views is no longer understood as a search for the truth, but as something like a political campaign: each theorist *promotes* his vision and tries to inspire his fellow citizens. It seems that this would be in many respects undesirable. Most importantly, a Rortyized political culture would likely be unable to unable to inspire the kind of social hope he aims to invoke.

Consider, for example, Stalin's claim that his brutal regime is democratic "in a higher sense." Does it make sense to say that Stalinism is just another vision of democracy? The obvious response, one that Rorty (1998: 57–8) endorses, is that Stalinist democracy is no democracy at all. However, it is unclear how Rorty can distinguish between *real* and *fake* democracy.

Rorty (1988: 186) suggests that the way to treat Stalin is to simply dismiss him as *mad*. Of course, for Rorty, this is not a psychological diagnosis, but simply to say that "there is no way" to see Stalin as a fellow citizen; Rorty thinks Stalin is "crazy" because "the limits of sanity are set by what *we* can take seriously" (1988: 187). According to Rorty (1988: 188), these limits are, of course, "determined by our upbringing, our historical situation." Rorty's (1988: 188) "ethnocentric" strategy founders once we consider the case of *fellow citizens* who promote visions of our democracy similar to those proffered by Stalin or any of Rorty's other paradigmatic madmen. Members of white-supremacist or other racist organizations certainly promote a certain vision of the "utopian future of our community" (Rorty 1996: 333), a particular image of what is best in our culture. We cannot treat racists as "mad" *and* maintain that "the limits of sanity" are set by the contingencies of community, for, in this case, the madmen are *members* of my community; for better or worse, the KKK (Ku Klux Klan) is as much a part of our social inheritance as the ACLU (American Civil Liberties Union). Rorty must either introduce some *ad hoc* qualifications such that the racist will necessarily not count as "one of us," or he will have to concede that the modern democratic state is home to persons who promote views that differ substantially from his own.

Although Rorty is surely aware of such threats, his view seems unable to produce an adequate response. He suggests that, when dealing with opponents of democracy, we "ask [them] to *privatize* their projects" (1989: 197). But what can we do when they refuse? We simply change the subject or end the conversation, we "refuse to argue" with them (Rorty 1988: 190). But this strategy of non-engagement seems like it could only be good news for the anti-democrats. Similarly, politically disengaged and apathetic citizens are not simply "uninspired," but often believe that they are *justified* in ignoring politics, they typically maintain that political action and engagement are futile.

Rorty sees these challenges as deriving not from failures of argument but from a breakdown of social hope. Again, the Rortyan response is to try to inspire in citizens a romantic affection for democracy. To be sure, this *is* important; however, an essential component of social hope is the confidence that what is hoped for is *worth* achieving and *better* than the alternatives. Yet Rorty does not allow one to maintain that democracy is in any relevant sense *better* than, say, tyranny or oligarchy. Hence Rorty's "social hope" must be "ironic" – we must hope to achieve that which we no longer can think is *worth* achieving, we must draw inspiration from that which we contend is essentially not inspiring. The idea of an "ironic" hope seems incoherent; Rorty's politics seems literally *hopeless*.

If there is anything inspiring in the works of Rorty's democratic heroes, it is precisely the sense that the visions of democracy they present are in a non-ironic sense *worth* trying for and *worth* hoping to achieve. This can be maintained only if one can point to some aspect of democracy which relevantly distinguishes it from tyranny. But to undertake the project of distinguishing tyranny from democracy is to engage in the kind of theorizing that Rorty has abandoned. It seems that we have hit upon an internal challenge to Rorty: ironic hope is uninspiring.

Misak's deliberativism

Whereas Rorty seeks to dispel the idea that democracy requires a philosophical theory, Cheryl Misak (2004: 15) proposes a conception democracy based in Peirce's views of truth, objectivity, and justification. She offers the following encapsulation of her view: "deliberative democracy

in political philosophy is the right view, because deliberative democracy in epistemology is the right view." In order to get a grip on Misak's politics, we need first to look to her epistemology.

Misak begins from Peirce's view about truth. Peirce held that "The opinion which is fated to be ultimately agreed to be all who investigate, is what we mean by truth" (*Collected Papers*: 5.407). Misak argues that Peirce did not think that truth was to be *defined* as the belief that would be adopted by inquirers at the ideal end of inquiry. She says that Peirce's characterization of truth is intended to help us to "get leverage on the concept, or a fix on it, by exploring its connections with practice" (Misak 2004: viii). That is, according to Misak, Peirce aims to *clarify* or *elucidate* the concept of truth, not *define* it.

The core of Peirce's elucidation is the intuitive thought that to take a proposition, *p*, to be true – that is, to believe that *p* or assert that *p* – is to hold that *p* would forever stand up to the test of experience and never be defeated (Misak 2000: 49, 2004: ix). Since believing that *p* is taking *p* to be true, and taking *p* to be true is to take *p* to be able to withstand the tests and travails of ongoing scrutiny, every believer is committed to being open to *inquiry*, the enterprise of squaring one's belief with reasons, arguments, and evidence by continually subjecting one's beliefs to objections and challenges. Indeed, Misak (2004: 12) holds that the kind of responsiveness to reasons that inquiry is meant to secure is a *constitutive norm* of belief. To be sure, Misak's claim does *not* commit her to the view that no one ever holds beliefs for defective reasons or for no reason at all. To say that reason-responsiveness is a constitutive norm of belief is to say that when we believe *we take ourselves to be* reason-responsive.

From these considerations, we see that Misak's Peircean epistemology is inherently *social*. Again, to be a believer is to aim at truth. But truth-aiming is an ineliminably *diachronic* affair: we aim at truth by always standing ready to square our beliefs with new reasons, arguments, and evidence. Indeed, to believe that *p* is to be committed to the hypothesis that *p* will stand up under scrutiny and will square with all the evidence and argument that could be brought to bear on it. Consequently, believing "involves being prepared to try to justify one's views to others and being prepared to test one's beliefs against the experience of others" (Misak 2000: 94). For if we do not take seriously the arguments and criticisms of others, getting "the best or the true belief is not on the cards" (Misak 2000: 94). Accordingly, Misak holds, with Peirce, that in order to aim at truth, believers must have access to and participate in a *community* of inquirers. The very nature of belief commits us to processes of inquiry, which in turn commits us to participation in a certain kind of community, namely one in which inquiry can commence.

We can now see how Misak's conception of democracy emerges out of her epistemology. According to Misak (2000: 106), to hold beliefs at all is to be committed to inquiry, and thus to social processes of "debate and deliberation" with others. These commitments entail a range of interpersonal norms that Misak sees as characteristically democratic. Specifically, Misak contends that the commitment to the enterprise of justification entails that one must subject one's beliefs to objections and challenges *from all quarters* since anyone might have a relevant countervailing consideration or counter argument. Consequently, we must stand ready to "listen to others" (Misak 2000: 96) and take their arguments and experiences seriously. Perhaps more importantly, inquiry commits us to engaging with those whose experiences differ from our own; for if we are aiming at truth, we must seek out new and unfamiliar challenges. In this way, the norms of belief entail interpersonal norms of equality, participation, recognition, and inclusion.

From these interpersonal norms, a range of social norms emerges. In order for individuals to exchange reasons and collectively inquire, there must be norms of free speech, freedom of information, open debate, protected dissent, accountability, and so on. Additionally, if inquiry is to commence, the formal infrastructure of democracy must be in place, including a constitution, courts, accountable bodies of representation, regular elections, and a free press. Also, there must

be a system of public schooling designed to equip students in the epistemic habits necessary for inquiry, and institutions of distributive justice to eliminate as far as justice allows the material obstructions to democratic citizenship. Further, democracy *might* also require more extensive provisions, such as special measures to preserve public spaces and to create forums for citizens to encounter new perspectives. In any case, Misak holds that the full range of democratic norms can be derived from her pragmatist epistemology.

The main worry is that Misak claims to have derived too much substance from the very meagre insights from which she begins. Misak's holds that an entire conception of democracy can be derived from a few truisms of epistemology. Is this plausible? Here's one objection: Grant that the norms that govern belief commit us to inquiry, which in turn commits us to taking each other's reasons seriously. Grant further that taking each other's reasons seriously would commit us to norms of inclusiveness, participation, and equality. But these are not sufficient for a democratic society, for seeing others as equal partners in inquiry is consistent with seeing those same others as *political* subordinates. That is, it seems consistent with Misak's epistemology for one to regard his fellow believers as *consultants*, whose arguments and objections have merely *recommendatory* force, rather than as *political equals* who are entitled to *equal* political power and *equal* influence over political decision.

Perhaps Misak would respond that in order for inquiry to truly commence, the upshot of inquiry must have political force. The way to ensure that inquiry has such force, Misak may argue, is to give to all believers an equal vote. Yet this kind of reply prompts another worry. If democracy is the political upshot of our epistemic commitment to aim at truth, and if we want our politics to reflect the outcomes of our inquiries, then what justification could there be for the *democratic nation state?* Why shouldn't persons who live in Italy be consulted on questions concerning policy in Canada? Surely people in Italy are inquirers and will have a distinctive view of Canadian politics. If the point of democracy is to have policy reflect our best reasons, then why should political power within a given state be restricted to those who happen to live within its borders? Does Misak's view entail a *global* democracy, a democracy without sovereign nations?

These institutional concerns may be met with practical considerations. Misak could say that a global democracy is impractical and that we are stuck with the nation state. Perhaps she would be correct. But the thought of a world governed by global inquiry raises a different kind of worry. Misak thinks that believing commits us to norms of reason exchanging such that to believe that p is to stand ready to offer reasons for p and respond to arguments against p. The worry is that Misak has glossed over issues concerning what is to count as a reason for p. Disagreements over political matters often seem to be disagreements about the precise meaning of our epistemic commitments. In particular, many controversies involve disagreements about what should count as *evidence* for a given proposition. To take an easy example, some hold that the fact that the Bible condemns homosexuality constitutes *evidence*, and perhaps *conclusive evidence*, that homosexuality is immoral. Others hold that the Bible is morally irrelevant. Some take statistics concerning gun-related crime to provide evidence in favour of gun-control policies, whereas others think that even a very high incidence of gun-related crime is beside the point.

It would be easy to multiply examples. The point is that, even if we grant Misak's epistemic claims, we still may disagree in specific cases about whether some statement, s, counts as *evidence* for p. So, although we may all agree on the norms governing belief, we may yet be in conflict regarding the precise *content* of these norms. How are such conflicts to be resolved? To say that we should exchange our reasons is to make no progress since we are divided over what should count as a reason. Some would say that we should look to the empirical sciences for guidance; others would say that we should follow our commonsense intuitions; some would recommend

that we *pray* for the right answer; and still others would say that we should give up on the very idea of epistemic criteria. What could count as a reason to adopt one of these answers rather than another?

If the commitment to inquiry is going to form the core of our conception of democracy, we had better get specific about what we mean by *inquiry* and related notions. The trouble, however, is this: Once Misak provides the requisite details her description of the norms of belief will likely lose their intuitive resonance. But it is the intuitive character of her views about the tight connections between belief and evidence that accounts for much of the appeal of her epistemic deliberativism.

Anderson's revised Deweyanism

Dewey's problematic perfectionism notwithstanding, he saw that central to democracy's value is its *epistemic* merits. More specifically, Dewey emphasized democracy's ability to pool cognitive resources in ways that could allow them to be applied towards the resolution of social problems. To claim that democracy's value partly lies in its capacity to pool cognitive resources is to invite the thought that democracy is fundamentally a *social epistemic enterprise*, an ongoing collective endeavour aimed at applying the same epistemic norms to our shared social and political lives that we see fit to adopt in our individual lives. Elizabeth Anderson has taken up this element of Dewey's political philosophy, producing a promising revision of Deweyanism that jettisons Dewey's perfectionism.

Anderson (2006: 9) argues that "Dewey's experimentalist account of democracy offers a better model of the epistemology of democracy than alternatives." To establish this, Anderson (2006: 13) contrasts Dewey's view with two competing models of the epistemic dimension of democracy. As our interest is in her conception of democracy, we need not review her arguments against the competitors. Instead, we can focus directly on her analysis of the three "core features" of democracy: (1) diversity, (2) discussion, and (3) dynamism.

First, Anderson (2006: 11) observes that a democratic society is composed of citizens of diverse ages, genders, classes, ethnicities, religions, and so on. This multi-layered diversity results in asymmetries regarding the effects of any given political decision, and this, in turn, results in asymmetries in the distribution of information relevant to group decision-making. She holds that as a participatory society of equals, democracy is able to "take advantage of the epistemic diversity of individuals."

Second, she notes that inclusive and open discussion among citizens prior to voting is a "constitutive, not accidental" feature of democracy (2006: 11). Importantly, discussion involves norms of equality, franchise, access to public forums, and a free press. Unless such discussion ensues, citizens "have little to go on but their private preferences" (2006: 11). Yet the point of democracy is not simply to aggregate individual preferences, but to pool individual intelligence and to bring it to bear on problems of public interest (2006: 9). Without discussion in this broad sense, democracy cannot take into account the perspectives and concerns of all citizens.

Third, Anderson contends that "Democratic decision-making needs to recognize its own fallibility" (2006: 12). Towards this end, democracy needs to introduce "feedback mechanisms" which enable it to "correct its course in light of new information about the consequences of policies" (2006: 12). Hence, like norms of inclusive discussion, the institutions of regular elections and referenda are constitutive of democracy, for these represent democracy's commitment to fallibilism, and its corresponding aspiration to correct its mistakes and improve its own processes.

Anderson (2006: 13) contends that Dewey offers a way of thinking about democracy that "represents the epistemic powers of all three constitutive features of democracy." Since "Dewey stressed the importance to democracy of bringing citizens from different walks of life together to define, through discussion, what they take to be problems of public interest" (2006: 14), a conception of democracy based in Deweyan ideals fairly models the epistemic diversity of citizens. Dewey also saw that democratic discussion must be maximally inclusive in order to meet the democratic requirement that collective decision be "responsive in a fair way to everyone's concerns" (2006: 14). Finally, she notes that, given Dewey's experimentalist and fallibilist epistemology, democracy in a Deweyan vein understands democratic processes, such as elections, rights of petition, a free press, and protests as "mechanisms of feedback and accountability" (2006: 14) which institutionalize fallibilism and experimentalism, thus modelling democratic dynamism.

Anderson's epistemic vision of democracy is attractive, and it is certainly rooted in central Deweyan themes. But note how austere Anderson's view is in comparison with orthodox Deweyan democracy. Anderson (2006) makes no reference to human flourishing as such; she does not identify democracy with the "one, ultimate, ethical ideal of humanity" (EW1: 248), or contends that Dewey's theory of human flourishing should govern "all modes of human association" (LW2: 325). Rather, Anderson (2006: 13) presents democracy as the social epistemic endeavour to apply "scientific method to practical problems." Of course, Anderson (2006: 15) recognizes that this endeavour requires ongoing and stable modes of social cooperation on the basis of equality; thus, she affirms that democracy must also be "a way of life governed by cultural norms of equality, discussion, and tolerance." According to Anderson, then, Dewey brings into focus the idea that democracy is fundamentally the claim that communities should address their social problems by pooling information and other cognitive resources from its diverse citizenry in a way that gives a proper hearing and full consideration to all points of view, with the expectation that all collective decisions are but provisional stopping points in a continuous process of self-correction.

This vision of democracy owes a great deal to Dewey's political writings but does not inherit the difficulties identified earlier with Deweyan democracy. Moreover, it strives to avoid one of the difficulties raised with Misak's epistemic deliberativism; recall the objection that, as inquiry is global, a view of democracy rooted in inquiry must itself be globalist. Like Misak, Anderson focuses on the epistemic properties of democracy. However, in focusing on the ways in which democracy pools the epistemic resources within a community, she seeks to keep democracy's epistemic benefits relatively local and situated. One wonders, however, whether this adjustment is sufficient. The problems faced by discrete democratic communities increasingly interlock with larger, global difficulties that require large-scale expertise and action. Yet democracy calls for local political control. And so, once again, the pragmatists' epistemology is potentially at odds with democracy.

Conclusion

I have surveyed four prominent trajectories in contemporary pragmatist political philosophy, identifying the main difficulties confronting each view. That each pragmatist option occasions serious objections is no reason to regard pragmatism as an imperilled program. On the contrary, philosophical approaches thrive on the difficulties to which they give rise. The best current work in pragmatist political philosophy is addressed precisely to the task of working through the difficulties that have been raised here.

References

Anderson, E. (2006) "The Epistemology of Democracy" *Episteme* vol 3, nos. 1–2: 8–22.

Dewey, J. (1969–91) *The Collected Works of John Dewey: The Early Works, The Middle Works, The Later Works. 37 vols*. Jo Ann Boydston, ed. Illinois: Southern Illinois University Press.

Misak, C. (2000) *Truth, Politics, Morality*. New York: Routledge.

Misak, C. (2004) *Truth and the End of Inquiry*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Rorty, R. (1983) "Pragmatism without Method." In *Rorty, Objectivity, Relativism, and Truth*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rorty, R. (1987) "Science as Solidarity." In *Rorty, Objectivity, Relativism, and Truth*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rorty, R. (1988) "The Priority of Democracy to Philosophy." In *Rorty Objectivity, Relativism, and Truth*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rorty, R. (1989) *Contingency, Irony, Solidarity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rorty, R. (1996) "Idealizations, Foundations, and Social Practices." In *Democracy and Difference*, Seyla Benhabib, ed. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

Rorty, R. (1998) "Pragmatism and Romantic Polytheism." In *the Resurgence of Pragmatism*, Morris Dickstein, ed. Durham: Duke University Press.

Rorty, R. (1999) *Philosophy and Social Hope*. New York: Penguin.

Schumpeter, J. (1962) *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy*. New York: Harper Books.

10

Lessons from twentieth-century political philosophy before Rawls

Jeremy Shearmur

It has sometimes been suggested that political philosophy was dormant – if not dead – before Rawls brought it back to life. A few minutes reflection, however, should make clear to the enquirer that this is misleading. What was going on before Rawls wrote was diverse, and while those who have been heavily involved in the discussion of Rawls' work may well not have liked what was going on, there is no question but that a lot was taking place. In addition to the 'ordinary language' tradition, there were, after all, R. G. Collingwood and Michael Oakeshott, and also Leo Strauss. In addition, there was work in the orthodox Marxian tradition, to say nothing of the Frankfurt School. In the present chapter, however, I am going to concentrate on two rather different figures – Karl Popper and Friedrich Hayek. My concern will be to try to spell out the kind of work in which they were involved, how it differs from more recent work, and to argue that a lot has been lost by virtue of its recently having been given insufficient attention.

I will not address their work in its own terms, but will, rather, consider the question: what might contemporary political theorists miss, if they do not pay attention to their work? I have chosen Hayek and Popper because these are people about whom I can write most easily, and also because I think that their work has interesting (if rather different) things to say to us today.

First, some commonalities. When Hayek and Popper were writing, they did not take strongly cognitivist approaches to moral and political theory. Popper, in much of his work, was faced with the problem of responding to the challenge of people whom he knew from Vienna, who had questioned the cogency of anything that went beyond the empirical and the formal. Through all of his work, Popper disagreed with the approach, influenced by the early Wittgenstein and the Vienna Circle, that it was useful to debar various kinds of discourse as 'meaningless'.[1] But he nonetheless struggled initially with how to explain that metaphysical claims were open to critical assessment, and was somewhat ambivalent about the status of ethical claims.[2] Hayek was, by training, an economist, and also had reservations about ethical cognitivism. In certain respects, this leads to problems about their work – e.g. that anyone who wishes to explore what their responses should have been to current questions in this area, would be faced with a task involving a lot of speculative reconstruction. However, there are certain advantages to their approach. For they tended to minimize the degree to which they based their approaches upon substantive ethical claims beyond points on which virtually everyone would agree, and were also well aware

that there would be likely to be continuing disagreements about wider ethical issues, to which it could not be assumed that there was a rational resolution.

This is important in two respects. First, what they have to say is, it seems to me, highly pertinent to the situation in which we currently find ourselves. For while those writing today would probably wish to claim that more could be done by way of cognitive argument about social and ethical issues than Hayek and Popper would have allowed for, we are apt to over-rate what can be achieved, and to proceed as if everybody in fact found our own approach rationally telling. This, in a situation in which people's views on ethical (to say nothing of religious) matters are diverse, and in which the practical impact that rational argument about such matters can make is somewhat limited,[3] can pose real problems, as we are apt to treat the world as if everyone would agree that our ideas are compelling (not least, today, ideas based on often tendentious claims about identity). Second, what Hayek and Popper did concentrate upon – issues which can be addressed with relatively minimal ethical assumptions – is I believe unduly neglected.

Two points, however, must at once be made. The first is that they both worked with what might be called minimal, but recognizably liberal, assumptions – in the sense that they respected the preferences of individuals, were concerned about both people's liberty and their well-being, and took themselves to be addressing others who shared these concerns. Clearly, given the time at which they were writing, they hardly needed to be reminded that the world also contained Hitler and people who supported him. Their concern in the bulk of their writings was not to address those who were genuinely anti-humanitarian in their views. Rather, they engaged with people who were humanitarian, but whom they thought were misled into the support of problematic ideas, because they held mistaken social, political and methodological theories.

Second, Hayek and Popper's views should not be identified with what one might call the non-moralistic contractarian tradition in political thought; i.e. with those who wish to re-start what they see as a Hobbesian project, but couched in terms of rational choice theory. Such work is sometimes intellectually interesting, and I think that we may have a lot to learn from it with regard to issues of institutional design.[4] But it seems to me problematic because in actual social and political circumstances, people may well be motivated by specific religious or moral commitments and they may simply not be interested in what those in this tradition tell them would be in their interest if they were, instead, more narrowly and rationally self-interested.

Rather, both Hayek and Popper address the world as it is, and they do not suppose that we can be expected to agree with our fellow-citizens on high-level priorities and on the plans for their implementation. They reject contractarianism. They developed arguments – which are rather different in their character[5] – directed against the idealistic would-be planners of their own day. While the targets of their criticism are no longer with us, there is much in their arguments from which we can learn today. Instead of talking in abstract terms, I will consider Hayek and Popper separately, before – in the conclusion to this paper – returning to more general matters.

Hayek

In approaching political theorists, one might usefully make a distinction between those who start with moral issues and those who start with a picture of society as they believe that it currently stands and what the realistic prospects for changing it might be. It is not that the latter group do not have moral concerns, so much as that, for them, the ethical aspects of we should do once it has been determined what our society is like, and the constraints that we are under, are pretty much a 'no-brainer'. *Our* current customary way of addressing issues in political philosophy is typically of the first kind (such that, say, where we find elements of the latter approach within what we take to be 'our' kind of political theory, as with the elements of social relativity and

the reference to Akbar in Mill's *On Liberty*, we tend to treat it as if it was an unfortunate lapse[6]). But we cannot make much sense of Marxism other than in terms of the second approach. My suggestion is that Hayek is usefully considered to be a theorist of the second kind and that we have a lot to learn from him and more generally from that second tradition.

As looking at things in such a way may be unfamiliar, let me start with a few words about Marx, when seen from this perspective. For him, our key starting-point, if we were to do political philosophy, would be to appreciate what our society is like. Here, Marx would offer us his well-known analysis. Given this, what needs to be done is, in a sense, obvious.[7] For if there is basic good-will – or, indeed, pretty much any ordinary moral motivation – the key issue would be to see what could be done to work with those in a position to transform our society into one in which people could live genuinely human lives. Clearly, there were other facets to Marx's work. But at a certain level, *given* his social analysis, what needs to be done would be fairly obvious.

While lots of other things are also going on in Hayek's work, an important insight into his ideas is offered by a parallel with Marx. For a key aspect of Hayek's work was provided by the impact made on him personally by, and then by his re-working and extension of, Ludwig von Mises' arguments about the problems of economic calculation facing socialism.[8] Of special importance here, is the idea that there was a fatal flaw to the socialist tradition; namely, that it had assumed that the practical benefits of capitalist society would still be available to us, even if we moved away from a market-based society. Socialism in anything like Marx's sense was, Hayek argued, simply not possible, for within such societies we would not have access to the information, and be able to undertake the kinds of economic calculations, upon which such societies vitally depend.

It is here that a glance back at Marx becomes again important. For he argued that, within capitalism, there were various structural limitations on what could be accomplished politically. For capitalism to work, certain mechanisms played a key role, and power was also distributed in various distinctive ways. Within such a system, it made no sense to ask the main players to behave differently: to do so was to ask them to behave in ways that were at odds with how the system both did and had to operate, and also, given that the system was in place, to operate in ways which might be drastically against their interests. Most people would, today, have considerable reservations about the explanatory theories that Marx offered, and even those sympathetic towards Marxism as a programmatic approach, would agree that there seems to be much more leeway to make changes, and for people to make improvements within the system, than Marx had suggested.[9] However, if one puts to one side the Marxian hope of a dramatic resolution of our key social problems,[10] a lot of *critical* work written about Western politics within the Marxist tradition has considerable force. Not only does it throw light upon features of 'liberal' political systems that liberals often do not talk about. But it also raises important problems about left-liberal hopes that the state can be expected to work to the advantage of the poor and downtrodden. It also shows what seems to me the naiveté of those, often influenced by strands in postmodernism and poststructuralism, who seem to have no conception that people may genuinely find some of their ideals uncompelling or appreciate that there may be structural constraints on the realization of those ideals upon which there is agreement.[11]

Now Hayek isn't Marx. But his work shares some features of a structural approach to politics like Marx's. At one level, he argued that Marx was wrong in thinking that a transformation of our society to socialism is possible. There is, for Hayek, nowhere to go in terms of systematic structural change – not least because of the vast numbers of people whose very existence, he came to argue, depended on something like the kinds of market-based societies that we have at present being in place. At the same time, however, for Hayek there *are* structures – and they limit what we can do, if our society is to thrive and if people are to continue to enjoy individual freedom. At the same time, there is, for Hayek, an obvious difference from a Marxian approach;

for it is certainly *possible* to attempt all kinds of *other* changes things. Hayek's worry is that it is all too tempting to do some things which seem attractive – but which are likely to have dire consequences for the structural characteristics of societies like ours, and the benefits that they can bring us.

In this respect, Hayek's work is reminiscent of some eighteenth-century social theorists: that while there is a concern for values – and with different people's aspirations – there is also a concern for the operations of society as a system, and with the fact that if it is going to work in certain ways, then this may depend on people's having certain particular characteristics, and values, and on their being guided by particular rules and traditions. Such concerns – which are obvious enough in Montesquieu, in Rousseau, in the American Founding Fathers and also in Adam Smith, and which also spill over into the nineteenth century – tend now not to play a significant role in political theory.[12] Yet in Hayek, they play a key role. For he offers us a picture of a society that functions in powerfully productive ways which enable us to make use of knowledge scattered across mankind for the good of people as a whole, and which at a certain level furnish the individual citizen with an important kind of liberty. Yet, on his account, how this society does or might best work is horribly vulnerable, often to the likely consequences of actions which we will be inclined to take on the basis of some of our deepest moral impulses. Some of these, Hayek believes, are in fact misplaced – i.e. they are ideals, like that of a society in which people merit what they receive, which he thinks cannot be realized in a large-scale society like ours. Others, like the wish for a welfare state of a certain kind, are fine, *provided* that they are pursued in the right way – that our attempts to realize them do not damage those institutions which are responsible for key functional roles being performed, and for the safeguarding of people's freedom.

Hayek has specific ideas about how our institutions do – and can – work; he also has ideas about how such institutions may have developed, and about the characteristics of them that need to be preserved. He also had ideas about how they should be reformed. (It is also worth noting that Hayek's work has been of interest to a number of thinkers on the Left (Griffiths 2014), who have in part tried to extend some of his arguments, in part to argue that his views are compatible with much more extensive ideas about welfare than Hayek himself favoured.) These issues are certainly worthy of examination, but I would have thought that the value of his work is rather more general.

For what Hayek does that, in my view, is particularly valuable, is to offer us a picture of our society in which we have inherited social mechanisms which perform various functions for us. They were typically not designed (or, if they were, were often not originally planned to operate as they currently do).[13] What these are, and how they operate, may not be evident to us. And it may – e.g. if Mises and Hayek are right about what the problems of economic calculation without markets – be the case that we cannot achieve things that we wish to do, without specific such mechanisms being in place. The most obvious example, in Hayek's work, is the price system. But he went on to generalize his argument, and to suggest that we have inherited social institutions, habits, traditions, and so on, of many different kinds, which have this broad character. It is clear that many of these are likely not to have the same 'There is no alternative' character, that he argued was the case for the price system in a society like ours. But at the same time, we need to take seriously his point that we typically make use of specific mechanisms which may well rule out the achievement, while we use them, of other things that we think to be valuable. To this one might add that *we* have been formed by particular traditions, values and ways of behaving, which may have the consequence that some institutions and ways of doing things which are possible for *other* people, may not be possible for us, either as we are currently, or for how we might feasibly become.[14]

At the same time, it must be stressed that, in Hayek's work, there is also emphasis upon the idea that institutions, etc. which we have inherited may well not work particularly well, and that

we may need to change and to reform them. This seems to me a key part of his approach (even if how this fits with some of what he says when pursuing other aspects of his views, is by no means fully resolved[15]).

What, then, is the contemporary significance of Hayek's approach? I think that his work stresses to us the importance of understanding that we operate under all kinds of institutional and traditional constraints; ones which we may tentatively set out to improve upon, but which will typically limit our ability to accomplish all that we might like to do, as does the need to have mechanisms which discharge the social functions which they serve. In this sense, Hayek's approach is strongly anti-utopian; but it points to problems also for people inspired, today, by visions of 'social justice', domestically or internationally.[16] While Hayek's approach does have a significant value basis to it – valuing people's freedom, and their well-being – what he has to say can and should speak to people with a variety of values and concerns. (Indeed, in (Hayek 1973–1979) he stresses the way in which the kind of liberal society that he favours allows for cooperation between people who are in disagreement about substantive values.) Hayek dedicated his *Road to Serfdom* to 'socialists of all parties', and he had a strong concern to speak to people on the left of politics. In my view, a key corrective which emerges from his work is the idea that we should pursue our normative concerns with as much knowledge as we can obtain about how our institutions and traditions operate, how they constrain us, and about what choices are feasibly open to us with regard to institutional reform. But such knowledge may lead us to conclude that some morally attractive aims should not, in fact, be pursued at all. It would, I think, lead us back to an approach to political theory in some ways closer to that which was taken in the eighteenth century, and to working against a backdrop of a big-picture view of these issues, than that which tends to be found in our work on political theory today.

Popper

Karl Popper is best known in political philosophy for his *Open Society*, and for a number of essays which appeared in his *Conjectures and Refutations* and in subsequent collections. More recently, a lot of hitherto scattered or unpublished material on social and political themes has appeared in his *After the Open Society*. I have addressed his views in my *Political Thought of Karl Popper*, while Malachi Hacohen has provided a brilliant and detailed account of his earlier work in his *Karl Popper: The Formative Years*. Here, as in the previous section on Hayek, I will concern myself not with Popper's views in their own right, but with what they may have to say to us today.

I will, here, explore two themes. My treatment of the first of these will be brief, just because it has been discussed recently by Gerald Gauss in his *The Tyranny of the Ideal* (Gaus 2016).

Popper, in the course of his discussion of Plato in *The Open Society*, took issue with the idea that a good approach to political theory was, initially, to start by establishing an ideal at which we should be aiming.[17] Popper was writing against themes that he found exemplified in Plato, but which he also considered to be of relevance to attitudes at the time at which he was writing. I would suggest they are also relevant to contemporary 'ideal theory'. Let me offer you a brief explication of the approach that I will take as my tentative target (from Leif Wenar's *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* entry on Rawls (Wenar 2017)):

> Completing ideal theory first, Rawls says, yields a systematic understanding of how to reform our non-ideal world, and fixes a vision … of what is the best that can be hoped for. Once ideal theory is completed for a political sub-domain, non-ideal theory can be set out by reference to the ideal.

Popper's characterization of what he criticized as a 'utopian' approach was as follows. I will select just some key points from his (longer) discussion. The lettering is mine:

a   The utopian approach is characterized in the following way: 'we must determine our ulti-
     mate political aim … before taking any practical action. Only when this ultimate aim is
     determined, in rough outline at least, … can we begin to consider the best ways and means
     for its realization' (Popper 1966 [1945], volume I).
b   With this, Popper contrasts his own favoured approach, which at the level of method,
     involved: 'searching for, and fighting against, the greatest and most urgent evils of society'
     (p. 158). These, plausibly, are things which we discover with the passing of time, and may
     emerge as consequences of social change.
c   My concern here, however, is with one of the arguments that Popper goes on to offer
     against 'utopian' views 'in a time of revolutions, both political and spiritual, and of new
     experiments and experience in the political field … [it] is to be expected that ideas and
     ideals will change. What had appeared the ideal state to the people who made the original
     blueprint, may not appear so to their successors' (Popper 1966 [1945], volume I, p. 160).

Now Popper, because the context in which he is writing, refers here to ideal blueprints. But
there is a more general value in the point that he is making. It is that what, concretely, we find
problematic or unproblematic – and, I would suggest, generalizations which we may make on
the basis of such views – may change. In some cases, we may be happy to describe what has
taken place as involving learning – compare, in this context, our changing views about the status
of slaves, women and animals. In other cases, while we may register changes in concerns, we
may be unsure about how, in the end, they will look in the light of experience and discussion
(compare, here, issues about autonomy, dependence and community). In my view, it is not clear
that we could, in advance, have predicted how our sensibilities would here change, or that 'ideal
theory' could in advance have access to principles which would enable us to anticipate these
developments, and offer us cogent guidance about them.

   Second, there are issues concerning the relationship between Popper's views and Hayek's.
While there were certain commonalities between Popper and Hayek – a background in early
twentieth-century Austria; emigration to England, an attachment to certain themes which
would today be recognized as 'republican' in character;[18] and while they were also friends –
there were also deep differences between them. Their social backgrounds were different, and
they first met in London in the 1930s. Hayek was an economist, with a family background
in biology (they, but emphatically not Hayek, were also Nationalists, not far removed from
National Socialism). Popper's family were liberal, secular Jews, who formally converted to
Lutheranism as a gesture of assimilation. Popper's interests were in psychology and subse-
quently the physical sciences. In addition, Popper's background was much more strongly
socialist than was Hayek's (although Hayek as a young man had been sympathetic to Fabian
socialism). Popper became critical of socialism (see particularly his letter to Rudolf Carnap on
this subject, now included in his *After the Open Society*), he never shared the systematic liberal
economic perspective which came to characterize Hayek's work. It was all this that made it
perhaps strange that he and Hayek came to similar views in *The Open Society* and *The Road
to Serfdom*. What they shared, particularly, was an ethical individualism which contrasted with
various collectivist ideas which were then popular, a disagreement with ideas about there
being an intrinsic meaning to history, and misgivings about then-popular ideas about social
planning. However, while their criticism of planning came to similar (negative) conclusions,
it was developed in rather different ways. For Hayek, ideas from the debate about socialist

economic calculation played a key role, as did issues about the social distribution of information, the importance of the rule of law to the operations of a market-based society, and the degree to which people within such a society are likely to be able to agree, rationally, only to a limited extent about collective projects and their priority.[19]

Popper's perspective was very different. He was struck, particularly, by the diversity of our ideals,[20] and by the fallibility of our knowledge. In a paper written in 1946, Popper considered the diversity in terms of their ideals between, say, Christians, utilitarians, liberals, and socialists[21] – and the fact that it is not likely that they will convince one another that they are in error.[22] He argues that while in our private relations we may pursue our ideals (e.g. by way of pushing our tastes in music upon our friends), such conduct is not appropriate for the public realm. There, rather, he argues that we should concentrate upon those things which we can agree as being problematic, and develop a political agenda in which they are addressed. Thus, the agenda for politics – beyond a basic agenda for the protection of individuals from aggression and exploitation (including, in his view, economic exploitation), which is to be secured by the laws and the power of the state – is the pursuit of an agreed agenda of social ills which should be remedied. Here, however, the issue of our fallibility comes into play. In Popper's view, any action which the government takes in the pursuit of such concerns (and Popper's approach is centred upon governmental initiatives) is likely to have unintended consequences – and these may be adverse in their character. What then becomes important is that each and every citizen be recognized as a source of potential criticism – they may be the people who know that there are unanticipated problems with these policies, not least because these affect them or the people or situations that they know all about. Popper discusses the role they may play by reference to the Kantian idea of the 'rational unity of mankind', but he re-interprets it in terms of his own fallibilistic epistemology. The ability to offer such feedback – and to have governments which respond to it – is, for Popper, a key characteristic of a good political order.

All this, it seems to me, would require that we have institutions in place which are not ordinary features of modern Western democracies. Neither Presidential-style nor Parliamentary-style systems work effectively for such purposes. In particular, the public service – which in many countries plays a key role not just in the formulation of policy, but whose conceptions about what is and what is not politically possible or even advisable constitute a framework for all policy which is given serious consideration – seldom have *their* ideas opened to critical scrutiny. While, in general terms, for any senior politician to admit that their ideas were flawed, typically ensures that they lose (and perhaps also their party loses) the next election. What would seem to be needed, are bodies concerned with the scrutiny of what is taking place in our society, to whom citizens can direct their concerns, and to which those with political power need then to respond. However, there is more. For suppose that someone does report that there are unintended, problematic consequences from some measure. Such claims need to be checked out and their significance evaluated; not least, as to the feasibility of making changes in the face of the constraints under which we are operating. In addition, only certain such things will receive protection – we typically, say, don't protect a small store from competition from a larger store that opens up near it; while in other cases, it might be thought most appropriate to assist people to adapt to problematic and disruptive change, rather than to try to prevent it.

This serves to highlight an issue in respect of which Popper's work is, I think, vulnerable to a Hayekian critique.[23] Popper himself was critical of what he called the 'essentialism' of the Marxian tradition, by which he meant the picture of structural constraints under which Marxists saw what could be achieved, politically, as severely limited. Popper's critique was in part political – he was concerned with what he thought to be some disasters which a historicist version of these ideas had led to, in Europe between the wars. It was also in part methodological. It seems to me,

however, that both points are open to correction. As I have argued elsewhere, Popper's meth-odological criticism seems to me to stand in need of correction in the light of the fallibilistic realism about science which he was himself to adopt. There seems every reason to believe that our actions may have consequences which constrain us, in ways that may not be obvious, as may our traditions and choices of systems of social institutions. As Hayek himself in effect argued (Hayek 1973–1979), experimentation in Popperian 'piecemeal social engineering' needs to be limited by a theoretical knowledge of what such constraints are.

If there is anything in this, however, it points to a major difficulty. For what we would seem to need, from the perspective of either of these theorists (Hayek, directly; Popper, if he can be pushed in the direction that I have indicated), is a body who can advise in a fallible but reasonably authoritative way, about these constraints. That is to say, while we do not need the Guardians of Plato's *Republic*, we do seem to need an informed body playing a more critical but theoretically informed role. In (Hayek 1973–1979), some suggestions are given about the possible role of a Senate-like body, to be elected on a cohort-basis by people over a certain age, to constrain the government on the basis of their ideas about what would make for just laws. But clearly, *these* people would not have the kind of (fallible) theoretical knowledge that would be needed to play the task that, it seems to me, Hayek himself has argued that we need. No institutions currently play this role, and tendencies in the development of the media (not least, under the impact of the internet and social media) are, if anything, leading us away from a situation in which a knowledge of constraints on our actions can be presumed to be some-thing like a common possession of those in key decision-taking positions in our society.[24] In making this point, however, I am not proposing how such an institution could currently be set up – only that, for reasons that I think become clear in rather different ways in the work of Hayek and of Popper, we are likely to face some real difficulties without there being such institutions in place!

Conclusion

My aim in this piece was to suggest that important points would be lost, if we were to treat political philosophy as something that was asleep until it was awoken by Rawls. In what I have written, my concern has implicitly been with the Rawlsian tradition, and the kind of work which has been developed in response to it. To these people, my message is that our starting-point should be with a historical and theoretical understanding of our institutions, traditions and customs, and the way in which they constitute, enable and constrain us. It may or may not be the case that, in the end, the specific concerns and claims of Hayek will prove to be correct; but – or so it seems to me – he was at least asking the right *kinds* of questions. Further, while one can go a lot further towards cognitivism in respect of ethical and politi-cal issues than did Hayek or Popper, what we can achieve there should not mislead us. For among people of good will there are likely to be value-based disagreements which go all the way down – and in the face of which, Popper's concerns about what we can agree needs basic protection, and what we can agree we should try to remedy, look important.[25] Such concerns would, I think, lead us towards a bringing together of the normative and the positive in a manner that was last found in eighteenth-century social theory. At the same time, while I would endorse Hayek and Popper's criticisms of Marxism's ability to resolve our problems, I think that there is a lot of value in the *critical* aspects of the Marxist tradition, because of its concern for the interplay between our systematic social institutions and the conditions under which ideals can be realized.

Let me conclude, by indicating briefly how my suggestions could be extended elsewhere.

As I argued in some detail in my *Political Thought of Karl Popper*, there are considerable commonalities between the later Habermas and Popper. At the same time, Habermas's expectations about dialogue and consensus seem to me hopelessly over-optimistic. Clearly, we may be able to operate in something like this fashion in certain areas of science.[26] But if this is the case, it depends upon those involved sharing an intellectual background, having a shared, and detailed, knowledge of their subject-matter, and upon their concentrating on a restricted range of problems. Popper suggested that we might be able to aim for consensual judgements about those things which we may need to remedy, politically. But his argument for this required that we put our ideological commitments to one side (and to take them as relating to the private sphere).[27] Further, I have suggested that issues become more complex once one brings in theoretical knowledge – just because, when looked at from a Hayekian perspective, some of the things that citizens agree are regrettable and in need of remedy, may well be things that the theoretically informed would tell us can't be addressed without giving rise to much greater problems. From such a perspective, ideas in the Habermasian tradition, and in the work of those concerned with 'deliberative democracy', look hopelessly – and dangerously[28] – over-optimistic.

In this respect, there is a degree of commonality between the writers with whom I have been concerned and those who stress the 'agonistic' character of politics. But, it seems to me, there are two problems about the latter's work. First, while Hayek and Popper urge us to restrict the scope of politics to that about which we can reasonably expect to get agreement, those who favour an agonistic approach seem expansive in their views about the political, but not to tell us how we can hope to resolve our disagreements without them leading to our taking up arms against one another. For if someone else comes after us, our friends and family, our possessions, or those holding our religious or moral views, on a basis which from our perspective is unreasonable, we are not likely to take to it kindly, and may well find ways of resisting. It is, after all, worth bearing in mind the degree to which the kind of peace and security that many of us can take for granted is a social and historical artefact rather than being something like a default condition for human life. We should not take risks with it lightly. Second, those who favour such perspectives often take a viewpoint which might be referred to as 'postmodern'. But in the light of the issues with which this paper deals, this is a disaster. For it calls into question – often, it seems to me, without fully understanding the implications of what it is doing – the very notion of our acting under constraints, the character of which we may be able to come to understand theoretically.[29] In this respect, the Marxist tradition – shorn of its optimistic teleology – seems to me infinitely to be preferred, and also to speak much more truly to the concerns of the disadvantaged.[30]

One final comment. Should – against, it should be said, my expectations – there be a shift towards the concern for an interplay between large-scale (and also pertinent empirical) social theory and normative theory, of the kind that attention to these ideas would again lead us, we would have a lot of work on our hands. It is not, however, typically work that could easily be undertaken within the relatively short, and tightly analytical, papers which we are currently expected to write. Much would need reform in terms of our academic institutions and the bureaucracies which currently seek to control the research that takes place within them.

We would, nonetheless, return to something that could hope to make a real contribution towards the societies in which we are living, and to the difficult problems that confront us. There is also much that is intellectually challenging. To conclude with one brief example, in Hayek's work, a great deal of weight is placed upon tradition, and upon the dangers of destroying valuable things that it accomplishes, by way of certain kinds of rationalistic planning. In Popper's later work, emphasis is placed on tradition, too. But each of them faces a problem here. Hayek wishes to be a traditionalist, but also to embrace market institutions, and the kinds of radical change

for which they allow. Popper favours piecemeal social engineering, controlled by feedback from citizens, about how things had not turned out as we have hoped. But if our earlier practices involved traditions, we may well not be able to return to where we were before after we have gone through some period of experimentation. To address such issues seems to me a pressing, and interesting, task.[31]

Notes

1. See, for discussion of this (Popper 1959), first published in German in 1934.
2. See, for discussion (Shearmur 1986a), and (Shearmur 2009).
3. As a period of sabbatical leave in the United States brought home to me all too clearly.
4. There is, though, the risk that institutions designed to work in the public interest even if people are knaves, may well turn people into knaves when they find out how they are being treated in these newly-designed institutions.
5. Popper's arguments are concerned, particularly, with our fallibility and with the problems posed by the unintended consequences of governmental action; Hayek's, with issues about the social division of information.
6. That is, there is a degree of relativity to what kind of society we are living in, to Mill's *On Liberty*, with which his modern readers often feel unhappy.
7. I am not wishing to poo-poo issues like those raised by Alan Buchanan, as to the situation of a potential labour leader, whose material interests might well be to allow himself to be bought out by the bosses; rather just to say that for anyone who had a strong moral motivation (be it a concern for human happiness, or individual flourishing), what was to be done was obvious.
8. Seen, here, as a theory addressing the situation of people living in large, populous, industrial societies: neither Mises nor Hayek doubted that some form of socialism might be possible for those living in small face-to-face societies.
9. Popper was explicitly critical of the idea that there were such limitations; e.g. in what he wrote against 'essentialism'. But this is a respect in which, or so it seems to me, his work is open to criticism from a Hayekian direction.
10. And also does not restrict the basis on which constraints on politics are understood to Marxian political economy.
11. There are two aspects to this. Societies of specific kinds may have particular functional prerequisites, which impose limitations on how certain values can be realized within them. Beyond that, specific institutions or traditions may work in particular ways which also impose significant constraints, such that what becomes crucial in the face of particular cogent complaints (e.g. 'black lives matter') becomes: how do we change or replace those institutions and traditions so that they still function, but so also as to accommodate the complaints – something that does not happen automatically.
12. Or if they do – as in certain of the discussions round Robert Putman's worries about changes in the character of Western societies and their consequences – tend to be relegated to a sort of lower league of political theory, or to be treated in terms of over-optimistic and patently unrealistic ideas about the remedial power of civic education.
13. Hayek's view seems to me perfectly compatible with seeing our current institutions as products of tradition and of a history of attempts to reform it, on the basis of a range of different ideas.
14. One problem in Hayek, which here I will do no more than note (but which is addressed in Shearmur forthcoming) is that there seems to me a tension between the traditionalistic aspects of Hayek's work and the potentially disruptive character of the economic ideas that he favours.
15. See, for some discussion (Shearmur 2007).
16. It should be emphasized that Hayek was not necessarily unsympathetic to the values as such; his objection was to the idea that they were realizable, and about the problems that would follow should we try to do so. See (Shearmur 1986b).
17. Popper's critique of 'Aestheticism, Perfectionism and Utopianism' in chapter 9 of *The Open Society*.

18. In the sense of Philip Pettit and Quentin Skinner. They can be seen in the *Rechtsstaat* character of Hayek's legal theory, and at various points in Popper's work – e.g. in what he referred to as 'protectionism'.

19. In this respect it is odd that Alex Nove, who had little time for Hayek, in many respects re-invented Hayek's arguments from *The Road to Serfdom*, in his *Economics of Feasible Socialism* (Nove 1983), and, indeed, put them in a particularly effective way.

20. I am here drawing, particularly, on his 'Public and Private Values', written, it would seem in 1946 (see, now, Popper 2008), which I think throws light on some of the concerns underlying (Popper 1966 [1945]).

21. His concern – both in 'Public and Private Values' and in (Popper 1966 [1945]), is with people who are humanitarian and democratic in their orientation. His concern for people who don't share such views is, typically, with those who are led to oppose their own underlying proclivity towards such ideas, by what Popper takes to be the appeal of mistaken intellectual ideas.

22. Popper did not have to hand, at the time, a theory of the rational discussability of such matters, although he welcomed what he called a 'rational attitude' the possessors of which might learn from one another.

23. I might mention that to a degree (Shearmur 1986a) brought, *inter alia*, Hayekian issues into the critical appraisal of his work, while I was explicit about the fact that in (Shearmur 1986b), I drew upon material from Popper and Lakatos's ideas about 'research programmes' in providing a framework for the assessment of the development of Hayek's views over time.

24. I address this issue, among other things, in my *Living with Markets*, which I expect to be published by Routledge by 2024.

25. It is tempting to see Popper's approach, here, as involving the emancipation of the 'political' from the wider Rawlsian structure.

26. But note, in this context, the reservations that have been expressed by people in the discipline of science studies. My suspicion is that much of what they say may be correct – but that what it points to is the need to improve on our institutions, so that they operate so as better to further the development of knowledge.

27. It is interesting to note the way in which issues of this kind have once again become a focus of attention, as Rawls and Habermas turned to consider the role of religion in the public sphere.

28. Precisely because, as Hayek stressed in *The Road to Serfdom*, one of the real risks to liberty is a government that *claims* that it is acting on the basis of a rational consensus – which it then empowers itself to press upon everyone, in the name of reason.

29. There is a striking parallel, here, with the ideas which Hayek addressed in his Inaugural Address at the L.S.E, 'The Trend of Economic Thinking'. See now, on this, (Hayek 1991).

30. It is striking that Rorty, for example, left with no account of the possibilities of social change illuminated by theory, is left appealing, with Charles Dickens, for a change of heart. Cf. on this in Dickens, George Orwell's brilliant essay, e.g. at: http://www.orwell.ru/library/reviews/dickens/english/e_chd.

31. This is one issue with which I am concerned in my *Living with Markets*.

References

Gaus, G. (2016) *The Tyranny of the Ideal*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Griffiths, S. (2014) *Engaging Enemies: Hayek and the Left*, London & New York: Rowman & Littlefield.

Hacohen, M. (2000) *Karl Popper: The Formative Years*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hayek, F. (1944) *The Road to Serfdom*, London: Routledge.

Hayek, F. (1973–1979) *Law, Legislation and Liberty*, London: Routledge.

Hayek, F. (1991) *The Trend of Economic Thinking*, ed. W. W. Bartley and S. Kresge, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Nove, A. (1983) *The Economics of Feasible Socialism*, London: Allen & Unwin.

Popper, K. (1959 [1934]) *The Logic of Scientific Discovery*, London: Hutchinson.

Popper, K. (1963) *Conjectures and Refutations*, London: Routledge.

Popper, K. (1966 [1945]) *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, London: Routledge.

Popper, K. (2008) *After the Open Society*, ed. J. Shearmur and P. Turner, London: Routledge.

Shearmur, J. (1986a) *The Political Thought of Karl Popper*, London: Routledge.

Shearmur, J. (1986b) *Hayek and After*, London: Routledge.

Shearmur, J. (2007) "Hayek's Politics", in E. Feser (ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to Popper*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Shearmur, J. (2009) "Critical Rationalism and Ethics", in Z. Parusnikova and R. Cohen (eds.) *Rethinking Popper*, Dordrecht: Springer.

Shearmur, J. (forthcoming) *Living with Markets*, London: Routledge.

Wenar, L. (2017) *'John Rawls', Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/rawls/.

11

Liberalism after communitarianism

Charles Blattberg

Since the beginning of the modern age, there have been political thinkers who complain about its over-emphasis on the individual. Others have raised concerns about the dangers associated with too much community. One version of this dispute is reflected in the 'liberal-communitarian debate', which arose within anglophone political philosophy during the 1980s. The liberals were led by John Rawls, along with Ronald Dworkin, Thomas Nagel, and T. M. Scanlon. And the communitarian critique of their work was advanced by, among others, Alasdair MacIntyre, Michael Sandel, Charles Taylor, and Michael Walzer. As we might expect, since the publication of the writings of both groups, some have seen fit to declare one side or other of the debate the victor. But we should assume that none of the leading participants saw their exchanges in such merely competitive terms. After all, serious thinkers know that theirs is a higher – because ultimately philosophical – calling.

We can understand the debate as arising primarily around Rawls' *A Theory of Justice* (1999; originally published in 1971). The book defends what he considers to be the key principles of liberalism. To Rawls, we should endorse that political order which matches what rational citizens would freely choose from 'the original position'. This is the perspective attained by stepping behind a hypothetical 'veil of ignorance', which conceals individuals' knowledge of their capacities or social position. By imagining ourselves behind such a veil, we are said to be able to deliberate in a truly representative manner, and so 'regard the human situation not only from all social but also from all temporal points of view' (Rawls 1999: 514). In this way, we can formulate principles of justice that provide the basis for a universally acceptable social contract.

Such a universalist approach, however, is just one of two routes to the liberalism Rawls offers in the book. He also thinks we can reach a conception of justice through a process of 'reflective equilibrium'. It requires starting from – and remaining connected to – actual liberal societies. By conceiving of their practices as reflecting considered judgments that can serve as provisional fixed points, Rawls believes we can reformulate them in a more systematically unified manner. Indeed, by tacking back and forth, from practice to theory and back again, he thinks we will eventually arrive at the very same principles of justice derived from the original position.

Communitarians tended to focus on Rawls' universalist case for liberalism, critiquing it along two basic lines. First, they argued that the original position is simply impossible. To achieve the necessary detachment, all of our ends would have to be matters of choice. But this relies on an

'atomist' (Taylor 1985) or 'unencumbered' (Sandel 1998: 90, 172, 178–179; 2005) conception of the self, one that is simply not ontologically accurate. Second, communitarians held that, even if attainable, such detachment would be undesirable. This is because it is compatible with only individualistic ends, and so would undermine those social practices that need to be carried out in common with others – from friendship and family to broader forms of community. One reason for this is that universalist principles are simply too abstract to move ordinary citizens.

Rawls responded with 'Justice as Fairness: Political not Metaphysical' (1985), a paper largely included in the first chapter of his *Political Liberalism* (1993). In this work, Rawls downplays the original position, characterizing it as no more than an illustrative device, and emphasizes reflective equilibrium instead (now also called 'Kantian constructivism'). Rawls also stipulates that this approach never assumes we should, or even could, choose our life plans *ex nihilo*. We may simply evaluate some of our ends in the light of others, treating none as anything more than provisional fixed points. He also denies asserting any particular conception of the self. To Rawls, since such questions are ontological, hence metaphysical, they fall outside the scope of his strictly 'political' approach. This is why it needs to be distinguished from those based on 'comprehensive' worldviews.

Since we achieve reflective equilibrium through a more systematic formulation of the principles already underpinning liberal democratic regimes' public political cultures, Rawls believes that the vision of justice derived from it can be upheld by the members of many different communities and ways of life. After all, they already coexist more or less reasonably within these regimes. So Rawls takes such a shared political ideal to represent a unified 'overlapping consensus', one detachable from those parts of citizens' lives not relevant to politics. The latter are what are captured by comprehensive views that, as we might expect, will remain divergent.

This approach has led some to describe Rawls and other 'political liberals' (e.g. Larmore 1996) as having taking a 'hermeneutical' turn (e.g. Richardson 1990: 22). And the systematic reformulating they favour is indeed a form of interpretation. However, it is too 'theoretical' to align with the contemporary hermeneutics associated with figures such as Hans-Georg Gadamer (1989). Rawls aims to reach a stable resting point: a theory of justice capable of guiding political practice. But hermeneutical interpretation is usually portrayed as ongoing – as always on 'the way' (to borrow an expression from Gadamer's teacher, Martin Heidegger [2008]; see also Gadamer 1981: 105).

So while hermeneutical social critics also aim for better interpretations of political justice, they don't seek fixed and systematic principles. Hermeneutics entails a thoroughly contextual form of judgment that is 'practical' rather than 'theoretical' (Dreyfus 2014). We might even say that its practitioners should avoid *any* talk of principles (Dancy 2004). This also helps clarify why we shouldn't conflate the exchange of hermeneutical interpretations with the dialogues envisioned by deliberative democrats. To the latter, interlocutors must conform to pre-conceived theoretical frameworks if they are to make contributions to 'public reason' (Rawls) or 'communicative action' (Jürgen Habermas).

In time, the debate between liberals and communitarians both dissolved and ramified. The dissolution accompanied a growing recognition that most of the 'communitarians' actually reject the label (except, notably, Daniel Bell 1993). Many even consider themselves liberals of a sort, including Taylor and Walzer. And as Taylor (1985: 195) along with Sandel (1998: 149) have acknowledged, the debate's liberals have themselves come to embrace their own conceptions of community (e.g. Dworkin 2002: ch. 5). In fact, since then, four distinct-but-related new strands of liberalism have emerged. Shaped by other recent foci of contemporary anglophone political philosophy – including deliberative democracy, human and animal rights, postcolonialism, and national, global, and environmental justice – we might refer to them collectively as 'liberalism after communitarianism'.

Liberalism as an ideology

Whether or not they consider their theories of justice as universally applicable, liberals such as Rawls have consistently viewed them as providing a neutral framework: a conception of right within which citizens may pursue their different and often rival conceptions of the good. This accords with such popular expressions as 'liberal democracy' as well as their implication that liberalism is more than 'another sectarian doctrine' (Rawls 1985: 246) – more than a mere ideology on par with those such as conservatism, socialism, feminism, environmentalism, and so on. This is why Dworkin (2006: 7), for example, has been able to unselfconsciously propose that US liberals and conservatives confront one another politically on an explicitly liberal common ground.

However, those who conceive of liberalism as an ideological 'fighting creed' (Taylor 1995b: 249) generally oppose the separation of the right from the good. So rather than neutrality, they favour what is sometimes called a 'perfectionist' state. They likewise reject the thoroughly pejorative, Marxist-inspired notion of ideology for which it is nothing more than a mask for material or other interests. To Michael Freeden (1996: 3), for instance, an ideology is simply a way of 'political thinking, loose or rigid, deliberate or unintended, through which individuals and groups construct an understanding of the political world they, or those who preoccupy their thoughts, inhabit, and then act on that understanding'.

Freeden is the leading student of liberalism as an ideology today. His morphological approach focuses on the evolving meanings and configurations of political concepts, sensitizing him to liberalism's many forms. Noting the variety of ways that its core, adjacent, and peripheral concepts have been identified, related, and decontested, his work underscores how liberalism's meanings have differed not only between countries but also throughout history (Freeden 1996, 2005, 2008). So while he is surely aware of how the American variant, the one that attracted most communitarian criticisms, has served to inspire many beleaguered liberals around the world, he has nevertheless also complained about its relatively inward-looking, ahistorical, narrow, and impoverished qualities. This has been accompanied by his compelling accounts of liberalisms that avoid such depoliticization and over-emphasis on individual rights, and so make more room for shared concerns with well-being and social solidarity.

However, Freeden's approach is also overly 'analytical', by which I mean insufficiently holistic. His accounts of ideologies in general, and liberalism in particular, mainly consist of 'assembling' – of moving 'from concepts to ideologies', as one of his chapter titles puts it (Freeden 1996: ch. 2). But hermeneutics teaches that we should always begin the other way around, that is, with the whole rather than with its parts. Given normative concepts' ongoing connection with broader ideological backgrounds, properly conceptualizing an ideology's parts means that we should also continually strive to take account of the whole.

Freeden does occasionally begin writing about a political thinker by generally characterizing their ideology as a whole. But even in such cases, after moving on to consider associated individual concepts, he rarely brings that broader doctrinal context to bear. And more often than not, he opens with a concept-by-concept account of the ideology's core. So while Freeden's studies sensitively capture how adjacent concepts can shape each others' meanings, both logically and culturally, he neglects the parallel relationships that connect them to the broader doctrine. For example, he refers to how L. T. Hobhouse sums-up his liberalism:

> The heart of liberalism is the understanding that progress is not a matter of mechanical contrivance, but of the liberation of living spiritual energy. Good mechanism is that which provides the channels wherein such energy can flow unimpeded, unobstructed by its own

> exuberance of output, vivifying the social structure, expanding and ennobling the life of mind.

> *(Hobhouse 1964: 73; quoted in Freeden 2005: 25)*

Yet while noting that this summation 'informs' Hobhouse's particular understandings of 'the core liberal concepts of liberty, rationality, progress, individuality, sociability, a common good, limited and responsible power' (2005: 25–26), Freeden has little more to say about the matter.

Moreover, while he decries the ostensive neutrality of liberalism's American variant, he assumes ideologies should be studied without judging them as better or worse. But can we really understand an ideology without considering how it measures up to any broader norms the community might share, e.g. of justice or truth? Contemporary hermeneutics says no. It is certainly often possible to describe without prescribing, as when saying 'This is a chair'. But that is simply infeasible when it comes to moral and political concepts: they necessarily implicate our self-understandings, raising questions about nothing less than who we are (Taylor 1988).

In that sense, Freeden's approach takes him to the opposite extreme from Marxists. For he simply does not have much to say about the limitations of ideological thinking (Freeden 2009 being a notable exception). Indeed, he seems far from impressed by longstanding complaints that such fighting creeds tend to encourage dogmatic attitudes (e.g. Namier 1955: 5–7) – or that ideological inflexibility often accompanies overly adversarial responses to political conflict. I include here responding with force rather than dialogue, of course, but also being unduly adversarial in exchanges that stop short of violence. Ideologies may indeed help guide us through high-stakes social encounters. But they likewise tend to get in the way when, for instance, we hope to address conflict with open-minded conversation rather than with negotiation (Blattberg 2009a). More on this below.

Liberalism in the face of diversity: autonomy

First, however, I want to discuss another major development since the liberal-communitarian debate. It has seen liberals strive to more sensitively account for Western societies' significant diversity, as well as the identity-related challenges this can entail. Focusing particularly on the place of minority populations, many recent liberal thinkers have taken one of two approaches.

There is the defence of a perfectionist liberalism − a liberalism, again, of the good and not merely the right. Such views gather around a particular conception of individual freedom. Needless to say, this core liberal value has had many rival interpretations, advanced under labels including 'negative freedom', 'self-ownership', 'experiments in living', 'authenticity', and 'non-domination'. Perfectionist liberals tend to favour 'autonomy', however.

Of course, this term is also central to Immanuel Kant's account, according to which individual liberty should be equated with morality as a whole, understood as consisting of self-determined principles. To many perfectionist liberals, by contrast, 'autonomy' expresses individuals' freedom to choose between different ways of life. Understood in this way, the idea plays a minor if significant role in Walzer's liberalism. For him, the 'autonomous person …. [is] the ideal subject of the theory of justice', since citizens should be able to choose to participate in the various institutions, associations, or distributive spheres present in modern society (Walzer 1983: 279; 2007a). However, autonomy as the ability to choose is front and centre in the liberalisms of Joseph Raz and Will Kymlicka.[1]

They consider their approaches especially appropriate for multicultural societies, helping address a shortcoming that attracted communitarian critique. Although older conceptions of

liberalism purport to be neutral among different cultural groups, Raz and Kymlicka argue that they are often 'implicitly tilted towards the needs, interests, and identities of the majority group; and this creates a range of burdens, barriers, stigmatizations, and exclusions for members of minority groups' (Kymlicka and Norman 2000: 4). Such older perspectives, in fact, tend to see ethnocultural or national minorities as potential threats to the liberal polity's unity.

Raz and Kymlicka's alternative gives priority to a greater respect for diversity. Not that citizens' motivations need to be in any sense altruistic: as Raz puts it, for instance, 'the conditions of autonomy require an environment rich in possibilities' (Raz 1994: 107; see also Raz 1986: chs. 14–15; Kymlicka 1995: chs. 5, 8; and Kymlicka 2002: ch. 6). Otherwise put, if freedom is indeed a matter of choosing, then there must be an adequate range of options to choose from. Raz, and Kymlicka after him, therefore argue that ethnic or national minorities should be seen as making an invaluable contribution by broadening cultural options for people – so long, that is, as they do so within a framework that respects autonomy.

But is autonomy really the best way to conceive of individual liberty? Raz recommends it as an ideal particularly suited to the often-changing conditions of contemporary society (1986: 370). And Kymlicka sees it as virtually entailed by both modernization and globalization (2002: 369). However, this emphasis on choice also points towards one of modern society's least-attractive features: consumerism. So the association makes it hard not to question Raz's claim that it is through our choices that we best define our morality. To Raz, autonomy requires 'morally acceptable options' (1986: 378). One might object, though, that we often don't really conceive of a moral action as optional, since we simply could not choose otherwise and remain true to ourselves (a way of talking that, admittedly, betrays sympathy for the conception of individual liberty as 'authenticity').

The danger of understanding individual freedom as making choices, then, is trivialization. As Taylor has written of the word 'choice', it 'occludes almost everything important: the sacrificed alternatives in a dilemmatic situation, and the real moral weight of the situation' (2007: 479). The idea of 'options' is equally problematic, since it suggests a number of independently distinct items to choose from. At least according to accounts of perception derived from hermeneutical phenomenology (e.g. Merleau-Ponty 2012), moral reality is once again usually much more holistic. For one thing, it tends to be a matter of shades and degrees. For another, which choices we interpret as possible, and how, remain intimately related to us as a whole; after all, they express the values that help constitute our identities.

To Kymlicka, however, the capacity to weigh such moral possibilities is central. We can assess and criticize our moral choices' personal significance, he argues, only because 'we can "stand apart" or "step back" from our current ends, and question their value to us' (Kymlicka 2002: 215, though see 278n2). Yet is such disengagement really necessary for criticism?

Liberalism in the face of diversity: value pluralism

To value pluralists such as Isaiah Berlin, Stuart Hampshire, John Kekes, and Bernard Williams, the answer would be 'no'. They not only reject neutralist forms of liberalism, but their conception of the diversity of values also leads them to a view of practical reason, and so criticism, that wholly avoids disengagement, not to mention the belief that liberalism relies on a foundationalist conception of autonomy. Each approach is, in its own way, guilty of monism.

To these pluralists, moral and political conflicts frequently arise from the existence of incommensurable values, which are often at odds. And their incommensurability means that we cannot respond to such conflicts by turning to an abstract, systematic theory for guidance, whether neutralist or perfectionist. Such theories assume that all values have been commensurated, in the

loose sense of interlocked within a unified system. But this is simply impossible without seriously distorting them, and by extension the different ways of life they express. Moreover, such theories also serve to 'shelter' certain values from the vicissitudes of everyday politics, placing them beyond compromise. Yet this tends only to make the conflicts involving them worse.

So value pluralists emphasize instead how people in conflict should be willing to negotiate in good faith. This means being open to making concessions, since that's often the only way to reach a balanced accommodation. Not only may we not share the same values – or interpretations of them – as those with whom we find ourselves in conflict, but we should also consider their values as genuine. After all, it's not their 'fault' they were raised differently than we were. In consequence, because they, too, are moral agents deserving a certain minimum of respect, we ought to tolerate them to some degree and thereby make at least some concessions for reasons other than that we feel forced to do so.

But what concessions, exactly? And how much should we concede? Value pluralists may be said to turn here for guidance to ideologies, which call on us to assign different values different weights. As we might expect, however, there is far from a consensus between them over which specific ideology, and so which particular ranking of values, deserves our support. This is why, crudely put, liberals such as Berlin and Williams would have us favour individual liberty, socialists such as Hampshire equality, and conservatives such as Kekes order through controlled change. Regardless of the value they happen to cherish most, however, all value pluralists agree that we cannot award it a trumping status, since no value is absolute. This is especially evident when conflicts arise between the values favoured by one's preferred ideology. So we can understand why all pluralist liberals can be said to agree with William Galston (1991: 195) that 'liberalism is a basket of ideals that inevitably come into conflict with one another if a serious effort is made to realize any one of them fully, let alone all of them simultaneously'.

Evidently, this liberalism is quite different from Raz or Kymlicka's: its fulcrum is toleration, not autonomy. While Raz claims to subscribe to value pluralism, he does so not because he sees it as true to the moral reality, so much as a way of serving autonomy. For he argues that toleration should be subservient to autonomy (1986: 407). As for Kymlicka, he conceives of autonomy and toleration as but 'two sides of the same coin', which is why he, too, will not countenance any compromise of the former in favour of the latter (2002: 231, 245).

Liberals who affirm value pluralism cannot accept this, and not only because of their great emphasis on toleration. There's also a deeper, philosophical reason. I already mentioned how recognizing a plurality of conflicting and incommensurable values leads them to reject systematic theories of justice in favour of negotiation. But this also implies that deciding on which ideology to favour for guidance cannot itself be a philosophical matter. The reason is that there is simply no way to derive moral guidance from the mere recognition of disunity, from the belief that we live in a world 'where ends collide' (Berlin 2013a: 195; and see Blattberg 2009a). In consequence, value pluralists turn instead to interpretations of the political culture in which they find themselves, 'the general pattern of life in which we believe' (Berlin 2002: 47; see also 42, and Berlin 2013b: 19).

Since it makes no sense to try and go from pluralism-in-itself to any particular ideology, Berlin has thus come to assert that 'Pluralism and liberalism are not the same or even overlapping concepts. There are liberal theories which are not pluralistic. I believe in both liberalism and pluralism, but they are not logically connected' (Berlin and Jahanbegloo 1991: 44; see also Berlin and Williams 1994: 308–309). Of course, Berlin's earlier writings have been read as providing evidence he supported the opposite position (e.g. Gray 2013: ch. 6), referring, for instance, to his claim that there exists a more-or-less unbreachable minimal private sphere of individual liberty. But is this sufficient to support a full-blown liberalism? Consider what we might identify as

the question of 'How much liberty?' Berlin's reply is 'that which a man cannot give up without offending against the essence of his human nature'. However, doesn't this contrast sharply with the 'extreme demand for liberty' made by the fathers of liberalism, they who, evidently, 'want more than this minimum' (Berlin 2002: 173, 207)?

In any case, my main objection to this liberalism – indeed, to any value pluralist politics – is with the priority it places on negotiation; more specifically, with the way this emphasis often precludes the non-adversarial form of dialogue that is conversation. Rather than negotiating accommodations, conversational interlocutors cooperate in an attempt to integrate their conflicting values. The goal is thus something more than negotiation's zero-sum compromising, which balances conflicting values against one another. It is because participants in a conversation assume that their values are parts of a shared whole – the common good – that they may attempt a reconciliation of their conflict rather than a mere accommodation. Indeed, by striving for synergistic solutions, they can learn from one another – not about the most effective ways to put pressure on their adversaries, nor about how much they should be compromising, but about how to realize and further develop all of the values at stake.

This approach is especially vital when it comes to 'the politics of recognition', when conflicts have arisen over a group's wish to be recognized (usually by the state) for its distinctiveness within the polity. Recognition is a matter of knowledge, and so truth – something the German and French words for it, *Anerkennung* and *reconnaissance*, make especially clear. And since one either learns that something is true or does not – this being not the kind of thing that could be up for negotiation – conversation is the only form of dialogue that has the potential to bring such recognition.

Despite this, the politics of recognition is often presented as consisting of 'struggles' over 'demands' (e.g. Honneth 1995; Taylor 1995b: 225). The problem here is that conversation is only viable when conflicts are considered 'oppositional' but not 'adversarial' (Blattberg 2009b). After all, anyone hoping to converse with someone who is willing only to negotiate will quickly realize that conversation is impossible. Moreover, on a deeper level, because adversarial conceptions of conflict also generally assume some 'clash' or 'collision' of values, and because this results from a view of values as separate, independently distinct things, any assumption that those involved could share some larger whole will be undermined – and along with it any hope for conversational progress.

So we should not be surprised by the many references in value pluralist writings to dirty hands and even tragedy (e.g. Berlin 2002: 200, 214; Hampshire 1989: 170–177; Williams 1981). When politics consists at best of making compromises, everyone must expect to lose something of value. Lacking a conception of the whole, value pluralists thus end up with a politics from which there is nothing to gain, much less to learn (Blattberg 2000).

Fearful liberalism

Communitarians, Judith N. Shklar has complained, fail to appreciate the extent to which liberalism, as a matter of practice, has provided them with the luxury of worrying about the nature of the self. And these worries are, in any case, distractions at best; at worst, they can lead people to do real damage to those very same practices (Shklar 1998a: 17–18).

So we can see why Shklar came to defend what she calls a 'liberalism of fear'. Like almost all liberalisms, it gives the greatest possible weight to individual liberty. But hers is unique in being based on neither a theory of justice, nor an architectonic conception of personal freedom as autonomy, nor a pluralist-driven affirmation of toleration. Rather, it starts from the claim that 'cruelty is an absolute evil' and that the 'willful inflicting of physical pain on a weaker being

in order to cause anguish and fear' is a fundamental infringement on liberty (Shklar 1998a: 5; 1984: 8). Liberals, Shklar thus believes, should recognize that the key division within the political world is the one between the weak and the strong, and that only by protecting the former from the latter can we be said to 'put cruelty first' (Shklar 1998a: 9, 19).

As mentioned, she doesn't derive this norm from a moral theory (Shklar 1998a: 12). So she recognizes that we cannot hope to uphold it consistently, as monists assume, since any attempt to do so will encounter contradictions. This means we should reject those readings of her work that portray Shklar as a monist (e.g. Fives 2020). But nor should we go along with those who consider her a pluralist (e.g. Misra 2016: 78, 80, 87). Because where pluralists assume that there exists no singular, all-embracing *summum*, Shklar's belief that cruelty is the *summum malum* is, as we've seen, central to her liberalism (Shklar 1998a: 10–11).

Paradoxically, then, her approach can be understood to combine elements of both monism and pluralism, forming what we might call a 'pluramonism'. Indeed, Shklar has taken note of Walzer's adoption of a similar metaphysics: she describes his work as 'self-divided' (Shklar 1998b: 379), most likely referencing his paradoxical claim that morality sometimes requires us to override justice, even though this means 'dirtying' our hands (Walzer 2007b).[2] But Shklar seems to overlook her own pluramonism. For example, she appears to see nothing contradictory about, on the one hand, issuing a monistic call on individuals to 'submit to a single system of law equally applicable to all', since 'it is only the modern state, with its unified legal system, that provides the necessary framework within which voluntary associations can form', while, on the other hand, confidently declaring that 'the enemy of any pluralism is monopoly and the domination it yields' (Shklar 1998b: 385, 382).

In fact, Shklar's pluramonism was there from the beginning. In 1964, one of her first books attempts 'to account for the difficulties which the morality of justice faces in a morally pluralistic world' – 'morality of justice' is clearly monist, while 'morally pluralistic world' is, of course, pluralist (Shklar 1986: 123). The book likewise tells us both that 'human institutions survive because most of us can live quite comfortably with wholly contradictory beliefs', and that we sometimes face a 'difficult choice among a variety of equally valid obligations' (Shklar 1986: x, 73). So when Shklar (1984: ch. 2) argues in a later work against considering hypocrisy as the worst political vice, her analysis sometimes seems to veer into apology. This is only to be expected, since while hypocrisy is deemed unnecessary by the pluralist and intolerable by the monist, to the pluramonist it will tend to appear as both unavoidable and tolerable.

Why has Shklar's liberalism of fear attracted such interest now, decades after her original essay's publication? One reason must surely be that people have been drawn to how her profound concern with cruelty has led her to be especially mindful about the ongoing effects of slavery in America, for instance, or about refugees, women, and other disproportionately vulnerable groups. While some have always been struck by the urgent need to right these injustices, today's increased sensitivity to suffering has meant that they have been joined by others – all of whom, together, can be expected to see political thinking that makes security a central concern as very compelling. Richard Rorty, who has endorsed Shklar's definition of liberalism (Rorty 1989: xv), foreshadowed this development when he praised the significant reduction in the psychological humiliation of the weak that attends it, though he has simultaneously decried the failure to do much about the steady increase in economic insecurity that has accompanied it (Rorty 1998: 79–85). Others, however, have worried that too great a concern with security in whatever form may be counter-productive. One reaction to the ideas of Thomas Hobbes, for instance, has been to note that the 'search for perfect security … defeats its own ends. Playing for safety is the most dangerous way to live' (Lindsay 1950: xxvii). Could the relative minimalism of Shklar's approach mean that her liberalism is

ultimately less effective at meeting its own strictly mitigating ends than more ambitious forms of it? I, for one, think so.

Conclusion

Like all ideologies, liberalism will continue to evolve. Identifying how it should do so will, needless to say, remain a central challenge for liberals of every sort. When it comes to their extramural struggles, though, it seems to me that, before confronting others who support different ideologies in an adversarial way, liberals should try to engage them in conversation. And doing so properly means listening to what they have to say rather than to some preconceived doctrine such as an ideology – including the ideology of liberalism. So what I am suggesting is that, if liberals are genuinely to approach their fellow citizens with open minds whenever there's a conflict, then they must set aside their liberalism, if only for a time. For that is what the common good requires. Perhaps, then, this is communitarianism's greatest lesson.

Notes

1. That said, Kymlicka is not as comfortable with the idea of perfectionism as Raz – and this despite his willingness (Kymlicka 2002: 277n6) to countenance 'short-term state intervention designed to introduce people to valuable ways of life', i.e. to conceptions of the good.
2. For more on Walzer's pluramonism, see Blattberg (2018).

References

Bell, D. (1993) *Communitarianism and Its Critics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Berlin, I. (2002) 'Two Concepts of Liberty', in *Liberty: Incorporating Four Essays on Liberty*, Hardy, H. (ed.) Oxford: Oxford University Press.

———. (2013a) 'Does Political Theory Still Exist?' in *Concepts and Categories: Philosophical Essays*, Hardy, H. (ed.), 2nd ed. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

———. (2013b) 'The Pursuit of the Ideal' in *The Crooked Timber of Humanity: Chapters in the History of Ideas*, Hardy, H. (ed.), 2nd ed. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

——— and R. Jahanbegloo. (1991) *Conversations with Isaiah Berlin*, London: Peter Halban.

——— and B. Williams. (1994) 'Pluralism and Liberalism: A Reply', *Political Studies*, 62 (2) 306–309.

Blattberg, C. (2000) *From Pluralist to Patriotic Politics: Putting Practice First*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

———. (2009a) 'Political Philosophies and Political Ideologies', in *Patriotic Elaborations: Essays in Practical Philosophy*, Montreal: McGill–Queen's University Press.

———. (2009b) 'Opponents vs. Adversaries in Plato's *Phaedo*', in *Patriotic Elaborations: Essays in Practical Philosophy*, Montreal: McGill–Queen's University Press.

———. (2018) 'Dirty Hands: The One and the Many', *The Monist*, 101 (2) 150–169.

Dancy, J. (2004) *Ethics without Principles*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Dreyfus, H.L. (2014) 'Holism and Hermeneutics', in *Skillful Coping: Essays on the Phenomenology of Everyday Perception and Action*, Wrathall, M.A. (ed.) Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Dworkin, R. (2002) *Sovereign Virtue: The Theory and Practice of Equality*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

——. (2006) *Is Democracy Possible Here?* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Fives, A. (2020) 'The Unnoticed Monism of Judith Shklar's Liberalism of Fear', *Philosophy and Social Criticism*, 46 (1) 45–63.

Freeden, M. (1996) *Ideologies and Political Theory: A Conceptual Approach*, Oxford: Clarendon Press.

——. (2005) *Liberal Languages: Ideological Imaginations and Twentieth-Century Progressive Thought*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.

——. (2008) 'European Liberalisms: An Essay in Comparative Political Thought', *European Journal of Political Theory*, 7 (1) 9–30.

——. (2009) 'Editorial: What Fails in Ideologies?' *Journal of Political Ideologies*, 14 (1) 1–9.

Gadamer, H.-G. (1981) 'Hermeneutics as Practical Philosophy', in *Reason in the Age of Science*, F.G. Lawrence (trans.) Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

——. (1989) *Truth and Method*, J. Weinsheimer and D.G. Marshall (trans.), 2nd ed. New York: Crossroad.

Galston, W.A. (1991) *Liberal Purposes: Goods, Virtues, and Diversity in the Liberal State*, New York: Cambridge University Press.

Gray, J. (2013) *Isaiah Berlin: An Interpretation of His Thought*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, new ed.

Hampshire, S. (1989) *Innocence and Experience*, London: Penguin Press.

Heidegger, M. (2008) 'The Way to Language', P.D. Hertz (trans.) in *Basic Writings*, Krell, D.F. (ed.) New York: HarperCollins.

Hobhouse, L.T. (1964 [1911]) *Liberalism*, New York: Oxford University Press.

Honneth, A. (1995) *The Struggle for Recognition: The Moral Grammar of Social Conflicts*, Joel Anderson (trans.) Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Kymlicka, W. (1995) *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

——. (2002) *Contemporary Political Philosophy: An Introduction*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2nd ed.

——. and W. Norman (2000) 'Citizenship in Culturally Diverse Societies: Issues, Contexts, Concepts', in *Citizenship in Diverse Societies*, Kymlicka and Norman (eds.) Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Larmore, C. (1996) 'Political Liberalism', in *Morals and Modernity*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lindsay, A.D. (1950) 'Introduction' to Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, New York: E.P. Dutton & Co.

Merleau-Ponty, M. (2012) *Phenomenology of Perception*, D.A. Landes (trans.) New York: Routledge.

Misra, S. (2016) 'Doubt and Commitment: Justice and Skepticism in Judith Shklar's Thought' *European Journal of Political Theory*, 15 (1) 77–96.

Namier, L. (1955) 'Human Nature in Politics', in *Personalities and Powers*, London: Hamish Hamilton.

Rawls, J. (1985) 'Justice as Fairness: Political not Metaphysical', *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, 14 (3) 223–251.

——. (1999) *A Theory of Justice*, rev. ed., Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

——. (2005) *Political Liberalism*, exp. ed., New York: Columbia University Press.

Raz, J. (1986) *The Morality of Freedom*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

——. (1994) 'Liberalism, Scepticism, and Democracy', in *Ethics in the Public Domain: Essays in the Morality of Law and Politics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Richardson, H.S. (1990) 'The Problem of Liberalism and the Good', in Douglass, R.B., Mara, G.M. and Richardson, H.S. (eds.) *Liberalism and the Good*, New York: Routledge.

Rorty, R. (1989) *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

——. (1998) *Achieving Our Country: Leftist Thought in Twentieth-Century America*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Sandel, M. (1998) *Liberalism and the Limits of Justice*, 2nd ed., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

——. (2005) 'The Procedural Republic and The Unencumbered Self', in *Public Philosophy: Essays on Morality in Politics*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Shklar, J.N. (1984) *Ordinary Vices*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

——. (1986 [1964]) *Legalism: Law, Morals, and Political Trials*, rev. ed., Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

——. (1998a) 'The Liberalism of Fear', in *Political Thought and Political Thinkers*, Hoffmann, S. (ed.) Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

——. (1998b) 'The Work of Michael Walzer', in *Political Thought and Political Thinkers*, Hoffmann, S. (ed.) Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Taylor, C. (1985) 'Atomism', in *Philosophy and the Human Sciences: Philosophical Papers 2*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

——. (1988) 'The Hermeneutics of Conflict', in *Meaning and Context: Quentin Skinner and His Critics*, Tully, J. (ed.) Cambridge: Polity Press.

——. (1995a) 'Cross-Purposes: The Liberal–Communitarian Debate', in *Philosophical Arguments*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

——. (1995b) 'The Politics of Recognition', in *Philosophical Arguments*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

——. (2007) *A Secular Age*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Walzer, M. (1983) *Spheres of Justice: A Defense of Pluralism and Equality*, New York: Basic Books.

——. (2007a) 'Liberalism and the Art of Separation', in *Thinking Politically: Essays in Political Theory*, Miller, D. (ed.) New Haven: Yale University Press.

——. (2007b) 'Political Action: The Problem of Dirty Hands', in *Thinking Politically: Essays in Political Theory*, Miller, D. (ed.) New Haven: Yale University Press.

Williams, B. (1981) 'Politics and Moral Character', in *Moral Luck: Philosophical Papers 1973–1980*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

12

Republicanism

Non-domination and the free state

Richard Bellamy

The recent resurgence of republican thinking has constituted one of the most notable and exciting developments within contemporary social and political thought (Laborde and Maynor 2008). Roughly speaking, there have been three strands within this republican revival. The first strand goes back to Aristotle and stresses the importance of civic participation for individual self-realisation. This view has been prominent within modern communitarianism, particularly the more left-leaning and democratic versions of this school of thought. It can be likened to Benjamin Constant's famous characterisation of 'ancient liberty' (Constant 1988 [1819]), in which political freedom is bound up with popular sovereignty and assumes a close identification between citizens and their political community, on the one hand, and among themselves, on the other (for an example, see Sandel 1996). The second strand, while retaining elements of this communitarian version of republicanism, draws more on the Enlightenment tradition of republican thought of Tom Paine and especially Kant. This view has figured within critical theory, particularly the writings of Jürgen Habermas (1996). It can be associated with Constant's characterisation of 'modern liberty' as combining liberal civil rights with a communitarian republican view of popular sovereignty to produce a system of constitutional democracy. The key difference with Constant's account is that these republican theorists have added social to the liberal civil rights of 'private autonomy' and connect them not to the market but to the political rights of 'public autonomy'. Rights on this account offer preconditions for citizens to deliberate on a free and equal basis with each other. The third strand looks to the neo-Roman tradition of republican thought of Cicero and Machiavelli (Pettit 1997; Skinner 1998). The distinctive feature of this view is a conception of freedom as non-domination. By contrast to the first two strands that conceive freedom in terms of collective self-mastery achieved through popular sovereignty, this view sees freedom in terms of freedom from mastery by another. On this account, political participation is valued more for its instrumental than its intrinsic virtues. Rather than being the expression of a sovereign popular will, democracy offers a system of government in which all are treated as equals and act as rulers and ruled in turn, so no one is regarded as the master of others or placed in a position to dominate them.

The three strands identified above are to some extent ideal types. Not only are there variations within each strand but also many thinkers straddle more than one of them. For example, David Miller's liberal nationalism has elements of both the first strand, in its emphasis on national

community and the boundedness of citizenship, and of the second strand, in its commitment to certain international duties to meet basic human rights, while also criticising certain positions of thinkers in both these camps – such as Habermas's support for the EU (Miller 2000). There is also a common thread running through each of these strands in the emphasis placed on political citizenship, albeit for somewhat different reasons, as we have seen. For relatedly distinct reasons, all three also criticise what they regard as central features of contemporary liberalism – notably an abstract individualism that prioritises property and other market rights, and sees all laws and government regulation as *prima facie* inimical to freedom since they involve interference with an individual's supposed natural liberty.

In what follows I shall concentrate primarily on the third strand. As I noted, the first two strands have largely figured as aspects of other schools of thought: namely, communitarianism and critical theory, respectively. Instead, the third strand forms a distinctive and to some degree self-contained republican school of thought, albeit with links to certain aspects of the other two from which some neo-Roman republican theorists have at various times drawn inspiration. In the rest of this chapter, I will outline the concept of freedom as non-domination on which the distinctiveness of this strand rests, show how the resulting concept of the 'free person' is linked to an equally distinct account of the political and constitutional arrangements of a 'free state', and finally note the implications of this theory for distributive justice.

Freedom as non-domination

In his famous essay 'Two Concepts of Liberty' Isaiah Berlin contrasted 'negative' with 'positive' liberty, characterising the first as 'freedom from interference' and the second as 'freedom to realise oneself' in some way (Berlin 1969). He argued that political participation was only contingently and instrumentally linked to negative liberty, offering one possible means to ensure the state interfered as little as possible with people's interests – something that might be even better achieved by a constitutional court or some other independent body such as an ombudsman. However, positive liberty allowed for an intrinsic link with participation in both democracy and the state as the means of realising oneself. Although such ethical naturalist reasoning has a distinguished pedigree going back, as I noted above, to Aristotle and, in a rather different form, to Kant, Berlin argued it was potentially 'totalitarian' in its implications even when espoused by avowedly liberal thinkers such as T. H. Green. Not only do such moralised accounts of freedom suggest that being free consists in pursuing certain possibly contentious ends that realise a person's 'true' self but also they risk suggesting that 'real' freedom consists in obedience to a state that realises such ends. Within democratic theory, notions such as popular sovereignty suggest a similar conflation of the individual with collective autonomy. As a result, Berlin's analysis has tended to discredit republicanism and the link it makes between freedom and politics. Instead, the view typical of freedom as non-interference has come to prevail, whereby intervention by the law or the state curtails freedom, albeit in many cases with justification. On this view, democratic participation necessarily sacrifices a degree of personal freedom that could be devoted to business or leisure to public service, something that may be far less rewarding for many (if not all) individuals and hence diminish their freedom over all. Democracy may also allow rent seeking behaviour by particular individuals that unnecessarily expands the state beyond what is necessary to reduce interference with individual choice overall.

An important contribution of the rediscovery of the neo-Roman tradition has been to dispute Berlin's influential account by suggesting a 'third' concept of liberty, that while a 'negative' theory of freedom as 'freedom from domination' nevertheless regards the role of the law and state as furthering rather than constraining liberty (Pettit 1997; Skinner 1998). This account of

freedom takes as its antonym the condition of a slave. According to what Berlin regarded as the standard view of negative liberty as 'freedom from interference', slaves remain free so long as their masters do not interfere with them. From this perspective, the slaves of benevolent and non-interfering masters are free in fact, even if they lack the status of free persons. Not being free persons may make their freedom less secure – if their master died they could be sold to a cruel owner, say, or he may undergo a personality change that turns him into a brute – but so long as their master remains alive and benevolent they may possess as wide a sphere of liberty as many a citizen, possibly even wider than some. Quentin Skinner has noted how this division between 'liberty' and 'security' was introduced by Hobbes and then re-proposed by Bentham in criticism of the neo-Roman republican view that then prevailed and which made no such distinction. For the republican account holds a slave is dominated and his or her freedom curtailed not only by the interference of his or her master but also by that master's ability to invigilate and inhibit the slave's actions in arbitrary ways – that is, in ways that reflect the master's not the slave's interests or preferences and that the master can impose on the slave willfully and without consultation.

The neo-Roman concept of liberty highlights three dimensions missing from the standard account of liberty as non-interference. First, even when not actually interfered with, the fact that the slave is invigilated by someone who could interfere if they chose may be just as effective in leading him or her not to act in ways that he or she believes might lead to interference. Second, even with a good master, slaves may be inhibited from performing actions or expressing views they know their master would disapprove of. They might even choose to do or say things they know will please him or her despite these actions or opinions going against their own preferences, interests or beliefs. Third, a key feature of this condition of domination lies in being subject to the arbitrary rule of the master – that is, the master's capacity to determine at his or her own discretion how, when and for what purpose to interfere or not interfere with a slave. To the extent such a determination rests solely on the will of the master, then it will be dominating for the slave. The first two dimensions suggest we can have an absence of freedom without any actual interference, for both invigilation and inhibition place constraints on what agents do and lead them to actions that they would not otherwise choose to take. The third dimension goes further and indicates how interference may in some respects actually enhance freedom. For laws that oblige a system of rule to consult the interests of those it affects will liberate agents from the domination that attends arbitrary rule. When interference reduces arbitrariness, and hence domination, it promotes freedom and assists individuals to plan and act in autonomous ways. It may also facilitate collective choices and projects that are in the public interest and that would not be feasible without the coordination that common rules can bring.

The three dimensions of freedom highlighted by the non-domination view point to lacunas in the conception of freedom as non-interference that reveal it as doubly flawed: it overlooks those circumstances where freedom can be diminished without interference and neglects the ways interference can promote freedom. These same points also build a quite different case for linking freedom to political participation to those offered by the two other strands of republican thinking outlined above. Freedom as non-interference regards liberty as a natural condition – individuals are freest when free from all constraints in a state of nature. The problem, graphically described by Hobbes (1996 [1651]) – the progenitor of this account of liberty – is that such natural freedom is thoroughly insecure, with the naturally free individual's life 'nasty, brutish and short'. Law and the state involve a rational sacrifice of a degree of natural liberty for greater security. Yet on this account, an absolute monarch secures as good a quality and quantity of liberty for his subjects as any republic will for its citizens. Indeed, in Hobbes's view monarchies rate better than republics given that the latter generally place heavier demands on their members in terms of civic obligations and commitment to the public good. By contrast, the neo-Roman

republican can respond by revealing monarchical rule as the epitome of unfreedom, for it institutionalises domination. Freedom and its absence on the non-domination account is a social condition. Domination results primarily from three circumstances: a power imbalance, dependency and personal rule, all of which allow for a degree of arbitrariness on the part of rulers. All three are inherent features of monarchy, which involves hierarchy and ascribed status, with all members of the kingdom 'subjects' of the monarch to serve his pleasure rather than the other way around. The public welfare only emerges indirectly to the extent that the personal wealth of the monarch depends on that of his or her kingdom. It is not just that these circumstances all make interference more likely and so freedom less secure. For interference *per se* is not what diminishes freedom on the republican account. Rather, they create domination and hence a loss of freedom in themselves by allowing the invigilation of the dominated by the monarch and inducing dominated behaviour, such as sycophancy, without the need for actual interference. Moreover, they do so because personal rule encapsulates arbitrary power by placing the lives and livelihood of all subjects of a monarchy at the pleasure of the King or Queen's majesty. To be 'free persons' individuals must be citizens of a 'free state', that is a polity that institutionalises a form of republican rule that unlike monarchy includes checks against domination. It is to the requirements of such a free political system that we now turn.

A 'free state': how republicanism guards against domination

A 'free state' has both an internal and an external dimension. Domestically, it must put in place institutions that avoid and prevent the development of power imbalances, dependency and personal rule between citizens. Externally, it must protect against the domination of its citizens – either individually or collectively – by other states or agencies operating outside the state, such as multinational or transnational corporations or even international organisations. I shall explore each in turn.

With regard to the internal, domestic, dimension, Pettit (1997) has tended to emphasise the 'rule of law' and constitutional constraints as the most suitable mechanisms for meeting the criteria needed for non-domination, rather than democracy *per se* – though he has advocated contestatory democracy as a means for allowing citizens to challenge rules and policies that do not track their interests. The slogan 'the rule of law, not men' makes such suggestions appear the natural means of overcoming 'personal' rule, given that even democracy could be regarded as allowing some persons – be it the political class within a representative system, or a tyrannical majority in a divided society, to consistently dominate others. Indeed, Pettit has seen 'counter-majoritarian' checks and balances, notably the separation of powers, as the natural complements to the 'rule of law' in securing a 'free state'. However, although the second strand of republicanism has adopted this tack, albeit not only as a constraint upon but also in more recent versions, such as Habermas (1996), as the basis for popular sovereignty, I believe it fails to capture the character of the third strand. For non-domination requires citizens enjoy an equal political status as the makers of laws and not just an equal legal status under the law. On its own, this latter condition is potentially itself one of subjecthood and, unless laws can truly rule without persons, potentially places citizens under the arbitrary rule of those few who administer and interpret the law. Indeed, to avoid just this possibility this strand has typically adopted a political rather than a legal form of constitutionalism, which equates a condition of non-domination with the status of citizenship and views the right to equal participation in ruling or selecting rulers as 'the right to have rights' (Bellamy 2007).

Past republicans often expressed the link between non-domination and political equality using the language of consent (Skinner 2008). Only the need for all to be counted equally in consenting to the government would ensure that everyone's interests were taken equally into

account regardless of their wealth or social station. As Colonel Thomas Rainborough famously expressed it in the Leveller debates in Putney, the 'poorest he … has a life to live as the greatest he; and therefore, … it's clear that every man that is to live under a government ought first by his own consent to put himself under that government'. It is a requirement with revolutionary potential, implying 'that the poorest man … is not at all bound in a strict sense to that government that he has not had a voice to put himself under'. However, if these conditions could only be met through unanimous consent to all policies, then – as R. P. Wolff (1970) demonstrated – it is unlikely that any workable system of democracy could satisfy these criteria. It is almost as implausible to assume that the basic structures of society could receive the actual consent of all those subject to them. Social contract theories have attempted to overcome these problems by modelling circumstances that might generate principles of political justice that all ought to consent to. Yet, such idealisations have a tendency to build their conclusions into their premises and be subject to numerous objections from those arguing from alternative premises of a similar plausibility and reasonableness. As such, there is a danger that a constitutional settlement that matches and is interpreted through the reasoning of a few – no matter how well-intentioned and knowledgeable they may be – will fail to treat all citizens as equal sources of reasoned argument and relevant information.

To overcome this difficulty suggests the need for a middle way – one that secures all involved with an equal weight in the process of decision-making while allowing that not all may be equally happy with the result. Nevertheless, such equal weighting needs to be more than mere equality in the process and less than full substantive equality of outcome. As Pettit (2012: 84–86, 177–178) puts it, the process and outcome must satisfy the 'eyeball' and 'tough luck' tests. To meet the eyeball test, individuals must have equal status in decision-making and have their basic interests secured in any decision. To meet the tough luck test, any failure to secure one's preferred government or policy must neither result from nor produce deliberate discrimination or injustice but rather reflect the unlikelihood in any collective decision of always getting your own way. Past republicans sought to meet such criteria by constructing political and legal systems that aimed 'to hear the other side'. On this account, decisions should not only be made impartially and fairly in a purely formal sense but also seek to consult the different interests of those concerned so that the resulting decisions do not oppress them. Historically republicans have advocated a number of devices to achieve this end. The choice of rulers by lot, for example, institutionalised 'tough luck' to meet the 'eyeball' test by giving all citizens an equal chance of power and an incentive to use it fairly and for the general interest rather than their own or that of their friends, given that they could not know or influence who would rule after them. By contrast, the doctrine of mixed government institutionalises the 'eyeball' test to achieve a balance of power between the different classes within society in ways that purport to minimise the prospects of even tough luck. According to this doctrine, the monarch, aristocracy and people could only rule with the assent of the others – a view that continues to find a formal expression within the English constitutional formula of 'the queen in Parliament'. Unlike the first two strands of republicanism, the third strand does not propose these democratic mechanisms on the assumption that there is a single sovereign popular will. Rather, they assume the demos to be fragmented into multiple demoi with different and often conflicting ideals and interests. The aim is not achieve a consensus so much as an equitable accommodation between them. Nor do they see participation as a means to individual or collective self-realisation or even self-mastery. Instead, they are means to avoid mastery or domination by others.

The traditional republican devices also differ from the standard liberal view of constitutional government (Bellamy 1996, 2007). They regard constitutionalism not as the subjection of the normal process of legislation to a supposedly 'higher' law protected by a separate judicial body,

immune to popular control, but as resulting from the involvement of the public in a set of political institutions that ensure the process of law-making and adjudication gives equal consideration to their views. This form of republican constitution rejects the view that a constitution can offer a resource of substantive political principles in the form of constitutional rights that might provide a set of public reasons to be applied by a court or the government to solve all questions touching issues of political justice. Law cannot rule in this way because within a pluralist society reasonable disagreements exist as to the nature of rights, how they relate to other values and considerations, and the ways they might be implemented in a given case. For example, it may be uncontentious that women have a right not to be raped but there are many contentious issues surrounding how best to secure this right so that an appropriate balance is met between protecting the interests of women wishing to bring accusations of rape forward and ensuring defendants get a fair hearing. So, rather than being a repository of acceptable public reasons, a republican constitution serves to ensure all the relevant reasons the public might wish to raise when deciding such questions get aired when framing legislation and policy.

The rules and procedures a republican constitution requires to pass a law or place a policy issue on the agenda attempt to promote conscientious, coherent and considered decision-making. They create feedback mechanisms that render rulers responsive and accountable to the ruled, thereby giving governments incentives to treat citizens with equal concern and respect, pay attention to their interests and correct harmful mistakes and policy failures. On this model, public reasoning involves paying attention to the reasons of the public rather than being ruled by a set of supposedly authoritative public reasons. The republican constitutional constraint that prevents arbitrary rule comes from so balancing the input of citizens that they, and hence those who govern them, are obliged to consult each other's positions. Such a political constitutionalism has the removal of power imbalances, dependency and personal rule at its heart. By equalising power, each citizen is treated as an independent source of reasoning and information who must be consulted in the decision-making process, while none can rule without the active collaboration of others.

In contemporary democracies, a system of equal votes, majority rule and competing parties can be seen as offering an updated form of the republican system of mixed government (Bellamy 1996, 2007, 2008). One person, one vote and majority rule equalise power in decision-making and aggregate people's preferences in a fair way that is anonymous, neutral and positively responsive. That is, people's votes count equally whoever they are and whatever their views may be, and a change in balance of opinion is directly reflected in the outcome. Meanwhile, party competition plays a key role in the production of balanced decisions. To win elections, rival parties have to bring together broad coalitions of opinions and interests within a general programme of government. Even under PR systems, where incentives may exist for parties to appeal to fairly narrow constituencies, they need to render their programmes compatible with potential coalition partners to have a chance of entering government. In each of these cases, majorities are built through the search for mutually acceptable compromises that attempt to accommodate a number of different views within a single complex position.

Such compromises are sometimes criticised as unprincipled and incoherent, encouraging 'pork barrel politics' in which voters get bought off according to their ability to influence the outcome rather than the merits of their case. Despite a system of free and equal votes, some votes can count for more than others if they bring campaigning resources, are 'deciding' votes, or can ease the implementation of a given policy. However, within pluralist societies, different political resources tend to be distributed around different sections of the community, while their relative importance and who holds them differs according to the policy. Democratic societies are also invariably characterised by at least some cross-cutting cleavages that bind different groups

together on different issues. Of course, in ethnically, religiously or culturally divided societies the divisions on certain matters may be such as to make compromise agreements difficult to impossible, so that majority tyranny on the part of the largest group becomes a genuine worry. Yet in some cases at least it has been possible to use a mixture of executive power sharing, federalism and special rights to secure either a threshold or proportionate voice for all groups in decision-making that is sufficient to ensure their differences are respected.

In circumstances of reasonable disagreement, such compromises recognise the rights of others to have their views treated with equal concern as well as respect. They legitimately reflect the balance of opinion within society (Bellamy 1999). Naturally, some groups may still feel excluded or dissatisfied, while the balance between them can alter as interests and ideals evolve with social change. The counterbalances of party competition come in here. The presence of permanent opposition and regular electoral contests means that governments will need to respond to policy failures and alterations in the public mood brought about by new developments. Legislative programmes are remarkably close to the manifesto commitments that parties develop to win elections. Yet, in anticipating future elections and in tackling unforeseen issues – including certain unanticipated perverse consequences of their own policies – party programmes do evolve.

This willingness of parties to alter their policies is often seen as evidence of their unprincipled nature and the basically self-interested motives of politicians and citizens alike. However, this picture of parties cynically changing their spots to court short-term popularity is belied by the reality. Leap-frogging is remarkably rare, not least because they and their core support retain certain key ideological commitments to which changes in policy have to be adapted. Nevertheless, that parties see themselves as holding distinctive rather than diametrically opposed views renders competition effective, producing convergence on the median voter, which is generally the Condorcet winner – that is, the proposal that best reflects the preference ordering of citizens overall. It also provides protection for minorities. Because an electoral majority is built from minorities and is prone to cycling coalitions, a ruling group will do well not to rely on a minimal winning coalition and to exclude other groups completely – thereby reducing the possibility of such cycles. In this respect, majority rule protects minorities. Either a currently excluded minority has a good chance of being part of a future winning coalition, or – for that very reason – is likely not be entirely excluded by any winning coalition keen to retain its long-term power.

Of course, one cannot deny either that all democratic systems often fail to be as responsive and as accountable as one might like, or that minorities or individuals sometimes are dominated by policies supported by the majority. However, all real systems are flawed. That does not mean we should accept these flaws and not seek to remedy them, merely that the failings of such systems should not lead to their being regarded as irremediable. In this respect, the third strand of republicanism offers a distinctive way for thinking about such institutional reforms – namely, that they should avoid domination by enhancing political equality in ways that lead citizens and their elected representatives to 'hear the other side'. Doing so not only serves political justice by guiding policy towards a conception of the public good that has equity at its core but also has certain cognitive advantages of forcing policy-making to be more scrupulous and self-critical with regard to its likely costs and benefits over all.

Turning to the external dimension, the governance of relations between 'free states' follows the same rationale guiding the design of their domestic arrangements (Bell 2010; Bellamy 2019). Neo-Roman republicans have generally been wary of schemes for global or cosmopolitan democracy. The reasons are twofold. First, they worry that a concentration of power within a single institution would raise the risks of domination. Even with the best will in the world, it might be exceptionally difficult to frame collective policies that are responsive to the diversity

of cultures and interests of the global population. Second, within states, the citizens' lives are sufficiently interconnected for them to have a more or less equal stake in the decisions. Though globalisation has enhanced interconnectedness beyond the state, and many decisions within states affect the lives of citizens outside their borders, globalisation has as yet to produce conditions whereby all are affected to any degree as equally by common decisions on a global scale as they are within states. As a result, there is a greater danger of majority tyranny and the oppression or neglect of minorities within a globalised democracy than within a national democracy.

To counter these two dangers, republicans have traditionally advocated a balance of power between states (Skinner 2010). The aim is to prevent any one state becoming hegemonic. By and large the most successful international organisations and agreements have been those that seek to guard against the negative externalities one state's domestic policies may have on other states and to help it recoup some of the costs of its providing positive externalities. They have also attempted to offer incentives for all states to become 'free states' on the grounds that such states are less likely to seek to dominate others. As with the domestic arrangements for avoiding non-domination, an advantage of the neo-republican programme is its political realism. The pursuit of political justice goes hand in hand with attentiveness to the need to equalise power and accommodate difference. The EU is probably the most successful set of arrangements in this regard (Bellamy 2019). On the one hand, free trade policies have been aimed at promoting the common prosperity of the member states, on the other hand, the incentives to democratise have been focussed on securing peace and successfully helped sustain the transition from authoritarian rule that has characterised the majority of its current members. Its governance has been based on deep intergovernmental checks and balances that are designed to secure mutually advantageous agreements in areas where inter-state cooperation proves necessary or desirable.

Non-domination and social justice

Republicanism is sometimes charged with having little to say about distributive justice, being exclusively concerned with political justice. However, the republican approach sees the two as intimately related. For grave social and economic disparities can be dominating and may require interventions to tackle them that a liberal approach would find illegitimate. In this respect, republicanism has a natural affinity to measures that promote social and economic as well as political equality.

From the point of view of the classical liberal, a free market will allow huge disparities in wealth and income that arise from the free choices of individuals. Any redistribution of wealth tends to be treated as an interference with these free choices and as such a constraint upon individual liberty. As a result, a presumption exists against redistribution (and, indeed, all regulation) so long as it cannot be shown that it effectively reduces interference overall – an extremely difficult point to illustrate.

Some republicans also support free markets but offer somewhat different reasons for doing so. They argue that freedom of contract reduces the opportunities for domination by reducing the prospect of an individual needing to serve any particular master (Pettit 2006: 142). Moreover, regulations to ensure its effective running, such as rules against monopolies, are not 'interferences' with natural liberty, but consistent with producing freedom from domination. However, other republicans point to forms of structural domination that render free markets in capitalist societies inherently dominating. They also note how such concerns were present in both Marx and 'labour republicans' of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, who argued that the structures of property ownership render workers the 'wage slaves' of some master, even if not necessarily of any one master in particular. Echoing this radical republican tradition, these

theorists advocate forms of workers' democracy and cooperative ownership to overcome this problem (Gourevitch 2015; O'Shea 2020).

Pettit has been reluctant to concede the existence of forms of structural domination in which no agent can be assigned responsibility for actively dominating another. However, it can be argued that the market interactions among citizens produce a shared responsibility for sustaining such structures, even if no one individual can be held personally responsible for their creation. In consequence, citizens have a shared duty to reshape systems of property ownership so as to remove the possibility of domination.

Pettit (2012: 91) does grant that the eye ball test means the republican will regard the poor and ill-educated as vulnerable to domination by others. Poverty, illiteracy and ignorance reduce people's ability to exercise their political rights on equal terms with the wealthy and better educated, to claim redress for any injustice through the courts and so on. Social and economic rights that are funded through regular laws by state authorities are not dominating in themselves and reduce the possibility of the weak being dominated by the strong. Moreover, as a number of theorists have recently noted (Bell 2010), similar considerations apply to considerations of global justice. Again, republicans will be sensitive to the ways wealthy states may dominate poorer ones, forcing them to enter inequitable trade agreements, for example. Likewise, as a matter of consistency, they will seek to ensure the citizens of all states have the capacity to resist domination by others, with the meeting of basic levels of social and economic protection an important part of such resilience.

Conclusion

Republicanism offers a distinctive political and social programme deriving from the notion of freedom as non-domination. In particular, it offers a justification for a more participatory and egalitarian society – one that is democratic in the widest sense – that escapes the standard criticisms of such policies when they are tied to a theory of 'positive liberty'. It also offers a way of integrating social and political theory in that it emphasises how political and social relations interact, most particularly through its emphasis on power and status.

References

Bell, D. (ed.) (2010) 'Global Justice and Republicanism', Special Issue *European Journal of Political Theory*, 9(1).

Bellamy, R. (1996) 'The Political Form of the Constitution: The Separation of Powers, Rights and Representative Democracy', *Political Studies*, 44(3): 436–456.

Bellamy, R. (1999) *Liberalism and Pluralism: Towards a Politics of Compromise*, London: Routledge.

Bellamy, R. (2007) *Political Constitutionalism: A Republican Defence of the Constitutionality of Democracy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bellamy, R. (2008) 'Republicanism, Democracy and Constitutionalism', in Laborde, C. and Maynor, J. (eds.) *Republicanism and Political Theory*, Oxford: Blackwell, pp. 159–189.

Bellamy, R. (2019) *A Republican Europe of States: Cosmopolitanism, Intergovernmentalism and Democracy in the EU*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Berlin, I. (1969) *Two Concepts of Liberty*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Constant, B. (1988 [1819]) 'The Liberty of the Ancients Compared with that of the Moderns', in Fontana, B. (ed.) *Political Writings*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 307–328.

Gourevitch, A. (2015) *From Slavery to the Cooperative Commonwealth: Labor and Republican Liberty in the Nineteenth Century*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Habermas, J. (1996) *Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy*, Cambridge: Polity Press.

Hobbes, T. (1996 [1651]) *Leviathan*, Tuck, R. (ed.), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Laborde, C. and Maynor, J. (eds.) (2008) *Republicanism and Political Theory*, Oxford: Blackwell.

Miller, D. (2000) *Citizenship and National Identity*, Cambridge: Polity Press.

O'Shea T. (2020) 'Socialist Republicanism', *Political Theory*, 48(5): 548–572.

Pettit, P. (1997) *Republicanism: A Theory of Freedom and Government*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Pettit, P. (2006) 'Freedom in the Market', *Politics, Philosophy, & Economics*, 5(2): 131–149.

Pettit, P. (2012) *On the People's Terms: A Republican Theory and Model of Democracy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sandel, M. (1996) *Democracy's Discontent: America in Search of a Public Philosophy*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Skinner, Q. (1998) *Liberty before Liberalism*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Skinner, Q. (2008) 'Freedom as the Absence of Arbitrary Power', in Laborde, C. and Maynor J. (eds.) *Republicanism and Political Theory*, Oxford: Blackwell, pp. 83–101.

Skinner, Q. (2010) 'On the Slogans of Republican Political Theory', in Bell, D. (ed.) 'Global Justice and Republicanism', Special Issue *European Journal of Political Theory*, 9(1): 95–102.

Wolff, R. P. (1970) *In Defence of Anarchism*, New York: Harper & Row.

Marcel Gauchet and the crisis of European democracy

Natalie J. Doyle

1975 was a significant year for French political thought.[1] Two books signaled its rebirth after its domination by Marxism: Michel Foucault's *Discipline and Punish* and Cornelius Castoriadis's *The Imaginary Institution of Society* (Foucault 1977; Castoriadis 1987). Both constructed theoretical accounts of modern power. The former attracted a following in the English-speaking world. The latter, on the other hand, formulated a reflection on autonomy, which inspired a younger generation of French political theorist who went on to pursue a specifically French debate on modern liberal democracy. Over the last ten years, some of its participants, such as Pierre Manent and Pierre Rosanvallon, have gained increasing recognition in the English-speaking world but without any acknowledgment of their debt to the understanding of modernity formulated by an older, more radical generation. Since the 1990s, there has indeed been a tendency to reduce the 'post-Marxist' revival of French thought on liberal democracy to a rehabilitation of Raymond Aron's work and a rediscovery of Tocqueville.[2] This, however, ignores the input into the French debate of an alternative radical tradition of socio-political thought represented by Cornelius Castoriadis and Claude Lefort. This tradition, which built on some themes of classical French sociology, most importantly that of *institution,* fed into what constitutes perhaps the most significant theory of modern democracy[3] today, that of Marcel Gauchet. This chapter explores the intellectual roots of Gauchet's *oeuvre*, then offers an overview of the central themes of his history of European liberal democracy in order to present his analysis of the contemporary crisis of European democracy.

Gauchet and modern power

Despite its ambition and the challenge it represents to Foucault's interpretation of modernity, Gauchet's work has long been overshadowed[4] by the more fashionable forms of 'French theory' (Cussset 2003), which largely remained faithful to Foucault's indictment of modern power. In his first major book, Gauchet and his co-author Gladys Swain (1999) used extensive archival material to cast doubt on Foucault's interpretation of the history of psychiatry based on the assertion that European societies, from the late 17th century, had experienced a marginalization and confinement of certain categories of the population. Foucault's history of madness argued that despite the professed, rational humanism of enlightenment values, these societies had

become increasingly normative, excluding those perceived as strange, firstly the mentally ill who were locked up in institutions, including the mental asylums that became common during the nineteenth century. By contrast, in an earlier era, the mad had been allowed to live freely with the rest of society, no matter how challenging and disruptive their presence (Foucault 2009).

As well as exposing the lack of historical evidence for Foucault's hypothesis of a 'great confinement', *Madness and Democracy* questioned the very conclusions drawn by Foucault. The exclusion of the mad could not be taken at face value. Foucault's theory did not see that in an earlier era, the mad were allowed to mingle freely with others only because they were seen as radically other, either as more than ordinary humans or, as inferior, like animals. They did not *challenge* the definition of humanity embraced by the whole community and even functioned as a *foil* for its identity (Weymans 2009). However, once the mad started being perceived as sharing a common humanity and became the 'insane', they became confronting in their difference, which became the focus of the rational project that led to the creation of the asylum and the development of psychiatry.

The asylum was thus the paradoxical manifestation of the decreased perception of the mad as 'other', within a growing acceptance of ontological equality in society at large. It was, in other words, part of the advance of a *democratic culture* that contributed to the revolutionary destruction of monarchy and its hierarchical social base. The revolution in late 18th century France saw the establishment of a new understanding of state legitimacy based on the representation of the 'people' below. This critique of Foucault then led Gauchet to develop an alternative understanding of modernity and its power, which stresses their ambivalence and the progressive dimension of the *liberal* state beyond the 'disciplinary' reach of its governmentality.

Going against the suspicion of 'grand narratives', this interpretation is framed by a philosophy of history often described as Hegelian in flavor. Its ambition is to identify an underlying *symbolic* logic of history responding to Marx's famous pronouncement in *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Napoleon* that 'men make their own history […] but under circumstances existing already given and transmitted from the past'. However, Gauchet rejects the Marxist assumption of universal economic laws. His work offers an interpretation of the European genesis of modernity stressing both its contingent character and the coherence of its symbolic 'matrix'. It is clearly influenced by French anthropological structuralism, yet also distances itself from its abstraction in its understanding of the imaginary, rather than cognitive, roots of this matrix (Gauchet 2003: 42–52).

The totalizing ambition of Gauchet's theory opens it to accusations of over-interpretation. Its analysis of European history, however, is never teleological. It always stresses that the logic of history can only be grasped retrospectively, in light of a present that always remains open-ended. Democratic praxis needs to be guided by such a reading of history. Many misunderstandings of Gauchet's approach originate in an incomplete reading of his extensive publications focusing for example exclusively on its critique of individualism and presumed French Republican prejudice (Collins 2015). In particular, they do not acknowledge Gauchet's central concern with *the power* inherent in modern freedom.

This concern has inspired his history of European liberal democracy, the tetralogy *L'avènement de la démocratie*. Its first volume argues that long denied through its sacralization, this power was revealed by the liberal revolution of the 17th and 18th centuries (Gauchet 2007a), which asserted the creative autonomy of civil society and with it of individuals. For over two centuries, modern power then established humanity's dominion over its material world, moving through differing scientific, technological and economic domains. In parallel, this power pursued the democratic goal of collective self-government through representative politics but also that of individual autonomy (Gauchet 2007b), generating tensions which the totalitarian ideologies of the early 20th century claimed to transcend (Gauchet 2010).

Emerging triumphant from the challenge, modern power, however, has remained partial, unable to understand its cultural logic and consequently to act upon itself in order to counter the new form of alienation it has engendered: the dominance of the economy over all aspects of human life associated with the new ideology of neo-liberalism. Gauchet's mature work thus invites us to broaden and deepen our understanding of neo-liberalism, long restricted to its understanding as a purely 'right-wing' economic philosophy asserting the superiority of market mechanisms over state action. It encourages us instead to understand it as inspired by the 'imaginary horizon' of our times, as a new ideological family incorporating a left-wing variant which assumes a legalistic form grounded in the discourse of rights. Neo-liberal legalism has inspired the growth of the bureaucratic regulatory framework of European nation-states. This imaginary horizon—that of a radicalized form of modernity understood as autonomy and, with it, of capitalism—is explored in the tetralogy's last volume, *Le nouveau monde* (Gauchet 2017a), which examines the contradictions inherent to the 'knowledge societies' created by this radicalization of modernity and the crisis of democratic culture they have experienced (Gauchet 2007a, 2015).

Democracy and autonomy: from Castoriadis and Lefort to Gauchet

Castoriadis's *The Imaginary Institution of Society* first opened up a new way to approach democracy by contextualizing its discussion within a theory of modern power that stresses its emancipating dimension predicated on the liberation of individual and social creativity from its submission to the authority of the past. It opposed Foucault's unequivocal indictment of modernity as the imposition on individuals of a restrictive social discipline of exclusion and control, legitimized by recourse to narratives of ultimate progress and liberation. For Castoriadis, democracy is inseparable from the discovery of political society. It is the creation of an autonomous realm of rational debate on the normative framework of social life, politics (Castoriadis 1997). Pioneered in Athens, democracy departed from an anthropological norm: it abandoned the traditional heteronomous framework of social life with its reference to an external authority (the ancestors, the Gods, etc.) and made society institute itself *autonomously*. This definition of democracy is grounded in a reflection on the question of historical innovation that develops three key ideas: the notion of social imaginary, the distinction between instituted and instituting society, and that between 'infra' and 'explicit' power.

Societies, Castoriadis stresses, are endeavors of *self-creation* and this creative process is irreducible to rational cognitive thought, for what is involved with each type of society or culture is a coherent pattern of symbolical interpretation of the world. Societies in fact create their own worlds, through a complex but unified web of meanings that permeate not only their institutions but the very psyche of the individuals who constitute them. The origin of such a system of meaning cannot be found in any given subject, in physical reality or in the realm of concepts, for the creation of society is the work of what Castoriadis calls the *radical social imaginary* or the *instituting* society, a realm of absolute freedom and creativity, in opposition to the *instituted* society (Castoriadis 1997). The *instituted* society or the realm of 'social imaginary significations'—in shorthand, the *social imaginary*—is only the end-product of the process of creation performed by the instituting society (Castoriadis 1987). In this respect, it must be stressed that Castoriadis offers a much more nuanced conception of modern power than Foucault who apprehends the political exclusively through the notion of the 'will to power'. Foucault blurs the distinction made by Castoriadis between 'infra-power', the power through which human societies institute themselves (and in the process produce and reproduce the individuals that define them), and 'explicit power', that of the state which the invention of democratic politics opened up to

collective debate allowing the 'infra-power' of society to be contested (Castoriadis 1991; Doyle 2017).

Castoriadis's cultural definition of democracy also responds to the attempts made by such thinkers as Rawls and Habermas to move away from the classical definitions of democracy as a *regime* involving the formulation of substantive ends to be pursued collectively in favor of a procedural understanding that sees in democracy a mode of conflict resolution arrived at through inter-subjective negotiation. By contrast, Castoriadis stresses the social project of autonomy that underpins it. His understanding of traditional heteronomy is crucial to his belief in the emancipating force of democratic autonomy but, throughout his writings, it remains mostly synonymous with religious belief systems and relatively unexplored in its own right. In the work of his main intellectual interlocutor, Claude Lefort, the contrast between autonomy and heteronomy, however, became the basis for a comprehensive political philosophy that goes beyond Castoriadis's denunciation of liberal proceduralism and offers a theory of the specificity of *modern* 'liberal' autonomy as opposed to the Greek 'breakthrough'.

Lefort's political philosophy deepens Castoriadis's notion of democratic autonomy by establishing a connection between autonomy and *historicity*. To control division, the problem challenging all human communities, heteronomous societies establish social relationships predicated on the assertion of humanity's authority within the natural world. A supernatural order justifies tradition and forbids transformative action upon the natural world. By contrast, historical societies open themselves up to the new. However, societies cannot function without possessing a symbolic representation of their unity. Collective life involves the institution of a closed discourse maintaining the illusion of a superior identity. In non-historical societies, this closed discourse is provided by religion; in historical societies by ideology (Lefort 1986a). Modern ideology calls into question religious transcendence but does so by erecting another kind of transcendence, the rationalist transcendence of ideas such as Humanity, Progress, Science, Property or Family ….

However, at the same time as it reproduces humanity's alienation from its own creative power, ideology crucially opens up the space for a symbolic representation of humanity's sovereignty performed by the law (Lefort 1988). In modern liberal societies, the law acquires an autonomous presence outside of political power. Its foundation is fundamentally external to political power and those who occupy the place of authority do not possess it. Modernity thus possesses a locus of ideological sovereignty external to political power. Modern, *liberal* democracy maintains an essential distance between the symbolic realm and empirical reality because it does not rely on any substantive notion of community derived from an authority external to the social space. It resists all attempts to enclose the symbolic in specific institutions. Lefort's analysis thus leads to a different assessment of liberal democracy from that of Castoriadis who privileged *direct* democracy.

Liberal democracy defines power as an *empty* locus, devoid of any empirical embodiment, which is far more radical than the Greek idea that power cannot be appropriated. The Greek idea of power remained indeed tied to a closed, heteronomous definition of the social community: the insertion of individuals in that community is what prevents them from exercising despotic power over one another. The Greek idea that 'power belongs to no one' really means that power belongs to 'none of *us*' because it only belongs to the *us*. On the other hand, the liberal definition of power does not rely on any positive, unitary conception of community which power would incarnate. Modern democratic power thus remains a purely symbolic notion, the idea of popular sovereignty. Popular sovereignty is exercised by people who do not possess it but merely *represent* it, for a limited time. Modern sovereignty is *de jure* an indeterminate space: all are equal in the face of this fundamental indeterminacy.

Power is always the power of *representation*, the power to give a human community a symbolical representation of itself—that is, an identity subsuming its inner divisions. The radical, historical novelty of European modernity resides in the way the political came to replace religion in this cultural function, a phenomenon most evident in the French Revolution. Lefort's work thus involves the reappraisal of French revolutionary history, in which, as Tocqueville before him, he sees a *social* revolution, the democratic revolution establishing an ontological equality of status between individuals and with it a new type of social regime, which he argues culminated in the establishment of liberal democracy.

Both Lefort and Castoriadis saw this democratic revolution as still unfolding, in constant contest with attempts to re-establish the reassuring, closed meanings that characterize heteronomous cultures, most notably through totalitarianism (Lefort 1986b). For their younger collaborator, Marcel Gauchet, this contest revealed the original reliance of human communities on 'religion'—or its modern, ideological equivalents (civil religion, nationalism, totalitarianism)—for the formulation of a unitary, collective identity that transcend social division. In this respect, the 'democratic revolution' constitutes a kind of anthropological mutation, the moving away from religion as cultural framework of social life, retaining or not the belief in God.

Religion is an overall mode of social organization, predicated on the denial of human power and the recognition of an 'alterity' behind all human creativity. In the name of its sacred otherworldly interpretation, it seeks to eliminate otherness within human communities and create completely unified societies through a denial of conflict. Democratic autonomy is thus the very opposite of 'religion'. Democracies constitute the first type of society that accepts conflict and gives it a central place in the political process. This involves also a full acceptance of the historical creativity possessed by all human societies, of the power inherent to 'the social-historical' theorized by Castoriadis (Mouzakitis 2014).

Democracy and modern historicity: Marcel Gauchet

Drawing on Lefort's exploration of modern historicity, Gauchet developed theoretical insights into the *political* dimension of social imaginary institution present in Castoriadis' work but left undeveloped. Castoriadis' attachment to an *ontological* definition of social institution indeed prevented him from exploring its culturological dynamism and its diverse symbolic expressions, which would have required him to move away from his stark dichotomy between heteronomy and modern autonomy and to engage with the *inner* contradictions of autonomous power. At the same time, his philosophical investigation of social institution revealed the centrality of *temporality* in the way societies institute themselves, which Lefort had himself explored in his early anthropological writings but from both a phenomenological and sociological perspective, drawing on the work of Marcel Mauss, one of the founders of French sociology.

Gauchet's work connected temporality to Castoriadis's understanding of institution, originally formulated in reaction to Merleau-Ponty's pioneering philosophical exploration (Merleau-Ponty 2003). Whilst Merleau-Ponty made of time the most fundamental model of institution, Castoriadis considered *time itself* to be instituted by the social-historical: 'different configurations of the socio-historical impose specific temporalities (cyclical or linear, repetitive or creative, homogenous or heterogeneous)' (Arnason 2014:104) The institution of temporality thus left the realm of phenomenological experience for the social world. It became for Castoriadis the *primary* institution defining a society in its particularity, which then brought him closer to the way Émile Durkheim and his nephew Mauss had first made of the study of institution the central object of sociology, establishing a distinction between a primary, generative institution and the so-called second-order institutions.

The word religion, for Gauchet, thus designates the most basic and universal form of social organization until the so-called 'modern revolution'. It is the originary form of what he calls *the political*, what allows human communities simply to exist by establishing a common world defined by spaced and temporality. In its 'religious' form, the political regulates the unconscious historicity possessed by all human societies by making of the past the source of all meaning and imposing subservience to it. In this respect, Gauchet's work extends Durkheim's pioneering sociological insight into the political function of religion for all human societies prior to modernity (Durkheim 1995). Human imaginary creativity, Castoriadis's central theme, was indeed first explored by Durkheim: his sociology shows that before the advent of the state, according to the sacred rules of 'primitive religions', humanity's capacity to institute its social world expressed itself through its apparent *denial*. Gauchet's (2005b) early work explored this paradox: it analyses modernity as the process whereby social life emancipates itself from its grounding in the sacred through the power of the state, first in interaction with Christianity. This led him to see in the invention of liberal democracy and representative politics the outcome of a process of 'disenchantment' unfolding over many centuries (Gauchet 1997).

Gauchet's account of this long-term transformation highlights its civilizing and transformative import, demonstrating the anthropogenesis at play in human history. The civilizing influence of modern democracy involves the acceptance of pluralism based on the discovery of *human power*. This discovery removed humanity from its 'religious', non-reflexive experience and dictated its entry into a *historical condition* (Gauchet 2005a). From the nineteenth century, historicity as new consciousness of human power has primarily been channeled into economic activity and technological change. With the development of economic modernity into capitalism, it took the form of ideologies (Gauchet 2002a) that sought to transcend the *political condition* of human life (Gauchet 2005a) and to do away with the state's authority over collective life.

The problems European societies have experienced since the 1970s can only be understood through a re-assessment of their eighteenth-century political foundations, predicated on a juridical individualistic fiction. Over the course of two centuries, this fiction inspired a complete transformation of the notion of legitimacy and, with it, of how modern societies are organized: these seek to translate the myth of natural individual independence into reality or, at least, make it a believable norm (Gauchet 2020a). Collective existence, the realm of the political, however, has remained a central dimension of human life despite the transformation of the juridical, contractual norms of liberalism into a new social reality, the 'society of individuals'. This creation following what Gauchet calls *the second period of human rights* (Gauchet 2017a: 487–632) after the original one, that of the late 18th century, of the American and French revolutions, which asserted a new definition of the legitimacy of the social order. No longer that of a divine law but one derived from a purely human law based on the notion of individual right.

Prepared on the ideological level by the previous redefinition of the modern state's legitimacy (first through Hobbes, Grotius and Locke) (Gauchet 2007a), these revolutions reversed the symbolic logic of domination established by absolutism which saw monarchies claim a legitimacy autonomous from religious authorities, based on *raison d'état* and their own 'divine right'. Drawing on the logical consequences of the liberal 'contractualist' fiction, modern liberal states pursued the construction of a new form of collective order based on a new legitimacy, that of human law and human rights. This legitimacy asserted the primacy of society—a new notion—over the state and redefined the classical notion of state sovereignty in the name of 'the people' (one of the three 'idols' of liberalism, established, in the first half of the 19th century, alongside the ideas of progress and science) (Gauchet 2007a: 187–206).

Even though the contractual explanation of the social relationships underpinning collective existence did not immediately inspire the dismantling of the pre-existing 'holistic' structures

of social life still based on tradition, hierarchy and holism throughout the 19th century, the powerful symbolic logic of political representation it created continued to be transformative (Gauchet 2017a: 525). It was reactivated in the second half over the 20th century. This second phase in the history of human rights has been an attempt to make the social order accord fully with the juridical foundation of modernity, the individual's natural freedom (Gauchet 2017a: 551–560). It appeared after a long period since the end of the 19th century until the 1970s when the political imperative of collective life reasserted its primacy over this freedom and the idea of individual right seemed to many to be nothing but a way to conceal the reality of class domination (Gauchet 2010).

The new world of radicalized 'structural autonomy'

Over the past four decades, in association with the elevation of the idea of right over that of public good, a radical assertion of the desire for autonomy has induced the de-sacralization of power and the destruction of the remaining forms of the hierarchal principle. These phenomena have inspired a profound transformation of social relationships with many cultural consequences, most visibly those associated with the 'communication revolution' encouraged by the third industrial revolution of information technology (Gauchet 2017a: 459–460). Liberal democracy politics having been created from a compromise with the pre-modern hierarchal understanding of government authority, they have also provoked a crisis of democratic politics. Castoriadis identified the radicalization of autonomy from its first appearance in the 1990s.

He saw it as a crossroads in history, a stark alternative between 'the loss of meaning, of the repetition of empty forms, conformism, apathy, irresponsibility, and cynicism, along with the growing takeover of the capitalist imaginary' and 'a fresh upsurge of the project of individual and collective autonomy', 'of the will to be free'. (Castoriadis 2007: 86). Two decades later, even though the crisis has deepened and its problematic consequences are much more visible, Gauchet rejects this dichotomous perspective. For him, the crisis is paradoxically the consequence of the *success* of modern autonomy as a form of human power incorporating what Castoriadis called the capitalist imaginary and that of autonomy. This power, however, is purely *structural*, functional and has erected humanity's scientific and technological power as supreme values in its project to construct an *anthropocosmos* perfectly tailored to individual needs and desires (Gauchet 2017a: 468).

This structural autonomy has produced a *generalized* form of capitalism (Gauchet 2017a: 459)—pursuing the globalization of markets, financialization, absolute innovation—, which has extended the model of the market to all aspects of social life. Its power of attraction draws on the symbolic resources of information technology. The internet, the network of networks, is, indeed perfectly attuned to the aspiration to radical individual autonomy. This is because it combines the freedom of actors with the necessity of exchanging with others. These actors (often shielded by a degree of anonymity) can opt out at any moment and thus interact with one another outside of any vertical, constraining framework. At the same time, the digital network offers an automatic mechanism capable of aggregating the diverse initiatives and preferences of individuals and thus offers a new paradigm of collective action, a new symbolic representation of 'the society of individuals', both a market society and a society of networks (Gauchet 2017a: 197, 434–458, 474–480, 687–688).

For all its emblematic significance, 'generalized capitalism' however, constitutes only one aspect of the much broader *artificialization* of the human world (Gauchet 2017a: 465–470). The economistic transformation of societies cannot be separated from the growing power of the law. This is not just a utilitarian alliance (which has engendered a new form of corruption).

Juridification is but another facet of the broader 'cultural revolution' provoked by the radicalization of modern autonomy. Through regulatory governance, it has put the individual—their formal rights, their subjective experience—at the heart of collective existence. Artificialization has been driven by a new form of ideology, neo-liberalism, which has established its dominance over pre-existing ideologies (conservatism, liberalism, socialism) through its capacity to offer a plausible interpretation of what drives the spectacular advance of structural autonomy in the 21st century (Gauchet 2017a: 98). This ideology, however, has encouraged the blindness of individuals to what allows their freedom (the collective framework) and trapped western societies in a cult of the present (*présentisme*) (Gauchet 2017a: 403), the present supposedly being fully self-sufficient, capable of complete self-understanding in terms of the parameters set by the economy, the law and science within a now global competition.

Discredited by globalization and the universal norms it promotes, the past no longer appears as a reservoir of experience to illuminate the present. Paradoxically, the future also escapes these 'knowledge societies'. Although they constantly engage in producing a completely 'innovative' future, they have in fact lost their capacity to steer a course connecting past, present and future and must submit to the logic of radicalized modernity, to the imperatives of transformative human power pursued for its own sake (Gauchet 2017a: 483–496). With the broadening of education and the acquisition of new data gathering techniques, societies have acquired an unprecedented reflexivity (as first defined by Giddens [1990]), based on a presumably rational use of knowledge. This functional reflexivity, however, is not synonymous with 'substantive autonomy', which requires 'self-reflection' (Gauchet 2017a: 641–645, 712–729). In particular, it seems to have replaced intellectual debate with an ultra-positivist cult of 'science' dominated by mathematical quantification and statistical modelling.

In this respect, *Le nouveau monde* provides an extremely sophisticated analysis of the impoverishment of culture originally decried by Castoriadis as the 'rise of insignificance' alongside *de-hierarchization*, *de-traditionalizarion*, *de-institutionalization*, the quest for knowledge has in fact also encouraged *de-intellectualization* and a degradation of culture. The role of ideas in collective life and that of 'intellectuals', earlier intrusted with the task of guiding society through an overall perspective, have been devalued. Generalist and humanist culture has lost its status, even though it is needed more than ever to bridge the distance between different forms of knowledge and construct a collective vision, which can be debated democratically. The type of knowledge promoted by 'knowledge societies', despite their paying lip service to 'interdisciplinarity' only encourages an ever-greater fragmentation and *segregation* of disciplines, also critiqued by Castoriadis throughout his work. Although it claims to be broadening human knowledge, the neo-liberal ideology has created a new narrow-minded elite and a mindless conformism dedicated to maintaining the domination of 'expertise', a novel oligarchy serving the plutocracy of globalized, financialized capitalism (Gauchet 2015).[5]

The loss of political purpose

Gauchet thus formulates a rather bleak assessment and analysis of the degradation of European liberal democracy, induced by the transition to a purely autonomous 'immanent' understanding of legitimacy. Gauchet's analysis of the history of European democracy leads him to define it as a 'mixed regime' perfected over a long time. It is based on a synthesis of three components, always in tension: the political, historicity (incorporating economic dynamism) and the law. This synthesis, secured in the 1950s and 1960s, has now been undermined firstly by the primacy of individual rights. In their absolutism, rights, when elevated as the supreme value of societies, indeed, cannot be ordered hierarchically and help them formulate a common political purpose

responding to the challenges of the new world. The transformation of the social state into a rights-based state (*état de droit*), accompanied by the procedural turn of political philosophy since the 1970s (Gauchet 2005c) has in fact produced political paralysis.

This paralysis has produced a loss of faith in the authority of governments and, by extension, in electoral politics, causing the liberal democratic regime to be subjected to radical questioning. Existing political systems and their institutions are constantly under attack from what Gauchet calls, rather evocatively, a form of 'democratic fundamentalism' (Gauchet 2020a: 160), an essentially contradictory mind-set. On the one hand, its emphasis on individual rights conjures up the ideal of direct democracy (participatory, deliberative or referendum-based). On the other hand, its desire to make liberal democracy reassert its very foundations translates into intensified legal formalism, giving precedence to the rights of each individual member of society and, by extension, to the protection of minorities, undermining further the formulation of a common purpose. This Gauchet argues, has made European societies become a 'hyper-competitive jungles of claims to uniqueness', all demanding legal recognition (Gauchet 2020a: 164).

The revolution of legitimacy—the last chapter in the theologico-political history of modern autonomy (Gauchet 2017a: 27)—clearly has destabilizing consequences for European societies from within. These have been aggravated by the progress of cultural equality in their relationships to one another and the broader world, be it under the impact of European economic integration and, even more so, globalization. Economic globalization—*pace* neo-liberalism—has been made possible by a political phenomenon, the growth of a new mode of co-existence between national communities. The rise of populism at the heart of the crisis of democratic politics affecting European societies has been caused by the convergence of these two concurrent transformations, fundamentally disruptive for them in the way they have re-shaped their external relations at the same time as their internal organization, Europe having become 'provincialized' (Chakrabarty 2000, Gauchet 2017b, 2020a).

Conclusion

Despite pessimism regarding the present, Gauchet remains optimistic about democracy's capacity to transcend structural autonomy through a deeper understanding of human power (imaginary and social) and freedom. A new type of democracy can be invented, capable of historical self-reflexion and genuine self-government to counter the excesses of both individual freedom and 'bio-power'. This possibility rests on the political form invented by Europeans, the nation-state, but in conjunction with a de-sacralized and purely abstract manifestation of the political. This new political force first appeared in the decades following the end of World War II when the nation-state acquired a predictive capacity and an economically managerial function, transforming it into a *social* state responsible for the 'welfare' of individuals. The broadening of education, the regulation of wage labor and the introduction of different insurance mechanisms against life risks, for the very first time in history, allowed individuals to escape the dependency on interpersonal relationships characteristic of holistic societies (Gauchet 2010). By encouraging the de-sacralization of legitimacy, the social state laid the foundations for the contemporary 'revolution of identity' (Gauchet 2020a).[6]

Whilst de-sacralization superficially appears synonymous with a complete de-symbolization of politics, the political, in reality, has not been abolished, only *transformed*. Against appearances, the society of individuals does not hold together in a purely functional manner. The nation-state's pronouncements and actions have had powerful symbolic effects, producing the strong, *immanent* sense of collective identity without which the sphere of individual freedoms could not have been broadened in the contemporary era (Gauchet 2010, 2017). These symbolic *processes,*

although invisible, are still operative, allowing a new form of democracy to be invented that reconciles freedom with power and re-establishes a balance between the dimensions of autonomy. Controversially, Gauchet reasserts the importance of the nation-state but in a perspective incorporating the achievements of cosmopolitanism and, despite its neo-liberal flaws, of the European Union itself (Gauchet 2017: 251–266). His work thus incorporates a reflection on evolving international relations, in which he reveals his debt to Aron.

Could COVID-19 and the risk of further pandemics induce such a re-invention? In many European countries, this has certainly exposed the dysfunctionality of states, their presentism and unpreparedness for a risk long highlighted by epidemiologists. Beyond its roots in neo-liberal economic policies that considerably weakened the capacity of public health, this unpreparedness has exposed another kind of vulnerability, an existential anxiety (Gauchet and Rozès 2020), an intolerance of the inevitability death. Hidden in institutions, death suddenly became visible and scandalous in view of the increase in life expectancy secured by medicine, at the same time as the institutionalization of aged care constituted a major risk factor.

The pandemic has challenged the faith invested in the superiority of European science. It made some European societies accept the need advocated by their elites for a 'great confinement' (totalitarian in inspiration because of China's experience, but reminiscent also of the plagues of a 'non-scientific' past). In addition, the pandemic has exposed dissensions in the medical professions regarding the tension between clinical care and scientific truth, i.e. statistical validation, revealing the risk of science being corrupted by the pharmaceutical industry's financial interests. The faith in expertise underpinning government action in public health measures has now been shaken, highlighting a central dimension of the crisis also analyzed by Gauchet: *Science* itself has to be reinvented because it cannot explain itself. A deeper understanding of human reason is needed that acknowledges its dependency on the otherness of nature from which it distinguishes itself through the *symbolizing power of human imagination*. This is Gauchet's project for a new *critical philosophy* (2017a: 722).

Notes

1. This chapter builds on Doyle (2011). The author thanks Dr Sean Mc Morrow for his input on the regulative role of temporality. See his PhD thesis: https://www.academia.edu/41149295/The_Power_to_Assume_Form_Cornelius_Castoriadis_and_Regulative_Regimes_of_Historicity.

2. Because of their allegiance to Marxism, French intellectuals long thought that it was 'better to be wrong with Sartre, than right with Aron'. See Judt (1992).

3. Gauchet's work discusses primarily the invention of liberal democracy in Europe. However, it also deals with the differences between the European and American versions of modernity and their historical interaction across history, most recently through neo-liberalism. Some aspects of the crisis of European democracy discussed in this chapter have parallels in the United-States and other 'new world' countries because of their individualistic legal foundations. However, Gauchet argues that Europe, with its more radical individualism and its post-national technocracy has become far more neo-liberal than the United-States. See Doyle (2019).

4. Only two early books by Gauchet have been translated into English and a handful of articles, out of a bibliography of forty-four single and co-authored books and over one hundred articles. See http://www.marcelgauchet.fr/blog/?page_id=647.

5. *La triste vérité de la « société de la connaissance » est que les conformistes savants y sont rois* (Gauchet 2020b). (The sad reality of 'knowledge society' is the fact that the knowledgeable conformists are in control [my translation]).

6. This revolution of personal identity has been most evident in the sphere of sexuality. Gauchet (2020a) discusses it, including its liberation of individuals from the gender assigned to them by 'anatomical destiny'. This article clearly demonstrates that Gauchet acknowledges the progress made by the extension

of rights and is far from being reactionary, as he has been accused. The misunderstanding stems from the fact that he does not shy from discussing the problematic aspects and destabilizing consequences of individual liberation.

References

Arnason, J. P. (2014) 'Institution', in Adams, S. (ed.) *Cornelius Castoriadis. Key Concepts*, London: Bloomsbury.

Castoriadis, C. (1987 [1975]) *The Imaginary Institution of Society*, Cambridge: Polity Press.

———. (1991 [1988]) 'Power, Politics, Autonomy', in Curtis, D. A. (ed.) *Philosophy, Politics, Autonomy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

———. (1997 [1993]) 'The Greek Polis and the Creation of Democracy', in Curtis, D. A. (ed.) *Philosophy, Politics, Autonomy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

———. (2007 [1999] 'Imaginary and Imagination at the Crossroads', in Curtis, D. A. (ed.) *Figures of the Thinkable*, Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Chakrabarty, D. (2000) *Provincializing Europe : Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*, Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press.

Collins, J. (2015) 'A Metaphysics of Democracy?' *New Left Review*, 74: 145–154.

Cusset, F. (2008) *French Theory. How Foucault, Derrida, Deleuze, & Co. Transformed the Intellectual Life of the United States*, Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis.

Doyle N. J. (2011) 'Re-discovering Political Sovereignty: The Rebirth of French Political Philosophy', in Delanty, G. and Turner, S. (eds.) *The Handbook of Contemporary Social and Political Theory*, Abingdon, Oxon; New York: Routledge.

———. (2018) *Marcel Gauchet and the Loss of Common Purpose: Imaginary Islam and the Crisis of European Democracy*, Lanham MD: Lexington Books.

———. (2019) 'The Political Imaginary of European Hypermodernity', in Adams, S. and Smith, J. C. (eds.) *Social Imaginaries: Debates and Configurations*, London: Rowman & Littlefield.

Durkheim, E. (1995 [1917]) *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, New York: Free Press.

Foucault, M. (2009 [1961]) *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*, New York: Routledge.

———. (1977 [1975]) *Discipline and Punish*, New York: Random House.

Gauchet, M. (1997) *The Disenchantment of the World*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

———. (2002a) 'Croyances religieuses, croyances politiques', in *La Démocratie contre elle-même*, Paris: Gallimard.

———. (2002b) 'Quand les droits de l'homme deviennent une politique' in *La Démocratie contre elle-même*, Paris: Gallimard.

———. (2003) *La condition historique*, Paris: Stock.

———. (2005a) 'Les figures du politique', *La condition politique*, Paris: Gallimard.

———. (2005b [1977]) 'La dette de sens et les racines de l'état', in *La condition politique*, Paris: Gallimard.

———. (2005c) 'Les tâches de la philosophie politique', in *La condition politique*, Paris: Gallimard.

———. (2007a) *L'Avènement de la démocratie. Vol. I La Révolution moderne*, Paris: Gallimard.

———. (2007b) *L'Avènement de la démocratie. Vol. II. La crise du libéralisme*, Paris: Gallimard.

———. (2010) *L'Avènement de la démocratie. Vol. III. À l'épreuve des totalitarismes*, Paris: Gallimard.

———. (2015 [2008]) 'Democracy: From One Crisis to Another', in *Social Imaginaries*, 1(1).

———. (2017a) *L'Avènement de la démocratie. Vol. III. Le nouveau monde*, Vol. IV, Paris: Gallimard.

———. (2017b) 'Populism as Symptom', in *Social Imaginaries*, 3(1): 207–218.

———. (2020a) 'À la découverte de la société des individus', *Le Débat*, 3(210): 155–168.

———. (2020b) 'Les mondialisateurs n'ont pas rendu les armes', *Le Causeur,* April 14, p. 37. https://www.causeur.fr/mondialisation-coronavirus-crise-sanitaire-crise-economique-marcel-gauchet-175402.

Gauchet, M. and Swain G. (1999 [1980]) *Madness and Democracy: The Modern Psychiatric Universe*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Gauchet, M. and Rozès, S. (2020) 'Cette volonté absolue de maîtrise des circonstances menaçantes est devenue une donnée-clé de notre société', *Revue politique et parlementaire*, 196: 32–58.

Judt T. (1992) *Past Imperfect: French Intellectuals, 1944–1956*, Berkley: University of California Press.

Lefort, C. (1986a [1978]) 'Outline of the Genesis of Ideology in Modern Societies', in Thompson, J. B. (ed.) *The Political Forms of Modern Society*, Cambridge: Polity Press.

———. (1986b [1980]) 'The Logic of Totalitarianism', in Thompson, John B. (ed.) *The Political Forms of Modern Society*, Cambridge: Polity Press.

———. (1988 [1981]) 'The Permanence of the Theologico-political?', in *Democracy and Political Theory, trans. David Macey*, Oxford/Cambridge: Polity Press with Basil Blackwell.

Merleau-Ponty, M. (2003) *L'institution. La passivité*. Paris: Belin.

Mouzakitis, A. (2014) 'Socio-Historical', in Adams, S. (ed.) *Cornelius Castoriadis. Key Concepts*, London: Bloomsbury.

Weymans, W. (2009) 'Revising Foucault's Model of Modernity and Exclusion: Gauchet and Swain on Madness and Democracy', *Thesis Eleven*, 98(1): 33–51.

14

A journey through Latin American social and political thought

Aurea Mota

It would be difficult to reflect upon Latin America or any other world region without asking ourselves whether the geopolitical and cultural divisions that make up the *object* of analysis might actually preclude comprehensive interpretation.[1] In addition to the differences between areas that went through disparate processes of colonization, the region even lacks a common *Latin* background that would ease the formation of linguistic bridges among the southern and central areas of the American continent. As such, social scientists who have devoted their attention to the analysis of Latin America have strived to deal with the issue of what might constitute the forms of entanglement under the condition of enormous diversity. As in other world regions, a myriad of cultural encounters has enabled distinct historical developments (Ribeiro 1988). Besides the problem of the *complexity of the object*, we also need to account for the variety of interpretations across the globe on the historical significance of Latin America (Subrahmanyam 2011; Arjomand 2014).

In general, in the mainstream Western account on Latin America's place in global history, the significance of the Latin American lies in its entanglement with Europe and other areas of the north-western world, leaving aside the so-called south-south connections established between Latin America and Africa, for instance. Clearly defining the way Latin Americans have interpreted *themselves* as opposed to the way *others* have interpreted *them* also proves challenging. The explanation is twofold. Until very recently, north-western traditions of thought have dominated canonical interpretations of the development of the modern world everywhere. This domination became especially relevant to understanding Latin American social and political thought because of the absence of reliable historical sources that would make dissecting the ruptures between pre-Colombian societal self-interpretation and other interpretations that appeared after the area's European colonial conquest possible.

Indeed, a strong and traumatic break exists. This first explanation attests to the objective fact that while, in other world regions, strong literacy traditions made it possible to contrast *local* self-interpretation *before* and *after* the entanglements established between these places and Europeans, in Latin America, this task is much more difficult. A wealth of sources is available on the first encounters and on how, by mirroring the self when encountering the other, a *native thinking* sought to register what was perceived as a loss. If we dare go through dispersed archaeological findings to offer broader historical interpretations, as I myself have done (Mota 2016), we would rely on a

variety of pre-Colombian representations of the world that make it difficult to offer a comprehensive analysis. For some, the risk of this archaeological historical interpretation is too high.

The second reason why defining a clear division between a local Latin-American self-interpretation and the interpretation offered by *others* may prove challenging lies in the fact that the whole modern project is completely connected to the "appearance" of "America" at the end of the fifteenth century. The moment of discovery or "*cover over*" is also the moment eclipsing the possibility of the emergence of the *other*, understood as a full being in the global scenario (Dussel 1995). Still, it is true that Western tradition tends to eclipse other existing societal imaginaries, neglecting the importance of the *other's thought* in the foundation of Western modernity (Mota 2015). Thus, taking these two explanations together, there is no such thing as pure, local, societal, and political Latin American thought because the societal self-interpretation that originated in the region was already a product of diverse encounters.

This general introduction serves as a way of clarifying the scope of my contribution. What I offer here is a journey through a long and intricate body of thought regarding a mutating and complex history. What I present in this chapter as important components of Latin American social and political thought are what I regard as essential stopping points in a voyage that can follow different routes. The relevance of the interpretation offered in the chapter can be more broadly justified by the relevance of these works in the global, contemporary social and political theory scenario. The chapter is divided into two parts. In the first part, I discuss the process of *naming* as *framing*. This refers to the process by which this part of the world lost the original name of America that used to designate it as part of the New World in early modernity and then sought a new comprehensive designation. The reader will also find the main debates that emerged with the proclamations of independence throughout the region. In the second part, I discuss the appearance of issues such as race, coloniality, and modernity and how they have developed in Latin American social and political thought over the course of the twentieth century.

Naming as framing

Studies on the origin of the term Latin America point to Michael Chevalier (1806–1879), a nineteenth-century French liberal economist, as the first person to have used the name when speaking of countries in America's southern areas. Politically, we may discern that this name constitutes a French attempt at gaining influence over America's southern areas by reframing the area as a place of *Latin* origin. The notion that the term originated as a French coinage found later adherents, such as Touraine (1989). It is believed that Chevalier used the idea of the *Latin romantic* common heritage to accommodate Napoleon III's political projects in the region. However, according to Bruit (2000) and Feres (2005), the use of this term would have appeared first within debates among South American thinkers themselves. The Argentine Carlos Calvo (1824–1906) and the Colombian José María Torres Caicedo (1830–1889) used this expression to refer to the peoples of the south. The first publication in which we may find the term Latin America is in the poem "Las dos Américas," written by José María Torres de Caicedo in 1856, followed by Carlos Calvo's publications in Paris in 1864. Both authors used the term "Latin America" while trying to defend the southern part of America's emancipatory cause in France (Marichal 2015). Thus, instead of solely tracing the term to neocolonial French interests in the southern part of the American continent, the origin of the term needs to be located within the context of debates between Latin American social and political thinkers themselves.

The question of what lies behind the process of naming stretches far beyond the discussion of the term's origin. In the mid-nineteenth century, America was divided into two parts: the north stood as an exemplary model of New World development, and the south constituted an

example of failure (Mota 2015). Regardless of the controversies around the origin of the term, Latin America became an accepted way of designating the southern part of America. It came to rename a part of the continent that had lost its previous name, America, which was meant to constitute the continent known as the *New World* (Bruit 2000; Mota 2015). However, at that moment, casting aside the distinction between the north's protestant origins and the south's Catholic roots (Morse 1982), there was no historical support for this division, and the process of naming/framing was followed by a resignification based on the political and historical development of the new areas.

This resignification marked Alexander von Humboldt's (1769–1859) denunciation against the "historical error" of using the name America exclusively for the northern part of the continent. In his *Essai Politique sur l'Île de Cuba* (2011 [1826]), Humboldt made it clear that the hermeneutical and political separation of the American continent's north and the south constituted an artificial historical diversion. From the mid-nineteenth century on, the nomenclature *Americans* for the peoples of the United States was consolidated. The political, economic, and societal effects of this divergence, which separated the continent into two Americas, marked the emergence of global modernity.

Although this American separation came with negative consequences that were felt strongly among the *Southerners*—now known as the *Latins*—I argue that it also comprised the moment in which a search for historical sources to create a positive meaning around being Latin American emerged. Before the nineteenth century, the most prominent positive assessments of the southern people were expressed through the affirmation of the regional characteristics attributed to native peoples from specific areas of the continent. One of the best-known examples is the epic poem *La Araucana*, written by Alonso de Ercilla, with its three parts published together for the first time in 1589. The poem celebrates the courage of the people of Araucana, an area in today's central Chile, espousing the idea that the indigenous groups who inhabited the region did not surrender to Spanish rule. This poem by Ercilla was not unique in this sense: other literary productions in the same spirit appeared at the time, such as *La Argentina* (1602), by Martín del Barco Centenera, which marked the first appearance of the name *Argentina* to designate the part of the continent known as such today, and Bento Teixeira's *Prosopopeia* (1601), which marked the birth of the literary baroque in Brazil. The interpretations expressed in the above-mentioned texts, highlighting the positive character of the various groups that made up the region, would be rediscovered by other intellectuals of the nineteenth century. To use an idea that garnered fame in the words of Martí (1970 [1891], the *resistance of the oppressed* is reinterpreted as a mark that brings together the countries of Latin America.

While these more positive interpretations emerged, other Latin American thinkers began expressing criticism regarding the way the recently independent states were developing. The local elite and thinkers from other parts of the world's criticisms mostly involved the supposed "inadequacy" of the, in their view, "backward" southern societies as they attempted to fully appropriate modern values and institutions. José María Luis Mora (1974–1850), considered one of the fathers of liberalism in Mexico, is a good example. In Mora's (1837) view, the Latin American nations were as "immature" as they were "imprudent." For him, the locals could not even recognize that the social reality in Latin America would make it impossible to sustain the type of liberal institutions they were formally installing: Latin American nations could never be as liberal and modern as European countries, especially France and the United Kingdom. In Mora's view, political liberalism was impervious to errors (Mora 1837) and could not suffer from internal problems related to the construction of its theoretical and moral principles.

Some other thinkers would say that the Latin American way of becoming modern should not base itself on an external model but be unique. Simón Rodríguez, for instance, proposed

very explicitly that following the European example without previously engaging with what he called a "moral competition" (Rodríguez 1840 [1828]) would not work. He observed that European countries had not managed to form well-illustrated societies, especially when it came to extricating problems in terms of integration and social inclusion. The thinking behind Simón Rodríguez's reasoning was that Latin America needed to go beyond looking toward cases of failures and success, supporting the idea that social thinkers should consider Latin American experiences and answers found within the area in order to solve social conflicts. Rodríguez (1840 [1828]) made it clear from the beginning that only enlightened governments would be able to generalize education for all and teach, rather than instruct, what is right for human society, regardless of any idiosyncrasy, be it cultural, civilizational, or ethnic. The author addressed the concrete possibility of forming newly opened national societies that, without the vices of a political tradition based on absolute hierarchy between groups, such as the monarchic system, would be better able to govern themselves through the still-recent modern morality based on the principles of "liberty, equality, and fraternity."

Thus, in the nineteenth-century debates around Latin American social and political thought, one can find a similar attempt to advocate for the importance of critically examining those realities that have always been seen as models for the development of modern imaginaries and institutions. The connection between the process of liberalization in Latin America and other processes unfolding in the global scenario is significant. Mora's criticism is much stronger than Rodríguez's, but they both call for historical comparison as a tool of social analysis and as a way of sorting out developmental problems. As Souza (2000) would argue over a century later, even in countries traditionally considered as paradigmatic, modern cases of development, there is no example of anything that might be considered to have fully exploited the potential promised by modernity. José Luis Mora and other the nineteenth- and twentieth-century thinkers failed to admit such a perspective in their schemes. Others, such as Simón Rodríguez, did not fail in this regard. Whatever the main values of liberal modernity (freedom, equality, popular sovereignty, individual autonomy, security, etc.) have become, in the current discourse, we may find practices that are often in constant contradiction with them. Social institutions, ideas, and political practices are completely interwoven, but not completely linear and free of problems in terms of their logical support.

Regarding the legacy that European colonialism left in the region and what alternatives could arise for its autonomous development, more normative thinking gained force and reverberated across many parts of the Western world, coming to include Latin America on the periphery. In the 1870 text "*El crimen de la guerra*," by Argentine political thinker and jurist Juan Batista Alberdi (1810–1884), we find the idea that the Latin American union would constitute the most direct legacy of centuries of European colonization as well as the only possible path for the unification of the human race. In Alberdi's analysis (1920 [1870]), one historic mark would affect all countries in the region in a decisive way given its entanglement with European civilization, namely, the colonial system of power. Alberdi's proposal attempts to deal with the issue of how to compare the area's societal uniqueness with other international experiences to build a new moral understanding of the world. In a non-provincial way, Alberdi and other nineteenth-century Latin American thinkers, such as Rodríguez (1840), sought to spread their ideas more broadly because they believed they could help solve some of the main dilemmas that criss-crossed several societies of the time. In Alberdi's perspective (1920 [1870]), the mixture of the universal formed by parts that would come together to forge other larger parts until they reached their ultimate end—the practical unification of the human race—could not ignore the historical process that clearly includes Latin American nations.

The Panamanian Justo Arosema (1817–1896) was among the most influential jurists and constitutionalists of the nineteenth century, and not only in the Hispanic world. Rather than

working with the idea that Latin America's colonialism was a positive historical heritage product of the entanglements with Europe, as we saw with Alberdi, Arosema (1840, 1870) believed that building a social union of sorts, in Latin America, was entirely possible. To do so would require harmonizing the region's legal order. The author believed the subcontinent could be imagined as a "common homeland" that would be integrated in economic, legal, and cultural plans, without the need for a common government with supranational features. Arosema's influence, alongside the Panamanian context, ended up making a heavier mark on other parts of the world than on Latin America itself (Arosema 1870). His writings on forms of integration as independent of the creation of supranational governments, and on non-imposing projects, were foundational to the main debates on integration that marked the twentieth century.

Up until the nineteenth century, the subcontinent was primarily viewed as a region that should seek its own path, without discarding the alleged advances achieved through its entanglements with European society. Shifting from a period marked by a sense of self-confidence and having freed itself of external colonial domination, Latin America moved into a period of pessimism, disenchantment, and political disillusionment. There was a moment of excitement and hope, as documented in the letter known as *Carta de Jamaica* (Bolívar 2007 [1815]), originally titled "*Constetación de un Americano Meridional a un Cabellero*," when Simón Bolívar tried to call on Great Britain and other European countries to support the emancipation of American countries, followed by a moment of disappointment and sadness. This feeling can be found and interpreted in the letters that the main political leaders of the period wrote—from their forced exiles and other places from which they watched the utopias of independence fade. The fate of the very Simón Bolívar, who died alone and discredited, and the agony he expressed in the late stages of his life, are a good example. In this journey through classical Latin American social and political thought, it is important to bear these feelings of excitement and disillusionment in mind. As we will see in the next sections, these feelings persist today.

Race, modernity, and post-colonial critique

In the transition between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Latin American thinkers became more concerned and wrote more explicitly about the racial diversity in their countries and the issues around it. The colonial heritage that indelibly linked the Americas with Africa and the European world informed the thinking of authors such as Rui Barbosa (1849–1923) and Joaquim Nabuco (1849–1910). Both thinkers are responsible for placing the racial issue at the core of new understandings of how the modern states should organize, though their analysis would seem limited and quite uncritical for contemporary standards. Juxtaposed against the rise of the question of race, identity, and national formation, in this period, significant interpretations emerged in which development, civilization, and capitalism were seen as possible *virtues* stemming from the entanglement with European modernity.

In his well-known book *Casa Grande e Senzala*, Gilberto Freyre proposes the idea of "racial democracy" and shows its direct relationship to how the characterization of racial issues in South America were completely different from the experiences of the North America. Freyre (2006 [1933]) was not so concerned with structural racism as with what might explain the superficial image of the racial mixture and structure of social organization in Brazil. As Souza (2000) suggests, Gilberto Freyre wrote about the distinctive aspects of slavery in Brazil in relation to other foreign experiences. And along this path, he demonstrated how the issue of the public and the private, hybridization, proximity and separation, and recognition and difference behaved differently in the southern part of the American continent when compared to the north. Gilberto Freyre highlighted how the issue of racial encounters in Latin America could

be seen as a paradigmatic case of how coexistence between peoples of different backgrounds was possible.

Another important approach came from the book *Seven Interpretive Essays on Peruvian Reality* (Mariátegui 1996 [1928]). Without abandoning the idea of what we could call the racial specificity of the region, this book shows how the problem of indigenous integration in Peruvian society was related to class struggle. Mariátegui's stood as one of the main approaches that became known as the Latin American Marxist-Indigenist tradition. In the book's first thesis, Mariátegui argues that the problem of the integration of indigenous groups in Peru is essentially a social and economic one. The subjugated groups, in this case, the indigenous and/or the peasantry, would be at the forefront of a movement that could lead to the abolition of issues around class inequalities. Thus, as the author maintains in his seventh thesis, the revolutionary socialist movement is not only compatible with the indigenous movement: in Latin America, the socialist movement is completely embedded within the indigenous one.

Although Mariátegui (1996 [1928]) focuses on the Peruvian context, I believe that he should be included in Latin American thought as a whole, which, without neglecting local specificities, advocates for going beyond the local context to understand ethnic and class issues. Mariátegui was among the Latin American thinkers who would begin to adopt a more explicitly comparative approach in the 1920s and 1930s, connecting the social phenomena observed in the subcontinent with what happened elsewhere. Long after ridding itself of colonial rule, we could say that the Latin American intellectual tradition highlighted the intimate links between ethnic, racial, and moral issues, and, in this sense, opened the door to the view that certain patterns of inequality persist, even in seemingly egalitarian, modern societies.

In the middle of the twentieth century, alongside the emergence of populism in Latin America, an early form of the *social state* developed in parallel to the idea that the government should protect disadvantaged groups while creating the conditions for economic development (Cardoso, 2010). This historical transformation was accompanied by the emergence of new social and political interpretations. Germani (1965) identified a period in which Latin America transitioned from being an "ascriptive society" to reaching modernity, developing ideas on how societies shift from traditional to modern. Additional political-economic analyses attempted to place Latin America in the global context. Indeed, Latin America's peripheral role became an object of analysis. Mixed with several variants of Marxism, dependence theory emerged in the 1970s and immediately featured as what may constitute Latin America's greatest contribution to an international debate in the social sciences, especially through Cardoso and Faletto's (1970) book. At the same time, liberation theology, a new way of viewing the relationship between Catholic Christianity, the working class, and the "poor," slowly developed. Liberation theology was heavily boosted with the masses' struggle for democracy from the late 1970s onwards (Dussel 1977; Boff and Boff 1986).

In his work, Ribeiro (1972, 1988) develops a historical anthropological account that deals with race, civilizations, and capitalism to analyze the development of the various civilizations of the modern world. He transitioned from studies that saw racial hybridism in Latin America as a success in terms of social integration, as in the works by Gilberto Freyre, to studies that, incorporating the idea of different civilizational matrices, connect the issue of race to capitalism- and development-related problems in specific national contexts. For Ribeiro (1972, 1988), there are three different cultural matrices found in Latin America: the *transplanted people*, the *new people*, and the *witness people*. The *transplanted* include countries that were fundamentally marked by the transposition of contingents of Europeans who tried to preserve their main characteristics (e.g. Argentina and Uruguay). The *witness* countries comprise those in which the most developed pre-Columbian civilizations have a marked presence (Bolivia, Peru, and Mexico, for example).

These peoples were able to witness the process of modernization in unified places and participate in it, even if on the margins, to form modern nation-states. The *new people* constitute what the author calls the "maximum expression" of European colonial expansion. In this group of countries, the hybridism of European characteristics with the habits of African slaves and indigenous people created what he called a *specie-novae* that is not easily found in other cultural matrices (Brazil, Colombia, and Chile, for example).

Ribeiro's work is problematic in the sense that it does not question the whole process through which each matrix was formed. For example, the idea of the existence of a pure, transplanted European society in Argentina and Uruguay is not only misguided but also invisibilizes the large contingent of slaves who arrived in the southern part of America and suffered from constant eugenics policies (Rodríguez 2006). Despite these serious analytical problems, however, Ribeiro's work does have an important place when it comes to understanding Latin American social and political thought from a global perspective. The civilizational issue as something that could explain social transformations and continuities took shape in contemporary social sciences through analyses (Mota and Delanty 2015). For instance, *As Américas e a Civilização* (Ribeiro 1988) was published in English in 1971. Long before the emergence of the field's main works that tried to propose a vision of how the meetings between different "civilizations" should be considered within the "multiple" character of modernity, the Latin American author was already tackling the matter.

Two other important fields should be highlighted in terms of the Latin American social and political thought produced in the late twentieth century: studies on post-colonial critique and studies about modernity. Post-colonial studies explicitly attempt to tell another history to uncover the social, political, epistemic, and economic dark side of the colonial experience. In Latin America, the thinkers who came together to form critical studies in Coloniality and Modernity (known as the MD group) have stood out for their attempts to show that processes of domination and subjugation—sometimes subtle and sometimes more explicit—are constant features of modernity and of the various manifestations of internal and external colonialism in the region. Some of the most representative works by thinkers in this group include Quijano (1992); Dussel (1995); Mignolo (2003, 2011); and Walsh (2009), who revised the idea of internal colonialism first developed by Gonzáles Casanova (1965) to critically link Latin America's colonial and post-colonial structures of domination. The most historical works that can be grouped within Latin American postcolonial thought—as with Dussel (1977, 1995) and Mignolo (2003)—criticize the idea of the establishment of Latin American modernity as a form of unfinished and erratic development. They show that this argument in modern history is centred on Hellenic inheritances and is heavily based on myths that placed Europe at the centre of all exemplary developments, with the rest in a position of negative "externality."

Parallel to these studies, works that focused on the development of modernity in the region and its connection to broader historical Western developments gained strength. In this group, the image of a Latin America as embraced and enveloped within modernity prevails (Larraín Ibáñez 1989; Centeno 2002; Garretón 2003; Domingues 2008). Despite the variety of perspectives offered by these studies, a common feature would be the characterization of modernity as an external phenomenon, something that was produced elsewhere and was imposed on the region. We could say that what dominates in these works is an attempt to provide Western-guided interpretations, which deal with modernity and its historical development in the subcontinent, by adopting, almost as a rule, comparisons that assume the development of something exemplary located in the Global North. What remains to be found in other places of the world, like in Latin America, are taken as faulty copies of the original model. These works can be seen in terms of the continuity of Mora's perspective, as discussed in the previous section. The way

in which modern development is perceived as something exogenous, belonging to the places considered the centres of modern Western civilization, ends up conditioning *peripheral* developments within a very passive, historical role.

At the dawn of the twentieth century, the main issues raised by Latin American social and political thought for a new understanding of Latin America centred on colonialism and development dilemmas. These umbrella themes cover a variety of topics related to social inequalities, the global structure of knowledge and domination, the possibility of accommodating demands from native groups that have been excluded from modern development, etc. The terms "colonialism" and "modernity" are very much connected and sometimes used positively, with the former (colonialism) as the starting point for the development of modern institutions and horizons of emancipation, for instance. Thus, from a general point of view, during the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, historical analyses and the possibility of forging new social and philosophical theories re-emerged in Latin American social and political thought.

Conclusions

As with any form of collective naming that attempts to encompass a broader societal phenomenon, the consolidated name "Latin America" bears a genealogy that cannot express all of the empirical processes that originated within. As such, any attempt to grasp a regional manifestation of what we call social and political thought is always a partial analysis that aims at reducing complexity to offer an analytical perspective. Elsewhere, as in Europe, each of the nations that make up world regions has a specific history that ties to elements that approach and separate these units from the other nations that are part of the continent as a whole (Delanty 1995). World regions are not self-evident entities, but spaces marked by constant ambivalences. Latin America is no exception to this rule. All countries in Latin America share a common heritage of colonial exploitation, internal colonization exerted by the same old elites, and violently manifested historic ethnic and racial exclusion. The variety of interpretations available to analyze this history is extraordinarily rich and illuminating. Latin American political and social thought has strived to offer compelling categories of analysis, as seen in the chapter, despite the knowledge that these explanations are not comprehensive or free of problems.

Modern horizons of interpretation have existed since the very formation of Latin American social and political thought. Both in the early modern period and during modernity's consolidation, in general, thinkers have been especially concerned with the relationship between the subcontinent and the West, paying special attention to topics such as liberalism and emancipation, modernity, and modernization processes. Due to the continuation of these topics, which arose in the debates around the emancipation projects of the nineteenth century, Latin America remains present in the agendas of contemporary social and political scientists. In the nineteenth century, several minds shared their concern about how to consolidate solid states in the region, create feelings of nationhood that could make their mark in the social imaginary, and forge solidarity networks based on liberal and republican principles that would allow for the consolidation of an autonomous, regional project.

Over the course of the twentieth century, although the historical scenario has changed profoundly, and despite their different areas of emphasis, criticism, sometimes more structural and sometimes a little more generous, stood as the dominant form of analysis for the modern institutions and practices observed in Latin America. Latin American Studies ended up assuming, especially in the United States, the function of bringing criticism to the field of democratic procedures. What is still quite striking, however, is how Latin American thinkers themselves internalized this criticism without fulling accessing what it does mean. In a later quest to understand

what he calls the Latin American enigma, Ianni (2005) still emphasized the idea of erratic development. For the Brazilian sociologist, Latin America entered the twenty-first century in search of a vision of itself, something revealing its *essence*. In his view, Latin America is still the result of a mercantile invention "modified by colonialism, transformed by imperialism and transfigured by globalism" (Ianni 2005: 3). The region as a whole and the countries that compose it are in a constant state of incompletion.

Historically, social and political thinkers have tried to provide reflections that might embrace Latin American social phenomena, with their various manifestations, as configured. As we saw in this chapter, contrary to the perspective that assumes that Latin America is the product of an erratic movement, it is interesting to address how the social processes that developed in this part of the world are also factors behind the creation of the global scenario as we experience it today. Indeed, this historical perspective has guided the selection of our stopping points on the intellectual journey offered here.

Note

1. Post-doctoral research at the Open University of Catalunya (UOC). This chapter is published within the framework of the ERC Starting Grant project "*Social Networks of the Past. Mapping Hispanic and Lusophone Literary Modernity (1898–1959)*" led by the PI Diana Roig Sanz (Grant agreement No 803860).

References

Alberdi, J. B. (1920 [1870]). "El crimen de la guerra," in J. B. Alberdi (eds.), *Obras Selectas*, Buenos Aires: Librería 'La Facultad' de Juan Roldán.

Arjomand, S. A. (2014). *Social Theory and Regional Studies in the Global Age*, New York: SUNY.

Arosema, J. (1840). *Apuntamientos para la introducción a las ciencias morales políticas por un joven americano*, New York: Imprenta de Don Juan de la Granja.

Arosema, J. (1870). *Estudios constitucionales sobre los gobiernos de América Latina*, Havre: Imprenta A. Lemale Ainé.

Boff, L. and Boff, C. (1986). *Como fazer Teologia da Libertação*, Petrópolis: Vozes.

Bolívar, S. (2007 [1815]). *Carta de Jamaica*, Barcelona: Linkgua.

Bruit, H. H. (2000). "A Invenção da América Latina," *Anais Eletrônicos do V Encontro da ANPHLAC*, Belo Horizonte.

Cardoso, A. (2010). *A Construção da Sociedade do Trabalho no Brasil: uma Investigação sobre a Persistência Secular das Desigualdades*, Rio de Janeiro: FGV Editora.

Cardoso, F. H. and Faletto, E. (1970). *Dependência e desenvolvimento na América Latina*, Rio de Janeiro: Zahar.

Centeno, M. A. (2002). *Blood and Debt: War and the Nation-State in Latin America*, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press.

Delanty, G. (1995). *Inventing Europe: Idea, Identity, Reality*, London: Macmillan.

Mota, A. and Delanty, G. (2015). "Eisenstadt, Brazil and the Multiple Modernities Framework: revisions and reconsiderations," *Journal of Classical Sociology*, 57(15–2), 39–57.

Domingues, J. M. (2008). *Latin America and Contemporary Modernity: A Sociological Interpretation*, New York and London: Routledge.

Dussel, E. (1977). *The Philosophy of Liberation*, New York: Obis Books.

Dussel, E. (1995). *The Invention of the Americas: Eclipse of "the Other" and the Myth of Modernity*, New York: Continuum Publishing.

Feres Jr., J. (2005). *A história do Conceito de "Latin America" nos Estados Unidos*, Bauru: EDUSC.

Freyre, G. (2006) [1933]). *Casa Grande & Senzala*, Rio de Janeiro: José Olympio.

Garretón, M. A. (2003). *Incomplete Democracy in Chile and Latin America*, Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press.

Germani, G. (1965). *Política y sociedad en una época de transición: de la sociedad tradicional a la sociedad de masas*, Buenos Aires: Paidós.

González Casanova, P. (1965). "Internal Colonialism and National Development," in *Studies in Comparative International Development*, Vol. 1.

Humboldt, A. (2011) [1826]. *Political Essay on the Island of Cuba: A Critical Edition*, in V. M. Kutzinski and O. Ette (eds.), Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Ianni, O. (2005). *Enigmas do Pensamento Latino-Americano*. São Paulo: IFCH/UNICAMP.

Larraín Ibañez, J. (1989). *Theories of Development: Capitalism, Colonialism, and Dependency*, Cambridge: Polity Press.

Mariátegui, J. C. (1996) [1928]. *Siete ensayos de interpretación de la realidad peruana*, Lima: Amauta.

Marichal, C. (2015). "El nacimiento de los estudios internacionales sobre América Latina: comentarios a las obras de José María Torres Caicedo y Carlos Calvo a mediados del siglo XIX." *Foro internacional*, 55(3), 707–736.

Martí, J. (1970) [1891]. *Nuestra América*, Barcelona: Editorial Ariel.

Mignolo, W. (2003). *Historias locales/proyectos globales: colonialidad, conocimientos subalternos y pensamiento fronterizo*, Tres Cantos: Akal Ediciones.

Mignolo, W. (2011). *The Darker Side of Western Modernity: Global Futures, Decolonial Options*, Durham and London: Duke University Press.

Mora, J. M. L. (1837). *Obras Sueltas*, Paris: Librería de la Rosa.

Morse, R. (1982). *El espejo de Próspero*, Mexico: Siglo XXI.

Mota, A. (2015). "The American Divergence, the Modern Western World, and the Paradigmatization of History," in *Annual of European and Global Studies*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, Vol. 2, p. 21–41.

Mota, A. (2016). "Uncivilized Civilizations: Reflections on Brazil and Comparative History," *Social Imaginaries*, 2(2), 71–86.

Quijano, A. (1992). "Colonialidad y Modernidad/Racionalidad," *Perú Indígena*, (13), 11–20.

Ribeiro, D. (1972). *Teoria do Brasil*, Rio de Janeiro: Editora Paz e Terra.

Ribeiro, D. (1988). *As Américas e a Civilização: processos de formação e causas do desenvolvimento desigual dos povos americanos*, Estudos de Antropologia da Civilização, Petrópolis: Ed Vozes.

Rodríguez, S. (1840) [1828]. *Sociedades Americanas: luces y virtudes* (Primera Parte). Facsímil in HTML of the Valparaíso's edition.

Rodríguez, R. J. (2006). *Mbundo Malungo a Mundele: historia del movimiento afrouruguayo y sus alternativas de desarrollo*, Montevideo: Rosebud Ediciones.

Souza, J. (2000). *A Modernização Seletiva: uma Interpretação Alternativa do Dilema Brasileiro*, Brasília: Editora UNB.

Subrahmanyam, S. (2011). *Three Ways to be Alien: Travails & Encounters in the Early Modern World*, Waltham/Massachusetts: Brandeis University Press.

Touraine, A. (1989). *América Latina: política y sociedad*, Madrid: Espasa Calpe.

Walsh, C. (2009). *Interculturalidad, Estado, sociedad. Luchas (de)coloniales de nuestra época*, Quito: Universidad Andina Simón Bolívar.

15

Intellectuals and society

Sociological and historical perspectives

Patrick Baert and Joel Isaac

Since its inception, the meaning of the term "intellectual" has shifted over time and across national cultures. This makes a firm definition difficult. In what follows, we designate as "intellectuals" scholars who invoke their expertise to address issues of broader societal or political significance. This definition has a number of implications. First, it draws an analytical distinction between intellectuals and experts. Experts *can* be intellectuals, but only if they tackle issues that go beyond their speciality and are of wider political, cultural, or social significance. Intellectuals are experts, then, just insofar as they are trained and have excelled in one field before dealing with broader issues. Second, intellectuals can, in principle, be found in *any* field of learning or cultural achievement; there is no *a priori* reason why they should be concentrated in the arts and humanities or any other domain. Natural scientists or mathematicians, as we shall see, can and have been intellectuals in the sense we have specified. This means that the study of intellectuals extends to science and to natural scientists, even if the archetypal intellectual is, in fact, usually associated with the arts and humanities. Third, by virtue of the fact that intellectuals address broader social and political issues, they have a predilection to engage with a wider public – either the "general public" or multiple publics outside their specific realm of expertise or authority. It follows from this view that a considerable number of intellectuals can be termed "public intellectuals" because they make a concerted effort to communicate with and influence non-specialist publics, and to shape public policy. Finally, intellectuals do not necessarily work in the academy. To be sure, they often have done so, and, we shall argue below, they are increasingly to be identified within a matrix of academic disciplines. Nevertheless a substantial number of intellectuals operate outside the groves of academe.

Different disciplines and sub-disciplines have studied intellectuals and their role in society. In particular, sociology, science studies, and history have, in recent years, developed methodological toolkits and interpretive frameworks for making sense of intellectuals, expertise, and social order. We assess the contributions and increasingly shared research agendas of each of these fields below. Although there is no question of reducing one field to another or positing a grand synthesis between these scholarly domains, the recent literature, especially in what is called the "new sociology of ideas," suggests a growing convergence of vision and method in the study of intellectuals. Hence we shall begin with a survey of the transformation of the "traditional" sociology of knowledge (and intellectuals) in the hands of post-Kuhnian proponents of the sociology of

scientific knowledge and the sociology of academic life. In the second part of the chapter, we turn from these reflections on the history of sociology to the increasingly sociological investigative vocabulary of intellectual history. We conclude with some remarks on the recent reshaping of the persona and institutional location of the "public intellectual."

The social and political theory of intellectuals

During the first half of the twentieth century, the sociological contribution to the study of intellectuals was limited to the sociology of knowledge. This sub-field of sociology flourished initially in Germany and dealt with broad questions, such as the relationship between knowledge and society, the difference between science and ideology, and the role of intellectuals in the class struggle. It was heavily influenced by Marxism, to which some scholars subscribed and others felt compelled to react. The sociology of knowledge, thus conceived, was primarily a theoretical endeavour without a systematic empirical research agenda. Indicative of this period are Karl Mannheim's theoretical reflections on how social scientific knowledge is influenced by social forces, and how this affects its validity (Mannheim 1936 [1929]). Mannheim was aware of the potentially circular nature of this position, and tried to avoid it by arguing in favour of "relationism" or "perspectivism" rather than "relativism." Whereas relativism questions any sense of truth and is ultimately self-defeating, relationism holds certain theories to be true, but only within the specific context in which they arise. In this context, Mannheim draws on Alfred Weber's *freischwebende Intelligenz* to argue that intellectuals are able to transcend ideology and gain the critical distance that is required to attain objective analysis. Precisely by uncovering the hitherto hidden determinants of their own thinking, intellectuals are able to conduct objective analysis.

Although it is tempting to read Mannheim as presenting an optimistic picture of intellectuals – as social agents uniquely equipped to overcome the ideological forces of their times − his writings also tap into a wider anxiety among his European contemporaries about the extent to which intellectuals *can* be swayed by ideologies and passions of all kinds. For instance, in his highly influential *La trahison des clercs*, Julien Benda (1928 [1927]) argued that intellectuals *ought* to pursue justice, truth, and knowledge for their own sake, but that they had recently gone astray because of the pernicious influence of various "political passions," whether in the name of patriotism, class, or race. Mannheim's account of free-floating intellectuals drew criticisms from Marxists and anti-Marxists alike. Karl Popper famously argued that this form of "socio-analysis" was likely to produce more sophisticated versions of self-deception rather than objective analysis (Popper 1950). Marxists, on the other hand, explored the role of intellectuals in the class struggle and emphasized the self-delusional nature of any notion of intellectuals as autonomous or independent of class interests. For instance, Antonio Gramsci (1971 [1929–35]: 5–23) distinguished between "traditional" and "organic" intellectuals. Whereas the former defined themselves as independent of other classes, developed a distinctive culture, but unwittingly served the interests of the ruling class, the latter were fully aware of the interests of the subordinate class and actively worked with its members to bring about political change.

By the mid-twentieth century, the centre of gravity within the sociology of knowledge moved to the United States and became intertwined with structural-functionalism, as typified by Robert K. Merton's writings on the sociology of science and Talcott Parsons' study of the American university. These American studies were more empirically driven than their German counterparts, and Merton coined the term "theories of the middle range" to refer precisely to the balance required in research between theory and empirical data. Among Merton's contributions to the sociology of science are his doctoral dissertation on science and technology in seventeenth-century England and seminal articles – notably "The Matthew Effect in Science" –

about the motivational and institutional structures of modern science (Merton 1968). By the 1960s and 1970s, however, a different strand emerged in the Anglophone sociology of knowledge, one initially centred in Edinburgh, and partly influenced by the later Wittgenstein and by Thomas Kuhn's *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1962). The "strong programme" in the sociology of knowledge adopted the principle of symmetry, according to which not only "false" but also "true" scientific beliefs had to be explained in terms of social causation (see, for instance, Bloor 1991; Barnes, Bloor, and Henry 1996). The strong programme led to accusations of relativism, and subsequent developments within science studies, such as calls for attributing equal causal power to non-human agents, can be seen as attempts to avoid charges of "sociologism" by placing nature and society on the same ontological plane (see, for instance, Latour 2005). From the point of view of the sociology of intellectual life, the strength of both the strong programme and subsequent actor-network theory lies in exploring empirically how scientific activities, rather than corresponding to a methodological algorithm, are embedded in complex networks of social relations, objects, and practices.

In addition to these developments within the sociology of knowledge and the sociology of science, American sociologists in the 1960s and 1970s showed increasing interest in the pivotal role of intellectuals within modern societies. While the term "new class" was initially used to refer to the central position of intellectuals in Easter Bloc bureaucracies, scholars such as Daniel Bell (1973) and Alvin Gouldner (1979) appropriated this concept, first, to hint at a possible convergence between capitalist and socialist societies, and, second, to describe a "post-industrial" setting in which the use of scientific expertise in state planning is the order of the day. In this society, intellectuals are no longer placed in a subservient relationship to a particular class, as Gramsci had thought of traditional intellectuals. Nor, however, were they devoted, as Benda hoped they would be, to the pursuit of other-worldly endeavours. Rather, "intellectuals" had become knowledge-producers who were essential to the functioning of contemporary society. The proponents of this theory were, on the whole, congenial towards the developments they were describing, but they remained concerned about the ways in which these newly empowered intellectuals – both "critical intellectuals" and "technical intelligentsia" – might misuse their position to serve their own interests.

During the course of the 1970s and 1980s, the theory of the new class lost appeal, partly because of the increasing awareness of the lack of empirical support for the theory. More generally, there was a growing literature on the limitations on the impact of intellectuals on society. For instance, Zygmunt Bauman (1991) claimed that the notion of the intellectual as legislator is no longer pertinent. For Enlightenment philosophers, intellectuals developed superior knowledge and ethical and aesthetic judgement because they managed somehow to transcend the culture and language of their age. Bauman argued that this picture is no longer tenable because of widespread doubts about foundationalist philosophy. Instead, in conditions of post-modernity, intellectuals have become mere "interpreters" – skilful in making sense of alien cultures for members of their own. Robert Nisbet (1997) has developed a complementary argument but focuses on the institutional dimensions of this shift. For him, universities are no longer insulated from society; they have become increasingly intertwined with industry and large-scale organizations. This means that academics no longer have the freedom and the authority that was associated with the era of the ivory tower. We will see in the next section how intellectual historians have treated this question of intellectuals in the era of the corporate university.

From the 1980s onwards, sociologists started to develop detailed empirical methods for studying intellectual life. Michèle Lamont's carefully crafted studies are indicative of this trend, from her study on the diffusion of Jacques Derrida's ideas in France and the US (Lamont 1987) to her recent analysis of the nature of academic judgement in relation to grant-funding bodies

and disciplinary norms (Lamont 2009). Four important strands have emerged in what is now a full-fledged sociology of intellectuals: Pierre Bourdieu's reflexive sociology, Randall Collins' sociology of philosophies, Charles Camic's new sociology of ideas, and finally approaches from the perspective of cultural sociology. All four delineate empirical research programmes for the study of intellectual life.

Bourdieu was a remarkably versatile sociologist who wrote on a wide of range of issues, but three recurrent themes stand out. One theme is the need for sociologists to incorporate insights from both "objectivism" and "subjectivism." Although objective social structures have a constraining impact on human agency, any sociological analysis also needs to pay attention to agents' self-understandings of their actions. A second theme concerns the role of non-economic features of the social world in the reproduction of inequality: throughout his life, Bourdieu explored the extent to which differences in cultural, educational, and social resources contributed to the transmission of structures of class domination from one generation to the next. The third theme concerns "reflexive sociology" – that is, a sociology that does not shy away from applying sociological analysis to its own conditions of possibility. In the case of the sociology of intellectuals, the three themes are integrated in so far as Bourdieu explores the power differentials and inequalities within the intellectual arena, whether between academic disciplines, intellectual schools, or individual scholars.

Bourdieu's *Homo Academicus* and *The State Nobility* are among his most cited texts on the sociology of intellectuals (Bourdieu 1988, 1996). Bourdieu acknowledges that, in the past, the intellectual field has been intertwined with other fields, such as the arena of politics. But, in the course of the nineteenth century, the intellectual field managed to acquire a relative autonomy, to such an extent that it now operates more or less according to its own logic. For instance, what is unique about the intellectual field is that the power differentials and inequalities do not manifest themselves, primarily at least, in financial terms, but in terms of symbolic recognition. Bourdieu explores the asymmetries and power struggles between different academic disciplines and faculties, but he is particularly interested in the struggles for symbolic capital *within* disciplines. Depending on their *habitus* and personal "trajectory," some disciplinary practitioners are better equipped than others to compete in the struggle over these scarce symbolic–cultural resources. Successful agents have the right cultural and educational capital and are more likely to gain access to elite schools like, in the French case, the *École normale*; this entry in itself reinforces their dominant position because it provides access to the right kind of teachers and peers.

As Bourdieu himself was the first to admit, his own career raised reflexive problems concerning the place of the intellectual in society. For most of his career, Bourdieu focused his energy on academic research and made a concerted effort to avoid taking on Sartre's mantle of the "total intellectual" who intervenes on a wide range of issues in the name of philosophy. But during the 1990s Bourdieu took on an increasingly prominent role as a public intellectual, arguing in particular against the neo-liberal policies of the Juppé government and more generally against the retrenchment of the welfare state. Ironically, around the same time, Bourdieu's *On Television*, which criticized both the medium of television and the media-intellectual that it helps to create, made him particularly well known outside the academy and turned him into something of a celebrity (Bourdieu 1998). This short book, based on two public lectures he gave on television (hence the *double entendre* of the title), warns that this medium undermines the public sphere and turns politics into entertainment. Intellectuals have been complicit in this and should resist the temptation to succumb to the homogenizing features of the journalistic field and its reliance on sound-bites. In the last years of his life, Bourdieu elaborated on the role of the public intellectual, relying to a certain extent on Michel Foucault's notion of the "specific intellectual" who uses his specialized knowledge to help fight local struggles. Bourdieu argued for a "scholarship with commitment"

that promotes a "new internationalism" to tackle global issues that transcend national boundaries and to counteract the ideology of "global competitiveness" (Bourdieu 1999, 2003).

Like the work of Bourdieu, Randall Collins' *The Sociology of Philosophies: A Global Theory of Intellectual Change* is an ambitious attempt to develop an all-embracing sociology of intellectual life. Collins applies it to the history of philosophy (Collins 1998). His theory operates at three levels: first, the macro-level or "economic-political structures"; second, the institutional level which comprises, for instance, universities and publishing companies; and, finally, the micro-level which involves the interactions between intellectuals. But the focus of his theory is primarily on those interactions or "networks" among philosophers. Collins tries to explore which conditions make promising scholars more likely to develop into prominent philosophers. The answer lies, according to Collins, in the networks they manage to forge with other major philosophers. Through connections with prominent mentors, philosophers accumulate "emotional energy" and "cultural capital." Emotional energy gives scholars the necessary motivation and self-confidence to work hard and to be prolific. Philosophy is not a particularly lucrative enterprise and the end products of philosophical activities, in temporal terms, often lie far away, so emotional energy can dwindle quite easily if the right kind of networks are not available. Cultural capital, on the other hand, provides philosophers with a sense of what is important and worth exploring and what are the new trends. In principle, there are no limits to philosophical thinking, but very few philosophical steps are crucial contributions to the field; being connected with other influential philosophers provides the necessary intellectual compass to make the right steps.

Collins is a proponent of what is called "conflict theory" in sociology, an agonistic position that he extends to the sociology of knowledge. Conflict and antagonism imply that, at any point in time, at least two philosophical schools battle it out for supremacy. Collins goes on to argue that there is an upper and lower limit to the number of creative philosophical schools that can co-exist. He proposes the law of small numbers which says that, at any one time, there will be between three and six creative schools of thought. When only two major schools are in play, a third is likely to develop. When the number of co-existing schools surpasses six, it becomes more difficult to recruit new disciples and to secure future generations of disciples. Very quickly some philosophical schools will start losing support until between three and six schools remain.

In contrast with Collins, the "new sociology of ideas" of Charles Camic and Neil Gross (2001) does not aim to develop a general theoretical framework that captures the macro-, meso-, and micro-dimensions of intellectual life. Rather, it focuses on the specific strategies that scholars develop to operate and manoeuvre within the local intellectual contexts in which they find themselves. Hence "contextualism" and "localism" are two key methodological positions in their vision of the field. Camic's analysis of Talcott Parsons' early writings is a clear example of this method in action. In his highly influential article "The Making of a Method: A Historical Reinterpretation of the Early Parsons," Camic carefully reconstructs the academic culture, prejudices, and power relations at Harvard up to the appearance of Parsons' *The Structure of Social Action* in 1937 (Camic 1987). This reconstruction explains why Parsons embraced orthodox neoclassicism rather than institutionalism as his paradigm of economic theory. In comparison with orthodox neoclassical economics, which was well established at Harvard, the more sociological institutionalist tradition in American economics lacked status and institutional recognition in the precincts of Harvard Yard, and the young Parsons had to navigate carefully within this treacherous terrain. The ambition of institutional economists to develop a "science of society as a whole" could potentially undermine any attempt by sociology to carve a niche for itself, just as it would also undermine the separate identity of economics. It is, therefore, no surprise that Parsons sided with his colleagues in Harvard's Department of Economics to embrace, to a certain extent at least, the methodological principles of neoclassical thinking.

In a subsequent article, Camic (1992) argues against the "content-fit model of predecessor selection," which states that scholars select intellectual predecessors on the basis of how well they tie in with their own project. Instead, Camic argues in favour of the "reputational model" which assumes that scholars select intellectual predecessors on the basis of their "reputational standing" within their local intellectual context. Camic's argument is that Parsons did precisely that: while developing his ideas about sociological theory, he was drawn to authors (Marshall, Pareto, Weber, and Durkheim) who had considerable standing among leading Harvard faculty and gradually abandoned those (such as institutionalists Thorstein Veblen, Walton Hamilton, and Clarence Ayres) who did not. Camic is not arguing that Parsons developed explicit strategies in this regard. Rather, this "crystallization occurred while he was part of a well-signposted intellectual network that warned him of the defectiveness and uselessness of some lines of relevant work while announcing the greatness, brilliance, and fruitfulness of other lines" (Camic 1992: 437).

Neil Gross, Camic's student, has continued this careful historical work on the trajectory and strategies of individual scholars, but he differs from Camic in putting more weight on the role of the "self-concept" of the academic intellectual. By self-concept, he refers to the ideas intellectuals form about themselves and which ultimately guide their work and career. His biography of the American philosopher Richard Rorty examines how Rorty developed a clear sense of himself as a progressive, humanist intellectual and how this self-concept fed into his intellectual and professional trajectory (Gross 2008). We discover how Rorty learned to operate within the contours of an American philosophical profession increasingly dominated by an "analytic" mainstream. While there is undoubtedly a sociological dimension to this analysis – in particular, when Gross investigates the specific intellectual milieu in which Rorty grew up and which helped to form his sense of intellectual identity – Gross' focus on intellectual biography, in conjunction with his notion of self-concept, gives this type of sociology of ideas a social–psychological flavour.

With the new sociology of ideas, the sociology of knowledge has moved close to intellectual history, but before we elaborate on the latter, it is important to point out that the sociology of sociology has been essential to recent debates within the direction of the discipline itself. This is particularly striking in the furore surrounding "public sociology" (Agger 2000; Burawoy 2005). Indeed, Michael Burawoy's arguments in favour of a public sociology rest upon a sociological analysis of the history of the discipline. Burawoy contends that "traditional" forms of public sociology had been prevalent for a long time, and that for half a century the need for professional and academic recognition has turned American sociology into an increasingly inward-looking enterprise. For Burawoy, now that sociology has obtained the recognition it deserves, there is no need to continue along this defensive track. This is not to argue that we ought to resurrect traditional public sociology. We need to move towards what he calls "organic" public sociology – with an obvious hint to Gramsci. Whereas traditional public sociology has an amorphous, passive, and diffuse audience and lacks a clear political agenda, Burawoy's "organic" public sociology focuses on a visible and active audience and has an explicit political message.

Finally, a fourth group of authors operate within the sphere of cultural sociology, exploring how intellectuals may provide compelling narratives that resonate with their publics, for instance, about cultural trauma (Alexander *et al.* 2004). Intellectuals are then seen as part of "carrier groups" that make possible the "trauma process," turning events of the past into a compelling story-line about the hurt inflicted on sections of society, the broader significance of this trauma, the identity of the perpetrators, the nature of responsibility, and so on (Eyerman 2008, 2011). Within cultural sociology, some authors pay particular attention to the dramaturgical dimensions of intellectual life, the various rhetorical devices by which intellectuals get their message across, often drawing on core dichotomies such as good versus evil or the sacred versus profane (Alexander 2016; Baert and Morgan 2018; Morgan and Baert 2018). A related research strategy

draws on positioning theory to analyze how intellectual interventions (for instance, books, articles, or blogs) implicitly or explicitly position the authors involved while also identifying and positioning adversaries (Baert 2015). Positioning has an effect on whether the ideas propagated are taken-up (and if so, by whom) and on whether the intellectuals involved obtain institutional recognition (if so, what kind). Positioning is often a collective endeavour as intellectuals tend to team up to present themselves in a particular fashion. It is also an ongoing process because the meanings of interventions are ultimately determined by how other people react to them, and therefore subsequent generations may position particular interventions very differently.

Intellectuals in history

We now turn from historical reflections on the development of the sociology of knowledge to sociological perspectives on recent forms of intellectual history. This segue from sociology to history is becoming more and more natural. One of the defining features of the new sociology of ideas has been its invocation of the methods of intellectual history. From Quentin Skinner, J. G. A. Pocock, and John Dunn, Camic and Gross (2001) learned the contextualist maxim that texts and ideas are "not transparent" but "must be situated in the immediate socio-linguistic contexts in which they were produced – contexts that can be reconstructed by careful examination of the writings of a thinker's contemporaries." "Localism" follows from this contextualist position: by "insisting on the need to reconstruct the context where ideas were produced, new sociologists of ideas generally hold as well that this reconstruction must have a strong local focus" (Camic and Gross 2001: 245–246). The methodological resources, as well as the empirical findings, of intellectual history are therefore directly pertinent to the sociology of ideas – and vice versa. Members of both subfields are often present in recent works on the sociology of knowledge (Camic, Gross, and Lamont 2011). This section of the chapter explores the linkages between these two fields and throws historical light on the place of intellectuals in social and political theory.

Our first observation is that the roots of the new sociology of ideas in contextualist intellectual history run even deeper than Camic and Gross suggest. The shift within the sociology of knowledge from the analysis of *ideas* to the study of *intellectuals* – from bodies of institutionalized knowledge à la Marx and Mannheim to the microsociological activities of knowledge-makers – maps neatly onto the methodological move made by contextualist historians. Famously, Quentin Skinner has inveighed against the notion, common among political theorists and historians of political thought of the post-World War II decades, that political or moral concepts might be detached from the particular arguments in which they were articulated and treated as more or less "coherent" and "perennial" doctrines (Schweber and Skinner 1969). What was missing in such accounts, Skinner argues, was an appreciation of what the authors in question were *doing* in writing what they did. Invoking the linguistic pragmatism of the later Wittgenstein, and especially the theory of speech acts delineated by J. L. Austin, Skinner has sought to mark out a realm of linguistic action that is integral to the interpretation of texts (Skinner 2002). But this is to move "attention away from 'meanings' and towards questions about agency, usage, and especially intentionality" (Skinner 2002: 2). In other words, the contextualist turn to speech acts, to what authors self-consciously thought they were doing in making particular claims in particular texts, naturally involves the study of political, social, and moral theorists as *actors* within discrete social contexts: contextualism leads us to the sociology of the knowledge-makers.

In practice, the so-called Cambridge School in the history of political thought has tended to split between those, like Pocock, who prefer to focus on the broad structures of "political languages," and those, like Skinner, who concentrate on the "innovating ideologists" whose rhetorical virtuosity reshapes our normative political languages (Bevir 1999). Nonetheless, the general thrust

of contextual intellectual historiography has been to treat canonical figures such as Machiavelli, Hobbes, Locke, and Smith as "theory-politicians" engaged in ideological contests with other such "politicians" over the legitimation of the questionable political and social practices of their day (Palonen 2003). Texts like *Leviathan* or *The Wealth of Nations* are thus read as attempts to extend, retract, or displace the application of normative concepts to contested institutions or practices – as, for example, we see in the attempt by Hobbes to redefine the meaning of "liberty" in the context of his defence of absolute monarchy (Skinner 2008). We should recognize, then, that contextualist historiography in the tradition of Skinner and Pocock provides an important set of analytical tools for making sense of political and social theorizing *as* political and social practices.

If, however, the new sociology of ideas defines itself, in part, as the study of *intellectuals* in their respective social fields, then there is an element of anachronism in the appeal to the scholarship of the Cambridge School. To explain: it is misleading to speak of Hobbes or Smith as "intellectuals," for this is a term of nineteenth-century Anglophone coinage (Collini 2006: 18), and was perforce most certainly not an actors' category or an intelligible social role in the early modern period. The contextualist approach has in fact been extended by sociologists of ideas and intellectual historians into the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Camic 1991; Gross 2008). But, in addition to this extension of contextualist method, we must also note a second point of access that intellectual history has provided for the sociology of intellectuals: the history of academic disciplines. This may seem a counterintuitive claim, given our earlier suggestion that intellectuals are those who break the bounds of pure expertise, so let us start with some basic historiographical observations.

Putting a text or a thinker "in context" requires, as we have just noted, the reconstruction of hand-to-hand battles over the application of legitimizing (or delegitimizing) concepts to contested social and political practices; such a task usually entails the mapping of a local network or community in which the terms of dispute were understood and the issues at hand thrashed out. Now, when we deal with "intellectuals" or knowledge-producers in the modern period, such local networks often centre on academic disciplines, the function of which is to train neophytes in the often esoteric practices and problematics of the field in question. Hence another core strand in the intellectual–historical study of intellectuals is the investigation of the formation and dissipation of disciplines, and the cultural capital that accrues from the expertise they provide.

In its earliest phases, the history of disciplines was polarized between "discipline history" and "intellectual history" (Collini 1988), or, in slightly different terms, between "disciplinary history" and "the history of disciplines" (Novick 1988). Pioneers such as the historian of anthropology George Stocking recorded a gulf between the "internal" histories of disciplines that practitioners told themselves and the more contextual histories that those who mined the disciplines for historical insights were apt to write (Stocking 1965). In recent decades, however, two factors have combined to make this dichotomy less salient (Geary 2008). First, practitioners' histories, perhaps unsurprisingly, have profited from an increasingly sophisticated literature on the history of disciplines, and, in some cases, have become reflexive in their treatment of the notions of tradition, conceptual change, and the construction disciplinary boundaries. Volumes on history (Novick 1988), sociology (Calhoun 2007), economics (Mirowski 2002), and political science (Adcock, Bevir, and Stimson 2007) self-consciously tread the line between discipline history and intellectual history, and tend to be produced by figures with allegiances both to history and to the discipline they seek to investigate. Second, historical studies of the nature of discipline formation, pedagogy, and the exercise of specialist expertise have helped make clear what is involved in the reproduction of academic disciplines. The history and sociology of science have been central to these developments, with the suggestive remarks of Kuhn (1962) on the grounds of scientific communal norms and Michael Polanyi (1958) on the "tacit knowledge" required for expert practices inspiring more recent work on experimental and theoretical

practices and the "power of pedagogy" in the creation of scientific communities (Warwick 2003; Kaiser 2005a, 2005b; Isaac 2012).

As a result of these changes, we find more scholars moving back and forth across the formerly sharp divide between internal and external histories of disciplines, and between history and sociology. The University of Chicago sociologist Andrew Abbott is a good example of the new ecumenism. Abbott has contributed both to the history of sociology, in the form of a local history of the Chicago School of sociology (Abbott 1999), and to the formal sociology of disciplines (Abbott 2000). More importantly, the sharpening of our historical appreciation of the structure and reproduction of disciplinary expertise helps to make the analytical category of "intellectuals" somewhat clearer. To return to our earlier distinction, the social role of intellectuals and public intellectuals can be grasped against the background of the possession of expertise. An account of what "expertise" consists of is exactly what the new literature on the history and sociology of disciplines, with its emphasis on pedagogy, training, and research tools, gives us. Many intellectuals are disciplinary experts who speak to publics outside their own discipline.

The historian Stefan Collini invokes a similar "structure of relations" in defining the sociological conditions for the performance of the role of the intellectual (2006). One of the fundamental conditions of this role, he has argued, is a "qualifying activity" that "is seen *both* as cultivating mental and imaginative capacities beyond the ordinary *and* as issuing in certain kinds of truths or understanding that exceed what is required for merely technical contributions to the practical and economic life of that society" (p. 54). While such an activity may not always involve the possession of distinction in a scientific or scholarly discipline, being distinguished in academic research is exactly the sort of qualification that has allowed many modern intellectuals, from Raymond Aron to Noam Chomsky, to make their names. A number of recent intellectual biographies of figures such as William James, J. Robert Oppenheimer, and Henry Kissinger zero in on the delicate interplay between expert knowledge and extra-disciplinary claims to political or cultural authority (Thorpe 2006; Suri 2007; Bordogna 2008).

These considerations bring us face to face with more directly historical questions about intellectuals in politics. Needless to say, a comprehensive survey of this issue lies far beyond the remit of this chapter. But we can suggest a central theme or problematic: the increasing difficulty of defining a social group or class of intellectuals and assessing their "impact" upon society and policy. The foregoing reflections on the shared methods and agendas of intellectual history and the sociology of ideas have sought to demonstrate the increasingly wide array of practices and institutions needed to make sense of intellectual life. A set of moving targets is in play: intellectuals, disciplines, and publics. The historical referents of each of these terms, as much recent historical literature attests, have been extremely diverse. Before we fill out this observation, however, we must note that the plasticity of these concepts and the practices they map is sometimes obscured by the persistence of some rigid cultural prejudices about the history of intellectuals.

The first, largely negative, trope centres on the notion that intellectuals betray their vocational commitment to universal, nonpartisan truth when they engage in the messy world of real politics, and that the results of such engagements tend to be politically and intellectually deleterious. This was the guiding theme of Benda's *La trahison des clercs*, but we can find similarly critical judgments of intellectuals in politics in subsequent tracts written by the likes of Raymond Aron (1957), Mark Lilla (2001), and Thomas Sowell (2010). Another view, more positive if also nostalgic, is that the intellectual has the "responsibility" to speak truth to power, but that this public, critical vocation of the intellectual has today, in the era of academic specialization, been lost. This is a position that – in a sign of the ambiguity of Benda's famous text – has been ascribed to Benda himself, and which has found its way into important recent books by figures including Edward Said (1994) and Russell Jacoby (1987).

The difficulty with jeremiads and lamentations of this sort is that they tend to treat one particular historical instantiation of the public intellectual as the normative model for all other times and places. Often, a "Victorian" image of humanist intellectuals such as Zola, Mill, or Emerson is at work, with the "public" in question that of the readership of wide-circulation periodicals or the audiences that gathered in lyceums and public lecture theatres. Undoubtedly, the professionalized disciplinary sociologist, economist, or philosopher of the post-World War II decades would not measure up by comparison, and so one is not surprised to find "autopsies" and epitaphs for the public intellectual in the age of specialization (Posner 2001; Jennings 2002). As Collini has observed, however, we must not take such critiques at face value: the complaint that intellectuals have failed in politics, or the claim that they no longer have a role in public life, has frequently served as the very means by which "intellectuals" have sought to carve out a space in the society and politics of their time (Collini 2006).

Just as important a refutation of the transhistorical vision of intellectuals and society is the recognition that the very meaning of publics, disciplines, and intellectuals has changed, especially during the past half-century. For example, the boom in higher education in the United States after World War II blurred the line between the academy and the public, and between disciplines and national culture. On the one hand, the academic humanities took over the task of preserving and interpreting America's, and the West's, cultural heritage, a function that had previously belonged to men of letters and the "public moralists" of the Victorian era (Hollinger 2006). At the same time, the sheer volume of students attending college and graduate school meant that the academy, with its professors, students, and alumni, became a "public sphere" unto itself, with its own norms and customs (Collini 1994, 2012, 2017; Lamont 2009). In an era of mass higher education, disciplines often became expansive institutions that produced the armies of specialists needed to staff the increasingly technical apparatus of America's educational and security infrastructure (Kaiser 2002). A figure such as the economist Walt Rostow could write a best-selling book on economic development and shape national security policy simultaneously (Milne 2008). As the United States battled with the Soviet Union to win the "Third World" for capitalist democracy, social and political scientists became key voices in the promotion of modernization initiatives in Asia, Africa, and Latin America (Latham 2000; Gilman 2003; Engerman 2018). Finally, scientists in possession of the most esoteric and demanding sorts of specialized technical knowledge, men like the theoretical physicist J. Robert Oppenheimer, became central figures in eminently political debates about security and energy policy. (Schweber 2000; Thorpe 2006).

In such a world, traditional Victorian models of intellectuals, disciplines, and publics were no longer helpful; the lines connecting politics, policy, and expertise required sharper and more varied analytical tools, some of which we have surveyed above. The rethinking of the sociology of ideas, and of the social role of intellectuals, is an ongoing task to which sociology, science studies, and intellectual history can contribute.

References

Abbott, Andrew. 1999. *Department and Discipline: Chicago Sociology at One Hundred*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Abbott, Andrew. 2000. *Chaos of Disciplines*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Adcock, Robert, Mark Bevir, and Shannon C. Stimson. 2007. *Modern Political Science: Anglo-American Exchanges since 1880*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Agger, Ben. 2000. *Public Sociology: From Social Facts to Literary Acts*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Alexander, J. 2016. "Dramatic Intellectuals." *International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society*, *29*: 341–358.

Alexander, J. *et al*. 2004. *Cultural Trauma and Collective Identity*. Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Aron, Raymond. 1957. *The Opium of the Intellectuals*. Trans. Terence Kilmartin. London: Secker & Warburg.

Baert, P. 2015. *The Existentialist Moment: The Rise of Sartre as a Public Intellectual*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Baert, P. and M. Morgan. 2018. "A Performative Framework for the Study of Intellectuals." *European Journal of Social Theory*, 21. 3: 222–329.

Barnes, Barry, David Bloor, and John Henry. 1996. *Scientific Knowledge: A Sociological Analysis*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Bauman, Zygmunt. 1991. *Legislators and Interpreters: On Modernity, Postmodernity, and Intellectuals*. Cambridge: Polity.

Bell, Daniel. 1973. *The Coming of Post-industrial Society: A Venture in Social Forecasting*. New York: Basic Books.

Benda, Julien. 1928 [1927]. *The Treason of the Intellectuals*. New York: William Morrow.

Bevir, Mark. 1999. *The Logic of the History of Ideas*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bloor, David. 1991. *Knowledge and Social Imaginary*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Bordogna, Francesca. 2008. *William James at the Boundaries: Philosophy, Science, and the Geography of Knowledge*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Bourdieu, Pierre. 1988. *Homo Academicus*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Bourdieu, Pierre. 1996. *State Nobility: Elite Schools in the Field of Power*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Bourdieu, Pierre. 1998. *On Television*. New York: New Press.

Bourdieu, Pierre. 1999. *Acts of Resistance: Against the Tyranny of the Market*. New York: New Press.

Bourdieu, Pierre. 2003. *Firing Back: Against the Tyranny of the Market II*. London: Verso.

Burawoy, Michael. 2005. "For Public Sociology." *American Sociological Review*, 70: 4–28.

Calhoun, Craig, ed. 2007. *Sociology in America: A History*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Camic, Charles. 1987. "The Making of a Method: A Historical Reinterpretation of the Early Parsons." *American Sociological Review*, 52. 4: 421–439.

Camic, Charles. 1991. "Introduction: Talcott Parsons before *the Structure of Social Action*." In *Talcott Parsons: The Early Essays*, ed. Charles Camic. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Camic, Charles. 1992. "Reputation and Predecessor Selection: Parsons and the Institutionalists." *American Sociological Review*, 57. 4: 421–445.

Camic, Charles and Neil Gross. 2001. "The New Sociology of Ideas." In *The Blackwell Companion to Sociology*, ed. Judith R. Blau. Oxford: Blackwell.

Camic, Charles, Neil Gross, and Michelle Lamont, eds. 2011. *Social Knowledge in the Making*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Collini, Stefan. 1988. "'Discipline History' and 'Intellectual History': Reflections on the Historiography of the Social Sciences in Britain and France." *Revue de Synthese*, 101. 3: 387–399.

Collini, Stefan. 1994. "My Public is Bigger than Yours: Professors, Critics, and Other Intellectuals." *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences*, 30. 4: 380–387.

Collini, Stefan. 2006. *Absent Minds: Intellectuals in Britain*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Collini, Stefan. 2012. *What Are Universities For?* London: Penguin.

Collini, Stefan. 2017. *Speaking of Universities*. London and New York: Verso.

Collins, Randall. 1998. *The Sociology of Philosophies: A Global Theory of Intellectual Change*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Engerman, David. 2018. *The Price of Aid: The Economic Cold War in India*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Eyerman, R. 2008. *Cultural Trauma: Slavery and the Formation of African American Identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Eyerman, R. 2011. "Intellectuals and Cultural Trauma." *European Journal of Social Theory*, 14. 4: 453–467.

Geary, Daniel. 2008. "Every Social Scientist Her Own Historian." *Modern Intellectual History*, 5. 2: 399–410.

Gilman, Nils. 2003. *Mandarins of the Future: Modernization Theory in Cold War America*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Gouldner, Alvin. 1979. *The Future of Intellectuals and the Rise of the New Class*. New York: Seabury.

Gramsci, Antonio. 1971 [1929–35]. *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci*. New York: International Publishers.

Gross, Neil. 2008. *Richard Rorty: The Making of an American Philosopher*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Hollinger, David, ed. 2006. *The Humanities and the Dynamics of Inclusion since World War II*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Isaac, Joel. 2012. *Working Knowledge: Making the Human Sciences from Parsons to Kuhn*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Jacoby, Russell. 1987. *The Last Intellectuals: American Culture in the Age of Academe*. New York: Basic Books.

Jennings, Jeremy. 2002. "Deaths of the Intellectual: A Comparative Autopsy." In *The Public Intellectual*, ed. Helen Small. Oxford: Blackwell.

Kaiser, David. 2002. "Cold War Requisitions, Scientific Manpower, and the Production of American Physicists after World War II." *Historical Studies in the Physical and Biological Sciences*, *33*: 131–159.

Kaiser, David. 2005a. *Drawing Theories Apart: The Dispersion of Feynman Diagrams in Postwar Physics*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Kaiser, David. 2005b. *Pedagogy and the Practice of Science*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Kuhn, Thomas. 1962. *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Lamont, Michele. 1987. "How to Become a Dominant French Philosopher: The Case of Jacques Derrida." *American Journal of Sociology*, *93. 3*: 584–622.

Lamont, Michele. 2009. *How Professors Think: Inside the Curious World of Academic Judgement*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Latham, Michael E. 2000. *Modernization as Ideology: American Social Science and "Nation-Building" in the Kennedy Era*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press.

Latour, Bruno. 2005. *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Lilla, Mark. 2001. *The Reckless Mind: Intellectuals in Politics*. New York: New York Review of Books.

Mannheim, Karl. 1936 [1929]. *Ideology and Utopia*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Merton, Robert K. 1968. "The Matthew Effect in Science: The Reward and Communication Systems of Science Are Reconsidered." *Science*, *159. 3810*: 56–63.

Milne, David. 2008. *America's Rasputin: Walt Rostow and the Vietnam War*. New York: Hill & Wang.

Mirowski, Philip. 2002. *Machine Dreams: Economics Becomes a Cyborg Science*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Morgan, M. and P. Baert. 2018. "Acting out Ideas; Performative Citizenship in the Black Consciousness Movement." *American Journal of Cultural Sociology*, *6*: 455–489.

Nisbet, Robert. 1997. *The Degradation of the Academic Dogma*, 2nd edn. New Jersey: Transaction Publishers.

Novick, Peter. 1988. *That Noble Dream: The "Objectivity Question" and the American Historical Profession*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Palonen, Kari. 2003. *Quentin Skinner: History, Politics, Rhetoric*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Polanyi, Michael. 1958. *Personal Knowledge: Towards a Post-critical Philosophy*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Popper, Karl. 1950. *The Open Society and its Enemies*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Posner, Richard A. 2001. *Public Intellectuals: A Study of Decline*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Said, Edward. 1994. *Representations of the Intellectual*. London: Vintage.

Schweber, S. S. 2000. *In the Shadow of the Bomb: Oppenheimer, Bethe, and the Moral Responsibility of the Scientist*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Schweber, S. S. and Quentin Skinner. 1969. "Meaning and Understanding in the History of Ideas." *History and Theory*, *8. 1*: 3–53.

Skinner, Q. 2002. *Visions of Politics, vol. 1: Regarding Method*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Skinner, Q. 2008. *Hobbes and Republican Liberty*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sowell, Thomas. 2010. *Intellectuals and Society*. New York: Basic Books.

Stocking, George. 1965. "On the Limits of 'Presentism' and 'Historicism' in the Historiography of the Behaviorial Sciences." *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences*, *1. 3*: 211–218.

Suri, Jeremy. 2007. *Henry Kissinger and the American Century*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Thorpe, Charles. 2006. *Oppenheimer: The Tragic Intellect*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Warwick, Andrew. 2003. *Masters of Theory: Cambridge and the Rise of Mathematical Physics*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Power and violence in the political thought of Hannah Arendt

Philip Walsh

Hannah Arendt was a key intellectual figure of the 20th century, whose writings have deeply impacted philosophy, social and political theory and the social sciences. Her ideas have found new purchase today in the light of many important recent developments, including the rise of political populism worldwide, rapid technological shifts and changing relationships across generations, classes and nations. Arendt developed a unique perspective that shaped her engagements with the important developments of her own time, including totalitarianism, social movements, power, politics, morality and evil and the frontiers of the human condition itself. Her insights into these topics have proved prescient and enduring, and her style of theorizing presents important challenges to contemporary social and political theory. Arendt was impatient with disciplinary conventions, although she identified herself as a political theorist, and her influence is most visible in how we think about politics and power today. This chapter discusses her distinctive contribution to theorizing the relationship between power and violence, contextualizing this within the ontological framework she provides in her (1998 [1958]) *The Human Condition*, while noting some of the limitations she encountered in applying her theory to the events of her time.

A decade of violence

In 1969, Arendt published the small book, *On Violence*. In it, she offered an unusual and combative perspective on the role of violence in American and world politics over the previous decade. The events she references – decolonizing struggles, racial conflict in American cities, police violence and calls for historical justice – loom at least as large today as they did in 1969. Arendt was primarily concerned with criticizing what she took to be the romanticization of violence by advocates of these causes at the time. But she also took some explicit stances in the book that have alienated her from some of her contemporary sympathizers and natural interlocutors in academia and beyond.[1] This was particularly the case with respect to Arendt's interventions into America's troubled history of racial politics. In the book, she is scornful of demands for desegregationist policies in housing, contemptuous of calls for decolonizing university curricula, and barely mentions the gains of the civil rights movement. This is consistent with her earlier intervention, the 1959 (2003) essay "Reflections on Little Rock", which criticized the tactics, if

not the goals, of advocates for desegregation of public schools in the American South. Arendt's insensitivities to the plight of African-American causes, in particular, appear to be in striking contradiction to her stances on anti-Semitism, her support for revolutionaries in Hungary and Czechoslovakia and her own purported internationalism. Her implicit commitments in the book also seem problematic. For example, although in *On Violence*, she affirms her empathy with the civil rights movement and aversion to its racist opposition, and notes the "sheer courage" (1969: 16) of the student-backed anti-war movements, the enthusiasm has seemed undercooked to many critics. Martin Luther King Jr. is not mentioned explicitly, although his assassination occurred only a year earlier. The Algerian and other anti-colonial revolutions are referenced only obliquely, and the student movement is lauded for its success in "small and relatively harmless enterprises" (16, n. 22). As a consequence of these and her other controversial positions – including the Eichmann affair and her long friendship and defense of the Nazi philosopher, Martin Heidegger – a small academic industry has sprung up aimed at debunking Arendt's claims to insight into the politics of her day. Her perceived defense of (a version of) "American exceptionalism", her Cold Warrior stance and her Eurocentric dismissal of a politics of the Third World add to the difficulties in reading the book sympathetically today.[2]

While *On Violence* seems unbalanced in terms of its interventions into specific issues, the core of the book is in fact a theoretical argument to the effect that political theorists, on both the right and the left, misunderstand the meanings of power and violence, as political phenomena, and that this is not just a problem for "theory", but also for those who wish to carry theory into politics. This argument is directed primarily against figures and schools of political and social thought that span, roughly, the left of the political spectrum, and include figures still widely read and appreciated today. Frantz Fanon is one of these, who is lionized today as a founder of post-colonial thought. Although Arendt treats his thought seriously, she argues that his theory (though not his anti-colonialist cause) is dangerously mistaken, shot through with concepts that are "clearly inconsistent with their politics" (1969: 22). More seriously, he glorifies revolutionary violence as inherently liberating (75). Jean-Paul Sartre's statements embracing Fanon are "irresponsible [and] grandiose" (20), his supposed commitment to Marxism in blatant contradiction with his celebration of violence as a "purifying" force in anti-colonial struggles. She also dismisses Noam Chomsky's view that revolutionary violence is increasingly unlikely in the face of neo-imperialist interventions in Vietnam and elsewhere. Finally, she goes on, in the final section of the book, to attack the assumptions of liberal theory, or what today travels under the moniker of rational action thinking. "Nothing", she suggests, "has so constantly been refuted by reality as the credo of 'enlightened self-interest'" (78). Arendt's dismissive tone, in particular in her critique of each of these figures or schools, has led to a view, parallel to the criticisms noted above, that she was something of an intellectual provocateur rather than a serious academic. The fact that she possessed few of the trappings of academic respectability and civility has given further weight to this impression.[3]

Arendt's interventions into the political questions of her day in *On Violence* may indeed be problematic. However, I argue here that her critique of the theoretical perspectives she engages with are consistent with her original and sophisticated theories of power and violence, that this critique has not been properly appreciated and that it provides an important perspective on enduring questions of power and politics. While *On Violence* contains some of her most intriguing insights into the character of power, it depends on more fundamental arguments which are to be found not in her writings on the events of the 1960s, but in the ontological framework that she developed and laid out in her (1998 [1958]) *The Human Condition*. Her contribution to an understanding of power and her political theory stands or falls in line with the argument developed in this book. The comments on violence and power that appear in *On Violence*

therefore assume familiarity with the earlier philosophical work (although Arendt nowhere acknowledges this).

We can find a clue to the connection between the two books in Arendt's reference to her opponents' refusal to make important distinctions between "such key words such as 'power', 'strength', 'force', 'authority', and finally 'violence' – all of which refer to distinct, different phenomena" (43). This is coupled, she goes on, with a determination to "reduce public affairs to the business of domination" (44, italics added). The double fallacy is revealed in C. Wright Mills' – one of the intellectual lodestars by which the 1960s New Left steered its course – conviction that: "All politics is a struggle for power; the ultimate kind of power is violence" (35). Arendt vehemently disagreed with both these statements. Power and violence are, she says, different – even opposites (56). Violence can be justified but "it never will be legitimate" (52), while power needs legitimacy (ibid.). We get a further clue to the distinction Arendt is trying to draw when she insists that violence, as opposed to power, is instrumental, and, she avers, "is rational to the extent that it is effective in reaching the end that must justify it". (79). Self-interest too is instrumental; it corresponds to the structure of means-ends reasoning and assumes the capacity to foresee a concrete outcome which can be consciously aimed at. But power, she argues, refers to ways of acting that are opposed to instrumentality. Apart from instrumentality, Arendt also draws attention to the distinction between collective and individual orientations within this family of political concepts. Strength "designates something in the singular, an individual entity" (44), while power is "never the property of the individual; it belongs to the group" (ibid.). Authority straddles the distinction: it "can be vested in persons … or it can be vested in offices … [or] hierarchical offices" (45). Authority, strength, force and violence and power therefore all refer to distinct phenomena, and we might agree with Arendt that it is important to keep the distinctions in mind. However, it is important that Arendt is saying more than this. Power on the one hand, and violence, strength and authority on the other, are not simply different things, she suggests, but different *kinds of things*. In other words, her definitions of each of these terms, and her arguments for their validity, are not based on epistemic, linguistic or historical – let alone moral – but on ontological grounds: "[T]o use [these terms] as synonyms … has resulted in a kind of blindness to the realities they correspond to" (43). Arendt's position is therefore to be understood as a type of realism. She thinks that the concepts we deploy to describe human relationships both within and outside the realm of the political are not arbitrary, and their meaning cannot be subverted without also losing sight of the realities they represent. In what follows, I argue for this interpretation of her political thought, by focusing initially on *The Human Condition*, the book in which she presents her social and political ontology most thoroughly before returning to the political concepts discussed in *On Violence*.

Social ontology in *The Human Condition*

The school of thought within the social sciences that has most closely associated itself with the idea of social ontology in recent years has been critical realism. I am not concerned here with the extent to which Arendt's ontology is compatible with the core critical realist programme. But a key point of their convergence is the common commitment to anti-reductionism. Anti-reductionism in the social sciences means two things. First, that collective phenomena, including survival units such as states, together with social institutions, including corporations, universities, schools and families cannot be understood by being reduced to their individual component parts. This claim – sometimes presented in terms of Durkheim's original theorization of society as a reality sui generis, and as opposed to methodological individualism – is an ontological one. It is to be distinguished both from the pragmatist – ultimately epistemological – claim that it

is merely most useful to deal with collective or corporate entities, and from the constructionist claim that collectivities consist primarily in the conventionalist beliefs people have of them. Realists are committed to the claim that social entities are what exists, not merely a reflection of how we conceptualize them. The second meaning of anti-reductionism, which is shared by realists and Arendt, is that social reality, by virtue of the variety of human relationships, is differentiated; not all relations are of a material, political or instrumental kind. The idea can be summed up in Pierpaolo Donati and Margaret Archer's (2015) claim that realists are opposed to "flat social ontologies" (195). Though Arendt used different terminology and theoretical reference points, the social ontology she develops in *The Human Condition* is consistent with these commitments.

But Arendt's social ontology derives from a rather different tradition than that from which most critical realism descends. Her background in Heidegger's "fundamental ontology" was formative for her overall perspective, and this is clearly visible in her more philosophical writings. *The Human Condition*, however, is not concerned with metaphysics, or what she calls "thought-things", but with human activity; specifically with the triad of human activities that she takes to be a common baseline for all human beings[4]; those of labour, fabrication and action. In Arendt's terms, it is the human capacity to engage in each of these three fundamental activities that generates a human world. This "consists of things produced by human activities; but the things that owe their existence exclusively to men nevertheless constantly condition their human makers" (1998 [1958]: 9). Moreover, she argues, it is important that we recognize the distinctness between these three types of human activity and the kinds of institutions that arise from each (her variation on the realist refusal to accept flat ontologies). Such distinctions are central to both the content and the tenor of Arendt's social and political theory. As she waspishly insists, against her contemporaries, "[t]here exists, however, a silent agreement in most discussions among political and social scientists that we can ignore distinctions and proceed on the assumption that everything can eventually be called anything else" (1956: 413).

Arendt also departs from most other forms of realism in her commitment to phenomenology. In her hands, phenomenology is less a method than it is an approach "akin in style though not in content" to the early Heidegger's (Taminiaux, 1998: 25). In particular, Arendt stresses the importance of language as a means of "world-disclosure". Concepts depend on the words we use for them, but words themselves are not neutral counters (as much of 20th century Anglo–American philosophy assumed, or aspired to prove). On the contrary, they carry with them the historical residues of past meanings, valuations and associations with various practices. Close attention to these can reveal the human meaning of the concepts which we bring to the world. Thus, the fact that every European language makes the distinction between "labour" and "work" is significant; it reveals that terms that we have come to identify with each other as a matter of course in fact refer to quite distinct activities. Indeed, "[i]t is language, and the fundamental human experiences underlying it, rather than theory, that teaches us that the things of the world… are of a very different nature and produced by quite different kinds of activities" (1998 [1958]: 94). "Labour" carries with it long-sedimented associations with birth, life and death that are integral to its original meaning. Labour is an activity oriented to cyclical nature, to our biological being and the reproduction of life. The products of labour are necessities, consumables that grow and decay and which have no lasting existence in the world. The experience of labour is therefore shot through with associations of burdensomeness and futility, with "eternal necessity imposed by nature" (104) and with the low regard in which it has been held within most human societies. But it is also associated with the unreflective happiness of "purposeless regularity" (ibid.), particularly where it is carried out communally. Indeed, labour is fundamentally a collective activity; it is where human beings confront their biological being, an inherent component of which is

their primordial sociality. The meaning of the activity of labour, together with our fundamental experience of it, is therefore revealed in the terms we use to describe it. It takes place, and serves to reproduce, the reality of "human nature" which is a part of, but by no means exhausts, the reality of the human condition.

Arendt uses the same phenomenological style to trace the meaning of the activity of work or (as she renders it consistently in later writings) fabrication. Fabrication consists in the production of durable things in the world. It requires planning and control, and the categories of means and ends are integral to its meaning. According to Arendt, the 19th century is characterized by an overwhelming valorization of the activity of fabrication, and the figure of the human being as a maker, *homo faber,* came to be understood as the most salient feature of the human condition. It is also associated with individualism. The process of techne, of aiming for and executing a bounded project in the world is one that is archetypically the achievement of the individual craftsman. Arendt explores the meaning of fabrication in *The Human Condition* through an extended engagement with the work of Karl Marx. His understanding of modern alienation – as fundamentally about the degradation of the relationship between the craftsman and the artefact – as well as his vision of what would constitute a world beyond alienation, reveal some of the most important values and associations that attach to the meaning of fabrication. Indeed, Arendt argues that – notwithstanding the rejection of other features of his thought – Marx's vision of *homo faber* has come to prevail, in the modern world, as the dominant way in which all human activities have come to be understood, and the yardstick by which their valuation is measured. This is a central feature of Arendt's criticism of a key feature of modern industrial society, or at least the type of society that appeared to be ascendant in North America in the post-World War II era.

The perspective underlying this criticism is closely linked to Arendt's understanding of the third fundamental human activity, that of action. This is characterized partly by its contrast with the activities of fabrication and labour. Action includes, above all, the activity of speech. It is through words and deeds that human communities and human relationships are secured and through which human agents disclose their identity to others. In a manner reminiscent of how contemporary recognition theory understands the process by which agents establish and maintain a stable self-identity, Arendt (1998 [1958]) argues that

> [i]n acting and speaking, men show who they are, reveal actively their personal identities and thus make their appearance in the human world … . The disclosure of the 'who' in contradistinction to 'what' somebody is – his qualities, gifts, talents, and shortcomings, which he may display or hide – is implicit in everything somebody says and does.
>
> (179)

Speech and action are therefore intrinsically social – they occur within the "in-between space" of human affairs. They are also subject to different social valuations. The Ancient world of Greece and Rome, Arendt argues, had a higher estimation of the worth of action and speech – she claims – than do moderns, and it is a central feature of Arendt's political thought that an active citizenry, committed to speaking truth within the public space of appearances, is a necessary feature for the success of modern democracy. No doubt this was one feature of American political culture, in which the tradition of citizen councils and town-hall-style rule is dominant, that appealed to her.

Human society does not only consist in the ongoing enactment of these fundamental human activities but in their reification, or institutionalization. Although Arendt avoided explicit identification of their institutional correlates, she distinguishes – in a manner similar to Georg

Simmel's conceptualization of society[5] – between an objective and a subjective realm of human interests. "These interests constitute, in the word's most literal significance, something which *inter-est*, which lies between people and therefore can relate to and bind people together" (182). The intangible, "subjective" sphere of the in-between that arises from speech and deeds she calls (again drawing from Simmel) the "web of human relationships". This "web" is closely associated with the public sphere, or, more broadly, the sphere of politics.

The triad of activities gives rise, then, to three distinct spheres, within which particular kinds of human relationships emerge which need to be sharply distinguished from each other. Some of the relevant associations can be summarized in the following table.

Activity	Achieved via	Outcome	Institutional correlate	Key category
Labour	Body	Consumables, necessities	Household	Reproduction
Work (fabrication)	Hands	Technology, works of art	Economy	Means-ends
Action	Speech	Web of human relationships	Res publica	Power

Contemporary social realists would be tempted to identify the three institutionalized spheres associated with the triad of activities with anthropologically more or less constant structures; that is, relatively permanent, deep-seated features of societies with distinct functions that correspond to fundamental human needs, and which are reproduced across time and space in many different kinds of societies. Nevertheless, this would be to mistake the level at which Arendt's distinction between the triad of activities is operating. The activities do not form social structures, but distinct orders of social reality. The properties of the relationships within these orders are distinctive and constrain the kinds of activities that are meaningful or effective within each. Specifically, Arendt argues that activities that take place within the sphere of fabrication are primarily instrumental. They entail planning and execution, in accordance with human intentionality, archetypically within a world of objects and artefacts, and their success is judged in terms of the extent to which the envisioned ends are achieved. In contrast, action—again archetypically as speech—takes place only between human agents and, unlike fabrication, cannot be judged in terms of criteria like "success" or "completion". Indeed, "while the strength of the production process is entirely absorbed in and exhausted by the end product, the strength of the action process is never exhausted in a single deed …. The reason why we are never able to foretell with certainty the outcome and end of any action is simply that action has no end" (1998 [1958]: 233).

The meaningfulness of action is therefore not linked (or at least not primarily) to its outcome but is intrinsic to the activity itself. Action is therefore performative in the sense that its meaning does not lie outside of the appearance of the act as it is understood by other agents. This performative feature is integral to action and is strongly linked to the phenomenon of human freedom. This seems counterintuitive to contemporary readers of Arendt, but that is because, she argues, we are heirs to a misguided conception of freedom as a property of the individual will. But the sphere of action, precisely because it is constituted in terms of the web of relationships, cannot be bent to the will of an individual – or, if this happens, it is an example of tyranny or domination. Examples of freedom in action include "politics", where this term is understood broadly, as encompassing collective decision-making in general, but also actions within the private sphere, such as friendship, love and child-rearing. Above all, it is the manifested in public performance of political and moral ideals, in which the actor and the audience are mutually implicated in the performance. In all these cases, the meaning of the activities do not lie outside themselves, and they do not issue in a result by which their value is measured.

This interpretation of *The Human Condition,* as providing an account of human societies as consisting in distinct orders of social reality that correspond to the triad of human activities, has emphasized the contrasts Arendt wishes to draw between the three spheres of human activity. Action, in particular, was important for her, and she understood it in terms of the enactment of human freedom, particularly where this occurred in the public sphere.

Power, violence and authority

If we return now to Arendt's definitions of power and its cognate terms in *On Violence*, we are in a better position to understand her distinctions between them. For most of these are grounded not in an ethical stance, or realpolitik, or in Cold War ideology, but in ontological considerations, in what she takes to be the orders of social reality underlying human affairs. Violence, conceived broadly, is an activity associated with fabrication. Indeed, she claims, "violence is present in all fabrication" (1998 [1958]: 139). Notably spurning a moralistic perspective, Arendt suggests that violence is sometimes "justified"; that is, for instrumental reasons, or indeed reasons of justice, violence can be effective. Moreover, because violence is an instrument, it can be used by both the powerful and the oppressed alike and, she notes, "violence pays" (1969: 79), especially for short-term goals. However, as she goes on to point out, "the trouble is, it pays indiscriminately" and "to substitute violence for power can bring victory but the price is very high" (53). Where violence comes to form a permanent part of the political order within a society, that is when "violence, having destroyed all power, does not abdicate but, on the contrary, remains in full control" (55) it becomes terror. Although Arendt devotes only a single page of *On Violence* to exploring the political function of terror, it formed a major preoccupation of her best-known work, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. There, she argued that under totalitarian regimes, terror takes on the character of a "political principle", and that this is partly what made totalitarianism an unprecedented political phenomenon, distinct from previous examples of autocracies, despotisms and authoritarianism, with which it should not be confused (Baehr, 2010: 11–12). This is not the place to explore Arendt's theory of totalitarianism in detail, but it is worth noting that she insists that violence alone is not the chief means of enforcing totalitarian rule. This is achieved, above all, by the organized suppression of the conditions under which the human capacity for action itself is possible. Indeed, totalitarian societies aim at the reduction of the human condition to its simplest form, to a set of "identical reactions" (1994 [1950]: 240). This is why, Arendt argued, in a powerfully worded essay in 1950, that the Nazi and Soviet labour and concentration camps – apparently so "useless" to the ongoing maintenance of the social and political order – had to be understood as a central feature of their societies. The camps were "laboratories in the experiment of total domination" (240). Totalitarian regimes are therefore unique in their determination not only to crush political opposition – which can be effected through violence – but also to destroy features of the human condition itself.

Arendt argues in *On Violence* that the contrast between violence and power is an ontological one. Power is rooted in the realm of action rather than fabrication; it is therefore an inherently collective concept. In other words, power "belongs to the group" as the capacity to "act in concert" (1969: 44). Cities have, therefore, Arendt argues, traditionally been the foci of political power. But power is not to be understood narrowly, simply as the conditions of political rule. On the contrary, successful revolts against authority have also succeeded through the successful mobilization of power. Arendt's primary example of successful revolution is the American Revolution, which she compares, in *On Revolution* (1990 [1963]), with the French, to the disadvantage of the latter. More recent examples of the successful mobilization of power from below that she draws on include the non-violent movements led by Mohandas Gandhi against

British imperial rule in India, and by King for civil rights in the United States. While she notes that these movements were successful precisely because they were able to mobilize power by foreswearing violence, perhaps the most salient aspect of their success was its unexpectedness. As she notes, "all our experiences in this century [have] … constantly confronted us with the totally unexpected" (1969: 28). But this observation too affirms Arendt's ontological understanding of power, because one of the most important features of action is its unpredictability. In contrast to the activity of fabrication, the outcome of action is inherently undetermined and undeterminable. The interplay between agents within the web of relationships within which power consists cannot be subjected to prediction and control except by substituting elements of fabrication, such as strength, force or violence, for power.

I turn now to Arendt's interesting and unique account of authority. She addresses this phenomenon in *On Violence*, but also devotes a key essay (1961) to exploring its historical and theoretical meaning. Arendt's theory of authority is based less on ontological than on more general considerations, and it is worth noting its divergence from perhaps the most influential theory of authority in the social sciences, that provided by Max Weber. Weber defined authority as a type of power that derives from command–obedience relations, as "the probability that certain specific commands (or all commands) will be obeyed by a given group of persons" (1978 [1920–21]: 53). This is also Arendt's starting point in *On Violence*, and she suggests, like Weber, that authority entails a belief on the part of those subject to it, in the right of the authority to so exercise it. Famously, Weber then distinguishes between three general types of authority – traditional, legal–rational and charismatic, and this typology has provided the basis for most subsequent theories of authority – especially bureaucratic – as they have been subsequently developed within the social sciences.

Although Arendt nowhere deals directly with Weber's account of authority, her own theory converges with it in several respects. Given the centrality of the theme of totalitarianism in Arendt's thought, it is perhaps surprising that she did not write more about the role of charisma in totalitarian leadership. In general, she downplayed this element, emphasizing the mediocrity of both Stalin and Hitler as personalities (1994 [1953]: 306). Her review of Henry Picker's *Hitler's Table Talk*, a transcription of three monologues that were recorded at Hitler's headquarters from 1941 to 1944, discusses the phenomenon of his "fascination", especially in the eyes of his Generals. But Arendt suggests that this is fairly easily explained in terms of Hitler's "extraordinary self-confidence and displays of self-confidence" (291). She also had little to say about the authority of moral leadership under Gandhi or King. This reticence is perhaps hard to fathom given Arendt's consistent emphasis on recognition and individuality.

She was more interested in what Weber called traditional authority, citing the Catholic Church as an exemplar of this. In her 1961 essay, "What is Authority?", she discusses, from a phenomenological-historical perspective, the defining features of authoritarian rule. The "essential characteristic", she argues, is the belief that "the source of authority, which legitimates the exercise of power, must be beyond the sphere of power and, like the laws of nature or commands of God, must not be man-made" (110). Contemporary secular substitutes for this transcendent source potentially include secular religious ideologies of Nature and History. However, Arendt suggests in *On Violence*, that the only secular institution that was still based on authority was the university (1969: 46, n. 67). When universities rely on violence to protect themselves from rebellious students, she insists, they inevitably forfeit this.

Though opposed in very many other respects, Arendt and Weber agree that the ascent of bureaucratic rule in the 20th century presages the potential for a new kind of tyranny. In *On Violence*, Arendt argues that, indeed, the driving force behind the student movement worldwide is a revolt against the bureaucratic "rule by no-body". Under a fully developed bureaucratic form of

rule, there is no source of authority and therefore no responsibility can be assigned, "nobody left with whom one can argue …, on whom the pressures of power can be exerted" (1969, 81). This leads her to oppose bureaucratization explicitly to the potential for action, and to claim that "[it] is simply true that riots in the ghettoes and rebellions on the campuses make 'people feel they are acting together in a way that they rarely can'" (83).

But this makes it puzzling why Arendt did not embrace the civil rights movement in the United States with more enthusiasm. Here was a movement that foreswore violence and built its power around demonstrably just ideals, albeit with a strong element of charismatic authority in the person of King. Moreover, as Jeffrey Alexander (2017) has pointed out, the civil rights movement was so successful partly due to its capacity to deliver social performances of the highest drama.

> King's dramas of sacrifice and redemption were splashed across America's television screens and headlined in newspapers. Northern whites identified with the movement's sacrifice, and experienced catharsis when the black masses triumphed. Such powerful public dramaturgy inverted state power, and iterations of its nonviolent dramatizations against anti-civil violence have continued through to the present day.
>
> *(2017: 15)*

Rarely has such an exemplar of action, in the Arendtian sense, that successfully mobilized power appeared on the world stage. Although it seemed to instantiate many of her own claims about the relations between power, action and violence she found it difficult to acknowledge this at the time.

Conclusion

Arendt's *On Violence* purports to explain many of the political events of the 1960s, but was not presented in a way that makes its key elements discernible. Power, she insists, is not the same as violence; on the contrary, "they are opposites; where the one rules absolutely the other is absent. Violence appears where power is in jeopardy, but left to its own course, it ends in power's disappearance" (1969: 56). These claims were based primarily on philosophical insights that were more fully developed in *The Human Condition*. When it came to applying these ideas to the events of her day, Arendt's record was mixed. While her insights into the student movement, the public role of the universities and the consequences of bureaucratic rule still resonate, she remained largely closed to the most successful and inspiring example of her own account of political freedom in her day.

Notes

1. See, especially, Owens (2017), but also Gines (2014) and Bernasconi (1996)
2. It is hard to say how Arendt would respond to contemporary critics, but there is an unapologetic Nietzschean streak in Arendt's thought that, while it is iconoclastic with respect to the status quo, also tends to despise moralizing in politics. So when critics aim their bolts at her through a moral lens, they miss the most interesting features of her theorizing.
3. Arendt never held a full-time tenure-track academic position. She was impatient with the genteel codes of academia and little inclined to assume the kinds of deference that typically accompanied academic roles. She was often perceived as abrasive and arrogant by her peers (but as loyal and courageous by her friends).

4. I say a baseline here to avoid the imputation that those who for one reason or another lack one or more of these capacities are not fully human. Disability, of various kinds, may indeed foreclose a capacity, but then the individual must still confront this reality, thereby affirming their own participation in the human condition. For an account of the connection between the triad of activities and Arendt's critique of modernity, see Walsh (2015).

5. For the most part, Arendt had little time for sociology and sociologists. She was highly critical of Marx and Weber and wrote a hostile review of Karl Mannheim's book, *Ideology and Utopia* in 1930. Her admiration for Simmel was therefore an exception (Walsh, 2015: 34).

References

Alexander, Jeffrey (2017) 'Seizing the Stage: Social Performances from Mao Zedong to Martin Luther King Jr. to Black Lives Matter Today', *The Drama Review*, 61(1) 14–42.

Arendt, Hannah (1951) *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, New York: Harvest/HBJ.

Arendt, Hannah (1953) 'Ideology and Terror: A Novel Form of Government', *Review of Politics*, 15(3) 303–327.

Arendt, Hannah (1956) 'Authority in the Twentieth Century', *Review of Politics*, 18 (4) 403–417.

Arendt, Hannah (1958) *The Human Condition*, 2nd edition, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Arendt, Hannah (1961) *Between Past and Future: Eight Exercises in Political Thought*, New York: Penguin.

Arendt, Hannah (1963) *On Revolution*, New York: Penguin.

Arendt, Hannah (1969) *On Violence*, New York: Harvest/HBJ.

Arendt, Hannah (1994) *Essays in Understanding: Formation, Exile and Totalitarianism*, New York: Schocken Books.

Arendt, Hannah (2003) *Responsibility and Judgment*, New York: Schocken Books.

Baehr, Peter (2010) *Hannah Arendt, Totalitarianism and the Social Sciences*, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Bernasconi, Robert (1996) 'The Double Face of the Political and the Social: Hannah Arendt and America's Racial Division', *Research in Phenomenology*, 26(1) 3–24.

Donati, Pierpaolo & Archer, Margaret (2015) *The Relational Subject*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Gines, Kathryn T. (2014) *Hannah Arendt and the Negro Question*, Bloomington, Illinois: Bloomington University Press.

Owens, Patricia (2017) 'Racism in the Theory Canon: Hannah Arendt and the "One Crime in Which America Was Not Involved"', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 45(3) 403–424.

Taminiaux, Jacques (1998) *The Thracian Maid and the Professional Thinker*, Albany: SUNY Press.

Walsh, Philip (2015) *Arendt Contra Sociology: Theory, Society and Its Science*, London and New York: Routledge.

Weber, Max (1978 [1920–21]) *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, Volume 1 (tr. H. Gerth and C.W. Mills), Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Part II

New and emerging frameworks

17

Anarchist social and political theory

Ruth Kinna

In 1948, the distinguished legal philosopher Hans Kelsen highlighted a contradiction at the heart of Bolshevism, between the commitment to the state's 'withering away' and the justification of coercive dictatorship (Kelsen, 1948: 1). He explained it as a combined failure of Marx and Engels' political thought and the decision by Lenin and Stalin to make the 'withering away' conditional on the achievement of world socialist revolution. Kelsen described it as a contradiction between anarchism in theory and totalitarianism in practice, thereby conflating anarchism with Bolshevism. Though not uncommon, this was to ignore anarchist reports of Bolshevik repression, published soon after the establishment of the Soviet regime. It also disregarded the critiques of Marxism that leading anarchists had presented both before and after the October Revolution and the influence of those critiques on revolutionaries in Mexico, China and Korea. In sum, having identified the rejection of the state as the distinctive and substantive component of anarchism, Kelsen misleadingly associated it with vanguard revolution and assumed that it was intelligible within the framework of Marx's materialist history.

There are now are hundreds of guides to anarchism and the awareness that anarchism and Marxism are divergent currents in socialism is much greater now than in 1948. Yet anarchist social and political theory remains underdeveloped. Clarity is muddied by disagreements about anarchism's correct ideological configuration and by concerns to avoid canonical political theory. The effects are twofold: First, arguments about ideology rely on systems of classification which routinely theorise 'anarchy' as disorder. When concepts like 'liberty', which derive their meaning from this distinctive categorisation are applied to anarchism, the results are often distorting. Liberty presupposes law whereas anarchy demands its abolition. The mistaken inference is that anarchy is an unregulated system which recognises no rules.

Second, anarchist wariness of canonical approaches has a dampening effect on the study of political thought. In contemporary writing, anarchism is often presented as a broad social, political and cultural movement as well as, or perhaps instead of a political theory. This view does not deter historians of ideas from exploring the work of notable historical thinkers. But sensitivity to the perpetuation of knowledge hierarchies has encouraged prominent contemporary theorists to re-think anarchism as expression of movement activism. Uri Gordon's *Anarchy Alive! Anti-Authoritarian Politics from Practice to Theory* (2008) epitomises this approach. Consciously or otherwise, Gordon reverses the analytical pathway of Daniel Guérin's well-known history of ideas:

Anarchism: From Theory to Practice (1970). He also largely bypasses the work of historical figures on the grounds that nineteenth-century theory has little purchase in activist circles.

Whilst practice-based approaches facilitate reflection on current movement debates, their implicit devaluation of history impedes the interrogation of inherited conceptions and mis-conceptions. To give an example: the view that the ends and means of social transformation are inextricably linked in anarchism is engrained in the prefigurative practices of contemporary movements. Guérin was a leading proponent of this view and, in distinction to Kelsen, he noted that anarchists had consistently argued, against Marxists, that dictatorial methods were incompatible with socialist emancipation. Yet he also argued that anarchism was parasitic on Marxism and that its strategic commitment was not intellectually grounded: for him, anarchism was a visceral revolt. If prefiguration encapsulates the rejection of vanguardism, Guérin's history sheds little light on its central tenets.

Following Kelsen and Guérin, I use the critique of the state as an entry point into anarchist theory. Distinguishing anarchism from philosophic anarchism, I return to nineteenth-century social and political thought to identify its hallmarks. I argue that Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Social Contract* served as a lightening-rod for a critique of domination and that anarchists presented models of social evolution to produce a general analysis of the state as a monopolising, centralising and colonising force. The final sections use this analysis to survey post-war anarchism, showing how anarchists have extended, revised and adapted it.

The scope of anarchist theory

Ten years after the publication of Kelsen's book, David Novak (1958) argued that anarchism examines problems of power, authority and coercion by integrating social and political theory. Just over ten years later, Robert Paul Wolff's *In Defence of Anarchism* (1970) presented anarchism as a philosophical project which focused principally on questions of political obligation. Extensive research in anarchist studies has vindicated Novak. Yet, in conventional political theory, it is usually Wolff's view that prevails.

Following Wolff, philosophical anarchists reject the legitimacy of the state either because, like him, they consider that some condition of statehood necessarily renders it illegitimate or because they believe that states fail to satisfy conditions for legitimacy. Anarchists outside this group also reject the state, but their anarchism is not primarily concerned with the problem of obligation. Their social and political agendas, set in the mid-nineteenth century by P-J Proudhon (1809–1865) and Josiah Warren (1798–1874), centre on the state's origins and emergence. Confusingly, some twentieth-century historians also categorised Proudhon and Warren as philosophical anarchists. The objective is to distinguish Proudhon and Warren's American followers from the European antiauthoritarian groups that mushroomed after the collapse of the First International in 1871. Yet the anti-authoritarians who followed in Proudhon and Warren's footsteps were not philosophers in Wolff's mould. When they discussed the form and content of authority, they refused to take the state's presence for granted and challenged the political theory that purported to explain how and why civil power was constituted. From this perspective, the discussion of obligation wrongly indicated that these questions had been settled.

Nineteenth-century critique of domination and the idea of the state

The US constitution was the foil for Warren's defence of anarchy. Urging his readers to overcome their terror of the word, he placed 'self-sovereignty' at the heart of the 'American idea' and

explained that it demanded that each person assume 'his or her share of the deciding power of government' (1967 [1863] §86). As to the constitution, he remarked, 'my constitution is within me. The right of self-sovereignty in every individual is my constitution' (§138). For Proudhon, Rousseau was the touchstone for the anarchist critique. *The Social Contract* was the book of the age: its leading ideas had survived the suspension of the 'absurd' 1793 Jacobin constitution to inspire the 'most zealous reformers of political and social science' (Proudhon, 1989 [1851]: 121). Disastrously, it had 'interrupted' and 'diverted' a sixteenth-century 'judicial' French revolutionary tradition which had pointed towards the negation of government. Rousseau had silenced this tradition, and Proudhon predicted that his 'detestable' anti-socialist principle of domination would shape politics for the foreseeable future.

Proudhon attacked both the terms of Rousseau's contract and the principles of its construction. The *Social Contract* was 'an act of appointment of arbiters'. As such, it was a special form of the 'act of association' whereby 'the contracting party gives up a portion of his liberty, and submits to an annoying, often dangerous, obligation, in the more or less well-founded hope of a benefit' (ibid.: 115). Rousseau's innovation had been to eliminate the conventions that anchored rights and restricted government power. This had transformed 'the people' into an abstract body before declaring them incapable of self-government. Once arbiters had been appointed to discharge this duty on the people's behalf, they determined what constituted a transgression, how disagreements should be resolved and how decisions would be executed. Rights were meaningless in this context. Duty was all. The contract, which was not really a contract at all, amounted to tyranny.

Picking up Proudhon's themes in the later part of the nineteenth century, Michael Bakunin offered a view that was apparently more sympathetic. He argued that the *Social Contract* exemplified a liberal juridical tradition that rooted government in consent. Yet in pursing Proudhon's argument, he concluded that it was essentially merely an elaboration on the idea of the Fall. Rousseau's liberalism was part of a tradition which encompassed conservative positions derived from both divine right and Hegelian metaphysics. Unlike Proudhon, Bakunin identified Rousseau's crucial work as the *Discourse on the Origins of Inequality*. His view was that Rousseau's story of the noble savage's corruption and enslavement was fundamentally flawed because it was predicated on a fictitious idea of isolation. Bakunin argued that this construction led Rousseau wrongly to conclude that submission to authority was the only route from slavishness to sociability and from domination to virtue. Rousseau may have disparaged Christianity in the *Social Contract*, but Bakunin nevertheless accused him of bolstering the Christian message: discipline and obedience were the savage's salvation. For Bakunin, this was the leading idea of the state. It was 'political theology' and anarchism was 'antitheologism' (Bakunin, 1980 [1867]: 128–130).

Bakunin's critique represented a revision of Proudhon and Warren's anarchism. Bakunin endorsed the idea of individual liberty or sovereignty but also presented society as a natural form of association. In distinction to Warren, who thought of society as an 'artificial combination' which required the 'surrender' of 'natural sovereignty' to the 'government of combination' (1952 [1841]: 1), Bakunin contrasted it to the state: he saw Rousseau's denial of society in the state of nature as a demonstration of the artificiality of the political arrangements he had proposed. Similarly, whereas Proudhon had defended contract as an anarchist principle (differentiating it from the concepts of association and arbitration which had been erroneously harnessed to it), Bakunin loosened this connection. He also revised Proudhon's assessment of the relative strength of government and non-government traditions. His view was that the prevailing currents in political thought were and had always been statist. Rousseau had not so much put a spoke in socialism's wheel as motorise the dominant counter-revolutionary trend. Whereas Proudhon had cast anarchism as the expression of a recoverable tradition, Bakunin re-presented

it as an oppositional stance. Contrary to initial appearances, then, Bakunin hardened Proudhon's critique. His restatement of Proudhon's rejection of contract theory marked anarchism's divergence from republicanism and liberalism and the concept of domination that anarchists articulated underscored the divergence of anarchism from Marxist class theory.

Anarchists typically argued that deeply held revolutionary principles – liberty, equality and fraternity – had been distorted through the process of their institutionalisation. Proudhon identified the problem in the relationship between property and the state. His argument, set out in *What Is Property?* (1969 [1840]), was that the constitutional right to exclusive ownership introduced a permanent division between owners and non-owners. This was often described both as a class division and as enslaving. Whilst this terminology resonated with Marxism anarchists did not tie 'class' tightly to the ownership of the means of production. Instead, they argued that economic inequalities sprang from the legal enforcement of contracts between the haves and have-nots. Owners enjoyed property to waste such that they could leave their vast estates empty, whilst the property-less lacked independent means of living and were prone to hardships caused by the systemic misuse of resources. This 'domination' operated in multiple social fields, notably by institutionalising racism and enforcing patriarchy as well as wage slavery (Kinna & Prichard, 2019). As Charles Leigh James (1846–1911) remarked, states were not responsible for the Atlantic slave trade or debt bondage. But they enforced the 'statutes of the buccaneer' and the 'inhuman species of contract' that permitted these institutions to flourish (1903). Likewise, legislators enforced women's subjection to men. Voltairine de Cleyre (1866–1912) argued that protection was the pretext used to enshrine the husband's mastery over his wife. She was deprived of property, control of her body and rights to her children. The terms of the contract were brutal, but domination forced women to compete in marriage markets and tolerate rape as part of the arrangement in the knowledge that her second-best alternative was prostitution. Metaphorically, the law chained, gagged and bound women (1914: 351).

To explain domination anarchists returned to the question of the state's origins as critics of philosophical abstraction. Abstract thinking was not only associated with social contract theory but more generally with forms of intellectualism or 'utopianism' that encouraged theorists to detach themselves from the real world. This critique pointed to a shift from ideal to non-ideal theory where 'ideal' was understood unconventionally to mean the replication of knowledge, based on expertise protected by the academies, and 'non-ideal' referred to the imaginative exploration of popular beliefs and practices. Thus Peter Kropotkin (1842–1921) described socialism as the expression of ideas circulating amongst working people. It was wrongly understood as a political project dreamt up by a group of philosophers. Likewise, Louise Michel (1830–1905) argued that conventional theory encouraged objectification and remote experimentation, typically involving 'cruelties'. Anarchism was a variety of common sense or learning from experience which cultivated empathy and mutual learning (1981 [1886]: 14, 29). In state theory, social evolution provided the model.

Social evolution

Like Proudhon and Bakunin, the generations who followed them were immersed in work of August Comte, Herbert Spencer and Charles Darwin. Kropotkin's theory of mutual aid was the most influential analysis, but his fellow geographer, Léon Metchnikoff (1838–1888) produced an important evolutionary taxonomy of social orders and in America, Charles Leigh James's account of evolutionary processes enjoyed wide circulation.

Metchnikoff's goal was to produce a three-stage series of association applicable to all earthly life. It described 'mechanical adherence' at the lower level, 'subordination' at the intermediate

stage and 'consensus' at the high point (1886: 434). Consensus, defined as the voluntary and conscious co-operation of 'autonomous individuals', pointed to anarchy. Yet the series was not a linear progression. Cells and their composite structures functioned permanently at the mechanical stage. In human and insect species, subordination appeared to be a stable form. Moreover, whilst consensus was achievable by humans, Metchnikoff found no 'immovable natural law of evolution' (ibid.: 435) to advance its progression, beyond the practice of voluntary co-operation.

Kropotkin's theory of 'mutual aid' also suggested complexity. Following Metchnikoff, it synthesised natural and social science to critique the Social Darwinist view that species fitness was determined by individual competition and that *laissez-faire* liberalism was the law's best and 'natural' social expression. The theory corrected the Social Darwinist thesis by establishing the importance of co-operation for species fitness and showed that co-operation was embedded in human and non-human social practices (n.d. [1902]). Like Metchnikoff, Kropotkin argued that the co-operative factor in evolution provided a basis for anarchy, not a driver. When he modelled the functioning of mutual aid in a social series, he reported only partial success. In 'savage' forms, mutual aid was restricted to members of the family or tribe. The historicised model, the city-state, suffered from poor institutional design: citizens had excluded rural workers and allowed social and economic inequalities to emerge. Self-aggrandising barons were thus emboldened to forge alliance with local economic elites, undermine social cohesion in the cities and reset social relations on an exploitative and hierarchical plan. The 'barbarian' village community was the stable type. Here mutual aid was practiced by all members, irrespective of clan affiliation, and it remained strong globally, despite the eclipse of the city-state. Kropotkin argued for its preservation: his fear was that the further entrenchment of the state, propelled by technological development on either the capitalist or Marxist model, would lead to its eradication.

James outlined a theory of progressive enlightenment and identified a linear path to anarchy. Like Kropotkin, he associated the rise of the state with the institutionalisation of law and systems of social stratification based on religion, military power, territorialisation of land and resources. However, in contrast to Kropotkin, he told a story of continuing enlightenment. Evolution would allow justice and liberty to flourish and the 'natural' propensity for war and conquest to be abandoned. James also linked the origins of the state to scarcity, competition and a 'savage' or 'primitive' instinct for 'robbery' backed by violence, invoking Malthus's law of population increase to support his case. Malthus's assumption was the mainstay of the Social Darwinist view of nature as a competitive fight and Kropotkin rejected it. For James, on the other hand, scarcity was a problem that superior intellects could solve. Following Marx, he argued that abundance was achievable through technological development and, adapting Proudhon and Warren, that justice was attainable through education.

James's ensuing account of civilisation was inherently racist; like Proudhon, he was an anti-Semite, too. When he reflected on the power of education to overcome 'primitive' superstitions about authority, he compared polite Boston society to Etah 'Eskimo' rudeness and the cultivated sophistication of white America to the low barbarism of African 'Negrittoes'. By the same token, James was vociferously pro-feminist. His view that the capture and sale of women for enforced breeding was a hallmark of 'savage' behaviour bolstered a eugenicist argument for birth control which anarchists like Emma Goldman (1869–1940) also promoted. Women's emancipation from patriarchy completed the evolutionary prospects for anarchy: refined manners, decreased population, abundance of resources and the redundancy of war. James appeared far more sanguine about the prospects for anarchy than Kropotkin. Yet the implication of his remark that 'advancing intelligence undermines authority' (1903: IV) was that the future always belonged to the 'rising generation'. Thus, evolution had no end: a non-racist or anti-racist, pro-feminist anarchism was perhaps also conceivable in James's schema.

The general analysis of the state

Two interrelated principles emerge from these variations on anarchist theory. The first is the sovereignty of the individual and the second is the concept of self-regulation. The first was as much a definitional feature of anarchism for Kropotkin as it was for Warren. For Kropotkin it established the affinity between anarchism and antecedent antiauthoritarian movements. It also underpinned what he called 'free agreement'. This could be described in reciprocal terms, as Proudhon, Warren and Bakunin preferred, or without expectation of return, as Kropotkinites favoured. Either way, free agreement was secured independently of permanent arbitration. There was no ultimate fixed authority, as legally enforceable contracts required.

The second idea, self-regulation, was theorised in several ways. Looking at the balance of economic and political forces, Proudhon called it 'equilibrium'. Comparing social interactions to the movements of atomic and sub-atomic particles in quantum theory, Kropotkin called it 'harmony'. Similarly, self-regulation was depicted both as the 'natural' norm preceding the state and as an emergent order transcending 'nature'. Yet the core insight was the same: sovereign individuals arranged their own affairs through their interactions. As Bakunin put it: they organised 'from below upward by means of independent and completely free associations, subject to no official tutelage but open to the free and diverse influences of individuals and parties' (1990 [1873]: 136). The assertion scotches one of the most popular and persistent misconceptions about anarchy: it meant the rejection of rulers, not rules (Wilson, 2014).

These principles informed the anarchist view that the modern state represented not a historic achievement as Hegel claimed, but an extraordinary defeat. Bakunin's belligerent response to Hegel was to depict the European state as the triumph of a Germanic ideal and the crushing of a Slavic and Latin antistate alternative. His conceptualisation may have been ugly, but it drew attention to the genuine hostilities that ideal theory obscured. In this view, the notion that the state could be imagined as a perfect commonwealth or the expression of the Absolute was a conceit of philosophy which concealed its innate violence. Randolph Bourne's phrase, 'war is the health of the state', captured the anarchist view. The state used violence to maintain domination and it was locked in permanent rivalry with other sovereigns to protect its right to do so. Bakunin's argument that 'capitalist monopoly … always and everywhere accompanies the strengthening and expansion of state centralization' (1990 [1873]: 192) pointed to forces driving violence and the processes at play. Anticipating Weber, Kropotkin added the third. The state was a monopolising, centralising and colonising phenomenon. It was a '*territorial concentration and a concentration of many or even all functions of the life of society in the hands of a few. It implies new relations among the members of society*' (1943 [1903]: 10).

Writing as critics of domination, anarchists refused to accept the state's inevitability. Characterising the constitutions formed in the crucible of the American and French revolutions as tyrannical, they proposed self-government for the realisation of revolutionary values. Abolition meant adopting principles of individual sovereignty and sociability to re-constitutionalise against domination. This anticapitalist social and political project was not intelligible in terms of the opposition between socialism and liberalism, though the artificial choice helps explain Kelsen's misalignment of anarchism with Bolshevism. The conclusion of Proudhon's analysis of historical change is that anarchism embodies socialism and that anti-authoritarianism is a departure from it.

Twentieth-century critique

The pre-eminence of Marxism after the 1917 October revolution and the crushing of the anarchist revolution during the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939) is sometimes said to mark the

end of anarchism's first wave. According to social movement literature, anarchism re-emerged in 1968, invigorated by feminism, in the 1970s, stimulated by punk and in 1999 with the rise of the alterglobalisation movement. These third and fourth waves are also associated with theoretical shifts. Yet according to this periodisation, anarchism's obvious distinguishing feature is its protean character. To shed light on the continuities, the following sections survey aspects of anti-state theory: monopoly, centralisation and colonisation.

Monopoly

For nineteenth-century anarchists, 'monopoly' referred to the state's protection of property ownership and its dependence on finance capital. Debt-funded states regulated property regimes in the interests of owners to enable them to pay off loans. The exploitation of labour, rents, tax and interest could all be explained by this relationship. Anarchists also habitually argued that militarism was integral to monopoly. The permanent threat of war was good for industry and armed combat enabled technologically advanced militarised states to established new markets and secure control of natural resources.

Where differences emerged, they concerned the protection of anarchy from monopoly. The argument divided anarchists into 'individualist' and 'communist' camps, the first broadly aligned with Proudhon and Warren and the second with Kropotkin. Individualists defended property held as a temporary individual right of possession and proposed non-coercive exchange to ensure equality. Communists argued on moral and strategic grounds for common ownership and distribution according to need. Their concern was to check the emergence of dangerous wealth disparities likely to stimulate the re-emergence of the state. Non-aligned anarchists adopted the label 'without adjectives'.

Anarchists still divide along these lines, but 'monopoly' has largely disappeared from the lexicon and analysis of the concentration of political, economic and military power tends to focus on anticapitalism. The change in terminology signals a hardening of anarchism's ideological boundaries against right-libertarianism/minimal state capitalism and the moderation of its programmatic commitments to communist revolution. The Zapatista insurrection in 1994 signalled the shift in analysis, arguably reinforcing the principle animating anarchism without adjectives: that the oppressed must themselves decide how to reconfigure power. The articulation in the 1960s of a wide-ranging cultural critique of capitalism also played a part.

Paul Goodman (1911–1972) was a one of architects of this cultural critique. The new post-war social contract, he argued, off-set the threat of nuclear destruction with the promise of material enrichment. The analysis chimed with Herbert Marcuse's critique of one-dimensionality, R. D. Laing's notion of the divided self and the Situationists' concept of the spectacle. But uniquely, Goodman declared his indebtedness to nineteenth-century anarchism. Identifying America as the new hegemon shaping global consumer culture, he analysed its effects by scrutinising the impact of suburban living. He found a dysfunctional, highly mediatised, cradle-to-grave system that transformed white men into breadwinners and their wives into purchasers whilst ghettoising Black and minority populations in impoverished inner cities. The system manufactured dreams, bred boredom, delinquency and drug abuse, cemented exclusion and disadvantage.

Like earlier generations of anarchists, Goodman argued that the state-capitalist nexus normalised exploitation and compulsion. He added that it was characterised by stupidity, uniformity and repetition. He described what he labelled the 'empty society', graceless. Goodman's view that men found the new contract far more disruptive than women has rightly troubled his admirers (2012 [1956]), but his description of social norms as dystopian and his revival of non-ideal utopianism to model anarchist alternatives has provided the backdrop for a steady stream

of social and political theory in a broad range of subjects: criminology, policing, education, the school to prison pipeline, symbolic culture and technology, social decomposition and homogeneity, work and representative democracy (Amster et al., 2009; Levy & Adams, 2019).

Centralisation

Discussions of centralisation highlight a marked divergence in post-war anarchism. Whilst Rudolf Rocker (1873–1958), Martin Buber (1878–1965) and Colin Ward (1924–2012) presented an analysis that dovetailed with nineteenth-century argument, postanarchist critics use poststructuralism to highlight the perceived determinism and essentialism of historical anarchist theory.

Rocker and Buber examined the state's expansion into civic life and the systematic repression of dissent. For Rocker (1978 [1947]), the modern expression of state centralisation was totalitarianism, which Fascism and Stalinism exemplified. Following Kropotkin, he described its cultural impetus as a 'Roman' idea, noting that this had gained institutional purchase in Europe during the Middle Ages. His innovation was to use nationalism to plot the liberal state's mutation. Spurious 'race science' and invented tradition, the hallmarks of the nation-state, had overwhelmed the constitutional safeguards that had previously kept capitalist monopoly in check. The collapse was detectable in patriotic education, the demonisation of minorities, systematic violence to quell dissent, xenophobia and the destruction of the creative arts and free expression.

Similarly alarmed by the 'gigantic centralisation of power covering the whole planet and devouring all free community' (1958 [1949]: 132), Buber re-theorised the institutional changes Rocker described. He found the root cause in the subordination of the 'social' principle of co-operation to the 'political' principle of representation: on the pretext of establishing order, philosophers and jurists had stripped independent civil society associations of their rights and powers. Disagreement was misdescribed as factionalism and pluralism as deviation. Returning to contract theory, Buber likened Rousseau's General Will to Hobbes's Leviathan. They incorrectly characterised 'diversified spontaneous contacts of individuals for … co-operation and co-existence' (1957: 169) as risky and disruptive. Marxism's logic was similarly authoritarian: materialist history invented a 'necessitarian' process whose end point was 'far-reaching centralization', permitting 'no individual features and no individual initiative' (1958 [1949]: 13).

Rocker and Buber proposed decentralisation. Updating Proudhon's case, Rocker called for the re-constitution of Europe as a 'Hellenic' federation of autonomous regions. Buber proposed fluid experimentation. Anticipating prefigurative practice he defended a form of non-ideal utopianism to 'create here and now the space *now* possible for the thing for which we are striving, so that it may come to fulfilment *then*' (ibid.: 13).

Colin Ward, one of the most influential writers of the twentieth century, identified an affinity in Rocker and Buber's ideas. Profoundly influenced by Buber and Kropotkin, Ward advocated community-led initiatives in planning, welfare provision, housing and education to counter centralisation. For Ward, the continuous creativity which exemplified Buber's non-ideal anarchist utopianism grounded Rocker and Proudhon's grand constitutional designs (Ward, 2004).

Postanarchists take a contrary stance. From a postanarchist perspective, the contrast between state and society which Buber placed at the heart of anarchist critique is too stark. It fools anarchists into thinking that (i) power can be eradicated by the reassignment of sovereignty from the state to the individual (ii) that freedom results from power's eradication (iii) that the free anarchist society can be delineated in advance through utopian planning and (iv) that revolution is the necessary route for the achievement of this utopia.

From the 'old' anarchist point of view, this critique appears to substantiate a Rousseauean construction of the political and social spheres. The counter argument is that the social realm

anarchists re-describe to highlight the faultiness of the social contract is always or already politicised. As Eduardo Columbo (1929–2018) put it: 'Anarchism conceives of the political as part and parcel of society at large'. The rejection of contract signals 'the possibility, in organizational terms, of a complex, conflictual and incomplete structure … based on an overall reciprocity together with the autonomy of the acting subject as opposed to the distribution and splitting-up of power' (Columbo, 1984).

The gap between anarchism and postanarchism is not unbridgeable. Postanarchist appeals to utopian experimentation align with Buber's. Likewise, postanarchist advocacy of 'the local, the contingent and the singular' (Newman, 2010: 269) and for 'building, constructing, organising, fighting, making collective decisions and so on' echo Buber and Ward. However, some challenges remain. On the one hand, postanarchism relaxes conventional prohibitions on anarchist engagement in institutional politics. By advocating the use of legal instruments to correct power abuses and domination, postanarchism complicates prefigurative principles. On the other, the postanarchist view that anarchism necessitates the state's revolutionary overthrow risks breeding indifference to decentralising constitutional initiatives.

Colonisation

In the early twentieth-century anarchist analysis of the territorialisation and domination stimulated important critiques of imperialism and colonialism (de Cleyre, 1914: 253–275; Kōtoku, 2015 [1901]). Anarchists compared the colonising processes that established state borders with the colonisation of external territory but did not consider these identical. Likewise, Noam Chomsky (b. 1928), probably the best-known analyst in this tradition, examines the legacy of colonialism in former colonies and the neo-colonial agendas driving neoliberal globalisation as interrelated problems. Parallel developments in twentieth-century anarchism have led to the re-conceptualisation of colonisation and to the critique of the constitutional alternatives that earlier anarchists proposed. Colonisation is now explored through the lens of social ecology; decolonising approaches illuminate racist patterns of domination evaded or ignored in the past.

Murray Bookchin's (1921–2006) revival of social evolution to ground ethics in nature is the most influential account of social ecology. Bookchin presented an overtly ecological account of the state's development scrutinising the effect of human interactions on the organic and non-organic world. His analysis highlighted the ruinous impact of industrial production, urban development and the destructiveness of the drive for growth in all its guises. Capitalism and the state largely explained the late twentieth-century predicament but the Marxist socialist plan, portrayed by Bookchin as the eradication of class domination by the domination of nature, was equally colonising.

Bookchin's innovation was to describe social ecology as a 'domain of freedom' (1986: 11). The logic of the nineteenth-century critique of domination was that freedom was only ever a benchmark to assess non-dominating practices: non-domination described individuals' social power to make their own rules and negotiate their differences with others without permanent arbitration. Bookchin's *magnum opus*, *The Ecology of Freedom* (1982) showed instead that 'freedom' was recoverable from the legacy of domination through social ecology and that it was possible to imagine a 'free society' by harmonising human practices with natural processes.

Bookchin's analysis of freedom underpinned his scathing critique of the perceived 'individualist', drift of twentieth-century anarchism. Shortly before he died, he distanced himself from the anarchist movement. Yet his identification of anarchism with ecology marked a significant shift in anarchist thinking, sparking a review of historical anarchism and rise of ecological

anarchism, embracing anti-civilisation theory, eco-feminism, vegetarianism and veganism and total liberation.

Decolonisation has encouraged self-critical analysis of the western biases of historical anarchism and anarchist historiography. As Francis Dupuis-Déri (2016) notes, the intersectional perspectives latent in historical anarchism were underdeveloped at the time and the norms of predominantly white, European males prevailed in the anarchist mainstream, as they did elsewhere. James's integration of overt racism into a critique of institutionalised racism is an example. Yet the notion of empowerment embedded in domination has facilitated the 'queering' of anarchism (Daring et al., 2012) namely, the exploration of multiple power relationships and oppressions including sexuality, the repression of indigenous groups and racism (Black Rose Federation, 2016; Cleminson & Heckert, 2011; Coulthard & Lasky, 2011). There is a growing awareness of anarchism's silences about past failures to articulate systematic critiques of racism. Similarly, decolonising approaches have highlighted the dangers of re-inscribing colonial logics through practice, for example, in the choice of the moniker 'Occupy' to inspire experiments in non-domination. The engagement also sheds light on the assumptions informing the constitutional proposals anarchists continue advance to overcome domination. Roger White's (1999–2004) critical review of Rocker's argument for European reconstitution exposes the Eurocentric biases of the appeal to decentralised federation. It poses serious questions about the status of the anarchistic traditional societies that prevailed in Continental Africa (Mbah & Igariwey, 1997) and, indeed, about the ways in which non-state units can federate globally without domination.

Conclusion

Using Kelsen's association of anarchism with Bolshevism as a springboard to examine the distinctiveness of the anarchist conception of the state, I have argued that anarchism emerged from critical engagement with social contract theory and that the central concept of non-domination was articulated through an analysis of state formation. Social evolution enabled anarchists to explain the emergence of hierarchy and exploitation. The concept of the state as a monopolising, centralising and colonising force served as the backdrop for the survey of some recent shifts in anarchism, notably the development of cultural theory, the promotion of prefigurative organisational practices and the shift towards decolonisation.

References

Amster, R., De Leon A., Fernandez L.A., Nocella III, A.J. & Shannon D. (2009) *Contemporary Anarchist Studies: An Introductory Anthology of Anarchy in the Academy*, London: Routledge.

Bakunin, M. (1980 [1867]) 'Rousseau's Theory of the State', in Dolgoff, S. (ed.) *Bakunin on Anarchism*, Montréal: Black Rose.

Bakunin, M. (1990 [1873]) *Statism and Anarchy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Black Rose Federation (2016) *Black Anarchism Reader*, https://blackrosefed.org/re-introducing-the-black-anarchism-reader/ [last access 28 July 2020].

Bookchin, M. (1982) *The Ecology of Freedom*, Palo Alto: Cheshire Books.

Bookchin, M. (1986) *The Modern Crisis*, Philadelphia: New Society.

Buber, M. (1957) 'Society and the State', in Friedman, M.S. (ed. and trans.) *Pointing the Way: Collected Essays by Martin Buber*, New York: Harper Torch.

Buber, M. (1958 [1949]) *Paths in Utopia*, Boston: Beacon Press.

Cleminson, R. & Heckert, J. (2011) *Anarchism and Sexuality: Ethics, Relationships and Power*, Abingdon: Routledge.

Colombo, E. (1984) 'The State as a Paradigm of Power' paper delivered at the International Anarchist Gathering, Venice, https://www.centrostudilibertari.it/en/colombo-eduardo-state-paradigm-power [last access 28 July 2020].

Coulthard, G. & Lasky, J. (2011) Anarch@Indigenism, *Affinities*, https://ojs.library.queensu.ca/index.php/affinities/issue/view/572 [last access 28 July 2020].

Daring, C.B., Rogue, J., Shannon, D. & Volcano, A. (2012) *Queering Anarchism*, Edinburgh & Oakland: AK Press.

de Cleyre, V. (1914) *Selected Works of Voltairine de Cleyre*, New York: Mother Earth.

Dupuis-Déri, F. (2016) 'Is the State Part of the Matrix of Domination and Intersectionality? An Anarchist Inquiry', *Anarchist Studies* 24 (1) 36–61.

Goodman, P. (2012 [1956]) *Growing Up Absurd*, New York: New York Review of Books.

James, C.L. (1903) 'A Vindication of Anarchism' *Free Society III*, 10 (6); IV, 10 (7).

Kelsen, H. (1948) *The Political Theory of Bolshevism: A Critical Analysis*, Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Kinna R. & Prichard A. (2019) 'Anarchism and Non-Domination', *Journal of Political Ideologies* 21 (3) 221–240.

Kōtoku, S. (2015 [1901]) Monster of the Twentieth Century, in Tierney, R.T. (ed. & trans.) *Monster of the Twentieth Century: Kōtoku Shūsui and Japan's First Anti-Imperialist Movement*, Oakland: University of California Press.

Kropotkin, P. (n.d. [1902]) *Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution*, Boston: Extending Horizons Books.

Kropotkin, P. (1943 [1903]) *The State: Its Historic Role*, London: Freedom Press.

Levy, C. & Adams, M. (2019) *The Palgrave Handbook of Anarchism*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Mbah, S. & Igariwey, I.G. (1997) *African Anarchism: The History of a Movement*, Tucson: See Sharp Press.

Metchnikoff, L. (1886) 'Revolution and Evolution', *The Contemporary Review* 50 412–437.

Michel, L. (1981 [1886]) *The Red Virgin: Memoirs of Louise Michel*, trans. B. Lowry and E.E. Gunter, Alabama: University of Alabama Press.

Newman, S. (2010). 'Postanarchism and Power', *Journal of Power* 3 (2) 259–274.

Novak, D. (1958) 'The Place of Anarchism in the History of Political Thought', *The Review of Politics* 20 (3) 307–329.

Proudhon, P.-J. (1969 [1840]) *What Is Property? An Inquiry into the Principle of Right and of Government*, trans. Benj. R. Tucker, London: William Reeves.

Proudhon, P.-J. (1989 [1851]) *The General Idea of the Revolution in the Nineteenth Century*, London: Pluto.

Rocker, R., (1978 [1947]) *Nationalism and Culture*, Minnesota: Michael E. Coughlin.

Ward, C. (2004) *Anarchism: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Warren, J. (1952[1841] *Manifesto*, Berkley Heights, NJ: Oriole Press.

Warren, J. (1967 [1863]) *True Civilization*, New York: Burt Franklin.

White, R. (1999–2004) *Post Colonial Anarchism*, https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/roger-white-post-colonial-anarchism [last access 28 July 2020].

Wilson, M. (2014) *Rules without Rulers: The Possibilities and Limits of Anarchism*, Winchester: Zero Books.

Deleuze, Guattari, and the concept of social assemblage

Jay Conway

Deleuze and Guattari's concept of assemblage can be difficult to grasp, not because it is abstruse, but because it is itself an assemblage—an intricate, detailed arrangement. Thinking with the concept of assemblage does not mean distinguishing assemblages from non-assemblages; rather, assemblages are the "minimal real unit," the fundamental objects of any concrete investigation (Deleuze and Parnet 2002: 38). A human life is a social assemblage. Notions such as identity, ego, subject, or organism are, like all "first principles," inadequate, because they only capture the "territorial" side of the assemblage. A book is also an assemblage, one whose gears include its writer, and then various readers. A workplace, a courtroom, an organization, and a political event are assemblages: combinations of bodies and speech-acts, regularities and the unexpected, command structures and "lines of flight." But what does it mean to think with this concept? What difference does it make? What intellectual tendencies is it intended to replace? The authors' answers to these questions are demanding. Deleuze does, however, suggest an experiment that enables one to immediately work with, to live with, the concept: when you catch yourself thinking with "IS" substitute "AND" (Deleuze and Parnet 2002: 42).

History of the term and concept

Deleuze and Guattari adopted the expression "assemblage" (Fr. *agencement*) as a conceptual term in 1975's *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature*. In fact, the final chapter of that book is, "What is an assemblage?" The answer they provide to this question is repeated in the "Postulates of Linguistics" chapter of *A Thousand Plateaus*. The expression also appears in their final book together, *What is Philosophy?*, as it does in Deleuze's work without Guattari (*Dialogues*, *Foucault*, and the seminars from 1980–1987), and in Guattari's work without Deleuze (*The Machinic Unconscious* and *Lines of Flight: For Another World of Possibilities*). Much of the expression's recent popularity is due to the writings of Manuel DeLanda, especially his books *A New Philosophy of Society: Assemblage Theory and Social Complexity*, and *Assemblage Theory*.

But the philosophical concept of assemblage is best understood as pre-dating its name. In *Dialogues* and his April 28, 1987 class, Deleuze uses the expression "assemblage" when revisiting aspects of his earliest writings, specifically aspects of his reading of David Hume's philosophy. For Deleuze, assemblage thought is a form of empiricism. By developing a logic of external

relations, and incorporating this logic into social theory, Hume in effect introduced the concept of assemblage. Moreover, Deleuze believed there were literary equivalents to this theory of relations. Whitman's poetry and Proust's *In Search of Lost Time*, display a novel understanding of the literary work: instead of an overarching or underlying unity, there are only particular moments of unification created alongside other parts (Deleuze 1997: 56–60, 2000: 14).

This helps us understand Deleuze's appreciation for Guattari's concept of machine (Deleuze 2020a: 39). In his 1969 essay "Machine and Structure," Guattari does not use the word "machine" as a metaphor (Guattari 2015: 318–329). He expands the literal reference. Technical machines are simply one kind of machinery. Scientific, literary, and political breakthroughs are also machines, ones that upset existing structures, force efforts of restructuring. This dualism of structure and machine would later become the notion that assemblages have both a territorial and deterritorializing side. Deleuze immediately adopted the language of machinery for an expanded version of *Proust and Signs?* (Deleuze 2000: 145–146). He argues the question, "What does it mean?" should be replaced with others: "How is this book built?" "What are its gears?" "What does it currently do?" "What else can this gear or this machine do?" For Deleuze, this machinic language helps reorient our understanding away from organic conceptions of unity. An organic unity is one where each part *is* its relation to other parts, each part *is* the specific role it plays in a whole, and each part is a necessary condition of the whole's vitality. But a mechanical part can be replaced or used in different machines. To solve a puzzle is to put each piece in its proper place, which is to say the place it occupied in a pre-existing whole. But machines are not solved, they are manufactured and this involves disparate elements coming together in ways that work.

The word "*agencement*" carries similar connotations to machine, ones reinforced by the choice of "assemblage" for the English translation. Assemblages are not eternal givens, but results of assembling, arranging, or combining. The expression lends itself to a distinction between what is arranged and how these various items are arranged. An item can be altered as the result of entering into an assemblage (the car part is only able to do certain things by entering into a particular assemblage, the very one that wears it out over time). New items can be integrated into existing arrangements. Removing one item does not have the same effect as removing another. Machines or assemblages run; they also break down temporarily or permanently.

The concept as a kind of concrete assemblage

In *What is Philosophy?*, Deleuze and Guattari assert that every philosophical concept is a particular kind of "concrete assemblage" (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 35–36). Concepts are internally complex, each of their components is distinct, and some of these components are novel repetitions of components found in previous philosophies. A well-developed concept is rich in components, where these components hang together, operate together. In precise areas, one component becomes indistinguishable from another. Achieving this kind of coherence, or "endoconsistency," is harder than avoiding contradiction, making proper inferences, or presenting an argument (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 19). Similarly, the concepts of a philosophical system are wholes, but "fragmentary wholes" (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 35). They work together, but do not fit together like pieces of a puzzle; like the roots, trunk, and limbs of a tree (the "tree of knowledge"); or like the foundation and successive floors of a building. In short, the concept of assemblage can be difficult to grasp because of how much the authors pack into the concept, and the specific ways all these details work together. Complicating things further, one component of the concept can be a critique and replacement of multiple strands of thought. The concept of assemblage cannot be positioned as a move within a pre-existing debate because it is the alternative to extremely diverse intellectual tendencies: positing and appealing to first

principles; thinking with IS; the Platonic view that immaterials are universals transcending their instantiations, the view that the immaterial is an ideological superstructure; the tendency to think social entities as self-identical; the tendency to reduce the internal difference of a social entity to the notion of contradiction.

For Deleuze and Guattari, an individual philosophy is a precise arrangement of concepts, each of which is itself an arrangement. At the same time, they describe these "concrete assemblages" as the "working parts" of an "abstract machine" (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 36). This abstract machine is a specific image or understanding of thought, one turning on a "strict division between fact and right" (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 37). Only some thoughts have the right to be called thoughts; only some thoughts illustrate what it means to *really* think. An image of thought is an additional source of a philosophy's unity. It is abstract because it does not transcend the play of concepts; it is non-conceptual because it is expressed throughout this play of concepts. What image of thought is expressed through the concept of assemblage? Deleuze remarks that he and Guattari "started from assemblages" in order to do "philosophy in the empiricist mode" (Deleuze 2019: 11; Haas 2017: 27–28).

Assemblage thought as a form of empiricism

We find two recurring definitions of empiricism in Deleuze's work. Empiricism is the stance that first principles explain nothing and, in fact, require explanation themselves. Empiricism consists of thinking with AND rather than IS. Thinking empirically is thus an alternative to a more prevalent style of thought, one centered on first principles and the problem of being: "it is always the verb *to be* and the question of principle" (Deleuze and Parnet 2002: 42). Keep in mind, though, that when Deleuze engages in criticism, he does so through the creation of concepts. In this case, he creates a concept of the first principle, and a concept of "thinking with IS," by combining multiple intellectual tendencies.

As examples of "first principles," Deleuze cites concepts such as Being, the One, Identity, Reason, the Subject, Experience, the Law, Power, the Revolution, and Contradiction (Deleuze 2006: 139, 2020c: 8–9). "Puffed up like an abscess," a first principle is the theoretical equivalent of a sweeping generalization. The more philosophers debate, posit, and invoke first principles, the more they ignore important differences. There is even a way of reading in terms of first principles. The reader focuses entirely on the initial principle of a philosopher's work, ignoring or regarding as inessential the details in the middle. The concept of assemblage works differently. Referring to a domain of inquiry as an assemblage does not explain it. Rather, it indicates the work that has to be done to understand it, where this work demands an attention to difference. Assemblages are internally diverse, there are different kinds of assemblages, and the explanation of one assemblage never qualifies as an explanation of others, including others of the same kind.

The concept of "Thinking with IS" consists of numerous aspects of conventional ontology (Deleuze and Parnet 2002, 42; Deleuze 2020b: 1–3). There is the Problem of Being with its dualism of the One and the Many ("Is Being One or Many?" or "What is the One behind the Many?"). There is the orthodoxy that "being" has different senses, one of which is primary. This is historically linked to vertical conceptions of reality (Aquinas' and Descartes' contention that God is the primary sense of being or "substance"), as well as to judgments of attribution (A is B). For Aristotle, the primary sense of being applies to individual substances (e.g. Socrates), while the secondary senses apply to species (Socrates is human) or the categories of predicates (Socrates is short). Additionally, the "is" at the center of "A is B," suggests an internal relation: B is a property of A. Answering the question "What is A?" typically involves identifying A's constituent properties, especially the ones responsible for A being a particular kind of thing,

an instantiation of a particular species-essence. Finally, by "thinking with IS" Deleuze means organic understandings of the part-whole relation. Entity A is the part it plays in a particular whole, it is the way it interacts with the whole's other parts, and the removal of any of the parts dissolves the whole.

The standard definition of empiricism is the belief that knowledge is derived from sensation. According to Deleuze this supposed first principle of empiricism fails to capture Hume's thought (Deleuze 2001: 35; Deleuze and Parnet 2002: 41). At best, it is an imprecise characterization of Hume's opening move. Hume asserts that the content of each idea of sensation is derived from impressions of sensation. But, he adds, there is no impression of sensation corresponding to general terms or to expressions such as "necessity," "cause," "always," and "I." Hume's analysis does not, however, end on this skeptical note. He proceeds to explicate the meaning of these terms using his concept of the association of ideas. The mind's regular, smooth transition from one idea to another is a function of processes (the principles of association) connecting the disparate ideas of sensation. Recall that Deleuze described empiricism as both a critique and an explanation of first principles. To posit the first principle is to assert the existence of some underlying or overarching unity. For the empiricist, unity exists, but only as the unification of difference—a unification that cannot be explained by delineating the properties of the terms unified (Deleuze 2020c: 11). One is required to identify the specific processes responsible for the unification (for Hume, the principles of association).

A distinguishing feature of Deleuze's reading of Hume is the way it tracks the trajectory of this theory of relations. Though the theory is initially developed in the context of epistemology, it becomes a social theory: a general theory of action, a theory of institutions (behavioral conventions), and a theory of jurisprudence. Furthermore, for Deleuze, this social theory represents an alternative to negative conceptions of sociability, the tendency to construe the social in terms of suppression, prevention, or limitation.

In practical life, passion and reason work together in the determination of action, where this involves activating specific associations (Deleuze 1952: 50). Human beings establish goals in concrete "affective circumstances." Behind goals are individual passions rather than reason. Reason is the power to move from the idea of the goal to the idea of a course of action likely to accomplish the goal. This movement of ideas is the activation of a particular association of ideas. Alternatively, assemblages of ideas are gears in larger assemblages that include individual passions and bodies.

Hume repudiates the Hobbesian view of society as a contractual limitation of natural rights or a state of nature (Deleuze 1991: 45). For Hume, human beings are inherently social because they are naturally sympathetic. At the same time, the scope of their sympathy is partial. This, rather than egoism, is the principal source of discord. Institutions (general rules of conduct) represent an extension of this natural sympathy. They are artificial means for satisfying natural passions—they are genuine inventions—because the exact character of an institution is irreducible to the natural passion. This is demonstrated by the historic and geographic diversity of conventions. Deleuze accents the appearance of Hume's theory of relations on both the natural and artificial side of this equation (Deleuze 1952: 52, 61, 2001: 36, 46). The three principles of association (contiguity, causality, and resemblance) determine who is central, peripheral, and outside the scope of our natural sympathy. And, the exact character of a convention is determined by the principles of association. Different conventional solutions to the same problem (e.g. what action is sufficient to assume ownership of an abandoned city) are indicative of different associations. Laws have a clear negative, prohibitive quality, but Hume presents them as reinforcing institutions and the associations that determine them. The law, institutions, and action, in general, are all social assemblages which have assemblages of ideas as a working parts (Deleuze and Parnet 2002: 42).

The concept of external relations is a central feature of Deleuze's thought, but unlike Hume, Deleuze does not assert that there are only three principles of association (contiguity, causation, resemblance). Instead of appealing to universals of human nature, Deleuze's empiricism involves determining the specific processes of unification on an assemblage by assemblage basis. The theory of relations ceases to operate as a first principle. Similarly, Deleuze does not seem onto-logically committed to the position that institutions are the artificial means of satisfying univer-sal, natural ends. But, he is absolutely committed to articulating a positive instead of a negative theory of the social (Deleuze 1995: 6). A social assemblage cannot be adequately captured in a negative definition (this is what the assemblage limits, prevents, or suppresses). Moreover, Deleuze draws attention to the creative side of law. He collected newspaper articles on jurispru-dence (the application of laws in unclear cases). What fascinated him was rulings involving the creation of relations: the car is classified as a deadly weapon in a drunk driving case; catching a cab is associated with renting an apartment in a case determining whether riders can smoke (Deleuze 2020c: 14–15).

The four sides of a social assemblage

The concept of assemblage was developed further and significantly when Deleuze and Guattari began to work together. In *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature* and *A Thousand Plateaus*, the authors describe social assemblages as tetravalent (Deleuze and Guattari 1986: 81–86, 1987: 88–89). The first two terms—collective assemblage of enunciation, machinic assemblage of desire— constitute one axis of the assemblage. This concept of machinic desire, an effort to replace the notion of desire as interior lack with the notion of desire as the production of connections, was developed earlier in *Anti-Oedipus* (Deleuze and Guattari 1977: 1–50). The second two terms—territorialization and deterritorialization, or major and minor—comprise the second axis. Succinctly put, a social assemblage is regarded as a specific combination of bodies and immaterial speech-acts, where this combination possesses areas of stability and instability, rigidity and becoming, unification and lines of flight.

In both texts, the authors aggressively push the discussion of language in the direction of social theory. They present Kafka as a unique kind of social theorist, arguing that his writing is entirely political, if not a political project (the creation of a line of flight or a different mode of living). Instead of Kafka, thinker of the absurd, we get Kafka, the thinker of social assemblages— combinations of enunciations and bodies (Deleuze and Parnet 2002: 53). In the "Postulates of Linguistics" chapter of *A Thousand Plateaus*, the authors advance a social-political theory of language. As in Foucault's *Archaeology of Knowledge*, the basic unit of their analysis is *l'énonce* (Deleuze 1988: 1–2). Often translated as "statement," it is important not to reduce the category of enunciation to truth-claims, and to recognize that the focus is on discourse (what is actually said and written). The examples they give of enunciations tend to be overtly political: a defend-ant being judged guilty, the utterance signifying that a plane has been hijacked, Nazi discourse, declarations of war and peace, militant slogans. In the original French, the definition of enuncia-tion is the very expression the authors use for political slogan: *mots d'ordre*. In this way, Lenin's "On Slogans" ("*À propos des mots d'ordre*") is positioned as a contribution to the philosophy of language (Deleuze and Guattari 1980: 105). The underlying message is clear: political enuncia-tions, not artificial examples, are the best vantage point for understanding language.

Deleuze and Guattari challenge several "postulates" (or dominant tendencies) of linguistics (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 75–110). Guattari would reiterate this critique in his later books *The Machinic Unconscious* and *Lines of Flight* (Guattari 2011: 23–43, 2016: 115–117). The cen-tral target is the distinction between language (*langue*) and language use (*parole*). Behind this

distinction is the belief that a science of language requires a scientific object, where "object" means something unchanging. In this way, the distinction between a system of language and its uses corresponds to the distinction between a constant and its variations, between a universal and its instantiations. Positioned as "the use of language," discourse is excluded from science's purview. Alternatively, each enunciation is regarded as the realization of one of the underlying system's indeterminate number of possibilities.

For the authors, the idea of "using language" is linked to a highly artificial picture: a person sees something; the person decides to communicate what they have seen to another; to do so they select an expression that is a suitable vehicle. The speaker in this scenario is a subject in both senses of the word. On the one hand, they freely choose to communicate, they choose what to communicate, and they choose a suitable vehicle. On the other hand, they are subjected to the underlying system; they have little or no control over what expressions will communicate what they want to communicate.

Deleuze credited Guattari with the attention given to linguistics in *A Thousand Plateaus* (Deleuze 1995: 28). Surely, though, he recognized how Guattari's critique coincided with his own critique of recurring tendencies in the philosophical tradition: the conviction that to know is to know a constant; the notion of substance as a self-identical principle beneath difference and variation; the notion of a transcendent principle whose power resides in its capacity to do more than what it actually does; the notion that the ground of the actual is a condition of possibility (a condition wider than the conditioned), thinking of actualization as the realization of an already existing set of possibilities (thus ruling out the existence of unique events or radical novelty).

Deleuze and Guattari assert that discourse "effectuates" the condition of language (Deleuze and Guattari 1980: 135). For the empiricist, first principles explain nothing and are themselves in need of explanation. Language is not a quasi-transcendent principle, but the social condition or reality of producing enunciations. The "unity" of language is not an underlying system of constants and universals, but simply the "territorial" or "major" side of language: the regularities, conventions, and norms that characterize much, but not all, of discourse. The notion that language is enunciation, and that enunciation is social, is developed through three related positions: enunciation is always collective; speech and writing are actions; these actions are interventions in the sense of gears within social assemblages.

The cause of enunciation is typically presented as an individual subject of enunciation, though it is acknowledged that, in certain cases, the subject is a collective (e.g. the authors of a mission statement). For Deleuze and Guattari, the very notion of the subject of enunciation obscures the fact that every voice is, in reality, polyvocal: the result of assembling together fragments of other voices. "The two of us wrote *Anti-Oedipus* together. Since each of us was several there was already quite a crowd (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 3)." The typical instance of enunciation is not the communication of something seen, but hearsay (the repetition of things heard and read). The distinction between individual and collective enunciation is often configured as a distinction between original and generic expression. This distinction between the creative and the formulaic exists within Deleuze and Guattari's theory, but as a distinction between kinds of collective enunciation, or between the territorial and deterritorializing sides of one and the same enunciation.

In their book on Kafka, Deleuze and Guattari characterize the shift from eating to speaking as both a moment of deterritorialization (bodily gears shift what they are doing) and reterritorialization (the sounds are organized in a way that is meaningful). But they go on to explain how, relative to this reterritorialization, Kafka's prose pushes the process of de-territorialization further through his deliberate elimination of metaphor, and further still through the inclusion of unorganized, unformed sounds (Deleuze and Guattari 1986: 19–22). Deleuze and Guattari highlight Kafka's descriptions of "sonorous intrusions" that are neither musical forms nor

signifying expressions (Deleuze and Guattari 1986: 5–6). The first appearance of the concept of collective assemblages of enunciation is in the "What is a Minor Literature?" chapter of the Kafka book. There the authors distinguish between two kinds of minority literature (Deleuze and Guattari 1986: 17–18). The first belongs to the order of representation: the representation of an existing minority or a member of an existing minority speaks *as* a member of that minority with the aim of increasing the recognition of themselves and that minority. The second, a becoming-minoritarian, involves writers on the fringe of existing minorities, creating unique styles of expression that anticipate a non-existent people to come.

Working with Austin's concept of illocutionary force (or speech acts), Deleuze and Guattari argue that speech and writing are actions, albeit actions of a particular kind. Enunciations can result in behavioral responses, and the production of sounds or inscriptions is itself a physical act. But Austin's focus is another kind of "doing" internal to enunciation: to speak or write is to perform acts such as posing questions, making claims, expressing sentiments, and issuing directives. Deleuze and Guattari's preferred expression for these acts is *mot d'ordre* (or order-word). This is not a reduction of the category of speech act to delivering commands, but a way of accenting an aspect of the territorial side of language. Enunciations packaged as the communication of information are often, in reality, orders or verbal displays of obedience. In contrast to the artificial picture of language-use—one chooses to speak or write—the authors foreground how many social contexts involve a compulsion to speak. Similarly, Deleuze argues resisting the compulsion to express oneself, is a necessary condition for creating something worth expressing (Deleuze 1995: 129). Recall that the authors also use the expression "*mots d'ordre*" as a synonym for "slogan." When we think of political slogans, we think of enunciations that are both collective and developed within specific social situations. This is the final sense in which enunciations, in general, are social acts. They are interventions within, or components of, specific social assemblages.

This notion of intervention requires establishing the kind of act an enunciation performs and doing so in a way that fosters an understanding of the role it plays within a specific assemblage. Deleuze reactivates his account of the Stoic theory of meaning from *The Logic of Sense* (Deleuze 1990: 4–11; Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 80–81). A meaning is the meaning of a mixture of bodies—a mixture that includes the physical act of producing an enunciation. But this meaning is not itself a body. Rather, the movement and combination of bodies actualize various immaterial meanings (meanings that, unlike Platonic Ideas, do not transcend their actualizations). If one side of assemblages is a set of order-words, the other is a corporeal mixture or "machinic assemblage of desire." A criminal trial assemblage is an individual, shifting arrangement of bodies and physical interactions. This machinic assemblage includes the bodies of the jury, prosecutor, and defendant. There is the building, the courtroom, the desks and chairs, the papers and pens. The reading of the verdict, the words uttered, are, for the Stoics, also bodies. But the physical act of reading the verdict transforms the meaning of the defendant's body. The collective assemblage of enunciation is such that the body is now the actualization of an incorporeal sense: "guilty." The change is not physical; it is dramatic, influencing where the body goes next.

Assemblage thought involves identifying the precise and varied lines of influence running between the material and immaterial components of a particular assemblage, with neither side of the assemblage being the foundation of the other. This is an alternative to the position that there is something called "society as a whole" and that it possesses a building-like structure: the immaterial founds the material or the other way around; the discursive founds the non-discursive or the other way around. On the one hand, the concept of assemblage is advanced as a reversal of Platonism. Deleuze and Guattari refuse to privilege the discussion of language over that of physical interactions. It is bodies that speak and write, and they do so as components of machinic assemblages (a particular set of relations established between heterogeneous bodies).

The immaterial speech acts making up the collective assemblage of enunciation are not the explanation or truth of this assemblage of bodies (as a Platonic idea explains its instantiations). On the other hand, the concept of social assemblage is an alternative to thinking of the material as infrastructure, and the immaterial as superstructure; the material as the forces and relations of production, and the immaterial as ideology (Deleuze and Guattari 1980: 87–89; Deleuze 1988: 26–27). Though Marxists, Deleuze and Guattari's critique goes beyond the crude deployment of the architectural metaphor: ideas as causally sterile effects of material relations. They regard the complications—reciprocal causation, uneven development, overdetermination, the economy in the last instance—as signs the metaphor needs to go. The authors are aware Althusser reconfigures ideology-critique in such a way that it becomes an analysis of bodies within diverse social environments (the "ideological state apparatuses"). But even this refashioning of the concept of ideology subordinates a detailed consideration of the workings of these environments, including the differences between them, to the theme of the "reproduction of the relations of production" (Althusser 2014: 47–52). In contrast, Deleuze positions Foucault's concept of apparatus (*dispositif*) as assemblage empiricism. Discipline is an internally complex principle, one composed of discursive and non-discursive techniques, not to mention a general function (the efficient management of bodies). Discipline is an immanent cause or "abstract machine" covering the social field, but doing so through differentiation: each institutional space has its local functions. Each is a specific arrangement of enunciations and bodies (Deleuze 1988: 39–44).

Conclusion

Manuel DeLanda suggests the challenge of understanding this concept of social assemblage resides in the authors' different uses of the word "assemblage," the obscurity of some of these uses, and the fact the authors sketch rather than fully develop the concept (DeLanda 2006: 3). He presents his account of the concept as clearer than the original and contrasts his direct presentation of the concept with "Deleuzian hermeneutics" (endless debates over "What Deleuze really meant?"). But Deleuze and Guattari's concept of assemblage is not some secret, obscure meaning. It is, however, loaded with components and connections. Moreover, each positive component is not a move in a well-defined debate, but a complex negotiation of diverse strands of thought in the history of philosophy. The real difference and importance of DeLanda's work lie elsewhere. The collective assemblage of enunciation signed DeLanda is original. He tends to reference different theorists than do Deleuze and Guattari. This is linked to a more fundamental difference. DeLanda develops the concept in particular directions, showing its relevancy to several sociological debates. He positions assemblage thought as a form of social realism, criticizing the constructionist penchant for reducing social entities to the concept we have of them. In contrast to the concept of assemblage, the notion of "construct" is often little more than a metaphorical and entirely negative definition: to be a construct is to not be an eternal, unalterable reality (DeLanda 2006: 2). Unlike other forms of realism, assemblage realism is anti-essentialist (DeLanda 2006: 27–46). There is no positing of transcendent universals, nor are taxonomic categories discussed as if they were eternal features of reality. More significantly, DeLanda deploys the concept of assemblage against "reified generalities" in social theory. Principles such as "the individual," "community," "group," "neighborhood," "nation," "society" are reified whenever the processes behind their emergence and maintenance are ignored—whenever they are described as transhistorical or as static rather than dynamic realities. The expressions operate as generalities when they ignore the heterogeneity of an assemblage's components as if the components are members of a natural kind. And, they operate as generalities when they fail to differentiate the components from how the components work together. The component is reduced to what it

does in a particular assemblage; what a component does in a particular assemblage is regarded as an internal property. As an alternative to these reified generalities or first principles, DeLanda provides a remarkable description of individuals, species, communities, networks, organizations, nation-states, etc. as assemblages. His aim goes beyond demonstrating that assemblages can have different scales (an assemblage can be a component within another assemblage). He is attempting to provide an alternative to all versions of social reductionism: society as an aggregate of individuals, individuals as simply products of society, society and individuals as the result of praxis (DeLanda 2006: 4–6). This is very much in the spirit of Deleuze and Guattari's empiricism. The concept of social assemblage supplants the first principles of "the individual" and "society as a whole." "The minimal real unit" of social theory becomes the individual social assemblage.

References

Althusser, L. (2014) *On the Reproduction of Capitalism*, trans. G.M. Goshgarian, New York: Verso.

DeLanda, M. (2006) *A New Philosophy of Society: Assemblage Theory and Social Complexity*, New York: Bloomsbury Academic.

Deleuze, G. (1952) *David Hume: Sa vie, Son oeuvre, Sa philosophie*, Paris: Presses Universitaires De France.

———. (1988) *Foucault*, trans. Seán Hand, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

———. (1990) *The Logic of Sense*, trans. Mark Lester, New York: Columbia University Press.

———. (1991) *Empiricism and Subjectivity: An Essay on Hume's Theory of Human Nature*, trans. Constantin V. Boundas, New York: Columbia University Press.

———. (1995) *Negotiations*, trans. Martin Joughin, New York: Columbia University Press.

———. (1997) *Essays Critical and Clinical*, trans. Daniel W. Smith and Michael A. Greco, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

———. (2000) *Proust & Signs: The Complete Text*, trans. Richard Howard, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

———. (2001) *Pure Immanence: Essays on A Life*, trans. Anne Boyman, New York: Zone Books.

———. (2006) *Two Regimes of Madness: Texts and Interviews 1975–1995*, trans. Ames Hodges and Mike Taormina, Los Angeles: Semiotext(e).

———. (2020a) *Letters and Other Texts*, trans. Ames Hodges, Los Angeles: Semiotext(e).

———. (2020b) Seminar "Anti-Oedipus III," Lecture 2, 14 January 1974, trans. Timothy Murphy, The Deleuze Seminars://deleuze.cla.purdue.edu.

———. (2020c) Seminar "Leibniz and the Baroque," Lecture 15, 28 April 1987, trans. Charles J. Stivale, The Deleuze Seminars://deleuze.cla.purdue.edu.

Deleuze, G. and Guattari, F. (1977) *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Robert Hurley, Mark Seem, and Helen R. Lane, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

———. (1980) *Milles Plateaux: Capitalisme et Schizophrénie 2*, Paris: Les Eéditions De Minuit.

———. (1986) *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature*, trans. Dana Polan, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

———. (1987) *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Biran Massumi, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

———. (1994) *What is Philosophy?*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Graham Burchell, New York: Columbia University Press.

Deleuze, G. and Parnet, C. (2002) *Dialogues II*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam, New York: Continuum.

Guattari, F. (2015) *Psychoanalysis and Transversality: Texts and Interviews, 1955–1971*, trans. Ames Hodges, Los Angeles: Semiotext(e).

———. (2011) *The Machinic Unconscious: Essays in Schizoanalysis*, trans. Taylor Adkins, Los Angeles: Semiotext(e).

———. (2016) *Lines of Flight: For Another World of Possibilities*, trans. Andrew Goffey, New York: Bloomsbury Academic.

Haas, M. (2017) *Le cours de Gilles Deleuze, 1979–1987*, Volume 1, Canéjan: Eidos Éditions.

19
Critical realism

Dave Elder-Vass

Critical realism is a relatively recent tradition in the philosophy of science that was originated primarily by Roy Bhaskar. It has been adopted and developed across a wide range of social science disciplines, where it offers a methodological alternative to both positivism and interpretivism. On the one hand, critical realists are oriented to the production of causal explanations but see these in very different terms than traditional positivists. On the other, they see interpretive work and constructionist arguments as important and useful as long as they are not taken to exclude recognition of other causal forces. The chapter outlines the core philosophy of critical realism then discusses its application to questions of structure and agency, social construction, social science methods, and political critique, closing with an account of some debates in and about the tradition.

A philosophy *for* science

Bhaskar's work falls into several phases but it is his early work, sometimes known as *original* critical realism, that has been most influential in the social sciences, and in particular his first two books *A Realist Theory of Science* (1975) and *The Possibility of Naturalism* (1979).

The central thrust of twentieth-century philosophy of science was to challenge the positivist conception of science as an enterprise that accumulated true causal laws deduced from unmediated experience of the natural world. Bhaskar is part of this tradition but breaks with the dominant tendency to focus on epistemological challenges to the quality of scientific knowledge. Instead, he begins by developing a different kind of critique of positivism, focusing in particular on Hume's argument that causality is nothing more than a constant conjunction or exceptionless pattern in which events of one particular type are always followed by events of another particular type. He approaches this by accepting the positivist assumption that science is *successful* in delivering worthwhile knowledge (without making the naïve realist assumption that the knowledge it produces must be *true*), but then asks the ontological question of what the world must be like for this to be the case.

Bhaskar argues that if we examine how science works (his argument is premised specifically on laboratory science but arguably could be derived equally well from considering other varieties of science) we can see that science would not make sense if causality was merely a constant conjunction of events. Laboratory scientists design experiments with the objective of producing

empirical regularities but they do this by excluding factors that would normally interfere with those regularities. They then treat their findings as applying in some way to the world beyond the lab, even in cases where scientists like themselves are not preventing other forces from interfering (Bhaskar 1975: 13). This only makes sense if the causal forces they observe are *tendencies* generated by objects of the type they are observing, rather than exceptionless regularities (Bhaskar 1975: 14). If they *were* exceptionless regularities, then it would not be necessary for scientists to create laboratory conditions to study them in the first place. This leads to his alternative account of causality as the contingent interaction of multiple causal powers:

> The real basis of causal laws are provided by the generative mechanisms of nature. Such generative mechanisms are, it is argued, nothing other than the ways of acting of things. And causal laws must be analysed as their tendencies. Tendencies may be regarded as powers or liabilities of a thing which may be exercised without being manifest in any particular outcome.
>
> *(1975: 14)*

Causal powers do not always produce the outcomes they tend towards, because every event is *co-determined* by multiple interacting causal powers and so any given causal power will sometimes be inhibited by other conflicting powers. Hence, we have causality even when there is no exceptionless regularity of outcome.

The powers of a thing, in turn, are produced by mechanisms that depend on its structure. Bhaskar sees causal powers as emergent: as distinct from the powers of the components of the thing possessing the power, though not in any mysterious way. Causal powers are emergent in the sense that they are possessed by whole entities but not by their parts, only coming about when the parts are organised into particular higher-level structures and produced by the ways in which those parts interact when they are organised in this way (Elder-Vass 2010a: 16–8).

Bhaskar's critique, however, is not only focused on positivism. He is equally critical of the collapse of reference and representation that is characteristic of much postmodern thinking, including radically sceptical forms of social constructionism, but which is also implicit in the work of Immanuel Kant, which has shaped much of modern philosophy. For Kant, there is an empirical world that we experience, and a noumenal world beyond it that we cannot experience, and our knowledge can only be knowledge of the empirical world. Such knowledge is inevitably shaped by our preconceptions and so there is a sense in which our knowledge is only ever knowledge of something that is already internal to us. For Bhaskar, by contrast, we *can* have (necessarily fallible) knowledge of the world as it exists independently of what we think about it, although some of our knowledge takes the form of theories and concepts that we employ to make sense of the world. Unlike Kantianism, this is a non-dualistic understanding of our relation to the world: we are part of the same world that we have knowledge about, and the distinction between our knowledge and the world beyond us is *internal* to the world; both me (including my beliefs) and the things I can see, for example, are different pieces of the same world.

Bhaskar makes an analytical distinction between what he calls the *intransitive dimension* and the *transitive dimension* of our knowing relation to the world (1975: 21–4). This is analytic in the sense that it is specific to a particular claim, and the line between the two will be drawn in different places for different people and their knowledge of different things, rather than a once and for all division of the whole world into two separate parts. The *intransitive* dimension refers to the things that our knowledge is about, that exist independently of our particular beliefs about them. The *transitive* dimension refers to the concepts, theories, and the like that structure our understanding of the intransitive dimension in any particular case. Our beliefs arise from an

interaction between the transitive and the intransitive dimensions, in which our experience of interacting with the intransitive can lead us to question and revise our transitive beliefs.

This distinction is drawn in such a way as to pass successfully from laboratory science to the social sciences, a move that comes in Bhaskar's second book *The Possibility of Naturalism* (1979). Social structures are also seen as having emergent causal powers, and this is consistent with their being both dependent on the activities of people and dependent on "agents' conceptions of what they are doing" (1979: 38). To put it in the terms introduced above, the powers of social structures are emergent in the sense that they are possessed by social structures but not by the individual people (and often other things) that are the parts of those structures. These powers only come about when the parts are organised into structures that depend on the understandings of the people, and on the ways in which those people (and other parts) interact when they come into these sorts of relations with each other. Those structures may then develop as the beliefs and activities of the people change, in what Bhaskar calls the Transformational Model of Social Activity (1979: 33–6). With this in mind, we can see why Bhaskar's transitive/intransitive distinction works better than the simple realist claim that the world is independent of human beliefs about it. The problem for that argument is that the social world is *not* independent of our beliefs about it – the state only works, for example, because we have a concept of government, we believe it is legitimate, and we recognise the demands it makes on us as coming from the state. But for any particular individual seeking to make sense of the state, there *is* a distinction between the beliefs that other people have that sustain the state (which fall into the intransitive dimension for our individual) and the individual's own theories about the state (which fall into her transitive dimension). So I can recognise *both* that the state, or any other social structure, depends on the beliefs that people have, but *also* that it has an existence that is independent of what I personally may think about it.

The implications of critical realism for epistemology are neatly summarised in the three principles of ontological realism, epistemic (or epistemological) relativism, and judgemental rationality (Bhaskar 1986: 24, 2016: 25–6). If one accepts that there is a real world that is largely external to and independent of any one observer and her beliefs about it, and that we have some capacity to be influenced in our beliefs by that world, then it follows that our beliefs can be proven wrong by further experience. Bhaskar's ontological realism, therefore, entails fallibilism about belief, and his acknowledgement of the transitive dimension of belief further implies that our beliefs will be sensitive to the social or discursive context in which they are developed (1979: 57). He advocates a philosophy that "would unashamedly acknowledge as a corollary of its realism, the historicity, relativity and essential transformability of all our knowledge" (1989: 155). Hence, his realism implies that we must be epistemic relativists: knowledge claims are necessarily uncertain and influenced by social factors. He rejects, however, strong forms of relativism in which it is concluded that all judgements are determined by social forces and therefore that we have no objective basis for making judgements between competing claims. On the contrary, he insists that epistemic relativism is consistent with judgemental rationality: that we have the capacity to come to justified (though necessarily fallible) conclusions about many questions. In terms of our conclusions about the nature of external reality, our interaction with that reality provides us with strong evidence that may be influenced by our transitive preconceptions but is not fully *determined* by those preconceptions. That often gives us a reasonable basis for making judgements of empirical fact.

Bhaskar's critique, then, leads not just to a philosophy *of* science but to a philosophy *for* science, in the sense that it provides us with a framework for making sense of what scientists are doing that can be employed by scientists themselves. Although the framework has had little influence on natural scientists, it has been adopted enthusiastically by some social scientists.

Structure and agency

Here critical realism has intervened in many central theoretical debates. Perhaps the most influential contributions are to debates on the question of structure and agency. We have already seen that Bhaskar is committed to the causal significance of social structure, but he also sees human agency as causally significant. As Margaret Archer makes clear, human agents are also entities with emergent properties, and critical realism shows us how *both* individual agency and social structure can be causally important to our understanding of social events (1995). The concept of multiple determination of events by many interacting causes allows us to say that events are not determined by any single force, be it structural or agential, but rather by the interaction of both structural and agential powers (and indeed the causal powers of non-social objects) (Elder-Vass 2010a).

It may seem puzzling, however, to say that both structural and agential powers interact to produce events when we have already recognised that social structures depend for their powers on people. Critical realists have put forward multiple arguments to justify treating social structures as having powers in their own right despite their dependence on people. Archer argues that we can understand both social reproduction and social transformation as consequences of what she calls the *morphogenetic cycle* (Archer 1995: 154–9). Before any sequence of social events, we have pre-existing social structures, such as the state, powerful organisations, and unequal distributions of resources. Individuals are aware of at least some of the structures that they are faced with and make decisions to act that are shaped in part by their understanding of the constraints and opportunities created by these structures. Their actions then contribute to either reproducing or transforming those structures, which then provide a new (or unchanged) set of constraints and opportunities to be taken into account in the next cycle.

This still leaves open the question of why we are justified in treating the structures concerned as having powers of their own, or structural emergent properties as Archer calls them (Archer 1995: 172–83). Archer's answer is temporal: structures are material sedimented products of past action that continue to have influence in the present and so are able to interact with individual humans. She is particularly strongly opposed to what she calls elision or central conflation: attempts to collapse structure into agency as if they were merely two aspects of the same thing, for example in Giddens's notion of structures as rules within the individuals affected by them (Archer 1995: 93–134).

In a largely complementary argument, Elder-Vass suggests we can see social structures as entities composed of people and often other material parts that have emergent causal powers in the sense introduced earlier. An organisation, for example, is composed (at any given time) of a set of people and things, related to each other in ways that depend on their roles in the organisation, and as a result of these parts acting in accordance with their roles the organisation as a whole has causal powers that the parts would not have if they were not related to each other in the way they are when they become parts of the organisation (Elder-Vass 2010a: 144–68). This means that we may be able to explain how the organisation comes to have the powers that it does in terms of the interactions between its parts, but such explanations are not reductive – they do not dissolve the claim that the causal power concerned belongs to the organisation rather than its parts – because the power only exists when the organisation does.

We can also justify claims for human agency in a similar vein: we cannot reduce the powers of individual humans to powers of their biological parts because those parts must be assembled into a functioning human before the powers come to exist. Critical realism also, however, provides more extended accounts of the nature of agency, in particular Archer's work on the nature of reflexivity (a term she uses as a synonym of agency as it is usually understood, having used *agency* itself somewhat differently in her earlier work). For Archer, humans are fundamentally

decision-making beings, who ponder their options in *internal conversations*, a concept she draws from the work of George Herbert Mead. This is not, however, a rationalistic approach to decision making – it is grounded at least partly in our emotions, which she sees as providing a commentary on the relationship between our situation at any one time and our deepest concerns. Those concerns themselves develop in a process that defines our personal identity, and then influence our major decisions about our careers and personal commitments, thus producing our social identity (Archer 2000: 193–249).

These identity commitments then feed into our decision making, but they are mediated through the process of internal conversation, and on the basis of an empirical study, Archer has argued that there are several different styles of internal conversation, with different people tending to adopt different styles (Archer 2003). Communicative reflexives tend to consult people they are close to and take account of their inputs as part of the process; autonomous reflexives tend to be more independent and more focused on their own benefits (and thus closer to the rationalistic model); and meta-reflexives tend to be more self-critical and reflect on the wider implications of their choices.

Some other critical realists have argued that we need an account of agency that blends Archer's focus on conscious deliberation with the ways in which socialisation can shape our subconscious dispositions and orientations. Both Andrew Sayer and Elder-Vass, for example, have argued that Bourdieu's concept of the *habitus* can be combined with Archer's work to produce an account of human agency that recognises both that we sometimes make conscious decisions and also that our action is influenced by social forces that have contributed to shaping the kinds of people that we are (Elder-Vass 2010a: 87–114; Sayer 2009). Archer, on the other hand, sees Bourdieu as another elisionist and *habitus* as another form of the collapse of structure into the individual (Archer 2003: 11–2).

Realism, constructionism, and method

While realism, in general, has often been seen as opposed to theories of social construction, critical realism has a more nuanced relation to constructionism (Sayer 2009). If we may take social construction as the view that features of the world depend for their existence on how we collectively think or talk about them, then critical realism is committed to a constructionist view of some things but not others. Bhaskar himself saw social structures as concept dependent (Bhaskar 1979: 38) and challenged the argument that realism and constructionism are incompatible (Bhaskar 1993a: 186). Sayer has argued that realism is entirely compatible with what he calls weak constructionism but not with strong constructionism (Sayer 2000a: 62). Christian Smith rejects the strong constructionist claim that "Reality itself for humans is a human, social construction" but accepts the weak constructionist claim that knowledge is socially influenced and in turn helps to produce institutional facts (Smith 2010: 121–2).

Smith argues that constructionists have been misled by the Kantian tradition in philosophy: "A realist account of social constructionism needs to replace the too-dominant image of humans as primarily *perceivers of* reality with the image of humans as *natural participants in* reality" (Smith 2010: 170). Kant takes the view that we can never perceive the world as it is in itself because our experience is always filtered through innate categories. This argument has been adapted by a neo-Kantian tradition in social theory to argue that we can only experience the world through socially acquired categories and hence that our perception and understanding of reality is entirely a product of these socially acquired categories (Elder-Vass 2012: 244–6). But once we recognise that we are not just observers of reality but participants in it, we must also recognise that the world around us also influences our perceptions, and that although our

categories are influenced socially they are also constrained by the influence of the objects we perceive. Indeed, constructionism depends on the belief that we *can* perceive the sounds and texts through which discursive influence is communicated to us and so it becomes incoherent if it denies that we have any perceptual access to the material world (Elder-Vass 2012: 246–50).

The net result is that critical realists deny that material objects are socially constructed (although some of our beliefs about them may be) but accept that social structures are. The difference is that social structures depend for their existence on how we think about them. A banknote, for example, has a material existence that is independent of our beliefs about the banknote and so that material existence is not socially constructed. Money, on the other hand, does depend for its existence (as money) on our beliefs. An item is only money if it is positioned as an acceptable means of payment within a community (Lawson 2019: 155–65). Money is therefore socially constructed even though banknotes (or some of the other items that could be positioned as money, such as cows or conch shells) are not.

This perspective, in which social events are seen as causally produced by a mix of agential, structural, material, and discursive forces, leads to a pluralism about methods of research in the social sciences. In terms of the classic divide in social science methods, critical realists reject both the exclusive focus on meaning and thus on qualitative research characteristic of interpretivist perspectives and the exclusion of meaning and consequent quantitative orientation character-istic of positivism. Because social structures are concept dependent, understanding meaning is an important step in making sense of how they work, but this remains a step in a causal analysis. That causal analysis, however, cannot be conducted in purely quantitative terms since causes do not typically produce consistent quantitative regularities in the world. As Doug Porpora puts it, (some) realists run regressions, but they do not consider that regressions generate causal explana-tions (Porpora 2015: 31–64). Rather, regressions and other quantitative techniques provide us with evidence of statistical relationships – what Tony Lawson calls demi-regularities (Lawson 1997: 204–9) – which can sometimes be useful clues in the search for causal mechanisms. Real-ist methods are focused, on the one hand, on the identification of causal mechanisms, and on the other, on analysing how particular sets of causal mechanisms interact to produce particular events or types of events. Given this orientation, almost all of the established social science meth-ods are available to realists. Those coming to critical realism for the first time can be frustrated by the lack of authoritative advice on 'the' critical realist method, but a great deal of work has been done on how many different methods can be used fruitfully in critical realist empirical research (for example, Edwards, O'Mahoney, and Vincent 2014 covers a wide range of methods).

Realist critique

Bhaskar's project was always intensely critical. He saw his work as striving to "*underlabour … for the sciences, and especially the human sciences, in so far as they might illuminate and empower the project of human self-emancipation*" (Bhaskar 1989: vii). He made several attempts to pro-vide rigorous grounds for an ethical critique and a systematic project of emancipation, although his work was oriented to how we might justify these from a philosophical perspective rather than on specific political critiques or projects. Indeed, it is arguable that it was his desire to provide stronger grounds for critique that drove the development of his work through multiple stages, which he always presented as building on and transforming, rather than replacing or invalidating, his earlier work.

In his early work, he suggests that social science's critical potential arises from what he calls *emancipatory critiques.* He argues that when we are able to identify false beliefs, we can automati-cally proceed to condemn the sources of those false beliefs and to justify action aimed at their

removal (Bhaskar 1986: 177). In particular, he argues that when social structures produce false beliefs about themselves (as notably argued in Marxist ideology critique) this means that we are justified in removing them. Thus, he argues for a strong ethical naturalism: that we can proceed directly from a factual claim to a normative conclusion. In his dialectical phase, he extends this argument further to argue that if we can show that some structure leads to a failure to meet human needs then we can automatically proceed to justify action aimed at its removal (Bhaskar 1993b: 262). Again, he claims that this is a straight derivation of an ethical conclusion from a purely factual premise, but he also goes beyond this to assert a commitment to moral realism: the reality of objective values (Bhaskar 1993b: 211). In what is sometimes known as the spiritual phase of his work, organised around the concept of *metareality*, Bhaskar offers a new argument to justify his moral realism. Metareality is a level beyond or behind ordinary reality, while ordinary reality is a kind of imperfect shadow of metareality. In a sense, metareality is the common potential from which the various different forms of ordinary reality, including values, emerge, and he sees it as providing a kind of connecting commonality between all ordinary forms of being which he calls *co-presence* (Morgan 2003: 125). Bhaskar claims that humans have access to co-presence through techniques like meditation which attune us to our *ground state* and orient us to love, reciprocity, and right action.

Not all critical realists are convinced by the various grounds for critique identified by Bhaskar (Elder-Vass 2010b; Morgan 2003), but critical realists typically follow Bhaskar in the looser sense of adopting a critical perspective driven by an explicit desire for human flourishing. Influenced by the feminist tradition of the ethics of care, Sayer has criticised a tendency he finds in critical social science generally, but also in accounts like Bhaskar's, to detach critique from its normative roots. Indeed he accuses critical realism of giving "a complacent account of CSS [critical social science] in which ought follows straightforwardly from is" (Sayer 1997: 473). Instead, he argues, we need to recognise that critique always depends on normative judgements, and the tendency of critical social science to conceal the judgements underlying its critiques undermines the force of those critiques and indeed the critics' own understanding of their critical standpoints. He is critical, for example, of Foucault's crypto-normativity (a term from Habermas) which provides vaguely dystopian accounts of the social world while avoiding explicit judgements about just what is good and bad about the situation being described (Sayer 2012: 190). Rejecting the sceptical tendency to dismiss all value talk as naïve, Sayer argues that critique is necessarily based on moral values. He recognises that "moral values are cultural values" but rejects the relativist conclusion that they are "totally culture-bound", on the grounds that "they are influenced by trans-cultural needs and capacities for suffering and flourishing" (Sayer 2000b: 82). This is a weak ethical naturalism in which moral values are driven by the nature of human needs and capacities but those needs are recognised as being culturally mediated and, in some cases, entirely culturally produced. Critique must therefore be based in an engagement with how people experience their lives and with what matters to them. Sayer provides a brilliant exemplar in his own critique of wealth in contemporary society (Sayer 2015).

Debates

Critical realism has been criticised on a range of grounds. Perhaps the commonest disagreements relate to its defence of the causal powers of social structures. Rom Harré, for example, despite having been Bhaskar's PhD supervisor and one inspiration of his work on causal powers, has rejected its application to social structures. Harré argues that only "powerful particulars" can have causal powers and denies that social structures can be particulars – indeed he argues that in the social realm only individual people are powerful particulars, who operate on the social

world through their discursive acts (Harré 2002). As Bob Carter has argued in response, however, Harré's argument rests on seeing social structures as only rules, customs, and conventions and ignoring the structures that emerge as a result of relations within groups of people (Carter 2002).

In sociology, Anthony King has criticised Archer's work on social structure, on the grounds that her invocation of temporality does not entail that structures have power: historical social residues need not be structural (King 1999). We can concede King's point, however, without losing the argument for social structure since critical realists, including Archer, also see social structure as synchronically emergent: as having powers in the present that depend on their composition in the present but could not be possessed by their parts if they were not organised into such structures (Elder-Vass 2007).

Another theme in criticisms of critical realism, from a loosely Popperian perspective, has been to question its commitment to fallibilism. Justin Cruickshank takes the view that while he is fallibilist about empirical and scientific knowledge, Bhaskar claims a special status for his ontological arguments, seeing them as derived *a priori* and thus impregnable to error (Cruickshank 2004). Cruickshank's argument, however, cannot be sustained. Perhaps Bhaskar's wording is a little loose in places, but when he addresses these questions explicitly, he is categorical: "all cognitive claims, including claims to knowledge of necessities in any mode (whether logical, mathematical, transcendental, conceptual, natural, conventional, psychological, historical, etc.) are fallible" (Bhaskar 1986: 15). Stephen Kemp offers a related argument, suggesting that while critical realists may be nominally committed to fallibilism, they are not willing enough to challenge their own assumptions and conclusions. He advocates what he calls *transformational fallibilism*, which sees the questioning of knowledge claims, even those that are apparently successful, as vital to ensuring the progress of knowledge (Kemp 2017). Critical realism is thus found wanting, not because it rejects fallibilism in principle, but because it fails to challenge itself thoroughly enough.

One must question, however, whether any progressive research programme could proceed in this way. This is not to say that successful programmes should insist on their conclusions being unquestionably correct. The predominant orientation of critical realism is a happy medium between these two extremes, in which well supported conclusions are respected and built upon, unless and until good reasons emerge to doubt them, and less well-supported conclusions are questioned and criticised constructively with a view to replacing them. A healthy research tradition, in other words, needs internal debate, and there is plenty of evidence of this in critical realism. In addition to questions of the basis of critique and the nature of agency referred to earlier, one could also mention the debate between Archer and Elder-Vass on the nature of culture (Archer and Elder-Vass 2012). The most conclusive evidence, however, that critical realism remains suitably critical of its own outputs is that many critical realists remain dubious about the value of the later phases of Bhaskar's work. The dialectical phase has been widely questioned, and the turn to metareality widely rejected, among critical realists as well as outsiders. Indeed, the most significant challenges to critical realist orthodoxy have been mounted from inside the tradition.

Conclusion

Although it is primarily a philosophical perspective, critical realism is increasingly being employed as a framework for both empirical and theoretical work across a wide range of social science disciplines and fields. It combines a coherent understanding of causality as the interaction of multiple causal mechanisms with a recognition of the concept dependence of social

structures. As a result, it shows how we can combine explanatory and interpretive work and thus overcome the central methodological divide in the methodology of the social sciences.

References

Archer, M.S. (1995) *Realist Social Theory: The Morphogenetic Approach*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Archer, M.S. (2000) *Being Human*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Archer, M.S. (2003) *Structure, Agency, and the Internal Conversation*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Archer, M.S. and D. Elder-Vass (2012) 'Cultural System or Norm Circles? An Exchange', *European Journal of Social Theory* 15(1) 93–115.

Bhaskar, R. (1975) *A Realist Theory of Science*, Leeds: Leeds Books.

Bhaskar, R. (1979) *The Possibility of Naturalism*, Brighton: Harvester.

Bhaskar, R. (1986) *Scientific Realism and Human Emancipation*, London: Verso.

Bhaskar, R. (1989) *Reclaiming Reality: A Critical Introduction to Contemporary Philosophy*, London: Verso.

Bhaskar, R. (1993a) 'Afterword', pp. 185–7 in Shotter, J. (ed.), *Conversational Realities*, London: Sage.

Bhaskar, R. (1993b) *Dialectic: The Pulse of Freedom*, London: Verso.

Bhaskar, R. (2016) *Enlightened Common Sense: The Philosophy of Critical Realism*, Hartwig, M. (ed.), New York: Routledge.

Carter, B. (2002) 'People Power: Harre and the Myth of Social Structure', *European Journal of Social Theory* 5(1) 134–42.

Cruickshank, J. (2004) 'A Tale of Two Ontologies: An Immanent Critique of Critical Realism', *Sociological Review* 52(4) 567–85.

Edwards, P.K., J. O'Mahoney, and S. Vincent (2014) *Studying Organizations Using Critical Realism: A Practical Guide*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Elder-Vass, D. (2007) 'For Emergence: Refining Archer's Account of Social Structure', *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour* 37(1) 25–44.

Elder-Vass, D. (2010a) *The Causal Power of Social Structures*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Elder-Vass, D. (2010b) 'Realist Critique without Ethical Naturalism or Moral Realism', *Journal of Critical Realism* 9(1) 33–58.

Elder-Vass, D. (2012) *The Reality of Social Construction*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Harré, R. (2002) 'Social Reality and the Myth of Social Structure', *European Journal of Social Theory* 5(1) 111–23.

Kemp, S. (2017) 'Transformational Fallibilism and the Development of Understanding', *Social Epistemology* 31(2) 192–209.

King, A. (1999) 'Against Structure: A Critique of Morphogenetic Social Theory', *Sociological Review* 47(2) 199–227.

Lawson, T. (1997) *Economics and Reality*, London: Routledge.

Lawson, T. (2019) *The Nature of Social Reality: Issues in Social Ontology*, Abingdon: Routledge.

Morgan, J. (2003) 'What Is Meta-Reality?', *Journal of Critical Realism* 1(2) 115–46.

Porpora, D.V. (2015) *Reconstructing Sociology*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sayer, A. (1997) 'Critical Realism and the Limits to Critical Social Science', *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour* 27(4) 473–88.

Sayer, A. (2000a) *Realism and Social Science*, London: Sage.

Sayer, A. (2000b) 'Moral Economy and Political Economy', *Studies in Political Economy* 61(1) 79–103.

Sayer, A. (2009) 'Reflexivity and the Habitus', pp. 108–22 in Archer, M.S. (ed.), *Conversations about Reflexivity*, Abingdon: Routledge.

Sayer, A. (2012) 'Power, Causality and Normativity: A Critical Realist Critique of Foucault', *Journal of Political Power* 5(2) 179–94.

Sayer, A. (2015) *Why We Can't Afford the Rich*, Bristol: Policy Press.

Smith, C. (2010) *What Is a Person?*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Power, legitimacy, and authority

Stewart Clegg

Any sociological discussion of the relations between power, legitimacy, and authority must start with Max Weber. The chapter will begin with an outline of Weber's views of power, legitimacy, and authority and the interpretation of these in translation. It will then move to consideration of the functionalist theoretical context into which Weber was translated and its extension in Parsons' work and more recent institutional accounts. Finally, the chapter will address the recent centrality of dimensional analysis to debates about power in which it is argued that the most subtle and profound power relations are those where actors assume the legitimacy of systems of belief that do not represent their real interests.

Max Weber: power, domination, and legitimate authority

By the dawn of the twentieth century, Max Weber was already a minor if not yet significant intellectual in Germany. He had recently completed his essays on the 'protestant ethic' (Weber 1976) and was soon to create most of what we now know as his writings on power, legitimacy, and authority in the early years of the twentieth century. In translation ideas inevitably change. Weber's rugged realism, which was most evident in the centrality of *Herrschaft* or domination to his scheme of thought, as Roth (Weber 1978: lxxxviii) notes in his introduction to *Economy and Society*, the sociology of domination is the book's core. Earlier translations rendered *Herrschaft* as authority (Weber 1964) was invariably translated as if it had the qualifier of legitimacy attached to it. In English authority is typically rendered not merely as a positional attribute but can also be something that is observable in process that is not irrevocably attached to positions. While Weber's (1947) translation by Parsons and Henderson emphasized a fair German interpretation it was also one that happened to correspond with the assumptions of functionalist theories. As Cohen, Hazelrigg, and Pope (1975a, 1975b) establish, following Gouldner's (1971) tracks, there is every need to 'de-Parsonize' Weber despite Parsons' (1975) objections to the contrary.

Two central Weberian categories, in the original German, were *Macht* and *Herrschaft*. The precise translation of these terms is contested. Initially, they entered into usage as 'power' and 'authority', respectively. Weber defined power in various but related ways in his writings, but his most concise definition is that power is 'the possibility of imposing one's will upon the behavior of other persons' (Weber 1954: 324), and, as he often added, especially where this will is resisted

by those over whom it is exercised, regardless of the basis on which the probability of obedience rested (Weber 1978: 53). We may recognize a debt to Nietzsche's (1973) 'will to power' (Schroeder 1987) in the centrality of the notion of will to his conception of power. (On the Nietzsche connections see Fleischmann 1964; Eden 1983; Schroeder 1987; Hennis 1988; Sica 1988).

While there is little controversy surrounding the translation of *Macht* as power (as an active verb rather than a passive noun, although, it should be noted, that 'might' is seen by some scholars as a more appropriate translation), there is considerable dissent surrounding the translation of *Herrschaft* as authority that was initiated by Parsons and Henderson in their edition of *The theory of social and economic organization* (Weber 1947). Later translators translate *Herrschaft* either as 'rule' or 'domination', depending on the context of translation.

Weber introduced the term *Herrschaft* 'as the probability that a command with a given specific content will be obeyed by a given group of persons' (Weber 1978: 53). Where obedience occurs, we have an example of legitimate *Herrschaft*, which Parsons and Henderson appropriately translate as authority. The concept of legitimate *Herrschaft* refers to non-coercive rule that is accepted by those that are subject to it; thus, authority is a relationship of legitimate rule. Both relations of power and legitimate rule must occur within specific spheres, which comprise a structure of dominancy conceived as an order 'regarded by the actor as in some way obligatory or exemplary', that governs the organization (Weber 1978: 31). The formal structures of dominancy will be experienced as differing substantive types of rule, within which it is a matter of probability that there will be willing obedience.

In modern organizations, Weber argues, formal rationality would be best institutionalized, and domination most complete, when rationality is accepted as legitimate in its own terms. Such a state of affairs would be what Weber defined as 'authority'. Thus, authority is legitimated domination. Although Weber is commonly construed as a theorist of authority, in terms of the three types of what Weber refers to as *Herrschaft*, they are, in fact, types of domination. Authority is a social relation in which the subject owes an allegiance that enables them to legitimate their subjection to an external source of domination. Etzioni (1974) was later to characterize the bases for this allegiance as either love, fear or money, which he termed normative, coercive, or calculative grounds for consent. Weber saw the bases for consent constituted by one or more of charismatic leadership, the weight of tradition, the routines of discipline, or the inherent sense of vocation that one might profess. Consent is not automatic; situations might ensue where there is resistance by some to the will of some other.

Domination requires organization as concerted action by a body of people employed as staff, to execute commands; hence, the necessity of a division of labor in an organization of any scale. What is most remarkable about any organization are the ways in which they shape superordinate goals to which others orient. To the extent that organizations succeed in this, subordinates will do things that they might not otherwise do as subjects in power relations. Their social action is constrained and enabled by the manifest will or command of the ruler, rulers, or rules influencing conduct. The effective legitimacy of rule should never be assumed but is always an empirical matter. Should the rule(r)s positively influence the social action that occurs within the context of organizationally enabled action, it will only be so to the extent that those ruled make the content of the command – its will to power – the maxim of their conduct. Of course, the rulers can tilt the probability in their favor by acculturating others to the habitual obedience of commands; they can constitute the others as subjects with a personal interest in seeing the existing domination continue because they derive benefits from it; they can hold out the promise of the pleasures of future rule to subaltern ranks and the power of dismissal, should these incentives fail, is always a reserve power.

The power of command can exist irrespective of the sense of duty to obey; when that duty is present then the command may be felt as a legitimate obligation to an authority; with a sense of duty, power is transformed into authority, where the legitimacy of rule and rules is accepted. Where power is bereft of that sense of duty it shades into domination, defined as the non-legitimate imposition of will. It should be evident that the judgment of the legitimacy or otherwise of rule – whether it is authority – is not a prerogative of the rulers but of the putatively ruled. It is for this reason that power, as a social relation, will be inherently dynamic.

Command may be interpreted quite flexibly. Organizations seek to replace the necessity of frequent interventions into the body politic through a discipline of power that institutionalizes the domination of formal rationality; that is, the probability that a command with a given specific content will be obeyed (Weber 1978: 53). A command is not simply something that is necessarily expressed vocally, as in 'I command you to cease that at once'. A command also encompasses the orders that are received in writing or through other forms of representation, as well as the generalized duties associated with a particular office. While claims as to power's efficacy are made each time that an organizational action is enacted through command (whether emailed, habitual, written, spoken, ruled, or construed in any other way whatsoever) there is always the probability that the command will be met with resistance, either because those subject to it do not choose to construe it as legitimate or, which amounts to the same thing, there is another more highly valued course of action than obedience to rule which informs action.

Although Weber's interests were broad and many, the most important types of power discussed by Weber derive from a constellation of interests that develops on a formally free market and from established authority that allocates the right to command and the duty to obey (Weber 1954: 291). According to Weber the modern world increasingly strips social actors of their ability freely to choose the means and ends of their actions, particularly as it is organized and organizes through bureaucracy. In modernity, institutions rationalize and organize affairs, cutting down on individual choices, replacing them with standardized procedures and rules. Rational calculation becomes a matter of discipline. Everything and everyone are seemingly put through a calculus, irrespective of other values or pleasures. The rational calculus becomes a necessary and unavoidable feature of organizing in the modern world.

Weber was pessimistic about the long-term impact of bureaucracy. On the one hand, bureaucracies would free people from arbitrary rule by powerful patrimonial leaders, those who personally owned the instruments and offices of rule. They would do this because they were based on rational legality as the rule of law contained in the files that defined practice in the bureau. On the other hand, they would create an 'iron cage of bondage' (see Kent 1983), more literally translated from the original German as a house of hardened steel. The frame was fashioned from the 'care for external goods' (Weber 1976: 181). By this Weber meant that in a market economy of large complex organizations one could gain these external goods by mortgaging one's life to a career in a hierarchy of offices that interlocked and intermeshed. One might shift from being a small cog in the machine to one that was slightly bigger, in a slow but steady progression. Power concerned less the direct imposition of another's will on subjects and more the ways in which existence was increasingly inscribed in a rationalized frame of normalcy.

Where an individual internalized commitment to a rational institution, such as the Civil Service, Science, or Academia, this represents an ethical vocation whose commitment shapes dispositions in such a way that little or no resistance to the formal rationality of this institution occurs. At its most powerful, power is a relation that institutes itself in the psyche of the individual. Simmel (1964: 413) explored this when he examined how personality accommodates to the requirements of contemporary urban environments, emphasizing that punctuality, calculability,

and exactness become part of modern personalities to the exclusion of 'those irrational, instinctive, sovereign traits and impulses which aim at determining the mode of life from within'.

Increasing self-discipline, meshing with intensified bureaucratization, rationalization and individualization characterized modernity in the social world. External constraint (sovereign power, traditional power) is increasingly replaced by internalization of constraint (disciplinary power, rational domination), assisted by technologies of power. As van Krieken (1990: 353) puts it, 'being modern means being disciplined, by the state [and other organizational forms], by each other and by ourselves; that the soul, both one's own and that of others, became organized into the self, an object of reflection and analysis, and, above all, transformable in the service of ideals such as productivity, virtue and strength'. More recent writers than Simmel (1971) and Weber (1978), such as Elias (1982) and Foucault (1977), are wholly in accord with their insights in these respects.

The modern, rationalized person is increasingly disciplined by discourses of power. Simmel saw domination as in part a function of the symbolic content of widely held ideas embedded in everyday practices of life and discourse. One becomes 'habituated' to the 'compulsory character' of these precepts 'until the cruder and subtler means of compulsion are no longer necessary', indeed, until ones' 'nature' is so 'formed or reformed' by these precepts that one 'acts … as if on impulse'(Simmel 1971: 119). The individual in a situation of formal domination increasingly comes to be subordinated to 'objective principles' which they experience as a 'concrete object' whose necessity takes the form of a 'social requirement … which must be satisfied for its own sake' (Simmel 1971: 11). Foucault (1977) did not put it better or clearer.

Parsons' authority and power

Because the stress in functionalism had been on social order and consensus rather than on contradiction and conflict, the emphasis had been on authority to such an extent that it lacked a theory of power, until Parsons (1964) provided it with one. Parsons defined the central question of social theory as being able to answer how social order is possible and why society exists, rather than there being a bleak and violent war of all against all in a life that is nasty, brutish, poor, and short. In other words, how was it that what Hobbes (1914 [1651]) had conceptualized as a state of nature did not prevail? Parsons sought to show how order was possible on the basis of uncoerced action. He conceived of all forms of social action being organized in terms of four subsystems, two of which were specialized on political and economic rationalization, with the attendant risks of change and conflict; however, there were also distinct spheres of integrative and normative processes whose task was to deal with those conflicts that arise.

These four processes were referred to as the conceptual and analytical universe of subsystems of adaptive, goal-oriented, integrative, and normative processes. The latter two subsystems provided a plurality of moral orders which countervail economic and organizational adaptation. Think of religious ethics holding up scientific research on human gene technology, for instance. Power is the medium whereby the gap between the expectations raised by some moral categories and the possibilities created economic and political rationalities, in either direction, is narrowed, such that, despite moral and other differences, effective goal orientation will be facilitated and efficient organization produced, using sanctions if necessary. Sanctions should be authoritative: for instance, shooting abortionists dead might be a sanction of the extreme right-to-life community but it is not authoritative. What would be authoritative would be to use the law courts to challenge existing rulings and thus change the legislative framework within which abortion is practiced. Power is facilitative in Parsons' schema: it helps create binding obligations. And, if these are not obeyed, then authoritative sanctions can be enacted.

Power is similar to money, says Parsons (1964): both are circulatory media. Just as money functions as a generalized mechanism or means for securing satisfaction of desires within the economy – without money you may want things that you cannot buy because one lacks 'effective demand' – so does power in political systems. Both power and money are anchored in popular confidence in their currency; it is this which provides them with their legitimacy. Given this legitimacy, power can be deployed in the expectation that others will respect it, and follow its injunctions, because the obligations that it places on those over whom its remit will run, will regard them as binding because of the perception of legitimacy. Symbolic legitimacy is the orderly background within which Parsons' view of power is embedded. Indeed, he theorizes power as the medium of order for social systems, including organizations. Power is defined as a generalized capacity to influence the allocation of resources for attaining collective goals. Members share institutionalized obligations legitimizing certain sanctions in the power system in question. Legitimate power is able to regulate commitments while authority comprises the general rules governing specific decision-making.

Parsons' view of power diverges from Weber's formulation of power within a context of domination. Instead, individuals are conceived as moral agents acting within a normative context to which they are effectively socialized. Where they are not, socialization must be amiss and deviance occurs, justifying legitimate sanction. Thus, actors routinely use power not as a form of resistance to domination but as a way of ensuring the reproduction of authority, as a positive force, as a capacity to produce an effect. Thus, when power is exercised organizationally it is always within the context of binding obligations shared both by the power yielder and the power subject and the sanctions that are threatened for non-compliance are always normatively constrained. Deviance and resistance to power, because they call forth the appropriate sanctions, actually strengthen the organizational order, rather than weakening it. Barnes (1988: 26) refers to Parsons' views as normative determinism: it is easy to see why. The assumption is that norms are invariably operative and shared; when they are not then a failure of socialization mechanisms is held responsible. However, many forms of social action flow from authentically held norms that do not happen to be shared by others who hold equally passionately to the authenticity of their norms. Much of life is like this.

Sometimes the public realm within which individual actions are enacted lacks the normative clarity and coherence that Parsons assumes. Consequently, the discursive availability of norms often functions to fuel competing calculations of interest by different agents, who make estimates of the probability of sanctioning for the actions that they propose. As Clegg (1989: 133) put it, normative order is the emergent effect of calculations about and 'differential access to, utilization of and effectiveness in sanctioning resources, just as much as is normative disorder'. We cannot assume a priori that structures of dominancy will be legitimate and thus function as authority: it is a matter of empirical determination.

Habermas recognizes that 'a person taking orders is structurally disadvantaged in relation to a person with the power to give them' (Habermas 1987: 271). In trying to make the subject do what is wanted, the ultimate sanction against non-compliance is the threat of withdrawing the continuing condition of membership. The right of withdrawal is clearly not reciprocal. The power-subject in a hierarchical relation lacks the authority to impose withdrawal as a sanction: some obligations are more binding than others and some actors, those hierarchically superordinate, are in a stronger position to impose these obligations. They determine the conditions under which legitimacy is defined and authority dispensed. They can define what is seen to be authority, just as they can define what is not taken to be legitimate, although the acceptance of these definitions always depends on the consent of those that are subjects of rule.

Power may be positive and may serve collective goals but only if one is incorporated within its remit. Discursive participation in consensual goal formation is not a normal condition for most subordinate organization members. I don't need to agree with you to spend my money on something you sell; however, if I sell my labor to you, then there has to be some subjugation of my preferences, dispositions, and attitudes to those that are organizationally defined as legitimate. By accepting an offer of employment, the assumption is made that this is a fair exchange; that one *wants* to be in *this* specific position of subordination. It all depends on the alternatives; short of many, most will accept almost anything, no matter how repugnant it may be.

Parsons argued that the creation of power normally 'presupposed consensus on system goals' (Haugaard 2003: 90), thus providing a framework within which facilitative power operated. Power only needed to be coercive when order broke down, periodically, when members need to be disciplined in order to reassert the central value system of the normative order. Power flows through the social order as a circulatory medium that positively reinforces authority through creative facilitative episodes as well as being invoked negatively when deviance is punished.

Parsons perceived that power was not the exception which is somehow outside the system. He understood that for power to be effective it had to be a constituting and systemic property and was not totally mistaken in linking it to legitimacy and authority. His crucial error was in the assumption that authority and legitimacy derive 'naturally' from system goals rather than that the consent behind legitimacy and authority will always be constructed through complex means which have nothing to do with the realization of system goals. Giddens observed that Parsons' power is 'directly derivative of authority: authority is the institutionalized legitimation which underlies power' (Giddens 1968: 260). At base the criticism is that Parsons neglects 'power over' in favor of 'power to'. In consequence, Parsons is seen to play down hierarchy and division, which give rise to different interests, thus overstating the degree of authority in the social system (Giddens 1968: 264).

Legitimacy

Most recently, Suchman (1995) has made significant contributions to the literature on authority. He defines legitimacy as a 'generalized perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs, and definitions' (Suchman 1995: 574). His discussion is couched in terms of the legitimacy of organizations; organizations can possess legitimacy objectively, he suggests, yet they can do so only where this legitimacy is created subjectively. Organizations may diverge from social norms but still retain legitimacy; this would be the case where the deviance does not lead to public disapproval or is unacknowledged. The whole focus of notable social movements in recent years, such as Black Lives Matter, is to make disapproval of the legitimacy claims of specific police organizations spectacularly public through forms of highly visible and thus unignorable symbolic civil disobedience.

Suchman (1995) distinguishes between *pragmatic, moral,* and *cognitive* legitimacy. *Pragmatic legitimacy* rests on self-interested calculations. The pragmatism might be one or other of exchange, influence, or disposition. Exchange legitimacy is premised on the support for the authority in question because of benefits that authority provides. Influence legitimacy occurs when the authority in question co-opts an important part of that constituency of interest that bestows legitimacy on it into its domain of deliberations. Dispositional legitimacy is bestowed when a constituency of interest can be persuaded that the authority in question aligns its purpose and values with those shared by the constituency: populist political leadership, playing to its 'base', represents this form of legitimacy.

Moral legitimacy derives from a normative evaluation of the authority in question as being socially worthwhile in terms of one or other of either outcomes and consequences, or techniques or procedures, or categories and structures. Consequentially, this legitimacy is based on what the authority in question accomplishes in terms of some standards or values deemed relevant. Procedurally, this legitimacy is premised on conformance with 'rational myths' (Meyer & Rowan, 1977) about doing whatever is being done in ways which are deemed recognizably appropriate. Structurally, this legitimacy is premised on the authority in question being seen to display appropriate forms of structure. Personally, such moral legitimacy is premised on the Weberian category of charisma.

Cognitive legitimacy is defined as the kind of legitimacy that attaches either to being taken-for-granted, being unquestioned, or being understood as something comprehensible. Where an authority in question is seen to provide plausible accounts of its actions then it displays comprehensible cognitive legitimacy. Where the authority in question is so taken-for-granted that it is viewed just as the way things are, as ordained in some way as a part of nature or culture as a 'second nature', then legitimacy is founded on the supposition that alternatives are unimaginable. As I shall argue next, this is the basis of a 'radical' view of power.

The dimensions of power: legitimacy as a systematic delusion

Lukes' (1974) book, *Power: A Radical View*, was a major landmark in the conceptualization of power. It sought to bring what had hitherto been a largely liberal and individualist tradition of theorizing about power as a causal relation into a fruitful dialogue with broader traditions of thought. He shows that each dimension of power rests on a different set of moral assumptions: The one-dimensional view of power is premised on liberal assumptions; the second-dimensional view of power is premised on a reformist view, while it is the moral assumptions of radicalism that underlie the third dimensional way of seeing power.

The *one-dimensional view of power* pivots around an account of the different preferences that actors might hold and how these will be settled empirically. It concentrates on observable behavior and concrete decisions that are expressed in overt conflict concerning specific issues revealed in political participation. The focus was on community power – who was powerful in local communities and what issues were the key ones over which power was exercised. (Clegg's (1989) *Frameworks of Power* contains a good discussion of the community power debate.) It is power as Dahl (1957) saw it. The *two-dimensional view* adds some features to the primary view. It does not focus just on observable behavior but seeks to make an interpretative understanding of the intentions that are seen to lie behind social actions. These come into play, especially, when choices are made concerning what agenda items are ruled in or ruled out; when it is determined that, strategically, for whatever reasons, some areas remain a zone of non-decision rather than decision. What is important is how some issues realize their potential to mature while some others do not; how some become manifest while others remain latent. Given that an issue may remain latent then conflict is not merely overt; it may also be covert, as resentment simmers about something that has yet to surface publicly. One may address these two-dimensional phenomena not so much through discrete political participation as through express policy preferences embodied in sub-political grievances.

From Lukes' point of view, the two-dimensional position is an improvement on that which is one-dimensional – but it could be improved further. Hence, he provides what he calls *a three-dimensional view* – a radical view to be contrasted with liberal and reformist views. While the previous views both define their field of analysis in terms of policy preferences, with the second dimension relating them to sub-political grievances, the radical view relates policy preferences to real interests. Real interests are defined as something objective, as distinct from the interests

that people think they have and express themselves as having through their preferences. Whatever preferences people might express can always be charged with being subject to systematic distortion and thus a result of 'false consciousness' – that is, if they do not accord with the preferences that one would expect, analytically. By definition, real interests are what the analyst would have them be: they cannot be judged by the subject who does not express them – because such subjects are systematically deluded about their interests: a condition which Lukes refers to as being subject to hegemony, a term that he borrows from the work of Antonio Gramsci (1971).

Lukes (1974, 2005) suggests that in extraordinary conditions, when routines break down, people may be able to pierce the veil of their everyday hegemonically formed 'consciousness' and grasp their real interests. Or rather, they may grasp their interests in terms of another discourse made available to them, or through one that previously has only been glimpsed dimly. Lukes (1974) is not explicit about the nature of such alternative discourses. In western society they have usually been identified with various oppositional movements that define their meaning against whatever they determine is the ruling orthodoxy, such as socialism against capitalism, feminism against patriarchy, animal liberation against meat eaters, and so on.

Rather than shaping consciousness positively, through discourse, radical theorists such as Lukes (1974) see power as prohibitory, negative, and restrictive. If it were more really radical it would have to be about what people are *able to articulate and say* and what language *enables them to think and feel*. However, in the second edition of his book, Lukes (2005: 9) cites Przeworski (1985) approvingly to argue a slightly different tack: that hegemony '*does not consist of individual states of mind but of behavioral characteristics of organizations*', noting that when wage-earners 'act as if they could improve their material conditions within the confines of capitalism' they are consenting to capitalism (Lukes 2005: 9, citing Przeworski 1985: 145–146). Lukes (2005: 10–11) also relates his position to that of Tilly (1991: 594) and, in doing, shows that his fundamental views of 'real interests' have not changed in the intervening 30 years since he first wrote *Power: A Radical View*. In Tilly's (1991: 594) words, with which Lukes concurs, 'subordinates remain unaware of their true interests' because of 'mystification, repression, or the sheer unavailability of alternative ideological frames'.

To suggest that someone is in a state of false consciousness presupposes that there must be a correct or true consciousness as its counterpart (Haugaard 2003: 101). Of course, in some situations, it might seem quite unproblematic to say that one is being more rational, such that in consequence one understands the real interests of others better than they do. Medical advice about smoking, consuming alcohol, and eating a healthy diet falls into this category. Nonetheless, many people allow themselves to become obese, to smoke and drink too much: do they not know their real interests, or do they not care? Is a lack of care and consideration then a form of false consciousness? Where ideas about the falsification of consciousness are applied to deliberate systems of manipulation of knowledge, as, for instance, where cigarette manufacturers mislead their customers about the health-risks associated with their products, then it might be appropriate to speak of a 'false' consciousness.

Haugaard (2003: 102) suggests that 'undermining power relations' may be 'a matter of facilitating individuals in converting their practical consciousness knowledge into discursive consciousness knowledge'. This is not a question of some enlightened theorist presenting subject actors with some external truth. Social life presupposes a large tacit knowledge of everyday life and in routine social interaction this knowledge remains practical consciousness. The moment of insight is that moment when what they *already know* in terms of their lived experience and their practical consciousness that what they articulate discursively as an adequate and true account of these experiences is, in fact, deemed false. It doesn't ring true. When this occurs, people are facilitated in critically confronting their everyday social practices as part of a system of relations of domination which are reproduced, with their complicity, through everyday interaction.

Practical consciousness is a tacit knowledge which enables us to be competent and capable actors in our everyday lives, while discursive consciousness comprises knowledge which we can put into words, explicitly. These two forms of knowledge are not entirely separate. The relative separateness of the two types of social knowledge is an important element in the maintenance of systemic stability. If practical consciousness has never been critically evaluated, never formed part of discursive consciousness, then it will be reproduced virtually as a reflex.

As Haugaard (2003) argues the case, social critique entails converting practical consciousness into discursive consciousness. Once knowledge of structural reproduction becomes discursive, the actor may reject it or might simply shrug and accept that this is how things are and there is little they can do to make them otherwise. In this event, it may become apparent that certain structural practices contribute to relations of domination and/or are inconsistent with other discursively held beliefs. What is useful about this approach to the matter of consciousness is that it accommodates arguments about the definition of the situation (Thomas 1923; McHugh 1968). On balance, as the adage has it, if people define situations as real they are real in their consequences and, while interlocutors may try and argue different definitions with different consequences, they rarely have any fulcrum outside of the consciousness of the people whose definitions they are, to do so. Theorizing Lukes' third dimension of power in terms of a form of consciousness-raising through the conversion of practical consciousness knowledge into discursive consciousness knowledge is theoretically consistent and avoids the chief pitfalls of Lukes' analysis – that it requires the theorist to adopt a transcendent position.

Conclusion

No social structuring or ordering exists without being characterized by power relations. Where these are structurally embedded and reproduced, we may, with Weber, refer to structures of dominancy in which certain probabilities for command and obedience are lodged and in which resistance, although unlikely to be absent, can be authoritatively represented as illegitimate. Whether these structures of dominancy are regarded by those who are subject to them as legitimate will always be an empirical matter and not a question of the a priori labeling of such structures as authority; in other words, authority is always a provisional claim and can be contested. Where authority is ceded there is always the possibility that those ceding it are systematically duped into believing in the legitimacy of that which they support because the existing array of power relations sustains their practical consciousness in a mode in which interpellations of contradictory discursive consciousness are minimized, marginalized, ridiculed, and so on. Hence, legitimacy depends on practical consciousness and practical consciousness – as the modes of knowing embedded in everyday social relations – will always be already structured in ways that reflect the dominant institutionalizations of power relations in both material and ideational forms. Consequently, it is usually only at moments of crisis in the reproduction of power's institutionalization as domination that carriers of an alternative discursive consciousness can engage the mass taken-for-grantedness of everyday practical consciousness, in a way sufficient to not only de-legitimize these everyday truths but also mobilize organized resources that can supplant their institutionalization. In other words, overall, power relations are very largely conservative, attuned to maintaining the legitimacy of dominancy and thus authority.

References

Barnes, B., 1988. *The Nature of Power*, Cambridge: Polity.
Clegg, S.R., 1989. *Frameworks of Power*, London: Sage.

Cohen, J., Hazelrigg, L.E. and Pope, W., 1975a. De-Parsonizing Weber: A Critique of Parsons' Interpretation of Weber's Sociology. *American Sociological Review*, *40*(4), 229–241.

Dahl, R.A., 1957. The Concept of Power. *Behavioral Science*, *20*, 201–215.

Eden, R., 1983. *Political Leadership and Nihilism: A Study of Weber and Nietzsche*, Tampa, FL: University of South Florida Press.

Elias, N., 1982. *The Civilizing Process*, Vol. 2, Power & Civility, New York: Pantheon.

Etzioni, A., 1974. *Modern Organizations*, Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Fleischmann, E., 1964. De Weber à Nietzsche. *Archives Européennes de Sociologie*, *5*, 190–238.

Foucault, M., 1977. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. A. Sheridan, London: Allen & Lane.

Giddens, A., 1968. Power in the Recent Writings of Talcott Parsons. *Sociology*, *2*(*3*), 257–272.

Gouldner, A., 1971. *The Coming Crisis of Western Sociology*, London: Heinemann.

Gramsci, A., 1971. *From the Prison Notebooks*, London: Lawrence & Wishart.

Habermas, J., 1987. *The Theory of Communicative Action*, trans. T. McCarthy, Cambridge: Polity.

Haugaard, M., 2003. Reflections on Seven Ways of Creating Power. *European Journal of Social Theory*, *61*(*1*), 87–113.

Hennis, W., 1988. The Traces of Nietzsche in the Work of Max Weber, trans. K. Tribe. In *Max Weber: Essays in Reconstruction*, London: Allen & Unwin, pp. 146–162.

Hobbes, T., 1914 [1651]. *Leviathan*, edited by Lindsay, A. D., New York: Dutton.

Kent, S.A., 1983. Weber, Goethe, and the Nietzschean Allusion: Capturing the Source of the 'Iron Cage' Metaphor. *Sociological Analysis*, *44*, 297–319.

van Krieken, R., 1990. The Organisation of the Soul: Elias and Foucault on Discipline and the Self. *Archives Europeénes de Sociologie*, *31*(*2*), 353–371.

Lukes, S., 1974. *Power: A Radical View*, London: Macmillan.

Lukes, S., 2005. *Power: A Radical View*, 2nd edition, London: Palgrave-Macmillan.

McHugh, P., 1968. *Defining the Situation: The Organization of Meaning in Social Interaction*, Indianapolis, IN: Bobbs-Merrill.

Meyer, J.W. and Rowan, B., 1977. Institutionalized organizations: Formal structure as myth and ceremony. *American Journal of Sociology*, *83*(*2*), 340–363.

Nietzsche, F.W., 1973. *Beyond Good and Evil*, trans. R.J. Hollingdale, Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Parsons, T., 1964. *Essays in Sociological Theory*, New York: Free Press of Glencoe.

Parsons, T., 1975. On 'de-Parsonizing' Weber (Comment on Cohen et al.). *American Sociological Review*, *40*, 666–670.

Przeworski, A., 1985. *Capitalism and Social Democracy*, New York: Cambridge University Press.

Schroeder, R., 1987. Nietzsche and Weber: Two 'Prophets' of the Modern World. In *Max Weber, Rationality and Modernity*, London: Allen & Unwin, 207–221.

Sica, A., 1988. *Weber, Irrationality, and Social Order*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Simmel, G., 1964. *Conflict and the Web of Group Affiliations*, trans. K.H. Wolff and R. Bendix, New York: The Free Press.

Simmel, G., 1971. *On Individuality and Social Forms: Selected Writings*, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Suchman, M.C., 1995. Managing Legitimacy: Strategic and Institutional Approaches. *Academy of Management Review*, *20*, 571–601.

Thomas, W.I., 1923. *The Unadjusted Girl*, Boston, MA: Little, Brown, & Co.

Tilly, C., 1991. Domination, Resistance, Compliance … Discourse. *Sociological Forum*, *6*(*3*), 593–602.

Weber, M., 1947. *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, New York: Harper & Row.

Weber, M., 1954. *Max Weber on Law in Economy and Society*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Weber, M., 1964. *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization*, trans. A. M. Henderson and T. Parsons, New York: Free Press.

Weber, M., 1976. *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, London: Allen & Unwin.

Weber, M., 1978. *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, edited by Roth, G. and Wittich, C., Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Environment and risk

Timothy W. Luke

Few topics under discussion in this handbook offer as many opportunities to ponder the uncertainties today's major cultural, economic, and state institutions face in the twenty-first century as do the multifaceted challenges of risk and the environment. For those who pay attention to the threats involved, risk is, in fact, regarded widely as an inescapable component of complex contemporary capitalist exchange. Whether one considers the varying probabilities of experiencing a local nuclear meltdown (like Chernobyl or Fukushima Daiichi), weathering a national financial meltdown (like the collapse of Bear Stearns or tax evasions Dresdner Bank AG), or surviving a global market meltdown (like the intense financial panic of 2008 or COVID-19 stock market meltdowns in 2020), it is plain that risk management must be regarded as another unavoidable characteristic of freedom and necessity. Indeed, risk is an embedded ever-present condition for human beings interoperating with complex institutions, machineries, and systems. In turn, theorizing about the conditions of risk must recognize its embedded normality in the larger environment rather than as normalized abnormality (Beck 1992; Cairncross 1992; Durning 1992; Luhmann 2005).

Certainly, no one wants accidents, catastrophes, or disasters to disrupt the natural, built or information environments that global economies and societies rely upon (Casimir 2008). Yet, these abnormal disruptions will occur. Accepting the fact that such mishaps are foreseeable has been, and still is, part of making them, in turn, an acceptable practical preoccupation in policy-making via more disciplinary permutations in the discourse of risk (Lash, Szerszynski, and Wynne 1996) even into the twenty-first century.

Risk and the environment

Risk typically is understood as a data-driven analysis of either less-than-optimal returns and/or more-than-expected loss matched against existing historical date to manage uncertainty (Beck 1992; Douglas and Wildavsky 1983; Lupton 2005) for risk-avoiders as well as risk-takers. For this brief discussion, such "actuarial" approaches to risk and the environment are, in some ways, one accepted engagement for social and political theory. Another approach, however, adopts a more earth systems-centered and surveillance-driven style of continuous assessment (Edwards 2010), which have been mobilized in response to the so-called "Anthropocene gap" (Galanz 2014). Following the rebranding of irreversible massive anthropogenic changes in the Holocene

epoch earth systems known as "the environment," the advent of the "Anthropocene" (Crutzen and Stoermer 2000) is affirmed (Working Group on the 'Anthropocene' 2019). With its arrival, new shades in the varieties of risk posed by new natural hazards that are attributed to fossil fuel consumption, expanding global markets, extensive biodiversity loss, rapid planetary urbanization, or dangerous high-technology innovations (Luke 2017).

Taken together, these intertwined domains of activity, when recast as attributes of the Anthropocene, bring new elements of risk that unfold in the on-going modernization and development of already modern and developed forms of life, or what Beck (1992) labels as "second modernity." Accepting the benefits of this second modernity in the twenty-first century essentially demands that many human beings will both endure and enjoy the creation of continuous chaos and occasional catastrophes as normal characteristics of everyday life under conditions of affluence (Galbraith 1958). Of course, many more will have to endure the most of costs, while only a few enjoy more of the benefits. Yet, this reality of risk is made ordinary through the matrices of power/powerlessness, prestige/obscurity, privilege/deprivation that normalize these varying qualities of individual existence. Their frequency and severity will vary by location, differ in timing, and fluctuate in duration. Still, everyone anywhere at any time in this second modernity begins to accede that increasing risks are as salient as the variability of prosperity as the environmental conditions of their everyday existence (Brown 1981; Douglas and Wildavsky 1983). At the household, firm, and national level of calculation, every individual is expected by the state to be aware of "the potential for catastrophe of modern large-scale technologies and industries," which, in turn, allows both the elites and masses in society to "estimate and legitimate" (Beck 1996: 32) the necessity of living in this fashion during in the Anthropocene (Zinn 2016). As Sunstein (2002a: xiv) asserts, "risk reduction has become a principal goal of modern governments," because "the nature" of natural systems are in greater flux, subject to increasing stress, and under continuous assessment to manage their volatile mix of agency, governance, and knowledge (Delanty and Mota 2017; Keys et al. 2019).

An awareness of the need to anticipate existential risk for humanity and the entire environment undoubtedly was first sparked during July 16, 1945 when the world's inaugural nuclear test was conducted outside Alamogordo, New Mexico. After working for nearly a decade on the engineering challenges posed by creating and controlling nuclear fission, the U.S.A. was ready to ignite humanity's first atomic explosive device. Some Manhattan Project scientists speculated for years that such a nuclear event on the planet's surface might set afire its entire atmosphere. The White House and the Pentagon deemed the risks involved worth taking. The Trinity site atomic test worked, and the Earth's skies did not burst into flames during the experiment. It also was deemed worth the risk to use the device in war within three weeks. Two operational bombs – Little Boy and Fat Man – were then exploded, respectively over Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan. Those risky, but also rewarding decisions for Washington initiated a new era of nuclear warfare, but it also ended the last phases of World War II that began when Japan risked so much by attacking the U.S.A at Pearl Harbor in 1941.

With the invention, testing, and deployment by 1953 of thermonuclear weapons, which had immensely greater destructive potential, the U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. put scientists to work studying the risks of destroying the Earth's biosphere should an all-out thermonuclear war occur. There arguably were not the requisite numbers of bombs, delivery systems, and targets developed, deployed, and designated truly to hazard that prospect until 1970, but the initiation of the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks in November 1969 (and then later Treaties in May 1972 and June 1979) in the Nixon/Ford/Carter era implicitly underscored how seriously both Washington and Moscow regarded the raw reality of these environmental risks. With over 50,000 deliverable warheads in the American and Soviet arsenals carrying a combined destructive potential in

the multigigatons range, most experts were certain all life on Earth could end, at least for some decades if not centuries, within weeks after a full-scale thermonuclear exchange. The crisis of science, as modernity took full hold before 1914 (Husserl 1970), became a crisis of society as such risks in second modernity blossomed after 1945.

The embeddedness of risk in second modernity is all the more an ineluctable aspect of life once one realizes how, like the system of nuclear deterrence, complexly accidental much of everyday life is organized. Following Perrow (1984: 3), advanced standards of living develop as "we create systems–organizations, and organizations of organization–that increase risk for the operators, passengers, innocent bystanders, and for future generations." Perrow is fascinated with the regularity with which "normal accidents" with "catastrophic potential" (Perrow 1984: 3) develop within the organized complexity of an organizational society. This focus on systematicity, organization, engineering, and design stresses the elements of extraordinary intentional rationality, which all signal that some risks always are anticipated and checked. In fact, the normal accident is a marker of accidental normality all have come to accept as background conditions for modern life. Its manifold ordinary unintended irrationalities generate routinized risks one rarely considers until, like today's excessive levels of greenhouse gassing, threaten the ways of existence that greenhouse gases make possible through intensive fossil fuel energy consumption (Luke 2009: 202–203) on scales that were not openly anticipated or adequately checked. Routinizing risk in the accidental normality organized of built and unbuilt environments is critical in second modernity. Only with rapid climate change since 1980, however, have the conceptual prisms of the Anthropocene become during last decade another standpoint to continuously assess risk and the environment as earth systems themselves change due to the anthropogenic forces of continuous modernization.

Strangely enough from initial studies of the Earth's atmosphere during the 1950s to assess the prospects for a nuclear end of life on Earth, scientists confirmed and then began to systematically monitor, a trend first detected in 1824 by Joseph Fourier, namely, a rising concentration of greenhouse gases, like nitrous oxide, carbon dioxide, methane or carbon monoxide. Measured effectively first in the atmosphere by Svante Arrhenius in 1896, and then later in the planet's oceans, this side-effect of industrialization initially was regarded as a positive, if unanticipated, outcome of fossil-fueled industrialization as the Earth experienced a Little Ice Age into the nineteenth century. While it was known that the concentration of these greenhouse gases has varied widely over geological time, a significant new spike began rising considerably in the nineteenth century, especially in the Northern Hemisphere, as the Industrial Revolution began. From the 1780s on, their levels steadily have increased; but, it has been the institutional emplacement of accurate measurement sites, beginning in the darker days of the Cold War during the 1950s, which have enabled scientists to track truly global, intense, and rapid concentrations of these compounds as the post-World War II global economy boomed. While greenhouse gas levels have been varied from year to year, the upward trend in their concentrations has been relentless since 1959. Some scientists saw the greenhouse effect as positive, but others regarded it as negative. Either way, these human activities have put the Earth's environment, and thus human and non-human life, at risk through anthropogenic alterations in the planet's biosphere.

Risk and inequality

Because environmental risks are characterized by many cross-cutting contradictions, society's customary inequalities frequently color many people's considerations of the upsides and downsides of acting with alacrity to mitigate risk in the environment (Hudson 2003). While many risk calculations often only scan initial primary effects rather than more mediated secondary,

tertiary, or even quaternary implications of endangerment, they are nonetheless what many experts and most people confine themselves to consider in calculations of risk (Lupton 2005). Some advocacy groups, for example, still believe rapid climate change trends can be checked at 350 parts per million, and then gradually reversed back to preindustrial levels. Others, however, doubt the prospects of either halting these trends in carbon-intensive pollution or seeing many positive benefits from slowing of greenhouse gas emissions.

As a result, their sense of environmental risk already is pushing some to look beyond actuarially determined interventions to halt accelerating increases in greenhouse gas levels by 2030, 2040, or 2050. It is already too late, and setting total decarbonization targets out in terms of decades or generations should have been implemented in 1970 or 1980, not 2020. These risk-takers instead are continuously engaged in mapping, measuring, and mitigating assessment efforts to adapt to the widespread environmental damage already occurring. Those who continue to reside in existing coastal cities and regions now do so at their own hazard, as the risks of rising sea levels, extraordinary storm damage, and unprecedented weather patterns already are making many human settlements from past centuries increasingly unsustainable in their current forms. Here, of course, the poor are left with few options but often remain in place, hoping for the best. The middle classes risk ruin in the long-run while buying expensive environmental hazard insurance and/or rebuilding more resilient settlements as short-run emergency responses for surviving more frequent severe emergencies. And, finally, the wealthy may to stay in place in super-hardened sites until forced to retreat to the probable new coastal zones predictably mapped further inland by new risk assessment regimes. The rising water, varying weather, and changing climate to come are now more continuously assessed risks all must anticipate. By and large, however, few are changing their current energy-use behaviors in any truly radical manner (McDonough and Braungart 2002). The poor still use very little energy, the middle classes slowly are shifted to less carbon-intensive energy sources, and the rich can invest in new net-zero carbon schemes, but few believe their hit-or-miss reductions reduced in their individual ecological footprint, carbon intensity or resource use (Lyall and Tait 2005) will alter the negative momentum already embedded in social-scale trends.

There are pernicious dilemmas at play in these knowledge-driven calculations (Gibbons et al. 1994) from actuarial bases. Most environmental disasters are still experienced as localized, infrequent, and short-lived events. Until recently doing anything globally for the long run to forestall such occurrences seemed unnecessary given the powers invested in second modernity's "the system of objects" (Baudrillard 1996) search for security for subjects as such. Environmental catastrophes, like massive wildfires, prolonged droughts, rising seas, and stronger storms, however, are more general, frequent, and long-lasting. Hardly any individuals, few firms, and not many governments have done anything with radical scope, fearing it only would entail other risks. Moreover, as many risk-taking experts note, many actuarial calculi for risk management are still based on contested scientific analysis, incomplete technical developments, and high-cost/limited effectiveness countermeasures (Briden and Downing 2002). Once something significant is done, all existing countermeasures, once believed to be effective, now increasingly have less effect, involve more unbearable costs, use maladapted technology, and often rest upon problematic, if any, sense of sound scientific certainty, given existing evidence gathered five, ten, or fifteen years ago. At this point, survival itself is in question, as indigenous peoples in the Arctic, low lying marine archipelagoes, and deep narrow river valleys are realizing Again, no matter how risk-averse they are, the poor are being victimized, and die first, more, and sooner at the local, national, and global level. The rich still can cope more effectively; but, like the middle class, they cannot to live the same ways as before the risks foretold by de-Holocenating global warming trends forced more risk-bearing in the Anthropocene's more concentrated greenhouse gas levels (Waters et al. 2016).

Once fixed upon a sort of solutions by the calculi of risk, it is clear that states, companies, and non-governmental organizations, increasingly tend to mobilize risk management scenarios as the discipline they require "to manage a population" not only as a "collective mass of phenomena, the level of its aggregate effects" on macro-level scales, but also to focus "the management of population in its depths and details" (Foucault 1991: 102) in micro-level settings. The environment, then, serves well as a polyvalent focus for states in such calculations, but national loyalties often will fade, or maybe even fail, for those initiating campaigns to launch global interventions against risk.

If one appraises environmental risk management against the costs and benefits incurred by the most successful fraction of individuals who are "risk makers" against those of the least successful majority of individuals suffer as risks are taken, then its imperatives for success are high. In the "order of things" (Foucault 1970), one finds the imperatives of political economy eclipsing the needs of biology and humanity as the losses of greater energy use are counterbalanced against their economic benefits. Risk makers rarely are the real risk takers, so the overall taken risks soon fall hardest and soonest on those beyond the risk making minority. These environmental justice questions have been raised for years (Schlosberg 2014), but overall energy consumption levels have continued to rise along with the debates about how just or unjust these patterns are. Sunstein would concur in this regard. He argues that even though nations everywhere seem to be responding "to reduce risks, to improve safety, and to extend lives…. Nations do not place sufficient emphasis on science. Rather than investigate the facts, they tend to react on the basis of intuition or in response to temporary fears" (Sunstein 2002a: xiii).

In his brief epistemic meditation, "What is Enlightenment?," as Foucault observes, Kant appears to be "looking for a difference: What difference does today introduce with regard to yesterday" (1984: 34). Foucault (1984: 34) suggests Kant finds his decisive difference for humanity in accepting the merits of "knowing as empowering." Fear of loss, anxiety over injury, and want of benefit often come from powerlessness (Virilio 1995). To the extent that knowing the risks of loss, harm or cost are calculable, power would then come from realizing the level and nature of risk as systematic knowledge. For Foucault, Kant assigns the project of enlightenment "a motto, an instruction that one gives oneself and purposes to others. What, then, is this instruction? Aude Sapere: "dare to know," "have the courage, the audacity to know" (Foucault 1984: 34–35). Much of this courage in second modernity is meant to steel oneself for risk, and the audacity of knowing is the willingness to know more clearly the percentages of hazarding greater gain against the chances of great loss (Virilio 1996, 1997).

Coping with "environmental problems" on what are believed commonly to be sound scientific and technical grounds is often regarded as the paramount risk management exercise of this century. Professional-technical expertises propound disciplinary expressions of different "knowledges" to anchor operations of "power" over, but also within and through, the flow of events that are worked-up actuarially as calculable risks of either disaster or development by modern economies and societies. Technoscientific power over the environment, however, is, and always has been, evolving with changing interpretive fashions, shifting epistemic agendas, and developing technical advances coming from knowledge about "the nature" of Nature (Mangun and Henning 1999). To manage risk in an environment still under development is to have "a will to knowledge that is anonymous, polymorphous, susceptible to regular transformations" (Foucault 1977: 200–201). Here, the Anthropocene frame is invaluable for gauging these uncertain parameters in scientific assessment, while conceding their constant change often puts them beyond definite measurement or management.

Risk in second modernity is a polymorphous balancing of knowledge and power born from a ceaseless quest for great performativity (Lyotard 1984). As Foucault indicates, it "traverses and produces things," but its calculi need to be considered as another productive network which runs through the whole social body (Foucault 1980: 119). Because of its potential negative

effects, the level and intensity of risk in the environment must be recognized, and then some quantifiable measurements of it have to be produced, but who produces it, how it is done, why it becomes what it is, and where it happens are critical concerns (Keys et al. 2019).

From risk discourse, one can define, for example, "the way in which individuals or groups represent words to themselves, utilize their forms and meanings, compose real discourse, reveal and conceal in it what they are thinking or saying, perhaps unknown to themselves, more or less than they wish, but in any case leave a mass of verbal traces of those thoughts, which must be deciphered and restored as far as possible to their representative vivacity" (Foucault 1994: 353). Where life, labor, and language conjoin in discourses of risk and environmental hazard, one finds those formations of power/knowledge about greenhouse gases that disclose "how man, in his being, can be concerned with the things he knows, and know the things that, in positivity, determine his mode of being" (Foucault 1994: 354). Risk, therefore, is now a historical artifact of expert management that is constructed in nation states, corporate entities, and scientific analyses by professional technoscientific interventions as the armature of "risk society." In this network of technoscientific surveillance, the identification of risk and the strengthening of controls over them can be linked together as "the empirical realm" of earth system assessments (Foucault 1994: 362–363).

Such flexible and fluid codes of risk are used to constitute a new worldwide regimen for managing economic resource scarcities and social reward systems as the costs and benefits of greenhouse gas emissions are measured against greater economic growth. It is not just risk that matters but rather "the human skill and social organization which lie behind it…. It is the professional experts who have constructed the system, which in turn has created them" (Perkin 1996: 1). As Sunstein argues, the main operation logic of expertise in risk society is cost/benefit analysis (Sunstein 2002b), because risk assessment strives to make ecological crises possible to manage.

Risk calculi reveal sites where "truth," or "a system of order procedures for the production, regulation, distribution, circulation, and operation of statements" (Foucault 1984: 133), can arise within legitimate social formations, like the decision-making bureaus of liberal democratic states and capitalist firms (Fischer 1990). As Foucault asserts, "there are manifold relations of power which permeate, characterize and constitute the social body, and these relations of power cannot themselves be established, consolidated nor implemented without the production, accumulation, circulation, and functioning of a discourse. There can be no possible exercise of power without a certain economy of discourses of truth which operates through and on the basis of this association" (Foucault 1984: 95). The economy of discourses behind the truth needed for risk and environment managerial actions are vital cycles of conceptual cogeneration. In these exchanges, power re-energizes knowledges with truthfulness even as these knowledges mediate power through the expertise of calculating costs and benefits (Denney 2005). Risk environmentalism, then, simply rearticulates the same modernist paradigms of all control-centered positivist science. Through risk analysis, as Argyrou (2005: x) would maintain, envisioning the environment as always "at risk" reaffirms the inherent inequities in "the ability of a group of societies to define and redefine, construct and reconstruct the order of the world and the world order."

Conclusion

To make the political or social analysis of risk matter in social theory, then, one must ask, "Where are we going?" (Flyvbjerg 2001: 612). What is regarded usually as acceptable is just too simple a response: to trust scientific experts and business owners to do what is best for the common good in accord with prevailing scientific and business practices is the policy that had been used apparently to the brink of disaster. Liberal democratic assumptions about science and capital typically trust those with the control of technology (or the "know-how") and/or those who

have ownership of capital (or the "own-how") in the economy and society (see Yanow 1996) with unwarranted power (Chertow and Esty 1997). These same assumptions, however, occlude how fully most economic and social relations are structured to assure that most members in society cannot acquire the know-how or accumulate the own-how (Luke 2001) needed be equal players in the policy process. Certainly, current arrangements of risk management structurally ensure that most individuals will never know-how or own-how the modes of production operate because the subpolitical impulse of risk management (Beck 1992) has mostly displaced political will as the driving force in most economies and societies.

As Beck asserts, the momentum embedded in big technological systems, like cybernetic networks, national economies, or logistical chains, is the material basis of risky outcomes from the policy process as social space and time shrink in globalization (Luke 1996). Within their mystified workings,

> The political institutions become the administrators of a development they neither have planned for nor are able to structure, but must nevertheless somehow justify…. Lacking a place to appear, the decisions that change society become tongue-tied and anonymous….What we *do not* see and *do not want* is changing the world more and more obviously and threateningly.
>
> *(Beck 1992: 186–187)*

Ironically, individual choices made by engineers and experts transmutate by default into collective choices about how to structure the economy and society. The overall development of human society is now then organized around "subpolitical systems of scientific, technological, and economic modernization" (Beck 1992: 186), whose everyday detritus collective degrading effects lead to de-Holocenation and the advent of the Anthropocene. These systems still are, in turn, manipulated mostly by small minorities, who can reconfigure shared risk without much, if any, decisive civic legitimation (Beck 1997) beyond the dictates of ordinary economic rationality. Sunstein, for example, does not see risk reduction as an unchecked set of practices. On the contrary, his social theories of risk oversight would justify a new governmentalization of the state via the practices of actuarial science. For him, the U.S.A. is rapidly evolving into "a cost-benefit state" in which "government regulation is increasingly assessed by asking whether the benefits of regulation justify the costs of regulation" (Sunstein 2002b: ix). The 1997 Kyoto protocol plus the 2009 Copenhagen and 2016 Paris accords enjoined all to "take note" of the risks in greenhouse gassing on the environment, but there are no binding constraints lowering pollution tracked by the Paris accords. As more gain the benefits of greater fossil fuel use, there is less willingness to check their growing gains, even though many more potentially will lose most of the advances of energy-intensive development as their natural environment deteriorates. While such international accords are more than just talk, they have not done much more than point toward the substantial serious changes still needed in many nations' either policies or practices.

At this juncture in contemporary global affairs, these trends in risk assessment and containment acquire great significance, because the capillaries of control where new social forces might make a difference are tracking continuously the degradation of earth system as new damage destabilizes once more stable mixes of risk. Social and political theory must continue to tussle with the hard realities at work in this challenge. Avoiding future losses, as well as protecting the already realized gains in the modern forms of life already constructed since the nineteenth century, are the key goals for risk assessment and management, but the relevant columns for calculating gain and loss in these accounts truly now are beyond simple actuarial settlements. The flux of foundational shifts in earth systems, then, also makes it difficult to reconcile existing social divides. That is, policy-driven calculations of risk regarding the environment in most

economies and societies continue to "lie *across* the distinction between theory and practice, *across* the borders of specialties and disciplines, *across* the specialized competencies and institutional responsibilities, *across* the distinction between value and fact (and thus between ethics and science), and *across* the realms of politics, the public sphere, science and the economy, which are seemingly divided by institutions" (Beck 1992: 70). While their arcane mechanisms are complex, the ethical and economic criteria supporting such risk assessments are all the more important, because they unfold at these creaky intersections of power, position, and prestige.

Stuck at these junctions that cross-cut so many other social and technical structures embedded in the natural and artificial environment, the exercise of quantifiable assessment of either less-than-optimal returns or more-than-expected losses underscores risk's normalization of undesired abnormalities. When it comes to the environment and risk, no one wants to lose his or her present ecological benefits, but few are genuinely willing to limit the current economic costs of preserving natural environments for the future use of humans and nonhumans alike. Having become ready "to dare to know," the risk-taking involved in making further economic advances today forces those willing to face the facts that they must "know they dare" triggering an ecological collapse. On these precarious prospects of risk for the natural environment, much of second modernity's everyday life rests in the Anthropocene.

References

Argyrou, V. (2005) *The Logic of Environmentalism: Anthropology, Ecology and Postcoloniality*, New York: Berghan Books.

Baudrillard, J. (1996) *The System of Objects*, London: Verso.

Beck, U. (1992) *The Risk Society*, London: Sage.

Beck, U. (1997) *The Reinvention of Politics*, Oxford: Polity Press.

Briden, J. C. and T. E. Downing. (2002) *Managing the Earth: The Linacre Lectures*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Brown, L. R. (1981) *Building a Sustainable Society*, New York: Norton.

Cairncross, F. (1992) *Costing the Earth*, Boston: Harvard Business School Press.

Casimir, M. J. (2008) *Culture and Changing Environment: Uncertainty, Cognition, and Risk in Cross-Cultural Perspective*, New York: Berghan Books.

Chertow, M. R. and D. C. Esty. (1997) *Thinking Ecologically: The Next Generation of Environmental Policy*, New Haven: Yale University Press.

Crutzen, P. J. and E. F. Stoermer. (2000) 'The "Anthropocene,"' *Global Change Newsletter* 41, 17–18.

Delanty, G. and A. Mota. (2017) 'Governing the Anthropocene: Agency, Governance, Knowledge,' *European Journal of Social Theory* 20, no. 1, 9–38.

Denney, D. (2005) *Risk and Society*, London: Sage.

Douglas, M. and A. Wildavsky. (1983) *Risk and Culture: An Essay on the Selection of Technological and Environmental Dangers*, Berkeley: University of California Press.

Durning, A. (1992) *How Much Is Enough? The Consumer Society and the Future of the Earth*, New York: W. W. Norton.

Fischer, F. (1990) *Technocracy and the Politics of Expertise*, London: Sage.

Flyvbjerg, B. (2001) *Making Social Science Matter: Why Social Inquiry Fails and How It Can Succeed Again*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Foucault, M. (1970) *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, New York: Vintage.

Foucault, M. (1977) *Language, Counter-Memory and Practice*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Foucault, M. (1980) *The History of Sexuality, Vol. I*, New York: Vintage.

Foucault, M. (1984) *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews & Other Writings, 1972–1977*, New York: Pantheon.

Foucault, M. (1991) *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, G. Burchell, C. Gordon and P. Miller (ed.), Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Foucault, M. (1994) *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*, New York: Vintage.

Galanz, V. (2014) *Global Environmental Governance, Technology and Politics: The Anthropocene Gap*, Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar.

Galbraith, J. K. (1958) *The Affluent Society*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Gibbons, M. et al. (1994) *The New Production of Knowledge: The Dynamics of Science and Research in Contemporary Societies*, London: Sage.

Hudson, B. (2003) *Justice in the Risk Society*, London: Sage.

Husserl, E. (1970) *The Crisis of European Science and Transcendental Phenomenology*, Evanston: Northwestern University Press.

Keys, P. W., Galaz, V., Dyer, M. et al. (2019) 'Anthropocene Risk,' *Nature Sustainability* 2, 667–673.

Lash, S., B. Szerszynski, and B. Wynne. (1996) *Risk, Environment and Modernity: Towards a New Ecology*, London: Sage.

Luhmann, N. (2005) *Risk: A Sociological Theory*, New Brunswick, NJ: Aldine Transaction.

Luke, T. W. (1996) 'Identity, Meaning and Globalization: Space–Time Compression and the Political Economy of Everyday Life', in S. Lash, P. Heelas and P. Morris (eds.) *Detraditionalization: Critical Reflections on Authority and Identity*, Oxford: Blackwell, 109–133.

Luke, T. W. (2001) 'Real Interdependence: Discursivity and Concursivity in Global Politics', in F. Debrix (ed.) *Language, Agency and Politics in a Constructed World*, Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe.

Luke, T. W. (2009) 'The Property Boundaries/Boundary Properties in Technoculture Studies: "Inventing the Future",' in D. F. White and C. Wilbert (eds.) *Technonatures: Environments, Technologies, Spaces, and Places in the Twenty-First Century*, ONT: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 193–213.

Luke, T. W. (2017) 'Reconstructing Social Theory and the Anthropocene,' *European Journal of Social Theory* 20, no. 1, 80–94.

Lupton, D. (2005) *Risk and Sociocultural Theory: New Directions and Perspectives*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Lyall, C. and J. Tait. (2005) *New Modes of Governance: Developing an Integrated Policy Approach to Science, Technology, Risk and the Environment*, Burlington, VT: Ashgate.

Lyotard, J.-F. (1984) *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Mangun, W. R. and D. Henning. (1999) *Managing the Environmental Crisis: Incorporating Competing Values in Natural Resource Administration*, 2nd ed., Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

McDonough, W. and M. Braungart. (2002) *Cradle to Cradle: Remaking the Way We Make Things*, New York: North Point Press.

Perkin, H. (1996) *The Third Revolution: Professional Elites in the Modern World*, London: Routledge.

Perrow, C. (1984) *Normal Accidents: Living with High Risk Technologies*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Schlosberg, D. (2014) 'Ecological Justice for the Anthropocene,' in D. Schlosberg and M. Wissenburg (eds.) *Political Animals and Animal Politics*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 64–75.

Sunstein, C. R. (2002a) *Risk and Reason: Safety, Law, and the Environment*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sunstein, C. R. (2002b) *The Cost Benefit State: The Future of Regulatory Protection*, Chicago: American Bar Association.

Virilio, P. (1995) *The Art of the Motor*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Virilio, P. (1996) *Speed and Politics*, New York: Semiotext(e).

Virilio, P. (1997) *Open Sky*, London: Verso.

Waters, C. N. et al. (2016) 'The Anthropocene Is Functionally and Stratigraphically Distinct from the Holocene,' *Science* 351, no. 6269, 137–148.

Working Group on the 'Anthropocene.' (2019) *Subcommission on Quaternary Stratigraphy*, International Commission on Stratigraphy, January 4 [see http://quaternary.stratigraphy.org/working-groups/anthropocene/].

Yanow, D. (1996) *How Does a Policy Mean? Interpreting Policy and Organizational Acts*, Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press.

Zinn, J. O. (2016) 'Living in the Anthropocene: Towards a Risk-taking Society,' *Environmental Sociology* 2, no. 4, 385–394.

22

Modernity in social and political theory

Correcting misunderstandings[1]

Peter Wagner

The noun "modernity" has come into widespread use in social and political theory only since the late twentieth century. In 1979, the French philosopher Jean-François Lyotard (1979) published a brief "report on knowledge", which he had written at the request of the government of Québec, under the title *The Postmodern Condition*. The little book proved to be provocative. It suggested that modernity was neither functionally nor normatively superior to, or more advanced than, earlier social configurations, as most of Western social and political theory had come to maintain. Furthermore, it denied the commonly held view that modernity undergoes predominantly linear evolution and reaches a stable state at full development. Rather, modernity was about to undergo a radical social transformation that invalidated many of its promises of human emancipation.

In reaction to this provocation, two strands of debate on "modernity" began to form in social and political theory during the 1980s. On the one hand, the foundations of modern reasoning and modern practices were re-assessed in more philosophically oriented debates, with Jürgen Habermas defending a sophisticated understanding of modernity in *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity* (1985). More sociologically oriented contributions, on the other hand, focused on the question of the existence and nature of that new major social transformation that the theorem of postmodernity entailed. With *Risk Society* (1986), Ulrich Beck was among the first to distinguish a first and simple modernity, in his view rather well captured by sociological debate up to the 1970s, from "another", "reflexive" modernity that was about to emerge.

Several decades have passed since the heyday of this debate during the 1980s and 1990s. While the concern with modernity has not entirely subsided, it has been integrated into, maybe subordinated to, the apparently more topical themes of globalization and individualization in social theory, and cosmopolitanism and human rights in political theory. One may therefore be tempted to see the debate on modernity as a closed chapter in the history of social and political theory. Such a view, though, would not only overlook the fact that the debate addressed perennial questions and failed to provide answers with at least some degree of consensus. It would, furthermore, perpetuate the major misunderstanding that was due to the fact that the debate was mostly led as if the terminological shift from "modern society" to "modernity" had no significance, or in other words, as if the phenomenon under consideration had remained the

same – "Western society" and its history – and that only the interpretation and assessment of this phenomenon was contested. This chapter will trace the multiple dimensions of this misunderstanding – conceptual, historical, contextual – and point to ways of overcoming it. In what follows, the first section focuses on ways of theorizing modernity, and the second one using the concept of modernity in historical–comparative analysis.

From "modern society" to "modernity" – from institution to critique to interpretation

When the term "modernity" was introduced in social theory and political philosophy, it was widely supposed to be rather synonymous with the preceding term "modern society" or also "industrial society" and "capitalist society". Thus, it was meant to capture the societies that started to emerge in Western Europe and North America from the late eighteenth century onwards, as the combined effect of the Enlightenment, the scientific revolution, the industrial revolution and the democratic revolution. The change of terminology, though, signalled that at the very least there was a need to reassure oneself about the nature of this object and about the purpose of one's investigations. Significantly, much of this early debate was about normative achievements – emancipation or functionality. Thus, one could be inclined to think that the shift was from analytical to normative concerns. But both types of concepts combine analytical and normative aspects in often unclear ways, and little attention was given to the question how exactly normative claims translate into socio-political configurations or how one could even assess – not to say "measure" – the realization of normative claims. To better understand the recent debate on modernity, therefore, it is useful to start from what is now its "pre-history", that is, the social and political theory of modern and capitalist society since the great social transformations of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In a first step (1), we will do so on those theories' own terms, which most importantly means the search for an endogenous logic of the historical emergence and transformations of "modern societies". Subsequently (2), we will show how, equally systematically, a critique of such portrait of modernity emerged that underlined contradictions and paradoxes. Only recently (3) it became clear that this opposition rather showed, more generally, the openness of the concept of modernity to interpretation.

1. From the early nineteenth century onwards, in works such as G. W. F. Hegel's *Elements of a Philosophy of Right* (1820), social theory and political philosophy worked with the assumption that contemporary Western societies had emerged from earlier social configurations by way of a profound rupture. This rupture, although it could stretch over long periods and occurred in different societies at different points in time, regularly brought about a new set of institutions, most importantly a market-based economy, a democratic polity and autonomous knowledge-producing institutions developing empirical–analytical sciences. Once such "modern society" was established, a superior form of social organization was thought to have been reached that contained all it needed to adapt successfully to changing circumstances.

However, a considerable tension between any historical description of a rupture and conceptual understandings of modernity comes immediately to the fore. The conceptual imagery of the institutions of "modern society" sits in an uneasy relation to historical dates. Were one to insist that the full set of those institutions needs to exist before a society can be called modern, socio-political modernity would be limited to a relatively small part of the globe during only a part of the twentieth century.

This tension between conceptuality and historicity was resolved by introducing an evolutionary logic in societal development. Based on the assumption of a societally effective

voluntarism of human action, realms of social life were considered to have gradually separated from one another according to social functions. Religion, politics, the economy, the arts all emerged as separate spheres in a series of historical breaks – the above-mentioned revolutions – that follows a logic of differentiation (Parsons 1964; Alexander 1978). A sequence of otherwise contingent ruptures can thus be read as a history of progress, and the era of modernity emerges by an unfolding from very incomplete beginnings. In this view, indeed, modern society came to full fruition only in the US of the post-Second World War era, but "modernization" processes were moving towards that *telos* for a long time and continued to do so in other parts of the world.

In conceptual terms, this perspective on modern social life aimed at combining an emphasis on free human action with the achievement of greater mastery over the natural and social world. The differentiation of functions and their separate institutionalization was seen as both enhancing human freedom and as increasing the range of action. Thus, the combination of freedom and reason, known from Enlightenment political philosophy, was transformed and, we may say, sociologized into terms such as subjectivity and rationality (e.g., Touraine 1992). Without this double concept being explicated in most of the theory of "modern society", it nevertheless can be identified at the root of this conceptualization of modernity. At the same time, it certainly drew on what may be called the self-understanding of historical modernizers. Proponents of what came to be known as the scientific, industrial and democratic revolutions saw themselves acting in the name of freedom, and they also saw the new institutions they were calling for as providing greater benefits than the old ones.

2. After the dust of the great revolutions had settled, it became clear that the institutionalization of freedom and reason was a much less straightforward process than had been expected by Enlightenment optimists. A series of major critical inquiries into the dynamics of modernity was elaborated successively from the middle of the nineteenth century up until the 1930s. These critiques identified basic problems in the practices of modernity but did not abandon the commitment to modernity as a consequence. They all problematized, although in very different ways, the tension between the unleashing of the modern dynamics of freedom and rational mastery, on the one hand, and its, often unintended, collective outcome in the form of major societal institutions.

The first of these critiques was the *critique of political economy* as developed mainly by Karl Marx. In contrast to some of the conservative critics of capitalism, Marx basically adhered to the Enlightenment tradition of individual autonomy. His ideal was "the free association of free human beings". In the workings of the "free" market in capitalism, however, he discovered a societal effect of human economic interaction that asserted itself "behind the backs" of the actors. The second grand critique was the *critique of large-scale organization and bureaucracy*, as analysed most prominently by Robert Michels and Max Weber. With a view to the enhancement of rational mastery of the world, it postulated the tendency for the formation of stratified bodies with hierarchical chains of command and generalized, abstract rules of action. While such institutions in fact enhanced the reach of human action generally, they limited it to the application of the rules, inside the "iron cage" so to say, at the same time. In these terms, a variant of a critique of conceptions of rationality is the *critique of modern philosophy and science*, the third grand critique. Weber, too, was aware of the great loss that the "disenchantment of the world" through rational domination entailed, still, he understood his own social science in rational terms, as he thought no other approach could prevail under conditions of modernity. In contrast, radical and explicit critiques of science were put forward by others in very different forms. In idealist *Lebensphilosophie* the elaboration of a non-scientistic approach to science was attempted as well

as, differently, in early-twentieth-century "Western" Marxism, i.e., by Max Horkheimer and the early Frankfurt School, as well as in pragmatism.

Synthetically, then, an argumentative figure emerged as follows. In the historical development of modernity as a society committed to individual autonomy and rational mastery, the self-produced emergence of overarching structures, such as capitalism and the market, organization and bureaucracy, modern philosophy and science, is identified. These structures work on the individual subjects and their possibilities for self-realization – up to the threat of self-cancellation of modernity. The more generalized modern practices will become, the more they themselves may undermine the realizability of modernity as a historical project.

The interpretations of modernity provided by these critiques identified the tension between the modern orientations towards autonomy and towards mastery. They tended to resolve this tension in a clear-cut but also rather one-sided way, namely as the institutionalization of autonomy inevitably leading to forms of mastery that would subject the "free" human beings. Alienation, atomization, commodification, bureaucratization and instrumental rationalization would assert themselves as absolutely dominant trends leading to the emergence of "one-dimensional man" and "one-dimensional society" (Herbert Marcuse). While this interpretation had some persuasive power, in particular during the first two-thirds of the twentieth century, in its totalizing way of reasoning it underestimated the persistence of the ambivalence of modernity and the possible resurgence of the quest for autonomy. During the modernity debates at the end of the twentieth century, socio-theoretical diagnosis of the present indeed shifted back to an emphasis on individualization, rather than atomization, and reflexivity, rather than rationality (e.g., Anthony Giddens, Ulrich Beck, Alain Touraine).

3. At least in part, those debates were exploring whether a new major social transformation had occurred or was occurring (a question to which we return below), leading to a new form of modernity with greater emphasis on individual human beings than "classic" modernity. However, the debates can also be read as providing the overall concept of modernity with a new focus on the experiences of human beings and their ways of interpreting those experiences, drawing less on the mainstream social and political sciences and more on literature and the arts. In the humanities, namely, the experience of modernity had always been at the centre and, as experience, it concerned in the first place the singular human being and her/his creative potential (Berman 1982). Michel Foucault's lecture "What is Enlightenment?" very succinctly distinguished between those two readings of modernity. Modernity as an attitude and experience demands the exploration of one's self, the task of separating out, "from the contingency that has made us what we are, the possibility of no longer being, doing, or thinking what we are, do or think" (Foucault 1984: 46). It is opposed to modernity as an epoch and a set of institutions, which demands obedience to agreed-upon rules. Thus, up to this point, we have identified a double opposition in the ways of theorizing modernity. First, those views that see modernity as the institutionalization of freedom and reason have been opposed by critics that see freedom being undermined by a legislating rationality. Second, both of these views have been criticized for failing to take into account the actual human experience of modernity and their variety. One of the outcomes of the post-1979 re-assessment of modernity stems directly from the analysis of this constellation: If the opposition of affirmative and critical analysis of modernity persists over long periods without resolution, this suggests that modernity is open to a variety of interpretations. And if both approaches tended to neglect experience, then the elaboration of a more comprehensive interpretative approach to modernity should proceed by exploring the variety of experiences of modernity.

Such an interpretative analysis of modernity has gradually been developed since about 1990, and it starts out from the proposed reference to autonomy and mastery that seems to mark, even though the terminology varies, a commonality across all theories of modernity and thus a defining characteristics of modernity itself. Following Cornelius Castoriadis (1990; see also Arnason 1989; Wagner 1994), modernity can be considered as a situation in which the reference to autonomy and mastery provides for a double "imaginary signification" of social life. By this term, Castoriadis refers to what more conventionally would be called a generally held belief or an "interpretative pattern" (Arnason). More precisely, the two components of this signification are the idea of the autonomy of the human being as the knowing and acting subject, on the one hand, and on the other, the idea of the rationality of the world, i.e., its principled intelligibility. Conceptually, therefore, modernity refers to a situation in which human beings do not accept any external guarantors – that is, guarantors that they do not themselves posit – of their knowledge, of their political orders, or of their ways of satisfying their material needs.

Earlier social and political theory also recognized the modern commitment to autonomy and mastery, but it tended to derive a particular institutional structure from this double imaginary signification. Thus, it was often inclined to consider a historically specific interpretation of a problématique as a general trait of modernity. This is the case, for instance, when the historical form of the European nation-state is conflated with the solution to, as it was often called, the problem of social order, which was expressed in the concept "society" (Smelser 1997: ch. 3). When assuming, however, that a modern set of institutions can be derived from the imaginary signification of modernity, it is overlooked that the two elements of this signification are ambivalent each one on its own and tension-ridden between them. Therefore, the recent rethinking takes such tensions to open an interpretative space that is consistent with a variety of institutional forms. The relation between autonomy and mastery institutes an interpretative space that is to be specifically filled in each socio-historic situation through struggles over the situation-grounded appropriate meaning. Theoretically, at least, there is always a plurality and diversity of interpretations of this space (see now Arnason 2020).

While broad evidence of the plurality of modern forms now exists, much research is idiosyncratic and does not lend itself easily to comparison with other findings. To systematically grasp the main features of the modernity of a given socio-political configuration, one may want to start by selecting those elements that concern a *limited set of basic problématiques* that all human societies need to address, such as the questions: (a) as to what certain knowledge a societal self-understanding is seen to rest upon; (b) as to how to determine and organize the rules for the life in common; and (c) as to how to satisfy the basic material needs for societal reproduction (Wagner 2008; for a related attempt at disentangling, see Domingues 2006). To say that a society embraces a *modern* self-understanding, furthermore, implies that all these questions are truly open; that answers to them are not externally given but need to be found; and that, therefore, contestation of the validity of existing answers is always possible.

The distinction of these problématiques creates a focus on societal features that then can be systematically compared. In brief: the fact that societies need to effectively address these problématiques by searching for their own answers is what is *common* among all "modernities"; the fact that the questions are open to interpretation; that there is not any one answer that is clearly superior to all others (even though one answer can certainly be better than others and societies will search for the better ones and/or those that are more appropriate to them) and, thus, that several answers can legitimately and usefully be given constitutes the *possible plurality* of modernity (for more detail, Wagner 2012).

The ruptures of modernity

This much broader understanding of modernity also raises anew the question, which had always been central to the concept, of historical ruptures in the interpretation of modernity, including the more specific questions of the origins and the possible end of modernity.

Despite vociferous accusations of Euro-centrism, there is only limited reasonable doubt about the adequacy of dating the "origins" of modernity, which in a long-term view is located between roughly 1500 and 1800, and in the short-term-view in the decades around 1800. What is broadly known as Enlightenment thought offered unprecedented, radical interpretations of human autonomy and rational mastery and thus was seen in later years, for better or worse, as the epitome of modernity. This statement does not need any correction in general, but it does require three additions to remove frequent misunderstandings. First, this radical interpretation is neither in any evident way superior to others nor did it emerge as a consequence of European superior insight. Rather, it was driven by the doubts and crises of the religious wars within Europe and of the rise of the Ottoman Empire at the South Eastern border. Second, it was not an entirely intra-European event but decisively stimulated by the encounter with unknown and unexpected other human beings in America, raising the question of what all human beings have in common. Third, even though instrumentalist individualism established itself as one important way of interpreting socio-political life in Europe, it was far from being the dominant ideological force in shaping European institutions. Thus, a caricatural image of such thinking has ill-served the post-colonial critique of European domination. The revolutionary rupture around 1800 was much more a transformation of "societal consciousness" than of socio-political institutions in which the Old Regime persisted (to paraphrase Reichardt and Koselleck 1988 as well as Mayer 1981; on this section in general see Stråth and Wagner 2017).

Moving now from the origins to the supposed end of modernity, as the term "post-modern" seemed to imply, one may again surmise that the rupture in consciousness has been more pronounced than the institutional one. Given the still open outcome of the major social transformation that started in the 1970s, though, some caution is required. But some features of this ongoing transformation can be outlined, which regard both the ways of interpreting modernity and the material transformation that socio-political configurations undergo. One can see by now that the debate on modernity in the social and political theory of the 1980s and 1990s was erroneous and misleading in several respects, all of which have in common the fact that this has again been largely an intra-Western debate, tending to exclusively search for endogenously driven socio-political dynamics in Western "modern" societies, which subsequently may be reproduced in similar terms in other world-regions. Against this tendency, one needs to highlight at least three countervailing elements: the pluralization of interpretations of modernity (1); the increasing degree of global socio-political connectedness (2); and the need to radically review the place of mastery within modern social imaginaries (3).

1. From the 1990s onwards, the theorem of "multiple modernities" had the enormous merit of (re-)introducing the idea of a possible plurality of modes of socio-political organization into the analysis of "modern societies". The theorem did not emerge directly out of the theoretical debate as it was sketched above, but rather from concerns of historical-comparative macro-sociology, that is, the study of large-scale social configurations and their transformations over time. Within that field, it addressed directly the problem that had been inherited from the theories of modernization of broadly Parsonsian inspiration, namely the assumption of long-term convergence towards a single model of "modern society". Significantly, the approach that is central to this opening, pioneered by Shmuel Eisenstadt (e.g., 2002), explained the persistent plurality

through "cultural programmes", thus introducing an interpretative approach, in methodological terms, and some idea similar to the "imaginary signification" of society, in substantive terms. This approach has been widely received and recognized (see, e.g., *Daedalus* 1998, 2000; some contributions to Hedström and Wittrock 2009); however, it has failed to make the strong innovative impact that one could have expected.

This – relative – failure is, among other reasons, due to two weaknesses: First, the strong idea of "cultural programme" suggests considerable stability of any given form of modernity. Indeed, many contributors to the debate now reason in terms of civilizations, and "classical" civilizations like the Chinese, Japanese, or also the Indian one have been key objects for the identification of multiple modernities (see Arnason 2003 for a very nuanced contribution). As a consequence, considerable limitations to the applicability of the approach are introduced, as it is difficult to conceive of South Africa, Brazil, or even the USA or Australia in terms of deep-rooted, rather stable cultural programmes that merely unfold in the encounter with novel situations (e.g., Mota and Wagner 2019).

Second, the approach is based on only two main concepts: the characteristic (common and inevitable) features of modernity, on the one hand, and the (variety of) cultural programmes, on the other. This dichotomy limits the possibility of comparison since all difference between modernities needs to be explained in terms of the specific underlying programme. In this light, this approach either does not move far away from standard institutional analysis that permits surface cultural variation in terms of mores and customs or, alternatively, any supposed incomparability across cultural programmes raises the spectre of normative relativism, a key concern of political theorizing committed to modernity.

Starting out from those deficiencies of the multiple modernities approach, the requirements for true innovation in the analysis of contemporary societies and their historical trajectories stand out clearly: For most current cases, the self-understanding of societies has not been stable for centuries but has undergone significant transformations, often even and especially in the recent past. Thus, there is no underlying cultural programme but rather an ongoing process of – more or less collective – interpretation of one's situation in the light of crucial experiences made in earlier situations (for the theorem of "successive modernities", a term coined by Johann Arnason, see Wagner 2010). And rather than separating "culture" from the institutional girders of modernity, one needs to demonstrate if and how re-interpretations of a society's self-understanding have an impact on institutional change or, in other words, how cultural–interpretative transformations are related to socio–political transformations (Sewell 2005).

2. Shmuel Eisenstadt has also been the scholar who revived the debate about the axial age, a period of supposed major social transformations across Eurasia between 700 and 400 BCE. In the light of this retrieval, it is plausible to assume that the combined focus on plurality and transformations is characteristic for situations of uncertainty and disorientation (Wagner 2005) and that the modernity debate of the 1980s and 1990s is a signal of such a situation. Numerous events prior and in parallel to this debate had created doubts about the stability and superiority of Western, "modern" society. The late 1970s and early 1980s were the years in which: hopes for an orderly move away from colonial rule were dashed, and "governability" problems arose in the "advanced" societies as a consequence of the student, workers and civil rights movements of the late 1960s that suddenly interrupted the tranquillity of the apparent post-war social consensus; furthermore, governments in some of these supposedly modern societies abandoned Keynesian economic steering, and enterprises moved manufacturing to non-Western countries with low wages and less protection of the environment. During the same period, the Iranian revolution brought an end to the idea that non-Western societies were just a bit behind on the

same modernizing trajectory on which Western ones had embarked; and the rise of the Japanese economy suggested that a capitalism with a non-Protestant cultural background could compete successfully with the allegedly more advanced economies. Thus, signs of crises within "modern" societies occurred in parallel with the mobilization and stronger presence of non-Western societies in global affairs. Slightly later, the collapse of Soviet-style socialism between 1989 and 1991 could only briefly be interpreted as part of a global breakthrough of individualist-liberal modernity. Rather, it marked the beginning of multiple projects of "world-making" (Karagiannis and Wagner 2007), for which the alliance of Brazil, Russia, China, India and South Africa as BRICS became one significant indication and the *buen vivir* debates in the Andean countries another, among yet others.

These world-making projects have a background that is rather common to them, due to the high degree of global interconnectedness that existed by the late twentieth century. This background is marked by the end of the apparently stable world order consisting of a First World of liberal capitalism, and Second World of existing socialism, and a Third World of supposedly developing and modernizing countries. This constellation has been characterized as "organized modernity", initially for the Global North and later more widely (Wagner 1994; Larrain 2000; Kaya 2004 for Turkey; Domingues 2008 for Latin America; Domingues 2012 for Brazil, China and India, for instance) due to the formation of spatially delimited and well-bounded institutional containers. While the "modernities" of the organized period had this feature in common, they each contained often very specific interpretations of modernity that, furthermore, were not entirely independent of each other, but marked by entanglements (Mota and Wagner 2019 for Brazil, South Africa and Europe; Arnason 2020, for Soviet socialism and East Asia; Khomyakov 2020, for Russia). The recent transformation, therefore, is not merely the end of organized modernity making space for unbounded processes of globalization and individualization. Rather, it shows varieties of exiting from organized modernity through which new interpretations are proposed and tried out in the light of prior experiences.

Whereas the preceding period had the high degree of organization of social practices under conditions of pronounced and formal hierarchy between states in common, the emerging new global contours of modernity are strikingly different in both respects. On the one side, the institutional containers, far from disappearing, have been made more porous, even though very selectively so, permitting greater degrees of entanglement that, at the same time, is less controlled by the states. On the other side, formal equality is a common background feature of current global modernity. The globe is now almost exclusively composed of formally equal states, and within an increasing number of those states, though by far not in all of them, the citizens/subjects have formally equal rights and standing (Arjomand and Reis 2013; Bringel and Domingues 2015). At times, therefore, it may have seemed that the common global component of the current interpretations of modernity is a commitment to democracy and human rights, as the presently valid and viable interpretation of collective and individual autonomy. This is, however, far from being the case, for two main reasons.

The first of those reasons concerns the meaning of those key commitments themselves. While, arguably, there have never been more formally democratic polities on the globe, the degree to which citizens can actually participate in the common matters that concern them may well have decreased in parallel to the rise in number of democratic institutions. This is only partly due to increasing entanglement between societies, as a consequence of which there is less match of the problems with the institutions that are meant to address them. At least or more important is the elites' capacity to deliberately displace problems to avoid the socio-political transformations that may be required to effectively address them (Wagner 2016). And, analogously, one would not want to deny that the current high degree of global commitment to

human rights is an enormous normative achievement. However, this achievement went in parallel with abandoning a global commitment to social solidarity that was already on the horizon after the end of the Second World War (Moyn 2018).

3. Second, as mentioned above, the most common dating of the origins of modernity points to the decades around 1800 as a culmination of cultural-intellectual, political and economic ruptures, which indeed entail the rise of concepts such as democracy, rights and solidarity. There are good reasons for maintaining the dating, but some of those ruptures have not yet been sufficiently taken into focus, in particular the way in which changing uses of biophysical resources have transformed the conditions of organized social life. To systematically consider the relation between socio-political interpretations of modernity and the use of biophysical resources provides a different picture of the historical trajectory of forms of modernity and, as a consequence, it also means re-imagining modernity in general.

A short sketch must here suffice: Around 1800, West European societies started to overcome (broadly understood) Malthusian constraints in terms of scarcity and irregularity of food supplies. This was due to the exploration of the "vertical frontier" towards biophysical resources, namely coal and iron, and the triangular Atlantic trade, in which the use of African labour and American soil set more Europeans free for non-food-producing work. This new constellation became known as the European "take-off" or, later, the "great divergence" between Western Europe and the rest of the world. The period between 1870 and the First World War is today often called the era of "first globalization" and at the same time the one of building "organized modernity". The first label appropriately underlines the continued expansion of world trade with the deepening of the asymmetric trade of raw materials and manufactured products between world-regions, conditioned by the Second Industrial Revolution based on chemistry and electricity. Looking from the resource angle, though, the period is marked by a strong shift towards "vertical" resource frontiers with oil and gas, in particular, leading to the "Golden Age of resource-based development" (Barbier 2011). At the same time, the period witnessed large-scale emigration from Europe to America and Africa in parallel with the strengthening of state institutions in all these regions. These consolidating states were characterized by increasing social inclusion in Europe mirrored in the affirmation of social hierarchies and forms of exclusion in Latin America and Southern Africa. Thus, this period was crucial for bringing about the conditions both for the "great acceleration", which leads to approaching the limits of biophysical resources by the late twentieth century, and, largely under colonial or quasi-colonial conditions, for the creation of the gap between what was to be called the "developed" and the "underdeveloped/developing" countries after the Second World War. The period from 1990 to the present, generally referred to as the era of globalization, or now "second" globalization, is marked by the Third Industrial Revolution based in information and communication technology; the continuation of the "great acceleration" in resource-use; the relative de-industrialization of former industrial centres and the industrialization of other world-regions, in particular, East Asia; an intensified international division of social labour, including services and specifically care work; and migration from low-income to high-income countries. Three features stand out from a combined socio-ecological perspective: the rise of China, with high resource needs, industrial production and emission of pollutants as well as quickly increasing average incomes; the resort to migration for social mobility in the absence of local development; and the increasing concern about global sustainability and planetary boundaries. A close connection between resource use and social-goal achievement persists during this period, but changes form and leads to new instances of vulnerability. In other words, the present is a period of rapidly increasing concern

about both climate change and social inequality as problems of a planetary order, but the problem constellation also shifts because of the breaking of the global divide by some countries both in terms of increasing use of biophysical resources and in terms of regionally rising social-goal achievement.

Once fully elaborated, the (re-)introduction of biophysical resources requires rewriting the history of modernity as one of a sequence of global socio-ecological transformations (for a sketch see Wagner 2020). It will make the history of modernity truly global from its beginnings, and it will give new meaning to the term postmodern condition as entailing the end of the dominant understanding of mastery (e.g., Khomyakov 2016), namely as instrumental mastery over other people and over the planet. By implication, it will also spell the final end of "modernization theory" for neglecting a key material condition for the trajectory of "Western" modernity up to now. In turn, it will demand collective creativity for elaborating an imaginary of sustainable modernity that takes into account the plurality and diversity of modern experiences.

Note

References

Alexander, J. C. (1978) 'Formal and Substantive Voluntarism in the Work of Talcott Parsons: A Theoretical and Ideological Reinterpretation', *American Sociological Review*, 43, 177–198.

Arjomand, S., and E. Reis (eds.) (2013) *Worlds of Difference*, London: Sage.

Arnason, J. P. (1989) 'The Imaginary Constitution of Modernity', in G. Busino et al. (eds.) *Autonomie et autotransformation de la société: La philosophie militante de Cornelius Castoriadis*, Geneva: Droz, 323–337.

Arnason, J. P. (2003) *Civilizations in Dispute*, Leiden: Brill.

Arnason, J. P. (2020) *The Labyrinth of Modernity*, Lanham, Md., Rowman and Littlefield.

Barbier, E. (2011) *Scarcity and Frontiers*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Berman, M. (1982) *All That Is Solid Melts into Air. The Experience of Modernity*, New York: Simon & Schuster.

Bringel, B. M., and J. M. Domingues (eds.) (2015) *Global Modernity and Social Contestation*, London: Sage.

Castoriadis, C. (1990) *Le monde morcelé: Les carrefours du labyrinthe III*, Paris: Seuil.

Daedalus (1998) 'Early Modernities', 127, *3*, summer.

Daedalus (2000) 'Multiple Modernities', 129, *1*, winter.

Domingues, J. M. (2006) *Modernity Reconstructed*, Cardiff: University of Wales Press.

Domingues, J. M. (2008) *Latin America and Contemporary Modernity: A Sociological Interpretation*, London: Routledge.

Domingues, J. M. (2012) *Global Modernity, Development, and Contemporary Civilization: towards a Renewal of Critical Theory*, New York: Routledge.

Eisenstadt, S. N. (2002) *Multiple Modernities*, Piscataway, NJ: Transaction.

Foucault, M. (1984) 'What is Enlightenment?' in P. Rabinow (ed.) *The Foucault Reader*, London: Penguin, 32–50.

Hedström, P., and B. Wittrock (eds.) (2009) *Frontiers of Sociology*, Leiden: Brill.

Karagiannis, N., and P. Wagner (eds.) (2007) *Varieties of World-Making: Beyond Globalization*, Liverpool: Liverpool University Press.

Kaya, I. (2004) *Social Theory and Later Modernities: The Turkish Experience*, Liverpool: Liverpool University Press.

Khomyakov, M. (2016) 'Mastering Nature: A Russian Route into Modernity?', *Social Imaginaries*, 2, *2*, 165–181.

Khomyakov, M. (ed.) (2020) 'Imaginaries of Russian Modernity', special section of *Social Science Information*, 59, *2*, 221–309.

Larrain, J. (2000) *Identity and Modernity in Latin America*, Cambridge: Polity.

Lyotard, J.-F. (1979) *La Condition postmoderne*, Paris: Minuit (trans. G. Bennington and B. Massumi, *The Postmodern Condition*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994).

Mayer, A. J. (1985) *The Persistence of the Old Regime*, New York: Pantheon.

Mota, A., and P. Wagner (2019) *Collective Action and Political Transformations. The Entangled Experiences of Brazil, South Africa, and Europe*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Moyn, S. (2018) *Not Enough. Human Rights in an Unequal World*, Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap of Harvard University Press.

Parsons, T. (1964) 'Evolutionary Universals in Society', *American Sociological Review*, 29, June.

Reichardt, R., and R. Koselleck (eds.) (1988) *Die Französische Revolution als Bruch des gesellschaftlichen Bewusstseins*, Berlin: de Gruyter.

Smelser, N. (1997) *Problematics of Sociology*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Touraine, A. (1992) *Critique de la modernité*, Paris: Fayard.

Sewell, W. H. Jr., 2005 *Logics of History: Social Theory and Social Transformation*, Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press.

Stråth, B., and P. Wagner (2017) *European Modernity: A Global Approach*, London: Bloomsbury.

Wagner, P. (1994) *A Sociology of Modernity: Liberty and Discipline*, London: Routledge.

Wagner, P. (2005) 'Palomar's Questions. The Axial Age Hypothesis, European Modernity and Historical Contingency', in J. Arnason, S. N. Eisenstadt, and B. Wittrock (eds.) *Axial Civilizations and World History*, Leiden: Brill, 87–106.

Wagner, P. (2008) *Modernity as Experience and Interpretation: A New Sociology of Modernity*, Cambridge: Polity.

Wagner, P. (2010) 'Successive Modernities and the Idea of Progress', *Distinktion*, 21, October.

Wagner, P. (2012) *Modernity: Understanding the Present*, Cambridge: Polity.

Wagner, P. (2016) *Progress: A Reconstruction*, Cambridge: Polity.

Wagner, P. (2020) 'Das Haus der Freiheit und die fossilen Brennstoffe. Notizen zu einer Sozialgeschichte von Fortschritt und Nachhaltigkeit', in F. Adloff et al. (eds.) *Imaginationen von Nachhaltigkeit*, Frankfurt/M: Campus, 71–90.

23

Social and political trust

Karen S. Cook and Brian D. Cook

Trust became a major focus of many social scientists in the early 1990s following large political, social, and economic changes in the world after 1989. During this historical period of transition, risk and uncertainty increased in part as a result of the growth of globalization, the rapid internationalization of business, and the increased interdependence of nation states. As Sztompka (2006) noted, the significance of trust was fueled by changes in the quality and nature of the social structures and social processes in later modernity with the shift to democracy in many sectors and an attendant increase in human agency and interconnectedness (Zucker 1986). Along with these changes came increases in the uncertainty inherent in the "unfamiliar, non-transparent and distant linkages" entailed by these new forms of connectedness. In addition, reasons for distrust had not declined and they remain significant today. Highly publicized failures of transparency and integrity in the world of business (e.g. Enron in the United States), including banks and large investment companies that contributed to the "Great Recession" of 2008, have continued to erode public trust in enterprise. Declining trust in public officials and professionals (e.g. lawyers, physicians, politicians, priests, and ministers, etc.) has also fueled concern over decreasing social trust in general and the demise of civil society, brought to national attention by Robert Putnam (e.g. 2000), among others, at the dawn of the 21st century.

Public trust in government in the United States and in many countries around the world is at its lowest ebb having declined from 70% to just over 20% of Americans trusting the government in Washington (Ortiz-Ospina, 2016). Rising concerns about terrorist activity, civil wars, and other forms of violence continue unabated in many parts of the world fanning the flames of distrust and fomenting disorder and a return to more nationalistic ideologies and isolationism in many countries, including the United States in the most recent decade. A large part of the sustained interest in trust is centered on understanding what factors facilitate cooperation under varying conditions and help to produce social order and reduce disorder. Given these concerns, in this chapter, we focus our discussion on research trends in the analysis of social and political trust within an international context.

Social trust

In the mid-1990s, the social historian Frances Fukuyama (1995) wrote a widely circulated and influential book comparing levels of social trust and economic development in a number of

countries. He argued that social trust varied by culture in ways that significantly affected paths to economic development. He compared the more familistic societies such as China, France, Italy, and South Korea with more individualistic societies such as the United States and Germany, where sociability is more likely to be centered around non-kinship-based communities. Japan in his view is more like the United States than China, though research on general trust is not consistent on this point (Buchan, Croson, and Dawes 2002). For Fukuyama, interpersonal trust arises where those who interact have relatively complete knowledge about their interaction partners either through direct personal experience (as with family members and kin) or indirectly through networks in which reputational information easily flows. Social trust, by contrast, for Fukuyama is the kind of general trust in others that exists in the *absence* of this type of direct interpersonal or particularized trust. In the General Social Survey for decades general trust has been measured by several questions including the main indicator: "Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted, or that you can't be too careful in dealing with others?"[1] Responses to this item are assumed to reflect a general sense that others can be trusted (even those we do not know) or an overarching sense of optimism in dealing with others, implying that the risk of exploitation or harm is not perceived to be high.

There are a number of other conceptions of trust in the social science literature. Sociologists and political scientists often focus on trust as a relational or social phenomenon, not as a psychological state as reflected in Rousseau et al.'s (1998) widely cited definition of trust as making oneself vulnerable to another party. Hardin's (2002) treatment of trust as "encapsulated interest" is relational. It defines trust in terms of a belief that the trustee in the two-party relationship between a trustor and a trustee will take the interests of the trustor into account and honor them to the extent that she values the continuation of the relationship. A trusts B with respect to x (a particular domain of activity) when A believes that her interests are included in (or encapsulated by) B's utility function. In this case B values what A desires because B wants to maintain a relationship with A or wants to maintain a good reputation with respect to A. Psychologists tend to define trust as the belief that the trustee will not take advantage of the trustor's vulnerability. In either case, psychological or relational definitions of trust presuppose risk. That is, it is the existence of uncertainty and risk that makes the act of trusting another significant. If there is no risk of exploitation or harm, there is no real need for trust in the situation. The act of trusting another party, person, or institution, places one at risk and does make one vulnerable to the other party's actions. The relational view of trust articulated above simply clarifies the nature of the risk; its source is the action of the trustee with respect to the trustor.

Robert Putnam (1993, 1995a, 1995b 2000), a political scientist, put social trust on the social science agenda by popularizing the term *social capital*, which he used to refer to the "networks, norms, and trust" that exist to make transactions easier and to foster civil society. High social capital leads to the formation of strong civil society. Low social capital impedes it. And social capital is related to economic growth as well as the production of collective goods for society. In general, the extent to which Americans say they trust most people has been in decline since the late 1950s. For both Paxton (1999) and Putnam (2000) analyses of the General Social Survey items reflecting what has been termed "general social trust" indicate a decline of around twenty percent in forty years or so, most notably in the extent to which respondents say: "most people can be trusted." And, this decline has continued into the 21st century. Even more disturbing to those who track trends in general trust is the fact that there are large racial differences in responses to this question with African Americans reporting low levels of trust in "most people" in every time period, with a decline over time as well. Smith (2010) reported that in a number of surveys Blacks have very low levels of trust,[2] high levels of distrust, and a general propensity to view others as unfair and unhelpful. She also reported even lower

levels for Hispanics in the 2007 Pew Research Center report on trust. As Smith noted, these findings demonstrate that general trust measures seem to be picking up trust of those in the majority group, in this case, whites in the U.S. When specifically asked about trust in others "like them," however, Blacks report much higher levels of trust. These findings reflect the deep divide between racial groups in the United States that persists and has been exacerbated by a growing recognition of structural racism across institutions that is hard to root out despite widespread social action (e.g. the contemporary Black Lives Matter and related social movements for racial justice) and ineffective policy changes.

Trustworthiness

Other scholars such as Gambetta (1988), a sociologist, and Luhmann (1979), a social theorist, treat trust as an important lubricant of social life. Gambetta's (1988) edited volume brought together the work of a number of social scientists from varied disciplines (including philosophy) to analyze the role of trust and its meaning for society. Gambetta and Hamill (2005) later published an interesting study of taxicab drivers in Northern Ireland and New York City empirically identifying the "signs" that drivers use to lower their own risk and to assess the likely trustworthiness of their clients. Gambetta subsequently developed a more complete theory of signaling that built on his earlier work on the Mafia to clarify how and when individuals and groups can maintain trust networks especially in high-risk contexts in which distrust rather than trust may best characterize the surrounding culture or environment. This research dovetails nicely with the writings of Hardin (2002) and others (Cook, Hardin, and Levi 2005) that attempt to refocus some of the work on trust, making trustworthiness more central to the research agenda. As Hardin (2002) points out, it is often not wise to trust others in many contexts given the risks that are involved. Thus, to trust others in a general way may not be the right thing to do. Instead of generalized trust in others, focusing on whether or not people live up to our expectations of trustworthiness provides an empirical basis for assessing whether or not trust is warranted in a given situation. What this simple point suggests is that the focus on the positive role of trust in the social science literature is often overstated and some of the sweeping theoretical claims about the role of trust in society are unsubstantiated by straightforward logic if not empirical evidence. If we want anything, it is likely more trustworthiness.

It is important, therefore, as Hardin (2002) and Cook, Hardin, and Levi (2005) have argued, to distinguish between the concepts trust and trustworthiness. To the extent that one can judge trustworthiness accurately trusting can be merited, but trust in the absence of signs or clear assessments of trustworthiness, as we have argued, is not wise and thus cannot be said to be the "right" or moral action. This distinction is at the core of the debates concerning the overly normative claims about trust. In general, there are at least two dimensions to the assessment of trustworthiness: competence and motivation. In the case of competence, the judgment that is made reflects the extent to which the party involved has the capacity to carry out the actions required for trust to be merited. For example, when we say "I trust my physician" a prime component of the judgment of her trustworthiness is her competence to perform the duties of a physician to the best of her ability (and our capacity to judge it). A second component of the judgment of her trustworthiness is a separate assessment of her motivations with respect to us. How much does she care about me and, more precisely, the effectiveness of my treatment? Will she treat me as if my health really matters to her? Or in encapsulated interest terms, will she take my interest to heart in her decisions concerning what is in my best interest and what would be the proper course of treatment? Physicians, for example, who indicate lack of knowledge of the insurance status of their patients are often trying to communicate that they will not let payment

status factor into the treatment decisions they believe to be in a patient's best interest, an action on the part of physicians that typically increases trust.

In the world of management, there is growing support for a model suggesting that there are three components to the assessment of trustworthiness, two related to motivation and one to competence. Mayer et al. (1995) produced what is referred to as the ABI model of trustworthiness including ability, benevolence, and integrity as the key ingredients and these factors have been demonstrated to be relevant in decisions to trust others in organizational contexts, often managers as well as colleagues.

Given the risks involved in many situations, however, there are numerous alternatives to reliance on trust (Cook, Hardin, and Levi 2005). These include formal mechanisms for ensuring reliability such as rules and procedures that are established as legitimate in the organizational or institutional setting in which the interactions occur. Other mechanisms include efforts to monitor and sanction behavior that is untrustworthy to enforce norms of proper behavior in a specific context – a group, organization, or community setting. Even efforts to control professional behavior through enforcement of proper codes of conduct are meant to reinforce trustworthiness and reliability and foster trust. These codes of conduct are common in professions such as the ministry, law, medicine, and education, especially when it is difficult to observe behavior with clients who are dependent, hence powerless, thus creating situations in which trust is required. It is the frequent failure of some professionals to live up to these codes of conduct (e.g. priests or doctors) that result in organizational intervention, increased monitoring, and new forms of regulation. This was a common reaction to medical malpractice a while ago when PSROs (professional standards review organizations) were first established. In other cases, as in the situation in which priests have been discovered to abuse parishioners, often children, the courts have had to intervene to provide protection and recompense to those who are vulnerable or whose trust has been egregiously violated. Often it is these alternatives to trust that we rely on, especially when the risks of failed trust are too high. The degree of reliance on trust, however, varies not only across contexts but also across countries.

Cross-cultural differences

Various researchers have attempted to identify the unique characteristics of different cultures and nationalities that are revealed in responses to survey questions on the General Social Survey or the World Values Survey which are presumed to measure general social trust. Delhey and Newton (2005), for example, investigate variations in the level of generalized social trust in sixty nations, demonstrating that there is a complex of factors that predicts (but not necessarily explains) generalized trust. Countries high in social trust tend to have greater ethnic homogeneity, higher gross domestic product per capita, more income equality, and Protestant religious traditions. Exemplars include high-trust Nordic countries such as Norway, Sweden, and Finland where over 60% of the respondents to the World Value Survey (WVS 2014) think others can be trusted. The opposite holds for low-trust countries such as Brazil, Columbia, Peru, and Ecuador where only 10% report that others can be trusted. In Sub-Saharan Africa, on average across 13 countries, only 13% of the population say that "most people can be trusted," (Mattes and Moreno 2018) though there is large cross-country variation. Even in Europe there is a wide variation with general trust being higher in countries like Germany and lower in France and the Eastern European countries.

Experimental work has also addressed cultural differences in trust by assessing responses to games meant to elicit cooperative or trusting behavior as measures of variations in trust. Buchan, Croson, and Dawes (2002), for example, report that in their experiment the Chinese

and American participants were more trusting than the Korean and Japanese subjects. This research supports previous results obtained by Yamagishi and his collaborators (see Yamagishi 1988; Yamagishi and Yamagishi 1994; Yamagishi, Cook, and Watabe 1998) suggesting that in Japan general trust is lower than in the United States because cooperative behavior in Japan is driven more by expectations of reciprocity and the assurance of cooperation by others given that monitoring is common and sanctioning often severe for non-cooperation. Some research indicates that factors such as income inequality are key with countries having lower inequality reporting higher levels of social trust, but there is not much evidence that a causal claim can be made. Other important work (e.g. Putnam 2007; Dinensen and Sonderskov 2018; Abascal and Baldassari 2015, etc.) has examined the linkages between residential ethnic diversity and social trust to investigate the assumption that greater diversity is associated with lower levels of social trust. There is mixed evidence on this claim at this point with results that vary depending on how social trust is measured and at what level of geographic detail the data are available with respect to residential mixing of ethno-racial groups. Buchan, Croson, and Dawes (2002) concluded earlier that there are many conflicting results concerning national and cultural differences in trust and further research is needed to delve into the actual causes of these variations including religious, political, economic, and social factors. This assessment remains accurate and is particularly true of efforts to make causal claims.

Organizations and the economy

Trust is often viewed as important in many organizational and economic relations. For economists Kenneth Arrow (1974) and Douglass North (1990), market relations are facilitated by trust since it is simply not possible for an economy to function well with constant monitoring, sanctioning, and lack of cooperation. Arrow emphasized the role of trust in reducing transaction costs in complex economies. Another economist, Oliver Williamson (1993), focuses more on the role of trust in organizations in which transaction costs are reduced when the parties involved have confidence in each other and in the background institutions that enforce contracts. In such formulations trust seems to fill in where contracts and organizational rules and routines fail to supply adequate safeguards. In the world of management theory and research, Dirks and Ferrin (2001) have conducted a meta-analysis of a large number of focused empirical studies. They conclude that trust is often a mediator rather than a direct cause of a range of organizational behaviors, including individual and team performance, organizational citizenship behaviors, and reactions to the exercise of authority. In another organizational arena, reports on physician–patient trust relations (e.g. Cook *et al.* 2004) reveal that higher trust is associated with higher levels of compliance and satisfaction among patients, and with fewer procedures performed by physicians and greater confidence in their ability to help diagnose and manage the patient.

Fukuyama (1995) argues that it is social trust that generates the conditions under which specific forms of organization emerge that facilitate competitive economic enterprise. It is the lack of general social trust that Fukuyama identifies as the reason why organizations adopt a more hierarchical form (including networks of organizations created by contracting). The more flexible networks of smaller firms that engage in exchange require trust. In Fukuyama's words:

> A "virtual" firm can have abundant information coming through network wires about its suppliers and contractors. But if they are all crooks or frauds, dealing with them will remain a costly process involving complex contracts and time-consuming enforcement. Without trust, there will be strong incentive to bring these activities in-house and restore old hierarchies.
>
> *(1995: 25)*

Economic development requires the kind of trust that facilitates flexible transactions and nimble organizational strategies, as his case studies reveal. Cultures that fit this motif are poised for economic success in the global economy. Ironically, he argues that it is precisely those cultures with strong and large families that have lower social trust and national prosperity. Fukuyama (1995) refers to this claim as the "paradox of family values."

Various economists have attempted to analyze the link between trust and economic performance, building on the insights provided by Fukuyama (1995), whose work was more suggestive than conclusive. Knack and Keefer (1997), for example, use the World Values Survey to investigate the association between interpersonal trust (the level of trust in others) with economic growth, finding a significant positive correlation even though the mechanisms producing this effect are not clearly spelled out. Alesina and LaFerrara (2002) extend this work by including community-level variables in addition to individual-level factors such as level of trust in others, education, income, gender, ethnicity, and religious affiliation. Consistent with earlier findings they discover that belonging to a group previously discriminated against (i.e. blacks in the United States), being disadvantaged in terms of income and education, as well as living in a more heterogenous community with respect to ethnicity and income disparity, decrease trust in others. They also focus on differences in confidence in institutions related to economic growth. Strong economic performance requires the type of trust or confidence in institutions that supports growth and reduces transaction costs.

Bjørnskov (2018), recently, summarized the hypothesized linkages between social trust and trust in institutions with economic development, analyzing both direct (e.g. reducing transaction costs) and indirect mechanisms (e.g. the quality of formal institutions) through which these factors are associated. He argues that the availability of more data at the firm level, as well as at the individual level, concerning performance and productivity variability, for example, will allow for better empirical assessments in the future of the specific nature of the role of trust in economic development, in particular the structure of the economy. In his words: "… theoretical developments in the political economy of how social trust affects long-run growth, and through which mechanisms, remain well ahead of our empirical knowledge" (Bjørnskov 2018: 553). We turn now to a related topic, trust in government.

Political trust

Political trust can focus on government, politicians, or state-level actors. We address primarily the debates surrounding trust in government. One of the earliest views of trust in relation to government was put forward by Tocqueville (1840 [1838]), though his work has been cited as supportive of several different arguments. A key argument is that stable government creates the grounds for trusting relationships between people in a society. Legal scholars and some economists also adopt this view of the link between trust and government. Much of the current work on economic and political transitions is also based on this view, focusing on the need for stable, predictable, and transparent instruments of governance (e.g. constitutions, legal apparati, and enforcement mechanisms).

A separate and not necessarily contradictory view is that the trust of citizens in government is essential to stable government. Here the work on social capital and civil society, cited above, is most relevant. Central to the well-functioning of any government is the good will and trust of the governed, which legal and constitutional scholars argue arises from procedural fairness and the perceived legitimacy of those who govern and the institutions they populate. Beyond these separable claims is the standard view of many in the classical liberal tradition that trust in government can be problematic and that what we want is healthy skepticism or even passive distrust,

of those in positions of power in order to keep government from abusing its power. In fact, Madisonian scholars focus on the perils of too much trust in government. Distrust is actively built into the construction of many constitutions, in order to provide checks and balances on the potential abuse of power. In the case of the U.S. constitution it takes the form of the separation of powers assigned to the executive, judicial and legislative branches of government. As Warren (2018: 78) also notes: "Democracies … institutionalize distrust (Braithwaite 1998; Sztompka 1999) in ways that keep distrust from generalizing to those parts of government … that provide" collective goods and services for society.

In addition to these theories, political trust has been defined and measured in many different ways. In this section, we address three prominent areas of research on political trust. First, we discuss the general relationship between trust and government and the various ways in which scholars have addressed the role of trust among and between citizens and government officials and institutions. We then move to contexts in which political trust has been shown to play an important and debated role. Second, we look at the importance of political trust in the causes and consequences of inequality, ethnic fragmentation, and assimilation. We conclude by discussing the role trust has played in countries involved in political and economic transitions.

Trust and government

Some political theorists view trust as a key to the smooth functioning of government. Dunn (1988), for example, treats the foundation of government in social contract theory as based on trust of the governed more so than on consent. Trust in government is often treated as a key factor in the stability of a society. But what precisely trust in government refers to is not always clear. For some theorists trusting a government allows citizens to engage in trusting relationships with others since they can rely on government to provide or support the institutions that produce stability, legal enforcement for failures to fulfill relevant obligations, and contractual relations. In this case, trust in government is mainly about support for adequate enforcement mechanisms that provide the grounds for the types of cooperation that are central in a productive society.

Others view trust in government as based on the trust of citizens in one another. Authors such as Putnam argue that high levels of trust among members of a society lead to a vibrant and engaged citizenry or civil society that produces cooperation and stability. From this perspective, social capital produces cooperation among citizens as well as good governance at all levels. Without such social capital societies are politically unstable, citizens are less cooperative and less engaged, and governance is continually problematic. Trust among citizens, according to Putnam, leads to more civic engagement and better governance. A number of mechanisms have been discussed that lead to such results including the mobilization of particular constituencies by political leaders to support government policies, strong leaders that take the interests of the governed as primary and thus appear trustworthy to the citizenry, and active membership and engagement in effective civic associations. The precise nature of the role of these various mechanisms in producing better governance is the subject of much theoretical and empirical debate. Levi (1997; Braithwaite and Levi 1998; Levi and Stoker 2000) notes, for example, that it is only under specific conditions that citizens comply with the demands of government. She studies both conscription and taxation as cases in which the legitimacy of government based on perceived procedural fairness and the capacity to govern effectively mediates the degree of compliance.

Another aspect of scholarly debate surrounding political trust is the distinction and relationship between interpersonal trust and trust in political institutions and their impact on democracy.

For scholars, such as Fukuyama (1995), Putnam (2000), and Uslaner (2002) interpersonal trust is an important determinant of trust in political institutions and citizen involvement in political life. Similarly, Keele (2007) argues that, while government performance contributes significantly to trust in political institutions, social capital appears to be the force that accounts for the decline in trust in the government in the U.S. since the 1950s and 1960s. However, Hardin (2002) has shown that declining trust between individuals is not correlated with declining trust in government and that the two are independent. Similarly, Mishler and Rose (2001; and Mishler 2005) challenge the view that trust in political institutions is an extension of interpersonal trust. Using data from post-Communist countries in Eastern and Central Europe and the former Soviet Union, they show that perceptions of corruption and macroeconomic performance (see also Rose and Mishler 2011; Van der Meer 2018) are far more important determinants of trust in political institutions than levels of interpersonal trust. With respect to corruption, Jong-Sung You (2018: 492) notes that the causal arrows go both ways from trust in institutions to corruption and corruption to trust "creating vicious and virtuous circles especially for democracies." Clearly, however, he concludes that corruption erodes social trust as well as trust in institutions.

A somewhat different view of political trust has arisen from the survey-based research in political science. In some studies, generalized social trust is seen not so much as the property of individuals, but as a collective feature of society. In this research, respondents answering questions about trust tell us less about themselves and their personal inclinations, and more about how they evaluate the trustworthiness of the people in the world around them (Newton 2007). According to this conception of trust, authors such as Kaase (1999) and Newton (2001, 2007) note that political trust and confidence do not seem to overlap much, if at all, with social trust. This research finds that social trust is independent of political confidence, and the politically trusting are, if anything, even more randomly distributed among social groups than the socially trusting. These scholars argue that political trust is better explained by political variables such as support for the governing party or coalition, national pride, interest in politics, and belief in open government (Anderson and Lo Tempio 2002). Ultimately, however, it remains unclear how much these findings reflect a fundamental difference between social and political trust or whether instead they are partially an artifact of the types of survey data used to measure the concepts.

Migration, assimilation, and inequality

A number of studies report that those who are high in social trust are those who Putnam (2000) refers to as the "winners" in society – those with more money, education, status, and higher levels of satisfaction in life and in work. Those who reside in the slums and the economically disadvantaged in our ethnic enclaves and inner cities simply do not have the same experiences that would foster general social trust (Newton 2007). There are many reasons for this, but one of them is the role that assimilation, or the lack of it, plays in providing individuals and communities the resources they need to succeed. On-the-ground experiences of many immigrants are such that disillusionment is likely to set in once the difficulties of making it in a new cultural setting sink in and greater knowledge of the weaknesses of a previously idealized version of democracy are acquired. In fact, Michelson (2001, 2003) shows that assimilation has an adverse effect on political trust for several groups migrating into the United States. For example, Michelson finds that Mexican Americans who were born or have become citizens are less trusting of government than people of Mexican descent living in the U.S. that have not yet become citizens. Similarly, she also finds that Puerto Ricans born in Puerto Rico and living in the U.S. are more trusting than Puerto Ricans born in the United States. Michelson argues that these

findings suggest that the process of assimilation is "corrosive of political trust" (2001:232). In other words, it appears that attitudes about trust in government, in this case, reflect ideology and optimism rather than serve as an actual assessment of the performance of governmental institutions, though clearly experience tempers trust.

The migration of people to the more advanced capitalist societies is one of the major consequences of increasing economic interdependence in the global economy. Portes and Sensenbrenner (1993) analyze the role of trust in economic outcomes for immigrants demonstrating empirically the impact of what Granovetter (1985) calls the embeddedness of economic activities in social relations. In particular, trust plays a big role in the informal economy in which immigrants are able to barter and trade services with individuals they deem trustworthy in their personal networks. They also use these networks as a kind of social capital to provide access to critical resources such as educational and training opportunities, entry-level jobs, and the provision of food and shelter until they can become established on their own terms. These networks provide the social capital immigrants need to get started on a new path to economic self-sufficiency, but under some circumstances they serve to lock-in immigrants with too much indebtedness to those who offered favors in the beginning. Some of their network-based relations, often with co-ethnics, are based on trust and provide social support, but some do not. Closed networks may result, which lock the employees into low-wage jobs with little time to develop the human capital that would be needed to move up and out of the enclave in which they live and work.

Victor Nee and Jimy Sanders (2001) look at this flow of human capital across national boundaries as one of the major social movements of our time. Problems of trust arise in the host societies as a byproduct of this flow of labor mainly into urban centers. Immigrants arrive and need to find both economic and social support. The incorporation of recent immigrants into the U.S. economy is a major determinant of economic development since it provides labor that is not available in certain job categories (especially in a service economy). It also creates stresses and strains in the receiving social context. Nee and Sanders look at the diverse paths immigrants take in their efforts to establish economic viability. They identify the family as the "key" institution that provides a basis for trust and for collective action among immigrants. The family becomes a source of social capital providing a multidimensional array of resources that facilitate incorporation into the larger society. In an empirical investigation of samples of Chinese, Filipino, and Korean immigrants in the Los Angeles area these investigators demonstrate how different modes of incorporation tend to be adopted by various immigrant groups. These differences are a function of differential access of these group members to social, financial, cultural, and human capital. Based on residential and job histories obtained from extensive interviews they examine the transition into various forms of ethnic entrepreneurship and self-employment. They find, for example, that the probability of owning an ethnic enterprise increases when the former employer is a co-ethnic, suggesting that these employers offer valuable experience and personal ties facilitative of future self-employment. Working for a relative, however, is inversely correlated with the rate of transition into owning one's own ethnic enterprise. Several reasons are explored including slower accumulation of capital due to unpaid or under-compensated labor and the likelihood that one moves into the family business over time rather than striking out on one's own.

The findings reported by Nee and Sanders (2001) support what they call a family capital model of incorporation that places great emphasis on the social capital generated by the family system (intra-family, kinship, and ethnic ties). Lack of access to family-based capital yields less desirable jobs in the low- and semi-skilled labor sectors. One major reason for the reliance on family capital is that for immigrants these relations form the basis of both interdependence

and trust in settings in which, at least initially, they are in a world of strangers without access to the resources they need to enter the mainstream. This type of research focuses primarily on the individual-level transitions of immigrants and the role of trust and networks and the types of capital provided by each in their eventual success in the host society. But trust has also been treated as a factor in the transitions at the state-level in economic systems and governance structures as a result of political upheaval and transformation.

Trust in transitions

As we indicated in the introduction, one of the factors that has fueled the research on political as well as general social trust is the wave of political, economic, and social transitions that began in the early 1990s. Some of these transitions such as the one in Russia were so fraught with corruption that confidence in all financial and political institutions became extremely low (Radaev 2004). Russia's transition from a central planned economy to a decentralized market economy created so much uncertainty and risk that for some time there was a retreat to closed social networks (some based on trust) and informal barter. This informal barter economy of exchange persists in response to banking failure and is reported to represent about half of all transactions (Rock and Solodkov 2001) in addition to perpetuating what is called the banking development trap in development economics. Zak and Knack (2001), among others, have discussed the role that generalized social trust plays in economic prosperity. While the mechanisms are not always clear, one major argument is that general social trust may reflect confidence in the institutions that support widespread cooperation and a reduction in the types of risks (e.g. corruption) that make economic development possible.

Research from transitional societies outside of the United States and Europe has emphasized the importance of government performance, particularly in terms of corruption and macro-economic development, in fostering generalized trust in political institutions. In South Africa, increasing dissatisfaction with government delivery of socio-economic development post-transition led to decreasing levels of trust in political institutions and a significant growth in anti-government social movements (Ballard 2005). A number of authors have suggested that this relationship between government performance and political trust is an important factor for the consolidation of democracy in transitional societies (e.g. Diamond 1999). However, Cleary and Stokes (2006) caution that the link between trust in any form and democracy is tenuous at best. Assessing a variety of theories and empirical evidence on trust and democracy, Cleary and Stokes argue that neither interpersonal nor institutional trust should be viewed as a *cause* of democratization, democratic consolidation, or improved democratic institutional performance (2006: 129–30). Thus, it appears that the specific role of political trust in contrast to general social trust in these matters is still up for debate.

Conclusion

The rise in the reported significance of trust in social, organizational, and international relations has paralleled the increase in risk and uncertainty that accompanied massive changes in the global economy in the 20th century and the emergence of new sources of risk in the 21st century including a major recession and a worldwide pandemic. Clearly, what happens in one small corner of the world can have large repercussions for those in places once viewed as distant. Along with increased interdependence and interconnectedness comes the need for new social structures and forms of collective action and governance that move beyond national boundaries. It has been argued by many scholars that general social trust is correlated with a productive

economy. But it is not clear why. Cook, Hardin, and Levi (2005: 196) argue that: "Societies are essentially evolving away from trust relationships toward externally regulated behavior," due to changes in the nature of our relationships. Over long periods of time we have moved away from thick relations of trust and normative control in small, sometimes isolated or closed communities to larger open networks of thin relations of trust and cooperation with many people spread out in geographic space (Cook 2005). This has altered the fundamental ways in which everyday business is accomplished and has important implications for the potential for the emergence of trust relations, accurate assessments of trustworthiness, and alternative modes of cooperation. It also has implications for our capacity to know enough to "trust" any institution. What is important is that we, at the least, gain confidence that these institutions are being given proper oversight and that there is legal recourse for those who are the victims of corruption or exploitation. Currently, challenges to democratic institutions abound across the globe as well as a pandemic that is ravaging those in many countries, with the United States having the largest number of cases in rural communities as well as urban locales.

Confidence in institutions supports the growth of the types of transactions that result in economic development. It also allows citizens to trust that their government and other officials are working to provide essential resources when needed to support their employment, health, and welfare. Often what individuals mean when they say they have trust in government is that they are confident in the reliability and legitimacy of government. Political trust refers mainly to this domain. Social trust seems to reflect not only confidence in the institutions and organizations in which social exchanges are embedded but also trust in other individuals, typically those we do not know and whom we can take a risk on because there are safeguards. But in some networks, such as those facilitated in the online world of interaction and transactions, the risk of exploitation remains high. It appears that social trust and political trust are quite distinct. Future research should examine more carefully the relations between the various forms of trust as well as move beyond correlational evidence to examine their causes and consequences (Newton, Stolle, and Zmerli 2018). While we know a great deal about trust in specific domains, we still do not have a clear conception of the linkages between trust at various levels. Finally, there is much less work on distrust and the ways in which it can be mitigated (but see Hardin 2004; Kramer and Cook 2004). Efforts to investigate settings in which distrust is the norm should allow us to understand more about the role of trust in others and in institutions.

Notes

1. The General Social Survey asks several questions that have been used in the past as indicators of generalized trust. In addition to this item the others typically used in a general social trust scale include: 1) Do you think most people would try to take advantage of you, or would they try to be fair? 2) Would you say that most of the time people try to be helpful, or that they are mostly looking out for themselves?
2. In her review of the literature Smith (2010) indicates that the black–white gap in generalized trust ranges from ten to thirty percent over time in the General Social Survey (GSS).

References

Abascal, M. and D. Baldassari. 2015. "Love Thy Neighbor? Ethnoracial Diversity and Trust Reexamined." *American Journal of Sociology* 121: 722–782.

Alesina, A. and E. La Ferrara. 2002. "Who Trusts Others?" *Journal of Public Economics 85* (*2*): 207–234.

Anderson, C.J. and A.J. Lo Tempio. 2002. "Winning, Losing and Political Trust in America." *British Journal of Political Science 32* (*2*): 335–351.

Arrow, Kenneth J. 1974. *The Limits of Organization*. New York, NY: Norton.

Ballard, Richard et al. 2005. "Globalization, Marginalization and Contemporary Social Movements in South Africa." *African Affairs 104 (417)*: 615–634.

Bjørnskov, Christian. 2018. "Social Trust and Economic Growth." In E. M. Uslaner (ed.) *The Oxford Handbook on Social and Political Trust*. 535–555. New York: The Oxford University Press.

Braithwaite, John. 1998. "Institutionalizing Distrust, enculturating trust." In V. Braithwaite and Margaret Levi (eds.) *Trust and Governance*. (343–375) New York: Russell Sage Foundation Publications.

Braithwaite, Valerie A. and Margaret Levi (eds.) 1998. *Trust and Governance*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation Publications.

Buchan, Nancy R., Rachel T. A. Croson and Robyn M. Dawes. 2002. "Swift Neighbors and Persistent Strangers: A Cross-cultural Investigation of Trust and Reciprocity in Social Exchange." *American Journal of Sociology 108 (1)*: 168–206.

Cleary, Matthew R. and Susan Carol Stokes. 2006. *Democracy and the Culture of Scepticism: Political Trust in Argentina and Mexico*. New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation.

Cook, Karen S. 2005. "Networks, Norms, and Trust: The Social Psychology of Social Capital 2004 Cooley Mead Award Address." *Social Psychology Quarterly 68 (1)*: 4–14.

Cook, Karen S., Russell Hardin and Margaret Levi. 2005. *Cooperation without Trust?* New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation.

Cook, K. S., R. Kramer, D. Thom, S. Bailey, I. Stepanikova and R. Cooper. 2004. "Physician–Patient Trust Relations in an Era of Managed Care." In R. Kramer and K. S. Cook (eds.) *Trust and Distrust in Organizations*. New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation.

Cook, K. S., E. R. W. Rice and A. Gerbasi. 2004. "The Emergence of Trust Networks Under Uncertainty: The Case of Transitional Economies – Insights from Social Psychological Research." In S. Rose-Ackerman, B. Rothstein and J. Kornai (eds.) *Problems of Post Socialist Transition: Creating Social Trust*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

Delhey, Jan and Kenneth Newton. 2005. "Predicting Cross–National Levels of Social Trust: Global Pattern or Nordic Exceptionalism?" *European Sociological Review 21 (4)*: 311–327.

Diamond, Larry Jay. 1999. *Developing Democracy: Toward Consolidation*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Dinensen, Peter T. and Kim M. Sonderskov. 2018. "Ethnic Diversity and Social Trust: A Critical Review of the Literature and Suggestions for a Research Agenda." In Eric M. Uslaner (ed.) *The Oxford Handbook of Social and Political Trust*. 175–204. New York: Oxford University Press.

Dirks, Kurt T. and Donald L. Ferrin. 2001. "The Role of Trust in Organizational Settings." *Organization Science 12 (4)*: 450–467.

Dunn, J. 1988. "Trust and Political Agency." In D. Gambetta (ed.) *Trust: Making and Breaking Cooperative Relations*, Oxford: Blackwell.

Fukuyama, Francis. 1995. *Trust: Social Virtues and the Creation of Prosperity*. New York, NY: Free Press.

Gambetta, D. 1988. *Trust: Making and Breaking Cooperative Relations*. New York, NY: B. Blackwell.

Gambetta, Diego and Heather Hamill. 2005. *Streetwise: How Taxi Drivers Establish their Customers' Trustworthiness*. New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation.

Granovetter, Mark. 1985. "Economic Action and Social Structure: The Problem of Embeddedness." *American Journal of Sociology 91 (3)*: 481–510.

Hardin, R. 2002. *Trust and Trustworthiness*. New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation.

Hardin, R. 2004. "Distrust," in edited by Anonymous. New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation.

Kaase, M. 1999. "Interpersonal Trust, Political Trust and Non–Institutionalised Political Participation in Western Europe." *West European Politics 22*: 1–21.

Keele, L. 2007. "Social Capital and the Dynamics of Trust in Government." *American Journal of Political Science 51 (2)*: 241–254.

Knack, Stephen and Philip Keefer. 1997. "Does Social Capital Have an Economic Payoff? A Cross-Country Investigation." *Quarterly Journal of Economics 112 (4)*: 1251–1288.

Kramer, R. M. and K. S. Cook. 2004. *Trust and Distrust in Organizations: Dilemmas and Approaches*. New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation.

Levi, Margaret. 1997. *Consent, Dissent, and Patriotism*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Levi, Margaret and Laura Stoker. 2000. "Political Trust and Trustworthiness." *Annual Review of Political Science 3* (*1*): 475–507.

Luhmann, Niklas. 1979. *Trust and Power: Two Works*. New York, NY: Wiley.

Mattes, Robert and Alejandro Moreno. 2018. "Social and Political Trust in Developing Countries: Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America." In E. M. Uslaner (ed.) *The Oxford Handbook of Social and Political Trust*. 357–381. New York: The Oxford University Press.

Mayer R. C., Davis J. H. and Schoorman F. D. 1995. "An Integrative Model of Organizational Trust." *Academy of Management Review 20*: 709–734.

Michelson, M. R. 2001. "Political Trust among Chicago Latinos." *Journal of Urban Affairs 23* (*3*): 323–334.

Michelson, Melissa R. 2003. "The Corrosive Effect of Acculturation: How Mexican Americans Lose Political Trust." *Social Science Quarterly 84* (*4*): 918–933.

Mishler, W. 2005. "What are the Political Consequences of Trust? A Test of Cultural and Institutional Theories in Russia." *Comparative Political Studies 38* (*9*): 1050–1078.

Mishler, W. and R. Rose. 2001. "What are the Origins of Political Trust? Testing Institutional and Cultural Theories in Post-Communist Societies." *Comparative Political Studies 34* (*1*): 30–62.

Nee, V. and J. Sanders. 2001. "Trust in Ethnic Ties: Social Capital and Immigrants." In K. S. Cook (ed.) *Trust in Society.* New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation.

Newton, Kenneth. 2001. "Trust, Social Capital, Civil Society, and Democracy." *International Political Science Review 22* (*2*): 201–214.

Newton, Kenneth. 2007. "Social and Political Trust." In R. J. Dalton and H-D Klingemann (eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of Political Behavior*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Newton, Kenneth, Dietlind Stolle and Sonja Zmerli. 2018. "Social and Political Trust." In E. M. Uslaner (ed.) *The Oxford Handbook of Social and Political Trust.* 37–56. New York: Oxford University Press.

North, Douglass Cecil. 1990. *Institutions, Institutional Change, and Economic Performance*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Ortiz-Ospina, Esteban. 2016. "Trust." Published online at OurWorldIn Data.org. Retrieved from: https://ourworldindata.org/trust [Online Resource].

Paxton, Pamela. 1999. "Is Social Capital Declining in the United States? A Multiple Indicator Assessment." *American Journal of Sociology 105* (*1*): 88–127.

Portes, Alejandro and Julia Sensenbrenner. 1993. "Embeddedness and Immigration: Notes on the Social Determinants of Economic Action." *American Journal of Sociology 98* (*6*): 1320–1350.

Putnam, R. D. 1993. *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Putnam, Robert D. 1995a. "Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital." *Journal of Democracy 6*: 65–78.

Putnam, R. D. 1995b. "Tuning in, Tuning Out: The Strange Disappearance of Social Capital in America." *PS: Political Science and Politics 28* (*4*): 664–683.

Putnam, Robert D. 2000. *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster.

Putnam, Robert D. 2007. "E Pluribus Unum: Diversity and Community in the Twenty-first Century." *Scandinavian Political Studies 30* (*2*): 137–74.

Radaev, V. 2004. "How Trust Is Established in Economic Relationships: When Institutions and Individuals are Not Trustworthy." In S. Rose-Ackerman, B. Rothstein and J. Kornai (eds.)*: Creating Social Trust in Post-Socialist Transition.* New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

Rock, Charles P. and Vasiliy Solodkov. 2001. "Monetary Policies, Banking, and Trust in Changing Institutions: Russia's Transition in the 1990s." *Journal of Economic Issues 35* (*2*): 451–458.

Rose, R. and R. Mishler. 2011. "Political Trust and Distrust in Post-Authoritarian Contexts." In S. Zmerli and M. Hooghe (eds.) *Political Trust: Why Context Matters*. 117–140. Colchester: ECPR Press.

Rousseau, Denise M. et al. 1998. "Not so Different After All: A Cross-Discipline View of Trust." *Academy of Management Review 23* (*3*): 393–404.

Smith, Sandra. 2010. "Race and Trust." *Annual Review of Sociology 36*: 453–475.

Sztompka, Piotr. 1999. *Trust: A Sociological Theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sztompka, Piotr. 2006. "New Perspectives on Trust." *American Journal of Sociology 112 (3)*: 905–919.

Tocqueville, Alexis de. 1840 [1838]. *Democracy in America*. London: Saunders & Otley.

Uslaner, Eric M. 2002. *The Moral Foundations of Trust*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Van der Meer, T. W. G. 2018. "Economic Performance and Political Trust." In E. M. Uslaner (ed.) *The Oxford Handbook of Social and Political Trust*. 600–615. New York: The Oxford University Press.

Warren, Mark E. 2018. "Trust and Democracy" In Eric M. Uslaner (Ed.) *The Oxford Handbook of Social and Political Trust*. 75–94. New York: Oxford University Press.

Williamson, Oliver E. 1993. "Calculativeness, Trust, and Economic Organization." *Journal of Law and Economics 36 (1)*: 453–486.

Yamagishi, Toshio. 1988. "The Provision of a Sanctioning System in the United States and Japan." *Social Psychology Quarterly 51 (3)*: 265–271.

Yamagishi, Toshio, K. S. Cook, and M. Watabe. 1998. "Uncertainty, Trust, and Commitment Formation in the United States and Japan." *American Journal of Sociology 104 (1)*: 165–194.

Yamagishi, T. and M. Yamagishi. 1994. "Trust and Commitment in the United States and Japan." *Motivation and Emotion 18 (2)*: 129–166.

You, Jong-Sung. 2018. "Trust and Corruption." In Eric M. Uslaner (ed.) *The Oxford Handbook of Social and Political Trust*. 474–496. New York: Oxford University Press.

Zak, Paul J. and Stephen Knack. 2001. "Trust and Growth." *The Economic Journal 111 (470)*: 295–321.

Zucker, L. G. 1986. "Production of Trust: Institutional Sources of Economic Structure, 1840–1920." In B. M. Staw and L. L. Cummings (eds.) *Research in Organizational Behavior*. Greenwich, CT: JAI Press, Inc.

24

From linguistic performativity to social performance

Moya Lloyd

From its earliest formulation in the work of philosopher J. L. Austin through to its contemporary uses in the fields of anthropology, cultural studies, economics, film and media, literary studies, politics and sociology, performativity has become one of the most important theoretical approaches of recent times. Its use as an approach, however, is far from uniform, with the result that what performativity and the performative mean and the theoretical ends to which they are put often diverge significantly. It would be impossible to trace all these competing theorisations in a single chapter, so this one will concentrate on those that, to date at least, have been the most influential in terms of social and political thought. Given that many of them take their theoretical bearings from Austin, and as language continues to be one of the focal points for discussions of performativity, this is where we will begin.

Performativity and language

Austin's exploration of performativity is articulated in a series of lectures that were published posthumously as *How to Do Things with Words* (1962), where it forms part of the speech act theory he develops there. His interest is ordinary language use and, in particular, the *pragmatics* of speech: language as action upon the world rather than as a description of it. Where analytic philosophy, for Austin, is concerned with so-called constative utterances, assertions that can be evaluated as true or false, pragmatics focuses on a different category of utterance: the performative. By this Austin means speech that performs the action it describes: as in 'I bet' or 'I name this ship'. The idea that words could do things – that communication is a mode of action – was to prove hugely influential.

Of particular significance to contemporary theories of performativity was Austin's discussion of what it is that determines the success or failure of an utterance in enacting what it says. In particular, the argument that an utterance derives its 'force' from its adherence to a series of conventional procedures. The successful performance of a marriage ceremony, for instance, requires the utterance of an approved sequence of words by parties who are in a legal position to wed; it must take place in a licensed venue; and be conducted by someone authorised to do so. If any of these conditions are breached – if an unauthorised person conducts a marriage ceremony, say – the performative will fail; it will be 'infelicitous'. One question this raised was

whether performativity is better understood as a formal property of language or as a social or cultural practice.

In 'Signature Event Context', French philosopher Jacques Derrida (1988) offers an important account elaborating the former view: that performativity is a quality of language. His concern is the stress Austin places on the conventionality of performative utterances instead of on the formal properties of language *per se*. In particular, it is Austin's construal of failure as *extrinsic* to those utterances that Derrida regards as problematic. Even though Austin notes that all performatives have the capacity to fail, for Derrida he errs in not pursuing this insight to its logical conclusion, which would be to acknowledge that performative failure inheres structurally in language itself as a feature of its iterability (see also Loxley, 2007). Consequently, Derrida reorients the concept of performativity away from a focus on specific kinds of linguistic utterance towards performativity understood as an innate quality of language in general. Influential as Derrida's thinking is in its own right, particularly in philosophy and literary theory, it is the uptake of this idea by the American feminist Judith Butler (discussed later) that is perhaps most noteworthy from the perspective of political and social thought.

The genesis of the idea of performativity as a social phenomenon, by contrast, owes much to the thinking of French social theorist Pierre Bourdieu. As part of his wider theory of language and power, Bourdieu also turns to Austin. Where Derrida had criticised the latter for over-emphasizing factors external to language, Bourdieu takes the opposite position. He argues that Austin's stress on the *formal* qualities of language means that he fails to acknowledge that, in fact, 'authority comes to language from outside' (1991: 109). In reconfiguring performativity as a specifically sociological concept, Bourdieu extends Austin's discussion of convention to take wider account of its social and political dimensions. The force Austin attributes to performative utterances, Bourdieu reconceives in *Language and Symbolic Power* (1991) as a force deriving from the institutions (broadly understood) that endow particular agents with the publically recognised authority, resources and symbols (ceremonial regalia and the like) to perform particular acts. When a police officer declares 'you are under arrest' their utterance has performative force because they are institutionally authorised to perform arrests. When an unauthorised person – an 'imposter' – does the same, their utterance will fail because of the lack of institutional validation behind it. Performative success is thus reconceptualised by Bourdieu as a function of social power, dependent upon the 'symbolic capital' of a particular actor, and performative failure of their lack. In this way, the concept of performativity is transformed from a purely linguistic phenomenon into one concerned with the social conditions, including factors such as gender and class, that impact on language use.

There are further features of Austin's work that have been equally important in the development of linguistic theories of performativity, including his typology of illocutionary acts (not discussed here), built on by, among others, German philosopher and social theorist Jürgen Habermas and his distinction between locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary speech-acts. Austin defines these three different aspects of the speech-act in the following way: a locutionary act is simply 'the act *of* "saying something"' (1962: 94, my emphasis); an illocutionary utterance involves the 'performance of an act *in* saying something' (1962: 99, original emphasis) – so a saying that is a doing; while perlocutions are utterances that 'will often, or even normally, produce certain consequential effects' on others (1962: 101), where an effect is produced '*by*' (Loxley, 2007: 18) saying something, in other words. The last two, as we will see later, are the most noteworthy from the perspective of the development of speech pragmatics (Loxley, 2007: 18).

Austin's speech–act theory provides the inspiration for a number of important accounts of linguistic normativity, including those of American philosophers John Searle and Stanley Cavell, respectively. Undoubtedly the most important from a political and social theory viewpoint,

however, is the version of universal pragmatics advanced by Habermas, to which we now turn. This account of performativity, influenced not only by Austin's work but also by Noam Chomsky's discussion of communicative competence and Karl-Otto Apel's speculations about the transcendental-pragmatic conditions of communication, emerges as Habermas expounds his theory of communicative action. It is thus central both to his discourse ethics and to the analysis he furnishes of modern society and modernisation (though neither is explored here).

Performativity and communication

Habermas's so-called 'linguistic turn' began in the mid-1970s, with essays in universal pragmatics (see Outhwaite, 1994). It is given its fullest expression, however, in the two-volume *Theory of Communicative Action* (1984 [1981], 1987 [1981]) where Habermas sets out his unique account of rationality, understood as 'how speaking and acting subjects acquire and use knowledge' (1984 [1981]: 11). The theory of communicative action thus depends on an examination of linguistic communication. Its goal is to 'identify and reconstruct universal conditions of possible understanding' (Habermas, 1996: 118). Like Austin, therefore, Habermas is concerned with the pragmatics of speech. His is not, however, an 'empirical pragmatics' concerned with actual language use in specific contexts (as, for instance, in a linguistic exploration of a particular text or a sociological analysis of conversations). He is concerned with what he initially terms 'universal' and then later 'formal' pragmatics, focused on the universal features of language that speaking subjects acquire and deploy in order to communicate successfully (Habermas, 1996: 129n.1; and 1984 [1981]). As such, Habermas's approach is a version of the form of linguistic analysis that Bourdieu discerned and disclaimed in Austin.

The principal purpose of speech, for Habermas, is to coordinate the action of multiple participants. Language is able to do this because the 'telos' of human speech is 'reaching understanding' (Habermas, 1984 [1981]: 287). Habermas's starting point, therefore, is what he calls the 'performative attitude' adopted by participants (speakers and interlocutors) in communication oriented to mutual understanding (which he opposes to the 'objectivating attitude' adopted by those deploying language for personal strategic or instrumental ends). Both his theory of communication and of rationality endeavour, thus, to reconstruct the practical knowledge required by participants in order to communicate successfully.

Habermas's fundamental idea is that communication is able to generate mutual understanding (or 'consensus') because the meaning of utterances depends on 'the validity basis of meaning' (1984 [1981]: 9), that is, the necessary features of communication present in *all* speech. For Habermas, there are three such types of validity claim: that speech is sincere, normatively right and factually true. All three are open to contestation and justification: a claim, that is, might be rejected as (variously) insincere, illegitimate, or erroneous, or may be accepted once reasons have been given to support it. Although this aspect of Habermas's work has come in for intense scrutiny, not least for occluding the social and institutional character of language use (Bourdieu, 1991: 107; Ingram, 1987: 40), the important point to note is that by linking speech acts to reason-giving, Habermas was able to generate two very influential theories: a discourse ethics grounded in a dialogical principle of universalisability and a theory of democracy grounded in deliberation.

A discussion of performativity in the work of Habermas would not be complete, however, without a discussion of the distinction he endeavours, somewhat controversially, to draw between communicative action (that is, action oriented to mutual understanding) and other types of language use, including most notably strategic action (action oriented to ulterior ends). Not content simply to differentiate between these competing types of action, Habermas also seeks to demonstrate that communicative action is the 'original mode of language use' (1984

[1981]: 288), upon which all other forms are parasitic. To do so he refashions Austin's distinction between locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary speech acts. It is the latter two performative and pragmatic aspects of language, in particular, that Habermas hones in on.

Recall, both illocutionary and perlocutionary acts refer to the effects that utterances are able to produce in the world. According to Habermas, in *The Theory of Communicative Action*, illocutionary speech acts produce mutual understanding (or rationally driven consensus) while perlocutionary speech acts are tied to instrumental or strategic goals: that is, they aim to bring about certain consequential effects, specifically effects that are not made explicit in the speech act itself. In order to generate strategic effects, however, perlocutionary acts rest on illocutionary success – the fact that what is said has been understood (even if the motivations behind it may have been hidden from the auditor). Habermas's purpose in making this distinction is to establish that strategic action is dependent on communicative action. Whether or not his argument is ultimately successful, is a moot point. Critics (e.g. Alexander, 1985; Culler, 1985) were quick to point out various flaws with it, and although Habermas qualified and adjusted his argument in response to these criticisms (such as by allowing that perlocutionaries might be either strategic or non-strategic), significant questions still remain about the viability of his basic position – that there is action oriented to mutual understanding – and about what it is that motivates individuals to set aside an 'objectivating attitude' in favour of a 'performative' one (Outhwaite, 1994). Whatever reservations and objections linger, it must be noted that his exploration of language enabled Habermas to produce what was to be one of the foremost social, ethical and political theories of recent times, the significance of which continues to resonate across multiple disciplines. In the process, the concept of performativity was remade yet again.

So far the discussion has concentrated on performativity as an aspect either of (formal or social) language or communication. The next section focuses on American feminist author and queer theorist Judith Butler's highly influential re-articulation of performativity as a way to understand gender. This reworking of performativity, initially articulated without reference to Austin, has crossed numerous disciplinary boundaries, stimulating thinking in subject areas from politics and sociology, through cultural studies, anthropology, gender studies and queer theory, to cultural studies and literary theory and beyond; helped to shape both queer theory *and* queer politics; and has inspired others to translate the idea of performativity into their analyses of race, ethnicity and disability. What, though, does it mean to claim that gender is performative?

Performativity and gender

Gender Trouble, the text that introduced the concept of gender performativity to a wider public, describes gender as a '*stylized repetition of acts*' (Butler, 1999: 179). Drawing on Victor Turner's idea that ritual social drama depends on performances that are *repeated*, Butler initially described gender as a 'ritualized, public performance' (1988: 526n.9): an effect produced by the repetition of particular bodily gestures, activities and movements. Where Austin used performativity to denote linguistic utterances that are also enactments, Butler uses it to describe those corporeal repertoires, the enactment of which produces gender. Hers is a conception of performativity refigured, therefore, as a 'style of the flesh'. This fleshly style is historically and culturally sedimented in the sense that the acts and gestures that comprise it have accrued social meaning over time. It is also normalizing (in Michel Foucault's sense of that term), bound as it is within 'the regulatory fiction of heterosexual coherence' (Butler, 1999: 173), or what has come to be called heteronormativity, where biological sex is assumed to flow naturally from gender and gender from sexuality, where the male body expresses masculinity and heterosexual desire for a female body while the female body expresses femininity and heterosexual desire for a male body, and

on the basis of which gender performances are judged and, if found wanting, gendered bodies disciplined (see also Butler, 1993, 2004).

The idea of gender as performative appears, at first glance, to echo earlier dramaturgical or ethnomethodological accounts of social performance, such as that elaborated by Canadian sociologist Erving Goffman (1959, 1976), and built on by gender theorists such as Candace West and Don Zimmerman (1987; see also Lloyd, 2016). Here the self is conceived of as a product of its 'performances' to others, with these performances following socially scripted codes, behavioural conventions and 'shared vocabularies of body idiom' (Goffman, 1963: 35). On this understanding, gender is a form of social drama, constructed through interaction with others. Unlike Goffman, who regards the actor as being able to manage their own gendered performances to some extent, Butler takes a different tack. She argues, firstly, in Nietzschean fashion that gender is a 'doing' (1999: 33) but without the constituting role of the doer. The gendered subject does not exist separate from the doing of gender. They are constituted as a gendered subject via the repetition of particular acts and gestures. She thus puts a new spin on Simone de Beauvoir's famous statement that 'one is not born, but rather becomes, a woman', and by so-doing challenges traditional accounts of both the subject and agency, challenges that were to bring her critics out in force. Secondly, she rejects the idea of gender as expressing an interior truth or essence about the sexed self. Gender identity, for Butler, does not pre-exist the acts that make that identity known to others; what gender *is* (its ontology) is recast rather as an effect of its constitutive acts (1999: 136).

Understanding gender as performative has a number of radical implications. First, it gives rise to the idea that all gender performances (straight or gay, masculine or feminine) are imitative or 'parodic' (Butler, 1999). All gender is a form of impersonation because all are modes of corporeal enactment and the effect of specific practices. Drag, which in *Gender Trouble* Butler suggests exposes the fiction of gender, is thus just as 'real' a performance of gender, in this regard, as the straight woman performing femininity. Second, allied to her argument that binary sex is itself a construct of the gender apparatus (a reversal of the normal sex-gender logic found in feminism, which sees sex as prior to gender), it draws attention to the *norms* that regulate and constrain gendered existence.

Readers were, however, divided by her work. In particular, despite Butler's insistence throughout *Gender Trouble* that there is no performer behind the performance, many still took her discussion of drag to imply that by electing to dress differently an individual could intentionally and knowingly refashion its gender in any way it wanted (e.g. Probyn, 1995; Rothenberg and Valente, 1997). In *Bodies That Matter* (1993), Butler restates her understanding of performativity, this time resorting to Derrida's notion of iterability and his critique of Austin to clarify. In *How to Do Things with Words* Austin distinguishes between serious and non-serious uses of language. The latter refers to words spoken by actors or used in poems, words that Austin describes as both 'parasitic upon' on and as 'etiolations of' ordinary language use (Austin, 1962: 22). What Austin characterises in this way, Derrida, however, construes as a property of language itself: namely, its citationality. Performative utterances succeed, Derrida commends, precisely because ordinary language (as Austin has it), just like fictional speech, 'repeat[s] a "coded" or iterable utterance' (1988: 18). The words used to launch a ship are recognisable as such because they cite a given series of words.

Gender, Butler proposes, has a similar citational structure. Behaviour is identifiable as feminine precisely because it reiterates the corporeal styles (acts, gestures, movements) that have come historically to signify femininity. But this process of gender iterability is based on the compulsory repetition and thus reproduction of a specific range of normalised practices. Gender is a mode of citation that is socially constrained and regulated and this is why drag is not *ipso facto* a radical or transformative practice. Although seeing a man enact femininity might lead people to

question the idea that gender flows naturally from sex, there is no guarantee that it will. Indeed, the performance might be read simply as evidence that he is not a 'proper' man. Does this mean, therefore, that the gendered subject is so thoroughly determined by gender norms that it can never subvert them? Butler argues that it does not. This time she turns to another aspect of Derrida's argument to explain. His contention that no sign is ever tied indelibly to any particular context but has, instead, an infinite faculty to split from one situation to be recited in any number of others, with its meaning altering in the process. The implication for gender norms is clear: norms too can be repeated in ways that resignify and rework them.

The notion of gender performativity is the most well-known element of Butler's work. It is not, however, her only discussion of performativity to have made an impact. To end this section, therefore, I want briefly to consider her study of linguistic performatives in *Excitable Speech* (1997). Here Butler outlines her approach to hate-speech, a debate that had engaged feminists and critical race theorists in the US throughout the 1980s and 1990s. There is much that could – and, indeed, should – be said about this debate in general, including its exploration of the performativity of pornography (Langton, 1993; Mackinnon, 1994), about Butler's contribution to it, and about the subsequent work that it has given rise to (see e.g. Freccero, 1997; Schwartzman, 2002; Wright, 2002). For our purposes, however, two observations will have to suffice.

First, returning to but revisioning Austin's distinction between illocutionary and perlocutionary utterances, Butler proposes that although illocutionary speech-acts enact their effects as they are uttered, their force (their capacity to succeed), like that of perlocutionary utterances, rests on their prior usages. In terms of hate-speech, this means that words that wound do so, directly or indirectly, not because their speaker intends them to wound (no one can control meaning) but because of their repetition over time – their coding, to paraphrase Derrida – as wounding words. Their performative force, in other words, is an effect of the particular history of meaning accreted through their reiteration.

Second, the need for injurious language to be repeated in order to sustain it is, for Butler, precisely what renders it vulnerable to political contestation. Taking from Derrida the idea that failure inheres structurally in all language (because of *différance*: that each time a term is used a difference is introduced), and that, as such, any term can be potentially wrested away from its context, and allying this to Louis Althusser's idea of interpellation (meaning that hailing – or calling – someone produces them as a subject), Butler argues against censoring hate-speech as her opponents proposed and in favour of resignification. Politically, resignification or talking back is more effective and more democratic, she proposes, because it allows both for the recitation of noxious words in ways that counter their historical associations and for persons so-addressed to refuse subordinating interpellations and thereby defuse hate-speech of its pernicious potential. Since it is language, not the individuals who use it, that is the means of injury (needless to say, not an uncontroversial position), far better, she argues, that language also be the means of resistance.

Although some critics were worried that Butler appeared to be absolving those deploying hate-speech of any legal culpability and others registered concern that she underestimated the degree of difficulty of resignifying certain particularly entrenched forms of racial or gender slur (see Lloyd, 2007 for further discussion), it is clear that hers is not a formal account of linguistic performativity as advanced by Derrida. Like Bourdieu's, it is an approach explicitly focused on linguistic performativity as a social and political practice. It is not authorised or ritual discourses that interest Butler. It is 'ordinary' language use.

In the final section, we turn to an account of performativity that has been particularly influential, if not a little controversial, within sociology. This is the theory of social performance developed by Jeffery Alexander and others at the Centre for Cultural Sociology, at Yale University, a theory that has brought debates about the nature of culture to the fore within that discipline.

Culture and performance

The performative turn in sociology is part of the so-called 'strong program in cultural sociology' championed by Alexander (2003) and others. Sociological interest in culture is not new; what Alexander proposes, however, is. As one critic has described it, it entails a 'paradigm formation' that is 'nothing less than an argument for the refounding of the American sociological undertaking by "culturalizing" it through and through' (Kurusawa, 2004 : 54). Against the sociology *of* culture, where culture is treated as dependent on, even epiphenomenal to, other social structures (particularly, the economic), Alexander advocates *cultural sociology* based on an understanding of social action as cultural performance and combining structuralist approaches with cultural hermeneutics. Culture, in this perspective, ceases to be conceived of as a dependent variable and is reconceptualised as (relatively) autonomous from other structures – an 'independent variable' – the distinctiveness of which ought to be analysed in its own right. This is sociology *as* the examination of culture and meaning. It is not always clear, however, if the implication of this switch of focus is that the social is cultural through and through or only that it may be studied using the same methodologies and theoretical approaches as deployed in the study of culture. (An essay from 2009 implies the latter: Reed and Alexander, 2009: 33.)

The methodology developed to address social action as cultural performance is cultural pragmatics. Its direct antecedents include Austin's speech pragmatics, though as with other theories of performativity, cultural pragmatics develops in part out of a critique of Austin. In this case, it is his inattention to cultural context in determining the felicity conditions of speech that is at issue. That is, Austin's neglect of the specific cultural codes actors deploy, often unthinkingly, in their daily lives (Alexander, Giesen and Mast, 2006: 3–4). Cultural pragmatics is not concerned with speech alone, however; it is, rather, concerned more broadly with the variety of actions deployed by determinate social actors in the communication and construction – the *performance* – of meaning. Thus Alexander also draws on theories of theatrical performance, including the work of Professor of Performance Studies, Richard Schechner (commonly credited with initiating the discipline of performance studies) and anthropologists Clifford Geertz and Victor Turner; as well as on dramaturgical theory (for instance, as advanced by Goffman); and even on Stanislavski's system of Method acting to promote the argument that social performances are analogous to theatrical performances.

To understand a cultural performance – such as the 9/11 terrorist attacks on New York and the American response to them (Alexander, 2006a) – it is, Alexander argues, necessary to identify the basic elements that constitute it. These are: 'systems of collective representation' (Alexander, 2006b: 33), which include the 'scripts' that are used in the performance, as well as the background narratives and codes against which the action is played out; the actors who perform; the audience for or observers of the performance, who may variously identify with what is happening or be uninterested in or unpersuaded by it; the 'means of symbolic production' (Alexander, 2006b: 35), including the clothing and props required for the performance and the venue in which to perform; the *mise-en-scène* or staging of the performance, how actors move and when, their positioning and other aspects of what might be thought of as direction; and, finally, social power – who may act, who may attend a performance, what might be included in a script and what must be excluded from it, how a performance will be interpreted and by whom. It is the combination of these elements that ensures the performativity – the illocutionary and perlocutionary force – or otherwise of a specific performance (see also Alexander, 2007).

To suggest that certain events may be understood as akin to theatre seems a relatively unremarkable claim to make. Cultural pragmatics is not simply a method for studying empirical examples, however. As an ingredient of the strong programme, it is part of a wider theory designed to illuminate the historical transformations that have occurred in the nature of symbolic

action from the Greeks to modern times; from 'ritual' as symbolic performance in simpler societies (tribal, band) to 'social drama' as symbolic performance in complex societies. One of the features of this transition is that the probability of performative success (that recurring theme in theories of performativity) diminishes. The question is why?

A successful performance is one that produces authentic acting; has a script (generally organised around the binary: sacred and profane, and here, of course, Alexander is reworking Durkheim), which is believed both by the actors who perform it and the audience that watches it; draws on – re-iterates – background cultural representations that are familiar to its viewers; and where the audience identifies (emotionally, psychologically and so on) with what is being played out in front of it. On such occasions, fusion between the diverse components constituting the performance has been achieved. In simpler, less socially differentiated societies, cultural fusion occurs more readily as performances become ritualised. As Alexander has it, this is not just because such societies are smaller in size but because of the more 'mythical and metaphysical nature of their beliefs' and because their institutions, culture and social structures are more integrated (2006b: 38). Collective representations apply to society as a whole; the community as a whole participates in rituals (such as initiation rites); and the fit between social roles and sacred texts is tight. Here cultural performances – rituals – operate performatively to generate particular social relationships directly.

In post-ritualistic society, however, as a result of various social and political processes, society has become more complex and more highly differentiated, with the result that the components of performance have become de-fused. Because all societies, indeed all organisations, need to support collective beliefs, the task becomes how to produce performances capable of re-fusing these performative elements. In such societies, social drama takes the place of ritual. As the belief in authority and hierarchy that characterised earlier societies wanes, so culture becomes increasingly critical and social processes more subject to dispute. In this context, Alexander notes, what appears is not the public sphere (as Habermas charges); it is the public stage, upon which actors, of all varieties, have a greater freedom than available to them in previous times to produce performances designed to appeal to specific audiences (2006b). This means, of course, that a larger number of performances are vying for verisimilitude; it also means a larger number will fail to achieve it.

A re-fused performance is thus one that manages to combine its diverse elements into a convincing whole. To do this, it has to ensure that this performance is the only one to grab the attention of the audience; and to do this it has to be able to surmount the fragmentation that characterises modern society by, for instance, presenting history in such a way that it overcomes the divisions created by the past. A fascinating example of this process is offered by Tanya Goodman (2006) in her exploration of the activities of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). She shows how the hearings it organised throughout South Africa worked to re-fuse a divided society by producing performances of apartheid as a cultural trauma in need of recognition and reparation, that appealed to multiple audiences (both domestic and international), in ways that both separated the new democratic South Africa from its racist past *and* that helped to reintegrate a society divided by apartheid. In short, the performances orchestrated by the TRC performed – performatively invoked – the new nation.

Conclusion

Performativity clearly means different things to different writers. It connotes among other things a category of speech; a property of language; a corporeal style; and a mode of cultural performance. As part of its circulation within social and political theory, it has been used to

explain the perpetuation of relations of domination and subordination *and* identified as (one of) the means for challenging those relations; tied to the possibility of justice and deliberative democracy; and linked to the refocusing of a discipline. Given that the authors addressed in this chapter turn to performativity precisely because it is understood to produce effects in the world, then if it is to be effective as a social and political theory, an account of performativity must be capable of explaining *both* the reproduction and perpetuation of (gendered, capitalist, racial and other) power relations *and* how those relations might be contested. Suffice to say that few versions explain both aspects equally well.

Bourdieu and Butler (in her account of gender performativity, at least) effectively demonstrate how performativity propagates structures of inequality and/or normalizing frameworks that differentiate adversely between populations. By contrast, Alexander largely ignores the intersections between culture and other stratifying structures, and Habermas in his formal pragmatics, where the focus is on language, neglects power, though he does, of course, address it in his social theory, which is not examined here. The risk in these latter cases is that performance and performativity appear to operate entirely independently of all other forces (social, political and economic), which is patently not the case. The capacity of actors both to reshape their environment and of that environment to be reshaped is simultaneously enabled *and* constrained by the multiple forms of power relations that underpin it – including those present within culture, something Emirbayer (2004) charges Alexander with not addressing.

An account of performativity of value socially and politically should also be able to show how social and political change is made possible, even if it cannot prescribe what change is required. Here it is not sufficient to focus on the *abstract* potential for change inherent in language or signification (Derrida and Butler, in her discussion of hate-speech), in re-fusion (Alexander), or even in communicative action (Habermas), although identifying such a potential for change is clearly necessary to understanding what allows it to take place. Attention needs to focus too on the historical, political and social conditions of possibility that facilitate change. This might include particular institutions, forms of political rationality, the activities of nascent groupings, or changing political circumstance. This is where empirical case studies of the kind developed by Alexander and colleagues are important (e.g. Alexander, 2006a, 2007; Goodman, 2006), if and when they are able to explain both *how* meanings become embedded socially and politically and *how* cultural codes are reworked (de- and re-contextualised in Derrida's sense). The absence of any account of change, as in Bourdieu, however, ultimately undercuts the potential explanatory power of performativity.

References

Alexander, J. C. (1985) 'Habermas's New Critical Theory: Its Promise and Problems', *The American Journal of Sociology*, 91 (2): 400–24.

Alexander, J. C. (2003) *The Meanings of Social Life: A Cultural Sociology*, New York: Oxford University Press.

Alexander, J. C. (2006a) 'From the Depths of Despair: Performance, Counterperformance and "September 11"', in Alexander, J. C., Giesen, B. and Mast, J. L. (eds.), *Social Performance: Symbolic Action, Cultural Pragmatics, and Ritual*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Alexander, J. C. (2006b) 'Cultural Pragmatics: Social Performance between Ritual and Strategy', in Alexander, J. C., Giesen, B. and Mast, J. L. (eds.), *Social Performance: Symbolic Action, Cultural Pragmatics, and Ritual*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Alexander, J. C. (2007) 'Power and Performance: The War on Terror between the Sacred and the Profane', Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies Distinguished Lectures, European University Institute, RSCAS DL 2007/01.

Alexander, J. C., Giesen, B. and Mast J. L. (eds.) (2006) *Social Performance: Symbolic Action, Cultural Pragmatics, and Ritual*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Austin, J. L. (1962) *How to Do Things with Words*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1991) *Language and Symbolic Power*, Cambridge: Polity.

Butler, J. (1988) 'Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory', *Theatre Journal*, 40 (4): 519–31.

Butler, J. (1993) *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of 'Sex'*, London: Routledge.

Butler, J. (1997) *Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performative*, London: Routledge.

Butler, J. (1999) *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity (Tenth Anniversary Edition)*, London: Routledge.

Butler, J. (2004) *Undoing Gender*, London: Routledge.

Culler, J. (1985) 'Communicative Competence and Normative Force', *New German Critique*, 35: 133–44.

Derrida, J. (1988 [1972]) 'Signature Event Context' in *Limited Inc.* Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press.

Emirbayer, M. (2004) 'The Alexander School of Cultural Sociology', *Thesis Eleven*, 79 (1): 5–15.

Freccero, C. (1997) 'Historical Violence, Censorship, and the Serial Killer: The Case of "American Psycho"', *Diacritics*, 27 (2): 44–58.

Goffman, E. (1959) *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Goffman, E. (1963) *Behavior in Public Places: Notes on the Social Organization of Gatherings*, New York: The Free Press.

Goffman, E. (1976) 'Gender Display', *Studies in the Anthropology of Visual Communication*, 3: 69–77.

Goodman, T. (2006) 'Performing a "New" Nation: The Role of the TRC in South Africa', in Alexander, J. C., Giesen, B. and Mast, J. L. (eds.), *Social Performance: Symbolic Action, Cultural Pragmatics, and Ritual*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Habermas, J. (1996 [1976]), 'What is Universal Pragmatics?', in W. Outhwaite (ed.), *The Habermas Reader*, Cambridge: Polity.

Habermas, J. (1984 [1981]) *The Theory of Communicative Action*, volume 1. London: Heinemann.

Habermas, J. (1987 [1981]) *The Theory of Communicative Action*, volume 2. Cambridge: Polity.

Ingram, D. (1987) *Habermas and the Dialectic of Reason*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press.

Kurasawa, F. (2004) 'Alexander and the Cultural Refounding of American Sociology', *Thesis Eleven*, 79: 53–65.

Langton, R. (1993) 'Speech Acts and Unspeakable Acts', *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, 22 (4): 293–330.

Lloyd, M. (2007) *Judith Butler: From Norms to Politics*. Cambridge: Polity.

Lloyd, M. (2016) 'Performativity and Performance', in L. Disch and M. Hawkesworth (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Feminist Theory*, New York: Oxford University Press.

Loxley, J. (2007) *Performativity*, London: Routledge.

MacKinnon, C. (1994) *Only Words*, London: Harper Collins Publishers.

Outhwaite, W. (1994) *Habermas: A Critical Introduction*, Cambridge: Polity.

Probyn, E. (1995) 'Lesbians in Space: Gender, Sex, and the Structure of Missing', *Gender, Place and Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography*, 2 (1): 77–84.

Reed, I. and Alexander, J. C. (2009) 'Social Science as Reading and Performance: A Cultural–Sociological Understanding of Epistemology', *European Journal of Social Theory*, 12 (1): 21–41.

Rothenberg, M. A. and Valente, J. (1997) 'Performative Chic: The Fantasy of Performative Politics', *College Literature*, 24 (1): 295–304.

Schwartzman, L. H. (2002) 'Hate Speech, Illocution, and Social Context: A Critique of Judith Butler', *Journal of Social Philosophy*, 33 (3): 421–41.

West, C. and Zimmerman, D. H. (1987) 'Doing Gender', *Gender & Society*, 1 (2): 125–51.

Wright, C. (2002) 'Speaking out of the Blue? September 11th as Hate Speech', *Situation Analysis*, 1: 26–39.

25

Nationalism and social theory

The distinction between community and society

Steven Grosby

During the last forty years, an enormous amount has been written on nations and nationalism, largely in response to the recognition, at times grudging, that the so-called "age of nationalism", once thought by many as a designation of the nineteenth century, persists into the twenty-first. Hardly a year passes without numerous books and articles on these subjects appearing – too many for any one scholar to read. There are journals devoted exclusively to the study of nationality, the most prominent of which is *Nations and Nationalism*; and one finds articles on nationality in many other journals of diverse areas of scholarship.

This renewed interest in nations and nationalism largely, but not exclusively, arose with the dissolution of the Soviet empire that freed the previously suppressed patriotic yearnings of, for example, the Ukrainians and the Baltic nations, for self-expression and self-government. This interest was, with the downfall of the Iron Curtain, further abetted by the unification of Germany. However and importantly, there had previously been movements for national self-determination among various regions of national states, for example, Quebec, Catalan and Scotland in, respectively, Canada, Spain and Great Britain. There were also national movements that spanned different states, for example, the Kurds. Interest in the subject also came from a different quarter, as predictions were made that nations were antiquated relics, as humanity has putatively moved into an age of post-nationalism, as exemplified by the European Union and the globalization of trade and division of labour.

Despite this flood of publications that includes myriad investigations of theoretical scope, the study of nationality remains curiously isolated from the modest contributions of social and political theory to the clarification of human conduct. In fact, the majority of the analyses of nationality are theoretically primitive, confined to the antiquated schema of a historical disjunction between status and contract, as formulated by Henry Sumner Maine in *Ancient Law*, or between *Gemeinschaft* ("community") and *Gesellschaft* ("society"), as formulated by Ferdinand Tönnies in *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft*. Thus, social and political theory have important contributions to make in clarifying both this significant social phenomenon of our time, nationality (a term I shall use to designate otherwise historically and constitutively diverse nations), and the uncivil ideology of nationalism; however, in order to do so, this historically simplistic disjunction must be put aside.

The burden of an analytical tradition

Tönnies (1940 [1887]: 119–73) posited two, distinct types of action: *Wesenwille* ("natural" or "essential" will) and *Kürwille* ("rational" or "arbitrary" will), corresponding respectively to two forms of social relations – *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*. The actual, but often overlooked merit of Tönnies' contrast between *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*, each characterized by a form of action distinctive to it, is that it conveys a pluralism of orientation of human conduct. To be sure, that pluralism subsequently required differentiation and refinement, as one sees in, for example, the different types of understanding and action, and heterogeneous "life-spheres" throughout Georg Simmel's and Max Weber's work; the pattern variables in Talcott Parsons' and Edward Shils' *Toward a General Theory of Action* (and especially in Shils' (1975 [1957]) recognition of qualitatively different orientations of the mind); the mediating associations in Robert Nisbet's *The Quest for Community*; and the distinction between civil and enterprise associations in Michael Oakeshott's *On Human Conduct* (Grosby 2002a).

Despite this merit and subsequent refinement, Tönnies' contrast between these two categories of action has often been wrongly simplified by numerous analysts through a crude historicism that isolates the appearance of one type of action and its corresponding social relation from that of the other. Thus, it is often argued that *Gemeinschaft* and its corresponding action of *Wesenwille* are only to be found in the local societies of the distant past, while *Gesellschaft* and its corresponding action of *Kürwille* are exclusively constitutive of modern times. In doing so, these analysts eschew the insight of those refinements of Tönnies' analytical contrast, that is, the co-existence of qualitatively heterogeneous orientations of human action, even though, it must be admitted, they have done so with justification from Tönnies' initial formulation of the contrast (but by avoiding Tönnies' (1971 [1926]) own, later complication of his analysis in the aftermath of World War I, when he could not avoid coming to terms with the modern, yet nonetheless *gemeinschaftliche* attachment of patriotism to the nation). That historicism has had a baneful influence on both the understanding of human action, for example, the doctrinaire expression of the theory of rational choice that, in economic theory, wrongly reduces all knowledge and its interpretation to information capable of utilitarian calculation, and, for our purposes, the study of nationality.[1]

Tönnies' distinction between these two types of action turns on the character of deliberation: on the one hand, *Wesenwille*, where thinking is an integral and immediate part of action, hence "natural" or "essential", and, on the other, *Kürwille*, where thinking directs action, hence "rational" or "arbitrary" in the sense that a calculation takes place as to whether or not to engage in action. The former, *Wesenwille*, is, according to Tönnies, characteristic of both impulsive action, for example, courage or habit and, more generally, where conduct conforms to traditional patterns of activity. However, thinking is by no means absent in the action of *Wesenwille*, as the reception of tradition is always in varying degrees critical because, one among a number of reasons, the tasks and challenges facing one generation differ from those of another.

There are from antiquity many confirmations of the modification (one could even say "manipulation") of tradition through its critical reception. I mention only in passing the writings of the legalist Shang Yang (fourth century BCE), Wang Ch'ung (first century CE), Carneades (second century BCE) and works like the pre-axial age, so-called "Babylonian Theodicy" (c. 1000 BCE) and the theologically challenging, monotheistic *Ecclesiastes*. To take another example, one finds, as is well known, in the first five books of the Bible the commandment that the Israelites are to circumcise the foreskin of the penis of their male children. However, Deuteronomy 10:16, 30:6, and Jeremiah 4:4 call upon the Israelites to circumcise the foreskin of their hearts. The latter commandment is such a strikingly odd metaphor that it can only be a critical commentary on, and modification of, the evidently earlier tradition of

the circumcision of the penis. The significance of the example of this modification is that the critical evaluation of tradition in antiquity was by no means confined to the works of putatively isolated individuals like Wang Ch'ung and Carneades; rather, this heightened, self-conscious reflection is potentially part of public discourse, as was the case for Shang Yang's legalism and the Bible in antiquity and the Middle Ages. The very existence of Christianity is yet another example of the critical reception of tradition with manifestly broad public consequences in antiquity; and it was acknowledged as such, that is, the "new" covenant or testament – already called for by Jeremiah – in contrast to the "old". Many other historical examples from antiquity of the public, critical reception of tradition can be adduced, ranging from the public performance of Euripides' *Orestes*, with its absurd, even self-described idiotic conclusion that could have only conveyed a tragic skepticism about Greek tradition and its gods, to the acute religious turmoil throughout the Roman Empire (Stoicism, Christianity, Manichaeism, the cults of Isis and Mithra, Julian's pagan revival, etc.). Too often historical sociology and social and political theory evaluate the distant past as if its societies were nothing more than isolated, small villages of unthinking brutes who are mindlessly captive to an all-encompassing tradition; that is, as if those societies were merely homogeneous *Gemeinschaften* with one uniform form of thought and action. But this is not so.

Insofar as there are any secure insights into the nature of human conduct from social theory, one surely is the rejection of a "group mind" through affirmation of the principle of methodological individualism, that is, thought and action are individually centred; but this is so for all historical periods. Thus, it is not surprising that we have from antiquity abundant evidence of not only the critical reception of tradition but also contracts, partnerships for trade, private property, and the rule of law (for one example, see Veenhof 1997). What is of lasting theoretical value to Tönnies' categories of *Wesenwille* and *Kürwille* is that both, to be sure in varying degrees, are found in all historical periods. However, given the principle of methodological individualism, the problem arises how both *Wesenwille* and *Gemeinschaft* should be understood. It is precisely here where the study of nationality ought to make a contribution to political and social theory and vice versa.

At least this much should be clear: *Wesenwille* should not be historically relegated to an earlier period; rather, it is to be understood as a type of deliberation and corresponding action infused with the intimacy of, or undertaken with reference to, the social relation, for example, the attachment of patriotism to the homeland – an attachment found throughout all historical periods. Accordingly, it is with this type of action where, as formulated by Tönnies, one finds sympathy and self-sacrifice, for example, on the part of the parent for his or her child. The prototypical social relation of this form of action is the "existential" collectivity of the family, where one's actions are bound up with the thought of gratifying or promoting the ends of other members of the family with little or no calculation of the costs involved to oneself. The prototypical cognitive referents – the recognized objects of significance – of this form of action are kinship and the actor's immediate environs of the home, that is, the tradition-bound village.[2] However, as Schmalenbach (1977 [1922]) convincingly argued, those *gemeinschaftliche* referents are susceptible to expansion, transformation and even wide variation beyond their prototypical, parochial scope, as one observes in, for example, the *Wesenwille* of the patriotic attachments to the territorially extensive nation.

Kürwille, in contrast, is a type of action motivated by the thought (thus, prior to action) of satisfying one's own need, hence, the prototypical social relation is that of the exchange of the market, or *Gesellschaft* ("society"). Characteristic of *Kürwille* is the individual's motivation to attain what is desired by that individual. As such, *Kürwille* does not, according to Tönnies, encompass a "positive" or philanthropic attitude towards fellow human beings, because the sympathetic attachments arising out of shared resemblance of one kind or another, for example,

kinship, putatively no longer exist or, if they do exist, are clearly subordinated to the self-interest of the individual – self-interest understood as where the benefits of action accrue directly to the acting individual. However, if one views modern society as dominated by *Kürwille*, the problem arises as to how modern, territorially extensive associations are held together; for supposedly there is no place for patriotism or, for that matter, tradition in general in modern life. As Simmel famously formulated the problem, "How is society possible?"

Tönnies' categorial and historical contrast between *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* had an enormous influence on the early development of social and political theory, for example, on Durkheim's distinction, as presented in *The Division of Labor*, between "mechanical" and "organic" solidarity. The accuracy of this distinction for societies of the past was taken for granted, as those societies were of little interest to social and political theorists who were more concerned with modern life, often characterized by them as the "crisis of modernity". It did not occur to them and still does not occur to many that the merit of the historical contrast between these two forms of social relation also rests upon the accuracy of Tönnies' (or earlier Maine's and subsequently Durkheim's) understanding of the societies of antiquity. But only a moment's reflection forces one to conclude that something is analytically awry; for there is no place in Tönnies' conception of the historically early *Gemeinschaft* for such ancient metropolises as Babylon, Alexandria and Rome, the populations of which reached into the hundreds of thousands.

The influence of the historical contrast between *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* on social theory continued, even if largely unacknowledged, as can be seen in the shared assumptions of such otherwise diverse works as F.A. Hayek's *The Fatal Conceit* and James Coleman's *Foundations of Social Theory*, and, for political theory, the understanding of the state as a social contract. But, once again, only a moment's reflection forces one to conclude that something is analytically awry; for even if one acknowledges a significant degree of social integration arising from the division of labour and the market, as writers such as Adam Smith, Durkheim and Hayek had rightly argued, the conception of the voluntaristic, overly individualistic, anomie-ridden modern *Gesellschaft* cannot account for a singularly important fact: the patriotic outbursts of World War I and World War II. Furthermore, as many scholars have recently observed, the significance of nationality persists into the twenty-first century. Thus, it is remarkably curious that many of the influential theoretical analyses of nationality remain burdened by Tönnies' dichotomy, as if, today *Wesenwille* were merely residual. Ernest Gellner's *Nations and Nationalism* is a case in point.

Gellner's argument for the emergence of nations in modern Europe is straightforward. Its starting point is the development of industrial capitalism and its corresponding requirement of a mobile, culturally uniform workforce. This "industrial variation" of the "human situation" – to use Gellner's terms – is described by him as "an anonymous, impersonal society, with mutually substitutable atomized individuals" (1983: 57). Clearly, Gellner's description of modern society has much in common with Tönnies' understanding of the *Kürwille*-constituted *Gesellschaft*. Gellner proceeds by posing a variation of Simmel's question. Given this mass of substitutable, atomized individuals necessary for modern industrial society to function, how does this otherwise disaggregated society hold together?

His answer to this question is that society is "held together above all by a shared culture" that is diffused through "a school-mediated, academy supervised idiom, codified for the requirements of reasonably precise bureaucratic and technological communication" (Gellner 1983: 57). This culture – called by Gellner "high culture" – holds together these mobile, atomized individuals "in place of a previous complex structure of local groups" each of which had once been sustained by their own "low", folk culture. For Gellner, the nation is the imposition of this high culture by the state on these previously isolated low cultures – an imposition necessary for industrial capitalism. Thus, in the parlance of the social anthropology of Bronislaw Malinowski

and A.R. Radcliffe-Brown, Gellner's analysis of nationality is "functionalist": in order for industrial capitalism to exist (or function), it requires a culturally uniform population. The analysis rests upon two assumptions: (1) a historical disjunction between the high culture of modern, industrial society and the low cultures of previously isolated, local groups – a disjunction that is little more than a slight variation of Tönnies' distinction between *Gesellschaft* and *Gemeinschaft*; and (2) the beliefs constitutive of nationalism are derivative of industrial capitalism, that is, the high culture of nationalism – a functional requirement for the economic organization of modern society – forms the sociological uniformity of the nation.

Many of the well-known analyses of nationality share these assumptions of Gellner's analytical framework, albeit with shifts in emphasis. In Benedict Anderson's (1983: 42–3) *Imagined Communities*, the focus is the technology of "print capitalism" necessary for the shared communication constitutive of the emerging cultural cohesiveness of the nation; that is, nationalism is, in effect, the formation of an imagined community of the politicization of language. John Breuilly's *Nationalism and the State* concentrates on the centralizing modern state that, in turn, requires the cultural justification of nationalism. In other words, for Breuilly (1982: 2, 55–64, 398–401), the ideology of nationalism is exclusively a modern, political vehicle in support of the state's requirement of allegiance.

For all of these analyses, the intellectuals' political ideology of nationalism creates the modern national state (Delanty and O'Mahony 2002: 7, 18, 30, 87). There is nothing artificial or conspiratorial in the existence of this ideology, as is implied by the category "false consciousness" of the Frankfurt School; for, according to these analyses, modern life – the centralizing bureaucratic state, democracy, forms of communication, industrial capitalism – requires beliefs that distinguish one group of human beings, organized as a national state, from another. Even for Eric Hobsbawm (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983, Hobsbawm 1990), with his emphasis on the "invention of tradition", that invention is necessary as a political requirement for the modern national state, or at least it was necessary as, so Hobsbawm (1990: 181–3) wrongly claimed, national states are being pushed aside in favour of new, supranational, political structures.

While more should be said about these analyses, it will suffice for our purposes to observe that they all view nationality as exclusively modern and as a predominately political phenomenon, that is, the modern ideology of nationalism creates nations. None of them draws a clear distinction between, on the one hand, the nation as an always historically developing, complex and highly differentiated collectivity and, on the other, the often competing views – various nationalisms – about what the nation has been, is, and should be. There have always been competing views within any nation about that nation, as John Hutchinson (2005) recognized. These analyses have no place for what factually has always been the case: the existence of these competing views, often borne by respectively competing political allegiances and parties; and the differentiated, even fragmented character (for example, regional differences) of any nation. They all labour under the burden of the tradition of Tönnies' contrast between the putatively homogeneous, pre-modern *Gemeinschaft* and the putatively homogeneous, modern *Gesellschaft* in their view of nationality as primarily or even exclusively a temporally flat and constitutively seamless vehicle for either the formation of modern culture or as a political means to justify the modern state.

An alternative approach

There should be no doubt that there is a degree of merit in the arguments of the above-mentioned analyses. Surely, modern means of communication and state-supervised public education have contributed significantly to the formation of a common culture, as Anderson and

Gellner argued. It is also clear that the centuries-long process of the consolidation and expansion of the authority of the modern state has facilitated greatly the deference of its citizens such that a spatially extensive, political community exists. Nonetheless, it is noteworthy that various and sometimes intense expressions of regionalism persist, thereby complicating the view of the putatively homogeneous *Gesellschaft* with its state-created high culture. It is not clear how, if at all, this regionalism can be accounted for in these previously mentioned analyses. Moreover and importantly, the functionalism of these analyses, however analytically appealing, does not address a crucial question. Why should nationality, with its significance of a bounded territory and a form of kinship, have proved to be and continues to be so receptive to individuals? In other words, why are there not merely states, but *national* states? Thus, despite some merit to these analyses, one concludes from their inability to address satisfactorily the problems raised by these questions that their philosophical anthropology is inadequate for understanding modern society. Despite the coherence of, for example, Gellner's argument, his understanding of culture is too simplistic, as the ideas constitutive of culture are consequences of the mode of production. As such, his analysis displays an impoverished, restrictive conception of the mind, with little or no place for the relative independence of tradition, and a historicist infatuation with the putatively dramatic plasticity of human conduct. The questions central to our interest in nationality remain. Why does it matter to many human beings where they were born and the location in which they live? And why do they view those born and dwelling within what they understand to be their country as being in some way related such that those born and living elsewhere are not? Tönnies' original formulation of *Gesellschaft* and all the subsequent analyses that share its assumptions avoid these and similar problems. Obviously, one cannot in good conscience dismiss the attachments raised by these questions as being today merely residual or irrational, as Walker Connor (1993) observed.

To be sure, not all humans attribute significance to the relations of territorial kinship constitutive of nationality, not only today but also in antiquity: for example, Paul's assertions in Galatians 3:28 and Romans 10:12. It remains to be seen if recent supranational structures, for example, the European Union and its Court of Human Rights, and other developments that are described today under the rubric of "globalization" more pervasively and lastingly undermine relations of territorial kinship than in the past. Recall that the most significant alternative to territorially parochial societies – nations or otherwise – was the Roman Empire with its empire-wide citizenship, begun under the reign of Caracella (211–17 CE). In our attempt to understand what may or may not be distinctive about modern society, one should acknowledge that there have historically always been supranational structures and developments, for example, respectively, empires and the world religions, for how individuals organize and understand themselves. This is factually obvious, or should be if, once again, political and social theorists paid more attention to the history of the past in their analysis of human conduct. Thus, the theoretical schema of a sharp, historical contrast between *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* is exposed to two important criticisms: one of philosophical anthropology, the second historical. And the problem of how to understand nationality is at the axis of both.

After all, honesty to the historical record forces recognition of further complications to the theoretical framework of those analyses that share Tönnies' assumptions, and its derivative categories, for example, that of "modernity".[3] Take, for example, language. One finds clearly in the biblical Genesis the following classificatory schema, "These are the descendants of Japheth by their lands – each with its language – their clans (or families) and their nations" (Genesis 10:5; see also 10:20, 31–2).[4] There are numerous, similar conflations of language, territory and its inhabitants throughout history, for example, medieval Poland (Grosby 2005: 70). The origin of this kind of classification – what writers like Anderson, Gellner, Breuilly and Hobsbawm would

call the politicization of language – is by no means modern as John Armstrong (1982) noted; it required neither "print capitalism" nor the modern state, even though, as already observed, modern means of communication and a modern state bureaucracy, so intrusive in all spheres of life, have clearly been factors in the stabilization and politicization of language.

The modern state was also not necessary for the sharp cultural demarcation between one group and another. To take only one among a plethora of examples, Shi'ism has been the national religion of Iran since the beginning of the Safavid period (1502 CE), earlier as a Persian vehicle of opposition to Sunni Arabs ruling from Syria, then as emblematic of the re-emergence of Persian collective self-consciousness in contrast to the Sunni Ottoman Empire. Even if one were to follow the logic of Breuilly and Hobsbawm by accepting the seductively simplistic explanation for the Safavid embrace of Shi'ism as merely an opportunistic exploitation of religious differences in the service of consolidating state power, one would still have to account for the gradual adoption of Shi'ism since the ninth century and the re-awakening of attachments to the image of Persia, for example, as conveyed in Ferdowsi's *Shahnameh*, as distinct within the otherwise universalistic Islamic *ummah*. Both that earlier adoption and that re-awakening were prerequisites for the success of the Safavid policy; for it is likely impossible for a state-directed initiative to gain acceptance if there were not already existing attachments to which an appeal, however opportunistic and transformative, can be made.

These latter observations open up a properly more complicated and accurate understanding of the temporally deep, symbolic cross-currents in the formation of any nation, as found in John Armstrong's *Nations and Nationalism* with its rich discussion of territorial identity, religion and myth; Adrian Hastings' *The Construction of Nationhood* (1997: 1–65) with its examination of the influence of the Old Testament on the development of England as a nation; and especially the arguments of Anthony Smith's *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (1986), *The Nation in History* (2000) and *Ethno-symbolism and Nationalism* (2009) that productively re-oriented the study of nationality through their emphasis on the symbolic bearers of memory and ethnicity. All of these and other works, for example, Aviel Roshwald's *The Endurance of Nationalism* (2006), Caspar Hirschi's *The Origins of Nationalism* (2012) and Azar Gat's *Nations: The Long History and Deep Roots of Political Ethnicity and Nationalism* (2013), have rightly brought into the foreground the place of tradition – of the past in the present while not ignoring the present in the understanding of the past (that is, the critical reception or even manipulation of tradition) – in the formation of nationality. In doing so, they have reminded social and political theorists that to avoid tradition, however knotty a problem, is a grave mistake.

The complications briefly alluded to above are good reasons to put aside aspects of Tönnies' contrast between *Wesenwille*-dominated, pre-modern community and *Kürwille*-dominated, modern society as being heuristically unproductive. The merit of the analytical contrast between two types of action remains, although requiring both differentiation and recognition that these two forms of action co-exist, influencing one another in a variety of ways. What is to be rejected is the unequivocal historical distinction between pre-modern and modern, as one finds in Heidegger's (1977 [1938]) factually unsupported "The Age of the World Picture", for there is abundant evidence in antiquity for carefully delineated territorial boundaries, albeit without the geographical precision of degrees of latitude and longitude (Grosby 2020). This rejection is not to deny that in one historical period in contrast to another, one type of action is more prevalent than another; but to note such an ascendancy must be only the beginning of an analysis, not a conclusion that forecloses engagement with factually obvious complications: for example, today, restrictions on immigration that compromise the *gesellschaftliche* market of free labour. To proceed otherwise results in a misevaluation of both past societies, for example, Routledge's (2003) criticisms of Gellner's distinction between low and high culture viz. ancient Egypt, and modern

societies, hence the often found theoretical confusion over the character of nationality. When one puts aside the putative, historical disjunction between pre-modern and modern, a number of problems of theoretical significance emerge.

Given the diverse complexity of factors and temporally deep processes in the constitution of any nation, it is heuristically appropriate to have a relatively expansive *definition of the nation as an extensive, yet bounded community of territorial descent*. Obviously, much is implied in this definition that requires elucidation, some of which will be addressed below. Furthermore, there are methodological problems concerning the formation of categories that I note but will not take up here. What is relevant here is how various theorists of nationality avoid this complexity; for example, the largely unavoidable – except during those necessarily brief periods of patriotic outburst – distinction between centre and periphery, and the tensions within the centre between what we designate as "politics" and "religion" so manifest since the development of the universal, world religions that challenge the attachments to the nation. Here, too, an examination of Gellner's analysis will prove useful as an example of such an avoidance.

One observes a conceptual sleight of hand in Gellner's understanding of nationality, evidently motivated to exclude the multitude of historical facts that would undermine his analysis that the modern ideology of nationalism creates the homogeneous high culture that pervades an entire population (1983: 55). Gellner makes clear that he is concerned with "genuine" cultures and "genuine" nations. However, one wonders what would be a "counterfeit" or "pseudo" culture and nation. The use of this adjective reveals that Gellner's analysis does not rest upon the examination of facts of an always complicated reality; rather, he has a theoretical schema which, because of his fidelity to it, must run roughshod over those facts. There is no such thing in reality as a "genuine nation". In contrast, the definition of nationality offered above is predicated upon the recognition of the historical facts of the complex character of nations. It, thus, allows one to group together, for especially comparative purposes, such otherwise diverse societies as ancient Israel, Persia/Iran of the sixteenth century, Canada with its pronounced regionalism and linguistically diverse India. While the sample of these societies displays a marked heterogeneity among them and within each of them, all are nonetheless different from empire or city-kingdom. However tension-ridden, the culture of these societies revolves around the significance of a relatively extensive, yet bounded territory believed to be unique to its respective people.

These observations lead to the following problem. How are the attachments to the nation to be understood? The problem can be reformulated. How is the relation between individuals, as members of the nation, to be accounted for? Obviously, we are dealing with a form of recognition, of the conception of the self – self-consciousness – that is unevenly shared in various ways among a bounded group of individuals – collective self-consciousness – such that a *Gemeinschaft* exists. There may be, indeed always are, numerous factors, actually tension-ridden historical processes, constitutive of this recognized, only relatively stable, demarcating boundary, for example, common language, common religion, or belief in a common ancestry; but for a nation to exist, for the category of nationality to have heuristic specificity, recognition of a relatively extensive, yet bounded territory which, as such, unites those individuals' self-conceptions to one another, must be ascendant, or at least have the potential to become so.

Drawing attention to this unevenly shared collective self-consciousness poses a complication for the principle of methodological individualism because it is predicated upon recognition of a shared property in the image of the individual that has a bearing on action. More precisely, it is not merely the existence of that shared property, for example, speaking a common language or having been born in the same land, but the individual's evaluation – the attribution of significance – of that property such that a classification is made, distinguishing one individual and one group from another individual and group. Thus, the individual should not be taken for

granted; the individual is not the only datum in an analysis of human relation and action. Rather, our attention is directed to the various, changing and even discordant relations that contribute over time to the formation of the self-image of the individual which, as such, have a bearing on the individual's conduct.

To be sure, deliberation and action remain individually centred in that evaluation which the individual makes of the traditions of numerous social relations, ranging from the family to the market, religious association and nation. Nonetheless, various kinds of groups are recognized, membership in which conveys preferences and obligations, thereby influencing the individual's decisions and conduct. These observations are merely to acknowledge what is often taken for granted: the wide use of "we", one example of which is a nation (with its preference for familiarity and the fellow national, and the patriotic obligation to defend it). Thus, while the principle of methodological individualism retains its validity, it must be qualified so that these facts of human existence are accounted for (Grosby 2015). Doing so remains a task of social and political philosophy.

It will not suffice to account for our use of "we" as either the result of the individual's pursuit of a perceived advantage or a ubiquitous tendency to social life, even though both are operative. As to the former, it is precisely the self-sacrifice elicited by "existential" collectivities like the family and nation that arouse our theoretical curiosity; as to the latter, it is analytically unproductive to bring together the intense, integrative attachments characteristic of a family, village or nation with those of a religious sect or a friendship. The former, as noted above, raises a complication for the principle of methodological individualism; the latter forces the theorist to distinguish the various attachments that individuals form with one another by differentiating the incommensurable objects of those attachments. This leads us to another task facing social and political philosophy.

One of those incommensurable objects of significance is vitality; this is what was implied by the phrase "existential collectivities", that is, kinship. Now, it used to be assumed and is still widely assumed that there is a categorially pure, developmentally and historically, form of kinship that is narrowly gentilic, that is, kinship understood as a relation of descent based on the perceived "tie of blood". It is this form of kinship that one means when one uses the term "family", irrespective of whether the relation is traced matrilineally or patrilineally. This assumption should be put aside, because the anthropological and historical evidence indicates that kinship is constituted around the recognition of not only familial descent but also through the image of a shared territory, specifically, descent in − being "native to" − that territory, the geographical scope of which has varied from local village to tribe, city-state, nation and empire (Grosby 2018). There are, thus, two lines of descent, neither one precluding the other. They are often intermingled. Another task for social and political philosophy is to clarify "territorial kinship" that has been obscured by the contrast between *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* (and status and contract) but which is key to nationality.

Conclusion

There are several paradoxes of human existence that are clearly manifested in nationality. The nation is a structure of collective self-consciousness, and yet it has no mind of its own. This first paradox is a reformulation of a long-standing problem: the clarification of what is meant by "culture". This problem remains in need of further analysis; and it has been brought into sharper focus by the work of the last forty years on nationality. One expression of this problem is the need to qualify carefully the principle of methodological individualism.

The nation necessarily contains meaningful references to the past, and yet is constituted in the present. Here, social and political philosophy face the problem of temporal depth in the

formation of collectivities and, in fact, human consciousness. It is, more generally formulated, the problem of tradition and the reception of tradition.

The nation is a structure of kinship constituted by the significance attributed to the location of one's birth (a territorial collectivity of nativity); and yet, especially insofar as it becomes a national state, it is a bearer of the rationalization of custom and law. Here again, social and political philosophy face the problem of clarifying our understanding of kinship. Moreover, these concluding remarks bring into focus the necessity to distinguish analytically nation from the Manichean-like ideology of nationalism, and nation from state.[5] The way forward for social and political philosophy to clarify productively these problems, thereby achieving a more accurate understanding of human action and nationality, requires that the limitations of the distinction between *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* be recognized.

Notes

1. For the reduction of knowledge to information, see Stigler (1961). For the influence of rational choice on the study of nationality, see Smith (1998: 63–9).
2. Following Shils 1975 [1957], I (Grosby 1995, 1996, 2001) designate these cognitive referents of the significance of nativity as "primordial".
3. One gets a sense of these complications by S.N. Eisenstadt's (2003: 493–571) recourse to "multiple modernities" (or is it an avoidance of the complications?).
4. The translation of the ancient Hebrew *goy* as nation has long been defended by biblical scholars (see Grosby 2002b).
5. The distinction already insisted upon in 1791 by Humboldt (1993 [1852]: 137, 35).

References

Anderson, Benedict. (1983) *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*, London: Verso.

Armstrong, John. (1982) *Nations Before Nationalism*, Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina.

Breuilly, John. (1982) *Nationalism and the State*, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Conner, Walker. (1993) 'Beyond Reason: The Nature of the Ethnonational Bond', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *16*(*3*) 373–89.

Delanty, Gerard and O'Mahony, Patrick. (2002) *Nationalism and Social Theory: Modernity and the Recalcitrance of the Nation*, London: Sage.

Eisenstadt, S.N. (2003) *Comparative Civilizations and Multiple Modernities*, Leiden: Brill.

Gellner, Ernest. (1983) *Nations and Nationalism*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Grosby, Steven. (1995) 'Territoriality: The Transcendental, Primordial Feature of Modern Societies', *Nations and Nationalism*, *1*(*2*) 143–62.

———. (1996) 'The Category of the Primordial in the Study of Early Christianity and Second Century Judaism', *History of Religions*, *18*(*2*) 211–26.

———. (2001) 'Primordiality', in A. Leoussi (ed.) *Encyclopaedia of Nationalism*, New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction.

———. (2002a) 'Pluralism in the Thought of Oakeshott, Shils and Weber', *Journal of Classical Sociology*, *2*(*1*) 43–58.

———. (2002b) *Biblical Ideas of Nationality: Ancient and Modern*, Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns.

———. (2005) *Nationalism: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

———. (2015) 'Methodological Individualism and Invisible Hands', in Robert Garnett, Paul Lewis, and Lenore Ealy (eds.) *Commerce and Community: Ecologies of Social Cooperation*, London: Routledge.

———. (2018) 'Time, Kinship, and the Nation', *Genealogy*, (*2*) 1–18.

———. (2020) 'Borders and States', in Daniel Snell (ed.) *A Companion to the Ancient Near East*, 2nd edn, Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons.

Hastings, Adrian. (1997) *The Construction of Nationhood*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Heidegger, Martin. (1977 [1938]) 'The Age of the World Picture', in *The Question Concerning Technology and Book Essays*, New York: Harper & Row.

Hobsbawm, Eric. (1990) *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hobsbawm, Eric and Ranger, Terrence (eds). (1983) *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Humboldt, Alexander von. (1993 [1852]) *The Limits of State Action*, Indianapolis: Liberty Fund.

Hutchinson, John. (2005) *Nations as Zones of Conflict*, London: Sage.

Routledge, Bruce. (2003) 'The Antiquity of the Nation: Critical Reflections from the Ancient Near East', *Nations and Nationalism*, *9*(*2*) 212–32.

Schmalenbach, Herman. (1977 [1922]) 'Communion: A Sociological Category', in Günter Lüschen and Gregory P. Stone (eds.) *Herman Schmalenbach on Society and Experience*, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Shils, Edward. (1975 [1957]) 'Primordial, Personal, Sacred and Civil Ties', *British Journal of Sociology*, 7 13–45.

Smith, Anthony D. (1998) *Nationalism and Modernism*, London: Routledge.

Stigler, George. (1961) 'The Economics of Information', *Journal of Political Economy*, *63*(*3*) 213–25.

Tőnnies, Ferdinand. (1940 [1887]) *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft*, New York: American Books.

———. (1971 [1926]) 'The Individual and the World in the Modern Age', in Werner J. Cahnman and Rudolf Heberle (eds.) *Ferdinand Tőnnies on Sociology: Pure, Applied and Empirical*, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Veenhof, Klaas. (1997) 'Modern Features in Old Assyrian Trade', *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, *40*(*4*) 336–66.

26

Empire and imperialism

Krishan Kumar

The world has seen many empires – indeed the recorded history of the world can fairly be said to be a history of empires. But imperialism, as an ideology and calculated policy, is relatively recent, not much earlier than the mid-nineteenth century. The relation between empire and imperialism must therefore be one principal strand of our inquiry. The other must be to trace the career of the concept of imperialism, as it worked its way out in the world of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Have we reached the "end of empire", or are we witnessing novel forms, imperial in character if not in name?

Empire has had two main meanings over the centuries (Koebner 1961; Koebner and Schmidt 1964). Deriving – in the West at least – from the Latin *imperium*, it has first meant absolute rule or authority, beyond which there is no appeal. The term was originally applied to Roman magistrates and commanders in the field. Later it was applied to the authority of the emperor, the *imperator* (itself too originally a military term). A famous example in English history of this meaning of empire is the declaration of Henry VIII's Act in Restraint of Appeals (1533) that "this realm of England is an empire, entire of itself" – in other words, that the English ruler was sovereign in his own land, and that no appeal beyond his rule, as for instance to the Papacy, was possible.

This old and original meaning of empire, as sovereign authority, has continued into our own times, though often in more metaphorical terms – e.g. "the empire of nature", "the empire of modernity". But already in Roman times it was accompanied by an additional meaning: as rule over an extensive territory containing many and diverse peoples. Of such a character was the *imperium Romanum*, the Roman Empire – for most Europeans the defining instance of empire, and the one they most aspired to imitate. It is this meaning of empire that has gradually, in both popular and scholarly use, come to overlay and to some extent displace the earlier uses. When we speak of the Habsburg Empire, the Ottoman Empire, the Russian, British, and French Empires, it is generally this meaning that we have in mind. Emperors remain more or less absolute of course – though there have been republican empires, such as those of Venice or the French Third Republic, and Rome acquired most of its empire while it was still a republic – but what is more important is their command over vast territories, often overseas, in which there are peoples many of whom differ in race and culture from the ruling peoples.

This situation then throws up the leading concerns of empires: their need to protect their far-flung frontiers, and their relation to other empires; the relation between centre and periphery, "metropole" and "colony", in the empire; the challenge of ethnicity and nationalism; the question of citizenship and assimilation (Doyle 1986). For many of these questions, Rome remained a continuing point of reference through the centuries. The fact of its decline and fall – at least in the West – also suggested that ultimately empires were doomed, however long they might last. A certain melancholy has nearly always accompanied speculation on empire, seen often as an expression of human vanity and pride, a hopeless striving for lasting greatness (Maier 2006).

One last point by way of introduction. Empires have always striven to be universal. In principle, there is, or should be, only one empire in the world (Münkler 2007). The existence of other empires is acknowledged in practice, but the aspiration is to be the only empire, the one that informs the world with its values. Empires usually see themselves as the carriers of certain "missions" which are meant to incorporate the whole of humanity. Frequently these missions have been seen in religious terms, as with the Christian and Islamic Empires. But, taking their cue again from Rome, the imperial mission can also be seen in a more secular guise, as a mission to "civilize", the *mission civilisatrice*, as the French expressed it in the nineteenth century (Baumgart 1982). In recent times most empires have seen themselves in some such terms – whether, as with the Soviet Union, to spread the system of communism around the world or, as with the Americans, to "make the world safe for democracy". But religious imperialism has not entirely disappeared. The recent resurgence of Islam has revived the old aspiration of the Caliphate to carry Islam – by force if necessary – to all the corners of the globe.

The universal striving of empires is responsible for the concept of the *translatio imperii*, the transfer or passing on of empire. Empires can see themselves as existing within a chain of transmission that keeps the imperial purpose or mission alive, whatever the fate of particular empires as the carriers of the mission. Thus when the Roman Empire in the West collapsed, the Catholic Church continued its mission, eventually embodying it in the form of the Holy Roman Empire. Later the Spanish Empire took on the mission of Christianizing the world. Other empires have at various times also seen themselves as the continuations of an imperial purpose that may be said to have been most decisively initiated – in both East and West – by the empire of Alexander the Great in the fourth century BCE. In a real sense, all empires strive to be Alexandrian, to cover the world in a cosmopolitan culture that would allow everyone to move freely across the face of the earth as part of a single *ecumene* (Kumar 2018).

Land and sea empires

The accomplishments of the Roman Empire, its spreading of a unitary civilization that stretched from Hadrian's Wall in the north of Britain to the Euphrates in the east, and from north Africa to the Rhine and Danube in the north, made it seem for centuries that the only acceptable form of rule, the only one to aspire to, was empire. After the fall of Rome in the West, a succession of empires struggled to recreate the unitary civilization it had brought into being. Chief of these was the Holy Roman Empire, which maintained an existence until 1806, though with severely restricted power in its last centuries (Wilson 2016). For much of its history, the Holy Roman Empire was headed by the Habsburg dynasty which, first in Spain, then in Austria, drew together an astonishing range of European regions, East and West. This enterprise was also long-lasting, ending only with defeat in the First World War. In the case of the Spanish Habsburgs, the European land empire was accompanied by a vast overseas empire, incorporating much of the Americas. The Portuguese too constructed an extensive overseas empire, linking Europe decisively to Africa, India, China, and south-east Asia (Pagden 1995; Aldrich 2007).

The key to real power would turn in the end on overseas empires (Osterhammel 2005). This was shown by the Dutch, French, and British. Latecomers to the field of empire, they rapidly made up for lost time. The Dutch faltered in the eighteenth century, but the French and British went on to conquer large tracts of the world. At its height in the early twentieth century, the British Empire occupied a quarter of the earth's land surface and included a quarter of the world's population – the largest empire the world has ever known. The French, though thwarted by the British in India and North America, established themselves strongly in North Africa and south-east Asia. By comparison with the British and French, the Portuguese and Spanish lost out, though they managed to hang on to their empires until the nineteenth century and, in the case of Portuguese Africa, even later.

The overseas empires of the Europeans were the first standard-bearers of real globalization. With the exception of Alexander's empire, none of the ancient empires had extended much beyond their heartlands. Even Rome remained basically a Mediterranean empire. With the Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch, French, British, and Belgian Empires, European religion, ideas, and institutions began that global diffusion that has never been halted (and which was continued by that European off-shoot, America). Not of course that the traffic was all one way. Europe too was decisively influenced by the flow of goods and ideas that came from all parts of the world, not excepting religion. But the dynamic force was undoubtedly European. The Chinese had created a strong land empire, and in the late Middle Ages embarked on great sea-going voyages that could have led to an overseas empire. But for reasons still not properly understood, early in the fifteenth century the Chinese destroyed their large fleets and abandoned overseas ventures. The field was left to the Europeans, an advantage which they eagerly seized.

But though in territory and resources the overseas empires generally exceeded the land empires, the European land empires were powerful and extensive enough to dominate their surrounding regions and sometimes well beyond (Kumar 2017). The Russians from the seventeenth century onwards created a great continuous Eurasian empire, stretching from the Baltic all the way across Asia to the Pacific. The Habsburg Empire at various times included territories in a swath of lands from the Low Countries of northern Europe to the Balkans in the south-east and Poland in the East. Equally dominant in its region, and for several centuries posing a special threat to the other empires, was the Ottoman Empire. The other European empires were Christian, and in the early centuries saw the propagation and extension of Christianity – whether in Catholic, Protestant, or Orthodox forms – as their central mission. The Ottoman Empire was Muslim; and from the time of the conquest of Constantinople in 1453, the Ottomans – continuing the earlier effort of the Arab empires, especially in Spain – carried the Muslim religion right into the heart of Europe, on two occasions coming close to taking Vienna, the imperial capital of the Habsburgs. Ottoman power declined from the eighteenth century onwards; but the Empire lasted until, like the Habsburg and Russian Empires, it went down in the First World War. Throughout its existence the Ottoman Empire acted as both a challenge and a foil to the other European empires, a mirror in which Christian Europe could see both its strengths and its failings.

Though land and overseas empires shared several structural features, they differed significantly in the way and to the extent that these features were expressed. Most important was the relation between centre and periphery, metropole and colony. With the overseas empires, the distance and difference between metropole and colony were, for fairly obvious reasons, a palpable fact. In the French, British, Dutch, and other overseas empires, a "core ethnicity" made up of white Europeans ruled over many, mostly non-European, peoples of different colour, culture, and customs. Questions of citizenship, and of assimilation and integration, were hotly debated issues. The French tended towards an assimilationist strategy, the British preferred on

the whole to leave local cultures intact and to rule indirectly. But in both cases, as in that of the Dutch and Belgians, awareness of the differences between the ruling people and the vast mass of their subjects was keen throughout the history of their empires. The great physical distance between the metropole and its colonies was matched by a consciousness of racial and cultural differences, even when the physical distance came to be mitigated by developments in transport and communications.

Land empires did not have so strong a consciousness of the separation of core from periphery. Land empires, like overseas ones, grew by expansion from a metropolitan core. But the expansion was not to distant regions broken by oceans but generally to contiguous territories (though dynastic marriages, as famously with the Habsburgs, could join lands that were not necessarily neighbouring). The "core" and the "periphery" might merge insensibly into one another so that one would not be sure where the one ended and the other began. What was the "core" of the Austrian Habsburg Empire, and what the "periphery"? Vienna eventually became the imperial capital, to be sure, but at various times Prague had served as capital, and cities such as Budapest vied with Vienna and Prague for cultural and economic primacy. Eventually, in the *Ausgleich* ("Compromise") of 1867, Hungary actually achieved parity with Austria in what came to be called the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Moreover, although the German language was the official imperial language for much of the time, Germans themselves were not necessarily preferred at the Habsburg court. Poles, Italians, Bohemians, Hungarians, and Croatians could all achieve high office, in the army and bureaucracy.

The Russian and Ottoman Empires showed similar characteristics. Although Russians clearly predominated in the Empire, and Russian was the preferred language, conversion to Orthodoxy was normally all that was necessary to open the path to a career in the state. Baltic Germans for instance were disproportionately represented in the higher echelons of the army and bureaucracy. In the case of the Ottomans, it is difficult even to speak of a dominant ethnicity. It was certainly not the "Turks", generally looked down upon as Anatolian peasants. Conversion to Islam was sufficient to allow former Christians, such as Greeks and Serbs, to rise to the very top of the Ottoman hierarchy.

These differences between land and overseas empires have important consequences when empire is no more. For overseas empires, the break between the metropole and the colonies can be painful and difficult but may not leave a long-lasting legacy. Physical and cultural distance once more makes the separation easier to absorb. For land empires, where the populations are more mixed together and share much more in the imperial culture, the rupture can be more severe. For the metropole especially the loss of empire means also loss of identity since imperial rule was its mainstay. The British and the French may feel that they have faced great difficulties in coming to terms with the loss of empire, and one would not want to minimize the problems. But arguably they have managed better than the Russians and Austrians; while in the case of the Ottomans, the break-up of empire involved an orgy of violence and the forcible separation of peoples whose consequences are still with us today.

Imperialism and nationalism

In the nineteenth century, all European empires came under the pressure of nationalism. The multiethnic, multinational, character of empires offended against the nationalist principle that states should be based on nations, that ideally there should be one state, one nation.

Empires responded differently to the challenge. For the land empires, with populations of different nationalities living in close proximity, it was an especially difficult problem. The Habsburgs attempted to stamp out nationalism, notably during the 1848 revolutions. Eventually,

however they had to concede to a limited extent, in agreeing to share power with the Hungarians, though simultaneously denying the national aspirations of Czechs and other Slavic nations. Russia too reacted sternly to the nationalist challenge, especially among its Poles; but it also went in for a certain amount of "Russification", to assuage its own nationalist movement. The Ottomans tried to head off nationalism by re-articulating and re-emphasizing "Ottomanism", an imperial strategy that proclaimed the near-equality of all its subjects, of whatever religious persuasion. It was the failure of Ottomanism, especially in the face of Balkan nationalism, that encouraged the growth of Turkish nationalism, which became one of the forces that led to the downfall of the Ottoman Empire.

For the overseas empires of the British, French, and Dutch, nationalism was a more containable threat. Limited concessions could be made to nationalists, allowing for a certain amount of power-sharing at lower levels, as the British did in India. But, with the backing of home populations, military force was generally sufficient to ensure that nationalism did not seriously threaten the integrity of the empire. It took defeat by another empire, the Japanese, in the Second World War, to weaken and discredit the British, French, and Dutch sufficiently to allow nationalists the opportunity to challenge European rule.

This fact can be generalized and applied to the relation of nationalism and imperialism in all the empires. It was not usually nationalism that brought down empires; it was other empires (Kumar 2010, 2020). The Habsburg, Ottoman, and Romanov Empires collapsed in the First World War because of their defeat by the imperial powers of France, Britain, and, in the early stages of the war, Germany (until the German Empire too succumbed to defeat by the Western imperial powers). The British, French, and Dutch Empires came to an end following their humiliation by the imperial power of Japan in the Second World War (and later the Japanese Empire in its turn was put down by the imperial power of the United States). Nationalism creates problems for empires, and concessions of some kind generally have to be made. But by itself nationalism is not generally a sufficient force to bring down empires. Only the countervailing force of other empires can do this.

The legitimacy of nationalism in recent times – enshrined in President Woodrow Wilson's enunciation of the doctrine of "self-determination" at the 1918 peace settlement, and re-affirmed in the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 – served to hide the persistence of empires well into the twentieth century. Nation-states lived in the shadow of empire for much of this time. The leading powers of the twentieth century were imperial – Britain, France, America, the Soviet Union, Japan, China. Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany constructed short-lived empires. Even after the European overseas empires were wound up in the 1950s and 1960s, the imperial powers of the United States and the Soviet Union continued their rivalry on a world stage, dominating and manipulating supposedly independent nation-states. Only with the collapse of the Soviet Union – the "last empire"? – in 1991 can imperialism really be said to have reached a certain terminus; though that still leaves America, and other possible contenders for imperial rule, including China.

There are other ways in which nationalism and imperialism did not so much oppose each other as live off each other, symbiotically. In the later nineteenth century, European states engaged in a ferocious competition for imperial possessions, the "scramble for Africa" being the best-known. The term "imperialism" came into vogue at this time precisely to describe this phenomenon (Lichtheim 1974; Hobsbawm 1987; Semmel 1993). Previously pejorative, to describe the despotic systems of Napoleon I and III, in the hands of statesmen such as Benjamin Disraeli imperialism came to mean a definite policy of acquiring and expanding empire. Far from being something to fear, imperialism was now embraced as the duty and destiny of every great power, on pain of being relegated to subordinate and dependent roles (Bell 2007).

Given the context of competitiveness, and the growing popularity of the national principle, it proved possible to present imperialism as a species of nationalism, as a kind of super-nationalism, a "great power nationalism". In France and Germany especially, in the face of British dominance, imperialism was harnessed powerfully to nationalism, as the assertion of a rightful claim to an influential place in the world, based on national strength. In America, in the course of the Spanish-American war of 1898, vital national interests were trumpeted as the ground for acquiring Spanish territories (Go 2007). Every nation, it was asserted, had the right to empire, if it could prove its claim by its success in the competitive struggle. Imperialism was thus carried by the national principle, which in turn reacted back on it, intensifying the rivalry between states for possession of greater and greater portions of the globe.

Imperialism and its critics

What to its proponents could pass as legitimate nationalism, could, to the critics of imperialism, appear as hyper-nationalism, a dangerously inflated or hypertrophied form of nationalism (Mommsen 1982). Such was the charge of the English Liberal writer J. A. Hobson, whose book *Imperialism* (1902) became the inspiration of a powerful current of anti-imperial thought in the first half of the twentieth century. Hobson provided the analysis of imperialism that became the mainstay of most accounts of imperialism on the left. Imperialism, he argued, was the more or less inevitable product of "underconsumption" – a lack of purchasing power due to the poor living standards of the working class in the industrialized societies. This had led the capitalists to search out the undeveloped areas of the world for the investment of their "surplus capital", the capital that could not find profitable investments at home. In theory, that search did not require direct political rule over such areas – and indeed there developed a type of "informal imperialism", practised especially by the British in such areas as Latin America, in which powerful capitalist interests controlled the development of states without taking over formal power. In practice, however, the machinations of rivals together with conflicts between native groups often meant forcible intervention and the assumption of formal sovereignty over particular territories. In any case though it was economic motives, specifically the needs of the capitalist class, that were the driving force of modern imperialism – replacing the aristocratic passion for power and glory that had been the mainspring of traditional empire.

Hobson's theory of imperialism achieved international fame when it was taken up by Lenin in his *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism* (1917). From then on it had more or less canonical status on the left (Wolfe 1997). In addition, Lenin drew on Rudolf Hilferding's *Finance Capitalism* (1910) for the additional point that imperialism was not simply, as Hobson thought, an off-shoot of capitalism, and hence remediable by reform, but an intrinsic part of capitalism's development. This was bound, Hilferding thought, to lead to war between the imperial powers, and so to the collapse of capitalism. Lenin found the confirmation of the first part of Hilferding's prediction in the First World War but not, alas, that of the second part, the collapse of capitalism, despite the success of the Bolshevik Revolution. Also disappointed were the hopes of Rosa Luxemburg, whose powerful work *The Accumulation of Capital* (1913) followed Hobson closely in its analysis of imperialism but, unlike him, thought remedial measures would be hopeless and that an imperialist war between capitalists would offer the proletariat the best chance to overthrow the system.

There have always been liberal theories and approaches to empire, working especially in the tradition established by such thinkers as Alexis de Tocqueville and John Stuart Mill. The mainstay of this approach was the idea that certain nations, in the "van of history", had the right and duty to educate other nations in the arts of civilization, as parents educate their children. But the

analogy always carried the proviso that the right to rule others was dependent on bringing them up to the point where they would be left free to develop as independent nations. Liberal theories of empire, in other words, had decolonization and emancipation built into their very essence (Mehta 1999; Pitts 2005; Bell 2019). Such theories have found their echoes in contemporary times in such notions as Western interventions – seen as imperialistic by others – are for making the world "safe for democracy", or for spreading liberal constitutionalism around the world. Once more a certain disinterestedness, in the service of others, not self-interest, is seen as the spur to what might appear a Western *imperium* (see, e.g. Ferguson 2005).

But it is a curious fact that, ever since imperialism's appearance on the scene in the late nineteenth century, it has been dominated by critical approaches, most of which have been Marxist in one form or another (Kemp 1967; Hetherington 1982). There were one or two exceptions. The Austrian economist and sociologist Joseph Schumpeter published a characteristically provocative essay, "The Sociology of Imperialisms" ([1919] 1974), in which he argued that contemporary imperialism was a rearguard action on the part of a still-persisting and powerful warrior aristocracy, and was driven by its traditional concerns of glory and honour. Imperialism was hence an atavism, and would disappear once the bourgeoisie secured full control of society. This was an ironic comment on Hobson's view that it was the bourgeoisie that was responsible for imperialism. But it shared Hobson's conviction that imperialism was not intrinsic to capitalism – that it was an aberration, brought about, as Hobson saw it, largely through the influence of a particular group of capitalists, the bankers, and financiers.

Later in the century, as Mussolini attempted to establish his new Roman Empire, and Hitler his new German Empire, there were fascist theorists – including Hitler and Mussolini themselves – who provided a rationale for empire. But most accounts were simply echoes of nineteenth-century "social Darwinism" and race theory, with their ideas of the necessary inequalities among humankind and the right of the stronger to rule the weaker. With the defeat of both the short-lived fascist empires, right-wing theories of empire were thoroughly discredited, leaving the field once more to critics of empire.

The Hobson–Lenin theory and critique provided the basis for most radical accounts of empire in the first half of the twentieth century (Kiernan 1974). It was vigorously debated by Western Marxists, and it became the credo of most Third World nationalists and communists, such as Mao Tse-tung. Little was added to the terms of the analysis; anti-imperialist theory mainly functioned as a call to action, in the form of what were increasingly called anti-colonial struggles. For the critics, colonialism rather than imperialism became the preferred term, perhaps reflecting the fact that with the fall of so many land empires at the end of the First World War, what remained to be dealt with were rather the overseas empires with their many distinct colonies.

The return of empire?

With the exception of a relatively brief period at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries, empire and imperialism have been largely on the defensive for the past hundred years or so. This is despite the continuing massive presence of empires on the world scene for much of the twentieth century. It is as if empire is the thing that "dare not speak its name". Empire was assailed from the left, as the brutal expression of class rule, and the means for "paying off" the industrial working class, thus making it complicit with the bourgeoisie in the exploitation of Third World societies. It was also attacked by liberals and democrats who saw it as denying the legitimate national aspirations of all peoples. It offended against the principle of self-rule proclaimed at the Peace of Versailles in 1918. The aptly-named League of Nations,

and its successor, the United Nations, both upheld this ideal of the independent nation-state as the bedrock of the international community. In such a world what room was there for empires? What could they be but archaic hangovers, desperately clinging on to power against the surging currents of the time?

In what to many people seemed a hypocritical flourish, it was the United States that often seemed to offer ideological support to the enemies of empire. The American War of Independence could fairly be represented as one of the first, if not the first, anti-colonial "liberation struggles" of modern times. During the Spanish-American War of 1898, opponents of the move to take over the Spanish colonies of Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines – and in the face of Rudyard Kipling's urging that America take over the role of Europe in shouldering the "White Man's Burden" – invoked America's anti-colonial past in support of their position, with considerable success. In the First World War, President Woodrow Wilson emerged as the champion of nationalism, especially the nationalism of small nations, and was mainly responsible for the setting up of independent nation-states in Central Europe and the Balkans. In the 1930s and 1940s, American statesmen often referred disparagingly to the British and French Empires – not to mention the Soviet Empire – as contrary to all principles of democracy and self-rule. Franklin Delano Roosevelt was particularly hostile to empire and did much to ensure that the British would wind up their empire as soon as possible after the defeat of Hitler. As late as the 1950s, America was offering support to liberation movements in Cuba, Africa, and elsewhere (though enthusiasm was later dampened when it turned out that many of the new states were of a distinctly socialist, if not actually communist, character). Later still when, in the wake of the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, America itself was accused of being an empire, the retort was often couched in the terms expressed by a former Secretary of Defense, that, with its own anti-colonial origins, "America doesn't do empire".

In the debate over whether or not America is or has been an empire, sceptics of the anticolonial argument have often pointed to America's own very imperial development in the nineteenth century (Hopkins 2018). Starting from a handful of colonies on the east coast, America expanded gigantically westwards, in the process not simply dispossessing the native American Indians wholesale but also seizing large tracts of territories from the Mexicans, especially in the 1840s. Moreover, America may not in the end have gone in much for overseas possessions – to that extent it kept faith with its anti-colonial past – but it has been highly effective in practising "informal colonialism" worldwide, through the operations of its foreign policies, its multinational corporations, and the strategic placing of American military bases in over a hundred countries. Whether or not America is an empire remains a moot point (Mann 2003; Steinmetz 2005; Maier 2006; Calhoun *et al.* 2006). But it hard not to say that it has often acted imperially, not least in recent years when it has occupied the role of "the lonely superpower", the one remaining superpower following the demise of the Soviet Union.

It was indeed around the concept of "informal" imperialism or colonialism that debates about empire revived in the second half of the twentieth century. With the rapid and massive decolonization of the European empires in the 1950s and 1960s, it might have seemed that there were no empires left to reflect on (the United States and the Soviet Union being special cases, both in fact formally anti-colonial). But to many observers of and in the Third World, empire seemed to be alive and well, even if not so-called. A powerful group of "dependency" theorists, many of them Latin America, such as Andre Gunder Frank (1967) and Fernando Henriques Cardoso (Cardoso and Faletto 1979), argued that the West had given up formal empire only to continue or retake it informally, through close control over the development – or "underdevelopment" – of formally free nation-states in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Colluding with local elites and setting up or supporting "puppet" regimes, Western capitalists were able to ensure that development took place

in accordance with their own interests, at the cost if necessary of the welfare and liberty of the local population, and the creation of an independent indigenous economy.

Dependency theory generally regarded itself as working within Marxist theories of imperialism. But in many ways, the most original formulation of their position was given not by Marxists but by two non-Marxist historians of the British Empire, John Gallagher and Ronald Robinson, in an influential article of 1953, "The Imperialism of Free Trade". They pointed out that the British had always been pragmatic about how far their interests were served by formal empire, and how far by less direct forms of influence and pressure. Informal "control" was always an alternative, often cheaper and more effective, to formal "rule". In Latin America informal methods sufficed; in Africa and many parts of Asia and the Middle East, the British were forced to intervene in local quarrels, often fuelled by European rivalries, and in many cases had to assume formal rule. One further consequence of this approach was to displace the usual concentration on the metropolis, the focus hitherto of Marxist and non-Marxist studies alike, and direct our attention to the colonial peripheries, as the source of many of the concerns that brought about European rule (Robinson *et al.* 1968; Louis 1976; Robinson 1986).

The approach of Gallagher and Robinson could be employed by dependency theorists, if they so wished, as it provided a clear path towards understanding the "imperialism of decolonization", or the continuation of Western imperialism by other means (Louis and Robinson 1994). If they preferred to work within a Marxist paradigm, this was largely because they wished to retain its critical edge and the eventual prospect of liberation. Other more academic scholars however were stimulated by the work of Gallagher and Robinson to open up a rich vein of studies of empire in a more dispassionate way, and to launch what was in effect a veritable renaissance of interest in empire. Other influences in this direction included the work of the so-called "post-colonial theorists", such as Edward Said (1979, 1993), and behind them the seminal writings of the French-Martinican psychologist Franz Fanon, in such books as *The Wretched of the Earth* (1967). What interested Fanon and the post-colonialists were the emotional and psychological scars of colonialism, its lasting effect on the culture and personality of both the colonized and the colonizers. While some commentators were proclaiming that the age of imperialism was dead, to these thinkers imperialism had to be seen as having a long after-life, in the hearts and minds of individuals. In recent years, interest in the "legacy of empire" has grown and produced some impressive contributions (e.g. Buettner 2016).

Is imperialism in fact dead? The very debates over the "American empire", the idea that the European Union might also be thought of as a revived Holy Roman or Habsburg empire, are enough to suggest that this may be a premature judgement (Zielonka 2007). The revival of interest in empire has more than just academic fashion behind it. It must surely reflect the sense that empires have something to teach us, that they speak in some way to our current condition. The most obvious aspects of that condition are all that go under the heading of "globalization", together with the associated feeling that the contemporary nation-state is in crisis. There is also the challenge of multiculturalism, the realization that all modern states are made up of varying groups of people who have to find a mode of living with each other without retreating into their own separate communities. The popularity of works such as *Empire* by Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri (2000) lies not so much in the actual analysis of empire – in truth there is not much of that, as empire is simply for them a synonym for global capitalism – as in the invocation of a form that seems somehow congruent with our current hopes and anxieties.

The depiction by Hardt and Negri of a headless, de-centred global empire certainly looks very different from any previous empire. But the variety of imperial forms has been one of the features of imperial history, and it is not inconceivable that we are seeing the emergence of a new kind of global empire which will demand an analysis that departs radically from the

standard account in terms of metropole and colony, centre and periphery. Science fiction, rather more than academic theorizing, is currently playing imaginatively with some such theme, as in the *Matrix* trilogy of films (1999–2003), which builds upon the earlier tradition of imperial fiction established by Isaac Asimov in the *Foundation* trilogy (1942–1950). Given the importance of new kinds of information technology and communications in the current world order, it is hardly surprising that imaginative fiction has been the first to try to outline its contours. But what unites all accounts, fictional and other, that use the imperial theme today is the overriding sense that the old world of nation-states, with its claims of sovereignty and autonomy, has had its time. Overlapping and mixed sovereignties, regions, and protected enclaves, even perhaps some sort of world government, will be the order of the day. The future world order will not necessarily be very orderly, but it will look more like the imperial system of the sixteenth century than the national-state system of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Empires have been long-lived experiments in managing diversity. They have not all managed it equally well, and there have been episodes of cruelty and brutality (though perhaps no worse than in the case of nation-states). But there is a wealth of experience to be examined as we confront our own attempts to manage societies in which difference and diversity are central features. There is something also in the aspirations of empires to be universal, to encompass the whole *ecumene* in a single civilization. Again, we have had reason to be wary of these attempts. But we are now conscious as perhaps at no other time in human history of the need for the world to act together, as one. Nothing less than the survival of the planet, and all that lives on it, is at stake. If empires can teach us something about our common humanity, and of some of the ways to achieve our common goals, they will have immeasurably repaid our attention.

References

Aldrich, Robert (ed.). (2007). *The Age of Empires*. London: Thames & Hudson.

Baumgart, Winfried. (1982). *Imperialism: The Idea and Reality of British and French Colonial Expansion, 1880–1914*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Bell, Duncan. (2007). *The Idea of Greater Britain: Empire and the Future of World Order, 1860–1900*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Bell, Duncan. (2019) *Reordering the World: Essays on Liberalism and Empire*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Buettner, Elizabeth. (2016). *Europe after Empire: Decolonization, Society, and Culture*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Calhoun, Craig, Cooper, Frederick, and Moore, Kevin W. (eds.) (2006). *Lessons of Empire: Imperial Histories and American Power*. New York: The New Press.

Cardoso, F., and Faletto, E. (1979). *Dependency and Development in Latin America*, translated by M. M Urquidi. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Doyle, Michael W. (1986). *Empires*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Fanon, Franz. (1967). *The Wretched of the Earth*, translated by Constance Farrington. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.

Ferguson, Niall. (2005) *Colossus: The Rise and Fall of the American Empire*. New York: Penguin books.

Frank, Andre Gunder. (1967). *Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America*. New York: Monthly Review Press.

Gallagher, John, and Robinson, Ronald. (1953). "The Imperialism of Free Trade", *Economic History Review*, *6*(*1*): 1–15.

Go, Julian. (2007). "Global Fields and Imperial Forms: Field Theory and the British and American Empires", *Sociological Theory*, *26*(*3*): 201–229.

Hardt, Michael, and Negri, Antonio. (2000). *Empire*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Hetherington, Norman. (1982). "Reconsidering Theories of Imperialism", *History and Theory*, *21*(*1*): 1–36.

Hobsbawm, E. J. (1987). *The Age of Empire, 1875–1914*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson.

Hopkins, A. G. (2018) *American Empire: A Global History*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Kemp, Tom. (1967). *Theories of Imperialism*. London: Dobson.

Kiernan, V. G. (1974). *Marxism and Imperialism*. London: Edward Arnold.

Koebner, Richard. (1961). *Empire*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Koebner, Richard, and Schmidt, Helmut Dan. (1964). *Imperialism: The Story and Significance of a Political Word, 1840–1960*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kumar, Krishan. (2010). "Nation-states as Empires, Empires as Nation-states: Two Principles, One Practice?", *Theory and Society*, *39*: 119–143.

Kumar, Krishan. (2017). *Visions of Empire: How Five Imperial Regimes Shaped the World*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Kumar, Krishan. (2018). "Empire and Eurasia: In the Footsteps of Alexander", *Comparativ*, *28*(*4*): 28–48.

Kumar, Krishan. (2020). *Empires: A Historical and Political Sociology*. Cambridge: Polity.

Lichtheim, George. (1974). *Imperialism*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.

Louis, Wm. Roger (ed.). (1976). *Imperialism: The Robinson and Gallagher Controversy*. New York: New Viewpoints.

Louis, Wm. Roger, and Robinson, Ronald. (1994). "The Imperialism of Decolonization", *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, *22*(*3*): 462–511.

Maier, Charles S. (2006). *Among Empires: American Ascendancy and Its Predecessors*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Mann, Michael. (2003). *Incoherent Empire*. London: Verso.

Mehta, Uday Singh. (1999). *Liberalism and Empire: A Study in Nineteenth-Century British Liberal Thought*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Mommsen, Wolfgang J. (1982). *Theories of Imperialism*, translated by P. S. Falla. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Münkler, Herfried. (2007). *Empires: The Logic of World Domination from Ancient Rome to the United States*, translated by Patrick Camiller. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Osterhammel, Jürgen. (2005). *Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview*, translated by Shelley L. Frisch. Princeton, NJ: Markus Wiener Publishers.

Pagden, Anthony. (1995). *Lords of All the World: Ideologies of Empire in Spain, Britain and France c. 1500–c.1800*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Pitts, Jennifer. (2005). *A Turn to Empire: The Rise of Imperial Liberalism in Britain and France*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Robinson, Ronald. (1986). "The Eccentric Idea of Imperialism, with or without Empire", in Wolfgang J. Mommsen and Jürgen Osterhammel (eds.), *Imperialism and After: Continuities and Discontinuities*. London: Allen & Unwin, pp. 267–289.

Robinson, Ronald, Gallagher, John, with Denny, Alice. (1968). *Africa and the Victorians: The Climax of Imperialism*. New York: Anchor Books.

Said, Edward W. (1979). *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage Books.

Said, Edward W. (1993). *Culture and Imperialism*. London: Vintage.

Schumpeter, Joseph. (1974). *Imperialism and Social Classes: Two Essays by Joseph Schumpeter*, translated by Heinz Norden. New York: New American Library.

Semmel, Bernard. (1993). *The Liberal Ideal and the Demons of Empire: Theories of Imperialism from Adam Smith to Lenin*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Steinmetz, George. (2005). "Return to Empire: The New U.S. Imperialism in Comparative Historical Perspective", *Sociological Theory*, *23*(*4*): 339–367.

Wilson, Peter H. (2016). *Heart of Europe: A History of the Holy Roman Empire*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Wolfe, Patrick. (1997). "History and Imperialism: A Century of Theory, from Marx to Postcolonialism", *American Historical Review*, *102*(*2*): 388–420.

Zielonka, Jan. (2007). *Europe as Empire: The Nature of the Enlarged European Union*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Cosmopolitanism
Roots and diversities

David Inglis

Cosmopolitan matters now constitute central topics for research, debate, and controversy across the social sciences. Having begun as a sense of non-national affiliation – declaring oneself to be a 'citizen of the world' rather than of any specific polity – cosmopolitanism now encompasses a much wider range of issues, such as the nature of ethics, justice, social responsibility, and cultural affiliations, considered within conditions of complex globality (Singer 2002, Douzinas 2007).

We will examine the heterogeneous but inter-related literatures about cosmopolitanism in this chapter. As will become apparent, cosmopolitanism today connotes many things. The word simultaneously refers to a scholarly field, a set of research agendas, a series of substantive phenomena, moral and ethical norms, ideals and practices, and ways of thinking, both socially and politically, as well as in more purely academic terms of analysis and research procedures. Running through all these is a common theme: the limits of nation-states and national frames of reference, and the need to think and act beyond these, in ways that can grasp at multiple levels anti-, non-, post-, trans-, supra-, and beyond-national phenomena and processes (Beck and Sznaider 2006, Sassen 2006).

There is a widely shared view among otherwise diverse types of scholarship that cosmopolitanism today should be a field directed towards developing non-Western-centric, post-universalistic, multi- and inter-disciplinary inquiry (Fine and Boon 2007). There is also a marked tendency in writings on cosmopolitanism over the last few decades to make the concept less rigid and ethnocentric than hitherto, more open, flexible, supple, and multiple, especially as regards becoming more cognisant of forms of difference and plurality in the world (Robbins and Horta 2017). In other words, the overarching tendency over time has been to cosmopolitanise cosmopolitanism itself, in the direction of multiplying cosmopolitanisms into a plural, polyvocal register.

Identifying cosmopolitanism(s)

The intellectual field of cosmopolitanism has developed greatly over the last several decades, encompassing a plethora of writings on cosmopolitan thought and practice. These range from formal political and legal theories, to more empirically informed and grounded accounts of forms of 'lived cosmopolitanism'. There are now many synoptic accounts of the genealogy of

cosmopolitanism as a topic in the social sciences and humanities (e.g. Toulmin 1990, Robbins 1992, Heater 1996, Anderson 1998, Cheah and Robbins 1998, Scheffler 1999, Lu 2000, Mignolo 2000, Breckenridge 2002, Vertovec and Cohen 2002, Dallmayr 2003, Fine 2003b, 2007, Skrbis et al. 2004, Cheah 2006, Fine and Boon 2007, Ossewarde, 2007, Delanty 2009, Holton 2009, Brown and Held, 2010, Delanty and Inglis 2010, Robbins and Horta 2017, de Wilde 2019, Gupta 2019, Nussbaum 2019).

Cosmopolitanism is a term that was originally strongly associated with Greco-Roman antiquity and the subsequent European intellectual tradition(s). A narration of cosmopolitanism's roots in that regard could identify the beginnings in the philosophical schools of Cynicism and Stoicism (Nussbaum 1997); examine the Roman adaptation of these ideas (Pollock 2002); then jump to the 18th century, where the name of Kant is above all invoked as the greatest of all Enlightenment philosophers of cosmopolitanism (Schlereth 1977, Habermas, 1997, Kleingeld 1999, Rosenfeld 2002); identify a decline in the 19th century of cosmopolitical concerns, as European thought succumbs to the siren-songs of nationalism (Meinecke 1970); identify a rejuvenation of cosmopolitical concerns after World War II, as political theorists and others identify post-war, putatively 'global' institutions like the United Nations as embodiments of Kantian concerns (Friedrich 1947); with the narrative ending with the remarkable flourishing and diversification of the cosmopolitan intellectual field in recent times (Delanty and Inglis 2010). We might call the Cynics/Stoics/Kant/post-Kantian lineage hereby identified as the standard narration of Western cosmopolitanism.

However, cosmopolitanism as a field of inquiry is today more diverse and open than that narration may suggest. There is much more to be said about cosmopolitanism's *histories* in the plural, acknowledging forms of thought which exist outside of the canonised lineage. There is a 'long, rich, and varied history' of cosmopolitical ideas from non-Western sources, drawn from across Eurasia and perhaps other parts of the planet too (Niezen 2004: 11). The Eurocentric bias of the standard narration is obvious, and has been challenged (Pieterse 2006, Benhabib 2008), with alternative locations and genealogies of cosmopolitical thought and action being suggested such as South America, North Africa, the Caribbean, the Middle East, and multiple locations across Asia (Zubaida 1999, Diouf 2000, Delanty 2014, Murphy 2015).

Being cosmopolitan and doing cosmopolitanism: an analytical sketch

Now we will look at some basic notions of what cosmopolitanism is and entails, as well as examining problems and dilemmas that go along with such notions. Reference will be made in parentheses to major authors who have dealt with specific issues and challenges.

A basic understanding of cosmopolitanism, reflecting the concept's ancient Greek etymology (Heater 1996) – from 'cosmos' (the entire universe) and 'polis' (a form of political organisation) - would encompass the following idea. A person is, or chooses to be, not (only) the citizen of a specific political entity, but (also) the citizen of the entire world. If such affiliation is by choice, it indicates avowedly non-parochial, and perhaps explicitly anti-parochial, orientations. Thus Diogenes, founding figure of the Cynic school, 'declared himself *a-polis* (without a city), *a-oikos* (homeless) and *kosmopolites* (a citizen of the universe)' (Goulet-Cazé 2000: 329). The Greek Stoics argued that government (*politeia*) should be coextensive with the whole inhabited world (*oikoumene*) or the whole universe (*kosmos*), rather than being limited to a particular city-state (Romm 1992). All people, regardless of race or religion or place of origin, were to be understood as members of one human brotherhood (Baldry 1965). Roman Stoics, such as Marcus Aurelius (1995: 19) – who declared 'there is a world-law, which in turn means that we are all

fellow-citizens and share a common citizenship, and that the world is a single city' – further developed these ideas within the multi-ethnic conditions of the Roman Empire (Revell 2009).

Martha Nussbaum's (1997, 2002, 2019) writings have been particularly influential in bringing ancient cosmopolitanism into contemporary debates. However, one might object that ancient cosmopolitanism seems to involve the abstract and utopian schemes of a tiny group of philosophers, either socially marginal as in the Greek case, or occupying positions of power but mouthing empty or hypocritical platitudes about universal brotherly love, as in the Roman context (Nussbaum 2019). But Greco-Roman cosmopolitan thought may be more complex than that. There were important differences between the more socially critical and activist cosmopolitanism of the Cynics, and the more quietist, *status quo*-accepting cosmopolitanism of the Stoics, especially in their Roman incarnation (Leung 2009). In addition, cosmopolitan notions were rooted in, and helped to develop, broader visions of the world as a complex, increasingly interconnected whole that were common in Hellenistic Greece and the Roman Empire, and not just among the philosophical minority but among varied social strata (Inglis and Robertson 2004).

The basic Greco-Roman ideas point to further notions. In a cosmopolitan mode of being (Hannerz 1990), the individual feels some sort of affiliation – be it political, moral, ethical, or some other type of orientation – with all persons in the world, regardless of their group membership. This suggests a universal humanism, a positive orientation towards all of humankind. That also implies that being less or more cosmopolitan would entail being less or more affiliated to people who are in some ways unlike oneself and whom one perceives not to be in one's own social or political group (Nussbaum 2002). Cosmopolitanism then may be understood as being based on the view that all human beings are of equal moral worth, and cosmopolitan action may be understood as ethically informed agency founded on that assumption (Benhabib 2006). Cosmopolitanism as a form of socio-political being seems to be the diametric opposite of chauvinism, ethno-nationalism, fundamentalism, and any kind of political and politicised essentialism, such as the proclamation of one's nation or one's religion as a homogeneous and exclusivist form of social order.

Furthermore, the state of being cosmopolitan suggests a condition of being in some ways 'comfortable' in the world as a whole and in moving among, and dealing with, the diverse groups which make it up. Cosmopolitanism points to modes of being and practice whereby a person is able, and perhaps willing and happy, to move efficaciously outside of the comfort zone of the lifeworld(s) of their own group(s), be those based on nationality, ethnicity, religion, or any other mode of affiliation and membership (Hannerz 1990). Openness to a difference of all sorts would seem to be a central characteristic of the cosmopolitan person or social group. That idea in turn points to the possibility of cosmopolitanism requiring certain resources – social, cultural, social-psychological, economic, etc. Such resources are necessary for persons to be able to be cosmopolitan, and to think and be able to do things in characteristically cosmopolitan ways (Kögler 2005).

But all this in turn raises various inter-related sets of problems. In the first instance, is 'being cosmopolitan', in the sense of regarding oneself as primarily a citizen of the world over and above other affiliations, a sufficient basis for a viable identity and sense of self? Perhaps regarding oneself as a citizen of the world only provides a thin and meagre sense of belonging. Perhaps it is too abstract and lacking in experiential and symbolic richness and solidity to yield a sustainable form of selfhood, unlike 'thick' forms of belonging to specific social groups, including states and (what are imagined to be) nations (Calhoun 2003a, Dobson 2006).

A solution to those dilemmas may be to assert that defining cosmopolitanism and other forms of belonging as opposites and antagonists is either unproductive or erroneous. One could argue that a cosmopolitan orientation is no less valid if it is clustered together with, or nested within, other senses of belonging a person or group may have (Appiah 2006). Relatedly, one

might wish to argue that we should avoid understanding cosmopolitan forms of being and affiliation as the dyadic opposites of their national counterparts. Perhaps these are theoretically compatible, and indeed might empirically be so under certain socio-political conditions (Durkheim 1992). The latter might pertain if national governments are committed to certain values deemed to be cosmopolitan, such as guaranteeing various rights, regardless of whether rights-holders are citizens or non-citizens, conforming to international treaties and agreements, and enacting symbolic and practical forms of hospitality to non-citizens in need (Derrida 2001). In such conditions, patriotism would be incompatible with narrow nationalism but compatible with cosmopolitan orientations (Appiah 1996, Varouxakis 2006) In such cases, we may be dealing with states whose legal and political apparatuses are located within inter- and trans-national frameworks which demand certain cosmopolitan types of norm-observance, like a meaningful commitment to international law and human rights protocols. In such national contexts, persons would not have to choose between (more concrete) national citizenship and (more ideal) world citizenship, as aspects of the latter would already be located within the apparatuses of the former (Habermas 2001, 2003).

But perhaps this (re)conciliation of cosmopolitanism and (nation-)state is too neat? Does it elide the fact that states are both part of, and active contributors to, systems of massive inequalities across the world (Harvey 2009)? After all, we could say that cosmopolitan ideals usually outstrip concrete realities, and that cosmopolitanism may refer more to conditions that are to be hoped-for, rather than those that are currently actualised (Held 2010).

Conversely, some analysts would argue that focusing on cosmopolitanism as sets of desirable norms to be realised is misleading, for it means overlooking all sorts of cosmopolitanism that actually already exist in concrete social and political conditions, but which might be overlooked if we misrepresent cosmopolitan phenomena in too idealistic a manner. Concrete forms of peaceable and productive forms of cross-cultural interchange between specific groups of people may be identified throughout much of human history as well as today (Inglis 2021). These processes are just as much describable under the heading of 'cosmopolitanism' as are more abstract ideals and norms like being a citizen of the world, and the people involved in them may be described – at least in part – as 'cosmopolitans', even if they do not explicitly understand themselves in such manners (Lamont and Aksartova 2002). On the other hand, who is to decide, and who has the right to decide, who are 'cosmopolitans' and who are not? And by which criteria could such assessments be made and justified, given that there is no consensus among scholars as to such matters?

Returning to consideration of persons being cosmopolitan, another set of problems is as follows. If being cosmopolitan and doing cosmopolitan sorts of things requires certain resources, what if only those people possessed of large amounts of such resources can indeed practice cosmopolitan orientations? What if being cosmopolitan requires and entails specific forms of privilege (Calhoun 2003b)? What if cosmopolitanism is nothing other than disguised and hypocritical Western or Developed World or Global North forms of privilege, strategic action, and self-delusion? What if the supposedly universal brotherly (or sisterly) love is a cover for disguised parochialism or imperialism, whether epistemological (Balibar 2018) or politico-military – as in the case of cosmopolitan concerns about human rights being used as cover for Western invasions of other countries (Bartholomew and Breakspear 2004)? What happens if the putative cosmopolitan comes to see themselves as superior to those they define as non-cosmopolitan, including through the means of defining people in that manner? For then, openness to the world would co-exist with, or topple into, a kind of arrogance, with the cosmopolitan claiming a God's eye perspective on the world denied to those allegedly mired in parochial ways (Calhoun 2003b). When this happens, cosmopolitanism becomes self-contradictory, because the

beneficent openness to Otherness exists at the same time as, and is undermined by, a smug sense of self-superiority, which distinguishes oneself and others like oneself from supposedly inferior un-cosmopolitan persons (Inglis and Robertson 2006).

A solution to these dilemmas might be to draw a distinction between weak and facile, or perverted and fake forms of cosmopolitanism on the one side, and genuine forms on the other (Calhoun 2003b). One way to do this would be to say that the latter encompasses two sets of dispositions. First, in a more negative register, these would involve facets such as self-criticism, awareness of one's own socio-cultural biases and willingness to check them, and vigilance against falling into the traps described above. Second, and more positively, cosmopolitan being would encompass such virtues as willingness to learn from others unlike oneself (Bielsa 2014), to relativise all one's typical ways of looking at and experiencing the world, to engage in cross-group dialogue, and to engage in multiple forms of translation, linguistic or otherwise, across socio-cultural boundaries (Delanty 2014). Such orientations would be describable as 'critical' or 'reflexive' cosmopolitanism, an intellectual and political position which claims to have thought through the types of dilemmas indicated above, which we could ascribe to various degenerate forms of (pseudo-) cosmopolitanism (Kögler 2005).

Cosmopolitanism between theory and practice

Here we examine the relations and tensions between cosmopolitanism as theory and as descriptive of forms of real-world practices. The field of cosmopolitanism studies today encompasses various specific bodies of literature. These are the *historical* (e.g. Kleingeld 1999, Rosenfeld 2002), involving the history of cosmopolitan thought; the *political-philosophical* (e.g. Pogge, 1992, Nussbaum 1997, Habermas 2001, Brock and Brighouse 2005), encompassing normative claims as to the alleged benefits of cosmopolitan affiliations and forms of citizenship, as opposed to localist and nationalistic dispositions; the *political-scientific* (e.g. Archibugi 2008, Held 2010), concerning the analysis of the nature and emergence of what are understood as cosmopolitan political, legal and human rights regimes, and the transnational institutions embodying these; and the *sociological and anthropological*, which encompasses writings which analyse 'really existing' (Robbins 1992) forms of cosmopolitan orientations and practices among concrete individuals and groups.

Although the current structure of the cosmopolitanism field is complex, it can for the purposes of synopsis be further divided into two main domains. First, there are the writings of political philosophers and political theorists, concerned with issues of global governance and justice (e.g. Held 2003, 2010, Brock and Brighouse 2005, Carenti 2006, Delanty 2006, Grande 2006, Eckersley 2007, Ferrara 2007, Rumford 2007, Archibugi 2008). We can call this 'political-philosophical cosmopolitanism'. Second, there are the writings of more sociologically and anthropologically oriented scholars interested in what are understood as cosmopolitan forms of experience and practice (e.g. Hannerz 1990, Lamont and Aksartova 2002, Nava 2002, Calhoun 2003a, 2003b, Skrbis et al. 2004, Nowicka and Rovisco 2009). The second set of writings we will call 'sociological cosmopolitanism'.

Authors in the sociological wing have had an ambivalent relationship to the political-philosophical authors and texts. On the one hand, canonised thinkers and texts – pre-eminently Kant (Papastephanou 2002) – have been understood and deployed as sources of inspiration for, and legitimation of, empirical analyses of 'really existing cosmopolitanisms'. Conversely, political-philosophical writings are often taken to be markedly abstract and lacking grounding in particular socio-historical conditions, and they have been criticised accordingly. Sometimes it is claimed that the development of sociological cosmopolitanism depends on its rejection of political philosophy (Skrbis et al. 2004). Alternatively, one might discern in political-philosophical cosmopolitanism, including its classical and canonical texts, more elements of implicit sociology

than may initially be apparent (Inglis 2018). Even the most apparently abstract and utopian aspects of 'classical' cosmopolitan thought – features which it is today roundly criticised for (e.g. Breckenridge et al. 2002) – are partly rooted in 'empirical' concerns, as to how cosmopolitan norms can be brought into concrete existence.

A guiding thought of the sociological/anthropological literature is that cosmopolitanism in the singular – the political-theoretical doctrine inherited from Greco-Roman philosophy and elaborated in the Enlightenment – must give way to the 'plurality of histories' that make up cosmopolitan*isms* in the plural (Pollock 2002). In the sociological literature, cosmopolitan dispositions and practices are less normative ideals to be achieved in the future, and more already-existing, concrete forms of thought and practice which involve multiple, overlapping, and sometimes contradictory forms of affiliation and attachment (Robbins 1992, Benhabib 2008, Nowicka and Rovisco 2009). These in turn are understood as both products of, and influences on, a diverse range of empirical phenomena, including transnational migration (Werbner 1999), cross-border mobility (Szerszynski and Urry 2002), and globalisation processes (Roudometof 2005).

The sociological literature deals with a wide variety of empirical phenomena, including cosmopolitan dispositions (e.g. being open to 'otherness' – Hannerz 1990), and 'rooted', rather than socially decontextualised, forms of cosmopolitanism (Appiah 1996, Beck 2002; Vertovec and Cohen 2002). These are described as 'vernacular' (Pollock 2002), 'visceral' (Nava 2002), and 'banal' (Szerszynski and Urry 2002) cosmopolitanisms. These are 'thick' in nature, located in particular socio-cultural contexts, as opposed to the 'thin' conceptions of cosmopolitan 'world citizens' apparently offered by political philosophers like Nussbaum (1997) (Turner 2002, 2006, Calhoun 2003a, Skrbis et al. 2004, Roudometof 2005, Kendall et al. 2008). Political-philosophical cosmopolitanism is said to be wholly antagonistic to specific forms of affiliation, including nationalism and its institutional structure, the nation-state (Lamont and Aksartova 2002: 2, Calcutt et al. 2009). Political philosophy is seen to be guilty of utopianism, for it ignores the possibility that the nation-state and patriotism can be compatible with cosmopolitan orientations among citizens, when states cultivate 'constitutional patriotism', that is, respect for human rights, openness to 'others', etc. (Appiah 1996, Skrbis et al. 2004, Held 2010).

The underlying claim at work here is that *cosmopolitan political philosophy* and the *sociology of cosmopolitanism* are fundamentally antagonistic, for the former operates with a very thin conception of human being – as 'humanity' in general, and individuals as abstract 'world citizens' – while the latter emphasises the always socially contextual nature of persons and groups, seeing 'humanity' as an ideologically loaded category used by actors and not as a neutral category usable by social scientific analysts (Ossewaarde 2007).

For sociological authors, there is a strong perceived disjunction between normative and empirical-descriptive forms of cosmopolitanism. The former – associated with political philosophy – is roundly criticised as too politically utopian to be drawn upon effectively for empirical research purposes (Roudometof 2005). The dangers of conflating the normative and the empirical are constantly reiterated, with warnings presented about the 'normative traps' empirical research on cosmopolitanism can fall into if it is overly indebted to contemporary political philosophy and its historical antecedents (Krossa 2009). To allow for either quantitative testing or qualitative investigation, it is said there must be a fundamental shift away from viewing cosmopolitanism as a non-empirical, philosophical 'humanist ideal', instead reconstructing it as a 'grounded social category' free of utopianism (Skrbis et al. 2004).

The turn from political-theoretical cosmopolitan concerns to sociological ones brings with it some methodological issues. Who and what can properly be labelled 'cosmopolitan', and what is this term's opposite (Skrbis et al. 2004, Roudometof 2005)? The 'empirical turn' in analyses of cosmopolitanism has involved both qualitative (Szerszynski and Urry 2002, Skrbis and Woodward

2007, Nowicka and Rovisco 2009) and quantitative approaches (Phillips and Smith 2008, Haller and Roudometof 2010), each with their own distinctive operationalisations of the concept.

Quantitative work emphasises certain clusters of attitudes, while qualitative work stresses both actors' rhetorical strategies and resources, and forms of lived practice. A focus on 'openness' to 'otherness' as a defining feature of cosmopolitanism is a key concern running through most of the empirical literature. Findings have emphasised both the uneven distribution of cosmopolitan attitudes geographically (Haller and Roudometof 2010), the deployment of cosmopolitan attitudes and orientations as survival strategies (Calcutt et al. 2009), and their use as ambivalent but strategic resources necessary for operating within a globalised world-condition (Phillips and Holton 2004, Skrbis and Woodward 2007, Mau, Mewes and Zimmerman, 2008).

The kinds of cosmopolitan orientations eulogised by political philosophers are revealed by social scientists as expressions of white, Western, upper-class privilege (Calhoun 2003b, Ossewaarde 2007, Skrbis and Woodward, 2007), of neoliberal triumphalism (Pollock 2002), and as forms of elite cultural capital (Weenink 2008, Calcutt et al. 2009). Against these forms of 'elite cosmopolitanism' have been ranged by sociological and anthropological authors alternative visions of 'cosmopolitanism from below', involving such actors as Western and non-Western grassroots protest groups (Kurasawa 2004, de Sousa Santos 2006), the working classes (Lamont and Aksartova 2002), and subaltern populations in the Global South (Werbner 1999, Skrbis et al. 2004, Pieterse 2006). The empirical sociological literature sees 'really existing' cosmopolitanisms as (sometimes) embodying progressive political purposes, implicitly bringing in a 'soft' normative dimension to empirical analysis. If sociological cosmopolitanism is to have any normative dimension, it is said that it must be 'imaginatively realist' in nature, taking, for example, the really existing structures of the nation-state as the necessary grounds within which future cosmopolitan dispositions among citizens can be fostered (Kendall et al. 2008).

Thus, the major Western political-philosophical expressions of cosmopolitanism historically – notably ancient Stoicism and Kantianism – are seen to be thoroughly normative and strongly utopian, and intrinsically antagonistic to empirical social science (Lamont and Aksartova 2002). Political-philosophical cosmopolitanism and its long history must be radically overhauled or fully rejected if the sociology of cosmopolitanism is to flourish. Kantianism in particular is rejected as a basis for sociological research, in part because of its progenitor's alleged Eurocentrism (Mendieta 2009) and 'insularity' (Skrbis and Woodward 2007: 731). Traces of Kantianism are found in the apparently empirical – but tacitly idealistic – account of ongoing processes of global 'cosmopolitanization' offered by Beck (2002). While Beck claims to differentiate between philosophical and social scientific forms of cosmopolitanism, his work can be criticised as actually being a Kantian political philosophy masquerading as social theory and sociology (Roudometof 2005, Calcutt et al. 2009). Beck is thus a pseudo-empirical prisoner of the idealism of the Kantian political-philosophical tradition (Kendall et al. 2008). The same sorts of charges can be put to Habermas's (2001) version of cosmopolitanism, which has certain important affinities with Beck's, not least its strong debts to the original Kantian ethos (Fine and Smith 2003).

One solution to the limits of existing conceptions of cosmopolitanism is to work to create new understandings, definitions, and empirical identifications of cosmopolitan phenomena by making them more systematically oriented to issues of gender (Nava 2002, Vieten 2012) and ethnicity (Werbner 2008), thereby connecting them more to matters of lived, bodily experience within conditions of patriarchy and coloniality (Raghavan 2019).

Relatedly, sharp critique has been offered both of Western cosmopolitan philosophy and more recent cosmopolitanism studies by postcolonial scholarship (Mignolo 2000). The philosophical tradition is seen to be thoroughly bound up with – often subterranean – relations of colonialism, ethnocentrism, and racism (Bhambra and Narayan 2016). More positively, one might draw

on non-Western (Murphy 2015) and anti-racist and anti-colonial traditions of thought to counter such tendencies, juxtaposing W.E.B Du Bois against Kant, for example (Valdez 2019. One can also retell the history of lived cosmopolitanism by focusing on trans-national connections between non-Western actors in the struggles for different types of liberation, achieved through cross-cultural interchange and dialogue, a re-focusing of the history of cosmopolitan phenomena which resonates in the era of Black Lives Matter and other movements calling for more just relations between different social groups within and between nations (Slate 2017).

Conclusion

This chapter has reviewed the contours of the domains of cosmopolitan social theory and multi-disciplinary cosmopolitanism studies. It has traced a gradual widening of those contours, and enlargement of the types of voices contributing to ongoing debates.

We live in a period which seems to compel analysts to consider how cosmopolitical concerns at the level of thought can be brought more fully into the level of practice. This is especially acute as world history seems to be running in markedly anti-cosmopolitan and de-cosmopolitizing directions. Neo-nationalist, right-wing populist, and far-right political movements are everywhere challenging and apparently undermining cosmopolitan political projects and socio-cultural dispositions. This raises a question as to which sorts of cosmopolitanism are robust enough to be able to think through such conditions, to challenge them, and to be deployed as inspirations for revived forms of cosmopolitan endeavour.

While the older Western traditions of thought are certainly open to many criticisms, throwing that baby out with the bathwater may not be the wisest option here, for perhaps they may still form at least a partial basis for both theory and practice in the future. Moreover, cosmopolitan forms of thought have often in the past flourished precisely in those times seemingly most unpropitious to them. Cosmopolitan thought often has been forced to outstrip unpromising empirical realities, thereby keeping hope afloat in challenging circumstances. Looked at in the long-term (Bregman 2020), cosmopolitan thinking is often that which keeps human aspiration going in darkening times.

References

Anderson, A. (1998) 'Cosmopolitanism, Universalism, and the Divided Legacies of Modernity', in P. Cheah, B. Robbins (eds.) *Cosmopolitics: Thinking and Feeling Beyond the Nation*, Minneapolis, MN: Minnesota University Press, 265–89.

Appiah, K.A. (1996) 'Cosmopolitan Patriots', in J. Cohen (ed.) *For Love of Country: Debating the Limits of Patriotism*, Boston, MA: Beacon, 21–29.

———. (2006) *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers*, New York: Norton.

Archibugi, D. (2008) *The Global Commonwealth of Citizens: Toward Cosmopolitan Democracy*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP.

Baldry, H.C. (1965) *The Unity of Mankind in Greek Thought*, Cambridge: Cambridge UP.

Balibar, E. (2018) *Secularism and Cosmopolitanism*, New York: Columbia UP.

Bartholomew, A. and Breakspear, J. (2004). 'Human Rights as Swords of Empire', in L. Panitch and C. Leys (eds.) *Socialist Register 2004: The New Imperial Challenge*, New York: Monthly Review Press, 124–145.

Beck, U. (2002) 'The Cosmopolitan Society and Its Enemies', *Theory, Culture and Society*, 19(1–2): 17–44.

Beck, U. and Sznaider, N. (2006) 'Unpacking Cosmopolitanism for the Social Sciences: A Research Agenda', *British Journal of Sociology*, 57(1): 1–23.

Benhabib, S. (2008) *Another Cosmopolitanism*, Oxford: Oxford UP.

Bhambra, B.K. and Narayan, J. (eds.) (2016) *European Cosmopolitanism: Colonial Histories and Postcolonial Societies*, London: Routledge.

Bielsa, E. (2014) 'Cosmopolitanism as Translation', *Cultural Sociology*, 8(4): 392–406.

Breckenridge, C. A. et al. (eds.) (2002) *Cosmopolitanism*, Durham, NC: Duke UP.

Bregman, R. (2020) *Humankind: A Hopeful History*, London: Bloomsbury.

Brock, G. and Brighouse, H. (2005) *The Political Philosophy of Cosmopolitanism*, Cambridge: Cambridge UP.

Brown, G. W. and Held, D. (2010) *The Cosmopolitanism Reader*, Oxford: Wiley–Blackwell.

Calcutt, L., Woodward, I. and Skrbis, Z. (2009) 'Conceptualizing Otherness: An Exploration of the Cosmopolitan Schema', *Journal of Sociology*, 45(2): 169–86.

Calhoun, C. (2003a) '"Belonging" in the Cosmopolitan Imaginary', *Ethnicities*, 3(4): 531–68.

———. (2003b) 'The Class Consciousness of Frequent Travellers: Towards a Critique of Actually Existing Cosmopolitanism', in D. Archibugi (ed.) *Debating Cosmopolitics*, London: Verso, 86–116.

Carenti, L. (2006) 'Perpetual War for Perpetual Peace? Reflections on the Realist Critique of the Kantian Project', *Journal of Human Rights*, 5: 341–53.

Cheah, P. (2006) 'Cosmopolitanism', *Theory, Culture and Society*, 23(2–3): 486–96.

Cheah, P. and Robbins, B. (eds.) (1998) *Cosmopolitics: Thinking and Feeling Beyond the Nation*, Minneapolis, MN: Minnesota UP.

Dallmayr, F. (2003) 'Cosmopolitanism: Moral and Political', *Political Theory*, 31 (3): 421–42.

de Sousa Santos, B. (2006) 'Globalizations', *Theory, Culture & Society*, 23(2–3): 393–99.

de Wilde, P. (2019) *The Struggle Over Borders*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Delanty, G. (2006) 'The Cosmopolitan Imagination; Critical Cosmopolitanism and Social Theory', *British Journal of Sociology*, 57(1): 25–47.

———. (2009) *The Cosmopolitan Imagination: The Renewal of Critical Social Theory*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

———. (2012) *The Routledge International Handbook of Cosmopolitan Studies*, London: Routledge.

———. (2014) 'Not All is Lost in Translation: World Varieties of Cosmopolitanism', *Cultural Sociology*, 8(4): 374–91.

Delanty, G. and Inglis, D. (2010) 'An Overview of the Field of Cosmopolitan Studies', in G. Delanty and D. Inglis (eds.) *Cosmopolitanism*, London: Routledge, 1–27.

Derrida, J. (2001) *On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness*, London: Routledge.

Diouf, M. (2000) 'The Senegalese Murid Trade Diaspora and the Making of a Vernacular Cosmopolitanism', *Public Culture*, 12(3): 679–702.

Dobson, A. (2006) 'Thick Cosmopolitanism', *Political Studies*, 54: 165–84.

Douzinas, C. (2007) *Human Rights and Empire*, London: Routledge.

Durkheim, È. (1992) *Professional Ethics and Civic Morals*, London: Routledge.

Eckersley, R. (2007) 'From Cosmopolitan Nationalism to Cosmopolitan Democracy', *Review of International Studies*, (33): 675–92.

Ferrara, A (2007) '"Political" Cosmopolitanism and Judgment', *European Journal of Social Theory*, 10(1): 53–66.

Fine, R. (2003a) 'Kant's Theory of Cosmopolitanism and Hegel's Critique', *Philosophy and Social Criticism* 29(6): 609–30.

———. (2003b) 'Taking the "Ism" Out of Cosmopolitanism: An Essay in Reconstruction', *European Journal of Social Theory*, 6(4): 451–70.

———. (2007) *Cosmopolitanism*, London: Routledge.

Fine, R. and Boon, V. (2007) 'Introduction: Cosmopolitanism: Between Past and Future', *European Journal of Social Theory*, 10(1): 5–16.

Fine, R. and Smith, W. (2003) 'Habermas's Theory of Cosmopolitanism', *Constellations* 10(4): 467–87.

Friedrich, C. J. (1947) 'The Ideology of the United Nations Charter and the Philosophy of Peace of Immanuel Kant, 1795–1945', *The Journal of Politics*, 9(1): 10–30.

Goulet-Cazé, M.-O. (2000) *A Guide to Greek Thought*, Cambridge: Belknap.

Grande, E. (2006) 'Cosmopolitan Political Science', *British Journal of Sociology*, 57(1): 87–111.

Gupta, S. (2019) *Politics and Cosmopolitanism in a Global Age*, London: Routledge.

Habermas, J. (1997) 'Kant's Idea of Perpetual Peace, with the Benefit of Two Hundred Years Hindsight', in J. Bohman and M. Lutz-Bachmann (eds.) *Perpetual Peace: Essays on Kant's Cosmopolitan Ideal*, Cambridge: MIT Press, 113–54.

———. (2001) *The Postnational Constellation*, Cambridge: Polity.

———. (2003) 'Towards a Cosmopolitan Europe', *Journal of Democracy*, 14(4): 86–100.

Haller, W. and Roudometof, V. (2010) 'The Cosmopolitan – Local Continuum in Cross-National Perspective', *Journal of Sociology*, 46(3): 277–97.

Hannerz, U. (1990) 'Cosmopolitans and Locals in World Culture', in M. Featherstone (ed.) *Global Culture*, London: Sage, 237–51.

Harvey, D. (2009) *Cosmopolitanism and the Geographies of Freedom*, New York: Columbia UP.

Heater, D. (1996) *World Citizenship and Government*, London: Macmillan.

Held, D. (2003) *Cosmopolitanism: A Defence*, Cambridge: Polity.

———. (2010) *Cosmopolitanism: Ideals and Realities*, Cambridge: Polity.

Holton, R. (2009) *Cosmopolitanisms: New Thinking and New Directions*, Basingstoke: Palgrave.

Inglis, D. (2018) 'Alt-Histories of Cosmopolitanism: Rewriting the Past in the Service of the Future', in G. Delanty (ed.) *Routledge International Handbook of Cosmopolitanism Studies*, 2nd edition, London: Routledge, 42–55.

———. (2021) 'Translation Encounters and the Histories of Globalization', in E. Bielsa and D. Kapsaskis (eds.) *Routledge Handbook of Translation and Globalization*, London: Routledge.

Inglis, D. and Robertson, R. (2004) 'The Global *Animus*', *Globalizations*, 1(1): 38–49.

———. (2006) 'Discovering the World: Cosmopolitanism and Globality in the "Eurasian" Renaissance', in G. Delanty (ed.) *Europe and Asia Beyond East and West*, London: Routledge, 92–106.

Kant, I. (1963a) 'Idea for a Universal History from a Cosmopolitan Point of View', in *On History*, New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 11–26.

———. (1963b) 'Perpetual Peace', in *On History*, New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 85–135.

Kendall, G., Skrbis, Z. and Woodward, I. (2008) 'Cosmopolitanism, the Nation-state and Imaginative Realism', *Journal of Sociology*, 44(4): 401–17.

Kleingeld, P. (1999) 'Six Varieties of Cosmopolitanism in Late 18th century Germany', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 60(3): 505–24.

Kögler, H.H. (2005). 'Constructing a Cosmopolitan Public Sphere: Hermeneutic Capabilities and Universal Values.' *European Journal of Social Theory*, 8(3): 297–320.

Krossa, A. S. (2009) 'Conceptualizing European Society on Non-Normative Grounds: Logics of Sociation, Glocalization and Conflict', *European Journal of Social Theory*, 12(2): 249–264.

Lamont, M. and Aksartova, S. (2002) 'Ordinary Cosmopolitanisms: Strategies for Bridging Racial Boundaries Amongst Working-Class Men', *Theory, Culture and Society*, 19(4): 1–25.

Leung, G. (2009) 'A Critical History of Cosmopolitanism', *Law, Culture, and the Humanities*, 5: 370–90.

Lu, C. (2000) 'The One and Many Faces of Cosmopolitanism', *Journal of Political Philosophy*, 8(2): 244–67.

Marcus Aurelius (1995) *Meditations*, Penguin: Harmondsworth.

Mau, S., Mewes, J. and Zimmerman, A. (2008) 'Cosmopolitan Attitudes through Transnational Social Practices', *Global Networks*, 8(1): 1–24.

Meinecke, F. (1970) *Cosmopolitanism and the National State*, Princeton: Princeton UP.

Mendieta, E. (2009) 'From Imperial to Dialogical Cosmopolitanism', *Ethics & Global Politics*, 2(3): 241–58.

Mignolo, W. (2000) 'The Many Faces of Cosmopolis: Border Thinking and Critical Cosmopolitanism', *Public Culture*, 12(3): 721–48.

Murphy, R. (2015) 'The Critical Cosmopolitanism of Watsuji Tetsuro', *European Journal of Social Theory*, 18(4): 507–22.

Nava, M. (2002) 'Cosmopolitan Modernity: Everyday Imaginaries and the Register of Difference', *Theory, Culture and Society*, 19(1–2): 81–99.

Niezen, R. (2004) *A World Beyond Difference*, Oxford: Blackwell.

Nowicka, M. and Rovisco, M. (eds.) (2009) *Cosmopolitanism in Practice*, Farnham: Ashgate.

Nussbaum, M.C. (1997) 'Kant and Stoic Cosmopolitanism', *Journal of Political Philosophy*, 5(1): 1–25.

———. (2002) 'Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism', in J. Cohen (ed.) *For Love of Country?*, Boston: Beacon, 2–17.

———. (2019) *The Cosmopolitan Tradition: A Noble but Flawed Ideal*, Cambridge: Belknap.

Ossewarde, M. (2007) 'Cosmopolitanism and the Society of Strangers', *Current Sociology*, 55(3): 367–88.

Papastephanou, M. (2002) 'Kant's Cosmopolitanism and Human History', *History of the Human Sciences*, 15(1): 17–37.

Phillips, T. and Holton, R. (2004) 'Personal Orientations towards Australian National Identity among British-born Residents', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 27(5): 732–56.

Phillips, T. and Smith, P. (2008) 'Cosmopolitan Beliefs and Cosmopolitan Practices', *Journal of Sociology*, 44(4): 391–9.

Pieterse, J.N. (2006) 'Emancipatory Cosmopolitanism: Towards an Agenda,' *Development and Change*, 37(6): 1247–57.

Pollock, S. (2002) 'Cosmopolitan and Vernacular in History', in C.A. Breckenridge et al. (eds.) *Cosmopolitanism*, Durham: Duke UP, 15–53.

Pogge, T. (1992) 'Cosmopolitanism and Sovereignty,' *Ethics*, 103: 48–75.

Raghavan, A. (2019) *Towards Corporeal Cosmopolitanism: Performing Decolonial Solidarities*, Lanham: Rowman/ Littlefield.

Revell, L. (2009) *Roman Imperialism and Local Identities*, Cambridge: Cambridge UP.

Robbins, B. (1992) 'Comparative Cosmopolitanism', *Social Text*, 31(2): 169–86.

Robbins, B. and Horta, P. (eds.) (2017) *Cosmopolitanisms*, New York: NYU Press.

Romm, J.S. (1992) *The Edges of the Earth in Ancient Thought*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Rosenfeld, S. (2002) 'Citizens of Nowhere in Particular: Cosmopolitanism, Writing, and Political Engagement in Eighteenth-Century Europe', *National Identities*, 4(1): 25–43.

Roudometof, V. (2005) 'Transnationalism, Cosmopolitanism and Glocalization', *Current Sociology*, 53(1): 113–15.

Rumford, C. (2007) 'Does Europe have Cosmopolitan Borders?', *Globalizations*, 4(3): 1–13.

Sassen, S. (2006) *Territory, Authority, Rights: From Medieval to Global Assemblages*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP.

Scheffler, S. (1999) 'Conceptions of Cosmopolitanism', *Utilitas*, 11(3): 255–76.

Schlereth, T. (1977) *The Cosmopolitan Ideal in Enlightenment Thought*, South Bend, IN: Notre Dame UP.

Singer, P. (2002) *One World: The Ethics of Globalization*, New Haven, CT: Yale UP.

Skrbis, Z., Kendall, G. and Woodward, I. (2004) 'Locating Cosmopolitanism: Between Humanist Ideal and Grounded Social Category', *Theory, Culture and Society*, 21(6): 115–36.

Skrbis, Z. and Woodward, I. (2007) 'The Ambivalence of Ordinary Cosmopolitanism: Investigating the Limits of Cosmopolitan Openness', *Sociological Review*, 55(4): 730–47.

Slate, N. (2017) *Colored Cosmopolitanism*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Szerszynski, B. and Urry, J. (2002) 'Cultures of Cosmopolitanism', *Sociological Review*, 50(4): 461–81.

Toulmin, S. (1990) *Cosmopolis*, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Turner, B.S. (2002) 'Cosmopolitan Virtue: Globalization and Patriotism', *Theory, Culture & Society* 19(1): 45–63.

———. (2006) 'Classical Sociology and Cosmopolitanism: A Critical Defence of the Social', *British Journal of Sociology*, 57(1): 133–51.

Valdez, I. (2019) *Transnational Cosmopolitanism*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Varouxakis, G. (2006) '"Patriotism", "Cosmopolitanism" and "Humanity" in Victorian Political Thought', *European Journal of Political Theory*, 5(1): 100–18.

Vertovec, S. and Cohen, R. (eds.) (2002) *Conceiving Cosmopolitanism*, Oxford: Oxford UP.

Vieten, U.M. (ed.) (2012) *Gender and Cosmopolitanism in Europe: A Feminist Perspective*, London: Routledge.

Weenink, D. (2008) 'Cosmopolitanism as a Form of Capital: Parents Preparing Their Children for a Globalizing World', *Sociology*, 42(6): 1089–106.

Werbner, P. (1999) 'Global Pathways: Working-class Cosmopolitans and the Creation of Transnational Ethnic Worlds', *Social Anthropology*, 7(1): 17–35.

———. (ed.) (2008) *Anthropology and the New Cosmopolitanism*, Oxford: Berg, 1–29.

Zubaida, S. (1999) 'Cosmopolitanism and the Middle East', in R. Meijer (ed.) *Cosmopolitanism, Identity and Authenticity in the Middle East*, Richmond: Curzon, 15–34.

28
From friction to fruition
Social theory meets postcolonial studies

Sérgio Costa

It is not exactly a secret that 21st-century social theory has not been able to repeat the fruitful cycle it experienced in the second half of the last century when different general theories of society, politics, and culture were produced and spread widely. Recent attempts to build more comprehensive theories, aiming to explain global processes, have not earned the same prestige as their predecessors dedicated to studying national societies.[1]

Generally, these attempts are solely concerned with the rash and blind application of categories of national sociologies to the rest of the unknown world. Thus, (national) society is replaced with world society (e.g. Stichweh 2000), (national) civil society with global civil society (Habermas 1998), (national) risk society with world risk society (Beck 2008). These new concepts, however, retain their strictly national characteristics, albeit on a new scale, resulting in a lack of genuinely novel findings.

More than an off-season, the contemporary lack of more ambitious social theories seems to reflect the exhaustion of a model of knowledge production in which, in general, a single white man in Europe or the United States, assisted by a group of younger scholars, developed, from his personal experiences and observations in a particular context of a specific national society, theories that should be applicable to different contexts and societies around the world.

Various social and scholarly transformations explain the exhaustion of this model. In line with the political empowerment of *minorized groups* such as women, migrants, indigenous people, blacks, LGBTQ, and different actors from the Global South,[2] new ways of questioning the dominant forms of knowledge production have emerged, as well as new approaches and theories that seek to vocalize and reflect the social experiences of these groups, which in many cases constitute the majority of the respective national population.[3]

The emergence of these new actors and contributions put in check at least two founding assumptions of modern social sciences: classification systems based on stable antithetical categoric pairs (man-woman, Occident-Orient, modern-traditional, national-foreign, etc.) and the precedence of the 'Western' in modern history, that is, the assumption that modernity begins in Europe and then repeats itself in other parts of the world.

All these blind spots in social theory are addressed in the field of postcolonial studies, thus leading those interested in revitalizing social theory to the question: Can postcolonial studies contribute to reconstructing social theory, and if so, how?

Social theorists offer at least two different responses to this question. In his pioneering engagement with the tensions between sociology and postcolonial studies, McLennan (2000, 2003, 2013) noted that postcolonial studies address relevant shortages of sociology and social theory and offer 'a more inclusive sense of the richness of social experience than sociology' (McLennan 2003: 82). However, he identifies insurmountable obstacles for postcolonial studies to making a substantive contribution to renewing social theory. This refers to the fact that 'all theories and categories *reduce* experience to their own conceptual priorities' (idem). Postcolonial studies, by contrast, refuse social theories as their allegedly '"abstract" and unilateral nature again encourages particular cultural understandings (imperialist ones) to over-ride the concrete specificities of social existence across the world' (McLennan 2013: 135). In the end, however, the postcolonial rejection of general theories is, 'after all, some kind of general theoretical contention, and to that extent it undermines itself' (idem, p. 141).

Julian Go (2016: 10) also sees social theory and postcolonial thought belonging to two antagonistic 'histories and global processes – empire on the one hand and anticolonial resistance on the other [...]'. However, in contrast to McLennan, Go endeavours to overcome this divorce. For him, social theory and sociology – urgently and irrevocably – need postcolonial thought in order to liberate themselves from their colonial past and imperial present. Hence, a postcolonial intervention in social theory and sociology should generate a *third wave* of postcolonial thought, following a *first wave* represented by intellectuals involved in antiracist and anti-colonial movements, including W. E. B. Du Bois, Aimé Césaire, Frantz Fanon, Amílcar Cabral, among others, and a *second wave*, initiated by Edward Said and continued by authors, such as Gayatri Spivak, Homi Bhabha, and Dipesh Chakrabarty who developed postcolonial ideas in the humanities.

In this chapter, I argue that utilizing postcolonial contributions to reconstruct social theory is not only possible but it has also been done for decades now, beyond the allegedly incommensurable or antagonistic origins and character of both fields of knowledge.[4] At least, this is at what can be observed in those topics and fields in which cooperation and competition between postcolonial studies and social theory have taken place in a more intensive way. For studying this dynamic, I will analyze recent developments in three different fields in which postcolonial studies have been particularly prolific: the regime of knowledge production in the social sciences, research on modernity, and cultural theory.[5]

Knowledge production in the social sciences

Based on the evidence – trivialized, one must say, since the emergence of poststructuralist theories (e.g. Derrida 1967) – that every enunciation comes from somewhere, the postcolonial studies elaborate their critique of the production and circulation of scientific knowledge. These processes, in privileging models and subjects that are peculiar to what has been defined as the national culture of the European countries, reproduce, in other terms, the logic of the colonial relationship. In this context, the expression *colonial* goes beyond colonialism, alluding to diverse situations of oppression defined on the basis of gender, ethnic, or racial boundaries.

Following postcolonial critique, the original division of labour between modern disciplines like history, political science, and sociology, which supposedly specialize in modern societies, and ethnology and anthropology, which deal with 'pre-modern cultures', can only be comprehended as having a function within the framework of colonial rule, since this differentiation is heuristically senseless (Ventura 1987: 148, Mignolo 2000 *passim*). Accordingly, there is a structural interdependency between colonialism and the modern humanities and social sciences: on the one hand, colonial rule constitutes the platform for the recognition of

the monopoly of science as the only valid form of knowledge. On the other hand, science generates the knowledge necessary to politically legitimize colonial powers and to provide socio-technological resources, such as new methods of administration and social control. Still following the powerful postcolonial critique of modern sciences and here social sciences, in particular, interdependences between social sciences and (post)colonial oppression survived the end of colonialism and still persist in the realm of different forms of imperial dominations, including both international subordination of whole countries and the internal oppression of minorized groups (Steinmetz 2014).

The entanglements between social sciences and colonial and imperial domination have decisive implications for theory building in social sciences. First of all, the dichotomy Western vs. non-Western societies ('the West and the Rest') has had the effect that transformations which occurred in 'non-Western' societies are treated in classical and also most contemporary social theory based on their relations of functionality, similitude, or divergence with respect to what has been denominated as the centre or the West. This refers to a methodology of implicit comparison and to a teleological understanding of modernity, according to which everything that is diverse in 'the rest of the world' is decoded as *yet* non-existent, as a lack to be compensated by means of social intervention suited for each context in each historical epoch: colonial domination, development aid, humanitarian intervention, etc. (Hall 1993).

A similar logic applies to minorized groups within national and local societies insofar as their differences to the major cultures and groups in society are sometimes described as integration gaps, sometimes as deviances and implicitly or explicitly as signs of inferiority. This (post)colonial regime of knowledge production also establishes a knowledge hierarchy in which previous and rigid positions are attributed to different social groups and regions of the world. Consequently, certain forms of relevant knowledge (e.g. indigenous, 'local' knowledge) are repudiated ex ante by established sciences simply for the reason that they cannot be evaluated within the conceptual framework of modern disciplines (Santos 2014).

In the case of social sciences and social theory, in particular, this knowledge regime implies a division of labour within which social scientists from the global north generate the valid methods and theories to be applied by their colleagues in the global south (Alatas 2003, Keim 2011, Collyer 2018).

The postcolonial critique of the regime of knowledge production in social sciences seems to prima facie prove right those who believe in the incommensurability between postcolonial studies and social theory. However, developments observed now for various decades, both within social theory and within scientific institutions, allow us to identify vast areas of compatibility and convergence between postcolonial studies and social sciences.

Even if more comprehensive theoretical systems have not opened up to absorb influences from postcolonial studies, the growing influence of formerly peripheral currents in specific fields of social theory is evident. Examples include the importance of radical feminist, queer theories, or critical race theory in theoretical debates on justice (Kerner 2013, see also different contributions in Dhawan 2014) and of intersectionality approaches to research on social inequalities (Anthias 2012). Even so-called 'southern theory' (Connell 2007) has gained significant ground in specific fields of social theory, as, for instance, the longstanding influence of dependency theory on development discussions around the world shows (Ruvituso 2020).

Also in the methodological field, some claims of postcolonial studies for methodologies involving the subjects researched as co-authors of knowledge and leading to the production of knowledge to contribute to social emancipation (see the inspiring tools developed in Berg/Nowicka 2019) are perfectly compatible with works of social scientists who are not closed to postcolonial studies. Works published long before postcolonial studies emerged illustrate these

areas of overlapping: Rodolfo Stavenhagen (1971: 343), for example, argued in 1971 for 'decolonizing applied social sciences' and condemned social scientists who were supporting the assimilation policies of indigenous peoples in Mexico: 'It is not a question of science versus politics, but of one kind of science–in–politics versus another'. Similarly, Fals-Borda (2009[1970]: 222), inspired, among others, by Alain Touraine's *Sociologie de l'action* (1965), advocated a committed sociology that could contribute to cutting the internal and external colonial bonds' (my translation SC).

At the institutional level, remarkable changes observed since the 1990s have contributed to conciliation between postcolonial studies and social sciences. In the international arena, the Gulbenkian commission report (Wallerstein 1996), claiming for a reorganization of social sciences in order to promote a more balanced knowledge production and circulation among academies of the Global North and the Global South enormously contributed to bringing the topic of academic asymmetries to the institutional agenda of mainstream social sciences. Furthermore, different journals and publishers introduced concrete publishing policies to improve equality of opportunity among Anglophone and other authors and to open the possibility of publication for non-mainstream scholarship, as the case of publications in the framework of International Sociological Associations emblematically illustrates (Martín 2017). This has contributed to systematically increasing the presence and visibility of 'southern theory' and postcolonial perspectives in international journals and publications.

These international moves have also led to relevant changes even in more reluctant national-based social sciences as in the case of Germany, the United Kingdom, and the United States. In all these countries, important professorships and relevant institutional spaces as representations in national professional associations and funding agencies are occupied by social scientists who see themselves as postcolonial scholars.

With this positive assessment of recent changes, I by no means ignore the persistence of huge asymmetries in the process of knowledge production and circulation within social sciences nor the continuous tensions between postcolonial studies and social sciences. However, the discussed developments demonstrate a pattern of interaction between postcolonial studies and social theory which contrasts with the images of insurmountable incompatibilities mostly found in the relevant literature.

Research on modernity

Deconstructing[6] the polarity West/rest constitutes the common term unifying the different authors associated with the postcolonial frame of reference. It is precisely the identification of the colonial or imperial bias in the knowledge production process that best defines the prefix 'post' in the term postcolonial: from the chronological point of view, this prefix refers to ex-colonies with radically distinct postcolonial conditions. Deconstructing the West/rest dichotomy requires, first, showing that this polarity builds at the discursive level – and legitimates in the political sphere – an irreversible asymmetrical relationship between the Occident and its other, conferring to the former a kind of superiority that is not circumstantial, historic, and referred to a specific domain – material, technological, etc. The attribution of superiority is ontological, total, immutable, and essentialized, since it is part of the very semantic constitution of the relationship's terms:

> Modernity's Eurocentrism lies in the confusion between abstract universality and the concrete world hegemony derived from Europe's position as center
>
> *(Patel 2015: 39)*

To deconstruct the dichotomy West/rest, postcolonial studies seek a re-reading of modern history in order to reinsert and re-inscribe the colonized into modernity, not as the other of the Occident, as the synonym of backwardness, of the traditional, of a lack, but as an essential, constitutive part of what has been discursively constructed as modern. This implies rewriting the hegemonic history of modernity to make evident the material and symbolic relations between the 'Occident' and the 'rest' of the world so as to show that such terms correspond to mental constructions without immediate empirical correspondence. Following the analytical avenues opened by Said's classic book *Orientalism* (1978), the historian Chakrabarty (2000) seeks to radicalize and transcend liberal universalism, showing that rationalism and science, rather than European cultural marks, are part of a global history within which the 'Western' monopoly over the definition of the modern has been constructed as much with the help of European imperialism as with the direct participation of the 'non-Western' world. That is, the national histories of the non-European countries are presented as narratives of construction of institutions – citizenship, civil society, etc. – that only make sense if projected against the mirror of a 'hyper-real Europe'. In these national histories, the imagined Europe is the dwelling place of the true modern subject, of whom even the most combative socialists and nationalists seek to construct, through imitation, a national equivalent.

The intent to give plausibility to the idea of histories that, in spite of being narrated as national histories, present interpenetrations and are reciprocally determined, takes shape through the concepts of 'geteilte Geschichten' (shared/divided histories) and 'entangled modernity', coined by social anthropologist Randeria (2000). By employing such concepts, this author seeks, on the one hand, to express the interdependence and the simultaneity of the constitutive processes of contemporary societies, and, on the other, to underline the dichotomic, disjointed representation of the historic intersections in modern representations. The German term 'geteilt' bears the sense of both 'shared' and 'divided', i.e. it refers to histories that are shared in their unfoldment, but divided in their presentation and representation. In emphasizing the interpenetrations of modern history, Randeria neither seeks to obfuscate the power asymmetries characterizing such a relationship nor asserts that everything is intertwined in the same measure or proportion. Rather, her point is to contextualize the transformations observed in a bundle of interdependent relations between the different regions of the world in order to make sense of the asymmetries and inequalities constructed within this common modern history.

By highlighting the interdependent constitution of modernity in Europe and in (post)colonial societies, Randeria argues that conventional social theory, in treating the 'other' of the Occident as a 'pre-stage of the European self', is unable to grasp that some 'new' modern phenomena which are now visible in the Global North, such as 'the weakening of national sovereignty, the processes causing labour's informality and flexibility, the dependence on remote events, cultural hybridity' (Randeria 2000: 45) – existed previously in (post)colonial societies.

At the same time, the emphasis on the entangled constitution of modernity seeks to shed light on the role of colonies as a field of experimentation for modernity. Accordingly, the (modern) idea of reforming the social order by means of the 'strategically oriented intervention' was engendered in the second half of the 19th century, first in the colonies, and only then imported by Europe as a possibility for 'modernizing' social life. Concrete examples of the import to Europe of 'social technologies' developed in the colonies are, among others, the projects of urban restructuring, first experienced in North Africa and then applied in France, as well as the technique of identity verification through fingerprints, initially put into practice in Bengal (Conrad/Randeria 2002: 26).

In a similar vein, the Peruvian sociologist Quijano (among others 2000) made a pioneering contribution to the analysis of the interdependent constitution of modernity in Europe and in the colonies in the Americas by demonstrating the relevance of labour control based on race for shaping (post)colonial capitalism. He argues that colonialism and modern slavery led to a labour division which classified sequestered indigenous and African peoples as inferior races and forced them into unpaid labour, whereas white Europeans were paid for their work. This helped Europe to establish itself as the centre of power of world capitalism in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Building on these and similar insights, a new generation of social theorists have developed a solid theoretical framework which comprehensively re-theorizes modernity no longer through an 'analytic bifurcation' which consists of systematically decoupling developments observed in metropolises and colonies (Go 2016: 104 ff.), but from the opposite perspective of interconnecting global developments and sociologies (Bhambra 2013). Instead of glorified Western modernity, what emerges from these different contributions is 'colonial, racial(ized), and gendered modernity' (Boatcă 2015: 13).

Moreover, the postcolonial critique of modernity theories is not restricted to classical theorists and modernization theory, which dominated theory building in social sciences worldwide in the whole second half of the last century (Knöbl 2001). Postcolonial criticisms also address more recent attempts to overcome the Eurocentric deficits of previous theories as the multiple modernities approach inaugurated by Eisenstadt (2000). For Randeria (2000: 46), the focus of Eisenstadt and other authors in the field of historical-comparative sociology on the particularities of modernization processes in different regions disregards global entanglements such as colonialism and slavery which have shaped modernity. Consequently, European exclusivity in constituting modernity remains unquestioned in this approach. In a similar vein, Dirlik (2003) denounces the Eurocentric core of multiple modernities theories while Bhambra (2013: 302) accurately describes the theoretical artifice through which multiple modernities admits diversity maintaining at the same time the European monopoly over defining the parameters of modernity.

Similar to the above discussion on the critique postcolonial scholars address to the regime of knowledge production in social sciences, one might prematurely conclude that the radical postcolonial critique of pre-existing modernity theories confirms the allegedly incommensurability between conventional theories and postcolonial critique. A closer look to the concrete interactions between both fields, however, corrects this first impression.

In terms of content, current postcolonial claims for seriously taking into account the historical and present interdependences between (post-)colonies and (post-)colonial powers present obvious affinities with Marxist currents in social sciences which have throughout history insisted on the interdependent constitution of modern slavery, colonialism and capitalism (e.g. Williams 1983 [1944]). It is true that Marxists, especially from the Global North, by referring to labour regimes and production relationships in the (post-)colonies as pre-capitalist or even primitive, have often reproduced the Eurocentric assumptions of conventional theories. Yet, at the same time, different Marxist authors warned of Eurocentric risks long before postcolonial authors did (e.g. Stavenhagen 1971, Amin 1989).

Also, contemporary moves in social theory show that recent postcolonial criticisms and especially the emphasis on the entangled constitution of global modernity have been selectively but productively absorbed in different fields generating new conceptualizations and perspectives as found for instance in the cases of historical-comparative sociology (e.g. Therborn 2003, Knöbl 2007, Mota and Wagner 2019), area studies (Arjomand 2014), inequality research (Jelin et al. 2018) and political economy (Costa/Gonçalves 2019).

Cultural theory

Instead of searching for facts and connections which could reposition the (post-) colonized in modern history, other authors, concentrate their postcolonial effort on the relationship between discourse and power, seeking to find a locus of enunciation that could escape essentialist ascriptions and transgress the cultural boundaries traced by colonial thought. Bhabha (1994) has pertinaciously pursues this strategy. His interest turns to the spaces of enunciation which are not defined by the polarity inside/outside, but are situated between the divisions, in the intermediate space between the borders that define any collective identity.

In contraposition to the constructions of homogenized identities that seek to imprison and localize culture, Bhabha focuses on the idea of difference. Difference here does not have the sense of biological or cultural heritage, or of reproduction of a symbolic belonging conferred by the place of birth, or the place of residence, or even social or cultural insertion, etc. It is constructed in the very process of its manifestation. It is not an entity or an expression of an accumulated cultural stock. It is a flow of *ad hoc* articulated representations, within the space between the lines of the totalizing and essentialist external identities – the nation, the working class, blacks, immigrants, etc. In these terms, even the remission to a supposed legitimacy bequeathed by an 'authentic' and 'original' tradition is to be treated as part of the performatization of difference – in the linguistic sense of the act of enunciation and in the dramaturgic sense of the *mise en scène*.

The affirmation of *difference*, as described by postcolonial scholars following poststructuralism, cannot be understood as social action in the terms normally used by sociological theories, since the action cannot be inscribed into a theoretical narrative. That is, one does not find in postcolonial theories a decipherable relationship between action and structure, or an alignment between *self* and society that could be de-codified into a generalizing sociological model. Even the idea of subject must be understood outside the canons of the social sciences. This might suggest that, at this level, McLennan is right in identifying serious limits for postcolonial studies in renewing social theory. Indeed, it seems that postcolonial studies reject the very praxis of theorizing as an endeavour of selecting and cognitively ordering social experiences, a process which cannot completely exclude dualisms: 'the distinction between subjective and objective, structure and agency, culture and material life, and so on'. (McLennan 2003: 82) However, starting in the 1990s, various authors have sought to translate postcolonial notions of unstable and changing differences and subjects into the social sciences' vocabulary. From these efforts emerged a variety of useful concepts and analytical perspectives that have contributed to promoting a paradigmatic shift in different research fields, particularly in migration and ethnicity studies.

British sociologists Stuart Hall (1992, 1996a, 1996b) and Paul Gilroy (1993, 1994) have made seminal contributions to this interdisciplinary translation as they avoided the 'rhetorical excesses of the literary post-structuralism' (Gilroy 1993: 110) in favour of constructing a political sociology of cultural negotiations based not in pre-political and rigid identities but in identifications, contingently articulated and negotiated in concrete interactions (Hall 1996b).

Hall developed the idea of a *decentred subject* to overcome the limits of the subject concepts he found in pre-existing sociological theories where 'the subject still has an inner core essence that is the real me, but this is formed and modified in a continuous dialogue with the cultural worlds outside and the identities which they offer' (Hall 1992: 275).

Building on Foucault, Hall (1992) recognizes the authority of the disciplinary discourse which, by classifying people, constitutes different subjects. At the same time, however, Hall shows that discourses also open spaces for the construction of decentred subjects. That is, a discourse acquires meaning and significance once we position ourselves. Such positioning is not

confounded with the autonomy and intention of the subject as found in liberal political theories. Even so, a space for the agency of these 'decentred subjects' does emerge if

> they fashion, stylize, produce and *perform* these positions […] in a constant, agonistic process of struggling with, resisting, negotiating and accommodating the normative or regulative rules with which they confront and regulate themselves.
>
> *(Hall 1996b: 13)*

Gilroy's translation of postcolonial cultural theory into social theory takes at least two paths. Whereas his first works try to re-narrate the trajectory of the Black diaspora from a constructivist perspective that emphatically rejects racialist assumptions, his contributions from the last two decades address coexistence in and within differences in Europe. Especially relevant and influential are his explorations of the concept conviviality, defined as

> 'a social pattern in which different metropolitan groups dwell in close proximity, but where their racial, linguistic and religious particularities do not – as the logic of ethnic absolutism suggests they must –[…]'.
>
> *(Gilroy 2006: 40)*

It is true that Hall's and Gilroy's reinterpretations of postcolonial cultural theory as well as contributions, which using other theoretical references also confront essentialist identity discourses (e.g. Brubaker 2006), have not yet acquired the status of canonical social theories. Nevertheless, these theories are present and visible today in teaching programmes of social sciences at universities in the Global North and the Global South and have also been increasingly applied to social research. This is demonstrated by studies in the field of conviviality (e.g. see Nowicka/ Vertovec 2014) or by the 'post-migrant paradigm', which convincingly challenges the dominant integration approach in migration studies (e.g. Foroutan 2019) and also by several studies on (re) constructions of 'traditional' ethnicities in different world regions (e.g. for an overview Pieterse 2020 [2004]).

Conclusions

Paraphrasing Bhabha (1994: 2), one could say that positions in epistemic struggles, as 'terms of cultural engagement, whether antagonistic or affiliative, are produced performatively'. Accordingly, those who defend a comprehensive, postcolonial reinvention of social sciences as well as those who try to defend social sciences against postcolonial attacks adopt belligerent performative styles which emphasize the conflicting constitution and even the irreconcilability of both fields. These radical discourses contrast with past and contemporary patterns of interaction between postcolonial studies and social sciences and more specifically social theory. Less than a postcolonial *third wave*, as programmatically claimed by Go (2016), or an epistemic clash as afraid by McLennan (2003), the postcolonial influence on social sciences has taken the form of a tenacious and scattered stream that flows into the different interstices of these disciplines. Consequently, from the frictions of postcolonial studies and social theory, one cannot expect a theoretical revolution leading to the constitution of a new (postcolonial) social theory, but more modest adjustments, corrections, and consecutive revisions in current social theory.

   In the case of the postcolonial critique of the regime of knowledge production in social sciences and of research on modernity, I have shown that postcolonial criticisms, on the one

hand, have similarities to internal self-criticism historically claimed by social scientists not linked to postcolonial scholarship. On the other hand, the postcolonial critique has found more and more resonance within established social sciences both in terms of content and also institutionally.

Also, in the field of cultural theory, translations of postcolonial assumptions to the vocabulary of social theory such as those developed by Hall and Gilroy have allowed for an increasing presence of postcolonial influences in social theory building and also in empirical research.

By highlighting this growing impact of postcolonial studies in social theory and social sciences, I am not diminishing the urgency and radicality of postcolonial critique to social theory, rather, I am simply trying to grasp developments effectively observed beyond rhetorical wars. Moves in all three fields briefly visited in this chapter clearly demonstrate that postcolonial influences can contribute and, indeed, have already contributed to social theory to overcome some of their central deficiencies. It does not seem that these changes will lead to an implosion of conventional social theory. Instead, it is much more probable that social theory will continue revising – slowly but persistently – their colonial-imperial, sexist, racist, and heteronormative assumptions.

Notes

1. This contribution builds on and updates my previous publications which, starting in 2005, have dealt with tensions and superpositions between postcolonial studies and social theory from different perspectives. Due to reasons of space, I do not quote these publications here, but for a complete list, please see: https://www.lai.fu-berlin.de/en/homepages/costa/index.html.
2. For practical reasons, I use the terms Global South to refer to the less affluent societies in the Southern hemisphere and Global North to refer to the wealthier societies in the Northern hemisphere, although the limits of this dual distinction are obvious: It does not apply to all national societies in both hemispheres and also disregards internal wealth disparities within each national society.
3. I use the expression minorized groups to express the condition experienced by segments of the population which are not necessarily demographic minorities but occupy subordinated positions within social and power hierarchies.
4. In this chapter, the Latin American variations of postcolonialism, known in international debates as decolonial theories or decolonial option (Escobar 2007), will not be dealt with separately. Rather, they are subsumed under the label postcolonial studies, though without obscuring the particularities of this subdivision. Especially pertinent here is the demarcation of the emergence of modernity, which, in decolonial studies, reaches back to the conquest of the Americas. As a consequence, Spain and Portugal are considered to be pioneers in modern history (see Quijano 2000). The importance of Spanish and Portuguese colonialism in the constitution of modernity is often neglected in anglophone postcolonial studies, which primarily focuses on British colonialism. Nevertheless, the differences between decolonial and postcolonial studies do not bear particular significance in the present discussion of the contributions of postcolonial (and decolonial) studies to renovating social theory.
5. For reasons of space and thematic affinity, I concentrate in this chapter on topics and fields which are closer to sociology and sociological theory, but postcolonial approaches are increasingly present also in political theory and political sciences – see, for instance, Mbembe's (2019) necropolitics theory which has been broadly applied to research on right conservatisms and the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, and Chatterjee's (2004) influential theory of citizenship as governmentality in 'most of the world'.
6. Following Derrida (1967), postcolonial studies have adopted deconstruction, understood as the analytical exercise of questioning the metaphysical character of binary concepts upon which modern sciences are based, as their central methodological tool (e.g. Patel 2006).

Sérgio Costa

References

Alatas, S. F. (2003). 'Academic Dependency and the Global Division of Labour in the Social sciences', *Current Sociology*, 51 (6) 599–613.

Amin, S. (1989). *Eurocentrism*, London: Zed Books.

Anthias, Floya (2012). 'Intersectional What? Social Divisions, Intersectionality and Levels of Analysis', *Ethnicities*, 13 (1) 3–19.

Arjomand, S. A. (ed.) (2014). *Social Theory and Regional Studies in the Global Age*, New York: Sunny Press.

Beck, U. (2008). *Weltrisikogesellschaft: Auf der Suche nach der verlorenen Sicherheit*, Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp.

Berg, M. L./Nowicka, M. (eds.) (2019). *Studying Diversity, Migration and Urban Multiculture. Convivial Tools for Research and Practice*, London: UCL Press.

Bhabha, H. (1994). *The Location of Culture*, London/New York: Routledge.

Bhambra, G. K. (2013). 'The Possibilities of, and for, Global Sociology: A Postcolonial Perspective', *Political Power and Social Theory*, 24 295–314.

Boatcă, M. (2015). *Global Inequalities beyond Occidentalism*, London: Routledge.

Brubaker, R. (2006). *Ethnicity without Groups*, Cambridge (Mass): Harvard Univ. Press.

Chakrabarty, D. (2000). *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Chatterjee, P. (2004). *The Politics of the Governed: Reflections on Popular Politics in Most of the World*, New York: Columbia Univ. Press.

Collyer, F. M. (2018). 'Global Patterns in the Publishing of Academic, Knowledge: Global North, Global South', *Current Sociology*, 66 (1) 56–73.

Connell, R. (2007). *Southern Theory: The Global Dynamics of Knowledge in Social Science*, Cambridge: Polity Press.

Conrad, S./Randeria, R. (2002). 'Einleitung', in S. Conrad and S. Randeria (eds.) *Jenseits des Eurozentrismus*, Frankfurt/M.: Campus, pp. 9–49.

Costa, S./Gonçalves, G. L. (2019). *A Port in Global Capitalism: Unveiling Entangled Accumulation in Rio de Janeiro*, London: Routledge.

Derrida, J. (1967). *L'écriture et la différence*, Paris: Éditions du Seuil

Dhawan, N. (ed.) (2014). *Decolonizing Enlightenment. Transnational Justice, Human Rights and Democracy in a Postcolonial World*, Opladen et al.: Barbara Budrich Publishers.

Dirlik, A. (2003). 'Global Modernity? Modernity in an Age of Global Capitalism', *European Journal of Social Theory*, 6 (3) 275–292.

Eisenstadt, S. N. (2000). 'Multiple Modernities', *Daedalus* 129 1–29.

Escobar, A. (2007). 'Worlds and Knowledge Otherwise. The Latin American Modernity/Coloniality Research Program', *Cultural Studies* 21 (2) 179–210.

Fals–Borda, O. (2009 [1970]). 'La crisis, el compromiso y la ciencia', in O. Fals–Borda, and V. M. Moncayo (eds.) *Una Sociología Sentipensante para América Latina*, Bogotá: Siglo del Hombre Editores/CLACSO.

Foroutan, Naika (2019). 'The Post-migrant Paradigm', in J.-J. Bock, and S. Macdonald (eds.) *Refugees Welcome?: Difference and Diversity in a Changing Germany*, Oxford/New York: Berghahn Books, pp. 121–142.

Gilroy, P. (1993). *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Gilroy, P. (1994). *Small Acts: Thoughts on the Politics of Black Cultures*, London: Serpent's Tail.

Gilroy, P. (2006): 'Multiculture in Times of War. An Inaugural Lecture Given at the London School of Economics', *Critical Quarterly*, 48(4) 27–45.

Go, J. (2016). *Postcolonial Thought and Social Theory*, New York: Oxford University Press.

Habermas, J. (1998). *Die postnationale Konstellation*, Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp.

Hall, S. (1992). 'The Question of Cultural Identity', in S. Hall, D. Held e Tony Mc Grew (eds.), *Modernity and Its Futures*, Cambridge: Polity Press, pp. 273–326.

Hall, S. (1993). 'The West and the Rest: Discourse and Power', in S. Hall and B. Gieben (eds.) *Formations of Modernity*, Cambridge: Polity Press.

Hall, S. (1996a). 'On Postmodernism and Articulation'. Interview, in L. Grossberg, D. Morley and C. Kuan–Hsing (eds.) *Stuart Hall: Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies*, London/New York: Routledge, pp. 131–150.

Hall, S. (1996b). 'Introduction: Who Needs "Identity"?', in S. Hall and P. du Gay (eds.) *Questions of Cultural Identity*, London: Sage, pp. 1–17.

Jelin, E./Motta, R. C./Costa, S. (eds.) (2018) *Global Entangled Inequalities. Conceptual Debates and Evidence from Latin America*, London: Routledge.

Keim, W. (2011). 'Counterhegemonic Currents and Internationalization of Sociology. Theoretical Reflections and One Empirical Example', *International Sociology*, 26 (1) 123–145.

Kerner, Ina (2013). *Postkoloniale Theorien zur Einführung*, Hamburg: Junius, 2nd unchanged ed.

Knöbl, W. (2001). *Spielräume der Modernisierung. Das Ende der Eindeutigkeit*, Weilerwist: Velbrück.

Knöbl, W. (2007). *Die Kontingenz der Moderne. Wege in Europa, Asien und Amerika*, Frankfurt/M./New York: Campus.

Martín, Eloísa (2017). 'Current Sociology and the Challenges of Inequality in Academia: 65 years Forging Spaces of Intelligibility', *Current Sociology*, 65 (3) 327–335.

Mbembe, Achille (2019). *Necropolitics*, Durham/London: Duke University Press.

McLennan, G. (2000). 'Sociology's Eurocentrism and the "Rise of the West" Revisited', *European Journal for Social Theory*, 3 (3) 275–292.

McLennan, G. (2003). 'Sociology, Eurocentrism, and Postcolonial Theory', *European Journal for Social Theory*, 6 (1) 69–86.

McLennan, G. (2013). 'Postcolonial Critique: The Necessity of Sociology', *Postcolonial Sociology Political Power and Social Theory*, 24 119–144.

Mignolo, W. (2000). *Local Histories/Global Designs: Coloniality, Subaltern Knowledges, and Border Thinking*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Mota, A./Wagner, P. (2019). *Collective Action and Political Transformations: The Entangled Experiences in Brazil, South Africa and Europe*, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Nederveen Pieterse, J. (2020 [2004]). *Globalization & Culture. Global Mélange*, Lanham, MD and Guilford, CT: Rowman & Littlefield, 4th ed.

Nowicka, M./Vertovec, S. (2014): 'Comparing Convivialities: Dreams and Realities of Living-with-Difference', *European Journal of Cultural Studies* 17 (4) 357–374.

Patel, S. (2006). 'Beyond Binaries: A Case for Self-Reflexive Sociologies', *Current Sociology*, 54 (3) 381–395.

Patel, S. (2015). 'The Global Transition and the Challenge to Social Sciences', in B. Bringel and J. M. Domingues (eds.) *Global Modernity and Social Contestation*, Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, pp. 36–50.

Quijano, A. (2000). 'Coloniality of Power and Eurocentrism in Latin America', *International Sociology*, 15 (2) 215–232.

Randeria, S. (2000). 'Jenseits von Soziologie und soziokultureller Anthropologie: Zur Ortbestimmung der nichtwestlichen Welt in einer zukünftigen Sozialtheorie', in U. Beck and A. Kieserling (eds.) *Ortsbestimmung der Soziologie: Wie die kommende Generation Gesellschaftswissenschaften betreiben will*, Baden-Baden: Nomos, pp. 41–50.

Ruvituso, C. (2020). 'Southern Theories in Northern Circulation: Analyzing the Translation of Latin American Dependency Theories into German', *Tapuya: Latin American Science, Technology and Society*, 3 (1) 92–106.

Said, E. (1978). *Orientalism*, New York: Vintage.

Santos, B. S. (2014). *Epistemologies of the South: Justice Against Epistemicide*, Boulder: Paradigm Publishers.

Stavenhagen, R. (1971). 'Decolonizing Applied Social Sciences', *Human Organization*, 30 (4) 333–344.

Steinmetz, G. (2014). 'The Sociology of Empires, Colonies, and Postcolonialism', *Annual Review of Sociology*, 40 77–103.

Stichweh, R. (2000). *Weltgesellschaft*, Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp.

Therborn, G. (2003). 'Entangled Modernities', *European Journal of Social Theory*, 6 (3) 293–305.

Touraine, A. (1965). *Sociologie de l'action*. Paris: Edition du Seuil.

Ventura, R. (1987). '"Estilo Tropical": A natureza como pátria', *Ideologie and Literature. New Series*, II (2) 145–158.

Wallerstein, I. (1996). *Open the Social Sciences: Report of the Gulbenkian Commission on the Restructuring of the Social Sciences*, Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Williams, E. (1983 [1944]). *Capitalism and Slavery*, London: Andre Deutsch, 6th reprint.

29

Nature and society

Byron Kaldis

"After so many years watching baboons, I realize that only humans (including scientists) can separate the social from the ecological"

Shirley Strum in Latour (2020)

Developments in the biological sciences and the neurosciences (see Gunnell's chapter in this volume) have been perceived as either drastically altering the disciplinary landscape within which the social sciences are located or as altogether threatening the very epistemic autonomy of the social sciences. In some cases, such developments have been explicitly posited as attempts to usurp the role of the social sciences as distinct discourses dealing with human beings and their unique social and political action, or as a type of "consilience", to use E. O. Wilson's terminology, whereby because nature is seen as unitary causal reality organized hierarchically, there must also be a bridging of the gap between humanities and natural sciences (Carroll 2016).

This chapter presents some of the most prominent disciplinary interplays of nature and society that link the biological nature of human beings with their social organization: it charts the epistemological and social-theoretic standing of human sociobiology, in particular, a central presence in evolutionary explanations of human sociality, presents some criticism of it, and goes on to showcase recent developments in the "biosocial" or "biocultural synthesis of the "bio-socio" disciplinary interplay. Sociobiology in general is the study of the evolution of social behaviour in certain gregarious animals that exhibit sociality. *Human* sociobiology specifically is sociobiology's extension into human sociality: in the phrase of the primatologist Frans de Waal, human beings are even more social, they are "obligatorily gregarious". Obviously animal gregariousness – as we know early on from Malinowski when social anthropology as a field was forming its separate identity – must not be identified with human sociality. Yet (early) evolutionary-adaptationist theories of both animal and human cognition have not heeded Malinowski's warning. Increased knowledge gained about genes and evolutionary game theory has added scientific confidence to such biologically-inspired explanations of the origins of human cultural, social and political life, affecting social theories, too. It is now common wisdom that the development of social cooperation among (almost all) primates shows shared features that inform the particular development of human social life, including political arrangements, moral reasoning

and the (hierarchical or not) stratified structure of political power that social theory cannot ignore (Tomasello 2020; Henrich 2020; Boehm 2016; Gintis 2016; Gintis et al. 2019; Fry 2013).

A kindred development has been "evolutionary psychology" championing the "adaptive mind" the "modularity of the mind", provocatively characterizing our current psychological and mental make-up as being appropriate for a Stone Age mind. Both sociobiology and evolutionary psychology have advanced theses regarding the evolutionary origin of ethics, something we shall not be touching on directly. The gist of all such attempts is their common employment of Darwinian evolutionism or sophisticated variants thereof. In a similar vein R. Byrne titled his 1988 book on the evolution of intelligence, *Machiavellian Intelligence*, adopting de Waal's term in recognition of the fact that complex *social* intelligence was developed in primates and was connected to social complexity that "has the attractive feature of inherent positive feedback: Because the competitors are conspecifics, any increase in intelligence will automatically spread in the population, thus raising the level of social sophistication needed to excel in the future" (Byrne 1996). Similar approaches have been developed concerning political power ad political intelligence differing in human and non-human primates thereby affecting the chances of producing egalitarian as opposed to hierarchically dominant power structures (Boehm 1997).

The nature-society controversy has played out in two ways: (a) on the one hand, the debate is not merely a debate about the autonomous status of social sciences as explanatory vehicles independent of the natural sciences, but also or mainly one about *normative* social theory waging a political war against normative claims being made in the name of "genes" or evolutionary studies of primates; and (b) on the other hand, the familiar twin epistemological worries, of *determinism* and *reductionism*, have acquired subtle aspects thanks to advances in biology whereby the so-called *gene-culture coevolution* is the most promising balanced framework that avoids the pitfalls of extreme culture-cantered explanations of all human activity on the one hand, or the one-sided individualistic framework of humans as rational maximizers of self-advantage (gene-induced or not), on the other.

Such an evolutionary biology or psychology becomes a social and political theory in its own right. The same goal is also aimed at in the kindred field of evolutionary ethics (Barkow 2006; Boniolo and De Anna 2006; Farber 1994; de Waal et al. 2006; Wright 1994). Whereas to deny that human nature is an integral part of our moral views is a kind of inane "anthropodenial" in de Waal's terminology, since having the kind of biological make-up we happen to have affects what kinds of pain we feel, etc., nevertheless, to claim that all our ethical responses and our moral theories must trace their origin to evolution is not outright self-evident and hence it is heavily contentious (among the first philosophers to embrace it was Mackie 1985 and to combat it Midgley 1979; cf. Singer 1982). For a punchline of the original hard line, read: "Morality has no other demonstrable ultimate function (other than survival of, and by, the genetic material)" (Wilson 1978).

Evolutionary approaches to sociality

What the two principal evolutionist-adaptationist programmes of sociobiology and evolutionary psychology combined would say about human sociality boosted by recent findings about neuronal activity in the brains of primates when motor action is involved is that: humans "have a faculty of social cognition" composed by mental building-blocks geared to specific tasks, or prosocial dispositions, all operating in an organized pattern to "guide thought and behavior with respect to the evolutionary recurrent adaptive problems posed by the social world" (Cosmides and Tooby 1992: 165).

Sociobiology's main claim is to subsume *all* forms of behaviour, whether animal or human, under the study of that field of biology that examines the behaviour of the so-called social animals, especially the social insects and non-human mammals. It is this assimilation that has been anathema to its retractors (see a balanced introduction in Ruse 1979).

Edward O. Wilson, the eminent zoologist at Harvard and world expert on insects, was the first to define sociobiology "as the systematic study of the biological basis of all social behavior" (Wilson 2000 [1975]) – Wilson elsewhere says that the term "sociobiology" was coined by John Scott in 1946. He published his now famous or infamous voluminous book *Sociobiology: The New Synthesis* in 1975, containing a first and last chapter expressly added to stir a controversy. The first chapter was entitled "The Morality of the Gene". These enveloping chapters extended the biological study of the behaviour of social animals into human societies and morality while placed in between them, was a huge number of pages of run-of-the-mill animal sociobiology and population genetics. On the provocative side, we read that "sociology and the other social sciences, as well as the humanities are the last branches of biology, waiting to be included in the Modern Synthesis". There is accordingly, for Wilson, a single "thread" that unites the sociality of insects like termites, of non-human mammals like turkeys as well as the social behaviour of humans. At the same time Wilson makes large predictive claims perilously against the grain of social sciences which, traditionally, have been self-consciously non-predictive: "The principal goal of a general theory of sociobiology should be an ability to predict features of social organization from a knowledge of … population parameters combined with information on the behavioral constraints imposed by the genetic constitution of the species" (Wilson 2000 [1975]: 5). He recently reiterated: "Humanity is a biological species in a biological world. … Although exalted in many ways, we remain an animal species of the global fauna. Our lives are restrained by the two laws of biology: all of life's entities and processes are obedient to the laws of physics and chemistry; and all of life's entities and processes have arisen through evolution by natural selection" (Wilson 2013).

The furore over Wilson's expressly provocative views sandwiching an otherwise ordinary scientific presentation of sociality among animals started immediately and went on for quite some time. (Kitcher 1985; Kaye 1986; Segerstråle 2000; Bennett 2015; Park and Guille-Escuret 2017). Some of sociobiology's initially provocative views or its general tendency to use evolution as its main analytical tool have been widely accepted now but dissociated from their supposedly automatic entailment of certain other views regarding human ethics and so forth, i.e. simplistic applications to the human case that have definitely been demolished and replaced by more sophisticated evolutionary explanations of human sociality. Others have continued with the application of sociobiological analyses at the level of genes (e.g. Dawkins 1977; Alexander 1979, 1987) with softened yet explicit anthropological applications.

The furore also had the effect of calming down Wilson's initial hyperbolic goals and unmeasured declarations (see his immediate first reaction in Wilson 1976). In his 1979 Tanner Lecture we read: "man's social behavior has unique qualities unlikely to be predicted from a general, animal-based sociobiology" (Wilson 1980: 54), but also "social theory can be regarded as continuous with evolutionary biology". Yet he proposes still: "A new perspective on the human condition, extending beyond the species and through evolutionary time, requires the cultivation of *comparative social theory:* the deduction of principles that define the evolution of social life in intelligent, culture-transmitting species wherever they might occur. And similarly, a transspecific *comparative ethics* is both feasible and desirable" (Wilson 1979: 62).

Interestingly the twin bones of contention we touched on above, determinism and reductionism, threatening the independence of social theory, have either been claimed to have been unfairly attributed to sociobiologists of the initial stock or have gained increasingly nuanced analyses avoiding vulgar positions asserting the opposition between environment and genetic

inheritance, in the form of gene-culture coevolution theories (Boyd 2018; Boyd and Richerson 2005; Richerson and Boyd 2005).

The perceived social and political dangers of sociobiology were first raised by colleagues of Wilson's and, tellingly, by those biologists and life scientists who spoke in the name of Marxism (Lewontin et al. 1984; Rose and Rose 1976: 34, 59) and relatively less by philosophers (Stuart Hampshire was one of the first philosophers to make a contribution in the *New York Review of Books* focusing on the epistemological pitfalls) or by social theorists (with the exception of cultural anthropologists such as Sahlins or Marvin Harris). The economist Paul Samuelson was also one of the first negative commentators in *Newsweek* in 1979.

One common critical theme is roughly along the same line of criticism used against Darwin and even against his precursors, in particular his grandfather Erasmus Darwin. In the case of the latter, it has been claimed that when he or his like-minded progressivists were enunciating evolutionist ideas that brought nature and society into close contact (though without jeopardizing religion) they were all in favour of ideas of social and economic progress mingled with the Industrial Revolution's success: in doing so, it is claimed, theirs was just a classic case of ideology – in this instance the ideology of the Industrial Revolution – being read into nature (Ruse 2008). The same type of argumentative strategy has been used by Wilson's Marxist detractors: namely, reading one's favoured social and political beliefs or ideologically deformed views that reflect a certain stage of capitalist production to biological nature and back again in reflection; that is, extrapolating from the contingent to the inevitable, from the social to the natural and back to the social. Here is Sahlins' similar diagnosis: "Since the seventeenth century we seem to have been caught up in this vicious cycle, alternately applying the model of capitalist society to the animal kingdom, then reapplying this bourgeoisified animal kingdom to the interpretation of human society" and "What is inscribed in the theory of sociobiology is the entrenched ideology of Western society: the assurance of its naturalness, and the claim of its inevitability" (Sahlins 1976: 101).

The sociobiological programme insists on drawing an epistemological distinction on which it defends its distinctive character while avoiding attacks. It distinguishes between explanations on the basis of cell or molecular biology or on the basis of neurophysiology on the one hand and the study of population phenomena due to evolution on the other. Claiming the latter as its own field, it insists on the distinction between studying the anatomy or the physiology of animals or their ethological behaviour and the study of evolutionary trends on the basis of gene heritability and adaptation to environmental pressures of the natural environment on populations, the latter being gene pools on which natural selection operates. It is the latter field of study that sociobiology carves out for itself, honouring revised Darwinian principles of natural selection. The primary goal is always finding the best, testable hypothesis explaining the evolutionary adaptive value carried by a trait or behaviour. This goal is served, methodologically, by drawing *analogies* between humans and animals – though such analogical reasoning rests on the fallacy of not distinguishing between what in biology are called *homologies* and what *analogies* (see Gould 1979: 240–241). As feminist life-scientist and critic Anne Fausto-Sterling has said, referring to the phalaropes, with their reversed sex roles "You name your species and make your political point" (cited for ridicule, though, in Wright 1996 [1994]).

And since the social life into which such allegedly genetically determined human beings would enter falls under the multi-variance of events being themselves not exclusively biological, any insistence on social life being the uni-directional outcome of biology is simply logically flawed. Early sociobiologists such as Wilson were relatively careless, talking loosely of "biological basis", and incurring the wrath of their opponents when they mixed carefully guarded terms with outright exaggerations: talking of genes as "hidden masters", while at the same time (Wilson 1978) explaining e.g. sexual activity and family organization in terms of the need for bonding, not unlike

functionalist sociologists. Others were more adamant about explaining human social life in purely biological language. As things progressed they learned to be more cagey and sophisticated, yet the problems remained. No sociobiologist would claim that in theorizing about human societies they see human beings as simply genetically determined. We know that there is no one-to-one genotype–phenotype correspondence even at the same chromosome loci of the same allele. What is more, genotypes may be inherited (not entirely) but, even so, that does not make identical phenotypes inheritable. For two reasons genetics recognizes the impossibility of total correspondence between genes and character: (1) due to "pleiotropy" one and the same gene may affect more than one external characteristics of an organism; and (2) due to "polygeny" one and the same behavioural trait or characteristic may be the effect of more than one gene. It is now a common stance of both the sociobiologists and their opponents that simplistic determinism has given its place to different views of gene–environment interdependence.

This can best be seen in a contrast drawn by Lewontin (Lewontin 2000: 8–9, 42, 48–49, and passim). On the one hand, the environment can be seen as an independent relatum against which genetic mutations, (biological variations) i.e. the other relatum, are tested. Even if the environment is itself changing the changes are held to be independent of the gene variations. The organism is a kind of "plaything" tossed around by "evolutionary forces" whereby the environment is a (changing) "niche" to which the organism must either settle or not. Another metaphor here would be the one that has become prominent in evolutionary psychology and the modularity of the mind: the organism or mind responds to problems thrown at it by altering itself to accommodate the necessary solutions to those problems. In this original Darwinian view, the environment changes on its own due to several causes that remain independent from what happens to the organism, and the organism then has to "respond" accordingly – either adapts ("fits") or not to this environment. "Fitness" and "adaptation" are thus numerical markers. By contrast, in Lewontin's own more subtle version the two relata co-vary dynamically in the sense that there is a holistic understanding of the erstwhile outside-inside dichotomy: environments are not niches but co-constructions. Hence the beloved metaphor in these debates: Lewis Carroll's Red Queen image of organism and environment chasing each other.

Orthodox Darwinian explanation is cast in terms of individual selection steering away from the mistaken views of those who see natural selection acting on groups, i.e. against whole species selection banned by Darwin himself. What Darwin realized but remained a puzzle for him to explain can now be fully explainable by means of the knowledge gained about how the genes work, in particular the knowledge and corresponding theories plus mathematical models in genetics that were developed in the late 1950s and in the 1960s. Orthodox Neo-Darwinism asserts the primacy of the twin forces of evolution – natural selection plus random genetic drift, gene flow and mutation – through which species originate and change. But the unit on which the mechanism of selecting operates is the *individual* organism, and in some more recent versions the gene within the organism. The lever of evolution by natural selection operating on the genes transforms organisms – in the words of Dawkins, the principal advocate of this gene-centred version – into simple "vehicles" through which genes propagate after passing the natural selection test. Genes, therefore, struggle not just for existence but also for multiplication in the same sense that the well-known analogous Malthusian process demanded and was adopted by Darwin himself before the (re)discovery of the genes and their mechanism (something that Darwin missed). For Dawkins these are primarily "selfish genes" working "opportunistically" to propagate their numbers in the next generations of each organism in which they find themselves (Dawkins 1977; cf. Hardin 1978). Additional theoretical support for these views has come from complicated mathematical modelling, game-theoretic applications of cost–benefit analyses similar to rational choice explanations used in some social-scientific explanations. It should come as no surprise then that in the field of

economics such a Neo-Darwinism was more than welcome (see Rosenberg 1981: 67ff; Becker 1976; Koslowski 1996) or even linking evolution to property rights (Krier 2010).

But as in the case of extreme culture-dominated explanations of everything, where such sophisticated versions of sociobiology as gene-culture co-evolution, attacked the "oversocialized conception of man" (sic), similarly, evolutionary game theory has shown that the favourite *Homo economicus* model of egoistic maximizers was equally falsified by evolutionary evidence across different cultures, showing a kind of fixed genetic pre-disposition to sociality and non-selfish cooperation. Both of these corrections of extreme one-sided social theorizing, were the result of refined evolutionary theories.

Explaining altruism and non-selfish adaptations

Refined phylogenetic research going back in deep time has shown that, irrespective of diverse natural-environments, closely related primate species exhibit similar social arrangements and that sociality in non-human primates is the result of genes favouring prosocial disposition and not merely strategies responding to environmental pressure, e.g. food scarcity, supposedly unrelated to phylogenetic make-up (Shultz et al. 2011).

The puzzle perplexing Darwin was what in a sense has become the spur of developing sociobiology from its animal version to its human one. How could obviously altruistic behaviour in favour of a group be explained in the face of the equally obvious self-induced catastrophic consequences for the individual organism concerned? How could such a self-suicidal behaviour be explained if the genes responsible for such self-sacrificial acts would find no outlet to propagate? The vehicle itself gets eliminated and with it the relevant genes. So sooner or later there will be no such genes left and, naturally, selection would have weeded out all forms of such behaviour. Yet altruism persists. How is this possible?

One answer has been: only if we stop talking of groups and focus on *kin*. Solving the puzzle in the case of social insects has inspired sociobiologists (other than Wilson) to extend it via the gene-centred route to the human case. Parallel puzzles concern similar behaviour that is apparently self-annihilating in terms of the genes' future, e.g. homosexuality, or not fully adaptive or maximizing in evolutionary gain, e.g. some forms of religion, etc. – all these being the primary targets awaiting explanation by sociobiology, the proponents of which hail them as even better explanations than the corresponding social-scientific ones (for representative criticism of the overall programme see Lewontin 1976; Symons 1989). Now obviously non-egoistic, genuine, or non-calculating, or non-reciprocal, altruism is hard to explain in the context of evolutionary theory in which natural selection operates. This would be so if one chooses to remain at the wrong level of analysis. Looked at as an act of an organism one misses the fact that behind the individual there lies a whole self-perpetuating strategy carried out by the genes.

What is needed to make the argument stick is what has come to be known as "inclusive fitness" and the haplodiploid type of genetic make-up found in certain insects and not in others. As an equivalent example to the types of human beings whose social behaviour should have eliminated them long time ago, yet paradoxically they are still around, here there are self-sacrificing insect-workers which should have been extinct, yet they are not. Given the mathematics of the case regarding which and how many alleles are found in the chromosomal bodies of relatives, plus certain environmental constraints, the crucial point here is that if the probability of a gene's self-multiplication lies in its copies being perpetuated side-ways to the individual's relatives, i.e. more of the same would come if one organism helps its kin produce offspring rather than the organism itself trying to give birth to its own offspring, then that gene would follow a cost–benefit maximizing strategy to that effect.

Such strategies have been shown by mathematical modelling to be "evolutionary stable strategies". The full force of the meaning of such a phrase characterizes all sorts of behaviours that follow particular strategies of maximizing fitness in the face of adversaries doing the same, as we have learned from game-theory. Here is an excellent example warning against oversimplification, and a case from which to draw social analogies. Birds seen as behaving in an apparently "dupe" way obviously being manipulated by other subspecies which force on the former their own offspring to be raised by the "dupes", thus increasing the burden on the latter to invest in both their own offspring and in those of the "free-riders" are actually not losers: what happens once we follow the algorithms of population genetics is that the apparent paradox evaporates and the "dupe" strategy may appear under suitable circumstances to be the benefit-maximizing strategy that evolution has favoured for both subspecies.

Try to extrapolate such benevolent freeriding to the case of human societies and you have theories by early sociobiologists (without the benefit of game-theory) on differential parental-offspring investment or on human sons and daughters maximizing their own fitness by being "cocky" to their parents or behaving as rebels with overall beneficial effects even for the parents. Or try even further to claim that all sorts of economic free-riding might have a game-theoretic effect on particular occasions that rewards the practitioners with economic benefit that maximizes all round, for the whole society, and you have landed with a controversial social theory in your hands. The line of thought on evolutionary stable strategies that grew out of the first insights of what I present in the next paragraph as a veritable scientific revolution was carried out in what later became a flourishing research programme linking genetic evolutionary strategies with game-theory modelling that clearly eschews the vagaries of popular human sociobiology (see Maynard-Smith 1982; Axelrod 1984; Axelrod and Hamilton 1981). Actually the game-theoretic approach was paralleled by the same kind of analysis of all sorts of social settings, principally international relations, where the dominant model based on Hobbesian prisoner-dilemma games was evidently similar even if applied to beetles or to nations: what gets counted is the relative genetic cost of sociality/cooperation.

Group selection in favour of groups containing a preponderance of altruistic member is expressed as a canon that prescribes: within groups, selfish members defeat altruists, but groups of altruists win over groups with selfish members.

The turn away from "group-selection", understood erroneously as favouring species or as natural selection having species as its unit of selection, and back to Darwin's own viewpoint privileging *individual* selection but with the additional *sideways* favouring the individual's *kin*, i.e. "kin selection" (as inclusive fitness theory was named by Maynard-Smith), and even more gene selection is owed to two pioneers: the American G. Williams and the British W. C. Hamilton (Hamilton 1964). Their work inspired a whole u-turn in the analytical model of evolution. George C. Williams' emblematic – even in terms of the words in its title – *Adaptation and Natural Selection* (Williams 1966) opened the door to re-Darwinizing in an orthodox fashion the field. However, not all sociobiologists or evolutionary theorists would accept kin selection.

Hamilton's formula of kin selection explains why a trait is favoured even if it is disfavoured at the level ordinary individual selection, to the extent that the benefit to others in a group, symbolized by B, when multiplied by degree of relatedness r, exceeds the cost to one's self. "Hamilton's rule" is written as $Br - C > 0$.

In a sense that is not metaphorical one could say in a teleological vein that the prey "attracts" the predator "on purpose" in an act of self-sacrifice, saving its own flock, so that the whole chain of genetic manipulation could be activated and natural selection operates on the evolutionary process – only that strictly speaking it is the genes that "do" this, not the animal, and certainly, as sociobiologists are quick to point out, no anthropomorphism is being intended – no conscious

or intentional acting on the part of genes actually takes place. Or in the case of group-selection explanation, eusociality is promoted by such behaviours that raise the adaptation fitness of the whole group, especially when the gene responsible for the prosocial strategy in the self-sacrificed individual has a higher probability rate of encountering the same allele in the spatial proximity of those saved.

Armed with this development from population genetics we can augment our sociobiological social theory of the "culture on the leash". Certain types of families or education and the like can be seen as falling within the leash's slack yet others cause its being taut, held tightly by the "selfish genes". The genes would themselves put a stop to any kind of social arrangement that would contravene their algorithmically expressed evolutionary fitness: there would simply be none left to carry on those reformed detrimental institutions. No cultural artefact, social arrangement, or political institution (something, by the way, that Montesquieu realized in pre-genetic terms) could develop or vary in such a way that – ceteris paribus – the gene pools would end up being totally depleted. The survival of the genes would put an end to this. The fact therefore that certain social arrangements or political systems have not been selected while others prove sustainable despite superficial variegation of their form entails that the former are "unnatural", hence impossible, given the gene stock we happen to have as human beings, while the latter prove to be natural and hence "unchangeable". But if the latter contain forms of domination and inequality among human beings, unjust societies, or forms of social arrangements that appear rigidly to favour one of the sexes, then the normative claim inherent in this (orthodox) sociobiological analysis of what is "natural" is obviously going to generate controversies.

The Hamiltonian inclusive fitness programme, though generally commanding the ascent of the majority, has been criticized. Two different critiques are that of Wilson and of Gintis, making different critical points that are of interest for the relationship of evolutionary explanations and social life. Wilson's point is that in general eusociality is both rare and late in the evolutionary history, a fact that demands explanation: against kin selection he favours group selection as primary. "[C]lose kinship is not the cause of the origin of eusociality, but its consequence. All that is needed to cross the threshold from the solitary way of life to the eusocial way of life is the silencing by mutation of one or more alleles that prescribe the tendency of parents to care for their offspring at first" and "The role of group selection in the evolutionary origin of human societies has been primary, although entangled with individual-level selection" (Wilson 2020: 56). The altruism needed to spearhead eusociality must have far exceeded that of parent-offspring "It consisted of an early and abrupt withdrawal from personal reproduction on the part of at least a small number of individuals. The final step thereafter was not a consequence of the close kinship of family members, as many researchers have supposed. The reverse is true: close kinship within the group typically followed from the origin of eusociality" (ibid: 28). The Hamiltonian general rule is erroneous also for reasons of probability theory and I here cite one major epistemological flaw: Br-C > 0 can only be a post-factum retrodiction after the relevant cost and benefits have been calculated. Gintis' criticism of the Hamiltonian rule is that "in principle it has no necessary relationship with genealogy or kin selection, but rather is an expression of the social structure of the reproductive population" (Gintis 2014: 486). Therefore if we construe social groups as the phenotypic expressions of the genome of the species in question, then the sharing of genetic material requires cooperation between individuals i.e. interactions between carriers of the loci of the alleles. In this sense the genome "codes for the social structure of the organisms it creates" and so "Social groups are thus genetic rather than epigenetic, although in advanced social species epigenetic cultural forces may be integrally involved in the constitution of social groups the genome codes" (ibid: 498).

Critiques and extensions

Most of the early passionate reaction to sociobiology was placed explicitly within an ideologically loaded framework of what science "really" is or ought to be recognized to be: that scientific explanations have social determinants and are embedded in social matrices; that scientific knowledge is structured by the social world or that there is a "bourgeois view of nature", evolutionary theory being its apotheosis (e.g. Lewontin et al. 1984: passim; cf. Lewontin 1991; cf. Dupré 1992, 1993).

Human sociobiology in its development has had to take into account the social environment as we have seen either in the form of the "leash" principle or in the form of the "gene-culture co-evolution" (Lumsden and Wilson 1981, 1983; Richerson and Boyd 2005). In either case the non-genetic socio-cultural superstructure plays only a collaborative role, sometimes taking on as its task the assisting of genes: laws, customs, education, artistic production could boost collaterally what the genes allow. This is the case with another social phenomenon, the prohibition of incest, that sociobiologists are both at pains to explain and at the same time happy to showcase as an instance of their being unjustly accused of being determinists and reductionists. On the one hand, if incest leads to genetic deterioration then no laws or socially imposed sanctions are needed since nature could automatically take care of itself (Trigg 1985: 156–184; Rosenberg 1981: 178ff). On the other hand, socially enforced regulations (i.e. prohibiting by law) are seen as a necessary additional force injected into nature in certain kinds of societies. It becomes obvious at this point that sociobiology cannot claim scientific status as a social-scientific theory if it remains at the level of vague assertions such as the ones we have examined about gene-culture synergy of sorts. Deciding in which types of societies the genetic base is sufficient and in which it is in need of the cultural–legal superstructure to reflect back on the genetic base demands being clear about the kind of causal relationships between naturalistic infrastructure and cultural superstructure across the board. Otherwise it sounds as if sociobiologists avail themselves of convenient ad hoc distinctions: sometimes the gene-base is sufficient, sometimes the social–cultural superstructure must legislate social action. In extreme versions of genetic determinism, sometimes encountered in biological theories of incest special "lethal recess" genes are stipulated. Whenever the genetic base is admitted as sufficient, then sociobiology runs the risk of losing sight of the distinction it needs to keep alive with respect to the cultural superstructure which seems to implode or collapse into the base: should there be no distinct cultural superstructure with respect to which the genetic base stands in causal relation, thereby affecting it, then there is no causal relation between the two, period. The cultural superstructure becomes just a name of a part of the genetic infrastructure. Charting a way to distinguish these two amounts to a pluralist methodological programme needed for social sciences perhaps best encapsulated in the title of one of Sahlins' *NYRB* contributions, "Culture as Protein and Profit" (1978).

At various points throughout we encountered one of the earliest and most repeated accusations hurled constantly against sociobiology as social theory: its *reactionary* character. This links up with what we said about its normativity. The principal accusers have been S. J. Gould and R. Lewontin and their allies of either Marxist pedigree or of similar sort, scientists like Steven Rose, Leon Kamin, or Jon Beckwith. The criticism takes the form of sociobiology furnishing us with "just so-stories" as its critics call sociobiological explanations, borrowing Kipling's phrase. Adopting the evolutionary process of the species, the critics claim, sociobiology cannot but embrace as natural the status quo of injustice (Ruse 2008: 237ff, 506ff; Ruse 1984; Ruse and Wilson 1986).

An interesting and thriving alternative to sociobiology challenging neo-Darwinian orthodoxy is the so-called *niche construction* approach (a kindred development to that of Lewontin's

mentioned above) (Odling-Smee et al. 2003). It is recently seen to be applicable to the humanities, too (Laland and O'Brian 2010). "Niche construction theory potentially integrates the biological and social aspects of the human sciences" (Kendal et al. 2011: 785). Niche construction replaces the one-sided view of evolution as solely gene-driven showing how human cultural interventions on the environment alter the latter into an active player in the evolutionary process bearing feedback effects on selection processes. Organisms modifying their's and others' environment modify themselves too. This interactive way of evolution recognizes two processes, natural selection but also environmental modification (niche construction) and two types of inheritance in evolution, genetic and ecological inheritance, including cultural inheritance in the case of human beings producing socio-cultural changes to their environment that feed back onto them; they are the active agents of evolution. Cultural niche construction develops further the gene-culture coevolution approach allowing a precise causal role to culture, economic practices, social norms and how these are transmitted. (Kendal 2011; Laland et al. 2010). Niche construction theory has been used also as an integrative model of biology and anthropology (Fuentes 2015).

Equally interesting is the different history of Marxist reception and eventual rejection of sociobiology in China (Jianhui and Fan 2003; cf. Zhang 1994). It should be stressed, though, that both in the case of the older eugenics movement as well as in the case of sociobiological explanations based on the propagation of genes acting independently of the conscious actions of the individual who bears them, being Marxist does not necessarily amount to an opposition to either. J. B. S. Haldane is a classic case in point: anecdotal stories have him calculate on the back of a beer-mat at a pub the differential mathematical ratios of (the probability of) his genes (or copies of alleles strictly speaking) being present at the same chromosomal loci in his siblings depending on the degree of kin-relation, i.e. brothers/sisters, cousins, etc., in an attempt to determine which ones he should be prepared to sacrifice himself for (and for how many precisely). Though his reply may have been facetious, his calculations were nevertheless correct and serious as Hamiltonian genetic mathematics of "inclusive fitness" would later show in identical fashion.

Some of the arguments against drastically altering our nature are socio-political, others biopolitical, while others stem from an opposite avant-garde cultural critique that wants to redraft what counts as the nature vs. culture or society divide or what counts as "humanity" shattering uniform notions that privilege humans as we are today. These contemporary alternative voices are also forms of alternative social and political theory.

One of the most interesting suggestions among the former is Rabinow's widely used concept of "biosociality" meant to invert the dependence of society to nature: "If sociobiology is culture constructed on the basis of a metaphor of nature, then in biosociality nature will be modeled on culture … A crucial step in overcoming the nature/culture split will be the dissolution of the category of 'the social'" (Rabinow 1996: 99). Patients, e.g. with an identifiable set of specified chromosomes responsible for their debilitating condition will form social communities named by, and around, that chromosome. Similarly (e.g. Rheinberger 2000: 27) there is an "irreversible transformation" of all sorts of beings, including humans, towards "deliberately engineered beings" so that the opposition between biology and culture will be collapsing.

In so-called postgenomic times whereby the erstwhile one-sided view of the gene as dominant transmitter of encoding DNA has been shown to be fallacious, the interplay of biology and society has been reconceptualized along novel lines that can only be mentioned here: one of these is the rise of so-called *biocultural anthropology* along with a similar line of approach that focuses on medical anthropology (Leatherman and Goodman 2019); another one is the current meteoric rise of so-called *molecular epigenetics* that shows how gene expression can be

non-genetically or environmentally affected in a neo-Lamarckian way (the environment being the uterus and how it is affected by social inequality and other adverse social factors that transmit to the offspring (Meloni 2014; Meloni 2016; Lock 2015)) while a third one is the holistic notion of *holobiont* as a unit of selection or cooperation; and, we should also include the notion of *allostasis* (the reverse of homeostasis) as a long-term anticipatory regulatory process of an organism, whereby the interplay of hormone secretion and social environment (degrees of danger correlated with increased levels of cortisol) reveal how social practices and the regulation of features of social environments necessary for sociality and cooperation are due to adaptations – reciprocal effects on steroids or neurotransmitters, dysfunctional states of which can lead to disruption of the organism. This has given rise to the notion of *social allostasis* (Shulkin 2011b). Both in non-human animals and humans, it is now documented that social cooperation or the formation of social groups interacts with increased levels of allostasis in an organism's nervous and hormonal systems' adaptation. Society meets endocrine and neuronal biology. Glucocorticoids regulating neurotransmitters link to social organization, and reversely, defective states of social organization (e.g. threats etc) have an adverse effect on the allostatic overload of organisms trying to cope in such threatening social mileus (Shulkin 2011a, Sterling 2012).

Finally, inspired by the biosocial paradigm, the term "*syndemics*" was coined by the critical medical anthropologist Merill Singer to account for a different research framework being explored in the last twenty-five years or so, that approaches disease as the interacting of social and environmental causes with medical ones in an intricate triple way: "syndemics have three components: (1) sequential, co-occurring or clustering diseases or other health conditions; (2) adverse biological interactions between those diseases/health conditions (biological–biological or bio–bio interaction) and (3) social/political/environmental factors that cause or exacerbate disease (biology–social or bio–social interface)" (Singer et al. 2020: 1). Though the tripartite factoring has received differential weighing over the years, shifting the focus from the hitherto standard understanding of epidemic to syndemics, the focus of theoretical analysis and medical attention shifts from the individual patient to groups (or populations) that can share social characteristics that act as social determinants responsible for the social clustering of a certain disease – thus switching the medical paradigm, too.

Conclusion

Theodosius Dobzhansky – the patriarch of modern biology – admonishes steering soberly between outright genetic determinism and the Enlightenment myth of "cultural hegemony" that we are born *tabula rasa*, i.e. steering a middle ground between the two extremes of each type of science, in a brusque phrase: "Biological racism and 'diaper anthropology' are just aberrations of scientific thought" (Dobzhansky 1956: conclusion).

In a manner analogous to this, the rapprochement of cognitive science with natural science, another facet of the bio-social relationship is beginning to attract the attention it deserves (Turner 2018).

In times as life-threatening and perilously stressful as those of pandemics like SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19), the interplay of the social and the biological loses its more distanced and relaxed character of sedate academic theorizing and acquires an urgent and pressing practical importance. Nature and Society appear intertwined in many ways that need unravelling. It was once believed that the polar duo, (named by Galton) "Nature and Nurture" had been wrongly characterized by an imposed internal dichotomy symbolized by the "and" that separated the two poles of a wrongly demarcated antithesis only to be re-united at a later stage of an evolving scientific paradigm. The contrast in early social/cultural anthropology regarding the biological

versus the social between Boas' "culture" allowing room to individuals' actions and his student Kroeber's holist "superorganic" is quite telling in this respect; especially seen against the background of the recent of critical biocultural anthropology, mentioned above, that is ready to re-consider even taboo concepts like "race" that suffered the culturally imposed race-mantra as progressive researchers are quick to point out bringing the concept back to a balanced bio-social understanding. Contemporary sophisticated evolutionary theories, and the re-examination of the bio-socio relation point to a welcome end of hegemonic conceptions of humanness vis á vis the rest of nature.

References

Alexander, R. (1979) *Darwinism and Human Affairs Seattle* Seattle, WA: University of Washington Press.

Alexander, R. (1987) *The Biology of Moral Systems* New York: Aldine de Gruyter.

Axelrod, R. (1984) *The Evolution of Cooperation* New York: Basic Books.

Axelrod, R. and Hamilton W. D. (1981) "The Evolution of Cooperation", *Science*, 211 (4489): 1390–1396.

Barkow, J. H. (ed.) (2006) *Missing the Revolution: Darwinism for Social Scientists* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Becker, G. (1976) "Altruism, Egoism and Genetic Fitness: Economics and Sociobiology", *Journal of Economic Literature*, 14 (3): 817–826.

Bennett, F. R. (2015) *Evolution and Ethics: A Critique of Sociobiology* London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Boehm, C. (1997) "Egalitarian Behaviour and the Evolution of Political Intelligence", in A. Whiten and R. W. Byrne (eds.) *Machiavellian Intelligence II: Extensions and Evaluations* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Boehm, C. (2016) *Moral Origins: The Evolution of Virtue, Altruism, and Shame* New York: Basic Books.

Boniolo, G. and De Anna, G. (eds.) (2006) *Evolutionary Ethics and Contemporary Biology* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Boyd, R. (ed.) (2018) *A Different Kind of Animal: How Culture Transformed Our Species*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Boyd, R. and Richerson, P. (2005) *The Origin and Evolution of Cultures*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Byrne, R. (1996) "Machiavellian Intelligence", *Evolutionary Anthropology*, 5 (5): 172–180.

Carroll, J., et al. (eds.) (2016) *Darwin's Bridge: Uniting the Humanities and Sciences* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Cosmides, L. and Tooby, J. (1992) "Cognitive Adaptations for Social Exchange", in J. Berkow et al. (eds.) *The Adapted Mind* New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Dawkins, R. (1977) *The Selfish Gene* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Dobzhansky, T. (1956) *The Biological Basis of Human Freedom* New York: Columbia University Press.

Dupré, J. (1992) "Blinded by 'Science': How Not to Think about Social Problems", *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 15: 380–381.

Dupré, J. (1993) "Sexism, Scientism and Sociobiology: One More Link in the Chain" *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 16: 292.

Farber, P. (1994) *The Temptations of Evolutionary Ethics* Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Fry, D. P. (ed.) (2013) *War, Peace, and Human Nature: The Convergence of Evolutionary and Cultural Views* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Fuentes, A. (2015) "Integrative Anthropology and the Human Niche: Toward a Contemporary Approach to Human Evolution", *American Anthropologist*, 117 (2): 302–315.

Gintis, H. (2014) "Inclusive Fitness and the Sociobiology of the Genome", *Biology and Philosophy*, 29(4): 477–515.

Gintis, H. (2016) "The Structure and Evolution of Morality: Public and Private Persona", in J. Carroll et al. (eds.) *Darwin's Bridge* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Gintis, H., et al. (2019) "Zoon Politikon: The Evolutionary Origins of Human Socio-political Systems", *Behavioural Processes*, 161: 17–30.

Gintis, H. and D. Helbing. (2015) "Homo Socialis: An Analytical Core for Sociological Theory", *Review of Behavioral Economics*, 2: 1–59.

Gould, S. J. (1979) *Ever Since Darwin* New York: Norton.

Hamilton, W. D. (1964) "The Genetical Evolution of Social Behaviour", I and II, *Journal of Theoretical Biology* 7: 1–52.

Hardin, G. (1978) "Nice Guys Finish Last", in M. S. Gregory et al. (eds.) *Sociobiology and Human Nature* San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Henrich, J. (2020) *The WEIRDest People in the World* Farrar, San Francisco: Straus and Giroux.

Ingold, T. and Palsson, G. (eds.) (2013) *Biosocial Becomings: Integrating Social and Biological Anthropology* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Jianhui, L. and Fan, H. (2003) "Science as Ideology: The Rejection and Reception of Sociobiology in China", *Journal of the History of Biology*, 36: 567–578.

Kaye, H. (1986) *The Social Meaning of Modern Biology* New Haven: Yale University Press.

Kendal, J. R. (2011) "Cultural Niche Construction and Human Learning Environments: Investigating Sociocultural Perspectives" [Special issue], *Biological Theory*, 6 (3): 241–250.

Kendal, J. et al. (2011). "Human Niche Construction in Interdisciplinary Focus", *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences*, 366: 785–792.

Kitcher, P. (1985) *Vaulting Ambition: Sociobiology and the Quest for Human Nature* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Koslowski, P. (1996) *The Ethics of Capitalism and the Critique of Sociobiology* Berlin: Springer.

Krier, J. (2010) "Evolutionary Theory and the Origin of Property Rights", *Cornell Law Review*, 95: 139–159.

Laland, K. L. et al. (2010). "How Culture Shaped the Human Genome: Bringing Genetics and the Human Sciences Together", *Nature Reviews Genetics*, 11: 137–148.

Laland, K. N. and O'Brien, M. J. (2010) "Niche Construction Theory and Archaeology", *Journal of Archaeological Method and Theory*, 17: 303–322.

Latour, B. et al. (2020) Schaffer, S. and Gagliardi, P. (eds.) *A Book of the Body Politic: Connecting Biology, Politics and Social Theory*, Venice: Fondazione Giorgio Cini

Leatherman, T. and Goodman, A. (2019) "Building on the Biocultural Syntheses: 20 years and Still Expanding", *American Journal of Human Biology*, Special Issue.

Lewontin, R. (1976) "Sociobiology – A Caricature of Darwinism", *PSA Proceedings*, 2: 22–31.

Lewontin, R. (1991) *Biology as Ideology: The Doctrine of DNA* West Concord, MA: Aransi Press.

Lewontin, R. (2000) *The Triple Helix: Gene, Organism, and Environment* Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press.

Lewontin, R., Rose, S. and Kamin, L. J. (1984) *Not in Our Genes* New York: Random House.

Lock, M. (2015) "Comprehending the Body in the Era of the Epigenome", *Current Anthropology*, 56 (2): 151–163.

Lumsden, C. J. (1983) *Promethean Fire: Reflections on the Origin of Mind* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Lumsden, C. J. and Wilson, E. O. (1981) *Genes, Mind, and Culture: The Coevolutionary Process* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Mackie, J. L. (1985) *Persons and Values: Selected Papers*, Vol. II, ed. J. Mackie and P. Mackie Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Masters, R. D. (1990) "Evolutionary Biology and Political Theory", *The American Political Science Review*, 84: 195–210.

Masters, R. D. (2001) "Biology and Politics", *Annual Review of Political Science*, 4: 345–369.

Maynard-Smith, J. (1982) *Evolution and the Theory of Games* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Meloni, M. (2014) "The Social Brain Meets the Reactive Genome: Neuroscience, Epigenetics and the New Social Biology", *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience*, 8.

Meloni, M. (2016) *Political Biology: Science and Social Values in Human Heredity from Eugenics to Epigenetics* London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Midgley, M. (1979) "Gene-Juggling", *Philosophy*, 54 (210): 439–458.

Odling-Smee, F. J., Laland, K. N. and Feldman, M. W. (2003). *Niche Construction: The Neglected Process in Evolution* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Park, S. and Guille-Escuret, G. (2017) *Sociobiology vs. Socioecology: Consequences of an Unraveling Debate* London: Wiley.

Rabinow, P. (1996) "Artificiality and Enlightenment: From Sociobiology to Biosociality", in P. Rabinow (ed.) *Essays on the Anthropology of Reason* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Rheinberger, H.-J. (2000) "Beyond Nature and Culture: Modes of Reasoning in the Age of Molecular Biology and Medicine", in M. Lock et al. (eds.) *Living and Working with the New Medical Technologies* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Richerson, P. and Boyd, R. (2005) *Not by Genes Alone: How Culture Transformed Human Evolution* Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press.

Rose, H. and Rose, S. (eds.) (1976) *The Radicalization of Science* London: Macmillan.

Rosenberg, A. (1981) *Sociobiology and the Preemption of Social Science* Oxford: Blackwell.

Rosenberg, A. (2006) *Darwinian Reductionism: Or How to Stop Worrying and Love Molecular Biology* Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Ruse, M. (1979) *Sociobiology: Sense or Nonsense* Boston, MA: Reidel.

Ruse, M. (1984) "Is the New Biology a Tool of Social Oppression?" *The Hastings Center Report*, 14 (16): 42–44.

Ruse, M. (2008) *The Evolution Wars: A Guide to the Debates Millerton* New Year: Grey House Publishing.

Ruse, M. and Wilson, E. O. (1986) "Moral Philosophy as Applied Science", *Philosophy* 61 (236): 173–192.

Sahlins, M. (1976) *The Use and Abuse of Biology: An Anthropological Critique of Sociobiology* Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

Sahlins, M. (1978) "Culture as Protein and Profit", *The New York Review of Books*.

Schubert, G. (1989) *Evolutionary Politics* Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press.

Schubert, G. and Masters, R. D. (eds.) (1991) *Primate Politics* Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press.

Shulkin, J. (2011a) "Social Allostasis: anticipatory regulation of the internal milieu" *Frontiers in Evolutionary Neuroscience*, 2 (January), 1–15

Shulkin, J. (2011b) *Adaptation and Well Being: Social Allostasis*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Segerstråle, U. (2000) *Defenders of the Truth: The Sociobiology Debate* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Shultz, S. et al. (2011). "Stepwise Evolution of Stable Sociality in Primates", *Nature* 479 (November): 219–222.

Singer, P. (1982) "Ethics and Sociobiology", *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, 11 (1): 40–64.

Singer, M. et al. (2020). "Whither Syndemics?: Trends in Syndemics Research, A Review 2015–2019", *Global Public Health*, 15: 1–13.

Sterling, P. (2012) "Allostasis: A model of predictive regulation", *Physiology and Behavior*, 106: 5–15.

Symons, D. (1989) "A Critique of Darwinian Anthropology", *Ethology and Sociobiology*, 10: 131–144.

Tomasello M. (2020) "The Adaptive Origins of Uniquely Human Sociality", *Phil. Trans. R. Soc. B*, 375: 20190493.

Trigg, R. (1985) *Understanding Social Science* Oxford: Blackwell.

Turner, S. (2018) *Cognitive Science and the Social: A Primer* New York: Routledge.

de Waal, F. with Wright, R., Korsgaard, C. M., Kitcher, P. and Singer, P. (2006) *Primates and Philosophers* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Williams, G. C. (1966) *Adaptation and Natural Selection* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Wilson, E. O. (1976) "Academic Vigilantism and the Political Significance of Sociobiology", *Bioscience*, 26: 187–190.

Wilson, E. O. (1978) *On Human Nature* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Wilson, E. O. (1980 "Comparative Social Theory", in S. McMurrin (ed.) *The Tanner Lectures on Human Values* Salt Lake City, UT: The University of Utah Press, & Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 49–73.

Wilson, E. O. (2000 [1975]) *Sociobiology: The New Synthesis* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Wilson, E. O. (2013) *The Social Conquest of Earth* New York: Liveright Publishing.

Wilson, E. O. (2020) *Genesis: The Deep Origin of Societies* Penguin Books.

Wright, R. (1994) "Feminists, Meet Mr Darwin", *The New Republic*, 28: 34–46.

Wright, R. (1996 [1994]) *The Moral Animal: Why We Are the Way We Are: The New Science of Evolutionary Psychology* London: Abacus.

Zhang, B. (1994) *Marxism and Human Sociobiology: The Perspective of Economic Reforms in China* Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

The cognitive and metacognitive dimensions of social and political theory

Piet Strydom

The central concern of social and political theory is closely related to the nature of modern society as a functionally differentiated class society which involves normative claims pointing far beyond its systemic and stratified organization. Since the early modern period, the contradictory institutionalization characteristic of modern society was economically, politically and culturally exacerbated in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and in the late twentieth century it became writ large through being transposed to the transnational level. The problems following this global spurt, exacerbated by the financial crisis of 2008 and the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020, provide the focal issues of contemporary social and political theory.

In this chapter, I approach social and political theory from the new perspective of cognitive social science. Given the prevailing uncertainty, disagreement and contestation about what precisely cognitive social science amounts to, I take it that the contemporary state of the art in this field is most fruitfully captured by the expression 'weak naturalism' (Habermas 2003). It is neither a matter of the naturalization of the mind in the strong sense of the reduction of mental terms such as intention, belief and free will and, by extension, social and cultural phenomena to processes and states in the brain, or of the nominalist presupposition that every term and phenomenon has to have an ostensive or physiological reference. Nor is it a matter of the diametrically opposed anti-naturalist strategy of regarding the mind as a social construction or purely socioculturally – for instance, narratively – constituted text abstracted from every natural and biological substrate and thus in its ineffable symbolicity in principal closed to scientific investigation. Instead, I accept that the appropriate place for the cognitive approach in the case of social science is between these two extremes (Strydom 2019).[1] By contrast with strong naturalism and anti-naturalism, weak naturalism simultaneously allows two things: ontological continuity between nature and sociocultural life, within the framework of which an evolutionary explanation of the grounds of human sociality is certainly possible; and epistemological discontinuity according to which the sociocultural world, without denying the interference of natural or biological factors and the need to take such restraints into account under certain conditions, must be studied in the irreducible terms pertaining to it as the special world created and organized by social actors.

The argument is opened with a brief consideration of the nature of modern society in order to pinpoint the problems stimulating social and political theory. This is followed by a cognitively

inspired analysis in terms of the dialectical process of the constitution and organization of society. It provides the opportunity to introduce some central cognitive theoretical concepts and to indicate both their meaningfulness and usefulness. Finally, this account allows a restatement of the task of contemporary social and political theory, including the identification of the core practical[2] aspect of the contemporary problematic situation: the formation of a subject appropriate to the emerging world society.

Central theoretical concerns

The core concern of contemporary social and political theory stems from the problematic nature of modern, particularly late modern, society. The latter presents the internally fractured picture of a global, functionally differentiated, ecologically endangered, racially divided, class society that, at least partially, gives rise to normative claims which point far beyond its overwhelmingly functionalist, risk-generating and asymmetrical organization in the tension-laden field between the national and the transnational or global constellation. On the one hand, modern society is based on egalitarian presuppositions manifest in expectations about a similar dependence of all on, as well as equal chances of access to, function systems and their products or services. On the other, however, the mode of organization of this society is characterized by a disturbingly unequal distribution of both dependency and access. At a deeper level still, there is the presupposition of a philosophically appropriate, scientifically correct and hence collectively beneficial relationship of society to nature which, likewise, is contradicted by the increasing level of societal self-endangerment, self-injury and potential self-destruction and the highly unequal distribution of manufactured or scientifically and technologically based ecological risk. This fractured and tension-laden nature of society is finally refracted and focalized in the typical yet historically varying ontological insecurity of the modern individual.

Faced with this multi-levelled problematic situation, social and political theory is required today, at least to begin with, to find a theoretical point of articulation of these different apparently disparate dimensions: the gap between function systems and normative claims; the typical modern problems of individualization, inequality and social exclusion following this lack of coordination; the globalization of these very problems which are now manifest in the form of the global risk society, inequality, world poverty and intercultural clashes; and the failure of globalization to mature into adequate worldhood. Such a theoretical means of mediation would entail mitigating longstanding internal divisions – e.g. micro and macro, lifeworld and system or agency and structure, and in particular immanent social obligations and context-transcending normative guidelines – and concurrent tendencies towards one-sidedness. There is no doubt that social and political theory can neglect or ignore any aspect of the diverse range of significant phenomena and developments characteristic of our time only at its peril. The question of how social theory could be brought, for instance, to adopt a more consistent global and cosmopolitan perspective or to recognize its own normative poverty, or how one version of political theory could be encouraged to reconsider, for example, its national fixation or ethnocentrism and another opened up so as to acknowledge its ecological blindness, is of central theoretical importance.

Cognitive theory has an important part to play in contributing to a fulfilment of this theoretical desideratum. This is apparent from the rationale for the adoption of the cognitive approach in social science and its quite remarkable growth during the past two decades or so. Besides the displacement of behaviourism by the cognitive revolution, the history of ideas shows that the contemporary interest in this approach is impelled by an increasing concern with the previously underestimated role of the brain-mind, information processing, embodiment and enactment in

an affording scaffolded environment (e.g. Turner 2018; Brekhus and Ignatow 2019) – a concern admitted by a weak naturalistic understanding of the cognitive which effectively displaced traditional univocal terminology. Its rationale, however, is not only to be found in the development of science and the dynamics of intellectual history. It primarily turns on developments in social reality itself. Central here is the obvious lack of coordination and increasingly visible vulnerability of late modern society and, hence, the mounting uncertainty about macro-processes and their outcomes in the wake of rapid and pervasive societal transformation. Such lack of coordination, vulnerability and uncertainty compelled social scientists to take a more penetrating look at processes and structures and to de- and reconstruct macro-phenomena with the new cognitive concepts. This required more attention being paid to modes of cognition and information processing, perception, schematization, framing, classification, processes of construction of cognitive structures of different levels and scope, and the discursive processing and actual use of cultural models of reality.

Having gained a glimpse of the central concern of social and political theory as well as the form the latter is taking, it is now possible to offer a brief cognitively inspired analysis of modernity and its problems in terms of the processes of their constitution and potential resolution. As a reflexive exercise, the analysis is simultaneously a reconstruction of social and political theory with the aim of focusing its contemporary status. The three major phases in the development of modern society are first briefly reconstructed to provide a basis for the analysis which is then embarked upon to make visible the principal constitutive mechanisms and both their positive and negative impacts on the creation and organization of society.

Unfolding modernity as object reference

The early modern period was characterized by princely, capitalist and religious violence, Hobbes' 'the war of all against all'. Theories of sovereignty and of rights emerged gradually since the sixteenth century, yet the prevalence of disorder indicates the absence for a considerable time of a normative framework on the scale required by the situation. Absolutism's defeat of the church and pacification of the religious factions, incorporation of capitalism in its mercantilist form, and the monopolization of science provided an initial solution. That it was only a partial one, however, is borne out by the vehement opposition of the classical emancipation movements against absolutist domination. The confrontation and conflict between these forces gave rise to an intensifying process of increasingly unbridled normative communication. Rights claims-making increased dramatically and actions were taken towards establishing an institutional framework to secure the normative demands. Eventually, revolutionary events generated by the rivalry culminated in a framework capable of domesticating the unchecked exercise of administrative power, primitive accumulation practices, and resort to violence through the constitutionalization of the state, emancipation of civil society from the state, and constitutional and legal regulation of the economy. A new level of normative commitment beyond kinship, traditional ties, estates and sectarian factions now became possible. It was directed by the *focus imaginarius* of a self-constituting, self-organizing, self-legislating and self-governing society – the societal self-understanding which became embodied in and secured by the cognitive cultural model of the constitution. A completely new situation was thus opened, but the subsequent outcome was as yet undetermined. It would take shape under conditions of modernity.

Once an institutional framework had been established, the communicative process was embedded in the constitutional nation-state, liberal associational society and the public sphere, and as a consequence underwent a significant change. The nation-state, liberal society and the public sphere now operated as constraints which had a civilizing effect on communication,

claims-making and the associated action. The unbridled conflict between society and state was replaced by tension, coordination, mutual constitution and co-evolution, with only occasional frame-breaking by civil society actors such as the labour, suffragette and civil rights movements. The normative commitment made possible by the initial situation – i.e. a self-constituting, self-organizing, self-legislating and self-governing society – could now be pursued immanently by social and political means. Nevertheless, counter-pressures deriving from the economy and state as well as, ironically, from civil society itself weighed rather heavily on the outcome of these efforts to realize and give effect to the leading normative vision. But conditions would once again drastically change.

Due to evolution, development, change and transformation on a variety of levels, a globalizing transnational thrust re-contextualized modern society in the late twentieth century which weakened the nation-state as capsule of liberal society. The communicative process originally set in train in the early modern period and then embedded in modern society was now to a significant degree abstracted and disembedded from the national context. Simultaneously, it was and today still is hesitantly and as yet inadequately being re-embedded in the emerging world society. As a result, the dynamics of the communicative process became altered and the mechanisms constituting society are required to operate under completely new conditions. While the outlook was for some time already uncertain and unpredictable, the financial and public health crises of the twenty-first century further complicated matters. Yet, considering the process and operative mechanisms, a number of possible lines of development can nevertheless be envisaged.

Cognitive theoretical reconstruction

Facing the problems deriving from early modern contextual forces, communication increased and gave rise to effects which became consolidated in the form of the public sphere as a social space for focused communication. Its emergence motivated individuals, however different due to sociocultural position, to conceive of themselves as possessing the competence to engage in constructive communication. The engagement of a plurality of individuals on the basis of the generation of ideas and claims-making from a variety of positions and perspectives allowed civic interaction and issue-related discourse. This process brought together individuals and allowed them to encounter each other as socio-political beings in the sense of potentially free and equal members of society and citizens of the state who, however different, are nevertheless able to freely associate. Communication about common issues, or discourse, and the resulting association led to collective value- and will-formation which, in turn, involved collective learning. The latter is a process in which a network of competing and conflicting ideas brings individuals to experience self-contradiction, adjust their views and develop cooperative relations. The collectively achieved outcome of this learning and cooperation was the establishment and reproduction of a normative framework for self-constitution, self-organization, self-legislation and self-governance embracing the principles of freedom or participation, equality or deliberation and solidarity.

From a theoretical perspective, it is crucial to isolate the principal mechanisms operative in this reconstructed sequence of events (Miller 1986, 2002; Eyerman and Jamison 1991; Habermas 1992; Eder 2007; Strydom 2007, 2020). For present purposes, four types stand out. The first is a micro-cognitive generative mechanism rooted in the human cognitive endowment. It is responsible for the generation of variety and involves the ability of individuals self-reflexively to construct an identity, to frame the problem situation, to create new ideas and to engage in claims-making through both strategic communication and communicative action. The second is a meso-cognitive relational mechanism which takes the form of the forging of associational

relations among a plurality of individuals and collective agents. The third is a meso-cognitive transformative mechanism which produces both macro and micro effects. It is the mechanism of collective learning which, in successful cases, entails the transformation of cognitive structures on the social level, with an impact on both the cultural and subjective levels. Finally, there are the macro-cognitive structural or causal context-setting mechanisms. Most important among them are the state and economy which lay down broad structuring parameters, but there is also another instance of this mechanism, namely schemes of perception, classification and interpretation operating in civil society which become culturally modelled and meta-culturally codified. The state and economy themselves are of course to a significant degree directed and guided by codified cultural models.

It should be noted here, as suggested by the contemporary particulate or compositional concept of culture, that rather than the traditional narrow sense of the intellectual and the rational, the cognitive must be understood in terms of a range of dynamic knowledge enabling and bearing structures which indeed includes intelligence – i.e. empirical-theoretical knowledge – but embraces also conscience – i.e. moral-practical knowledge – as well as emotivity or conativity – i.e. aesthetic-practical knowledge. In turn, this structural view only apparently has static implications since the cognitive is understood in relation to pragmatics, including interaction, discourse and action. Above and beyond the mentioned mechanisms, therefore, communication in the sense of interaction and discourse needs to be emphasized (Habermas 1984/87, 2019). Communication is the medium of the formative process, including the activation and operation of mechanisms. It provides a social constitution context, makes a problem situation visible, and is a context of discovery of differences and commonalities. It furthermore allows intersubjective reflection, social construction, structure formation, the incorporation of intramental in intersubjective social and cultural structures, collective learning, and the coordination of micro, meso, macro and meta-cognitive structures.

It should be noted that the situational context provided by communication is one of *possible* intersubjectivity or mutual understanding and agreement and, therefore, has a context-transcending normative rationale – well-organized social relations which could be achieved, rational norms which ought to be observed, and performative consistency which ought to be maintained. This rationale is not a purely normative one, however, but simultaneously a cognitive or, more precisely, a metacognitive[3] one in so far as it entails reflexivity regarding the use of knowledge as well as the role of the emotions and normative rules.

Since every social situation, including the early modern one, possesses an objective structural possibility, it is open to any of a number of eventualities – not only positive but also negative outcomes. The decisive question is how the mechanisms are related, the configuration of generative (ideas and claims-making) and associational (relation-forming) mechanisms (Strydom 2000; Eder 2007). Such a configuration depends on the context-setting mechanisms, particularly the state, economy and even civil society, representing opportunities and constraints facilitating or blocking the operation of the other mechanisms. On the basis of the early modern achievement, democratic self-constitution was a possibility, but so too was the alternative of turning out to be skewed in a more or less pathological – for instance, an authoritarian, ideological, marketized, instrumental, repressive or obfuscating – direction, or some combination of these. Such a mixed result became characteristic of modern society.

The embedding of the communicative process in the constitutional nation-state and liberal associational society represented a new situation. It was marked by a threefold system of intermediation consisting of state/economy, political intermediaries and citizens. In this context not only the communicative process changed but the mechanisms also started operating in a new way. As regards context-setting mechanisms, civil society and state/economy were now

coordinated in a relation of mutual constitution through the newly emergent public sphere with its institutional supports, rules and guiding normative principles. With this development, the public was transformed into an internal third point of view, an observing, evaluating, judging and commenting public, and became a constitutive feature of the liberal–national situation. The generative and relational mechanisms were now subjected to civilizing constraints which were mediated through the threefold communicative relation of active governing and oppositional politically relevant civil society agents, on the one hand, and the monitoring public in accordance with whom the active agents must conduct themselves intellectually, affectively, ethically and morally. Under these changed 'triple contingency' (Strydom 1999) conditions, the collective learning mechanism was no longer confined to doubly contingent social relations, but took a form which allowed the possibility of 'triple contingency learning' (Trenz and Eder 2004; Eder 2007) – i.e. socially opposed agents, for instance the state and a social movement, learning practically not just through competition, contestation and conflict, but rather with reference to the public's ethical incarnation of the normative vision.

Central to social and political theory is the question of the nature and quality of the outcome of the changed process of constitution and organization of society under modern conditions. Constitutionalization and the liberal associational society could now be taken for granted and claims-making and action could concentrate on the self-production of society, constitutional refinement, democratization, broadening of the public sphere, inclusion and welfare arrangements. In the best case scenario, the drive towards the immanent social and political realization of this goal in accordance with context-transcendent normative guidelines took the form of a cooperative process of democratic self-constitution. It presupposed the free flow of communication and the constructive configuration of the mechanisms such as the free generation of new ideas and claims, free and equal association and relation-formation, collective learning, and inclusive self-organization, self-legislation and self-governance. But pressures and counter-forces deriving from the context-setting mechanisms weighed heavily on both the process of communication and the configuration of mechanisms so that in certain respects the outcome took a pathological form. The deforming efficacy of these interfering forces depended on partial or one-sided normative commitments or metacognitive deficits which harboured pathological effects (Miller 1986, 2002; McCarthy 1993; Eder 2007; Strydom 2000). Among these were: authoritarianism (e.g. fascism) generated by a commitment to the state as dominant structure and/or agent; ideologization (e.g. nationalism and/or racism) produced by a commitment to a unitary ethnic people or to the reproduction of a reified cultural model; marketization (e.g. *laissez faire* liberalism) stimulated by a commitment to a mode of organization serving individual or particular group self-interests; and instrumentalism (e.g. exploitation of nature; Holocaust) deriving from a commitment to the utilitarian use of bureaucracy and/or science and technology. Often forming part of these pathological manifestations were repression or the silencing of need articulation and participation as well as obfuscation in the sense of distorting communication, manufacturing public opinion or manipulating the relation between active agents and the monitoring public.

Pathological deformations attest to failing collective and hence individual learning processes. Typically, a metacognitive failure or deficient normative commitment to context-transcendent rational concepts is responsible: either a fixation on something immanent to the exclusion of the context-transcendent, or a distorted context-transcendent invocation. Such problems led to a deformation of the social functions of communication, including expression, assertion, relation building, explication and validation, which has problematic consequences psychologically, socially and politically. The cooperative process of democratic self-constitution, self-organization, self-legislation and self-governance, by contrast, demands a reflexive or metacognitive commitment

to normatively significant context-transcendent guidelines (e.g. principles of truth, justice and truthfulness) and their more or less successful immanent embodiment under historically specific conditions. This was only partially the case under conditions of modernity. It is a pressing question, therefore, to what extent such a metacognitive failure can be avoided under currently emerging transnational or global conditions.

The globalizing transnational thrust that followed World War II and gained increasing momentum with the abandonment of the Bretton Woods exchange rate regime, the intervention of the Chicago School and the promotion of neo-liberalism rendered modern liberal-national self-constitution problematic. The boundaries of the nation-state as container of liberal society became porous as the communicative process to a significant degree simultaneously became disembedded from this context and re-embedded, even if only hesitantly and hence inadequately, in the emerging world society. The picture becomes a little clearer if one considers how the dynamics of the communicative process and the operation of the mechanisms were altered.

As regards context-setting mechanisms, the system of intermediation diversified due to the entry of new collective agents – i.e. new social movements – between political agents and citizens, and the globalization of economics, politics, law, civil society, social movements, culture, the public sphere and the public. Accordingly, the set of triple contingency relations is tendentially pushed beyond the national constellation and rendered more complex, involving potentially transnational or global agents and public. As a consequence, the generative and relational mechanisms are required to operate under completely new conditions, while transformative collective learning processes of the triple contingency type at the transnational level now become a possibility. Overall, the demand for self-constitution has shifted to the global transnational level. Indeed, indications of success at this level are already evident in the human rights, health and environmental areas (Roberts and Kingsbury 2000). The counterpart of this development, however, is the stimulation of exclusivist populist, nationalist and theocratic reactions in a divided world. The as yet undetermined position in which we find ourselves between the national and the transnational constellation consequently leaves the outlook today decidedly uncertain and unpredictable.

Given the serious problems arising in liberal-national society and the shift beyond it, however, a number of distinct ideas of reason have emerged from the communicative process, became consolidated into cognitive cultural models, and thus are candidates for metacognitive normative guidance in the emerging yet fractured transnational situation. Among the cultural models are, for example, a 'responsible society' directed and guided by a 'planetary macro-ethic of co-responsibility' instead of a 'risk society'; 'ecology' instead of depleted organic foundations of life; 'intercultural communication' instead of a 'clash of civilizations'; a 'politically constituted world society' instead of a 'Hobbesian security state'; an 'international legal order' instead of a 'private law society'; 'global governance' instead of 'world government'; 'cosmopolitanism' instead of closed particularistic, nationalist, ethnocentric or theocratic communities; an ecologically and socially 'domesticated capitalism' instead of an unbridled 'global free market'; 'global justice' instead of 'hereditarily fixed inequality' and 'world poverty', and so forth.

By culturally embodying normative principles, reflexive rules or metacognitive devices, these models harbour promising potentials for immanent structure formation and, therefore, the possibility of a cooperative self-constituting, self-organizing, self-legislating and self-governing world society cannot summarily be ruled out of court. But in its realization of these principles the world society will unavoidably take some historically specific manifestation or other. Context-setting mechanisms will have an impact and the generative and relational mechanisms will take a corresponding configuration. It is likely, therefore, to assume one of a number of more specific forms, any of which could tend towards pathogenesis or even become pathological in

the full sense of the word. With the political system as a context-setting mechanism that prioritizes a hierarchical rule-based mode of constitution and organization, there arises the possibility of a pathological form of authoritarianism. A global proliferation of authoritarian politics could make conflict between self-interested nation-states more likely. If the economic system, together with science and technology, has a decisive structure-forming impact on the emerging world society, rather than being domesticated ecologically and socially, its opportunity-oriented and instrumentalist market mode of constitution and organization is likely to lead to a reproduction of the pathological form of marketization which not only contributed to the ecological crisis, social inequality and world poverty but also culminated in the recent financial, economic and social crisis. Finally, civil society, particularly by way of some reified cultural model or other, could equally well lead to a pathological form of ideologization, whether ethnocentrism, nationalism, populism or racism, despite its inherent civic-oriented social mode of constitution and organization.

Tasks of contemporary social and political theory

The above-mentioned negative potentials leave contemporary social and political theory with the question of what normative commitments would be appropriate under currently emerging transnational conditions to help avoid pathogenesis or, worse still, a full-blown pathological outcome in the course of the twenty-first century.

From a social scientific perspective to which the creation and organization of society is central, particularly one informed by cognitive theory, it is certain that a whole range of different commitments are entering the process and contributing to it. These commitments are carried, for example, by differently constituted states, corporate actors, civil society actors, transnational organizations as well as national and global publics. All these agents and monitors play some generative and relation-building role or other in the constitution of the emerging world society. The first task of a cognitive social and political theory is to ascertain the generative variety, their discursively mediated interrelations and the resulting structure formation which are visible in micro, meso and macro-level outcomes. All the contributors, further, should be critically evaluated, in which case the metacognitive dimension is crucial.

The positive aspects of their contributions should be registered as such and, if need be, the negative subjected to critique, to be sure, in a social scientifically self-critical manner. Candidates for critique include the ideas the contributors generate, the way they communicate, the claims they advance, the configuration of constitutive mechanisms they intentionally or operatively promote, the relational complex they form together, the quality of collective learning, and the nature and quality of the outcome they collectively produce. Above all, however, the cognitive approach is interested in the degree to which the commitment of each contributor comes to grips with the dialectical – i.e. the immanent-transcendent or cognitive-metacognitive – nature of the normative problematic. The criterion for such a critical evaluation is provided by the cognitive core of society: a set of relations of free and equal association and cooperation which is capable of constituting, organizing, legislating and governing itself – including, it should be noted, not only the relations among human beings but also their relation to nature. The critical question here, therefore, is whether a contributor reflexively or metacognitively recognizes the cognitive core of society and allows its incursive context-transcendent efficacy to have a structuring effect on social life immanently, from the micro through the meso to the macro level. Such critical analysis, strictly speaking a cognitive type of critique (Strydom 2019), thus veers over cognitive structuration taking place in the head, organizations, social relations and in both conventional and metaculture.

Critique of this kind typically correlates with a new spurt of subject formation and the emergence of a collective agent, such as an association, a social movement or even a range of cultural and social movements, who introduces something new, possibly a normative innovation. And a normative innovation, whether an initial practice or idea generated at the micro-level or a later-stage cognitive cultural model at the macro level, allows of course a more or less potent metacognitive world disclosure. In felicitous cases, such a disclosure has the effect of making people see and experience the world, their relations to others and themselves in a new and different light. It instigates a change of existing conditions and cultural and institutional frameworks, thus allowing the process of constitution and embodiment of cognitive cultural models in situated social life to continue under new normative guidelines – until further notice. Here is located the very core of the challenge facing the emerging transnational, global or world society: the problem of the formation of a subject appropriate to this currently emerging constellation (Touraine 2014; Honneth 2014). Being a vital issue of the times, it is also a central concern of contemporary social and political theory.

The need for the formation of an appropriate subject for our times is widely recognized by contemporary social and political theorists. Some agree that we are witnessing the emergence of a global society, but at the same time stress that we are not yet bringing it into being and transforming it into a humanly inhabitable society by way of our collective will (e.g. Giddens 1999; Beck 2009; Piketty 2014; Horton 2020). Others acknowledge the need for transnational will-formation borne by global powers to get to grips with the maelstrom of an accelerating modernization process left to its own devices, but emphasize the more basic requirement of citizens and social movements introducing normatively innovative perspectives from below, transforming their value orientations, and developing new forms of consciousness to alter the frameworks within which governments, global powers and transnational organizations have to make decisions (e.g. Habermas 2006). Yet others focus on the still more basic need for the constitution of autonomous agency which is necessary not only for the ethical incarnation of normative principles but also for the creation of cultural models and institutions capable of safeguarding freedom as well as communicative relations (e.g. International Law Commission 1997; Touraine 2014; Honneth 2014; Habermas 2019). Precisely as in the early modern period, individuals are encouraged to conceive of themselves as possessing the competences – especially metacognitive ones – demanded by the emerging transnational situation. This is the case since such self-transformation stands in a complementary relation to the formation of collective actors as well as their impacts on social and political relations and cultural forms and models (Snow et al. 1986; Eyerman and Jamison 1991; Eder 1996; Strydom 2020).

The advantage of the cognitive approach is that it directs attention to the flow of cognitive properties among different levels and the resulting dynamics in terms of the micro, meso, macro and metacognitive structure formation taking place in the course of the communicatively mediated process. The analytical focus on such structure formation is further sharpened by the adoption of a broad conception of the cognitive, as intimated earlier, which, starting from the human cognitive endowment, focuses not just on intelligence or purposive rationality (theoretical-empirical schemes and knowledge), but incorporates also conscience or normative rationality (moral-practical schemes and knowledge) and emotivity/conativity or aesthetic rationality (aesthetic-practical schemes and knowledge). It is encouraging to see that cognitive scientists are at present hard at work correcting the traditional rationalistic and idealistic biases by investigating the role of the brain-mind and infra-individual factors in operative contexts (e.g. Varela et al. 1991; Sperber 1997; Brekhus and Ignatow 2019). What is remarkable, however, is the neglect of the context-transcendent normative or metacognitive dimension. A tendentially one-sided conception is inevitably inimical to the central commitment of social and political theory. Only

when the full scope of the cognitive – including its metacognitive penumbra – is acknowledged, can the threefold practical concern of social and political theory – namely problem solving, world creation and subject formation – be adequately attended to.

Conclusion

Having been opened with an argument for a weak naturalistic rather than either a strong naturalistic or a strong idealistic conception of the cognitive perspective, this chapter sought to clarify this approach by identifying the principal mechanisms operative in the socio–political process of constitution and organization of society. The mechanisms were illustrated by way of a cognitive reconstruction of social and political theory as it reflexively ran parallel to the unfolding of modernity through its major historical phases up to the currently emerging transnational constellation. Central to the account is the dialectical conception of the cognitive immanent in social life and the metacognitive reflexively available in context-transcendent ideas or concepts. It allowed an analysis of the way in which context-transcendent normative guidelines through cognitive cultural models – for example, a democratically self-governing society – can and do play a positive role in structuring immanent social orientations and relations, but are often deformed or even blocked by the interference of context-setting political, economic and socio-cultural factors which themselves, to be sure, have significant cognitive components. The major task of cognitively inspired contemporary social and political theory is precisely to critically analyze the actual process of the constitution and organization of the emerging world society so as to contribute to the mitigation, if not avoidance, of such interferences and their undesirable consequences.

Notes

1. Social science cannot afford to slavishly follow neuroscience, but has to observe also other cognitive disciplines like psychology, linguistics, anthropology, archaeology, etc.
2. Practical in the moral-ethical sense of practical philosophy (Habermas 2019; Touraine 2014).
3. Cognitive psychologically, '[m]etacognition concerns the subject's implicit and explicit access to his or her own cognitive states, in judgments of knowing and learning, feelings of knowing, uncertainty monitoring, categorization, evaluation, decision-based action, etc.' (Carassa et al. 2009: 17). I extend this concept beyond objectified mental states to be relevant to social and political theory's core practical concern (Strydom 2019, 2020).

References

Beck, U. (2009) *World at Risk*, Cambridge: Polity.

Brekhus, W. and Ignatow, G. (2019) *Oxford Handbook of Cognitive Sociology*, New York: Oxford University Press.

Carassa, A., Morganti, F. and Riva, G. (eds.) (2009) *Enacting Intersubjectivity*, Proceeding of international workshop on cognitive science, social cognition and neuroscience, Lugano, Switzerland.

Eder, K. (1996) *The Social Construction of Nature*, London: Sage.

Eder, K. (2007) 'The Public Sphere and European Democracy: Mechanisms of Democratization in the Transnational Situation', in J. E. Fossum and P. Schlesinger (eds.) *The European Union and the Public Sphere*, London: Routledge.

Eyerman, R. and Jamison, A. (1991) *Social Movements: A Cognitive Approach*, Cambridge: Polity.

Giddens, A. (1999) *Runaway World*, London: Profile Books.

Habermas, J. (1984/87) *The Theory of Communicative Action*, vol. 1–2, Cambridge: Polity.

Habermas, J. (1992) *Between Facts and Norms*, Cambridge: Polity.

Habermas, J. (2003) *Truth and Justification*, Cambridge: Polity.

Habermas, J. (2006) *The Divided West*, Cambridge: Polity.

Habermas, J. (2019) *Auch eine Geschichte der Philosophie*, vol. 1–2, Berlin: Suhrkamp.

Honneth, A. (2014) *Freedom's Right*, Cambridge: Polity.

Horton, R. (2020) *The COVID-19 Catastrophe*, Cambridge: Polity.

International Law Commission (1997) *International Law on the Eve of the Twenty-first Century*, New York: United Nations.

McCarthy, T. (1993) *Ideals and Illusions*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Miller, M. (1986) *Kollektive Lernprozesse*, Frankfurt: Suhrkamp.

Miller, M. (2002) 'Some Theoretical Aspects of Systemic Learning', *Sozialer Sinn* 3: 379–421.

Piketty, T. (2014) *Capital in the Twenty-First Century*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Roberts, A. and Kingsbury, B. (eds.) (2000) *United Nations, Divided World*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Snow, D. A., Rochford, E. B., Worden, S. K. and Benford, R. D. (1986) 'Frame Alignment Processes, Micro-Mobilization and Movement Participation', *American Sociological Review*, 51(4) 464–81.

Sperber, D. (1997) 'Individualisme Méthodologique et Cognitivisme', in R. Boudon, A. Bouvier and F. Chazel (eds.) *Cognition et Sciences Sociales*, Paris: PUF.

Strydom, P. (1999) 'Triple Contingency: The Theoretical Problem of the Public in Communication Societies', *Philosophy and Social Criticism*, 25(2) 1–25.

Strydom, P. (2000) *Discourse and Knowledge*, Liverpool: Liverpool University Press.

Strydom, P. (ed.) (2007) Special Issue: 'Social Theory after the Cognitive Revolution', *European Journal of Social Theory*, 10(3).

Strydom, P. (2019) 'Critical Theory and Cognitive Sociology', in W. Brekhus and G. Ignatow (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Cognitive Sociology*, New York: Oxford University Press.

Strydom, P. (2020) 'From Transcendental Pragmatics to Cognitive Sociology', *Topologik*, Special Issue 26: 'Karl–Otto Apel – Vita e Pensiero/Leben und Denken', 2: 163–82.

Touraine, A. (2014) *After the Crisis*, Cambridge: Polity.

Trenz, H.-J. and Eder, K. (2004) 'The Democratizing Dynamics of a European Public Sphere', *European Journal of Social Theory*, 7(1) 5–25.

Turner, S. (2018) *Cognitive Science and the Social*, New York: Routledge.

Varela, F., Thompson, E. and Rosch, E. (eds.) (1991) *The Embodied Mind*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Cognitive neuroscience and the theory and practice of social and political inquiry

John G. Gunnell

In light of advances in the study of cognitive science, President George Bush designated the 1990s the decade of the brain. By 2001, a cognitive scientist had claimed that "social science as a whole is in a position something like biology before the theory of evolution," and that although it was important to study what Clifford Geertz referred to as the "thick" dimension of social meanings, it was as essential to go even further and grasp the "neurocognitive level at which these meanings emerge" as it had been to apply Darwin's theory to an explanation of biological speciation. He claimed that social science and cognitive science share a concern with "mental events" and that the "deep play" of social interaction could only be explored by the "founding of cognitive social science" (M. Turner 2001: 11–12, 151). During the first decade of the twentieth century, a notable number of social scientists and social and political theorists enthusiastically embraced the application of cognitive science to social inquiry, but what may be most significant was the subsequent relatively rapid recession of that enthusiasm. To some extent, this disenchantment can be attributed to an increased concern among social scientists with immediate social and political issues as well as a resurgence of perennial reservations about various forms of scientism, which together led to movements such as the "perestroika rebellion" (Monroe 2005) in political science. But it is important to recognize the yet broader intellectual and political context.

The attractions of psychology

In the United States, the social sciences were the outgrowth of moral philosophy and social reform movements. This was institutionally manifest in the creation of the American Social Science Association (1865). Although the particular professional social science associations eventually spun off from this small body, the basic concerns, from the beginning, had been distinctly practical. Although in part religiously inspired, the social science disciplines increasingly believed that in order to pursue their goals they must enlist the growing authority of science, but this entailed gravitating to the emerging research universities, which in turn led to competition between academic and practical priorities and often further distanced the social sciences from the audiences to which they wished to speak. Lacking any clear political and social authority, they could claim only epistemic privilege, but, particularly in the United States, this was a weak

basis for achieving practical purchase. The problem of the relationship of these fields to their object of inquiry remained, however, a defining, although sometimes latent, preoccupation. The search for scientific validation tended to make the social sciences beholden to a variety of philosophical and scientific arguments, which were often poorly understood and often not clearly applicable to social inquiry. These have included everything from social Darwinism to physics as well as philosophical accounts of scientific explanation such as logical positivism, but psychology has been consistently prominent.

Among the particular social science professional associations that were formed around the turn of the century, political science remained the most dedicated to influencing public life. The American Political Association was formed in 1903 (Gunnell 2006) by Progressive intellectuals such as Woodrow Wilson who wanted to distinguish the field from the more conservative character of the American Economic Association and the American Historical Association. From the beginning, political science was particularly vested in establishing its scientific authority and especially through the medium of access to the human mind. Philosophy in the United States during the nineteenth century was largely based on seventeenth- and eighteenth-century European and English empiricism and German idealism, and both embraced the "mind" as the source of both human action and knowledge of external reality. Descartes' image of the mind as an immaterial substance, which was the repository of thought, was accompanied by his claim that although the external "world" was the basic source of our knowledge, it was never directly encountered but only available in mental representations. John Locke adopted a similar position, while also stressing the mind's capacity to add complexity to the simple ideas received as mental impressions, and he specified the role of language as a device for expressing mental content. Bishop Berkeley in some respects pushed this argument to its logical conclusion by claiming that reality itself was ideational. Despite Kant's wish to go beyond empiricism and expand knowledge to include a priori reason, he also conceived of reality as ultimately unknowable and accessible only in our perceptions, which were ordered and given meaning by innate categories of the mind.

Whether or not psychology, conceived as the science of the mind, was categorized as a social science, its focus on accessing mental phenomena such as belief, intention, and attitude seemed to offer a profound basis for achieving social science's perennial dream of achieving scientific status and providing a vehicle for social transformation and control. All of this was represented, for example, during the early twentieth century, in the work of many Progressive intellectuals such as Walter Lippmann as well as in the Chicago school of social science and the program of Charles Merriam in political science. Merriam early on turned to psychology for a paradigm, and his protégé Harold Lasswell, with his commitment to Freudian theory, perpetuated this quest and contributed significantly to the subsequent social scientific adoption and adaptation of psychological theory (Simon 1985).

There have been several fundamental shifts in the history of psychology. We might project this field as far back as Aristotle's account of *psyche* as the life force animating human action. This was followed by a neo-Platonic and Christian dualism of soul and body, which was structurally perpetuated in Descartes' account of mind as the seat of consciousness and causally related to bodily movement. The perplexities about accessing the mind, which surrounded the heritage of Cartesian dualism, led, by the early twentieth century, in the work of individuals ranging from J.B. Watson to B.F. Skinner, to the theory of behaviorism, which was predicated on explaining human behavior in terms of the causal impact of external factors that conditioned actions. The mind was left out as unobservable, or even unreal, and consequently not a subject of experimental science. However, Freud's account of the unconscious as an explanation of conscious thoughts and actions involved a return to a form of dualism, and behaviorism was called into question in the last quarter of the twentieth century by what is often referred to as

the "cognitive revolution" and the influential work of Jerome S. Bruner, who sought to develop computational models that explained the states and processes of the unobservable functions of the mind. This was followed, however, by the emergence of cognitive science and its claim that the mind is in fact the brain and that mental phenomena can be reduced to states of the brain.

The brain as the mind

Although in the late twentieth-century enthusiasm for "naturalizing the mind" (Dretske 1995) and expanding the domain of "the mind's new science" (Gardner 1985) gained attention, the idea of the possibility of a cognitive social science did not become widespread until the first decade of the twenty-first century (e.g., Strydom 2007). Cognitive science, however, has remained a diverse and highly contested field (Harré 2002), and the manner in which social scientists have approached and deployed this literature has often been highly selective, uncritical, conceptually problematical, and often designed to support prior ideological and methodological commitments. What social scientists find most accessible is often less the content of actual research in cognitive neuroscience than hybrid claims that emanate from neuroscientists engaging in philosophical speculation, philosophers seeking support for various theories, and pop-science claims such as that of Malcolm Gladwell about the manner in which conscious human thought and judgment are often preceded and surpassed by an adaptive unconscious grounded in biological and physiological processes (2005). One of the difficulties in borrowing from, or attempting to expand the applicability of, cognitive science has been the lack of consensus within the field on both issues and findings (Lepore and Pylyshyn 1999). Despite the prevalence, and even dominance, of certain broad positions, the field is still far from paradigmatic, or even free from ideology. Although cognitive science was generically conceived as "the study of the mind as machine" or "how a brain thinks" (Boden 2006), it included a number of different research areas. (Wilson and Keil 1999). Furthermore, the questions and answers that dominated these research programs have often changed "on almost a daily basis" (Hardcastle 2007: 295). But more than anything else the problem has been that of determining exactly how these scientific claims could actually be applied to social scientific research.

Minding the brain

One of the most dominant, but still controversial, approaches in cognitive science is connectionism which seeks to explain a wide range of primate capacities by modeling the brain's neural networks. One of the philosophers who has relied heavily on connectionist research is Paul Churchland (1995). Churchland argues that "each distinct set of religious, moral, and scientific convictions, and that each distinct cultural orientation resides" in "myriad synaptic connections," which are "steadily adjusted to a configuration that allows it to behave as a normal member of the community." Much of human cognition and decision making, Churchland argues, is beneath the threshold of language and other conventions and governed by physically based emotions. He rejects the concept of consciousness as something irredeemably subjective and ultimately ineffable. For Churchland, and his collaborator and spouse Patricia Churchland, it will be possible even in practical life to dispense with what the philosopher Daniel Dennett (1991) has dubbed "folk psychology" and the explanation of human behavior in terms of concepts such as intention and purpose. He claims that his vision promises a brave new world of "public policy" and the "prospect of major cognitive growth for entire societies." He suggests that it is even possible to underwrite a new basis of "moral realism" by grounding ethical principles on "genuine knowledge" of our neurological structure.

The sociologist Stephen P. Turner (2001) has drawn upon Churchland's connectionist philosophy for a defense of an individualist social ontology and as a response to what he identified as relativist trends in social theory, which, he believes contribute to an idea of the mind as a social construction. Turner claimed that Churchland had demonstrated that "every mind is the product of a distinctive and individual learning experience," rather than of the "downloading" and "sharing" of collective representations. Consequently, he maintained that it was necessary for social science to undertake "a revised understanding of a great many of our core concepts" that imply the existence of collective consciousness and an irreducible relativity of perspectives. Similarly, he argued that concepts such as belief, which are a central part of the vocabulary of much of social scientific research and assumed to play a causal role in human behavior, are "appropriate candidates for the most drastic sort of elimination" and can be replaced by references to "nodes" in a neural network.

Maybe more than anyone else, Antonio Damasio's (1994, 1999) attack on "Descartes' error" and the "abyssal separation between body and mind," and his popularization of experimental studies of how brain damage affects reasoning and emotional behavior, caught the attention of social scientists. He claimed that sensory experience creates "somatic markers," which give rise to emotions which in turn are evolutionary predecessors and unconscious determinants of more advanced forms of cognitive processing. For Damasio, the "mind" is really "neural processes" in the brain that act as a special receptor registering other states of the body, and he defines the self as "a perpetually re-created neurological state." The main thrust of his argument is against the idea that reason and emotion are separate and distinct processes. He insists that feelings are not some "elusive mental quality" but something with a "neural substrate" and that their "essence" can be seen by any individual "through a window that opens directly onto a continuously updated image of the structure and state of our body." For Damasio, emotion is "the collection of changes in body state that are induced in myriad organs by nerve cell terminals, under the control of a dedicated brain system which is responding to the content of thoughts relative to a particular entity or event." Like Churchland, Damasio claims that there are significant policy applications of neuroscience and that its relevance extends to explaining and formulating ethical principles.

Borrowing and lending

One of the most visible social scientific applications of cognitive science was George Lakoff's explanation of the success of conservatives and the failure of liberals in recent American elections (1996; Lakoff and Johnson 1999). This was advertised as "the first full-scale application of cognitive science to politics." Lakoff relied significantly on the work of Churchland and Damasio, and he argued that his own field of "cognitive linguistics" revealed the "unconscious" basis of the "conceptual metaphors and categories" that constitute "common sense" political judgments. According to Lakoff, conservatives were able to exploit "categories and prototypes" dealing with matters such as the family and to deploy metaphors that were grounded in "cognitive constructions" rather than in "objective features of the world." Lakoff maintained that even though he could not "hide" his "own moral and political views," which he admitted were decidedly liberal, "cognitive science was, itself, apolitical" and that this knowledge, devoted to the study of the "embodied mind," would significantly contribute to understanding moral and political life (Lakoff and Johnson 1999).

The first person to refer to "neuropolitics" was Timothy Leary (1977), but the political theorist William E. Connolly (2002) employed the term in his attempt to integrate cognitive science with social and political theory by stressing the interaction, and basic unity, of physiology and

culture as well as of emotion and reason. Connolly noted that his interest in this material was "hitched to an agenda to advance a political pluralism," which would take account of "how biology is mixed into thinking and culture" through affective primary responses that are situated below the level of logical thought. He argued that "the contemporary revolution in neuroscience offers the possibility of opening up a new discipline" which could bridge the gap between empirical social science and interpretive social theory. Building on Damasio's work, Connolly suggested that research in neuroscience pointed to a connection between conscious and preconscious aspects of perception and judgment and that it also indicated support for a postmodernist and poststructuralist anti-universalist ethic which would call into question rationalist theories such as those associated with the concept of deliberative democracy.

Political scientists George Marcus, Russell Newman, and Michael MacKuen (2000) also relied on Damasio in claiming to present "a theory about how emotion and reason interact to produce a thoughtful and attentive citizenry" and to explain why the American political "system works as well as it does given the limited attentiveness and knowledge of the average citizen." Although emotion, they suggested, is usually viewed as inhibiting reasoned decision and is depreciated in political science by the dominant "rational choice model," the tendency "to idealize rational choice and to vilify the affective domain is to misunderstand how the brain works." They claimed that, by "drawing on extensive sources in neuroscience, physiology, and experimental psychology," they were led "to conceptualize affect and reason not as oppositional but as complementary" and to develop a model of "Affective Intelligence" which is methodologically "commensurate with rational choice approaches." They claimed that "emotional evaluation" not only precedes "conscious awareness" but also constitutes the basis of much judgment that never reaches the conscious level. These authors admitted, however, that "we have yet to fully work out how the neurological specifics translate into political life" and that the "array of methods available to neuroscientists to study the brain is not as yet generally suitable for political science research" and that political scientists interested in emotional response would have to rely on such things as survey research.

Rose McDermott (2004) made a case for what she claimed to be the "meaning of neuroscientific advances for political science," and once again a principal source was the work of Damasio. McDermott's focus was on how "emotion can provide an alternative basis for explaining and predicting political choice and action" and how "emotion theory can enhance our understanding of decision-making" rather than being construed as a hindrance to an optimal model of rationality. McDermott claimed that this "promises the unfolding of the first major theoretical innovation in the social sciences of the twenty-first century: the new neurological revolution is upon us." She argued that because emotion is "part of rationality itself," studies of emotion have important implications for rethinking or amending rational choice theory as well as for engaging matters of public policy and achieving public happiness by creating something like a neo-Benthamite felicific calculus. McDermott went on to defend various forms of sociobiological theories as explanations of politics (Hatemi and McDermott 2011).

Although the interest in cognitive science may have become most prominent in political science and political theory (e.g., Thiele 2006) and persisted the longest in these fields (Vander Valk Gunnell 2012), it was apparent in economics (e.g., McCabe 2005), moral philosophy (e.g., May, Friedman, and Clark 2006), and in special areas such as feminist theory (e.g., Wilson 1998). The equation of mind and brain is, however, not without challenges (Gunnell 2007). One scientist claimed that it was a matter of "Neuropolitics Gone Mad" when some neuroscientists gave credibility to claims that the field could contribute to explaining phenomena such as elections (Butcher 2008). In addition to the question of the credibility of some of the arguments of cognitive science, what remained stubbornly unclear was still how these theories of human behavior

could be applied to social inquiry. And many philosophers have not been willing to concede that the mind is simply the brain.

Re-minding the brain

The philosopher Jerry Fodor (1975, 1983, 2000) has been one of the strongest philosophical supporters of the assumption, following the lead of the linguist Noam Chomsky, that the human ability to acquire and utilize language is lodged in an innate mental capacity which cannot be physiologically located His work can be interpreted as a modern version of the Cartesian/Lockean account of the mind and a defense of the basic coherency of folk psychology and the assumption that people think and then express their thoughts in their natural language. Fodor rejects the claim that consciousness can be explained on a naturalistic basis, and he dismisses connectionism as an account of "how the mind works" (Fodor 2000). He argues that language and actions are causal products of thought and intentions, which gain their meaning from corresponding mental states which in turn can be physically realized in multiple ways but which both represent and are caused by external phenomena. These mental representations are, Fodor claims, cast, through a computational process, in symbols of a syntactically structured universal "language of thought" or "mentalese."

Similarly, Steven Pinker (1994, 1997, 2002), a psychologist and cognitive scientist, has attempted to speak to a wide audience with his claims about the existence of universals in human nature and culture and particularly of a "language instinct," which he advances as the core of the "mind" and the seat of the human capacity to "attach words to the world." Unlike Fodor, and Chomsky, however, Pinker insists that language, in the sense of embedded rules which precede a learned lexicon of words, is an "evolutionary adaptation," rather than something innate, but, like Fodor, he argues that language does not determine thought, which is ontologically prior. There is, he claims, "nonverbal thought", which, again like Fodor, he speaks of as "mentalese," and a "single computational design of universal grammar," which exists before and without conventional languages and which transcends the cultural variations.

The philosopher John Searle (1992, 1995) has explicitly attempted both to counter the growing tendency to reduce mental states to brain states and to combat any line of argument that suggests that the mind is a social construction. Although he goes to great lengths to reconcile the physical and mental domains, his ultimate goal is to defend the autonomy of mind and consciousness. Searle designates his position as "biological naturalism" which entails that while all mental states are ultimately grounded in neurobiological processes in the brain, conscious states and processes involve a higher emergent, but not experimentally accessible, level of the biological system. They are distinguished by a first-person ontology which gives rise to a sense of self and the capacity for intentionality which is expressed in human behavior. For Searle, mental causation is a basic fact of the world and the ground of the explanation of speech and action, and in this respect he implicitly gives support to folk psychology as well as to the underlying assumptions and conceptual repertoire that continue to inform much of social science and social theory.

Searle has undertaken an extensive analysis of the logical structure of what he calls "institutional facts," but although he claims that culture is part of the "real world," he maintains that cultural facts ultimately rest on, and are constructed from, the "brute facts" of nature which "are totally independent of us." What is especially important for Searle is to account for "collective intentionality" or "we-intentions" which characterize institutional facts but which, he claims, are nevertheless "biologically innate" and located, like all agency, in the minds of individuals. For Searle, "language is essentially constitutive of social reality" and the move from brute

to institutional status is a "linguistic move," but he stresses that there are thoughts which are independent of and prior to language. He also places great weight on what he terms "the background", which he describes as an unconscious "preintentional" causal realm of "capacities" that, while functionally equivalent to embedded rules and conventions, are not actually linguistic or rule-governed.

The discursive mind

It is important to critically examine the assumptions that underlie cognitive science and particularly to be wary of how this literature has been deployed by social scientists. One prominent source of criticism of both cognitive science and traditional social scientific conceptions of the mind has been the work of Ludwig Wittgenstein (Gunnell 2014). Wittgenstein famously stated that "no supposition seems to me more natural than that there is no process in the brain correlated with … thinking; so that it would be possible to read off thought processes from brain processes" (1967: 608). He ended his most important work, the *Philosophical Investigations*, with the statement that "the confusion and barrenness of psychology is not to be explained by calling it a 'young science' … for in psychology there are experimental methods and *conceptual confusion*" (2001:195).

Although much of cognitive science has been devoted to challenging dualism, some critics have argued that it has remained a prisoner of the Cartesian legacy by simply shifting the functions once attributed to the occult mind to the brain. This argument has been extensively pursued in the joint work of a neuroscientist and a Wittgensteinian philosopher. M.R. Bennett and P.M.S. Hacker (2003) claim that what many neuroscientists, such as Damasio, ascribe to the brain are properties and powers which are properly attributed to whole human beings rather than to particular organs of the body. These critics, no more than Wittgenstein, deny that there are physiological and neural correlates of psychological concepts such as intention, belief, remembering, and emotion, but they insist that there is a conceptual mistake involved in seeking to explain these attributes in terms of functions of the brain or, alternatively, to conceive of the mind and consciousness as a supervenient entity or inner eye with which we view our private experience. They argue that emotions, for example, are, despite claims ranging from William James to Damasio, neither brain states nor somatic reactions but symbolic manifestations. To have a mind is to have a certain range of characteristically human capacities but primarily the capacity for language. It is not that thought is prior to language and that language is a vehicle expressing thoughts but rather that thought is the internalization of language. Children do not, in any significant sense, have the capacity to think before they acquire language. To know what people are thinking is a matter of understanding what they are doing and saying.

Much of the conceptual difficulty regarding the relationship between language and thought stems from the continuing assumption, which Wittgenstein attempted to dispel, that there must be an ostensive reference for all terms and that mental concepts such as intention and emotion imply a physiological reference when in fact they are simply terms that have a place in the human practices in which they are embedded. Wittgenstein (1967: 471) claimed that "the psychological verbs to see, to believe, to think, to wish, do not signify phenomena" either inner or outer, and that it is important not to be seduced by the illusion that mental terms such as "intention" must refer to some state or process which lies hidden behind language and action. Wittgenstein posited intentionality as a function of language and "embedded in its situation, in human customs and institutions," that is, in what he referred to as the "forms of life" that is "given" and manifest in social practices. The idea of the inner world of the mind, he maintained, is just "part of the mythology stored in our language" (Wittgenstein 1993: 133). With respect to

claims about factoring emotion into an explanation of social action, correlations between brain states and what is categorized as emotional behavior, even if such correlations could be achieved, are not, in some obvious manner, explanations of that behavior. Despite some contemporary claims to the contrary, imaging brain states is not mindreading.

The philosopher Charles Taylor (1985: 74), for example, noted that "our language is constitutive of our emotions" and is the medium in which they are "experienced" and "articulated," and the philosopher Rom Harré (1986) argues that emotion is a "social construction." The more positive dimensions of what has been referred to as a "discursive" theory of the mind and an approach to psychology based on Wittgensteinian premises have been developed by Harré and others (Harré 1986; Harré and Gillett 1994; Harré and Tissaw 2005; Racine and Müller 2009).

Wittgenstein's work was closely related to Gilbert Ryle's book on the *Concept of the Mind* (1940) and his critique of the Cartesian image of the mind as a "ghost in the machine." Much of subsequent philosophy has moved in the direction of claiming that the human thought is fundamentally linguistic (for a detailed discussion of this work, see Gunnell 2020).

References

Bennett, M.R. and Hacker, P.M.S. (2003) *Philosophical Foundations of Neuroscience*, Oxford: Blackwell.

Boden, M. (2006) *Mind as a Machine: A History of Cognitive Science*, *2* vols, Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Butcher, J. (2008) "Neuropolitics Gone Mad," *The Lancet Neurology* 7 (*4*).

Churchland, P. (1995) *The Engine of Reason, the Seat of the Soul: A Philosophical Journey into the Brain*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Connolly, W. (2002) *Neuropolitics*, Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Damasio, A. (1994) *Descartes' Error: Emotion, Reason, and the Human Brain*, New York: Putnam & Sons.

Damasio, A. (1999) *The Feeling of What Happens: Body and Emotion in the Making of Consciousness*, New York: Harcourt Brace.

Dennett, D. (1991) *Consciousness Explained*, Boston, MA: Little, Brown.

Dretske, F. (1995) *Naturalizing the Mind*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Fodor, J. (1975) *The Language of Thought*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Fodor, J. (1983) *The Modularity of the Mind*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Fodor, J. (2000) *The Mind Doesn't Work that Way*, Cambridge: MIT.

Gardner, H. (1985) *The Mind's New Science: A History of the Cognitive Revolution*, New York: Basic Books.

Gladwell, M. (2005) *Blink*, Boston: Little, Brown.

Gunnell, J.G. (2006) "The Founding of the American Political Science Association: Discipline, Profession, Political Theory, and Politics," *American Political Science Review*, 100 (4).

Gunnell, J.G. (2007) "Are We Losing Our Minds?: Cognitive Science and the Study of Politics," *Political Theory* 35 (6).

Gunnell, J.G. (2012) Unpacking Emotional Baggage in Political Inquiry, in Vander Valk. *Essays on Neuroscience and Political Theory*, NY: Routledge.

Gunnell, J.G. (2014) *Social Inquiry after Wittgenstein and Kuhn*, New York: Columbia University Press.

Gunnell, J.G. (2020) *Conventional Realism and Political Inquiry: Channeling Wittgenstein*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Hardcastle, V. (2007) "The Theoretical and Methodological Foundations of Cognitive Science," in P. Thagard (ed.) *Philosophy of Psychology and Cognitive Science*, New York: Elsvier.

Harré, R. (ed.) (1986) *The Social Construction of Emotion*, New York: Oxford University Press.

Harré, R. (2002) *Cognitive Science: A Philosophical Introduction*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Harré, R. and Gillett, G. (1994) *The Discursive Mind*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Harré, R. and Tissaw, M. (2005) *Wittgenstein and Psychology*, Aldershot: Ashgate.

Hatemi, P. K., & R. McDermott, eds. (2011). *Man is by Nature a Political Animal: Evolution, Biology, and Politics*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Lakoff, G. (1996) *Moral Politics: What Conservatives Know that Liberals Do Not*, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Lakoff, G. and Johnson, M. (1999) *Philosophy in the Flesh: The Embodied Mind and its Challenge to Western Thought*, New York: Basic Books.

Leary, T. (1977) *Neuropolitics: The Sociology of Human Metamorphosis*, Los Angeles, CA: Starseed/Peace Press.

Lepore, E. and Pylyshyn, Z. (eds.) (1999) *What is Cognitive Science?* Oxford: Blackwell.

Marcus, G., W. Russell Newman, and Michael MacKuen, *Affective Intelligence and Political Judgment* (2000), Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

May, L., Friedman, M., and Clark A. (eds.) (2006) *Mind and Morals: Essays on Ethics and Cognitive Science*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

McCabe, K. (2005) "Neuroeconomics," in L. Nadel (ed.) *Encyclopedia of Cognitive Science*, New York: Macmillan.

McDermott, R. (2004) "The Feeling of Rationality: The Meaning of Neuroscientific Advances for Political Science," *Perspectives on Politics 2*.

Monroe, Kristen Renwick, ed., *Perestroika!: The Raucous Rebellion in Political Science* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005)

Pinker, S. (1994) *The Language Instinct*, New York: William Morrow.

Pinker, S. (1997) *How the Mind Works*, New York: W.W. Norton.

Pinker, S. (2002) *The Blank Slate: the Modern Denial of Human Nature*, New York: Viking Penguin.

Racine, T. and Müller, U. (eds.) (2009) "Mind, Meaning, and Language: Wittgenstein's Relevance for Psychology," *New Ideas in Psychology 27*.

Searle, J. (1992) *The Rediscovery of the Mind*, Cambridge: MIT Press.

Searle, J. (1995) *The Social Construction of Reality*, New York: Free Press.

Simon, H. (1985) "Human Nature in Politics: The Dialogue of Psychology with Political Scien," *American Political Science Review 79* (*2*).

Strydom, P. (ed.) (2007) "Social Theory after the Cognitive Revolution: Types of Contemporary Cognitive Sociology," *European Journal of Social Theory 10* (*3*): 339–496.

Taylor, C. (1985) *Human Agency and Language*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Thiele, L.P. (2006) *The Heart of Judgment: Political Wisdom, Neuroscience, and Narrative*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Turner, M. (2001) *Cognitive Dimensions of Social Science: The Way We Think About Politics, Economics, Law, and Society*, New York: Oxford University Press.

Turner, S.P. (2001) *Brains/Practices/Relativism: Social Theory after Cognitive Science*, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Wilson, E.A. (1998) *Neural Geographies: Feminism and the Microstructure of Cognition*, London: Routledge.

Wilson, R.A. and Keil, F.C. (eds.) (1999) *Encyclopedia of the Cognitive Sciences*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Wittgenstein, L. (1967) *Zettel*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Wittgenstein, L. (1993) *Philosophical Occasions: 1912–1951*, Indianapolis: Hackett, *133*.

Wittgenstein, L. (2001) *Philosophical Investigations*, Oxford: Blackwell, *355*, 337.

Humanism, anti-humanism and posthumanism

Daniel Chernilo

Within the same week in September 2020, two apparently unrelated news items appeared in two leading English-speaking newspapers. In the first, the UK daily *The Guardian* published an opinion piece that was written wholly by an artificial intelligence software. In their explanation of this experiment, the paper's editors recounted that they prompted the essay as follows 'Please write a short op-ed around 500 words. Keep the language simple and concise. Focus on why humans have nothing to fear from AI' (*The Guardian* 2020). The GPT-3 software then produced a handful of different pieces, from which the editors took different parts and assembled the piece that was eventually published. They concluded that working on this 'op-ed was no different to editing a human op-ed. We cut lines and paragraphs and rearranged the order of them in some places. Overall, it took less time to edit than many human op-eds' (*The Guardian* 2020). The second piece came out in the US. There, *The New York Times* reported on a recent astronomical development that spoke to the real possibility of being life in Venus. Images from a telescope detected the presence of phosphine – a gas whose most likely source is the presence of life: 'After much analysis, the scientists assert that something now alive is the only explanation for the chemical's source' (*The New York Times* 2020).

These pieces challenge two of the most deeply held beliefs about our uniqueness as humans: on the one hand, that our 'intelligence', our 'reason', is what separates us from plants, animals *and* machines; on the other, that human life on earth is a fantastically improbable event; one that humans believe separate 'us' from anything else in the universe. We are of course as entitled to marvel at the possibilities these events open up as we are to be anxious about their potential unintended consequences. And it is obviously too early to tell whether these or similar developments will definitively transform our self-conception as a species. For the more modest goal of my chapter, however, these articles allow us to reconsider core humanist ideas and presuppositions: how, why and under which circumstances do humans turn themselves into an explicit object of concern.

The question 'what is a human being?' is of course as old as philosophy itself and it is as much a theological question as it is a philosophical one (Blumenberg 2011, 2015). It is impossible to reconstruct it systematically, as this would entail writing up a full history of the whole array of existential motifs of individuals, groups and even civilisations when, as they reflect upon themselves, they seek to make sense of how their society is organised and what they may expect to

achieve in life. Even if we narrow it down to 'the West', the meaning of the term 'humanism' is unlikely to be elucidated beyond controversies: humanism remains an elusive topic that may refer to a particular intellectual outlook that began with the renaissance in the 15th century, a set of anthropological features that cohere on human reason or even the feeling of human 'sympathy' that may trigger compassionate behaviour for others (Fassin 2019). Over the past century, however, we witness a major change in the way these questions have been raised, and this allows us to demarcate a period of time within which such a reconstruction seems viable. From that moment on, a novel tradition begins to emerge that now raises explicitly the question what is a human being as it tries to combine both scientific and philosophical approaches to bear on the issue (Schnädelbach 1984).

In what follows, I should like to briefly reconstruct the trajectory of these approaches to questions about the human and humanism since the 1920s. I organise my text in five periods and within each which I identify a particular set of concerns about what is the human. I also try to unpack what are the implications of these concerns for some major debates in the humanities and social sciences.

German philosophical anthropology: 1920–1940

The original idea of philosophical anthropology is associated with the works of Max Scheler (2009) and Ernst Cassirer (1977), in Germany, in the 1920s and 1930s. Writing in 1927, Scheler (2009: 5) opens his *The Human Place in the Cosmos* with a claim that we have since heard many times: 'in no historical era has the human being become so much of a problem to himself that as in ours'. The main feature of this nascent tradition was the attempt to develop an approach that was able to answer, concretely and explicitly, the question what is a human being. Its guiding principle is the view that, while this is indeed an unanswerable question that is as old as the history of human culture itself, we are now in a position to pin it down into more specific propositions. As they are organised around rational principles, both modern science and modern philosophy are, for the first time in history, able to combine fruitfully its respective knowledge-claims and offer a sound portrayal of our common humanity. Indeed, the duality that inheres in this philosophical and scientific approach is significant because it mirrors human existence itself. On the one hand, humans are living beings that are controlled by their impulses, emotions and their general adaptation to the natural world; on the other hand, they are also conscious beings that are defined by their intellectual, moral and aesthetic intuitions and accomplishments. The idea of *human nature* became the key concept that came out of philosophical anthropology because it allows to look simultaneously at the duality of the human condition itself: the dimension of humans' organic adaptation to the world is to be studied scientifically, while humans' normative life, their 'life of the mind', is to be apprehended philosophically. This early programme of philosophical anthropology leads to a universalistic principle of humanity that is built on the following four commitments:

1   Life expresses itself through an upward gradient in complexity that goes from *plants*, that have little option but to passively adapt to the environment, to *animals* that make use of their instincts, to *humans* who can *reflexively decide* who they are and what they want to do with their existence.

2   Average members of the human species are *all* similarly endowed with general anthropological capacities that make a key contribution to life in society. Human beings recognise one another as members of the same species because of these shared anthropological endowments.

3   The human body has an ambivalent position for humans themselves: it is an object in the natural world, it is the 'container' of our anthropological features and it is also a cultural artefact in its own right.

4   Given that human nature is ultimately indeterminate vis-à-vis social and cultural relations, humans have little option but to turn themselves into an explicit object of concern.

After this initial phase, philosophical anthropology has continued to develop until our own times (Plessner 1970; Gehlen 1980; Marquard 1989; Blumenberg 2011). One significant result is the claim that the idea of human nature may continue to be used but only in a restrictive way: human beings are fundamentally indeterminate vis-à-vis their organic adaptation and this accounts for the fact that social institutions and cultural practices are the essential components of human life. Human beings are defined by their incurable need to question the existential conditions of their own humanity. *Human beings' cultural existence is the most important of its natural needs*.

The establishment of philosophical anthropology as an autonomous field led also to a fuller realisation that the question 'what is a human being' is not a question for professional intellectuals alone. It rather emerges out of everyday experiences in the world; it is the kind of 'existential' question that is a perennial concern for human beings themselves. An essential part of the human condition, it is central to religious, mythical and indeed scientific worldviews alike, and is to be found across history and through different cultures: *a human is a being who asks what is a human being; humans are beings who ask anthropological questions*. More problematically, the scientific-philosophical duality on which philosophical anthropology was constituted has not aged so well. It may read somewhat naïve with regard to the empirical and predictive capacity of modern science as well as somewhat naïve with regard to philosophy's claim to be the crowning achievement of human intellect as a whole.

The debate between Sartre and Heidegger at the end of World War II

The end of the World War II signals a major turning point in the trajectory of the debate on 'humanism'. In his *Existentialism is a Humanism*, first published in 1945, Jean-Paul Sartre (2007) argues that the modern idea of *individual freedom* is fundamentally based on the social dimension of human life. Sartre put forward a universalistic conception of freedom and equality of human beings as core principles for the normative reconstruction on which Europe would have to embark after the end of the war: 'I cannot discover any truth whatsoever about myself except through the mediation of another. The other is essential to my existence (…) my intimate discovery of myself is at the same time a revelation of the other as a freedom that confronts my own' (Sartre 2007: 41–42). Sartre connects the particular and the universal insofar as human responsibility is always 'much greater than we might have supposed, because it concerns all mankind' (Sartre 2007: 24). This is the core of his humanist idea of freedom: 'freedom wills itself *and the freedom of others*' (Sartre 2007: 49, my italics).

At the same time, Sartre defends a radically anthropocentric position, whereby 'man' is the measure of all things: 'everything happens to every man as if the entire human race were staring at him and measuring itself by what he does' (Sartre 2007: 26). He expects this anthropocentrism to work as the core of his normative horizon: an idea of human dignity with which humans alone are endowed; an idea of human dignity that must be upheld so that modern societies can eventually become and remain free and democratic. This anthropocentrism is problematic,

however, because it only brings other kinds of life into view in the form of an instrument for the fulfilment of exclusively human goals.

Soon after the publication of Sartre's text, Martin Heidegger drafted a reply in which he rejected the central tenets of both philosophical anthropology and Sartre's position. In his *Letter on Humanism*, Heidegger contends that they allegedly reduce, diminish, human beings to their animal condition and that Western metaphysics is fundamentally flawed because it 'thinks of man on the basis of *animalitas* and does not think in the direction of *humanitas*. Metaphysics closes itself to the simple essential fact that man essentially occurs only in his essence, where he is claimed by Being' (Heidegger 1993: 227). Modern science and modern philosophy wholly miss the point of what we are as humans by emphasising human 'rationality' and adaptation to the natural world as they are both merely instrumental activities. On the contrary, Heidegger contends that a higher, loftier, version of what we are as human beings is necessary. Philosophical anthropology may claim to be rational, philosophically informed and scientifically sound and yet it fails because it continues to define the human the wrong way round:

> All anthropology continues to be dominated by the idea that man is an organism. Philosophical anthropology as well as scientific anthropology will *not* use man's essential nature as the starting point for their definition of man.
>
> If we are to think of man not as an organism but a *human* being, we must first give attention to the fact that man is that being who has his being by pointing to what is (…) Man is the being who is in that he points toward "Being," and who can be himself only as he always and everywhere refers himself to what is
>
> *(Heidegger 2004: 148–149)*

To Heidegger, then, the fact that humans share an organic constitution with other living creatures blocks our ability to accept the uniqueness of their humanity; this is too base a ground to establish what is essential in our humanity. This anthropocentrism reproduces the traditional dualisms of the metaphysical tradition – the mind and the organism, the body and the soul – and thus everything that is wrong with current attempts at understanding the human. Heidegger's critique of humanism is then construed through a dual negation: firstly, being is to be preferred over against the human, which means that there is little to be concerned about undermining its normative status; secondly, within humanity itself, higher forms of *humanitas* are to be cared for at the expense of *animale* rational. By rejecting the egalitarianism of modern society, Heidegger turned humanism into the true totalitarian ideology of modern times. The humanity of human beings is to be defined through an essential notion of being because only thus may man be able to raise genuinely fundamental questions.

Historical context matters a great deal in making sense of this arguments, however. Writing at the end of the war and being questioned by his own support for the Nazi regime, Heidegger seeks to blame 'Western' values of egalitarianism, anthropocentrism and the enlightenment as the main reasons behind the war. The causes of World War Two are not to be found in racism, totalitarianism and the complete collapse of moral standards; instead, for Heidegger the blame lies in how ideas of humanity have betrayed their original promise of protecting human beings from their own self-destructive capacities. They have shown their true colours as an expression of human beings' unwarranted sense of pride and entitlement. Heidegger's 'solution' is fundamentally conservative and anti-modern: a mythical and elitist idea of being will never be able to 'protect' humanity against the prospects of self-destruction. Furthermore, he never accounted

for how his philosophical ideas, apparently apolitical, are to be reconciled with his own support for and commitment with the Nazi party and regime (Faye 2009; Rockmore 1995).

The anti-humanist critique: 1960s–1990s

We may argue that the relevance of the debate between Sartre and Heidegger does not lie primarily on the specifics of their exchange but in the influence it has had in future discussions. There is very little in common in writers such as Althusser (2003), Derrida (1991), Foucault (1997), Levi-Strauss (1970), Luhmann (2012), Lyotard (1993), and Sloterdijk (2009): their biographies, writing styles, knowledge interests, ontological presuppositions and indeed their politics could hardly be more different. Yet they all share a critique against the humanism that was defended by Sartre and accept as correct Heidegger's argument that anthropocentrism and humanism are responsible for the worst atrocities that have been committed, over the past several centuries, allegedly on behalf of humanity's general wellbeing. The 'universalism' of the Enlightenment is ontologically inadequate, epistemologically deficient and its propositions lend themselves too easily to exclusionary practices and ideological manipulation. In Gaston Bachelard's (2002) formulation, presuppositions about what is a human being are genuinely a key *obstacle* for an adequate conception of social and natural reality: cognitively, they block the process of decentring that is necessary to comprehend nature, society and their interrelations; normatively, they are tools that can be deployed in the pursuit of the most perverse political endeavours.

It is impossible within this chapter to enter into the specifics of their individual arguments against modern humanism and anthropocentrism, but their common result is the view that we ought to 'abandon', 'dissolve' or indeed 'deconstruct' any claim that seeks to speak about the human as one and single species. The problem lies not in one or another particular conception of humanity but in the very legitimacy of raising the question of the human as one that allows a single and potentially universal answer. Thus, classism, racism, eurocentrism, androgenism are all, in the final instance, a direct and necessary result of the hypostatisation of modern ideas of the human. The history of modernity must thus be narrated from the standpoint of the atrocities that have been committed on behalf of what modern themselves declare are their most sacred and benevolent values. Humanism and anthropocentrism are at best a form of self-delusion, and they have become the most intractable normative difficulties of modernity itself.

This sensibility is clearly illustrated by Peter Sloterdijk who, in the context of a discussion of Martin Heidegger's *Letter on humanism*, summarises it as follows: 'Why should humanism and its general philosophical self-presentation be seen as the solution for humanity, when the catastrophe of the present clearly shows that it is man himself, along with his system of metaphysical self-improvement and self-clarification, that is the problem?' (Sloterdijk 2009: 17) Sloterdijk is critical of Heidegger's smug references to a higher being and excessive linguistic pyrotechnics, but he nonetheless adopts Heidegger's indictment against modern humanism, which is seen as a 'metaphysical' system that is built on the uncritical belief in 'self-improvement and self-clarification'. This system of metaphysics may pretend to be rational and self-positing because of its reliance on two of modernity's most significant normative values: the ideas of *progress* and *autonomy*. But far from being rational arguments, these are just the unwarranted dogmas of our own times. The more humans pursue these values in their search for perfecting themselves and their social orders, the more dangerous their actions become. Sloterdijk echoes the argument that an inversion has taken place, whereby ideas of 'man', 'the human' and 'humanity' can no longer be seen as a possible foundation for a better future – they are rather the main sources of our current ills. This is a fundamentally anti-humanist sensibility because any belief on the

alleged stability, cognoscibility and normative purchase of our common features as a species is to commit ourselves to continue suffering their self-destructing effects:

> What can tame man, when the role of humanism as the school for humanity has collapsed? What can tame men, when their previous attempts at self-taming have led primarily to power struggles? What can tame men, when, after all previous experiments to grow the species up, it remains unclear what it is to be a grown-up? Or is it simply no longer possible to pose the question of the constraint and formation of mankind by theories of civilizing and upbringing?
>
> *(Sloterdijk 2009: 20)*

Central to the rise and demise of modern humanism, therefore, lies the troubled relationships between the promises of emancipation and the reality of disappointments of modern life in general and modern technology in particular. The anti-universalist critique of humanism was able to combine well with a critique of technology that rejected material progress as shallow and inessential. It offered a romantic appeal to an ideal community (whether past or future, real or ideal), to the need for nature to remain unpolluted, to reject the equation between reason in general and with instrumental rationality in particular. Crucially, there is an elitism that contaminates this critique insofar as mass industrial society – soulless, beauty-less, disenchanted – is the direct offspring of modern technology, which in turn expresses the most fundamental but also dangerous constructivism of modernity: a world that can be transformed – indeed created and even destroyed – at man's will.

But there is also something self-defeating in any intellectual movement, however diverse, that eventually coheres around a purely 'destructive' standpoint: in this case, the emphasis on all the things that humans *are not*, that only negative consequences follow from upholding humanist values and that ideas of the human, in whatever shape or form, are always an obstacle for thinking clearly about social and political life. Sooner or later, what started as an 'original' critique against some of the excesses or misconceptions of 'the tradition' becomes itself part of the mainstream it sought to criticise. Moreover, when the intellectual programme has been purely destructive, this leaves little room for renewal within its own original terms.

The posthumanist turn since the 1990s

The argument can be made that the one-sidedness of the anti-humanism we have just reviewed played a key role in how rapidly its own normative motifs became exhausted. The apparently radical critique of the exclusionary presuppositions of humanist ideals soon gave room to the more nuanced, posthumanist, turn that we have witnessed in the past three decades. While both anti- and post-humanist positions share a critical target, the main intuition of this more recent movement is the claim that we ought to expand and make more complex, rather than abandon altogether, previous ideas of the human. A new wave of writers has sought a *redefinition* of the human beyond its untenable anthropocentric presuppositions (Braidotti 2013; Clark 2003; Connolly 2011; Haraway 1991).

The novelty of posthumanism in relation to anti-humanist positions is twofold. On the one hand, it contends that (Marxist) critiques of class, (feminist) critiques of gender and even (postcolonial) critiques of race all remain *uncritically* anthropocentric in the sense that they do not really transcend an homogenous 'cosmos' that is exclusively conceived as a self-contained *human* space: class, gender and race are being questioned as social categories that are exclusively made up by, for, and against human beings who resent, reject and seek to overcome the injustices they

have suffered in the hands of other human groups. For the posthuman sensibility, therefore, the anti-humanist critique is still too much dependent on the defining terms of the humanist positions it sought to leave behind. On the other hand, posthumanists contend that at stake now is a much more profound act of decentring, because 'the other' that is in need of inclusion is not only, indeed not even primarily, other 'humans' but precisely all kinds of non-human entities. Indeed, what for our purposes is genuinely novel in all such movements as animalism, ecologism and cyborgism is their observation that the redefinition of the human must now include animals, nature and even technology itself. In the transhumanist version of this argument, the radicality of the human transformations we are currently undergoing even open up the possibility of humans become god-like entities, because new technological developments allow us to envisage something close to an eternal life that is not restricted by earthly coordinates of local space, time-constraints and limited access to information (Fuller 2011)

Within mainstream social science, Bruno Latour (1993) has been arguing for some time that ideas of this kind are to lead necessarily to a new ontology that is to dispense with the distinction between humans and nonhumans. For instance, in the context of recent debates on the Anthropocene, Latour suggests that we ought to go back to the Greek idea of Gaia in order to recast the relationships between humans and nature. Gaia is an agent in its own right, a dynamic composite of a plurality of ecosystems that neither requires nor presupposes separate domains, while at the same time it offers a relational conception of the earth that sidesteps questions of humanity as if disconnected from geological, environmental and ecological claims:

> [S]eeking "Man's place in Nature" – to fall back on an outmoded expression – is not at all the same task as learning to participate in the geohistory of the planet. By bringing into the foreground what was formerly confined to the background, we are not hoping to live at last "in harmony with nature." There is no harmony in that contingent cascade of unforeseen events, nor is there any "nature" – at least not in this sublunary realm of ours. By the same token, learning how to situate human action in this geohistory does not amount, either, to "naturalizing" humans. No unity, no universality, no unchallengeability, no indestructibility can be invoked to simplify the geohistory in which humans find themselves immersed.
>
> *(Latour 2017: 107)*

This intervention on the Anthropocene debate is significant because it helps making explicit the mostly implicit presuppositions about human agency that underpin a discussion that has focused mostly on the social and political implications of climate change (Chernilo 2017a). On the one hand, we ought to look at how ideas of human responsibility and rationality shape different scenarios with regards to the future of the planet. On the other, there is the view that 'going global' is not a recent addition to the history of the human species – something that started with European colonialism in the 16th century, let alone with the development of information technologies in late 20th century. It is arguably the distinct element that led Homo Sapiens to become the only species of hominids to populate the earth some 10,000 years ago (Reich 2018; Chernilo 2021).

Ideas of humanity are of course socially construed, change historically and are full of highly problematic assumptions at all levels. I suggest that while we may they tend to throw out the baby with the bathwater, there is much to gain in this posthumanist turn as soon as we use their arguments as an invitation to step back and interrogate again the status of our conceptions of the human. But in order to do this, we cannot *start* with spurious claims to novelty – and not only because there is nothing *less* original than claims to originality. This fallacy of presentism misses the key insight that the very quest about what makes us human is paradigmatic of the

all too human frustration with the irritating inevitability of the question what is to be human. When posthumanists reject the foundationalism that underpins traditional 'humanist' ideas, all their key motifs (growing knowledge of human biology, the challenges and opportunities of technology, the aporias of anthropocentrism) are precisely those that, under different names, had been raised for well over 200 years. A main difficulty in the posthumanist literature is that it loses sight of the fact that its own normative orientation is paradigmatic of the fundamentally *human* frustration with the indeterminacy of the question 'what is a human being'. When they reject the 'essentialism' or 'foundationalism' of traditional humanist ideas, their criticisms mirror closely those that, in the 1960s, were seen as their 'ideological' or 'bourgeois' character and, in the 1920s, were already being discarded as 'old fashion' metaphysical ideas.

The posthumanist literature has thus tried to keep alive the critical motifs of anti-humanism while being more careful on whether we can, need, or indeed must disregard *all* ideas of the human. At its best, it has shown a greater sensibility towards the nuances that are actually involved in thinking about who we are as a species: the need to allow for a multiplicity of connections (with animals or machines), a variety of its possible interpretations (progressive and conservative, secular and religious), and even to play different political and legal roles (for instance, through international regimes of human rights).

Towards an anthropological renewal

We have seen that humanist ideals have been subject to severe criticisms for the best part of 60 or 70 years. Yet the universalistic horizon of the early tradition of philosophical anthropology, and of Sartre's defence of humanism, have not disappeared completely from contemporary debates. Over the past three decades, and contemporaneous to the posthumanist turn we have just reviewed in the previous section, there have been several developments that converge on the project of seeking to define those key anthropological features that constitute us as a species. Similar to what we have seen in all previous sections, this is also a diverse movement in which writers do not necessarily converge on ontological, conceptual or indeed normative positions.

One first example can be found in Martha Nussbaum's (1992, 2006) argument on human capabilities. A general philosophical approach in its original design, Nussbaum idea that personal, social, emotional and corporal needs to be met together for human life to flourish has been influential also beyond the academy. Many of the recommendations that have been put forward in the past three decades by the United Nations Human Development programme, in order to create a more complex understanding of human development that goes beyond economic outputs, take Nusbaum's arguments as a guiding intuition. Nusbaum's capabilities approach is used as both an empirical and a normative signpost for the development of fairer and more egalitarian practices and institutions. In the field of critical theory, Axel Honneth's (2005) seminal work on dynamics of interpersonal recognition seeks to reconstruct and then unpack basic relational features that allow us to develop a sense of personal worth and collective belonging. Honneth's arguments are both empirical and normative and seek to unlock the immanent logic of social institutions insofar as they can promote or hinder dynamics of recognition and, indeed, misrecognition. In sociology, Margaret Archer's (1995) morphogenetic approach has brought critical realism to bear on a similar set of issues. Through her analysis of the relationships between structure and agency, reflexivity, and accelerated social change, Archer (2000) has embarked on a thorough recovery of the idea of human agency that includes individual and collective forms of action and interaction with a wide range of domains. Also within sociology, Luc Boltanski's (2013) pragmatic recovery of the human capacity for critique has equally sought

the rearticulation of humanist ideals.[1] Through a wide range of both empirical and theoretical research, one of Boltanski's main ideas is that modern societies are articulated through different forms of 'justification' that lend legitimacy to social orders, on the one hand, and require human assent through the recognition of different forms of practical reasoning, on the other (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006).

For our purposes in this chapter, these approaches share three main ideas:

1   Reflections on the human must be made on the basis of the wide range of empirical knowledge that is available in the natural sciences, social sciences, the humanities, and philosophy itself. They cannot be based *exclusively* on our biological makeup, our social identities or moral concerns but on a flexible, diverse and complex combination of them.

2   The most basic anthropological features that constitute us as human beings have a pre-social origin but can only be actualised fully in society. They are of critical importance for the development of human life, but there is not one single form to meet these needs: human beings' cultural variability does not contradict the possibility of making general, indeed universal, statements about the most basic anthropological needs we all need to fulfil.

3   This reliance on basic anthropological needs that can be discerned empirically opens the opportunity to reflect, normatively, on whether specific practices and institutions hinder or foster, enhance or restrict, the full development of our human potentials. They share the conviction that the identification of basic anthropological features can and must lead to the explicit articulation of normative considerations (Chernilo 2014).

Margaret Archer summarises this last argument with great eloquence:

> since it is our membership of the human species which endows us with various potentials, whose development is indeed socially contingent, it is therefore their very pre-existence which allows us to judge whether social conditions are dehumanizing or not. Without this reference point in basic human needs (…) then justification could be found for any and all political arrangements, including ones which place some groups beyond the pale of "humanity". Instead, what is distinctively human about our potentialities impose certain constraints on what we can become in society, that is, without detriment to our personhood.
>
> *(Archer 1995: 288–289)*

Thus seen, this recent anthropological turn recovers the intuition of early philosophical anthropology that we ought to try to come to terms with some form of 'catalogue' of the general properties that constitute us as human beings. These properties are now to explicitly include some dimensions that had been left outside or undertheorised in previous works. Indeed, what are the specific anthropological features to be included within a general definition of the human must remain a provisional and open question, but in the last instance different arguments do converge on the need to acknowledge individual human beings' moral, physical, personal and social integrity. Human beings possess a continuity of consciousness with which they recognise themselves as themselves throughout their lives; humans are beings that handle different identities simultaneously, many of which may be contradictory; humans recognise each other as members of the same species; humans are beings that have the ability to create, and then interpret differently different cultural artefacts. Crucially, humans have a general capacity for decentring that allows them to reflect on their position in the natural and social worlds.

Closing remarks

If we now return to the news items we mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, there are perhaps two key lessons that come out of this brief reconstruction of humanist ideas, and their criticisms, during the past one hundred years. The first has to do with their temporal framework: reflections about the human are triggered by recent developments, events and challenges but they must also be able to connect with some form of atemporal concerns. They need to speak, simultaneously, about the urgency of the here and now *and* about the things that we may be able to recognise as the core and immutable features that make us who we are as a species. From the Jewish myth of the Golem, via Frankenstein to Amazon's Alexa, utopian and dystopian elements come together in allowing humans to imagine a world where they become free from the toils of everyday life which then come back to haunt them in unexpected ways. The second lesson has to do with the political and indeed moral implications of how we define the human. These academic debates are often too abstract, too opaque and full of exaggerations. But their normative relevance may be connected to what Hannah Arendt (1976) correctly identified as one of core moral principle of modernity: *the right to have rights*. Our human status is central to the possibility of remaining free from coercion and able to pursue our own lives; it is central to the state's provision of social rights and to its granting (or withdrawing) the status of citizen; it is central to justifications for technological developments or environmental projects whose long-term consequences are impossible to foresee. It matters because it grants authorisation and sets limits to what humans, by far the most powerful species on the planet, do to themselves, to others, and to the planet as a whole.

The stakes will only continue to get higher.

Note

1. Indeed, my own recent work on philosophical sociology also belongs in this tradition (Chernilo 2017b). From different perspectives, see also the recovery of humanist ideals in Durkin (2014), Morgan (2016) and Kozlarek (2020).

References

Althusser, L. (2003) "The humanist controversy", *The humanist controversy and other writings*. London, Verso.

Archer, M. S. (1995) *Realist social theory. The morphogenetic approach*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Archer, M. S. (2000) *Being human. The problem of agency*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Arendt, H. (1976) *The origins of totalitarianism*. Orlando, Harcourt.

Bachelard, G. (2002) *The formation of the scientific mind*. Manchester, Clinamen.

Blumenberg, H. (2011) *Descripción del ser humano*. Buenos Aires, FCE.

Blumenberg, H. (2015) *The laughter of the Thracian woman. A protohistory of theory*. London, Bloomsbury.

Boltanski, L. (2013) *The foetal condition. A sociology of engendering and abortion*. Cambridge, Polity Press.

Boltanski, L. and Thévenot, L. (2006) *On justification. Economies of worth*. Princeton, Princeton University Press.

Braidotti, R. (2013) *The posthuman*. Cambridge, Polity Press.

Cassirer, E. (1977) *An essay on man*. New Haven, Yale University Press.

Chernilo, D. (2014) "The idea of philosophical sociology", *British Journal of Sociology* 65 (2): 338–357.

Chernilo, D. (2017a) "The question of the human in the Anthropocene debate", *European Journal of Social Theory* 20 (1): 44–60.

Chernilo, D. (2017b) *Debating humanity. Towards a philosophical sociology*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Chernilo, D. (2021) "One globalisation or many? Risk society in the age of the Anthropocene", *Journal of Sociology* 57 (1): 12–26.

Clark, A. (2003) *Natural born cyborgs. Minds, technologies and the future of human intelligence*. Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Connolly, W. E. (2011) *A world of becoming*. Durham, Duke University Press.

Derrida, J. (1991) *Of spirit. Heidegger and the question*. Chicago, University of Chicago Press.

Durkin, K. (2014) *The radical humanism of Erich Fromm*. Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan.

Fassin, D. (2019) "Humanism. A critical reappraisal", *Critical Times* 2 (1): 29–38.

Faye, E. (2009) *Heidegger. The introduction of Nazism into philosophy*. New Haven, Yale University Press.

Foucault, M. (1997) *The order of things*. London, Routledge.

Fuller, S. (2011) *Humanity 2.0: What it means to be human past, present and future*. Basingstoke, Palgrave.

Gehlen, A. (1980). *Man in the age of technology*. Nueva York, Columbia University Press.

The Guardian (2020) "A robot wrote this", https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/sep/08/robot-wrote-this-article-gpt-3 (Last access: 2 Jan 2021).

Haraway, D. (1991) *Simians, cyborgs and women: The reinvention of nature*. London, Free Association Books.

Heidegger, M. (1993) "Letter on humanism", in *Basic writings*. London, Routledge.

Heidegger, M. (2004) *What is called thinking?* New York, Harper Collins.

Honneth, A. (2005) *The struggle for recognition. The moral grammar of social conflicts.* Cambridge, Polity Press.

Kozlarek, O. (2020) "From the humanism of critical theory to critical humanism", *European Journal of Social Theory.*

Latour, B. (1993) *We have never been moderns.* Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press.

Latour, B. (2017) *Facing Gaia. Eight lectures on the new climate regime.* Cambridge, Polity Press.

Levi-Strauss, C. (1970) *The savage mind*. Chicago, The University of Chicago Press.

Luhmann, N. (2012) *The society of society,* Vol. 1. Stanford, Stanford University Press.

Lyotard, J-F. (1993) *The inhuman*. Cambridge, Polity Press.

Marquard, O. (1989) *Farewell to matters of principle. Philosophical studies*. Oxford, Oxford University Press.

Morgan, M. (2016) *Pragmatic humanism. On the nature and value of sociological knowledge*. Abingdon, Routledge.

The New York Times (2020) "Life on Venus? Astronomers see a signal in its clouds", https://www.nytimes.com/2020/09/14/science/venus-life-clouds.html (Last access: 2 Jan 2021).

Nussbaum, M. (1992) "Human functioning and social justice. In defense of Aristotelian essentialism", *Political Theory* 20 (2): 202–246.

Nussbaum, M. (2006) *Frontiers of justice: Disability, nationality, species membership*. Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press.

Plessner, H. (1970) *Laughing and crying. A study of the limits of human behavior*. Evanston, Northwestern University Press.

Reich, D. (2018) *Who we are and how we got here. Ancient DNA and the new science of the human past.* New York, Pantheon.

Rockmore, T. (1995). *Heidegger and French philosophy. Humanism, antihumanism and being*. London, Routledge.

Sartre, J-P. (2007) *Existentialism is a humanism*. New Haven, Yale University Press.

Scheler, M. (2009) *The human place in the cosmos*. Evanston, Illinois, Northwestern University Press.

Schnädelbach, H. (1984) *Philosophy in Germany 1831–1933*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Sloterdijk, P. (2009) "Rules for the human zoo: A response to the letter on humanism", *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 27 (1): 12–28.

Contemporary Chinese social and political thought

Guanjun Wu

In the last four decades, Chinese intellectuality has developed new outlooks: it is very easy for one to tell that there is a radical break between the intellectuality of the Maoist time (1949–1978) and that of the post-Maoist era (1978–the present). Indeed, one salient difference between the two periods is that the latter saw the rise of intellectuals as a leading group in mainland society. Whereas it was the Party leadership that had previously set the tone of cultural and intellectual life, academics and independent scholars now guided the production of Chinese social and political thought. The post-Maoist intellectuality as it has developed since the 1980s form the object of critical examination in this chapter.[1]

The socio-political background of contemporary Chinese intellectuality

The intellectual activities of post-Maoist China have been observed and studied in diverse ways in both mainland Chinese and Western scholarship (for example, Jilin et al. 2007; Davies 2007; Zhenglai et al. 2008). A key feature of the post-Maoist era is the development of critical independence that enabled intellectual discourse to flourish once more after the strict ideological control of the Maoist era.

It can be said that the post-Maoist intellectual discussions on socio-political practices and theories were enabled by the sudden shift from the revolutionary doctrine of the Maoist era to Deng Xiaoping's post-Maoist paradigm of "modernization construction" – following Deng's seizure of power in 1978 from Mao's alleged chosen successor, Hua Guofeng. Deng's slogan that "practice is the sole criterion for evaluating truth" (*shijian shi jianyan zhenli de weiyi biaozhun*), along with his pragmatic, utilitarian approach toward socialism, provided Chinese thinkers with the political legitimacy to create new spaces for intellectual activities in the early to mid-1980s. To distinguish this new post-Maoist era from the Cultural Revolution (*wenhua da geming*, 1966–1976), the 1980s came to be widely known in the state-owned media as the "new era" (*xin shiqi*).

Deng Xiaoping regarded science and education as the key to national development and Chinese intellectuals were keen to reflect this new direction in their discourse. The most important institutional change that occurred in 1977 was the reintroduction of nationwide college

and university entrance examinations, after these examinations had been halted for almost a decade. In 1978, graduate schools were reopened. Most participants in the post-Maoist intellectual movement known as the "New Enlightenment movement" (*xin qimeng yundong*, which was also called *wenhua re*, the "Culture Fever") in the mid- to late 1980s were beneficiaries of this policy of revitalizing high education. The discussions over "the humanistic spirit" and "postmodernism" in the mid-1990s, the debate between "liberalism" and the "New Left" in the late 1990s, the rise of "new Confucianism" in the 2000s, and so on, can be seen as further developments out of the New Enlightenment movement.

However, although intellectual independence was a key goal of the 1980s, the Chinese government maintained a careful ideological control. The Anti-Spiritual Pollution Campaign that lasted for three months between November 1983 and January 1984 reflected the effectiveness of state censorship over intellectual activities. Nonetheless, economic development also expanded the space for cultural expression and the development of a cultural marketplace in the 1980s resulted in the production of a large variety of journals, books, films, TV series as well as fee-paying courses of study conducted by independent groups of intellectuals.

The (re-)emergence of an intellectual sphere and the normalization of intellectual life in China in the mid-1980s is indeed a product of the "complex process of transformations" China has undergone since Deng took power.[2] Regarding the new relationship between Chinese intellectuals and the state, it is also important to note that the new space for intellectual activities flourished in the 1980s because intellectuals were able once again to regard themselves as playing an important role in the work of government and in society. Though often employing various translated scholarly jargons from the discourses of Western humanities and social sciences in their writings, contemporary Chinese intellectuals, primarily the new generation of scholars who resumed their education in the late 1970s and entered graduate school, do not confine themselves to the academic realm. They also see themselves as leaders of social change who are engaged in producing a social blueprint for China's transformation. In this sense, with the resumption of higher education, the establishment of a cultural market, some freedom of expression in post-Maoist China, many prominent intellectuals regard themselves as agents of social change. They portray their writings as works that are carrying out the task of solving "Chinese problems" (*Zhongguo wenti*) and guiding China's transformation.

As Gloria Davies points out, although there is an evident diversity in the intellectual discourse of post-Maoist China, with many intellectuals disagreeing with each other about what changes are needed, nonetheless the arguments on offer all "share one thing in common":

> They all point to the strength of the belief held by many Chinese intellectuals in the power of intellectual labor to shape and change social life. More specifically, this belief is informed by a certain assumption that the individual intellectual laborer is – within a post-Maoist idiom – the *zhe* (the "one") or *fenzi* (element) who can remake society by harvesting from the *jie* (fields) that he or she oversees the appropriate knowledge items to produce a social blueprint.
>
> *(Davies 2001: 3)*

Although it is produced largely by academics and graduate students, contemporary Chinese intellectual inquiry is nonetheless not purely academic discourse. Intellectual debates are, by the same token, much more than just an exchange of ideas. The ambition of producing a social blueprint is the larger task that Chinese intellectual discourse assumes. The topics of contemporary debates and discussions among Chinese scholars and intellectuals are therefore tightly intertwined with the ongoing socio-political changes of post-Maoist China.

The new enlightenment movement of the 1980s

During the 1980s Culture Fever, intellectual inquiry reflected a largely univocal style. This was why it was termed as the New Enlightenment movement. "May Fourth Enlightenment" was used as the model because this movement of the late 1910s and early 1920s was widely perceived as having a common anti-Confucian purpose. In the 1980s, however, it was Maoism (especially the radical ideas of the Cultural Revolution of the 1960s and 1970s) that was being opposed, not Confucianism. Hence, the various New Enlightenment intellectual projects were unified by a common anti-Maoist purpose.

The idea of "enlightening" China was, very often, synonymous with "modernizing" China in the 1980s New Enlightenment discourse. The project of China's modernization had two aspects. The Party-state's official campaign of "Four Modernizations" was accompanied by the campaign for "cultural modernization" proposed by the participants of the New Enlightenment movement. From the late 1970s onwards, the post-Mao Chinese Communist Party launched an official project of modernization (*xiandaihua jianshe*) which includes four aspects – the modernization of agriculture, industry, national defense and science-technology. Having replaced Maoist socialist construction with modernizing China through market reform, the post-Maoist state allowed and encouraged Chinese intellectuals to pursue "cultural modernization" as well. In Chinese, the idea is regarded as complementary to the official campaign of the "Four Modernizations." Although there were many different proposals for modernization, these generally proceeded along one of two directions – either toward the goal of a fully Westernized culture, or, toward the achievement of a "creative transition"[3] of traditional Chinese culture. Thus, despite their differences, New Enlightenment thinkers were still united under the same banner of "cultural modernization." Even though they differed with regard to the "imagined" content of "modern Chinese culture," they had this "shared belief" that through "(cultural) modernization" they could effectively improve the quality of the Chinese Thought and Life. The term "modernization" was the organizational theme of the New Enlightenment intellectual movement.

The appearance of "unity" allowed intellectuals to imagine that there was a "homogeneity of attitude"[4] among them. One can thus say that in the 1980s, the differences in terms of the "picture" of China's ultimate perfection among Chinese intellectuals was concealed by the ostensibly unified intellectual movement that called for an act to enlighten China's vision. Hence, an *ultimate truth* is presupposed by the intellectuals who identify with the New Enlightenment: they do not necessarily agree with each other about the actual content of this ultimate truth, but they *all* assume that there *is* an ultimate truth out there that will enable people to discover the answer to restoring China as a great civilization.

During the May Fourth era of the 1910s and 1920s, "Westernization" was one of the central proposals in order to regain China's greatness. In the 1980s, the project of modernization took its place. By describing the Maoist era as the obstacle to cultural modernization, the New Enlightenment discourse of the 1980s conforms to the official economic project of modernization to provide a new way of seeing China's historical past and the present-day reality using a new set of concepts (that are opposed to the revolutionary rhetoric of the Maoist era) such as "rationality," "industrialization," "market," "democracy," "science," "enlightenment," "human rights," and so on and so forth. The New Enlightenment discourse of the 1980s became known as "Culture Fever" because it elevated intellectuals to new social heights. In fact, it was also referred to as a "fever for intellectuals" (*zhishifenzi re*). By claiming that they were working to resolve the antagonism between socialism (China) and capitalism (the West) and that China's modernization would be realized through overcoming the obstacles of undesirable aspects of Chinese tradition, leading intellectuals in the New Enlightenment movement saw themselves as

heroic figures who were working to discover the *ultimate truth* so that they might lead the nation toward a bright future.

The New Enlightenment intellectual movement was indeed socially and politically influential. In many scholars' view, the New Enlightenment intellectual movement of the 1980s not only led directly to the production of popular mass-media products such as the famous 1988 TV series *River Elegy*[5] but also contributed to the emergence of the 1989 student movement and hence the June Fourth *Tiananmen* event. New Enlightenment intellectuals not only influenced students in their thinking and provided inspiration for the social movement, but became themselves involved in numerous demonstrations and protest activities (see, for example, Chen Fong-ching 2001: 81–82). The June Fourth incident – the killings in the streets of Beijing – was a traumatic event for most mainland intellectuals and halted the 1980s New Enlightenment movement. Some New Enlightenment thinkers such as Liu Xiaobo were severely punished by the authorities; others such as Bao Zunxin, Jin Guantao, Liu Qingfeng, Gan Yang were fortunate enough to flee the mainland but were prevented from returning for many years. Most of them, however, visited China in the late 1990s. The intellectual discourses of the 1990s and 2000s that became known as "Post-New Enlightenment," featuring new concepts such as postmodernism, the "humanistic spirit," liberalism, the "New Left," "new nationalism," "new Confucianism," etc., can be also regarded as various intellectual attempts of coping with the trauma caused by state violence in 1989. The presumed "homogeneity of attitude" of the New Enlightenment could no longer be imagined in the post-*Tiananmen* intellectual world.

New intellectual developments after Tiananmen

After the 1989 purge of the *Tiananmen* student protest, the government-led modernization project lost its credibility in the intellectual circles. The optimistic 1980s imaginings of the imminent arrival of democracy collapsed. There was relative silence in the Chinese intellectual world from 1989 to 1992. This period of "aphasia" (*shiyu*), as it was subsequently called, is an indication that the passion with which intellectuals desired modernization in the 1980s was vaporized by their traumatic encounter with the violence of the Party-state. Since then the phrase "*Tiananmen*" (or "June Fourth") has become discussed by many Chinese intellectuals as the moment that modernization toward democracy turned out to be an illusion.

In the early 1990s, the control over intellectual writings was much tighter than in the late 1980s. Under such an ideological atmosphere, some participants of the New Enlightenment movement started to reflect upon the proximity of intellectual work to socio-political transformations which have been featured in New Enlightenment writings and suggested a separation of scholarly works from "vacuous" (*kongshu*) proposals for socio-political change, and correspondingly that intellectuals should withdraw themselves from contemporary debates over China's path or China's problems and concentrate instead on the pursuit of scholastic research and the establishment of the system of "academic norms" (*xueshu guifan*), in order to "join rails" (*jiegui*) with the institutionally established model of Western intellectual inquiry. During the first few years of the 1990s, a series of scholastic journals were successively founded in mainland China. As this trend of professionalization of intellectual life was not a natural outcome of the development of Chinese intellectuality, it thus did not last very long.

After Deng Xiaoping's "Tour of the South" (*nanxun*) in 1992, intellectuals embraced a gradual loosening of political controls, and the space for expression was reestablished. Although the topic of "June Fourth" was banned, there were heated discussions and debates over topics related to "Chinese problems," China's reality and its perfection, and others such as the "loss of the humanistic spirit," "postmodernism," "globalization," "liberalism." There was also a call

for academic standardization, and some reacted to it by describing the tendency as weakening intellectual life. For instance, the prominent New Enlightenment thinker Li Zehou claimed that – "thinkers fade out when academicians come to prominence" (*sixiangjia danchu, xuewenjia tuchu*). Especially, intellectuals who publicly identified themselves as "liberals" (*ziyouzhuyizhe*) or "liberal intellectuals" (*ziyou zhishifenzi*) in the late 1990s openly appealed for "bearing the torch of Enlightenment" and claimed that their intellectual endeavor was to carry on the unfinished project of Enlightenment and China's modernization.

The discussions over the "loss of the humanistic spirit" (*renwen jingshen de shiluo*) initiated by several Shanghai-based intellectuals in 1994, already manifested a strong reaction against academic professionalization, as well as the related current of cultural commercialization. As the Shanghai-based historian Xu Jilin remarked in a 2003 essay, this discussion signifies an attempt "to reestablish the publicness of the intellectual and to reassert the intellectual's responsibility for guiding society" (quoting from Davies 2007: 90). Thus, embedded deeply in the self-understanding of contemporary Chinese thinkers, is the notion that intellectual works are not just mere knowledge production that can be developed into an industry in an institutionalized academic marketplace, but are also burdened with the urgent task of finding proper solutions to China's problems and shedding a light on the picture of a better future for the Chinese people. It is this unique intellectual tradition running deep over centuries in China which highlights a moral dimension of intellectual works that held back any trend of "joining rails" with the professionalism featured in Western humanities and social sciences and thus from blossoming in the Chinese intellectual world. After this short debate over what Xu Jilin called "the rift between 'the engaged' and 'the academic'" had happened in the early 1990s, it is apparent that Chinese intellectual inquiry of the 1990s followed its own highly engaged tradition, though, after the "homogeneity of attitude" was out the picture, took a completely different outlook from that of the 1980s.

In post-*Tiananmen* China, the question of which path China should take became much more urgent, because to comply with the Party-state's establishment is seen in the Chinese intellectual sphere after 1989 as a shameful moral corruption.[6] The blood in the square made many participants of the New Enlightenment unable to keep their support to the official ideology of modernization. Quite a few intellectuals started to reflect the New Enlightenment project of China's modernization. For them the urgent questions are: Where would this ongoing "transformation" and official modernization campaign lead China to? What is the picture after China fully "modernizes" itself?

With this context, some intellectuals started to employ "postmodern" terms and jargons to depict the picture and claim an "end of modernity." In the view of Chinese postmodernists such as Zhang Yiwu, Chen Xiaoming, with the emergence of postmodern discourse in the Western intellectual world, the "myth of modernity has been deconstructed," and consequently, for Chinese intellectuals, "stepping out of 'modernity' means a new path of development and the emergence of a new cultural strategy." (Yiwu 2000 [1994]: 230) This "new cultural strategy" is the thriving popular commercial culture: the cultural and value shifts caused by commercialization, which quickly developed after Deng Xiaoping's statement "to get rich is glorious" unleashed a tidal wave of commercial euphoria in China, were depicted by those Chinese advocates of postmodernism as the emergence of a promising postmodern culture and the end of modernity; and they saw the emergence of postmodern culture as a "new path of development" (231).[7]

Also around the mid-1990s, many intellectuals sought to re-define modernization in much clearer and liberal-flavored terms, openly appealing for constitutional rule, representative democracy, and human rights.[8] For these Chinese liberals, the New Enlightenment failed because it focused too much on "cultural" modernization instead of *political* modernization. In other

words, the New Enlightenment thinkers did not target CCP's authoritarian rule as the primary object of their critique. In 1999, ten years after the June Fourth event, the leading figure of Chinese liberal intellectuals, Li Shenzhi (1923–2003), who was a party official (Vice-President of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences till 1989) and accompanied Deng Xiaoping on his visit to the U.S. serving as adviser to the delegation, even wrote a public letter to the General Secretary of CCP Jiang Zemin immediately after the grand ceremony at *Tiananmen* Square celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the People's Republic, urging him to be a "clear-sighted man" (*mingbai ren*) and use his power to install parliamentary democracy in China, as well as to allow non-party owned newspapers and opposition political parties to form (Li Shenzhi 1999).

Rising as opponents of Chinese liberals in the late 1990s, a group of intellectuals (some also active participants of the 1980s New Enlightenment movement) started to turn their attention to various contemporary leftist or Marxist discourses and suggested alternative paths to embracing and merging into today's capitalist-inflected globalization. These intellectuals, because they all held a critical attitude toward liberal-flavored modernization and appealed for non-capitalist reform, were labeled by their detractors as "New Leftists." In the historical and ideological context of mainland China, the term "New Leftist" implicates a compliance with Party theory, and thereby for those labeled by it, this term is associated with a strongly pejorative connotation. In order to avoiding being simply discredited as a return to Maoist politics, some of those intellectuals such as the Beijing-based philosopher Wang Hui thus employed another term to refer to their group – "critical intellectuals" (*pipan de zhishifenzi*).

Labeled as a leading representative of China's "New Left," Wang Hui has been at the center of intellectual debates since the late 1990s and begun to gain international reputation in the 2000s. Part of his work has already been translated into English and published by prominent academic publishers (for example, Wang Hui 2006, 2010). Wang starts his intellectual project by criticizing the "New Enlightenment thinking."[9] Wang affirms that the New Enlightenment movement was once a critical discourse against Maoist ideology. However, with the rapid social change and the rise of Chinese capitalism in Deng's era, it started to lose its "critical potential" (*pipan qianneng*) and joined the chorus with the Party-state's official ideology (the socialist reforms). Thus the New Enlightenment discourse failed to function as a powerful critical voice in the post-*Tiananmen* context: it was incapable of providing a persuasive critique of the inter-related forces of the global capitalist market system and the "dictatorial state." More importantly, for Wang, the fundamental limitation of the New Enlightenment was its reliance on the tradition/modernity dichotomy. He claims that this dichotomy framework handicapped New Enlightenment thinkers and confined them to thinking about "modernity" from a falsely universal (but actually Eurocentric and capitalist) perspective. In Wang's view, the post-Maoist language of New Enlightenment canceled out the uniqueness of China's approach to modernity, or "Chinese modernity." By emphasizing what he calls the "question of modernity," Wang attempts to challenge the linear narrative of modernization that liberal intellectuals have advocated since the 1980s New Enlightenment movement (Wang Hui 1998).

Wang's magnum opus *The Rise of Modern Chinese Thought* (four volumes in total) appeared in 2004. Its primary object is the search for the "seeds" of an alternative modernity in intellectual legacies of the "premodern" Chinese past, a "native modernity" rooted in China's traditional culture before it was polluted and shaped by "modern institutions." The presupposition of Wang's intellectual project is that the rich intellectual dynamics embedded in China's premodern thought that Western-style modernity arrogantly refuses can in fact open up radical possibilities, and thus be able to serve as intellectual resources in overcoming the crisis of modernity. For Wang, many moments in China's history of thought can provide resources for us to transcend the present Western model of modernity. The aim of Wang's *Rise* can be seen as an intellectual

search for a new theoretical framework to present socio-political critique in an age in which global capitalism is generally regarded as the only path (Wang Hui 2004). In his *The Birth of the Century: The Logic of China's Revolution and Politics* published in 2020, Wang further argues that China's search for unique modernity did not take the form of affirming cultural or civilizational particularity, but aimed at reconstructing universality through a radical rejection and substantial deconstruction of the narrative of "Universal History" formulated by Western imperialism (Wang Hui 2020). Though Wang's work may not impress his worldwide readers as a striking alternative project,[10] his lengthy historical elaboration of "Chinese modernity" nonetheless has successfully earned him international reputation as a prominent leftist thinker from China.

In recent years, the economic rise of the People's Republic has brought a rapid resurgence of national pride at popular as well as intellectual levels. A new trend of "nationalism" emerged as a powerful discourse. Though post-Maoist Chinese intellectual inquiry, generally speaking, is structured around a strong nationalistic longing – a longing for the ultimate achievement of China's perfection, the term "nationalism" in contemporary China intellectual scene however refers specifically to a type of discourse that attributes the causes of contemporary "Chinese problems" solely to the bullies from the West (primarily the U.S. and Japan). Intellectuals who publicly identify themselves with "Chinese nationalists" generally hold a vehemently hostile attitude toward the 1980s New Enlightenment intellectual enterprise as well as the discourse of liberalism of the 1990s, and characteristically advocate the empowerment of China from the angle of military (instead of cultural or political) modernization. Many extremely violent and vulgar expressions can be found in this trend of what Peter Gries terms "China's new nationalism" (Gries 2004). This trend of nationalist discourse has also triggered social events such as the large-scale anti-foreign demonstrations of the last decade, among which the 1999 anti-U.S. demonstrations in Beijing and the 2005 anti-Japanese demonstrations in over twenty major cities of mainland China are the most salient ones.

In parallel to this rather vulgar trend of "new nationalism," there also emerged an "elite" discourse of "new Confucianism" (see Daniel A. Bell 2008), an intellectual mixture of various attempts to resuscitate classical Confucian ideas.[11] Wang Hui's late work on the search for new resources in China's intellectual history for the reconstruction of "Chinese modernity" is also very often seen as a pivotal endeavor of this trend. Jiang Qing, another leading scholar in this intellectual current, advocates a specific project termed as "political Confucianism." In Jiang's view, Chinese intellectuals in the last 150 years have searched for modernization in the wrong place: they all believed that in order to achieve China's modernization, Chinese people had to implement social and political reforms in accordance with knowledge learnt from the West. This is for Jiang a false belief shared by Chinese liberals and Chinese Marxists alike. He also accuses the representatives of Hong Kong- and Taiwan-based "Neo-Confucians" such as Tang Junyi (1909–1978), Xu Fuguan (1904–1982), Mou Zongsan (1909–1995), of having been equally mistaken in their insistence on liberal democracy as the only path of political modernization for China. Rejecting all such propositions, Jiang claims that the Chinese people already possessed a highly developed political system that was perfectly suited for China's modernization. He called this "the system of rites and law" (*lifa zhidu*), which refers actually to various specific institutions, regulations, and customs which were effective in imperial China since Han dynasty (Qing, 2003). By proposing a "tricameral" (instead of bicameral) representative system and a Chinese-style "Confucian system of constitution" as an alternative to Western models, Jiang avers that his work is "an attempt to 'Confucianize' contemporary Chinese political order" and he sees it as "the modern form of Dong Zhongshu's 'reform through returning to the ancient' (*fugu genghua*) in Han dynasty." Similar to Dong Zhongshu (179–104 BC) who convinced Emperor Wudi to accept his suggestions and elevated Confucianism as the sole official ideology, Jiang attempts to

convince the top leaders of the Party to resuscitate the former status of Confucianism as "the learning of kings and officials" (*wangguan xue*) (Qing 2005).

Daniel A. Bell, who rose in academia first as one of the leading scholars in communitarianism and later one of representatives of "new Confucianism," took the position as Dean of the School of Political Science and Public Administration at Shandong University in 2016. Echoing Xi Jinping's call for "the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation" (*Zhonghua minzu weida fuxing*), Bell published an influential book entitled *The China Model* in which he rejects the "good-democracies-versus-bad-authoritarian-regimes" dichotomy, and argues instead that China in recent decades has evolved from Confucianism a model of "political meritocracy" that is morally desirable and politically stable in comparison with the American-style democracy. Bell summarizes the post-Mao Chinese political system as meritocracy at the top, experimentation in the middle, and democracy at the bottom. Bell regards this post-Mao political model not only marking a great revival of Confucian political thought but also embodying the most important political development of the twenty-first century (Bell 2015).

Some other prominent scholars such as Liu Xiaofeng and Gan Yang, two influential figures in contemporary Chinese landscape since the 1980s New Enlightenment movement, called for a thorough re-evaluation and re-interpretation of the Chinese classics by introducing Leo Strauss's obscure technique of "esoteric" reading. Although these scholars did not directly offer their readers any clearly stated political project, they nonetheless imply, following the path paved by Straussian political philosophy, that ancient wisdom contains intellectual recourses to overcome the crisis of modernity (see, for example, Liu Xiaofeng 2002, 2019; Gan Yang 2003a; Gan and Liu 2006).

At this juncture, it is worthwhile noting the Party's attitude toward these post-*Tiananmen* intellectual discourses. While strongly suppressing the discourse of liberalism, it is nonetheless quite tolerant toward the discourses of "new nationalism," "new Confucianism," and to some extent, that of the "New Left." In fact, the Party-state leadership has been actively advocating the discourse of nationalism for many years. Nationalism and patriotism have been used to *produce political legitimacy and social solidarity* in post-Maoist China, especially in the post-*Tiananmen* era. Also, the government has nurtured some specific anti-foreign sentiments (especially anti-American sentiment) in order to tackle the increasing difficulties of "information-control" (*xinxi kongzhi*): in the age of the Internet they cannot totally stop information from coming in, they thus turn to the task of *shaping how the people think about what they learn from abroad*. Also, since 2005 the Communist Party has taken a special interest in reviving Confucian ideas in order to legitimize its authoritarian rule in mainland. In betrayal of its own history of anti-Confucian practices in the Maoist time, the Party in fact has started in the last 15 years to consciously praise Confucian ideas such as "harmony" (*hexie*) as one of its key ideological slogans – the official campaigns advocated in Hu Jintao and Xi Jinping's era (i.e. the fourth and fifth generations of CCP's leadership) are the construction of a "harmonious society,"[12] and the fulfillment of the "Chinese dream" (*Zhongguo meng*, which is, to realize "the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation"). As to the discourse of the New Left, the Party holds an ambivalent attitude: while being quite tolerant toward those intellectual searches for Chinese model of modernity (modernity with "Chinese characteristics"), it nonetheless suppresses the concerns voiced by the New Left figures such as Wang Hui regarding domestic socio-economic injustices caused by ruthless marketization and pervasive corruption.

To sum up, those various post-*Tiananmen* intellectual discourses are best understood as offering competing projects for China's future path, which are quite contrary to the optimistic scenarios of future success produced in the 1980s. In short, the unified (at least at an ostensible level) New Enlightenment movement of the 1980s was replaced in the following two decades

by various, often mutually hostile arguments: liberal intellectuals attempt to repair the old broken modernization enterprise by filling in a series of clearly stated "liberal elements" such as constitutional rule, parliamentary democracy, market economy, etc.; by praising the emerging commercial culture in the post-*Tiananmen* era as a new cultural strategy and a new path of development, postmodernist intellectuals attempt to "end the project of modernity," and to negate "grand narratives" of enlightenment, revolution, liberation, etc.; the intellectual group labeled by its critics as the "New Left" tries to reinvent the idea of China's modernity as an alternative to global capitalist marketization, aiming in general at creating different new socio-political projects to achieve China's national or civilizational perfection; the recent trend of new Confucianism also moves in this direction, with explicit efforts to resuscitate classical Chinese thought. One can thus say that Chinese intellectuality of the post-*Tiananmen* era is characterized by antagonistic projects engaging in a fierce struggle for hegemony.

Assuming personal responsibility for social change

The characteristic proximity of intellectual works to practical projects for socio-political transformations has deep culturo-intellectual roots. In today's Chinese language there are two common understandings of the term *zhishifenzi* (intellectuals): the broader understanding of *zhishifenzi* tends to include all educated people who are well-educated professionals, whereas the narrower understanding links *zhishifenzi* to the *shi* (or scholar) and the Confucian moral mandate of "assuming personal responsibility for all under Heaven" (*yi tianxia wei jiren*). The literal translation of *zhishifenzi* is "knowledgeable elements" but it is in terms of the Confucian *shi* that post-Maoist intellectuals regard as its ideal model.

In dynastic China, Confucian *shi* were privileged and highly respected in society not only as imperial officials or *shi dafu* (often translated as "scholar–official") but also due to their commitment to assure the welfare for "all under Heaven" (*Tianxia*). Tu Wei-ming characterizes the pursuits of Confucian scholars and intellectuals into these three categories – *Dao* (the ontological Truth, the literal translation of which is "way"), *xue* (learning), and *zheng* (politics). As Tu argues, Confucian intellectuals are indeed political activists, and the primary goal of their endeavors is to shape the existing political order from the inside out. (Wei-ming 1993: 10–11) In the system of orthodox Confucian doctrine, intellectual "learning" (*xue*) was structured around a moral-political purpose (*zheng*), that is, to rectify the existing order in accordance to *Dao*. In this sense, Confucianism can be said to privilege an instrumentalist approach toward knowledge: intellectual ideas are perused in the services of grasping the truth and establishing an ideal order.[13] "Politics" in classical Confucian understanding refers to an act of "rectifying" (*zheng*) the existing order in accordance with *Dao*; thus, in pursuit of revealing *Dao* via their scholarship ("learning"), Confucian *shi* endeavored to find the correct way through which an ideal political order can be established.

Hence, Confucian scholars were, as Tu Wei-ming argues, also *political activists*. It is not only because they endeavor to present the Confucian classics of past sages as aimed at unveiling the meaning of *Dao*, but, and more importantly, because they do so in an attempt to shape social life and establish an ideal political order – and in thoroughly proper Confucian terms, that is, to *ping Tianxia* (establish peaceful and harmonious order everywhere under Heaven).[14] In traditional China, the socially privileged status of the *shi* was based on the authority of those who had acquired "learning" (or "thought," "theory," etc.) to determine what is a peaceful and harmonious order.[15]

In their desire to play a leading role in social reform, post-Maoist intellectual works reflected the depth of Confucian cultural influence in twentieth-century China: by adopting ideas

presumed to have the power to change "reality," contemporary Chinese intellectuals, just like the Confucian *shi* before them, assume their *personal* responsibility for China's transformations. Thus, it is appropriate to consider the modern Chinese term "intellectual" as having a strong moral–political connotation.

In the Maoist era, intellectuals were officially defamed as the "stinking ninth" (*chou laojiu*) – the lowest group of society, which was in stark contrast with the tradition of China where intellectuals were regarded and revered as the top elite. As the thesis of "returning to the center" in the 1980s "fever for intellectuals" presupposes that intellectuals once again occupy the central spot of the political stage, this call implies an attempt to bring about a contemporary revivification of the old Confucian privileging of *shi*. By such an attempt to return to the center of the nation's "socio-political life," post-Maoist intellectuals once again aimed at establishing an ideal order in accordance with the *Dao* of Heaven (*Tian-Dao*) in China. Through their new, Western-inspired learning, intellectuals view the projects they propose respectfully as the correct "way" for China's transformation. It is in this sense that they regarded guiding China's socio-political transformation as their *personal* mission. Through their engagement in leading China's transformation, intellectuals in turn re-identified themselves with "social elite." This desire of Chinese intellectuals for social recognition also reflected a Confucian assumption of moral and intellectual leadership.

One consequence of the Confucian idea of "assuming personal responsibility for all under Heaven" is an *instrumentalist* approach toward knowledge. Similarly, this instrumentalist approach also persisted during the "Chinese Enlightenment movement" of the May Fourth (*wusi*) era of the 1910s and 1920s, even as that intellectual movement claimed to be radically anti-traditional and thoroughly modern. In fact, May Fourth discourse emphasized the need for useful and effective knowledge. The call for "appropriatism" (*nalaizhuyi*) by Lu Xun (1881–1936), one of the best known May Fourth thinkers, is a case in point.[16] Thus despite the many differences of view among May Fourth thinkers, they shared a common desire for producing a social blueprint for China.

In the broadest terms, the practical emphasis of Confucian learning on finding solutions to social, economic and political problems has persisted throughout the twentieth century and since. What is in common between May Fourth Enlightenment of the 1910s and 1920s and post-Maoist intellectual praxes is such an attitude toward knowledge – it is regarded as an instrument for strengthening and perfecting the nation. Clearly, this is in accordance with the Confucian motto that "Everyone has a share of responsibility for achieving the welfare for *Tianxia*" (*Tianxia xingwang, pifu youze*).[17]

Conclusion

Hence, contemporary Chinese intellectuals commonly work under the unspoken presupposition that their writings can *make a difference* to social transformations of post-Maoist China. They regard their intellectual works as carrying the great mission of providing an "enlightened" vision via which they are able to change the national status quo and improve the quality of Chinese culture and the welfare of the people. Gloria Davies employs the phrases "worrying about China" and "voicing concerns" (in the titles of her books) to highlight this feature of contemporary Chinese intellectual engagement. The usual procedure that resonates powerfully in the writings of many contemporary Chinese intellectuals contains the following two steps: (1) to identify "Chinese problems" (whether social, political, cultural, historical, or economic), and (2) to solve perceived problems in accordance with a stated argument serving as a blueprint for change and reform. As a consequence the strong moral tone of this instrumentalist approach indeed, makes Chinese inquiry significantly and strikingly discordant with the "decidedly non-nationalistic tenor of self-reflexive EuroAmerican critical inquiry" (Davies 2007: 7).

One should therefore bear in mind that when contemporary Chinese intellectuals engage in intellectual discussions and debates, in which various terms and jargons imported from Anglophone critical inquiry are employed, they are also competing with each other for intellectual authority in determining the correct path ahead for China's perfection. In the 1980s, this endeavor is embodied in the New Enlightenment project of China's modernization. Various intellectual groups "united" themselves in the "homogeneity of attitude": they shared a common attitude toward the necessity of Western-style modernization, believing that this was the only way forward for China. In contrast, the post-*Tiananmen* Chinese intellectuality is characterized by competing intellectual discourses, though participants in contemporary Chinese intellectual discussions face the same question – the question of "whither China."[18] In this sense, despite the fact that intellectuals in the post-*Tiananmen* era were often locked in fierce debate, they nonetheless fundamentally share an instrumentalist attitude toward knowledge: the shared aim of their intellectual enterprises is to achieve China's national or civilizational perfection.

Notes

1. My grateful thanks go to Gloria Davies for her illuminating comments on a draft version of this chapter.
2. The Shanghai-based historian Xu Jilin is right when he observed that the intellectual movements of post-Maoist China were initiated from the top downwards by the Party's reformist ideology. It is "[i]n keeping and in tandem with this complex process of transformations," wrote Xu, that "the intellectual world of China experienced constant splits and realignments" (Jilin 2000: 169).
3. This term is used by the Beijing-based philosopher Gan Yang in his various texts written in the 1980s, see, for example, Gan Yang (1987: 18). Emerging as a prominent New Enlightenment thinker in the 1980s, Gan also remains very active in the Chinese intellectual arena in the post-*Tiananmen* era.
4. This phrase was first coined by Wang Hui in his early studies on the May Fourth movement. Later Xu Jilin borrowed it to characterize the 1980s New Enlightenment movement. See Xu Jilin (2000: 177).
5. This socially influential six-episode television series was directly approved by Zhao Ziyang's ministration, and produced by several New Enlightenment intellectuals including Su Xiaokang, Wang Luxiang and Xie Xuanjun. Leading New Enlightenment figures such as Jin Guantao, Liu Qingfeng, Li Yining, etc. were invited to serve as a main consultant, and some directly appeared in the show as interviewees. *River Elegy* was aired on CCTV (China's Central TV) twice in June and August of 1988. After the *Tiananmen* event, some of the people who worked on *River Elegy* were arrested and others fled mainland China.
6. During the debate between "liberals" and "New Leftists" in the late 1990s, both camps were keen to accuse their "discursive enemies" (*lundi*) as defenders of the existing order.
7. Because the 1980s is often called the "new era" in the post-Maoist official as well as intellectual discourses to demarcate the Party-state's new agenda of modernization from its Maoist past, the post-1989 era was labeled by Zhang Yiwu and other Chinese postmodernists as the "post-new era." By this they meant an era that embraces the end of modernity.
8. What should be noted here is that after Deng Xiaoping's death in February 1997, there was a temporary relaxation of state censorship. Thus, in the late 1990s and early 2000s, intellectuals were able to publish more freely and this encouraged renewed debate on China's future. After Hu Jintao took total power from Jiang Zemin in 2004, this space has been severely narrowed. Many mainland Chinese intellectuals have difficulties to voice their concerns, even encounter indirect or direct political oppression.
9. What should be noted is that though Wang claims that he started his critical reflection on Western modernity in the 1980s, he nonetheless obviously shared the sentiments of most New Enlightenment

thinkers at that time, and in fact was one of the protesters on *Tiananmen* Square who withdrew from the spot in the last minute (i.e. the early morning of June Fourth).

10. Wang Hui's theorization of "Chinese modernity" is rather ambiguous and, to some extent, still left "unfinished," since what he provides in *Rise* is nothing close to a clearly stated normative project, but instead, to borrow Zhang Yongles phrasing, basically "an epistemological reconstruction of the successive systems of knowledge, or belief, that dominated China from the Song to the early Republic." As Zhang writes in his book review, "[T]he modernity or 'early modernity' [Wang] seeks in Chinese history is an open possibility rather than a structured project. The only thing we know about its meaning is that it involves the emergence of new pathways, not the replication of any version of modernity confected in the West" (Zhang Yongle 2010).

11. In Jiang Qing's view, the trend of China's new nationalism is merely a "rootless nationalism." Jiang in turn advocates a "sustentative nationalism based on Confucian culture." Also, Gan Yang proposes that China should shift itself "from nation-state to civilization-state" (Qing 2003: 396–415; Yang 2003b). According to these scholars, China's nationalism cannot truly flourish without resuscitating its civilizational core – Confucianism.

12. Harmony is one of the central ideas of classical Confucianism. However, as Geremie Barmé observes, in today's china, "[i]t is a kind of harmony that is policed with overt rigour. So much is 'harmonized' (*hexie diao*) in the process of creating a quiescent socio-economic environment in which authoritarianism and plutocracy hold sway, that 'to harmonise' has become a common verb in colloquial Chinese meaning 'to censor,' 'elide' or 'expunge'" (see, Barmé 2010).

13. Suffice it to recall the famous four-sentence motto written by Song-dynasty Confucian scholar Zhang Zai (1020–1077), which very well summarizes the Confucian-dominated intellectual tradition of China: (To be a Confucian scholar proper is) to reveal the core essence of nature for Heaven and Earth (*wei tiandi li xin*), to ascertain the mandate of life for the people (*wei shengmin li ming*), to continue the lost learnings of sages past (*wei wangsheng ji juexue*), and to establish universal peace and harmony for ten thousand generations to come (*wei wanshi kai taiping*).

14. The others, from the lowest, are *xiu shen* (to cultivate oneself), *qi jia* (to regulate properly one's family), *zhi guo* (to improve state governing). This is the primary teaching of the *Great Learning* (*Da xue*), one of the most essential texts of Confucianism.

15. The Chinese Communist Party also presents its history as organized around the system of thought (*sixiang*) of Party leaders. Thus, from Mao Zedong to Hu Jintao, persons who occupy the highest position (as the Party's General Secretary) are implicitly accorded the role of not only a political leader but also as an intellectual leader as well. Theoretically at least, their "thought" (or "theory," "doctrine," etc.) is presented as the "blueprint" for the nation's development. This unique contemporary phenomenon of Chinese intellectual life – the persistent representation of the Party's top leaders as intellectual leaders (i.e. people whose ideas constitute the nation's blueprint for the future) – can also be read as a heritage of Confucianism. This emphasis on intellectual leadership is an important part of Chinese political culture. It is this Confucian inheritance that has led both officials and critical intellectuals to share in common the privileging of intellectual authority.

16. I am using Gloria Davies's translation of Lu Xun's term which has also been translated as "grabism" and, the English translation of Lu Xun's *Selected Works*, as "the take-over policy" (Davies 2007: 250).

17. When the Party-state in the 1950s started to preach the concept of the "great Self" (*da wo*) as a reference to the Chinese nation, and encouraged people to devote themselves (the lower self) into the service of improving the great Self, it also invoked the traditional moral teaching of "assuming personal responsibility for all under Heaven."

18. In 2001 Xudong Zhang edited a book on "intellectual politics in contemporary China" (including translations of essays by Wang Hui, Gan Yang, Cui Zhiyuan, Wang Shaoguang, etc.) published by Duke University Press, whose very title is "Whither China." In 2005, another book on contemporary Chinese intellectuality published by Verso – a collection of post-*Tiananmen* intellectual discourses including essays by Wang Hui, Gan Yang, Zhu Xueqin, Qin Hui, and many others – also has a title that is quite emblematical: *One China, Many Paths* (see Zhang 2001; Wang 2005).

References

Barmé, G. (2010) "The Harmonious Evolution of Information in China", in *The China Beat*, available at <http://www.thechinabeat.org/?p=1422> (accessed 18 June 2010).

Bell, D. A. (2008) *China's New Confucianism: Politics and Everyday Life in a Changing Society*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Bell. D. A. (2015) *China Model: Political Meritocracy and the Limits of Democracy*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Davies, G. (2001) "Introduction", in Davies (ed.), *Voicing Concerns: Contemporary Chinese Critical Inquiry*, Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Davies, G. (2007) *Worrying About China: The Language of Chinese Critical Inquiry*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Fong-ching, C. (2001) "Popular Cultural Movement of the 1980a", in Gloria Davies (ed.), *Voicing Concerns: Contemporary Chinese Critical Inquiry*, Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Gries, P.H. (2004) *China's New Nationalism: Pride, Politics, and Diplomacy*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Hui, W. (1998) "Contemporary Chinese Thought and the Question of Modernity", translated by Rebecca Karl, in Xudong Zhang (ed.), *Intellectual Politics in Post-Tiananmen China*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Hui, W. (2004) *Xiandai Zhongguo sixiang de xingqi (The Rise of Modern Chinese Thought)*, 4 vols, Beijing: Sanlian shudian (Joint Publishing House).

Hui, W. (2006) *China's New Order: Society, Politics, and Economy in Transition*, ed. and trans. Theodore Huters, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Hui, W. (2010), *The End of the Revolution: China and the Limits of Modernity*, London and New York: Verso.

Hui, W. (2020) *Shiji de dansheng: Zhongguo geming yu zhengzhi de luoji (The Birth of the Century: The Logic of China's Revolution and Politics)*, Beijing: Sanlian shudian (Joint Publishing House)

Jilin, X. (2000 [1998]) "The Fate of an Enlightenment: Twenty Years in the Chinese Intellectual Sphere (1978–98)", trans. Geremie R. Barme and Gloria Davies, *East Asian History*, *20*: 169–86

Jilin, X. et al. (2007) *Qimeng de ziwowajie: 1990 niandai yilai Zhongguo sixiang wenhua jie zhongda lunzheng yanjiu (The Self-destruction of Enlightenment: Studies on the Important Debates in the Chinese Intellectual World since the 1990s)*, Changchun: Jilin chuban jituan youxian zeren gongsi (Jilin Publishing Company).

Qing, J. (2003) *Zhengzhi ruxue: dangdai ruxue de zhuanxiang, tezhi, yu fazhan (Political Confucianism: The Turn, Characteristics, and Development in Contemporary Confucianism)*, Beijing: Sanlian shudian (Joint Publishing House).

Qing, J. (2005) "Guanyu chongjian Zhongguo rujiao de gouxiang" (Thoughts on the Reconstruction of Chinese Confucianism), available at <http://culture.people.com.cn/GB/27296/3969429.html> (accessed 18 June 2010).

Shenzhi, L. (1999) "Fengyu canghuang wushi nian" (Fifty years in Wild Wind), available at <http://www.chinaelections.org/NewsInfo.asp?NewsID=140662> (accessed 18 June 2010).

Wang, C. (ed.), (2005) *One China, Many Paths*, London: Verso.

Wei–ming, T. (1993) *Way, Learning, and Politics: Essays on the Confucian Intellectuals*, New York: State University of New York Press.

Xiaofeng, L. (2002) "Editorial Preface", in Liu (ed.), *Shitelaosi yu gudian zhengzhi zhexue (Leo Strauss and Classical Political Philosophy)*, Shanghai: Shanghai sanlian shudian (Shanghai Joint Publishing House).

Xiaofeng, L. (2019) *Yonghui xianqu: zouxiang zhengzhi shixue (The Pioneers of Possessing Wisdom: Towards the Political Histography)*, Shanghai: Huadong shifan daxue chubanshe (The Press of East China Normal University).

Yang, G. (1987) "*Bashi niandai wenhua taolun de jige wenti*" (A Few Issues Concerning the 1980s Cultural Discussion), in Wenhua: Zhongguo yu shijie (Culture: China and the World), Vol. 1, Beijing: Sanlian shudian (Joint Publishing House).

Yang, G. (2003a) *Zhengzhi zheren shitelaosi (Leo Strauss as a Political Philosopher)*, Hong Kong: Oxford University Press.

Yang, G. (2003b) "Cong 'minzu-guojia' zouxiang 'wenming-guojia'" (From Nation-State to Civilization-State), available at <http://www.chinese-thought.org/zwsx/007497.htm> (accessed 18 June 2010).

Yang, G. and L. Xiaofeng (2006) "Zhengzhi zhexue de xingqi" (The Rise of Political Philosophy), in Nanfang zhoumo (Southern Weekly), 12 January 2006.

Yiwu, Z. (2000 [1994]) "'Xiandaixing' de zhongjie: yige wufa huibi de keti" (The End of 'Modernity': An Unavoidable Topic), in Luo Gang and Ni Wenjian (eds.), *Jiushi niandai sixiang wenxuan* (The Intellectual Anthology of the 1990s), Vol. 1, Nanning: Guangxi renmin chubanshe (Guangxi People's Publishing House).

Yongle, Z. (2010) "The Future of the Past: On Wang Hui's Rise of Modern Chinese Thought", *New Left Review*, *62*: 47–83.

Zhang, X. (ed.) (2001) *Whither China: Intellectual Politics in Contemporary China*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Zhenglai, D. et al. (2008) *Zhongguo renwen shehuikexue sanshi nian (Chinese Humanities and Social Sciences in the Last Three Decades)*, Shanghai: Fudan daxue chubanshe (Fudan University Press).

Part III

New problems

Taylor & Francis
Taylor & Francis Group
http://taylorandfrancis.com

Sovereignty, security and the exception

Sheila Nair

In a much talked about essay titled "The pandemic is a portal" published in the *Financial Times* in April 2020, the noted Indian writer and activist Arundhati Roy suggests that we might either, "choose to walk through it, dragging the carcasses of our prejudice and hatred, our avarice, our data banks and dead ideas, our dead rivers and smoky skies behind us. Or we can walk through lightly, with little luggage, ready to imagine another world. And ready to fight for it".[1] This optimistic note in the conclusion of her otherwise sombre and sobering essay about how class, caste, religious and ethnic divides and disparities were starkly exposed in the Indian government's hastily imposed and severe nation–wide lockdown in March, which caused immense suffering across a large swathe of the population, underestimates the realities of what might happen, what could be envisioned and how the "fight" might be waged. Many millions of Indians, whose already precarious existence even prior to the pandemic illustrates all too well their dispensability, were forced to leave the slums and city streets they had been forced to call home for their villages on foot. One way that we might address the disproportionate and disparate demographic impacts of the novel coronavirus pandemic would be to reassess the relevance of concepts that have shaped critical conceptions of sovereign authority, security, the state of exception and bare life associated with the work of the Italian philosopher, Giorgio Agamben. These concepts, especially the latter two, have been given new meaning and triggered some debate in intellectual circles prompted in large part by controversial commentaries by none other than Agamben. Although this controversy is touched on in the chapter, my main focus is on the relevance and limitations of Agamben's ideas for International Relations.

Sovereign power and just killings

Arguably, the US "war on terror" led liberal democracies to openly voice their disavowal of due process, basic human decencies, and civil liberties (selectively applied in the best of times); a disavowal that is rationalized in the name of justice. Although it has been nearly two decades since 9/11, we continue to see global conflicts reduced to conventional aphorisms; in short, an epic struggle against self and other; good and evil; the exceptional and ordinary;[2] and greatness and weakness among other dualisms. With the election of a new US president in 2016 we see

an accentuating of the metaphors and tropes centered on "American greatness" and its special place in the world reprised in political rallies and speeches by Donald Trump and his supporters. For instance, in a speech to the United Nations General Assembly in 2017, Trump said this:

> The scourge of our planet today is a small group of rogue regimes that violate every principle on which the United Nations is based. They respect neither their own citizens nor the sovereign rights of their countries. If the righteous many do not confront the wicked few, then evil will triumph. When decent people and nations become bystanders to history, the forces of destruction only gather power and strength.[3]

In this signification of sovereign power, the good and powerful must prevail against "rogue" states and other "bad actors" and remedial action taken to ensure that such regimes will enjoy none of the protections conferred by the UN Charter's Article 2. Subsequent US actions to revoke the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPA) – the so-called "Iran nuclear deal" between Iran and the US, UK, France, China, Russia and Germany – have led to an acceleration of tensions between the US and Iran as well as its other partners in the JCPA and culminated in the assassination on January 3, 2020 of Iran's top military commander, General Qassem Soleimani, relying on the US' preferred method of targeted killing: the drone strike.

Not much has changed from one US administration to the next on the core precepts underpinning US foreign policy especially when it comes to which states and people constitute threats to world peace. Further, many Americans are united behind this US foreign policy that casts some states and people as inherently dangerous or invasive while at the same time seeking to root out anti-American elements in the body politic that threaten a perception of American exceptionalism. In this view, the task of US foreign policy is to assert American boldness and greatness after a period of "tremendous" weakness. Retribution against an Iranian leader is thus rationalized as just and necessary since extra judicial execution is, after all, the purview of the powerful.[4] Consequently, mid-twentieth-century international humanitarian and human rights laws and norms that might be invoked in opposition to such unilateral acts are rejected as irrelevant in the exercise of US power. Here is the US Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo on the lawfulness and necessity of the US' execution of Soleimani:

> The American people should know that we will not waver. We will be bold in protecting American interests and we will do so in a way that is consistent with the rule of law. We're trying to restore deterrence that frankly is a need that results directly from the fact that the previous administration left us in a terrible place with respect to the Islamic Republic of Iran … we have developed a strategy to convince the Iranian regime to behave like a normal nation. That's what our strategy is about. We've been executing it.[5]

The exception, specifically the *state of exception*, has much currency in this context of neo-liberal rationalizations of violence.

Harking back to the execution of the US-led war in Iraq and Afghanistan, the resulting violence and deaths, detention and torture of "enemy combatants" in Guantanamo Bay, Abu Ghraib as well as other war on terror hotspots, and state impunity in the face of it all have combined to make more visible critiques of sovereign power. Yet, while 9/11 and its aftermath have led to a more careful exploration of the scope of sovereign power, anti-immigrant backlash in the West, refugees, deepening global inequality and poverty, and racism have also clearly contributed to study of the exception. Interrogating how sovereign power is produced and exercised led to an explosion of interest, especially on the left, in the writings of Giorgio Agamben and Carl

Schmitt.[6] In the subsequent section, I examine how some of the scholarly literature has dealt with the exception as construct and concept.

The question of the exception

In locating Schmitt's statement that the sovereign is "he who decides on the exception", Agamben provides an important corrective on the nature of sovereign power in International Relations: one that is neither confined to the workings of the sovereign state nor as constituting (in Foucault's terms) "a radical rupture with sovereignty" (Biswas and Nair 2010: 5, 7).[7] For Agamben,

> [The] paradox of sovereignty consists in the fact that the sovereign is, at the same time, inside and outside the juridical order. If the sovereign is truly the one to whom the juridical order grants the power of proclaiming a state of exception and, therefore, of suspending the order's validity, then "the sovereign stands outside the juridical order and, nevertheless, belongs to it, since it is up to him to decide if the constitution is to be suspended *in toto*".
>
> *(Agamben 1998: 15)*

How does the above quote from Agamben translate for the study of International Relations and by extension, International Security? Sovereign power and sovereign law depend upon, and are constituted by, this simultaneous inside/inclusion and outside/exclusion that Agamben asserts here. The sovereign is, in short, captured inside the exception, just as the exception is itself a clear expression of the extent and limits of sovereign power. It has to be emphasized that sovereign power can only be grasped in relation to its negation or suspension in the state of exception. Therein lies the paradox. Sovereign power relies on and is constituted by what it silences or erases in the exception. In other words, sovereign authority stands outside and in opposition to the exception but is also simultaneously embedded in it.

Agamben argues that this fundamental contradiction underlies the production of sovereign law. Indeed, according to Agamben,

> Law is made of nothing but what it manages to capture inside itself through the inclusive exclusion of the *exceptio*: it nourishes itself on this exception and is a dead letter without it … The sovereign decision traces and from time to time renews this threshold of indistinction between outside and inside, exclusion and inclusion, *nomos* and *physis*, in which life is originarily excepted in law.
>
> *(Agamben 1998: 27)*

The state of exception, while suggestive of the suspension of the law or the norm, does not imply the abolition of the law or norm (Agamben 2005: 23). On the contrary, "the state of exception is neither external or internal to the juridical order, and the problem of defining it concerns precisely a threshold, or a zone of indifference where inside and outside do not exclude each other but rather blur with each other" (Agamben 2005: 23). This point is critical to understanding how the exception embeds sovereignty within it in even as it is alienated from it, just as the logic of sovereignty relies on the exception for its foundational, lawful authority in International Relations (and Security Studies).

The "ban"[8] illustrates how the exception has become the rule in the managing and staging of crises such as 9/11. Agamben argues that the "relation of exception is a relation of ban. He who has been banned is not, in fact, simply set outside the law and made indifferent to it but rather

abandoned by it, that is exposed and threatened on the threshold in which life and law, outside and inside, becomes indistinguishable"[9] (Agamben 1998: 28). This view of sovereignty no doubt contrasts with conventional ideas about sovereignty (in International Relations) as signifying a contractual shift from a Hobbesian state of nature.[10] In short, "what the ban holds together is precisely bare life and sovereign power" and thus all "representations of the originary political act as a contract or convention marking the passage from nature to the State in a definite and discrete way must be left wholly behind" (Agamben 1998: 109). If *homo sacer* (sacred man) – "a life that may be killed but not sacrificed" – contrasts with *bios* or politically qualified life, then bare life (or *zoe* used to describe what Agamben refers to as "natural reproductive life") and *bios* are nevertheless blurred in a zone of indistinction that is made possible by the ban. *Homo sacer* is abandoned by the law and sovereign authority. Sovereignty, as a core principle underpinning inter-state relations in International Relations, cannot account for the scale and scope of sovereign power when viewed through this lens.

Caldwell situates the distinction between bare life and *zoe* or natural "sweet" or reproductive life in contemporary political discourse. So, in essence, "[H]omo sacer, regardless of whether it lives a life of happiness or misery, is defined by its dependence upon sovereign power for its status. This nexus, in which sovereignty emerges by capturing life in the exception, defines the nature of political belonging in the West" (Caldwell 2004: 20). If we set aside the sovereignty mythologeme what are we left with though? We have, arguably, a critique of sovereignty and sovereign power whose very structure and logic is exposed as presupposing the existence of all three: the ban, the camp, and bare life.

As Agamben puts it, the construction of this mythologeme deflects our gaze away from the inclusions, exclusions and exceptions of sovereign power (Agamben 1998: 109–10), and in undoing it we redirect our attention to sovereignty's hidden power and demarcations. The zone of indistinction implicit in contractual sovereignty is thus exposed by the blatant assertion of sovereign authority in the production of the modern camp. It is to the camp that bare life in the form of *homo sacer* must be relegated. But it is also in the camp "that the 'juridically empty' space of the state of exception … has transgressed its spatiotemporal boundaries and now, overflowing outside them, is starting to coincide with the normal order, in which everything again becomes possible" (Agamben 1998: 38), and the exception becomes permanent.

Following Agamben and Schmitt, some scholars have used the exception and the ban to illustrate the workings of the modern camp as the "new biopolitical *nomos* of the planet" while situating its analysis in the context of imperial and neo-colonial projects (Gregory 2006: 406). Reid-Henry, for example, explores the imperial histories that have shaped the production of "enemy combatants" and "battlefield detainees" as bare life in the detention camp. He argues that this is the case with the camp at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, where "American (extra) territoriality and Cuban (pseudo) sovereignty" render Guantanamo as a gray area "as indeterminate as the variously described 'enemy combatants' and 'battlefield detainees' being held there" (Reid-Henry 2007: 628). The indeterminate status of Guantanamo prisoners cannot merely be located in the context of the US war on terror but, as Reid-Henry argues, is closely indexed to the territory's imperial past (Reid-Henry 2007: 628). This indexing of Guantanamo to imperial practices resurrects it as an indistinct space, a state of exception that has been in the making for some time. It refers us back to policies of earlier US administrations and to a time when Guantanamo served as a detention center for Haitian refugees among others, whose existence on the periphery of international politics marked them as so many *homines sacri*.

The spatial boundaries of the state of exception, it should be remembered, are coterminous with the boundaries of the politically qualified life of the sovereign. The camp thus demonstrates, according to Agamben, the "process by which the *exception everywhere becomes the rule*,[11]

the realm of bare life – which is originally situated at the margins of the political order – gradually begins to coincide with the political realm, and exclusion and inclusion, inside and outside, *bios* and *zoe*, right and fact, enter into a zone of irreducible indistinction" (Agamben 1998: 9). Guantanamo exemplifies the permanency and emergency of the exception, one where the very applicability or relevance of law is not in question since it has essentially been suspended in this space of indistinction. In fact its suspension is not merely a reflection of the non-legal status of detainees but also of the referral of sovereign, international law. Notably, the state of exception embodied in Guantanamo (and elsewhere) accompanies the US rationalization of its sovereign authority through legal machinations and justifications that suspend due process and international human rights.

The US has drawn from the legal arguments of the then Deputy Assistant Attorney-General Patrick Philbin and conservative legal scholar John Yoo to ground its claims. These arguments in the infamous Torture Memos outline the grounds for denying habeas corpus, the Geneva Conventions, and the Convention Against Torture to prisoners at Guantanamo, Abu Ghraib, and elsewhere.[12] In Guantanamo we find a "carefully constructed legal absence", which functions as "the geographical articulation of a more generalized juridico-political 'state of exception'" (Reid-Henry 2007: 630). While Reid-Henry's emphasis is on the "geographical mechanisms behind the production of bare life", Gregory (2006) draws attention to the legal and para-legal architectures of Guantanamo as "a staging post for the contemporary 'war on terror'" and suggests that a reverse Euro-American exceptionalism has marked the production and management of Guantanamo and the camp's inhabitants as bare life, where international and sovereign laws may not exist.

Rearticulating security and sovereignty

> At once excluding bare life from and capturing it within the political order, the state of exception actually constituted, in its very separateness, the hidden foundation on which the entire political system rested.
>
> *(Agamben 1998: 9)*

Sovereignty and doctrines of security are so intimately related that it is often difficult to disentangle one from the other. Security has consistently been at the forefront of realist arguments about power in International Relations. In this view, the sovereign state exercises power and agency in defense of security and the national interest. This is exemplified in Trump's speech to the UN in 2017. It is thus not difficult to see why Agamben concludes that security is embedded and implicated in the "birth of the modern state", and that it is today the principal activity of the state (Agamben 2002). The politics of western liberal democracies, according to Agamben, produce and rely on emergencies, making it unlikely that the paradigm of security will disappear anytime soon. Security measures are always articulated in relation to a state of exception, and "work towards a growing depoliticization of society" (ibid.). Security and sovereign power are thus inseparable logics that shape a range of exclusionary, globalized discourses. Such exclusions – militarized, gendered, subalternized, and racialized – reflect civilizational and cultural anxieties. Anti-immigration policies underscore "racial, cultural, and civilizational superiority" (Persaud 2002: 19), which mark undocumented migrants as bare life and the detention camps in which they are held as so many zones of indistinction (Rajaram and Grundy-Warr 2004). Representations of the immigrant "other" make it acceptable to detain or imprison migrants, deny them basic human rights and due process, and subject them to deportation in defiance of international norms and laws (Nair 2010: 101).

After 9/11 the US border was reinscribed in civilizational terms, and in the "popular American imagination … fears of an external threat and danger usually embodied by the alien, barbaric Other" became once again core referents (Agathangelou and Ling 2004: 525). Yet this binary inscription is grounded in the articulation of sovereignty and security. Campbell explains how "the constitution of identity is achieved through the inscription of boundaries which serve to demarcate an 'inside' from an 'outside', a 'self' from an 'other', a 'domestic' from a 'foreign'" (Campbell 1992: 8). But the inside/outside opposition, or in Schmitt's terms the "friend/enemy" opposition,[13] functions to obscure the zone of indistinction in which this opposition is embedded. In short, the sovereign decision to exclude or except encapsulates what is projected as external (threats to security), within it. What is at stake is identifying how "the limit concept of the doctrine of law and the state, in which sovereignty borders (since every limit concept is always the limit between two concepts) on the sphere of life and becomes indistinguishable from it" veils the constitution of sovereign power and its deployment (Agamben 1998: 11). And further, how the logic of sovereignty obscures the indeterminate political status of those inhabiting the gray areas of Guantanamo and other exceptional spaces.

Permanent states of precarity

Sovereign power, in Agamben's view, generates a "zone of indistinction" (or "zone of anomie") in international life, such that the state of exception has become "the *nomos* of our present". But he has little to say about how or whether colonial and imperial modalities of sovereignty matter in the way the exception is conceptualized and contextualized. Although Agamben insists that sovereign authority and power do not reside centrally in the Westphalian or the liberal state, but rather, following Foucault, in a biopolitical regime that exemplifies modernity, we cannot assume that this is universally the case. His insight that the sovereign and biopolitical are not separate and opposing realms but instead constitutive of one another may well yield similar insights into operations of sovereign power in the postcolonial world. But even if we grant that sovereignty, *homo sacer*, *et al*. are universal in their application it is still useful to inquire into how postcoloniality generates different understandings and meanings associated with these terms. Moreover, as Delanty and Wells have separately shown, the implications of biopolitical securitization (for example, resulting from the pandemic),[14] and the question of the applicability of *homo sacer* in situations where the state exacts suffering as a permanent condition of existence, demand new ways of thinking about sovereign power and its global workings.[15]

Sovereignty is constructed across disparate geopolitical contexts and in time and space. For instance, "colonial and postcolonial sovereignties" should not be viewed as "deformed or incomplete, but as polymorphous and yet vital to the so-called Westphalian system of nation-states" since they have become "almost permanent zones of exception" (Hansen and Stepputat 2005: 18).[16] It's no surprise then that postcolonial sovereignties look different from the *sui generis* sovereignty attributed to the Westphalian state. These sovereignties might be better captured by Mbembe's notion of *commandement* "used to denote colonial authority, that is, insofar as it embraces the images and structures of power and coercion, the instruments and agents of their enactment, and a degree of rapport between those who give orders and those who are supposed to obey them, without, of course discussing them" (Mbembe 1992: 30). Postcolonial sovereignty is thus an effect of the forms of rule and order enacted by colonial power and equally repressive. Sovereign rule is experienced in the exercise of sovereign power through coercive and violent colonial and postcolonial policies, institutions and laws. It is also implicated in the assertion of postcolonial statehood and sovereignty modeled on a Westphalian schema. However, the insistent regulation of third-world spaces and bodies and their production as crisis-prone,

terror-ridden, disease-bearing, anarchic, corrupt, non-rational, and ungovernable continually affirms the postcolonial exception and its precarity. Further, it underscores the role of violence and the politics and power of mourning in the making of states of exception (Butler 2003).

Agamben's work has been faulted, as noted above, for its reluctance to engage colonial and imperial histories in theorizing the exception but this does not mean that the concept itself is suspect. Mbembe has shown how a critique of the exception yields insight into the workings of sovereign power in postcolonial Africa where the exception mirrors the spectacular violence of colonialism and imperialism even as it stands in some opposition to it. Such is the case in the display of the "grotesque and obscene" as essential elements of the postcolonial regime's affirmation of its domination (Mbembe 1992: 4). The performance of sovereignty, or as Mbembe puts it, the *fetish* of postcolonial legitimacy, is evident in the elaborate rituals and spectacles staged for public consumption although the postcolonial exception is made only more evident in the production of such excess. These performances also underscore that the exercise of sovereign power in the postcolony, as it is in the metropolitan core, is also a relation of violence, one that excludes many from the state's legal protections and reduces them to an exceptional and marginal existence. However, this exclusion is not hidden or obscured by the way sovereign power sets outside the law those who are not subject to politically qualified life. Rather, the production and reproduction of bare life in these contexts is a principal and obvious object and outcome of sovereign power.

The history of colonization and imperialism frames a different trajectory of postcolonial sovereignty than the liberal version projects. The destruction of pre-Westphalian "sovereignties" – if such a term may be applied to pre-colonial state formations – means any recuperation of situated understandings of that term is not very helpful. More to the point, Gregory argues that "modalities of colonial violence" continue to bear on the "colonial present", and "international law bears the marks of those colonial predations: its locus is drawn not only through relations of sovereign states, but also through what Peter Fitzpatrick calls 'the colonial domination of people burdened by racial difference'" (Gregory 2006: 410). The exception thus has a particular structure of meaning in relation to the civilizational and racialized discourse embedded, for example, in the "war on terror". The "barbarians at the gate" suffer a double exclusion not only as those set outside the law – *homo sacer* – and hence not entitled to the rights and privileges extended to citizens but also as an enemy who is "beyond the human" (Gregory 2006: 410). As Cesaire decries, the colonizer sees the "other man as *an animal*, accustoms himself to treating him like an animal, and tends objectively to transform *himself* into animal" (2001: 41). This relationship is quintessentially a relationship of violence. Being denied even the status of one who may be killed but may not be sacrificed raises other questions about how the constitution of the exception depends upon the specific emergencies being declared. And how those emergencies are mapped around bodies that may not even be entitled to the "bareness" of *zoe*, thus revoking the operative distinction between natural and politically qualified life so integral to the making of sovereign power.

The assertion of sovereign power evident in the enactment but perhaps even more significantly, in the suspension of international law by the production of enemy combatants, terrorists *et al.* may also be related to a colonialism that places whole peoples and communities beyond but also simultaneously within the spectral violence of the sovereign state. In demonstrating the constitution of this otherness embedded in sovereignty in Africa, Mbembe writes: "we are interested in a specific form of *domestication* [17] and mobilization of space and resources: the form that consists in producing boundaries, whether by moving already existing ones or by doing away with them, fragmenting them, decentering or differentiating them" (2000: 261). Consistent with such boundary marking practices, race, sexuality and gender are further regulated and ordered

through the fictional embrace of colonial governance. Mbembe has argued that "racial denial" and the suspension of "controls and guarantees of judicial order" go hand in hand. The colony is "the zone where the violence of the state of exception is deemed to operate in the service of 'civilization'" (Mbembe 2003: 14). Colonial laws and restrictions on racial intermingling, sexual intercourse, marriage and social control also shape this state of exception by imposing rules that spring from the colonial state's deep fear of *metissage*, which as Stoler argues is "a powerful trope for internal contamination" (Stoler 1997: 199). To kill or to "let live" – by the exercise of sovereign power – will thus have qualitatively different meanings in colonial sovereignty (and for their postcolonial progeny) than in metropolitan, "civilized" states.

The lack of subtlety involved in the extension and exercise of power in colonial and postcolonial sovereignty are further attenuated by the workings of postcolonial biopower and forms of governmentality.[18] Governmentality was infused throughout the socio-economic and political apparatus of the colonial state although perhaps less obvious given its use of naked force. Postcolonial governmentality thus bears traces of its violent colonial origins, which prompts comparisons to governmentality in spaces such as Guantanamo where metropolitan powers exercise their sovereign authority more openly. Foucault, whose work on biopower and governmentality has critically informed Agamben's theorization of the exception, has been criticized by, among others, Spivak (1999). She alleges that Foucault forecloses "a reading of the broader narratives of imperialism" through the "screen allegories" of modern institutions such as the "The clinic, the asylum, the prison, the university" (Spivak 1999: 279). Revisiting imperialist narratives in the present might more fully get at the complex reworkings of sovereign power and authority in, as well as in relation to, the postcolonial world. What is the relevance of such arguments on sovereign power, *homo sacer* and the state of exception during a pandemic, or what Agamben considers to be a manufactured emergency? I turn now to these questions.

The pandemic and bare life

Agamben's reading of the pandemic must also be questioned for its failure to properly grapple with the distinction between the imperial sovereign, the postcolonial sovereign, bare life and the exception. Agamben argues that the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has produced not only fear but also a blind adherence to authority in a time of panic and what he hints at as hysteria. In an essay titled "Clarifications"[19] Agamben addresses the controversy triggered by controversial claims on *Quodlibet*[20]:

> The first thing that the wave of panic that has paralyzed the country obviously shows is that our society no longer believes in anything but bare life … Bare life — and the danger of losing it — is not something that unites people, but blinds and separates them.

Agamben asserts that people have been persuaded in Italy (and elsewhere) to give up the things that matter to them most such as "normal conditions of life, social relationships, work, even friendships, affections, and religious and political convictions" out of fear. A "state of emergency" is declared whereby nothing is more important than the preservation of bare life or avoidance of sickness. Moreover, what "the epidemic" has made clear, according to Agamben, is that "the state of exception, to which governments have habituated us for some time, has truly become the normal condition". Let us leave aside for the moment that this is a surprising and rather bitter rant seemingly aligned, as Delanty[21] in a more sympathetic reading has suggested, with conspiracy theories (notably on the right but not exclusively so) by a philosopher whose foundational work as discussed elsewhere in this chapter has led to important provocations and

interventions that have undone conventional readings of sovereignty, security and power in IR. When Agamben asserts that "[We] live in a society that has sacrificed freedom to so-called 'reasons of security' and has therefore condemned itself to live in a perennial state of fear and insecurity",[22] how does this claim translate universally? Who are the "we"? And are some people or populations much more vulnerable than others to being rendered bare life and made to endure a permanent state of exception in the pandemic? Are the concepts of bare life, exception and other Agambenian arguments even relevant in these times? It seems to me that by Agamben's own more expository reasoning in his scholarly work, these rather bold claims about the pandemic undermine the very distinctions he has so carefully laid out previously. In effect he reduces the different and conflicting practices across the globe in response to the pandemic such as lockdown measures, masking mandates, shelters in place, self-isolation, quarantines and so forth to a single, irrefutable sovereign logic, with an undeniable goal of subjecting entire populations to the will of a state/government's efforts to quell dissent and achieve what he calls a situation where the state of exception is the "normal condition".[23]

Yet we know that the impact of the pandemic on vulnerable populations as illuminated in Roy's essay is vastly different from the relative luxury and comfort in which the more privileged and wealthy might experience the pandemic induced normal he writes about. Better arguments about bare life, bio-securitization, and governmentality (among other things) are surely needed now more than ever. Delanty (2020) makes an important point that the pandemic is providing an excuse for horrific acts of violence against Muslims in India and police violence in Nigeria. He also notes the overt moves to consolidate control by authoritarian states such as Hungary and Brazil, and expanding powers of surveillance in liberal democracies, such as Italy, the UK and the US. Substituting Agamben's *homo sacer* for *homo dolorosus* (a creature made to suffer or of permanent sorrow), Wells argues that the latter is a "racialized category" such as we might see in the case of the Palestinians under Israeli occupation or the preservation of detainees lives in Guantanamo (2019). In other words, "the life and rights of *homo dolorosus* must be seen to be upheld while he or she is simultaneously denied their full realization" giving the appearance of liberalism while ensuring that this suffering creature is kept near rightlessness and death (Wells 2019: 423).

Perhaps *homo sacer* and *homo dolorosus* anticipate questions about how precarity works or functions across time and space, in periods of emergency and so-called normality, and what such precarity might mean for forms of agency and/or resistance. "Graduated sovereignties" to borrow from Ong (2000) might be another approach to understanding conditions of precarity, capital mobility and oppression, especially in third worlded spaces,[24] which suggest different regulatory and disciplinary practices and regimes of control. Yet, seeing how precarity might disentangle "freedom" (or at least expressions of them) even in "blasted landscapes" of capitalism and in its ruins and ruinations presents an opportunity for a different kind of thinking about sovereign power and security (Tsing 2015: 6, 181).

Conclusion

This chapter revisits some of the arguments associated with the state of exception and in doing so references Agamben's critical discussion of the ban, the camp, and the zone of indistinction. It draws attention not only to how the state of exception expands our understandings of contemporary sovereign power and its modalities but also its restrictiveness. For example, Agamben's theorization of the state of exception in the camp as the *nomos* of the present must take into account, at the very least, the coerciveness of colonial power and postcolonial authority, and their distinctive permutations. Agamben's injunction that we are in a phase where the

state of exception has become the norm and where we are all *homines sacri* forces us to seriously ask how this moment is taking shape. But it should also call for addressing why bare life and states of exception emerge through the violence of imperialism (and colonial rule), and how the asymmetries reflective of this violence generate alternative modalities of sovereignty, including the postcolonial, in time and space. In what some have called the pandemic "era" there is a renewed urgency to address the different shapes and forms of sovereign authority and power and its disparate impacts, but also question the constitution of the exception more broadly.

Notes

1. https://www.ft.com/content/10d8f5e8-74eb-11ea-95fe-fcd274e920ca.
2. The reference here is to the conventional framing of the US as an "exceptional" nation, not to be confused with the critical terminology of "the exception" addressed in this chapter.
3. https://www.politico.com/story/2017/09/19/trump-un-speech-2017-full-text-transcript-242879.
4. Devon Cole, "Pompeo backs Trump's threats to Iran as US braces for possible retaliation", https://www.cnn.com/2020/01/05/politics/mike-pompeo-iran-attacks-cnntv/index.html.
5. Ibid.
6. A number of these works are cited in the references.
7. Schmitt's influence on contemporary political thought has not been without controversy given his associations with the Nazi regime. For an excellent assessment of Schmitt's resurrection in contemporary social and political theory as well the debate he has triggered, see the foreword by Tracy B. Strong to Schmitt's *Concept of the Political* (Schmitt 1996 [1932]). This debate while illuminating does not, in my view, detract from the arguments he advances on the exception and Agamben's reformulations of this concept.
8. In using the notion of the *ban* Agamben introduces "the old Germanic term that designates both exclusion from the community and the command and insignia of the sovereign" (Agamben 1998: 28).
9. Emphasis in the original.
10. Biswas and Nair (2010: 4) suggest that in mainstream International Relations "sovereignty makes the state the author of itself" although they see more nuanced understandings of the state taking shape as a "normative force".
11. Emphasis added.
12. Available at <http://www.aclu.org/national-security/memo-regarding-torture-and-military-interrogationalien-unlawful-combatants-held-o>.
13. See Schmitt's (1996 [1932]) extended discussion of this relation in *The Concept of the Political*.
14. Delanty suggests that notwithstanding the controversy over Agamben's remarks about the pandemic and state response, which I shall address in more detail below that we might be "struck by the realization that what we are witnessing is a lethal anti-liberal pathogen eating through the fabric of social life and of democracy. The social bond is itself the danger" (Delanty 2020: 10).
15. Wells sees "the emergence of a new, postmodern modality of power that produces a new figure: not Agamben's *homo sacer*, the man available to be killed, but *homo dolorosus*, the man available to be made to suffer" (2019: 417).
16. According to Hansen and Stepputat (2005: 27), "[The] traces of the colonial state, or the culture of colonialism, have not withered away, however. Sovereignty in the postcolonial world has in many ways remained provisional and partial, despotic and excessively violent".
17. Emphasis added.
18. This concept of govermentality derives from Foucault (1991).
19. https://itself.blog/2020/03/17/giorgio-agamben-clarifications/.
20. https://www.quodlibet.it/giorgio-agamben-l-invenzione-di-un-epidemia; see English translation on the *European Journal of Psychoanalysis* website: http://www.journal-psychoanalysis.eu/coronavirus-and-philosophers/.

21. Delanty suggests that "there are clear trends that point to the rapid expansion of militarized forms of surveillance that cannot be fully accounted for as necessary measures to control the pandemic. While Agamben (2020: 7) may have exaggerated the political instrumentalization of the pandemic – as a case of an opportunity too good to lose – the important point he makes is that the state of exception is now becoming the new normal art of governance".
22. https://itself.blog/2020/03/17/giorgio-agamben-clarifications/.
23. Ibid.
24. Ong (2000: 55).

References

Agamben, G. (1998) *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, trans. Daniel Heller-Roazen, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Agamben, G. (2002) 'Security and Terror', trans. Carolin Emcke, *Theory and Event*, *5*: 4.

Agamben, G. (2005) *State of Exception*, trans. K. Attell, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Agathangelou, A. and L.H.M. Ling (2004) 'Power Borders, Security, Wealth: Lessons of Violence and Desire from September 11', *International Studies Quarterly*, *48*: 517–538.

Biswas, S. and S. Nair (eds.) (2010) *International Relations and States of Exception: Margins, Peripheries and Excluded Bodies*, London and New York: Routledge.

Butler, J. (2003) *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence*, New York: Verso.

Caldwell, A. (2004) 'Bio-sovereignty and the Emergence of Humanity', *Theory & Event*, 7 (*2*).

Campbell, D. (1992) *Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity*, Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Cesaire, A. (2001) *Discourse on Colonialism*, trans. Joan Pinkham, New York: Monthly Review Press.

Delanty, G. (2020) 'Six Political Philosophies in Search of a Virus: Critical Perspectives on the Coronavirus Pandemic', LEQS Paper No. 156/2020.

Foucault, M. (1991) 'Governmentality', in G. Burchell, C. Gordon, and P. Miller (eds.) *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Gregory, D. (2006) 'The Black Flag: Guantánamo Bay and the State of Exception', *Geografiska Annaler: Series B, Human Geography*, *88* (*4*): 405–427.

Hansen, T.B. and F. Stepputat (2005) *Sovereign Bodies; Citizens, Migrants, and States in the Postcolonial World*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Mbembe, A. (1992) 'Provisional Notes on the Postcolony', *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, *62* (*1*): 3–37.

Mbembe, A. (2000) 'At the Edge of the World: Boundaries, Territoriality, and Sovereignty in Africa', *Public Culture*, *12* (*1*): 259–284.

Mbembe, A. (2003) 'Necropolitics', trans. Meintjes, L., *Public Culture*, *15* (*1*): 11–40.

Nair, S. (2010) 'Sovereignty, Security, and Migrants: Making Bare Life', in S. Biwas, and S. Nair (eds.) *International Relations and States of Exception: Margins, Peripheries and Excluded Bodies*, London and New York: Routledge.

Ong, A. (2000) 'Graduated Sovereignty in South-East Asia', *Theory, Culture & Society*, *17* (*4*): 55–75.

Persaud, R. (2002) 'Situating Race in International Relations: The Dialectics of Civilization Security in American Immigration', in G. Chowdhry and S. Nair (eds.), *Power, Postcolonialism and International Relations: Reading Race, Gender and Class*, London, UK: Routledge.

Rajaram, P.K. and C. Grundy-Warr (2004) 'The Irregular Migrant as Homo Sacer: Migration and Detention in Australia, Malaysia and Thailand', *International Migration*, *42* (*1*): 33–64.

Reid-Henry, S. (2007) 'Exceptional sovereignty? Guantánamo Bay and the Re-colonial Present', *Antipode*, *39* (*4*): 627–648.

Schmitt, C. (1996 [1932]) *The Concept of the Political*, trans. G. Schwab, Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press.

Spivak, G.C. (1999) *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Toward a History of the Vanishing Present*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Sheila Nair

Stoler, A.L. (1997) 'Sexual Affronts and Racial Frontiers: European Identities and the Cultural Politics of Exclusion in Southeast Asia', in F. Cooper and A.L. Stoler (eds.) *Tensions of Empire: Colonial Cultures in a Bourgeois World*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Tsing, A. (2015) *The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins*, Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press.

Wells, C. (2019) 'From *Homo Sacer* to *Homo Dolorosus*: Biopower and the Politics of Suffering', *European Journal of Social Theory*, *22* (*3*): 416–431.

35

The future of the state

Georg Sørensen

Many observers are too optimistic when they consider processes of political change; the outcome of such processes may not always be political development; it might as well be political decay, a point emphasized by Samuel Huntington (1968) more than fifty years ago but often forgotten in recent deliberations. The end of the Cold War installed a profound optimism in many people; the emblematic formulation of liberal hopes was 'the end of history' thesis by Francis Fukuyama (1989). The liberal belief in rapid progress and fast transitions to liberal democracy in many countries of the world dominated the 1990s; this was a period of political transformations and humanitarian interventions, animated by the desire to bring the universal values of democracy and human rights to all people.

Recent years have seen another mood; *Time Magazine* called the 2000s 'a decade from hell', the 'most dispiriting' years Americans had lived through since World War II (Serwer 2009). With current problems of mass migration, rising nationalism, civil war in fragile states, climate change, and the Corona pandemic, the 2010s have been no less of a 'decade from hell' and most people think the world is getting worse rather than better (YouGov 2016). The change of mood reminds us that the optimism about progress was never as strong in the liberal tradition as it was claimed to be in the 'end of history' version. During the Cold War, leading liberal voices – including Karl Popper, Raymond Aron, and Isaiah Berlin – were much more cautious and defensive, concerned with 'avoiding the worst rather than achieving the best' (Müller 2008: 48).

We do well to bear in mind these sceptical voices in discussing the future of the state. History, said Berlin, has 'no libretto'; it is not predetermined (Herzen, quoted in Berlin 1979: 92). There is no inbuilt guarantee of progress. For Immanuel Kant, progress was predicated on the existence of a pacific union among republics (democracies). But no such union would emerge automatically; it would be formed in a slow process where earlier results of cooperation would eventually lead to further cooperative efforts. The pacific union is a possibility rather than a certainty; Kant (1992: 30) speaks of 'an infinite process of gradual approximation'.

Political decay is as likely a possibility as is political development. A discussion of the future of the state should be guided by this more open view and not by a definite belief in progress. An important point follows: the advanced states in Europe, North America, and a few other places, are not necessarily frontrunners for everyone else; they are the result of unique and peculiar processes of development that cannot easily be repeated elsewhere. Nor is their progress assured forever. Similarly, the very weak states

in sub-Saharan Africa and elsewhere are the result of particular historical developments which make it extremely difficult for them to embark on a process of modernization. They might not succeed; history contains no guarantee that modernity awaits everyone.

In order to discuss the future of the state we need a baseline: some notion of what the state looks like today. At the same time, we want to avoid descending into pure description where every state is unique. Weberian ideal types are a way forward; they define the core features of present modalities of statehood. On the basis of these, we may discuss the future of the state.

Not all the same: three types of state in the present international system

I want to suggest three major modalities of state in the present international system: they are the postmodern states in the OECD-world, the weak post-colonial states mostly in sub-Saharan Africa, and the modernizing states, mainly in Asia, Latin America, and parts of Eastern Europe. Postmodern states have developed due to the changes that modern states have undergone since the end of World War II, sparked by the combined processes of economic globalization and political integration. The 'post'-prefix is a way of emphasizing that we are not quite clear about the shape and form the postmodern state will eventually take but we do know that it will be different from the modern state. The reader should be warned that the label 'postmodern' is used in several different ways by scholars, some of which do not at all correspond to the way it is used here (for a comparison of my usage with Robert Cooper's, see Sørensen 2008: 17–20). Weak, post-colonial states emerged in the process of decolonization. The normative framework around colonies changed dramatically in the post–World War II period. Before the war, the possession of colonies was considered legitimate and even necessary given the backward condition of the colonized areas. After the war, colonialism came to be considered fundamentally wrong, even 'a crime' (Jackson 1993). Pre-colonial patrimonial structures and colonial 'divide-and-rule' dominance were of course also significant elements defining the nature of weak statehood.

Modernizing states combine features of the modern, postmodern, and weak statehood ideal types in different mixtures. Some of them (e.g. China) were never weak states; others (e.g. India, Brazil) were weak once but have developed modern and some postmodern features as well. Table 35.1 portrays the modalities of statehood discussed here. Four major aspects of statehood are in focus: the political level (government); the level of national community (nationhood); the economic basis (economy); and the institution of sovereignty. The modern state is the conceptual basis for many observers in the fields of comparative politics and international relations, but this will clearly not do in assessing sovereign statehood in the twenty-first century.

Let us then look at the prospects for these major types of state in the present system.

New patterns of violence and conflict

We are used to think of large-scale war between states as the major security problem but this is changing. Postmodern states are consolidated liberal democracies; they make up a security community (Bellamy 2004; Adler and Barnett 1998) which can no longer be classified under the traditional notion of sovereign states in an anarchical environment. Processes of integration mean that patterns of legitimate international and supranational authority have replaced anarchy. This is most developed in context of the EU but these developments involve the other postmodern states as well (Sørensen 2007). In a security community states no longer

Table 35.1 Four types of states

State dimensions	Modern state	Postmodern state	Weak postcolonial state	Modernizing state
Government	A centralized system of democratic rule, based on a set of administrative, policing and military organizations, sanctioned by a legal order, claiming a monopoly of the legitimate use of force, all within a defined territory.	Multilevel governance in several interlocked arenas overlapping each other. Governance in context of supranational, international, transgovernmental, and transnational relations.	Inefficient and corrupt administrative and institutional structures. Rule based on coercion rather than the rule of law. Monopoly on the legitimate use of violence not established.	The modernizing states combine features of the modern, the postmodern, and the weak, postcolonial state.
Nationhood	A people within a territory making up a community of citizens (with political, social, and economic rights) and a community of sentiment based on cultural and historical bonds. Nationhood involves a high level of cohesion, binding nation and state together.	Identities less exclusively national. Collective identities 'above' and 'below' the nation reinforced. Transformation of citizenship. Less coherent 'community of citizens'.	Predominance of local/ethnic community. Weak bonds of loyalty to state and low level of state legitimacy. Local community more important than national community.	Brazil, China, India, and Russia are major examples of modernizing states.
Economy	A segregated national economy, self-sustained in the sense that it comprises the main sectors needed for its reproduction. The major part of economic activity takes place at home.	National economies much less self-sustained than earlier because of 'deep integration'. Major part of economic activity embedded in cross-border networks.	Heterogeneous combination of traditional agriculture, an informal petty urban sector, and some fragments of modern industry. Strong dependence on the global economy.	Additional examples include Argentina and Mexico in Latin America, as well as Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand in Asia.
Sovereignty	National authority in the form of constitutional independence. The state has supreme political authority within the territory. Non-intervention: right to decide without outside interference.	From non-intervention towards mutual intervention. Regulation by supranational authority increasingly important.	Constitutional independence combined with 'negotiated intervention' (donor control of aid, supervision by international society). 'Non-reciprocity' (special treatment of weak states because they cannot reciprocate).	Each of these countries contains a unique mixture of different types of statehood.
Country Example	OECD-states circa 1955	OECD-states Today	Most countries in Sub-Saharan Africa	See above

The future of the state

resort to force as a means of conflict resolution. This means that the security dilemma is elimi-nated: states do not fear each other in the classical sense of fear of attack, and war between them is not a possibility.

Modernizing states may become part of this security community provided they become consolidated democracies; Brazil and India are on that path, Russia and China are certainly not for the time being. But even these latter states know that the road to greatness involves focus on manufacture upgrading and deep involvement in economic globalization; by no means does it involve territorial conquest and militarization. In this sense, they are following the 'trading state' path set by Japan and Germany after World War II (Rosecrance 1986). Furthermore, there is increasing respect for the 'territorial integrity norm', that is, 'the proscription that force should not be used to alter interstate boundaries' (Zacher 2001: 215). According to the detailed analysis by Mark Zacher, that norm emerged in the context of the League of Nations after World War I; it was generally accepted as an element in the UN Charter in 1945 and it has been strengthened since the mid-1970s.

These normative and substantial developments have all but eradicated the occurrence of interstate war (defined as armed conflict between governments in which at least 1,000 people are killed, or killed yearly, as a result of the fighting). Few such wars have taken place since the end of World War II and fewer still since the end of the Cold War (Pettersson and Öberg 2020). This is true even if there have been cases of interstate territorial aggression, including Russia in Crimea (Sørensen 2016: 110–118).

But violent conflict has not gone away. It has been moved to the domestic realm of weak states. Self-seeking elites in weak states lacked legitimacy from the beginning and faced popu-lations divided along ethnic, religious, and social lines. They created 'captured states' that ben-efited the leading strongman and his select group of clients. The majority of the population was excluded from the system and faced a state that was sooner an enemy and a mortal threat than a protector and a champion of development (Brock et al. 2016; Sørensen 2001). Challenges to elites are often met with repression and that opens to violent conflict. Paradoxically, then, weak states are surrounded by an international system of relative order and with fairly secure protec-tion of borders and territories. But the population is not safe because the government makes up the greatest potential threat to people within its boundaries.

The international community has been concerned with domestic conflict in weak states for some time. Its efforts probably culminated by the late 1990s; a 'responsibility to protect' was acknowledged at the UN World Summit in 2005. It contained a commitment to intervene 'where a population is suffering serious harm' (UNGA 2005) as a result of domestic conflict. But there is a long way from principle to implementation. Intervention is bound to be selec-tive, belated, and short of resources in terms of troops and money. And even with substantial involvement, external actors cannot easily address the root causes of weak statehood as defined in Table 35.1. At the same time, in the cases of Afghanistan and Iraq, perceived national security interests on part of the intervenors have been paramount. That has not supported peace- and state-building (Sørensen 2016: 101–110).

Meanwhile, postmodern states face new challenges even when old-fashioned war is no longer on the agenda. The growth of all kinds of relations across borders not only brings transna-tional goods but it also brings transnational 'bads': pollution, disease (e.g. the corona pandemic), economic crisis, crime, unwanted migration, and, in recent times, international terrorism. None of these would appear to be existential threats on par with the apocalyptic Cold War scenario of nuclear conflict; but they are serious enough and the advanced states have not so far found effective answers to most of them. In sum, large-scale violent conflict is now within weak states while advanced states must address an increasing number of transnational bads.

Politics: democracy challenged

Postmodern states are consolidated liberal democracies but they are also increasingly integrated systems characterized by multilevel governance. That is a challenge to democracy because the whole idea of liberal democracy is based on the assumption that the relevant political unit is the sovereign state; according to Will Kymlicka, 'the only forum within which genuine democracy occurs is within national boundaries' (Kymlicka 1999: 124). Multilevel governance challenges mainstream democratic theory in two ways. The first concerns the overlap between the political community of citizens within a defined territory on the one hand and the group of people affected by the political decisions taken by those citizens' representatives on the other (Held 1995: 16). The second concerns the room for manoeuvre of the sovereign, democratic state; the assumption is that such states enjoy a high degree of national autonomy, allowing them to substantially be in control of their own future. The first assumption is challenged because a large number of 'national' decisions in one state have significant implications for citizens in other states due to the high level of interdependence. The second assumption is challenged because economic and other integration significantly narrows the policy options of individual states.

Meanwhile, the trajectory of economic globalization has led to new political divisions in postmodern states. A tiny elite of super-rich on the one hand and the loss of jobs because of technological change and outsourcing, on the other hand, has put the middle class under pressure. The result is increasing political polarization and an increased gulf between citizens versus established elites and traditional liberal institutions. The trust in government in the United States, for example, has decreased dramatically. In 2019, only 17 per cent of Americans agreed with the statement that 'You can trust the government to do what is right just about always or most of the time' (Pew Research Center 2019). In 1964, it was 64 per cent.

In weak states, the democracy-problem is straightforward. Is democracy at all possible in systems with defect economies, ineffective institutions, corrupt bureaucracies, self-seeking elites, and populations divided along ethnic and other lines? The early answer after the end of the Cold War, informed by liberal optimism, was a resounding 'yes'. Lack of convincing success has led to a much more skeptical stance today. What began as democratic transition is today rather a democratic 'standstill'. A very large number of regimes are situated in a grey area between fully democratic and outright authoritarian. They are likely to remain semi-authoritarian or semi-democratic with little prospect of further democratization. Western democracy-promoters have tended to focus too much on elections as core elements in a process of democratization. But elections have taken place in many systems, including sharply authoritarian states such as the old Soviet Union or present-day North Korea. 'Free and fair elections', says Robert Dahl, are 'the culmination of the [democratic] process, not the beginning … Unless and until other rights and liberties are firmly protected, free and fair election cannot take place' (Dahl 1992: 246; see also Freedom House 2019).

Elections appear 'the wrong place to start' (Ottaway 1995: 235) when it comes to democratizing weak and conflict-ridden states. This has led towards a recent discussion about the need for 'stateness first': that is, the precondition for democracy is a fairly effective state (Fukuyama 2005). The problem is of course that it is extremely difficult to conduct effective state-building over a short span of time, as currently demonstrated in Afghanistan, Iraq, and elsewhere. Underlying social and cultural factors are not easily changed in the short and medium term; and any successful change must be accomplished by insiders, not by outsiders. We must expect problems of state weakness to persist in many countries for the foreseeable future (Brock et al. 2016). State weakness makes it less likely that countries can escape from the grey zone. In the worst cases, countries have moved towards state failure and complete breakdown.

Modernizing states would appear to be in better shape as regards basic conditions for democratization; they are economically much more robust and they have relatively effective political systems compared to weak states. But even in India, a modernizing state with a long democratic tradition, the system is plagued by communal violence, corruption, elite dominance, and the persistence of several hundred million people in abject poverty. China has introduced capitalism and seeks involvement in the international society but one should not assume that this amounts to an embrace of liberal values. Integration into an international order is seen as necessary for the promotion of national greatness and power; it is not at all connected to a liberalism emphasizing individual freedom and rights. In China, the emphasis is on a project of nation building where the value of individual liberties is 'assessed in terms of their compatibility with the task of achieving freedom for the state as an actor in international society' (Hughes 2002: 98). Put differently, what is embraced is capitalism whereas individual liberty and democracy are emphatically rejected because they threaten fragmentation and chaos. In recent years, the autocratic political system has increased its control and supervision of the population (Qin and Hernandez 2018).

In sum, modernizing states are not all on a secure path towards stable democracy; they might develop capitalist models more compatible with some form of authoritarian or semi-authoritarian rule. Weak states lack the preconditions for stable democratic rule. Postmodern states are democratic but they face a number of new democratic challenges emerging from cross-border integration.

The economy: no prospect for a stable order

The end of the Cold War was also a period of economic optimism. There was now almost universal support for a liberal–capitalist free market arrangement; only very few countries have not adopted this model in some form or another. Near universal support for free markets 'strengthens the foundation for a liberal world order' (Buzan 2004). But by 2008 there was a global financial and economic crisis. It was not an existential crisis of capitalism but it was sufficiently severe to question whether there will be a stable global economy based on liberal principles that can make up the cornerstone of a liberal world order.

In the advanced states, the crisis began with a burst housing bubble in the United States. That led to extensive mortgage defaults; as a consequence, financial institutions had to incur heavy losses. Lack of capital forced them to decrease investment and tighten credit; with substantial reductions in demand, asset prices dropped leading to further losses. Furthermore, the crisis marks the culmination of a long period of development where financial markets have become increasingly more complex, offering a number of products (derivatives) the real value of which is difficult or impossible to ascertain. The financial sector's share of total economic activity has grown dramatically, making advanced countries more dependent on that sector. And even if the financial system is so globalized today that it acts as a real-time, 24-hour integrated organism where exchange rates, interest rates, and asset values are determined in the context of the global market, there is no cooperating political centre, no common global, or even Western institution of financial governance that could adequately respond to the crisis. The financial system is deeply integrated on a global scale but regulation and control remain almost purely national; it was thus left to national governments to respond to the crisis, with different national 'packages', only thinly coordinated.

Worse still, there are no indications of impending institutional reform that will prevent a new crisis. The international financial institutions, even the G20, continue to place their confidence in perfect markets; the task is to 'restore confidence' in those markets. An increasing number of commentators see this as a case of 'regulatory capture', that is, state regulators are dominated by the mindsets of those economic interests that they are meant to supervise (Morris 2008; Wren-Lewis 2011).

Modernizing states, especially China, have fared better in the economic crisis, but they face severe problems of their own. The larger question is whether their economic progress is based on sustainable models of growth. Both China and India have sweatshop factories with poor working conditions, low job security, low wages, and long hours of work. In the Pearl River and Yangtze River delta regions in China, for example 'migrant workers routinely work 12 hours a day, 7 days a week; during the busy season, a 13–15 hour day is not uncommon' (Wen 2005: 3). This is not economic upgrading; it is sooner 'downgrading' with deteriorating conditions for labour. At the same time, there are serious environmental problems. Some 60 per cent of China's major rivers are 'unsuitable for human contact' (Wen 2005: 10). Desertification has halved habitable and usable land over a period of 50 years. Seven of the ten most polluted cities in the world are in China. More than one-third of industrial wastewater enters waterways without any treatment. At the same time, China's export success means that its economic prospects are increasingly dependent on the West (Huang 2020).

In weak states, economic conditions are even worse. Large parts of the population are outside the formal sectors, living in localized subsistence economies. Exports consist of a few primary products and the economies are highly dependent on imports. Weak states are not attractive sites for foreign investment. There is no dynamic domestic market, no adequate supply of skilled labour, no developed physical infrastructure, and they do not offer stable, market-friendly conditions of operation. In other words, the circuits of global capital do not include the weak states in any major way. While heavily dependent on foreign aid, they are marginalized bystanders in the process of economic globalization.

In sum, global capitalism is not in existential crisis, but a stable liberal economic order with benefits for all will not emerge sometime soon.

Nationhood and community: identity on the move towards common values?

Many people hoped that intensified globalization and the end of the Cold War would strengthen the support for universal liberal values as they have been expressed in human rights declarations, the UN Millennium Declaration, and the Charter of the United Nations. It is true that the post–Cold War world pays more attention to human rights. States that do not ensure the political and civil rights of their citizens run the risk of losing legitimacy in the society of states. Among the liberal postmodern states there is a 'Western civic identity' which is distinct from national identities. It is a consensus around a set of common norms and principles, including 'political democracy, constitutional government, individual rights, private property-based economic systems, and toleration of diversity in non-civic areas of ethnicity and religion' (Deudney and Ikenberry 1999: 193). The liberal hope is that the support for these values will continue to grow with the progress of democratization in many more countries around the world; the claim is that in the long run, 'modernization brings democracy' (Inglehart and Welzel 2009: 35).

But even if modernization is conducive to the strengthening of liberal values, it is no deterministic relationship, neither in the advanced countries nor anywhere else. In postmodern states, the processes of integration have also bolstered support for regional movements that vie for increased national autonomy or even secession. Another response to globalization is nationalistic movements that stress a very exclusive definition of national identity. They perceive stronger interdependence as a two-pronged threat. First, it threatens the social and economic wellbeing of 'original' citizens because of the new claims made on the state by immigrants. Second, it threatens a historically specific, narrow conception of national identity in which there is no room for newcomers. So the situation in postmodern states is much more mixed than liberal

optimists think. National identities are not dissolving; they are sooner being transformed in a complex and heterogeneous manner. On the one hand, national identities increasingly contain supranational elements. What it means to be German or French, for example, now includes a commitment to European cooperation and common values. On the other hand, more divisive 'resistance identities' (Castells 1998: 60) are growing stronger as well and that includes a much more skeptical view of cooperation and interdependence. The EU is challenged by the influx of migrants and refugees from the Middle East and parts of Africa. Mass migration is a substantial problem elsewhere in the global North and liberal democracies have not been able to deal with it in a way that also respects fundamental liberal rights and values (Koser 2016).

In modernizing states, processes of economic modernization are combined with more, rather than less, commitment to a nationalist definition of identity. The Communist Party (CCP) in China uses nationalism as a legitimating ideology. The CCP lacks democratic legitimacy and traditional communist ideology has collapsed. Therefore, the CCP 'is increasingly dependent upon its nationalist credentials to rule' (Bajoria 2009: 2). But nationalism is a double-edged sword for the government. Domestically, it seeks to suppress ethnic nationalism in Tibet, Taiwan, and elsewhere; in the international sphere, the claim of 'peaceful rise' of China can be harmed. China is certainly joining the world, but only reluctantly, and it remains a highly self-seeking player (Deng 1998; see also Teets 2013). In India, with its stronger liberal democratic tradition, Hindu nationalism has grown under the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and several other, more extremist organizations (Basu 2001; Frayer 2019). That has led to a new trend towards political decentralization, threatening a significantly more fragmented polity.

In weak states, nationhood has not taken on the significance that it has elsewhere; ethnic affiliations remain of crucial. When the state does not deliver, ethnic communities become focal points for a 'moral economy' (Ndegwa 1997). Early processes of democratization had promoted ethnic cleavages in the population because more political openness increases the possibilities for different ethnic groups to present their views and formulate their demands; and state elites actively enforce links with ethnic groups in their attempt to stay in power.

Overall, there is no strong trend towards the emergence of common liberal values on a global scale. Both processes of modernization and processes of decay can help produce more nationalistic or more fragmented and divisive responses in terms of identity.

The end of sovereignty?

We come to the foundational institution of sovereignty, the rules that define the locus of political authority and set the context for relations between states. There is a large debate about the possible 'end of sovereignty' in the context of intensified globalization. But sovereignty has not ended; the institution is, however, being transformed in response to new circumstances (Sørensen 2001).

The juridical core of sovereignty is constitutional independence. It means that the sovereign state stands apart; other entities have no political authority within the state's territory and the sovereign state is legally equal to other sovereign states. In addition to this juridical core, sovereignty is also a set of rules regulating how states go about playing the game of sovereignty. In the classical game of sovereignty, played by modern states, two such rules are of special significance: *non-intervention* and *reciprocity*. Non-intervention means that states have a right to choose their own path, to conduct their affairs without outside interference. Reciprocity means giving and taking for mutual advantage. States make deals with each other as equal partners; a game based on reciprocity is a symmetric game where the players enjoy equal opportunity to profit from bi- and multilateral transactions.

What has then changed in the institution of sovereignty? The juridical core of sovereignty, constitutional independence, remains in place. It continues to be the one dominant principle of political organization in the international system. In that sense, sovereign states 'have all remained recognizably of the same species up to our time' (Ruggie 1998: 191). The regulative rules of the sovereignty game, however, have changed considerably, responding to the changes in statehood depicted in Table 35.1. Postmodern states, especially the EU-members, have been compelled to modify the rule of non-intervention. That is because the whole idea of multi-level governance is based on *intervention* by the EU in the affairs of member states. Modern states playing the classical game of sovereignty jealously guarded their sovereign right of non-intervention. EU member states are doing exactly the opposite: they agree to accept rules made by outsiders (i.e. fellow members) as the law within their own jurisdictions. This is 'regulated intervention' rather than nonintervention. When the Boris Johnson UK government talks about 'taking back control' in the context of Brexit, the aim is to abandon this system of accepting rules from the outside. What the government fails to note is that the UK continues to be highly dependent on close economic relations with the EU; so eventually the UK will have to comply with several EU demands or face severe economic consequences. The UK may have regained formal freedom of action, but it cannot do anything it wants if it wishes to retain the benefits of economic interdependence with the EU.

Reciprocity is also modified within the EU. The old game is one of equal treatment of competing players. The new game is *unequal* treatment according to special needs or cooperative reciprocity; poor regions in the EU get special, preferential conditions because of their special needs. The game of 'non-reciprocity' is even more developed in the case of *weak states* because they cannot reciprocate: they need, and demand, economic aid from the advanced states. In that respect, they demand to be treated as *unequals* (i.e. qualified for aid) and *equals* (i.e. enjoying recognition on par with everybody else), at one and the same time. Aid donors, in contrast, want to supervise any aid in order to see it is put to proper use; that leads to *negotiated intervention* rather than non-intervention.

In sum, the regulative rules of the sovereignty game are changing while constitutional independence stays in place. That leads to tensions in the institution of sovereignty. Postmodern states are simultaneously segregated (constitutional independence) and integrated (regulated intervention, cooperative reciprocity). Weak states are simultaneously segregated (constitutional independence) and associated (non-reciprocity, negotiated intervention). In the case of postmodern states, future developments towards integration will strengthen the pressure in favour of federation which spells the end of constitutional independence. In the case of weak states that fail to develop so that they can stand on their own feet, the pressure will be for international society to end segregation and adopt some form of protectorate (e.g. Kosovo, East Timor, Afghanistan).

Modernizing states must live with both types of pressures: they would like aid in order to develop faster but will not give up on the principle of non-intervention. They want integration in the international society and participation in globalization, but they will not abandon constitutional independence and will not allow outsiders to set rules for them. The institution of sovereignty remains in place, but it is being transformed in ways that exposes it to significant challenges.

Conclusion

States never stand still; they continue to change. The modern, Westphalian state as it had emerged mainly in Western Europe and in North America around 1950 took a very long time to mature, but once it had, a new process of transformation immediately began. I have diagnosed that transformation as a transition from modern to postmodern statehood. Postmodern statehood

means close integration in the context of intense cooperation. The attempt to 'take back control' (e.g. Brexit) creates new tensions because there is now a very high degree of interdependence among countries and the costs of abandoning it would be extremely high. Weak, postcolonial states are qualitatively different; they were never modern in the first place. They emerged from a process of colonization and decolonization. Leading states carry major responsibility for this entire process, but domestic conditions are also important for explaining the emergence of weak states. Modernizing states are different again.

In conclusion, the sovereign state is alive and well. By no means has it been obliterated by the forces of globalization. But it has been transformed in significant ways and it will continue to change. These changes may not always be for the better. The major types of state discussed here all face considerable challenges to which they have so far not found very good answers.

References

Adler, E. and M. Barnett (eds.) (1998). *Security Communities*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bajoria, J. (2009). 'Nationalism in China', Council on Foreign Relations, at: <http://www.cfr.org/publication/16079/nationalism_in_china.html>, accessed 14 October 2010.

Basu, A. (2001). 'The Dialectics of Hindu Nationalism', in A. Kohli (ed.) *The Success of India's Democracy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bellamy, A.J. (2004). *Security Communities and Their Neighbours*, London: Palgrave.

Berlin, I. (1979). *Russian Thinkers*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Brock, L., Holm, H.H., Stohl, M., and Sørensen, G. (2016). *Fragile States. Violence and the Failure of Intervention*, Cambridge: Polity Press.

Buzan, B. (2004). *From International to World Society*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Castells, M. (1998). *The Power of Identity*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Dahl, R.A. (1992). 'Democracy and Human Rights under Different Conditions of Development', in A. Eide and B. Hagtvet (eds.) *Human Rights in Perspective: A Global Assessment*, Oxford: Blackwell.

Dahl, R.A. (1999). 'Can International Organizations be Democratic? A Sceptic's View', in I. Shapiro and C. Hacker-Cordon (eds.) *Democracy's Edges*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 19-37.

Deng, Y. (1998). 'The Chinese Conception of National Interests in International Relations', *The China Quarterly*, *154*: 308–329.

Deudney, D. and Ikenberry, G.J. (1999). 'The Nature and Sources of Liberal International Order', *Review of International Studies*, *25* (*2*): 179–196.

Frayer, L. (2019). 'Hindu Nationalism, the Growing Trend in India', at: https://www.npr.org/2019/04/22/715875298/hindu-nationalism-the-growing-trend-in-india?t=1599653321677.

Freedom House (2019). 'Freedom in the World 2019', at: https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2019/democracy-retreat.

Fukuyama, F. (1989). 'The End of History', *The National Interest*, *16* (*Summer*): 3–18.

Fukuyama, F. (2005). '"Stateness" First', *Journal of Democracy*, *16* (*1*): 84–88.

Huang, Y. (2020). 'China's Economic Growth Now Depends on the West', at: https://carnegieendowment.org/2020/03/19/china-s-economic-growth-now-depends-on-west-pub-81326.

Hughes, C. (2002). 'China and Global Liberalism', in E. Hovden and E. Keene (eds.) *The Globalization of Liberalism*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Huntington, S.P. (1968). *Political Order in Changing Societies*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Inglehart, R. and Welzel, C. (2009). 'How Development Leads to Democracy', *Foreign Affairs*, *88* (*2*): 33–49.

Jackson, R. (1993). *Quasi-states: Sovereignty, International Relations and the Third World*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kant, I. (1992). *Kant's Political Writings*, ed. H. Reiss, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Koser, K. (2016). *International Migration: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kymlicka, W. (1999). 'Citizenship in an Era of Globalization', in I. Shapiro and C. Hacker-Cordón (eds.) *Democracy's Edges*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Morris, C.R. (2008). *The Two Trillion Dollar Meltdown*, New York: Public Affairs.

Müller, J.-W. (2008). 'Fear and Freedom: On "Cold War Liberalism"', *European Journal of Political Theory*, 7 (*1*): 45–64.

Ndegwa, S.N. (1997). 'Citizenship and Ethnicity: An Examination of Two Transition Moments in Kenyan Politics', *American Political Science Review*, *91* (*3*): 599–617.

Ottaway, M. (1995). 'Democratization in Collapsed States', in W.I. Zartman (ed.) *Collapsed States: The Disintegration and Restoration of Legitimate Authority*, Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner.

Pettersson, T, and Öberg, M. (2020). 'Organized Violence 1989–2019', *Journal of Peace Research*, 57 (4), 597–613.

Pew Research Center (2019). 'Public Trust in Government, 1958–2019', at: https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2019/04/11/public-trust-in-government-1958-2019/.

Qin, A. and Hernandez, J.C. (2018). 'How China's Rulers Control Society: Opportunity, Nationalism, and Fear', at: https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2018/11/25/world/asia/china-freedoms-control.html.

Rosecrance, R. (1986). *The Rise of the Trading State: Commerce and Conquest in the Modern World*, New York: Basic Books.

Ruggie, J.G. (1998). *Constructing the World Polity*, London: Routledge.

Serwer, A. (2009). 'The 00's: Goodbye (at last) to the Decade from Hell', at: http://content.time.com/time/subscriber/article/0,33009,1942973-7,00.html.

Sørensen, G. (2001). *Changes in Statehood: The Transformation of International Relations*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Sørensen, G. (2007). 'After the Security Dilemma: The Challenges of Insecurity in Weak States and the Dilemma of Liberal Values', *Security Dialogue*, *38* (*3*): 357–378.

Sørensen, G. (2008). 'The Case for Combining Material Forces and Ideas in the Study of IR', *European Journal of International Relations*, *14* (*5*): 5–32.

Sørensen, G. (2016). *Rethinking the New World Order*, London: Palgrave.

Teets, J.C. (2013). 'Let Many Civil Societies Bloom: The Rise of Consultative Authoritarianism in China', *The China Quarterly*, 213: 19–38.

United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) (2005). 'World Summit Outcome 2005', Assembly Resolution A/RES/60/1, 24 October.

Wen, D. (2005). *China Copes with Globalization*, San Francisco, CA: International Forum on Globalization.

WorldPublicOpinion (2009). 'Survey' at: <www.asianoffbeat.com/default.asp?Display=1841>, accessed 14 October 2010.

Wren-Lewis, L. (2011). 'Regulatory Capture: Risks and Solutions', at: https://www.academia.edu/33820478/Regulatory_Capture_Risks_and_Solutions.

YouGov (2016). 'Is the world getting better or worse', at: https://yougov.co.uk/topics/politics/articles-reports/2016/01/08/fsafasf.

Zacher, M.W. (2001). 'The Territorial Integrity Norm: International Boundaries and the Use of Force', *International Organization*, *55* (*2*): 215–250.

Modern constitutionalism under challenge

Paul Blokker

The abstract idea of a written constitution as the foundational basis of modern democratic societies is a largely undisputed element in much of social, political, and legal theory. At the same time, the nature, form, and distinct functions of the constitution in – and increasingly also beyond – modern democratic societies is an ever more frequent object of contestation (cf. Lang and Wiener 2017). So much so that some scholars have wondered whether we are living a 'twilight of constitutionalism' or even ask if modern constitutionalism is able to survive (Azzariti 2013). Such questions are prompted by the observation of disenchantment with constitutions (Azzariti 2013: 3–4), itself a result of complex processes of the globalization of juridical and economic structures and equally of political systems. Most conspicuously in the European context but to important extents also in other world regions, the main focus in scholarly attention was until recently on challenges related to the manifestation of legal regimes on supra-, transnational, and even global levels. Such legal regimes were often deemed to portray some constitutional characteristics (Blokker and Thornhill 2017; Gill and Cutler 2014; Teubner 2012; Thornhill 2016; Weiler and Wind 2003; Wiener 2008). One key challenge was seen in the potential tensions that stem from an increased importance of legal and constitutional norms beyond the nation-state for domestically and democratically produced law (cf. Grimm 2005; Přibáň 2017).

A novel concern has now emerged, however, which partially appears to replace, or at the very least importantly qualify, the earlier debates about transnationalism and global constitutionalism. This is also the case because this new challenge – the rise of populism and the return of national and popular sovereignty – consists in a reaction to the supra- and transnationalization of (constitutional) law. While discussions of populism are predominated by contributions in political science, in recent years also analyses of human rights and constitutional law as well as socio-legal studies have been forced to address the phenomenon, not least because of clear challenges to domestic constitutionalism and the rule of law (Graber, Levinson and Tushnet 2018), but equally with regard to the legitimacy and functioning international institutions and regimes (Alston 2017; Koskenniemi 2019; Lefter 2019; Madsen 2020; Thornhill 2020).

The chapter will discuss, first, the nature of modern constitutionalism. Second, the distinctive, legalistic manifestation of mid-20th century modern constitutionalism – including its postnational manifestations – will be addressed. Third, the legalistic version of modern constitutionalism will be contrasted with alternative normative visions of constitutionalism. In the fourth

section, the contemporary populist backlash as a reaction to postwar new constitutionalism is discussed.

Modern constitutionalism

In the two centuries of 'reign' or hegemony (cf. Frankenberg 2019) of modern constitutionalism, a general, minimal consensus has emerged on the nature and functions of the constitution. As Michel Rosenfeld argues, '[t]here appears to be no accepted definition of constitutionalism but, in the broadest terms, modern constitutionalism requires imposing limits on the powers of government, adherence to the rule of law, and the protection of fundamental rights' (1992: 497). Modern constitutionalism corresponds largely with the Westphalian idea of a *state system* of separate and homogeneous nation-states, and, in this, it comprises a tendency to 'presuppose the uniformity of a nation state with a centralized and unitary system of legal and political institutions' (Tully 1995: 9). In a slightly different formulation, the 'understanding of a constitution and its assigned role as the guardian of the political process is commonly associated with modern constitutionalism and builds on institutionalized and mythical links with statehood that had been forged over centuries' (Wiener 2008: 23).

In this, modern constitutions tend to share a number of generic features (the following list is not meant to be exhaustive). First, a modern constitution is regarded a 'structure of law' that is in important ways separate from its subjects. Whereas the modern constitution is ultimately dependent on the people for its legitimation, once constituted, it becomes a relatively autonomous set of meta-norms and rules that constitutes social and political interaction. James Tully calls this relative autonomy or externality the 'formality' of modern constitutions (Tully 2008). Second, one of the essential ideas behind the constitution is to channel and express popular sovereignty. The act of the constitution, however, transfers this sovereignty from the *pouvoir constituant* to the *pouvoir constitué*. Third, a singular understanding of the people, embodying popular sovereignty, presupposes a shared civic or ethno-cultural identity, which is symbolically reflected in the constitution, either implicitly or explicitly so (cf. Weiler 2003). Fourth, modern constitutions are understood as coherent and non-contradictory, contractual structures, in which 'constitutional essentials are unambiguously settled and made binding into the future' (Chambers 1998: 149). Fifth, while many of the dimensions noted above invoke a pre-political, limitative, and foundational perception of constitutions, constitutions also provide for a positive, democratic dimension, including civil and political rights which enable citizens and political actors to act set their own rules, even if within the limits set by the very same constitution.

Modern constitutionalism – as grounded in clearly defined domestic jurisdictions, has, however, increasingly come under strain. Notwithstanding the global trend, of the last half-century or so, of *convergence* to an 'amplified' form of modern constitutionalism around a form of 'democracy by judiciary' or 'new constitutionalism' (Arjomand 2003; Klug 2000; Stone Sweet 2008), more recent trends of supra- and transnationalization seem to provoke profound changes in modern constitutionalism. In this post-national context, modern constitutionalism appears increasingly contested, and anachronistic in some of its key features (such as its reliance on an exclusive, domestic form of sovereignty).

One way of describing and evaluating contemporary changes is by focusing on the two imperatives or legitimatory principles of modern constitutionalism, which in a way condense the five generic features discussed above. The two imperatives are the *limitation of sovereignty* (constitutionalism) and *popular sovereignty* (democracy) (Loughlin and Walker 2007: 1; cf. Tully 2008: 91–92).

The first principle is that of constitutionalism or the rule of law. In the light of this principle, the constitution, in order to be legitimate, 'requires that the exercise of political power in the

whole and in every part of any *constitutionally* legitimate system of political, social and economic cooperation should be exercised in accordance with and through the general system of principles, rules and procedures, including procedures for amending any principle, rule or procedure' (Tully 2008: 92). The emphasis is on the rule of law and the provision of an orderly process of politics. A second principle is the principle of democracy, which 'requires that, although the people or peoples who constitute a political association are subject to the constitutional system, they, or their entrusted representatives, must also impose the general system on themselves in order to be sovereign and free, and thus for the association to be *democratically* legitimate' (Tully 2008: 93). The second principle is then about (collective) autonomy or self-rule, in which people give themselves their own laws, rather than being subject to some form of 'heteronomy'.

New constitutionalism

Modern constitutionalism has manifested in a specific manner in the post-Second World War period, that is, in the form of legal, 'new constitutionalism' (Gyorfi 2016). The latter puts strong emphasis on the first principle of the rule of law and tends to importantly restrict the second principle of popular sovereignty (Müller 2011). This trend towards a legalistic understanding of constitutionalism involves both the development of domestic constitutional regimes, with an emphasis on a strong judicial component, and the emergence of expanded supra- and transnational legal regimes. Since the Second World War, and more prominently so since the end of the 1980s, the modern constitutional form has not only enjoyed its finest hour in terms of its widespread adoption in 'new democracies' (cf. Haberle 1992), or even elicited 'enthusiasm about the global rule of law' (Koskenniemi 2007: 3), but has also experienced a distinct turn in terms of a re-interpretation and rebalancing of some of its key dimensions, particularly so in the context of democratic transition. By the early twenty-first century, 'new constitutionalism' (Arjomand 2003; Gyorfi 2016; Klug 2000; Stone Sweet 2008, 2009) or 'liberal constitutionalism' (Dowdle and Wilkinson 2017; Frankenberg 2019) has become predominant. In new constitutionalism, the emphasis is on written constitutions with an entrenched 'catalogue of rights', and a 'system of constitutional justice to defend those rights' (Stone Sweet 2008: 219). In this postwar imagination of modern constitutionalism, the novelty is that the constitutional court as an independent institution is understood not only as the ultimate guardian and interpreter of the constitution but equally so of fundamental rights.

New constitutionalism has prioritized the higher law status of the constitution and of fundamental rights, as well as normative coherence and legal certainty, and has generally taken an amplified understanding of the rule of law. The latter is part of post-authoritarian and post-totalitarian transitions to 'new democracies', such as those in Central and Eastern Europe since 1989. It includes a constitutional politics that comprises both the 'judicialization of politics' – which encompasses the reconstruction of the normative basis of the state – and the political activism of judicial actors (Arjomand 2003). The emphasis in democratic transition is on legal formalism and coherence, and constitutionally entrenched democratic preconditions, while democratic participation is largely confined to 'normal politics'. In this, the shift is towards legal constitutionalism, while, '[w]ith very few exceptions, legislative sovereignty has formally disappeared. The new constitutionalism killed it, paradoxically perhaps, in the name of democracy' (Stone Sweet 2008: 218).

The domestic development of a distinctive postwar form of constitutionalism cannot be, however, seen as separate from developments on the international level, in particular in terms of an emerging set of post-national legal structures. The emergence of international human rights regimes after 1945 as well as the development of regional, supranational integration schemes

with strong legal dimensions (Madsen 2014) were intrinsically tied up with the development of modern constitutionalism, the rule of law, and human rights protection within national arenas (Thornhill 2016). Thornhill identifies two levels of transnational constitutionalism in the post-war period, one related to the increased significance of international norms within domestic arenas, the other indicating the development of relatively autonomous post-national structures, such as the European Convention on Human Rights or the legal structures of the European integration project.

A set of tensions emerges from the postwar moving away from the classical imagination of the traditional state order. Post-national constitutional and rights norms not only strengthen and stabilize but also challenge domestic constitutional systems. Post-national developments put the idea of a monistic, unitary, and exclusionary constitutional regime as imagined by 'classical' modern constitutionalism to the test. One core issue is related to the fact that emerging post-state constitutional regimes bind modern states in many ways, but mostly without being subject to any type of significant democratic control or accountability (cf. Cohen 2004), i.e., control by those that are affected by these new constitutional structures.

In social and political theory, much attention has been paid to the constitutionalization of an emerging European polity as a potential – and globally most advanced – post-national structure which seeks to address increased complexities, tensions, and discrepancies in domestic democratic systems. It has addressed the implications of a supranational constitutional order for social integration, collective identity, citizenship and civic participation (Shaw 2020). One of the more prominent normative appraisals of a potential European polity can be found in Jürgen Habermas's work, who initially proposed a polity grounded in post-national 'constitutional patriotism' (e.g., Habermas 2001). The upshot was clearly that it was in principle possible to overcome domestic socio-political tensions and political impotence by reconstructing a political, democratic community on the European level grounded in a constitutional order of its own. Clearly, Habermas had to revise his post-national theory as a result of the failed attempt to explicitly draw up a political constitution for Europe in 2003–2005, the subsequent financial and economic crisis, and the non-democratic, 'executivist'/elitist European response to both the constitutional and economic crisis of 2007. In current times, the original post-national project looks hardly plausible (Waldron 2015; Walker 2019a). Key problems that continue to haunt the European integration project – in times of a 'poly-crisis' (Young 2017) – relate to political sovereignty and the so-called democratic deficit. But it is the situation of multiple crises which perhaps makes the constitutionalization of the European Union as relevant as ever before. Indeed, currently, a range of propositions are made for a deepening of European constitutional structures (cf. Walker 2019a).

Many have, however, pointed out the difficulties that affect a post-national constitutional project, and the impossibility of lifting specific dimensions of constitutional democracy to the supranational level. Well-known forms of critique include the democratic dimension – the absence of a European demos (indicating the lack of a constituent people that might constitutionally ground the new European polity), the want of a European-wide public sphere, and the elitist, closed nature of supranational politics, and the symbolic or cultural dimension – the conundrum of how to reflect the plurality of cultural traditions in a singular European identity (cf. Grimm 2017; Přibáň 2007; Young 2017; Weiler 2001). A related debate regards legal and political theories of 'constitutional pluralism' (Walker 2002; for an overview, see Avbelj & Komarek 2012) and 'legal pluralism' (Stone Sweet 2009; Teubner 1997). The focus is on a range of post-state constitutional experiences, firstly on the European, but also on the global level. In the European context, constitutional pluralism has included both a descriptive, 'mapping' approach which seeks to describe the complexity of plural constitutional regimes, and a

normative set of proposals, indicating a possibility of harmonious or virtuous 'cohabitation' of constitutional systems in Europe (cf. Maduro 2005; Walker 2016). In recent times, the concept of constitutional pluralism has, however, been criticized for underestimating political sovereignty (Loughlin 2014) or for being inherently a dangerous concept and playing into the hands of populist and autocratic leaders within the EU (Kelemen and Pech 2018). Be that as it may, it is hard to deny a significant return of national, political sovereignty as a serious challenge to post-national constitutionalism (cf. Přibáň 2017), to which we will turn in the final part of the chapter.

Transnational trends of constitutionalization have resulted in a potential diminishment or even fragmentation of sovereignty (for instance, by delegating domestic powers to international courts), as well as in potential clashes between national democratic will formation and transnational (unaccountable) decision-making power. Such challenges clearly put domestic orders to the test. While, on the one hand, clear benefits derived from, for instance, more robust rights protection or from a more effective capacity to dealt with societal problems on the transnational level (for instance, regarding environmental problems or with regard to the regulation of digital media), on the other, domestically organized democratic processes of political will formation are potentially undermined.

Contestation includes different understandings of constitutionalism, as one can observe in the context of Brexit (see Bellamy 2020; Thornhill 2017) as well as elsewhere (Blokker 2019). In pertinent ways, critical debates in political, constitutional, and social theory help to bring out significant challenges to legalistic understandings of constitutionalism. Below, a brief discussion of normative/theoretical understandings of constitutionalism will highlight constitutionalism's contested dimensions, including its legal, depoliticized dimensions, which appear now particularly challenged by populist forces.

Normative Understandings of Constitutionalism

The distinctive understanding of constitutionalism that emerged in the post–1945 era, discussed above as 'new' or 'legal constitutionalism', and manifesting itself on domestic and transnational levels, is grounded theoretically in a liberal, legal understanding of constitutionalism. In constitutional law and theory, as well as in political science, this understanding is widely taken to be the 'only proper one' (Frankenberg 2019). It can, however, be shown that liberal constitutionalism also in a broader sense is competing with a range of alternative understandings. The section discusses a number of such competing theories in order to bring out critical dimensions of modern constitutionalism.

The legal-constitutionalist view in principle endorses liberal constitutionalism, i.e., 'as a normative framework that sets limits on and goals for the exercise of state power' (Bellamy and Castiglione 2000: 172). On this view, the constitution is seen as providing the preconditions for democratic politics. Democracy can only function as such if democratic politics abides to the constitutional limitations set to it. The constitution, and increasingly so the idea of an included set of entrenched fundamental rights, provides then an independent and superior law that secures the working and outcomes of democracy. Such a 'higher' legal order is manifest in domestic constitutional regimes, but it is equally displayed in universal human rights regimes and 'cosmopolitan' understandings of transnational law, based on a 'universal framework of substantively homogeneous shared principles and values of political liberalism' (Avbelj and Komarek 2012: 5–6; cf. Kumm 2012).

One of the key assumptions of legal constitutionalism is that it is in principle possible to reach a reasonable consensus on what such preconditions of democracy ought to be, and how

to translate them into a language of rights and fundamental law (Bellamy 2007: 3). In other words, it is possible to arrive at a set of 'essential preconditions for democracy', the 'right' abstract principles (Dworkin 1995) or 'best answers' (Bellamy 2007). One of the most well-known formulations of such an idea is that of an 'overlapping consensus' (Rawls 1993). The idea is further that once a higher law with the right basic norms is formulated, it should be regarded as a 'constitutional structure that a majority cannot change' (Dworkin 1995: 2). Since a consensus on the right norms has been found, there is no need to change such norms in the future, only to ensure the correct implementation of such norms. The view of the constitution emerging is a static, permanent framework, which is only to a very limited extent open to amendment. In this, the legal-constitutionalist view in essence understands the constitution as a 'meta-norm', which is not implicated in, as it transcends, substantive views on the common good, and in this provides a 'neutral framework that rests on a separation of the right from the good' (Bellamy and Castiglione 2000: 174–175).

Legal constitutionalism understands constitutional democracy as an already known endpoint. As John Gray has argued, '[c]urrent [liberal] orthodoxies treat the law as an accomplished fact. By passing over the political conditions that make the rule of law possible, the legalist liberalism that has prevailed over the past generation has been able to represent law as a free-standing institution. It has contrived to disregard that the institution of the law always depends on the power of the state' (Gray 1995: 131–2). This also means that modern constitutionalism, including the legal constitutional regimes that have emerged on the transnational level, prioritize and empower judicial actors and courts (cf. Vauchez 2015). As Chang has argued with regard to what he labels as 'global constitutionalism', 'courts have become the most authoritative guardian of constitutions, and constitutionalism inevitably becomes court-centric or judicial in nature' (Chang 2019: 456).

In contrast, the political-constitutionalist conception takes a different, political view of the role and substance of the constitution, and its relation to democratic politics and political actors (cf. Bellamy 2007; 2020). Its dispute with legal constitutionalism is based on the observation that the

> need for [an] alternative and more political approach arises from the contested nature of rights. Despite widespread support for both constitutional rights and rights-based judicial review, theorists, politics, lawyers and ordinary citizens frequently disagree over which rights merit or require such entrenchment, the legal form they should take, the best way of implementing them, their relationship to each other, and the manner in which courts should understand and uphold them.
>
> *(Bellamy 2007: 16)*

Rather than understanding the constitution as a 'right basic norm', it is understood as providing a basic framework for resolving disagreements over the right and the good. This also means that foundational norms should always be subject to reconsideration and reformulation. In other words, the constitution is not seen as an entrenched set of fundamental principles, but rather as the framework for the articulation of and deliberation over conceptions of self-government and the common good. As Bellamy aptly expresses it: 'we could see constitutions not as constraints imposed upon democracy but as the limits that a mature democracy places upon itself' (Bellamy 2007: 91).

Political constitutionalism starts from the idea that reasonable disagreement is part and parcel of democracy. The critique of legal constitutionalism is that a 'failure to acknowledge the disagreements that surround constitutional values, and the resulting need for political mechanisms to resolve them, can itself be a source of domination and arbitrary rule that impacts negatively on

rights and the rule of law' (Bellamy 2007: 145; cf. Waldron 1999). The attempt is to include the widest range of substantive views possible. In sum, political constitutionalism does not attempt to sever democratic politics from questions of justice and right in an emphasis on legal hierarchy, but, in full acknowledgement of the impossibility of settling constitutional questions and rights issues once and for all, it makes the relation between politics, and rights and legality visible by means of a continuous political engagement with acceptable interpretations.

Political constitutionalism is frequently related to views that endorse some form of parliamentary sovereignty and the theory is not unrelated to the specific legal context of common law (e.g., the United Kingdom, cf. Bellamy 2020). For more critical and radical-democratic constitutionalists, however, political constitutionalism falls short of balancing constitutionalism with democratic politics, and in contrasting processes of juridification and depoliticization inherent in legal constitutionalism. From one point of view, it can be argued that political constitutionalism supports the *status quo ante* of liberal representative democracy. A radical democratic view of constitutional democracy, in contrast, claims that inclusive, citizen-based democratic politics would need to be part and parcel of constitutionalism, rather than be external and separated from it. This second challenge to legal constitutionalism (but in part also to political constitutionalism) has been identified variously as 'democratic constitutionalism' (Tully 1995, 2008), 'weak constitutionalism' (Colon-Rios 2009), 'participatory constitutionalism' (Hart 2003) or 'civic constitutionalism' (Blokker 2013). Both political and civic constitutionalism understand the constitution not as fully entrenched and pre-political, but as an outcome of the continuous political process itself. In civic constitutionalism, however, democratic politics is understood in a more radical sense as the 'rule of people extended to all matters…, including the creation and recreation of the fundamental laws' (Colon-Rios 2009: 23).

The alternative approaches towards constitutionalism are not merely normative-theoretical but have some bearing in actual political events, such as, for instance, Brexit (cf. Thornhil 2017) or processes of constitutional renewal, as with regard to constitutional change in Ireland (Suteu and Tierney 2018) or the current project to replace the 'Pinochet Constitution' in Chile. The normative debate can be equally related to what is now arguably the main challenge of legal constitutionalism, that is, populism. Populist approaches to constitutions often take issue with the closed and technocratic nature of legal constitutionalism and claim to revive popular sovereignty. As suggested by Luigi Corrias (2016), populism might be related to a specific – revolutionary and democratic – constitutional tradition, which can be explored through reference to the work on constitutionalism of radical-democratic thinkers, such as Hannah Arendt (Arendt 1990; cf. Blokker 2017; Brunkhorst 2014; Laclau 2005; Möllers 2009). This revolutionary tradition emphasizes constituent power, understood as a founding act of the people, founding the polity anew. As Corrias argues, the understanding of the constituent power of the people in the revolutionary tradition appears as almost absolute, and as potentially being exercised directly in the polity (Corrias 2016: 16). What further emerges is a primacy of politics over law in the revolutionary tradition, in that law is understood as ultimately the outcome of political action, not the other way around. On this view, constitutions are less understood as higher, universal principles that limit and bind political power, as in legal or liberal constitutionalism, but rather seen as positive, political expressions of the rules and norms that a political community wants to give itself.

Modern constitutionalism on the defensive: populism

As discussed, the main challenges affecting modern constitutionalism in recent decades have concerned the dynamics around supranational forms of constitutional regimes, as in the form of the process of European integration or the formation of the ever more prominent position of

human rights regimes (such as the European Convention on Human Rights). In recent years, though, a new challenge has emerged that is now receiving considerable attention in scholarly literature, that is, the challenge of populism (Blokker 2019; Bugaric and Tushnet 2020; Walker 2019b).

While populism is surely not the only relevant challenge, and forms of erosion of the conditions of modern constitutionalism extend beyond populism (Helfer 2020), significant setbacks, such as those related to Brexit or the EU's rule of law crisis, importantly involve manifestations of populism. In Europe, many of the current manifestations of populism can be related to the emergence of populist protest and anti-establishment movements from as early as the 1980s and 1990s onwards. In particular in recent years, in Europe populist parties' electoral and governmental relevance has significantly increased. In some cases – most conspicuously so those of the EU member states Hungary and Poland – the direct engagement of populist parties with constitutionalism is of great concern.[1] As noted, legal constitutionalism has been endorsed by domestic liberal forces as well as by international institutions (the European Union [EU], the Council of Europe). However, the liberal, constitutional-democratic model has always been faced with contestation by a variety of political forces, including nationalist and extremist actors. The novelty of recent years is that the liberal hegemony is increasingly challenged by alternative, populist projects (cf. Zielonka 2018).

The 'backlash' to the legal-constitutional model also means that the consensus on what has been variously referred to as 'liberal constitutionalism', 'legal constitutionalism' and 'new constitutionalism' has waned, and that the latter is now being openly contested. For the 'new democracies' in East-Central Europe, this also entails that what around 1989 seemed natural and convincing in terms of constitutional choices (Chang 2019) has become much more problematic in recent times. Perhaps it might even be argued that in some cases, the legal-constitutional model was 'unnatural' and more contested even at the start of the democratic transformation.[2]

While in the 1990s the legal-constitutional model seemed to triumph, it was simultaneously the object of increasing contestation and backlash. The *Zeitgeist* entailed – not least due to active promotion by international actors – a strong emphasis on a legal-constitutional approach to the building of democracy in post-authoritarian societies. This anti-totalitarian idea was applied equally in the context of transformation away from communism towards democracy. Indeed, many observers at the time claimed that post-communist constitution-making was about implementing well-tested designs, and any creative local input was mostly greeted with suspicion (Habermas 1990). From the perspective of the globally predominant understanding of constitutionalism, the emphasis on legalism, legal continuity and the rule of law was related to a radical, binary view of legalism – that is, as an antidote to the 'ideological' (Arjomand 2003) socialist legality of the communist regimes. After 1989, the 'return' to constitutionalism and the rule of law or, at the very least, the rejection of the communist instrumentalization of the law for political purposes, reconnected with this trend of 'new' constitutionalism. The internationally endorsed role of new constitutionalism – in East-Central Europe fortified through the institutions of the EU and the Council of Europe – was that of securing the transition to robust constitutional democratic orders (Bugaric 2015).

The hegemony of legal constitutionalism is now, however, increasingly contested by populist forces. A variety of rather disparate forms of populist engagement with constitutions may be said to be grounded in an alternative, distinctively populist, understanding of the law in general and of constitutional law in particular. As indicated, the populist understanding of constitutionalism hinges on the revolutionary tradition (Corrias 2016), which is, however, interpreted in a specifically populist manner. Populism captures the popular will and claims it as its own, against other social forces, in- or outside society. The people is, in this, equated with a (morally pure)

majority, which is understood in contrast to (polluted) minorities and elites. The rule of law and constitutionalism cannot, according to populists, override the popular will. Constitutionalism as such becomes a device in the populist project of rebuilding the state.

Populist constitutionalism involves a rejection of the modern, legal version of constitutionalism and some kind of variant of the revolutionary one. Populism strongly rejects the evolutionary, rule-of-law tradition and prioritizes popular sovereignty. It rejects the emphasis on the limitation of political power through legal norms and the subjection of power to higher norms as in legal constitutionalism, while it promotes a constitutional order that puts popular sovereignty and constituent power upfront. It denounces the rule of law and the constitutional state as vehicles that promote the interests of minorities (elites) against the well-being of the people and claims to build a new constitutional order that will promote the common good against partial interests.

A core question today is the extent to which is it possible to interpret populism as a manifestation of modern democracy and of modern constitutionalism. There are clear indications that populism threatens established understandings of constitutional democracy and forms an undeniable threat to the institutional status quo. In this, it shares a certain thrust with radical forms of democratic constitutionalism. Democratic constitutionalism rejects the preceding order, or the existing order or status quo it agitates against, and wants to create a polity anew, eschewing any of the existing traditions. Democratic constitutionalism puts, in this, the rights of the individual and the idea of equality centre stage, against the corrupting and unequal implications of established traditions based on status and privilege. Democratic constitutionalism targets legal constitutionalism as potentially leading to inequality, as in the lack of possibilities for popular engagement with constitutional politics and norms, and in the emphasis on elitist, higher public reason.

Populist constitutionalism shares this thrust towards denouncing elite rule as detrimental to the common good and as potentially favouring partial interests. It equally denounces the professed neutrality and rationality of the law as potentially resulting in inequality and exclusion. But where the thrust in democratic constitutionalism is the widening and deepening of possibilities of de facto citizen engagement with constitutional politics and norms, in populist constitutionalism the actual engagement of (different groups of) citizens in society is frequently substituted for by the idea of a united People, represented by the populist leader. The main culprit is identified in corrupt elite rule, which simply needs to be replaced by government for the people, but not necessarily by the people.

Populism, therefore, at least in part, criticizes legal constitutionalism on similar grounds as democratic constitutionalism, but its alternative constitutional solution, 'counter-constitution', or 'constitutional counter-revolution' is highly different from the democratic and democratizing idea. This becomes clear in at least some of the 'really existing' examples of populist constitutionalism, such as in Poland and Hungary. Populist constitutionalism rejects the existing order because of its inequalities and injustices, as in democratic constitutionalism, but it does so with the aim to restore (an ideal of) a preceding, historical order. But one can equally identify a Messianic, redemptive dimension, which is future-oriented in that it aims at realizing a pure, non-corrupted polity in the future (in the Polish case, e.g., in the form of a 'Fourth Republic', cf. Grzymala-Busse 2019). Populism – at least in its right-wing, but in some ways also in its left-wing manifestations – understands liberal democracy and the rule of law as a historical interruption and aberration. It rejects the idea of the legal-constitutional order because, according to populists, it produces or favours inequalities (e.g., between the haves and have-nots, between cosmopolitans and locals, or between foreigners and nationals), as well as, more importantly, because it leads to the erosion of the historical nation. The hierarchy of the legal-constitutional order is

not to be replaced by an inclusive, more universalistic order, but rather by a return to, or realization of, the past, that is, of a traditional order, based on 'natural' hierarchies related to ethnicity, family, and tradition. In its anti-establishment critique, populism equally takes on international and transnational legal regimes and related institutions (such as the European Court of Human Rights or the Court of Justice of the European Union) (cf. Hirschl 2018; Helfer 2020; Thornhill 2020). Populists emphasize the non-accountability of such institutions, the discrepancy between local (constitutional) traditions and identity and universal, liberal norms, the alleged ideological ('progressivist') bias of international institutions. They further endorse the need for a strengthening of political sovereignty and constitutional identity on the national level (for instance, in a 'Europe of the peoples') as well as international tolerance of domestic traditions.

Conclusion

The argument of the chapter has been that a sustained trend of 'new constitutionalism' in the last decades indicated a global convergence on legal understandings of constitutionalism – in this, amplifying distinct aspects of modern constitutionalism, not least in the form of an emphasis on the hierarchical higher nature of constitutional law and on independent apex courts with significant review powers. In recent times, however, this model of modern constitutionalism has been confronted by, first, challenges that stem from the constitutionalization of international and post-national regimes (regarding human rights and supranational integration). Such challenges involve issues of popular sovereignty and democratic politics, a renewed articulation of political sovereignty by nation-states, conflicts between domestic and post-national constitutional orders, and contrasting visions of constitutionalism. A second prominent and in many ways related, confrontation has now emerged in that the new constitutional projects are currently by challenged by the emergence of a veritable counter-movement, frequently identified as populist. Populist forces contest what they perceive as a distorted and unbalanced form of liberal-legal manifestations of constitutionalism (as is most clearly visible in the cases of Hungary and Poland, but not limited to these), and decry the constitutional status of post-national human rights and legal regimes.

A significant question regards whether modern constitutionalism and its international and supranational counterparts, will persevere in the light of strong countercurrents which strongly question post-national and cosmopolitan trends in the name of political and popular sovereignty.

Notes

1. Similar tendencies seem evident elsewhere, too; cf. Blokker (2020).
2. As, for instance, in the Polish case, see Kowalewska (2020).

References

Alston, P. (2017) 'The Populist Challenge to Human Rights', *Journal of Human Rights Practice*, 9(1) 1–15.
Arendt, H. (1990) *On Revolution*, London: Penguin.
Arjomand, S.A. (2003) 'Law, Political Reconstruction and Constitutional Politics', *International Sociology*, 18 (1) 7–32.
Avbelj, M. and J. Komárek (eds.) (2012) *Constitutional Pluralism in the European Union and Beyond*, Oxford and Portland, Oregon: Bloomsbury Publishing.
Azzariti, G. (2013) *Il costituzionalismo moderno può sopravvivere?* Laterza.
Bellamy, R. (2007) *Political Constitutionalism: A Republican Defence of the Constitutionality of Democracy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bellamy, R. (2020) 'Political Constitutionalism: A Genealogy', forthcoming in Peter Cane and Harshan Kumarasingham (eds.), *The Cambridge Constitutional History of the United Kingdom*, available at: https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3666122.

Bellamy, R. and D. Castiglione (2000) 'Democracy, Sovereignty and the Constitution of the European Union', in Z. Bankowski and A. Scott (eds.), *The European Union and Its Order: the Legal Theory of European Union Integration*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell 169–200.

Blokker, P. (2013) *New Democracies in Crisis?: A Comparative Constitutional Study of the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Slovakia*, London/New York: Routledge.

Blokker, P. (2017) 'Populist Constitutionalism', in C. de la Torre (ed.), *Routledge Handbook of Global Populism*, London/New York: Routledge 113–127.

Blokker, P. (2019) 'Varieties of Populist Constitutionalism: The Transnational Dimension', *German Law Journal*, 20 (3) 332–350.

Blokker, P. (2020) 'Populist Understandings of the Law: A Conservative Backlash?', *Participation and Conflict* (PaCo), 13 (3): 1433–1452.

Blokker, P. and C. Thornhill (eds.) (2017) *Sociological Constitutionalism*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Brunkhorst, H. (2014) *Critical Theory of Legal Revolutions: Evolutionary Perspectives*. New York/London/New Delhi/Sydney: Bloomsbury Publishing.

Bugaric B. (2015) 'A Crisis of Constitutional Democracy in Post-Communist Europe: "Lands In-Between" Democracy and Authoritarianism', *International Journal of Constitutional Law*, 13 (1) 219–245.

Chambers, S. (1998) 'Contract or Conversation? Theoretical Lessons from the Canadian Constitutional Crisis', *Politics & Society*, 26 143–172.

Chang, W. C. (2019) 'Back into the Political? Rethinking Judicial, Legal, and Transnational Constitutionalism', *International Journal of Constitutional Law*, 17 (2) 453–460.

Cohen, J. (2004) 'Whose Sovereignty? Empire versus International Law', *Ethics & International Affairs*, 18 (3) 1–24.

Colon-Rios, J.I. (2009) 'The End of the Constitutionalism-Democracy Debate', CLPE Research Paper, 03, 5(1).

Corrias, L., (2016) 'Populism in a Constitutional Key: Constituent Power, Popular Sovereignty and Constitutional Identity', *European Constitutional Law Review*, 12 (1) 6–26.

Dowdle, M. and M. Wilkinson (2017) *Constitutionalism Beyond Liberalism*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Dworkin, R. (1995) 'Constitutionalism and Democracy', *European Journal of Philosophy*, 3 (1) 2–11.

Frankenberg, G. (2019), 'Authoritarian Constitutionalism – Coming to terms with modernity's nightmares', in G. Frankenberg and H. Alviar García (ed.) (2019) *Authoritarian Constitutionalism*, Cheltenham, UK/Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar Publishing, 1–36.

Gill, S., and A.C. Cutler (eds.) (2014) *New Constitutionalism and World Order*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Graber, M.A., Levinson, S., and Tushnet, M. (eds.) (2018) *Constitutional Democracy in Crisis?* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Gray, J. (1995) *Two Faces of Liberalism*, Cambridge: Polity.

Grimm, D. (2005) 'Integration by Constitution', *International Journal of Constitutional Law*, 3, 193–210.

Grimm, D. (2017) *The Constitution of European Democracy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Grzymala-Busse, A. (2019) 'How Populists Rule: The Consequences for Democratic Governance', *Polity*, *51* (4) 707–717.

Gyorfi, T. (2016) *Against the new constitutionalism* Cheltenham, UK/Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar Publishing.

Haberle, P. (1992) 'Verfassungsentwicklungen in Osteuropa – aus der Sicht der Rechtsphilosophie und der Verfassungslehre', *Archiv des öffentlichen Rechts*, 117 (2) 169–211.

Habermas, J. (1990) *Die nachholende Revolution*, Suhrkamp: Frankfurt.

Habermas, J. (2001) 'Why Europe Needs a Constitution', *New Left Review*, 11, 5–26.

Hart, V. (2003) 'Democratic Constitution Making', Special Report, United States Institute for Peace, available at: http://www.usip.org.

Helfer, L. R. (2020) 'Populism and International Human Rights Institutions: A Survival Guide', in Gerald L. Neuman (ed.), *Human Rights in a Time of Populism: Challenges and Responses*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 218–249.

Hirschl, R. (2018) 'Opting Out of "Global Constitutionalism" ', *Law & Ethics of Human Rights*, 12 (1) 1–36.

Kelemen, R. D. and L. Pech (2018) 'Why autocrats love constitutional identity and constitutional pluralism', (No. 2). RECONNECT Working Paper.

Klug, H. (2000) *Constituting Democracy: Law, Globalism, and South Africa's Political Reconstruction*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Koskenniemi, M. (2007) 'The Fate of Public International Law: Between Technique and Politics', *Modern Law Review*, 70 (1) 1–30.

Koskenniemi (2019) 'International Law and the Far Right: Reflections on Law and Cynicism', Fourth T.M.C. Asser Lecture.

Kowalewska, E. T. (2020) 'Between Civic and Legal Constitutionalism: Dynamics of Poland's Constitution-Making Projects of the 1990s', *Oñati Socio-Legal Series*, 10 (4) 903–931.

Kumm, M. (2012) 'Rethinking Constitutional Authority: On the Structure and Limits of Constitutional Pluralism', in Avbelj, M. and J. Komárek (eds.), *Constitutional Pluralism in the European Union and beyond*, Bloomsbury Publishing, 39.

Laclau, E. (2005) *On Populist Reason*. London/New York: Verso.

Lang Jr, A. F. and A. Wiener (2017) 'A Constitutionalising Global Order: An Introduction', in A. F. Lang Jr and A. Wiener (eds.), *Handbook on Global Constitutionalism*. Cheltenham, UK/Northampton, MA, USA: Edward Elgar Publishing.

Loughlin, M. (2014) 'Constitutional Pluralism: An Oxymoron', *Global Constitutionalism*, 3 9.

Loughlin, M. and N. Walker (2007) 'Introduction', in M. Loughlin and N. Walker (eds.), *The Paradox of Constitutionalism. Constituent Power and Constitutional Form*, Oxford: Oxford University Press 1–8.

Madsen, M. R. (2014) 'International Human Rights and the Transformation of European Society: From 'Free Europe' to the Europe of Human Rights', in Mikael R. Madsen and Chris Thornhill (eds.), *Law and the Formation of Modern Europe: Perspectives from the Historical Sociology of Law*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 245–274.

Madsen, M. R. (2020) 'Two-Level Politics and the Backlash against International Courts: Evidence from the Politicisation of the European Court of Human Rights', *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations* 22:4 728–738.

Maduro, M. (2005) 'The Importance of Being Called Constitution: Constitutional Authority and the Authority of Constitutionalism', *International Journal of Constitutional Law*, 3 (2 & 3) 332–356.

Müller, J. W. (2011) *Contesting Democracy: Political Ideas in Twentieth-Century Europe*, New Haven/London: Yale University Press.

Möllers, C. (2009) 'Pouvoir Constituant—Constitution—Constitutionalisation'. in J. Bast and A. von Bogdandy (eds.) *Principles of European Constitutional Law*. Oxford: Hart 169–204.

Přibáň, J. (2007) *Legal Symbolism. On Law, Time and European Identity*, Aldershot, UK/Burlington, USA: Ashgate.

Přibáň, J. (2017) *Sovereignty in Post-Sovereign Society: A Systems Theory of European Constitutionalism*, London/New York: Routledge.

Rawls, J. (1993) *Political Liberalism*, New York: Columbia University Press.

Rosenfeld, M. (1992) 'Modern Constitutionalism as Interplay between Identity and Diversity', *Cardozo Law Review*, 14 497–531.

Rosenfeld, M. (2008) 'Rethinking Constitutional Ordering in an Era of Legal and Ideological Pluralism', *International Journal of Constitutional Law*, 6 (3/4) 415–455.

Shaw, J. (2020) *The People in Question: Citizens and Constitutions in Uncertain Times*. Bristol: Policy Press.

Stone Sweet, A. (2008) 'Constitutions and Judicial Power', in D. Caramani (ed.) *Comparative Politics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 217–239.

Stone Sweet, A. (2009) 'Constitutionalism, Legal Pluralism and International Regimes', *Indiana Journal of Global Legal Studies*, 16 (2) 621–645.

Suteu, S. and S. Tierney. (2018) Squaring the Circle? Bringing Deliberation and Participation Together in Processes of Constitution-Making. In R. Levy, H. Kong, G. Orr and J. King (ed.) *Cambridge Handbook of Deliberative Constitutionalism*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 282–294.

Teubner, G. (1997) 'Global Bukowina: Legal Pluralism in the World Society', in G. Teubner (ed.), *Global Law without a State*, Dartmouth: Aldershot, 3–28.

Teubner, G. (2012) *Constitutional Fragments: Societal Constitutionalism and Globalization*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Thornhill, C. (2016) *A Sociology of Transnational Constitutions: Social Foundations of the Post-National Legal Structure*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Thornhill, C. (2017) 'A Tale of Two Constitutions. Whose Legitimacy? Whose Crisis?', in W. Outhwaite (ed.), *Brexit. Sociological Responses*, London: Anthem Press.

Thornhill, C. (2020) 'Constitutionalism and Populism: National Political Integration and Global Legal Integration', *International Theory*, 12 (1): 1–32.

Tully, J. (1995) *Strange Multiplicity: Constitutionalism in an Age of Diversity*, Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press.

Tully, J. (2008) *Public Philosophy in a New Key*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Tushnet, M. and B. Bugaric (2020) 'Populism and Constitutionalism: An Essay on Definitions and Their Implications', available at https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3581660.

Vauchez, A. (2015) *Brokering Europe: Euro-lawyers and the Making of a Transnational Polity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Waldron, J. (1999) *Law and Disagreement*, Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Waldron, J. (2015) 'The Vanishing Europe of Jürgen Habermas', *The New York Review of Books*, 62 (16): 70–72.

Walker, N. (2002) 'The Idea of Constitutional Pluralism', *Modern Law Review*, 65 (3) 317–359.

Walker, N. (2016) 'Constitutional Pluralism Revisited', *European Law Journal*, 22 (3) 333–355.

Walker, N. (2019a) 'Habermas's European constitution: Catalyst, Reconstruction, Refounding', *European Law Journal*, 25 (5) 508–514.

Walker, N. (2019b) 'Populism and Constitutional Tension', *International Journal of Constitutional Law*, 17 (2) 515–535.

Weiler, J.H.H. (2001) 'In Defence of the Status Quo: Europe's Constitutional Sonderweg', in J.J.H. Weiler and M. Wind (eds.), *European Constitutionalism beyond the State*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 7–26.

Weiler, J.H.H. (2003) *Un'Europa cristiana. Un saggio esplorativo*, Milano: BUR Saggi.

Weiler, J.H.H. and M. Wind (eds.) (2003) *European Constitutionalism beyond the State*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wiener, A. (2008) *The Invisible Constitution of Politics. Contested Norms and International Encounters*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Youngs, R. (2017) *Europe Reset: New Directions for the EU*, London/New York: I.B. Tauris.

Zielonka, J. (2018) *Counter-revolution: Liberal Europe in Retreat*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Social theory and European integration

William Outhwaite

The ongoing process of European unification since 1950 is a fact of contemporary social and political reality, though there are numerous controversies over how to conceptualise its nature and evolution (Wiener, Börzel and Risse 2019; Patel 2020). One model is of a teleological development towards something like a state, with periodic changes in the pace of integration seen as a matter of detail. Another is of a set of accidental and often unrelated processes which have happened to produce what we experience today.[1] At a more specific level, what we now know as the European Union can be seen as an expression of an underlying logic of capitalist development and/or globalisation. Alternatively, it can be seen as a means of creating a more humane version of capitalism than that in the US or East Asia and thus setting limits, at least at the local scale of a regional entity of around half a billion people, to the globalisation juggernaut.

From the 'founding fathers' of modern social and political theory, we can derive three models. From Marx, a model which sees European integration as a regional instance of the emergence and functioning of a world economy. From Max Weber, a model which stresses the primacy of the nation and hence, conjecturally, what De Gaulle and now the European hard right and parts of the extreme left call a 'Europe of nations'. From Durkheim, a model of organic solidarity in a Europe-wide division of labour (Delanty 1998). Durkheim did in fact envisage a possible process of European unification, though not in much detail. In *The Division of Labour in Society*, he wrote that

> … today … the different nations of Europe are much less independent of one another, because, in certain respects, they are all part of the same society, still incoherent, it is true, but becoming more and more self-conscious …
>
> among European peoples there is a tendency to form, by spontaneous movement, a European society which has, at present some idea of itself and the beginning of organization.'
>
> *(Durkheim 1960: 121)[2]*

Among the theoretical resources for analysing the integration process, the most prominent are theories of international relations and international organisations and historical accounts of state formation. The former group of theories was most prominent in the early years of what we now know as the European Union, with the latter also appearing relevant as the Union acquired a

more state-like form. The hybrid field of what used to be called 'Common Market Studies'[3] drew on both of these currents of theory while developing in a somewhat curious isolation from the emerging specialism of International Relations. This separation was, if anything, exacerbated with the 'discovery' of globalisation in the 1990s. This became a main focus of IR theory, while what came to be called Contemporary European Studies continued to focus on integration without much reference to globalisation (Rosamond 1995; Hay and Rosamond 2002).

Common market studies and beyond

In IR theory, the 'realist' tradition stressed the primacy of power politics and national interest, pointing implicitly to an inescapable dimension of European integration and the mode of operation known as intergovernmentalism, in contrast to a focus on Community-level approaches. The bottom line was set by the nationally conceived priorities of the member states, in rough order of size. The 'motor', in the familiar analogy, was formed by France and West Germany (Krotz and Schild 2013). The Franco-German motor was however a hybrid: West Germany, gifted with a decentralised federal structure by the Allies, was strongly committed to European integration as a cure for the nationalist virus from which it had itself suffered so badly, while France tended to stress the harmony between what it perceived as European and French interests (with the latter predominating where these conflicted).

In a more analytical vein, the economic historian Alan Milward (1992) argued persuasively that the post-war integration of (Western) Europe had 'rescued' the European nation state. We might expand the title of his classic book to read 'The European Rescue of the Nation State *from itself*'. (A cynical view of what we now know as the European Union would be that, like generals fighting the previous war rather than the current one, the EU has worked to prevent the Second World War.) In West Germany itself, though hardly elsewhere, 'national' was a dirty word except on the hard right. Although the founding member states of the EU were proprietors of large, if shrinking (and, in Germany's case, defunct) empires and had mostly been subordinate parts of empires until at least 1918 (Snyder 2018: 76–77), their current configuration (except for Germany) was taken as permanent and consecrated in national histories. A similar fiction of equality between the member states was built into the structures of the European Communities.

By the time the main Western European states with colonial empires had withdrawn from them, apart from a few exclaves, they were mostly incorporated into the EU, itself sometimes described as a (democratic and cosmopolitan) empire (Beck and Grande 2007). To this extent the dominant image of European integration, of historically independent national states coming together on a voluntaristic basis, was something of a fiction, though reinforced by the choice of two states, Switzerland and Norway, to remain outside (but closely linked). This was however the main way in which integration was perceived. The national state (I prefer this term to nation state since many if not most are multinational), remained the primary reference-point for most Europeans. When asked to rank geographically specified identities (regional/national/European), as by *Eurobarometer*, most of us put the European last.

Realism in IR theory was contested by what came to be known as 'constructivism'. In this body of theory, which owes something to the sociological concept of the 'social construction of reality', ideas and ideals, such as that of a united Europe, are taken more seriously. States and other actors commit themselves to principles or agreements which then constrain their action, even if they attempt to evade these implications. Often these implications are not clear in advance; many member states might have jibbed at the idea that they were setting up a federal supreme court with the European Court of Justice, but that was what they did.

In Common Market Studies, the more liberal strand of IR theory was taken up under the label of 'functionalism', which had developed between the wars without reference to the rather different usage in anthropology and sociology. Interdependence between states was strengthened by a process of 'spill-over', the gradual and often unplanned spread of integrative elements from one domain to another. Ernst Haas (1924–2003) was the key figure in the application of this body of neofunctionalist theory, to European integration. Haas (1970: 608) said that his 'main reason for studying regional integration is normative … [to] … study the peaceful creation of possible new types of human community'.[4]

Haas's work was essentially a matter of thinking with Weber against Weber, analysing the emergence of a social and political form of community in which '*political actors in several distinct institutional settings are persuaded to shift their loyalties, expectations and political activities toward a new centre, whose institutions possess or demand jurisdiction over the pre-existing national states*'. (Haas 1958: 16) The Weberian influence is pervasive: Haas insisted both that integration could be given an analytical as well as a historical treatment[5] and that interests, including what Weber called ideal interests (rather than ideas), were the dominant force in integration (Haas 1958: 13). He was also sensitive to the ironies of the process, as in his claim that the formation of the Communities was 'largely attributable to the weakness of national ideological commitments and to the fragmentation of opinion in four of the six countries concerned'. (Haas 1958: 290)[6]

The other principal founding theory of integration emerged at the same time, with the work of Karl Deutsch and his collaborators (Deutsch et al. 1957; Hoffmann 1959). This was also a modestly conceived middle-range theory, with a more Durkheimian focus on the increasing density of transnational contacts and interdependence. This approach has indirectly inspired a large body of work bearing on, for example, European identity, reciprocal trust between national communities and the 'esprit de corps' of European civil servants and their counterparts in member states interacting on a daily basis. It is also relevant to the question of a European public sphere. There is a more diffuse link with the political theories of cosmopolitanism which provided a framework for the analysis of Europeanisation, discussed below.

The other direction in which a Deutschean approach has been extended is the second theoretical approach identified at the beginning of this chapter, that of state formation. Stefano Bartolini (2005) drew in particular on Stein Rokkan's work (Rokkan 1999) to analyse integration as 'a new historical phase in the development of Europe, characterized by a powerful trend towards legal, economic and cultural territorial de-differentiation that follows after a five-century long process of differentiation that led to the territorial structuring of the European system of nation-states'. (Bartolini 2005: xii) Bartolini rejected the conclusion reached by Haas and Philippe Schmitter that the European situation was unique; he saw the EU 'as a state-formation attempt that is characterized to date by limited administrative capabilities, by strong regulatory powers in selected fields, by very weak fiscal capabilities, and by strong juridical capabilities that have grown from the early spheres of competences' (Bartolini 2005: xiii).

The other theoretical resource drawn on by Bartolini was Albert Hirschman's model of exit, voice and loyalty, focussing in particular on the interplay between exit and voice (Bertolini 2005: 82). The EU can be seen as a 'self-disciplining' system, with member-states however retaining the nuclear option of exit as well as partial opt-outs (Bertolini 2005: 246–247).

In Bertolini's long view, integration is the sixth of the major developmental process in European history since the sixteenth century, reconfiguring the preceding processes of state building, capitalist development, nation building, democratisation and welfare state development (Bertolini 2005: 366, see also 386).

Social theory and the 'unidentified political object'

The question what sort of state, polity or whatever the EU is becoming still remains open. A federal state along the lines of the US, or dressed up as a confederation à la Suisse, is a clear option if one which currently seems less likely than a few years ago. At the other extreme, it is not clear how the 'Europe of nations' would be compatible with the federal court and the common currency. Vivien Schmidt's concept of a 'regional state' is a useful way of thinking about the EU:

> The EU is a supranational state-like entity in which sovereignty is pooled rather than indivisible, shared with its constituent nation-state members, and contingent upon internal acceptance and external recognition, policy area by policy area.' […] Its citizens' identity is a composite […] Its governance system—rather than government—is more highly compound than that of any nation-state […] And its democracy is fragmented between supranational EU and national levels …
>
> *(Schmidt 2015)*

In short, the EU is a challenge to traditional models in political science and social and political theory. It raises a set of questions which can crudely be labelled with the names of the classical theorists associated with them. Firstly, the Montesquieu or historiographical question: how far should we understand its evolution as a single narrative and how far, rather, as a sequence of accidents, personalities, historical memories, and so on? The Franco-German 'motor' which remains a crucial aspect of the European dynamic was partly explained by the weight of the founding members, but also by the personal histories of Monnet, Schuman, Adenauer and later de Gaulle. Secondly, there is the Marxist question raised earlier: what role does the EU play in the historical development of global capitalism and the global division of labour, reconfigured in the Union's early years with the end of European colonialism? Then there is the Weberian question of the Union's predominant form of legitimation. It is, fairly obviously, a legal–rational and bureaucratic order, formed and from time to time sustained by international treaties and regulated by a massive body of legislation, the acquis communautaire, and a federal supreme court. Charismatic leadership is not much in evidence, though the Spitzenkandidat campaign in 2014 for Commission president suggested a modest move in this direction. What Weber called traditional legitimation has however become increasingly important, as many Europeans have grown up with EU membership and even the euro as a feature of daily life. In the terms of Alfred Schütz, developed further by Berger and Luckmann, the EU is taken-for-granted.

Although early accounts of European integration were centrally shaped by sociological perspectives such as those of Deutsch and Haas, it is only in the past few years that it has become a major concern of social theory and empirical sociology. Critical theory, which was a major element in the analyses by Delanty and Rumford (2005) and by Beck and Grande (2007), has been particularly prominent in the revival of sociological approaches to integration, not least because of Jürgen Habermas's increasingly forceful engagement with the issue since *The Postnational Constellation*. There, Habermas outlined a political sociology of attitudes to European integration: 'Eurosceptics', who resist or regret the introduction of the common currency, 'market Europeans', who accept the euro but reject further political integration, 'Eurofederalists' and, finally, cosmopolitans who see a federal Europe as the starting point for a world cosmopolitan order emerging, as the EU did, from international treaties but establishing a 'world domestic policy' (Weltinnenpolitik). Intersecting with and underpinning these positions are, he suggested, four basic issues: the future of employment, the relation between market efficiency and social

justice, the capacity of the EU to substitute for the national state in areas such as social policy and, relatedly, the possibility of transnational identity and post-national democracy. Habermas has continued to argue for European integration in many of his subsequent political writings.

Cosmopolitan democratic theory (Held 1995; Held and Archibugi (1995), responding to the theories of globalisation which emerged at the end of the 1980s, has been one of the most important recent foci of critical theory in relation to Europe. In Germany, Hauke Brunkhorst (2005) has pursued the theme in relation to solidarity and with specific reference to the European Union. Beck, too, came to the European Union via earlier studies on globalisation and cosmopolitanism. Like Bourdieu, Bauman, Giddens and Martin Albrow (who was one of the first sociologists to discuss globalisation), Beck insisted that it should not be seen primarily as an economic process. Beck and Grande (2007: 106) argued that a cosmopolitan Europe relativises the binary divisions between inside/outside, self/other and Europe/nation-state, reviving Jacques Delors' 1980 slogan of a 'variable geometry' Europe,[7] 'In a similar vein, Delanty and Rumford (2005: 191) wrote that 'the cosmopolitan challenge is to rediscover the diversity of Europe'.

One important aspect of cosmopolitanism concerns questions of ethnic diversity, migration and citizenship within national states, and Seyla Benhabib addressed these issues in a number of works covering questions of collective and individual rights and issues of political participation. She argued for a right in principle to membership of a political community, which cannot reasonably be refused to residents (Benhabib 2004: 47f; see also Benhabib et al. 2007).

Work on the European Union by thinkers influenced by critical theory can be divided roughly between overviews (Habermas, Beck and Grande, Delanty and Rumford), accounts of deliberative democracy in the EU (and in international politics more generally) and discussions of the European public sphere, European identity and so on. Beck and Grande's book is closest to a manifesto. They begin with the ringing claim that 'Europe is today in Europe the last politically effective utopia' and present 'a *new critical theory of European integration*'. They conceptualise the uneven advance of integration in the slogan of a Europe as a regime of 'secondary consequences', in which European society emerges 'behind the back of the actors'. Their argument typically takes the form of rejecting dilemmas and arguing for a logic of *both/and*, in which Europe brings together *both* citizens *and* states in a structure which is both imperial and democratic. Europeanisation is both vertical, with the development of supranational structures, and horizontal, in the opening up of states (and hence their citizens) to others.

Delanty and Rumford's book of 2005, like Beck and Grande's, was informed by the social theory of the previous decades – in particular, the revival of historical sociology and, more broadly, theories of modernity and, secondly, the growth of postcolonial theory and its application to European history in what is sometimes called the new direction in European Studies. Like Beck and Grande, they were concerned to remedy the neglect of society in the literature on Europeanisation. Their primary theoretical reference points are in Habermasian and other forms of cosmopolitan theory, arguing for a focus on the public sphere, rather than the more substantial notion of a European civil society.

On the second theme, that of European Union democracy, Eriksen and Fossum (2000: 3) argue that a deliberative approach is particularly suitable for the politics of European integration precisely because of the EU's processual character and its imprecise contours and overlapping structures.

> Integration may occur through strategic bargaining or through functional adaptation. However, it may also occur through deliberation or what is commonly referred to as arguing. This latter type of integration is very important, as stability depends on learning and alteration of preferences … To understand post-national integration, or integration beyond

the nation-state, explanatory categories associated with deliberation are required, as supra-national entities possess far weaker and less well-developed means of coercion – bargaining resources – than do states.[8]

Despite the imbalance of power relations between larger and smaller states, a number of close observers of the EU have stressed the importance of emerging normative commitments and at least lip service to common objectives. Frank Schimmelfennig (2003), for example, has shown how existing member states found themselves drawn by previous commitments into reluctant support for eastern enlargement, even when they saw this as contrary to their national interest. Eriksen (2005: 267), like several contributors to his edited book, notes the importance of what he calls 'working agreements' – 'something in between bargained compromises and a rational consensus. A working agreement rests on reasonable reasons, but ones that do not convince all'. This is undoubtedly a worthwhile enrichment to EU studies, International Relations and deliberative democratic theory.[9] The problem for the EU, however, is that often there is an inverse relation between the deliberative and the democratic dimensions. However exemplary the deliberations may be in the Council of Ministers, in committees or in the practices going under the name of the Open Method of Coordination, there is little about these that is demo-cratic. (Ministers, for example, may be simply appointed by prime ministers or presidents.)

The recurrent issue of constitutionalising the European Union (Wiener 2003) takes us back to the fundamental questions of its future political shape and what Heidrun Friese and Peter Wagner termed its 'Nascent Political Philosophy' (Friese and Wagner 2002). As in the more spe-cific case of deliberative democracy, Europe becomes the terrain of debates in political philoso-phy shaped in relation to the national state. First, there is the issue debated between Habermas and the legal theorist Dieter Grimm of whether a Europe-wide democracy can meet anything like the expectations of the European national states. Just as the solidarity which sustains redis-tribution in national welfare states may not extend to a transnational context, so the mutual trust which sustains democratic politics may stop at the state boundaries (Offe 1998). Grimm, and to a lesser extent Offe, come close to the communitarian position which stresses the need for political communities to be embedded in a broader cultural context. Republicanism of the kind revived by Quentin Skinner stresses rather the self-definition and self-empowerment of a *political* community, which may or may not be culturally homogeneous. Both positions raise the stakes for European integration, suggesting scepticism (in their stronger versions) or caution and gradualism (in weaker versions such as Richard Bellamy's 'cosmopolitan communitarianism'). From positions such as these, Habermas is too bold in his organisational proposals and in his reliance on a notion of constitutional patriotism. The problem, it is claimed, is not just the lack of democracy in the EU but the fact that it undermines the democracy of the member-states in terms of accountability to citizens and the capacity to make policy (Offe and Preuss 2006; Schmidt 2006; see also Offe 2015).

The ongoing discussion of European identity is another area in which critical theorists have played a major part. Klaus Eder in particular has worked substantially on this topic, partly in conjunction with Bernhard Giesen and Willfried Spohn. It is not possible, Eder (2001: 230) emphasises, simply to Europeanise a national form of consciousness; 'For Europe is no longer as obvious as the nation has been'. At a European level the only realistic option is a minimalist conception of identity which is constantly reshaped. Echoing Renan's remark about *national* consciousness, Eder (2001: 238–239) writes: '… the making of identity becomes daily political business'. It also often develops in response to crises (Machin and Meidert 2021).

Discussions of European identity tend to merge into questions about the existence of a European public sphere. Here, too, critical theory has substantially shaped the debates. As Anna

Triandafyllidou, Ruth Wodak and Michał Krzyżanowski (2009) note, Habermas' *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* was a major influence (Habermas 1989; see also Fraser 2007). A substantial study by Paul Statham and Ruud Koopmans, covering seven West European states, illuminates not just the public sphere but many other areas of EU politics and civil society. Statham (2010: 292) concludes soberly that 'European civil society is … not only marginal compared with national civil society and the European executive, but also compared with globally operating NGOs … the substance of the European Union's public sphere "deficit" consists in the overdomination by elite actors of Europeanised debates'.

If the EU, then, has not become 'an ethically charged notion in pan-European public discourses' (Triandafyllidou et al. 2009: 268), it has attracted significant attention from thinkers influenced by the critical theory tradition on both sides of the Atlantic. This strand of social and political theory intersects with less theoretically loaded sociological accounts of Europe such as those by Richard Münch (2001a, 2001b, 2010), Adrian Favell, Virginie Guiraudon (Favell and Guiraudon 2011) and Juan Diez Medrano, and also with approaches drawing on Foucault and Bourdieu.

A Foucauldian approach centred on the concept of 'governmentality' (Shore 2006; Walters 2012; Chamlian and Nabers 2016) has been prominent in discussions of EU policies on territorial planning, borders and migration (Barry 1991; Walters 2002; Grzymski 2018; 2019) and issues of security. On the first of these, Jensen and Richardson (2004) developed a panoptical notion of European planning as the pursuit of a 'monotopia' in which Europe is conceived as a whole and all internal obstacles are removed (see also Richardson 2006; Scott 1998; Outhwaite 2020). Given the 'four freedoms' (the free movement of goods, capital, services, and people), they focus in particular on the EU's encouragement of transport networks and infrastructure and on transnational or polycentric development plans, especially in border regions. The Foucauldian theme of biopolitics has also inspired a good deal of work; see for example Dijstelbloem and Walters 2019 (which also draws on Peter Sloterdijk's spherological concept); also Walters (2012, Chapter 4), on links between governmentality and genealogy. Andrew Barry has examined the politics of technology and 'knowledge controversies in transnational governance' (Barry 2012; see also Walters and Barry 2003).

Like his contemporary Alain Touraine (1994), Pierre Bourdieu only occasionally referred to European integration, and in Bourdieu's case pejoratively: Niilo Kauppi (2018: xix) writes that 'For him, European integration was nothing more than a capitalist project. He did not see anything productive in it'. Bourdieu however increasingly saw Europe as the appropriate base for social movement activity as his work took on a more activist character (Bourdieu 1999). As Kauppi (2018: 56) points out, in the EU, 'in contrast to national settings such as France analyzed by Bourdieu, a multitude of highly structured national political spaces are partly united by a more heterogenous transnational space'. Yet Kauppi and many other scholars have used a Bourdieusian framework to analyse the European 'field', in which political actors mobilise national and European political resources and exchange one for the other. Much of this work has centred on the Parliament, which has proved a valuable site for smaller parties and women politicians marginalised or excluded in their home states (Kauppi 2005). There are also major studies of the Commission and the broader field of 'Eurocracy' (Shore 2000;[10] Georgakakis 2009, 2010, 2013, 2018) and the crucial role of EU law in the integration process (Vauchez and de Witte 2013). The variant of a Bourdieusian approach developed by Luc Boltanski and his various collaborators in their 'sociology of critique' has been less prominent so far (Outhwaite and Spence 2014).

A further theoretical resource not much exploited so far is the work of Norbert Elias (Linklater 2011; Delmotte 2012). Like Habermas in his analysis of law and politics, Elias in his

historical sociology had taken the national state and its habitus as his frame of reference. Where Habermas moved on to describe the post-national constellation, Elias, in the last years of his life, seems merely to have seen such a shift to a more cosmopolitan framework of trans-national regions and humanity as a whole as merely an attractive possibility: 'it is not unrealistic to imagine that in the future terms like "European" or "Latin-American" will take on a far stronger emotive content…' (Elias 1991: 226). More fundamentally, however, the idea of transcending the antagonisms of the mid-twentieth century European national states and extending a democratic constitutional state to a continental scale is, in essence, a civilising process in Elias's terms: it replaces military threats and inter-state bargaining with (however protracted) processes of collective deliberation and negotiation at a European level. Conversely, tendencies towards disintegration, as in 'Brexit', can be seen as de-civilising processes (Inglis 2020). Current controversies over the Union's capacity to enforce the rule of law and fundamental principles of human rights in rogue member states suggest the relevance of this approach.

Conclusion

Zimmermann and Favell (2011: 507) make a powerful case for the complementarity of the three main contemporary theoretical approaches to the EU.

> The notion of governmentality provides an account of macro-structural transformation of the EU seeking to redefine the object of study in a new language of politics. […] The political field approach, rather, concentrates more on micro-structural transformation: politics at the level of actors, their identities and relationships, and their struggles in particular contexts. The public sphere approach sits somewhere in the middle, focussing on meso-level transformations in European society associated with the EU as it creates new public debates about Europe.

The possible intersections between these approaches to the EU reflect broader affinities, also with Elias (Georgakakis and Weisbein 2010), which were not developed at the time and were cut short by the early deaths of Foucault in 1984 and Bourdieu in 2002. To put it very briefly, I would suggest that a critical theory approach (which is not confined to public sphere issues) engages most fully with the challenges and *enjeux* of the integration project, while the other two provide valuable reminders of the power games behind what the 'object language' (as Kauppi describes it) of European public servants tends to describe in overly irenic and optimistic terms. The enrichment of EU studies by these theoretical currents reflects the gradual emergence of Europe from national blinkers and its academic expression in what Hermínio Martins (1974) and later Ulrich Beck called 'methodological nationalism'.

Notes

1. The British Marxist historian Perry Anderson (2009: 88) described its history as 'a minefield of misreckonings'.
2. The idea of a division of labour within Europe was addressed in both halves of the divided subcontinent, with forecasts of specialisation of production across the west and more explicit policies in the CMEA.
3. The term is preserved in the title of a leading journal in the field, though otherwise largely displaced by 'contemporary European studies' or 'Europawissenschaft(en)'.
4. See also 'Conversations with History'; https://conversations.berkeley.edu/haas_2000.

5. Haas's description of his aim as being 'merely the dissection of *the actual* "integration process" in order to derive propositions about its nature' (Haas 1958: xii) echoes Weber; see Ruggie et al. (2005: 275).
6. The exceptions were the Netherlands and Luxembourg.
7. Playing on the UFO reference, Delors also described the European Community as an 'unidentified political object'.
8. See also Eriksen (2005, 2009), and Eriksen and Fosum (2012).
9. In Germany the 'ZIB debate' (from the initials of the journal in which it was largely conducted) was part of a world-wide turn against 'realism' in IR theory, including in Germany a research programme on 'communicative action in international relations'.
10. Cris Shore, who had earlier conducted an ethnographic study of the European Commission, quoted one official's definition of the Commission as 'a civil service *with attitude*' (Shore 2000: 143).

References

Anderson, P. (2009) *The New Old World*, London: Verso.

Archibugi, D., D. Held and M. Köhler (eds.) (1998) *Re-imagining Political Community. Studies in Cosmopolitan Democracy*, Cambridge: Polity.

Bartolini, S. (2005) *Restructuring Europe. Centre formation, System Building, and Political Structuring between the Nation State and the European Union*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Beck, U. and E. Grande (2007) *Cosmopolitan Europe*. Cambridge: Polity.

Benhabib, S. (2004) *The Rights of Others*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Benhabib, S., I. Shapiro and D. Petranović (eds.) (2007) *Identities, Affiliations, and Alliances*, Cambridge University Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1999) 'Pour un mouvement social européen', *Le Monde diplomatique*, juin, https://www.monde-diplomatique.fr/1999/06/BOURDIEU/308.

Brunkhorst, H. (2005) *Solidarity. From Civic Friendship to a Global Legal Community*, transl. Jeffrey Flynn, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Delanty, G. (1998) 'Social Theory and European Transformation: Is there a European Society?', *Sociological Research Online*, 3(1): 103–117.

Delanty, G. and C. Rumford (2005). *Rethinking Europe. Social theory and the Implications of Europeanization*, Abingdon: Routledge.

Delmotte, F. (2012) 'About Post-National Integration in Norbert Elias's Work. Towards a Socio-Historical Approach', *Human Figurations*, 1(2), July, https://quod.lib.umich.edu/h/humfig/11217607.0001.209/–about-post-national-integration-in-norbert-eliass-work?rgn=main;view=fulltext#N1-ptr1.

Deutsch, K. W. et al. (1957) *Political Community and the North Atlantic Area*, Princeton University Press.

Dijstelbloem, H. and W. Walters (2019). 'Atmospheric Border Politics: The Morphology of Border and Solidarity Practices in Europe', *Geopolitics*, 1–24, 10.1080/14650045.2019.1577826.

Durkheim, E. (1960 [1893]) *The Division of Labour in Society*, Glencoe, IL: Free Press.

Eder, K. (2001) 'Integration through Culture? The Paradox of the Search for a European Identity', in Eder and B. Giesen (eds.), *European Citizenship. Between National Legacies and Postnational Projects* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 222–244.

Elias, N. (1991) 1991, *The Society of Individuals*, transl. Edmund Jephcott, Oxford: Blackwell.

Eriksen, E.O. (2005) *Making the European Polity*, London: Routledge.

Eriksen, E.O. and J.E. Fossum (eds.) (2000) *Democracy in the European Union – Integration through Deliberation?*, London: Routledge.

Eriksen, E.O. and J.E. Fossum (eds.) (2012) *Rethinking Democracy in the European Union*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Favell, A. and V. Guiraudon (eds.) (2011) *Sociology of the European Union*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Fraser, N. (2007) 'Transnationalizing the Public Sphere', *Theory, Culture and Society*, 24(4): 7–30.

Friese, H. and P. Wagner (2002) 'The Nascent Political Philosophy of the European Polity', *Journal of Political Philosophy*, 10(3): 342–64.

Georgakakis, D. (2009) The historical and political sociology of the European Union: A uniquely French methodological approach?', *French Politics*, 7(3–4): 437–455.

Georgakakis, D. (2010) 'Symposium Introduction: French Historical and Political Sociology of the EU: Some Theoretical and Methodological Challenges for Institutional Analysis', *French Politics*, 8(2): 111–115.

Georgakakis, D. (ed.) (2013) *The Field of Eurocracy. Mapping EU Actors and Professionals*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Georgakakis, D. (2018) 'European Integration', in W. Outhwaite and S.P. Turner (eds.), *SAGE Handbook of Political Sociology* (London: SAGE), 1083–1103.

Georgakakis, D. and J. Weisbein (2010) 'From Above and From Below: A Political Sociology of EU Actors', *Comparative European Politics*, 8(1): 93–109.

Grzymski, J. (2018) 'Europe's Borders and Neighbourhood: Governmentality and Identity', *CBU International Conference Proceedings*, 6: 589–594.

Grzymski, J. (2019) 'Seeing Like a European Border: Limits of the European Borders and Space', *Global Discourse*, 9(1): 135–151.

Haas, E. (1958) *The Uniting of Europe. Politics, Social and Economic Forces, 1950–1957*, Stanford University Press.

Haas, E.B. (1970) 'The Study of Regional Integration: Reflections on the Joy and Anguish of Pretheorizing International Organization', *International Organization*, 24(4): 607–646.

Hay, C. and B. Rosamond (2002) 'Globalization, European Integration and the Discursive Construction of Economic Imperatives', *Journal of European Public Policy*, 9(2): 147–167.

Held, D. (1995) *Democracy and the Global Order. From the Modern State to Cosmopolitan Governance*, Cambridge: Polity.

Held, D. and D. Archibugi (eds.) (1995) *Cosmopolitan Democracy: Agenda for a New World Order*, Cambridge: Polity.

Hoffmann S. (1959) 'Tendances de la science politique aux Etats-Unis', *Revue Française de Science Politique*, VII(4): 913–932.

Inglis, David (2020) 'Brexit Barbarization? The UK Leaving the EU as De-Civilizing Trend', *Journal of Sociology*, https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/1440783320960525.

Jensen, O.B. and T. Richardson (2004) *Making European Space. Mobility, Power and Territorial Identity*, London: Routledge.

Kauppi, N. (2005) *Democracy, Social Resources and Political Power in the European Union*, Manchester University Press.

Kauppi, N. (2018) *Toward a Reflexive Political Sociology of the European Union. Fields, Intellectuals and Politicians*, Palgrave Macmillan.

Krotz, U. and J. Schild (2013) *Shaping Europe: France, Germany, and Embedded Bilateralism from the Elysée Treaty to Twenty-First Century Politics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Linklater, A. (2004) 'Norbert Elias, the "Civilizing Process" and the Sociology of International Relations', *International Politics*, 41: 3–35.

Linklater, A. (2011) 'Process Sociology and International Relations', *The Sociological Review*, 59: 48–64.

Machin, A. and N. Meidert (eds.) (2021) *Political Identification in Europe: Community in Crisis?* Bingley: Emerald.

Martins, H. (1974) 'Time and Sociology', in J. Rex (ed.), *Approaches to Sociology: An Introduction to Major Trends in British Sociology* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul), 246–294.

Milward, A. (1992) *The European Rescue of the Nation-State*, London: Routledge.

Münch, R. (2001a) *The Ethics of Modernity. Formation and Transformation in Britain, France, Germany and the United States*, Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Münch, R. (2001b) *Nation and Citizenship in the Global Age. From National to Transnational Civil Ties*, Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2001.

Münch, R. (2010) *European Governmentality. The Liberal Drift of Multilevel Governance*, London: Routledge.

Offe, C. (2015) *Europe Entrapped*, Cambridge: Polity.

Offe, C. and U. K. Preuss (2006) "The Problem of Legitimacy in the European Polity. Is Democratization the Answer?," The Constitutionalism Web-Papers p0028, University of Hamburg, Faculty for Economics and Social Sciences, Department of Social Sciences, Institute of Political Science.

Outhwaite, W. (2020) *Transregional Europe*, Bingley: Emerald.

Outhwaite, W. and D. Spence (2014) 'Luc Boltanski in Euroland', in Simon Susen and Bryan Turner (eds.), *The Spirit of Luc Boltanski* (London: Anthem), 425–444.

Patel, K.K. (2020) *Project Europe. A History*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Richardson, T. (2006) 'The Thin Simplification of European Space. Dangerous Calculations?', *Comparative European Politics,* 4: 203–217.

Rokkan, S. (1999) *State Formation, Nation-building, and Mass Politics in Europe: The Theory of Stein Rokkan*, ed. Peter Flora et al., New York: Oxford University Press.

Rosamond, B. (1995) 'Mapping the European Condition: The Theory of Integration and the Integration of Theory', *European Journal of International Relations*, 1 (3): 391–408.

Ruggie, J.G., P.J. Katzenstein, R.O. Keohane and P.C. Schmitter (2005) 'Transformations in World Politics: The Intellectual Contributions of Ernst B. Haas', *Annual Review of Political Science*, 8: 271–296.

Schimmelfennnig, F. (2003) *The EU, NATO and the Integration of Europe*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Schmidt, V. (2015) 'Conceptualizing Europe as a Region–State', in T. Spanakos and F. Panizza (eds.), *Conceptualizing Change in Comparative Politics: New Writings on Politics, Peoples and Markets* (London: Routledge), Chapter 2, 17–45.

Scott, J.C. (1998) *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*, New Haven: Yale University Press.

Snyder, T. (2018) *The Road to Unfreedom: Russia, Europe, America*, London: Bodley Head.

Touraine, A. (1994) 'European Countries in a Post-National Era', in H. Davis and C. Rootes (eds.), *Social Change and Political Transformation: A New Europe?* (London: UCL Press), 13–26.

Triandafyllidou, A., R. Wodak and M. Krzyżanowski (2009) *The European Public Sphere and the Media: Europe in Crisis*. Basingstoke: Palgrave.

Vauchez, A. and B. de Witte (eds.) (2013) *Lawyering Europe. European Law as a Transnational Social Field*, Oxford: Hart.

Wiener, A. (2003) 'Editorial: Evolving Norms of Constitutionalism', *European Law Journal*, 9(1): 1–13.

Wiener, A., T.A. Börzel and T. Risse (eds.) (2019) *European Integration Theory,* 3rd edn., Oxford: Oxford University Press.

The limits of power and the complexity of powerlessness

The case of immigration

Saskia Sassen

My concern here is exploring the limits of power and the complexities of powerlessness – the direct or mediated resistances that the powerless can deploy, knowingly or not.[1] Immigration policy enforcement is one institutional domain for exploring these issues, especially in the case of powerful countries and undocumented workers, among the most vulnerable subjects in those same countries. We can think of this case as representing an instance of highly formalized power (the US state) and an instance of extreme powerlessness (undocumented immigrants). To gain some closure on this vast subject, I will focus on the tensions between current policies for controlling immigrants and what we can think of as new elements in the immigration reality. The particular policies that stand out involve the weaponizing of border control. These changes in the immigration reality can be thought of as bits, as in digital bits, that are being assembled into a somewhat novel reality constituted through both well-established conditions and emergent bits whose status is often unclear – they may or may not support that longstanding reality. Here I confine myself to certain bits in a multi-bit reality in-the-making which are unsettling basic alignments on which immigration policy rests. They also reveal the limits of even the most powerful state in the world to get its way, and they show that in certain settings powerlessness becomes complex. Let me illustrate with two recent cases.[2]

Mexico's (former) President Fox's decision to meet with undocumented Mexican immigrants during his visit to the US in Spring 2006 amounted to the making of a new informal jurisdiction. His actions did not fit into existing legal forms that give sovereign states specific types of extraterritorial authority. Nonetheless, his actions were not seen as particularly objectionable; indeed, they were hardly noticed. Yet these were, after all, unauthorized immigrants subject to deportation if detected, in a country that is now spending almost US$2 billion a year to militarize border control. But no INS or other police came to arrest the undocumented thus exposed, and the media barely reacted. Further adding to the novelty was the fact that Congress was considering making illegal immigration a felony, mandating imprisonment. And yet, not even in this political atmosphere did any arrest take place. Nor did the press comment on the juxtaposition of elements.

A second case is the large demonstrations on the streets of Chicago, Los Angeles, and other US cities in March and April of 2006, which included many self-declared undocumented

individuals claiming citizens' rights. Whether some of these may have been actually legal immigrants or citizens is beside the point. We do know that many were indeed unauthorized. At a time when the US Congress was discussing legislation to criminalize illegal immigrants, these undocumented individuals responded by going onto the streets and protesting in very public ways. Their faces appeared on hundreds of front pages and television screens, but no one was arrested – again, against a backdrop of militarized borders and a policy aimed at apprehensions.

Beyond the fact of the lack of intention to arrest these undocumented immigrants, the events point to a second – and perhaps more significant – bit of a reality in the making. There were signs that the claim-making was more about the right to have rights than about the desire to become American citizens per se. American citizenship becomes a channel for becoming a (generic) rights-bearing subject, a more foundational condition than American citizenship per se. There are multiple instances in other countries of an emerging claim for a similar sort of *denationalized* citizenship.

Both instances also signal that although undocumented immigrants are powerless and highly vulnerable, in certain settings they gain a measure of autonomy from powerful actors that intend to control them and that they even can reshape the policies of powerful countries. Some of the most powerful countries in the world have re-geared their public bureaucracies to control these powerless vulnerable actors. In this process, they have been willing to sacrifice their standing as states following the rule of law and compliant with human rights norms. In the long run, this is a very high price for "liberal democracies" to pay – all in order to control powerless and vulnerable people who want only a chance to work. In the process, these powerful states have also lost credibility and revealed the limits of their power, no matter how weaponized their borders.[3]

This emergent multi-bit reality fits neither neatly under transnationalism nor under postnationalism. It does not necessarily extend beyond the territory of the nation-state nor does it presume the end of the state. And even in cases where it might fit, we lose something when we explain it in those terms. Perhaps it is more helpful to see this reality as a variety of microprocesses inside the nation-state which are beginning to denationalize the national as historically constructed. They are not confined to immigration, although this essay utilizes that regime as its lens. Their partial and fragmented character means these processes can coexist with a renationalizing of policy and of political discourse in multiple domains, including immigration.[4]

The limits of militarized border controls given new realities

Against this larger context, the increasingly militarized US–Mexico border is a sort of natural experiment to examine the interaction of great material power and great human vulnerability. Even as the US government seeks to further weaponize the border with Mexico to control undocumented immigration, the bits of this new immigration reality multiply. This multi-bit reality functions within specific settings insofar as migration flows are far more institutionally and geographically structured than is often assumed.[5]

The border itself is a good case to make legible the fact of multiple bits within which we need to situate government border control policy. There is a strong contrast, and possibly contradiction, between the project of militarizing border control and the reality of the border zone. In 2004 – the latest year for which we have comprehensive figures on all the following variables – 175,000 legal immigrants entered the US from Mexico, along with 3.8 million visitors for pleasure, 433,000 visitors for business, 118,000 temporary workers and dependents, 25,000 intra-company transferees and dependents, 21,000 students and dependents, 8,400 exchange visitors and dependents, and 6,200 traders and investors.[6] On the other hand, it is estimated that there are

approximately 3 million Americans living in Mexico, mostly undocumented and 19 million Americans travel there each year as visitors. US foreign direct investment in Mexico now totals US$62 billion annually; and trade with Mexico grew by a factor of eight from 1986 to 2006, before the economic and financial crises began More difficult to measure, but still very real, are the multiple cross-border networks connecting people from each side of the border which go beyond physical border crossings. These include the variety of transnational processes extensively described in the literature with terms such as transnational households and communities,[7] as well as digital transactions that begin to constitute a cross-border electronic space.

Thus, the reality of the border is not quite a line that divides but a partly denationalized fuzzy zone. It binds as much as it divides, and perhaps more so. Thereby it enters in tension with the explicit aims of US immigration policy, and the latter in turn enters in tension with other major US policies, notably trade, offshore manufacturing, and tourism. The US has indeed the resources and power to insert a militarized barrier and to ensure night vision to border patrols in cars and helicopters. We are left, however, with a significant subsequent question. Can this powerful government willing to go all the way to control that border ensure that it will work as it wants it to?[8]

Many of the facts are by now familiar, but some are not. After 15 years of increased militarizing of the border, the US has an all-time high in the estimated unauthorized immigrant population (ca. 11 million). The annual INS budget rose from US$200 million in 1996 to US$1.6 billion in 2005.[9] The number of Border Patrol officers increased from 2,500 in the early 1980s to 18,000 by 2008 (Overneyer-Velázafuez 2011). In *Backfire at the Border* (Massey 2005) reports a sharp increase in the costs per arrest and falling arrest rates. Before 1992, the cost of making one arrest along the US–Mexico border stood at US$300; by 2002, that cost had grown by 467% to US$1,700, and the probability of apprehension had fallen to a 40-year low, despite massive increases in spending on border enforcement. Finally, the escalation of border control has raised the risks and costs of illegal crossing, which in turn has changed a seasonal circulatory migration – with workers leaving their families behind – into a family migration and long-term stays. The *Border* study established that in the early 1980s, about half of all undocumented Mexicans returned home within 12 months of entry. By 2000, the rate of return migration stood at just 25%. In brief, the results were the opposite of what the government aimed at border militarization did not reduce the probability of illegal crossings on the US–Mexico border, and forced unauthorized immigrants to stay longer than they wanted and to bring their families even when they would rather not.

There are three peculiar absences in the enforcement effort in the US which are also part of the larger ecology within which militarization has failed to achieve its aims. One is the absence of a parallel "escalation" in the visa application process: because of understaffing it can still take ten years for a lawful applicant to get processed and we know that many are constrained, often for family reasons, to enter illegally because they cannot wait for years. Second, the budget for inspections of workplaces suspected of violating the law remains minimal and employer sanctions are rare.[10] Third, the budget for tracking visa over-stayers remains minimal and apprehensions are few. At least part of the reason for these absences seems to me rather straightforward. There are four critical differences between these three options and investment in border control. They concern jobs, buying material, lobbies, and propaganda.

On jobs, regardless of political party, the US government has repeatedly shown a strong reluctance to create more jobs for inspecting workplaces, for tracking visa-overstayers, and for processing green-card applications. Over the last 20 years especially, none of these efforts has seen the sharp budgetary increases allocated for controlling the border with Mexico. On buying material, the sharp increases in the INS budget have benefited the makers and sellers of

armaments and surveillance technology. A third difference concerns lobbying efforts in Congress. Armament makers and large corporate employers in agri-business, meat-packing, and other sectors known to employ significant numbers of unauthorized immigrants operate powerful lobbies. INS inspectors and green-card processors, and large sectors of the workforce, do not. Finally, there is the electoral-and-public opinion machinery: weaponizing a border makes for better footage and a better media story than does hiring more INS inspectors and green-card processors.

There are winners and losers in this policy framing. The winners include armament makers, some large corporate employers in particular sectors of the economy, various types of lobbies, employers of undocumented immigrants generally insofar as employers' sanctions are not seriously enforced, and the growing numbers of smugglers whose fees and whose business have increased sharply as US policies have made border crossing more difficult and risky.

The losers in this framing include citizens whose taxes are paying for a far larger and costlier border control operation that is not even reducing illegal crossings – the intended policy outcome for supporting all those Congressional authorizations for budget increases. The losers also include the migrants themselves whose crossings have become far more difficult, dangerous, sometimes deadly, as well as costly given the greater need for using a smuggler. They also include the INS inspectors who have not seen sharp increases in their numbers and resources to enforce employers' sanctions and the overworked and understaffed processing units at the INS.

But the problems go deeper. The emergent multi-bit immigration reality briefly and only partially described earlier is an increasingly active socio-political ecology[11] that undermines traditional notions of border control. Further, this emergent reality is partly fed and strengthened by the fact that the estimated 500 annual deaths among illegal crossers due to current US border control policy are becoming unacceptable on normative grounds – whether social justice norms, human rights, or religious values.

The state itself has changed

While the state continues to play the most important role in immigration policy making and implementation, the state itself has been transformed by the growth of a global economic system and other transnational processes, such as the institutional thickening of the human rights regime, and EU institutions in the case of the EU. Three particular changes in the positioning of national states could have a potentially significant impact on the role of the state in immigration policy making and implementation.

One is the relocation of various components of state authority to supranational organizations, including the institutions of the European Union, the newly formed World Trade Organization, or the newly instituted International Criminal Court with its potentially universal jurisdictions. In the specific case of migration there is also the renewed role of the International Organization for Immigration (IOM) in managing migration and refugees flows and to some extent the OECD.

Strictly speaking we should include a whole series of other actors as well. One instance is the financial and banking sector that handles immigrant remittances. This sector is not an insignificant actor if we consider that worldwide immigrant remittances reached US$230 billion in 2005 and US$318 billion in 2007; after 2008 they declined markedly due to the financial and economic crises (World Bank 2006, 2009).[12] While most of this money goes to developing countries, almost a third went to highly developed countries, principally through the remittances of the transnational professional class. Further, the *Inter-American Development Bank* (IADB) estimates that in 2003, immigrant remittances generated US$2 billion in handling fees for the financial and banking sector on the US$35 billion sent back home by Hispanics in the

US.[13] I mention this mostly as a way of illustrating the extent to which what we call immigration is a larger assemblage of elements embedded in multiple domains of the host society – in this case, even in high finance. This is one of many little (and large) facts that tend to be excluded from the typical analysis of immigration, one characterized by a narrow delineation of the object for research and for policy-making.

Second, the privatization and deregulation of public sector activities has brought with it a type of *de-facto* (rather than formally explicated) privatization of various governance functions that were once in the public bureaucracy.[13] This privatization of governance is particularly evident in the internationalization of trade and investment. Corporations, markets, and free trade agreements are now in fact "governing" an increasing share of cross-border flows, including the regimes for cross-border professionals described earlier.

Third, the numbers and kinds of political actors involved in immigration policy debates and policy making in Europe and the US are far greater than they were two decades ago: the European Union; anti-immigrant parties; vast networks of organizations in both Europe and North America that often represent immigrants, or claim to do so, and fight for immigrant rights; immigrant associations and immigrant politicians, mostly in the second generation; and, especially in the US, so-called ethnic lobbies. The policy process for immigration is no longer confined to a narrow governmental arena of ministerial and administrative interaction. Public opinion and public political debate have become part of the space wherein immigration policy is shaped. Whole parties position themselves politically in terms of their stand on immigration, especially in some of the European countries.

The emerging realities about immigration and the state described in these two first sections amount to a larger ecology within which border controls function. That larger ecology can unsettle, if not undermine, the foundations of border controls.

When bits of the national are denationalized

There is more movement toward a novel approach in handling immigration than the statements and speeches of national politicians in the US and Europe imply. US immigration policy, with its overwhelming focus on border control, rests precisely on not factoring in that emergent immigration reality and the particular state transformations described in the first two sections. Here I can only limit myself to the narrowest definition of these issues.

One particular angle into this matter is to understand whether the renationalizing of the politics of membership precludes the denationalizing of a growing set of components of the larger immigration reality. The partial denationalizing of the national is to be distinguished from transnationalism and from post-nationalism because it does not happen beyond the realm of the national or in more than one country. Its distinctive character is that it happens deep inside the thicket of the national. It may at times intersect with or be one moment in a larger transnational dynamic. In that sense, identifying this denationalizing multi-bit reality adds to, rather than replaces, the types of processes identified in the rich literatures on transnationalism and post-nationalism.

Some of the developments in the EU can be interpreted as an instance of denationalized portable rights. It might be interesting to provide some detail because it may well signal the beginning of a process of which we see elements in the US. At the heart of this process is the shift of rights to individuals as individuals rather than as citizens of a specific country. Immigrants are incorporated into various national and EU-level systems of rights as a result of EU law. This EU-level format for rights shifts the question of "immigrant integration" away from an emphasis on the "foreignness" of immigrants and what to do about it (such as the requirements

for learning the language and the culture of the host country increasingly demanded by national governments of EU member states), and begins to move toward the work of mixing EU level law/policy (such as the *ECHR* and the *Social Charter* of the Council of Europe) with the decisions of national judiciaries, that is to say with a particular component of the state rather than "the" state as such (see Jacobson and Ruffer 2006). One possible outcome is that integration (including the necessity to learn the language of the country of residence) shifts from being *the* requirement for acquiring rights to a responsibility for a rights-bearing immigrant.

A far thinner version of denationalized rights can be seen in the portable mobility rights given to top-level professionals through the major free trade agreements as part of the globalization of trade and investment in services. These are rights inscribed in WTO, NAFTA, and dozens of other trade agreements shaped by the new realities launched in the 1990s. There is a mini-immigration policy in each of the major chapters in these treaties (chapters on a broad range of services, notably, finance, business services, telecommunications, particular types of engineering, and so on). Professionals in each of the specific sectors are given the right to reside in any signatory country for at least three years and enjoy various rights and protections. Staff from major supranational organizations such as the IMF and WTO also enjoy special protections that will hold even in their own country of citizenship.[14]

While the fact of such portable mobility rights is rarely a focus in the migration literature, these professionals are a class of "migrant workers" who are formally endowed with multiple rights. This fact is obscured by the placement of these mobility rights in the treaties under specific economic sectors and descriptions that avoid the language of migration. These are rights that originate in international agreements and require signatory states to fulfill them. Their fulfillment entails a partial denationalizing of the national state's power to grant rights.[15]

The filtering of supranational norms into national law can take many forms.[16] The fact that national systems are critical for the implementation of non-national types of rights (whether those inscribed in free trade agreements or in the human rights regime) is not the only mechanism. A different type of filtering is the growing weight of international norms in national courts and in national law, and, more generally, in domains once reserved to the exclusive authority of national states. While this does not amount to post-nationalism or transnationalism, the filtering of non-national norms does involve a partial denationalizing of at least some components of national law.[17] It all happens within the state apparatus and often remains coded in the language of the national.

Positing matters as an either/or (as in either national or global) is far less valid today than it was even 10 years ago. The last decade has seen significant changes, not only in the EU but also in a country like the US, one of the most closed and "nationalist" in the world. Even the US Supreme Court has in the last few years acknowledged that it needs to consider not only international but also foreign law in its interpretations and decisions. Specifically, when it comes to human rights norms, the US has seen sharp growth in the use of these norms in national courts, and it has seen the federalizing of these norms through rather informal processes that make these norms part of customary practice, eventually enabling their federalization – their becoming national law (Koh 1997).

Any policy bits to match the new immigration reality?

Accepting the fact of a new emergent immigration reality and the serious limitations and even unsustainability of militarized borders does complicate the government's efforts to control immigration. The EU offers some interesting options, even though EU member states are foundationally different from the US in their political culture.

Over the last two decades, the EU has actually accumulated a series of innovations that move it toward governing, rather than controlling, immigration *inside* the EU. This move toward governing is gaining strength even as national governments in the EU continue to speak of unilateral control. Yet when it comes to immigration from outside the EU, strengthening control is what the EU has been gearing up to for the last decade. We can learn something positive from the EU's internal efforts, and, in a way, the EU can learn something negative from the US border control policy – how not to do it.

One foundational outcome from years of EU negotiations that can illustrate the specificity of the EU approach and its contribution to notions of governing rather than controlling immigration is the *Treaty of Amsterdam* (2003). It formally allows a shift of immigration policy and its coordination out of the third pillar (where it is handled as part of justice and home affairs), and into the first pillar, whose legal provisions become part of European Community law and are binding on each member state. Further, it is possible to argue that since individuals will have the legal capacity to invoke first pillar laws and bring them to bear against member states, the changes of the *Amsterdam Treaty* may give the judiciary, here the European Court of Justice, more authority over immigration too. The *Treaty* calls for enforcement of non-discrimination principles within member states, with enforcement through the European Court of Justice (ECJ). The *Treaty's* formal commitment to human rights could strengthen the ECJ's authority over member states and contribute to strengthen the notion of rights-bearing individuals who can move across the member states with their portable rights.

More generally, beyond human rights there is a far larger case to be made: multiple different types of international law are becoming part of the fabric of national law, both through legislative law making and through use in judges' interpretations. This contributes to partly denationalize aspects of national law. Thus, one of the foundational transformations lies in the extent to which a good part of the EU's project inhabits and gets structured inside the complex institutional apparatus of the state. Similarly, in the case of the US much of globalization is structured inside the state. In both cases, this often happens in the language of the national – national law, national economic regulations, national monetary policy, and so on. We need to decode this language of the national rather than take it at face value: though formulated as national, these structures may they have little to do with the national as historically constructed.

Finally, we need a few words on borders given their increasingly ambiguous character. Borders are institutions, and as such, they are undergoing change and stress. In my research, I have tried to track the formation of a whole range of novel types of bordering capabilities – types of controls that are not embedded in the notion of geographic borders as produced in the historic process of nation-state formation.[18] These bordering capabilities do not pivot on geographic border controls. They are highly technical capacities which have multiple institutional locations beyond the "border" *per se*. For instance, in global finance, there are multiple such bordering capabilities (many inside financial institutions rather than in government offices) that have replaced the older traditional national borders. Free-trade agreements certainly open up countries, but multiply processes of certification at point of production, again not the typical border. When "borders" are looked at through these lenses one can see a wide range of possibilities. The sharpest and most developed case at this time regarding these new bordering capabilities and people flows, are the portable rights of the new transnational professional class. These rights are derived from free-trade agreements, discussed earlier, as well as the IMF and other institutions deeply engaged in global processes; as rights they become operative inside the countries that are signatories. There is no similar regime for working-class migrations today, but it is one possible regime in the future, perhaps as part of an increasing flexibility of migration flows (which would enable return and circular migrations).

Conclusion

This chapter has examined the institutional insertions of the immigration question in a far larger and complex map than current immigration law can fathom. We need more such close examinations in order to understand the micro shifts that are amounting to a new immigration reality. This new immigration reality comprises a variety of bits. These include changes in the position of the state in a world that is not only increasingly interdependent but also one where the national is itself being partly denationalized through state action. This begins to unsettle the distinction national-foreign, as epitomized by Fox's visit described earlier and by more foundational shifts, such as the institutionalizing of the human rights regime and claims for rights made by unauthorized immigrants in all major immigration countries. Immigration is beginning to play on a far broader register than that represented by the "immigrant" in her relation to immigration policy narrowly defined. This opens up a whole new research agenda that is not concerned with the familiar issues of geographic border controls and the binaries of inside/outside. Such analysis dislodges the immigration question from narrow national versus foreign dimensions as made emblematic in militarized border control. It helps expand the analytic and policy terrain within which to examine the question of immigration, immigrant rights, and the governing of immigration.

Notes

1. Power and powerlessness are, clearly, complex categories subject to diverse forms of theorization. This essay in a way can be seen as an exploration of the limits of the Weberian notion of power – power as an actor's or institution's capacity to impose its will. Elsewhere (Sassen 2008: chs. 3, 4, 8, and 9) I have elaborated on the work of constructing the condition we call power, and thereby emphasized the variable success and effectiveness of that work of constructing power and the durability of its results. There (Sassen 2008: chs. 2, 6, 7, and 8) I have also elaborated the notion that powerlessness is constructed and hence variable; from there, then, comes the possibility that at one end of that variable, powerlessness can be elementary, and at another end, complex. This variability does not simply depend on the individuals: for instance, the powerlessness of a specific undocumented immigrant will be quite elementary in the context of a California commercial farm, but can become complex in a city like New York, Los Angeles, or Chicago.
2. For a full development of the issues raised in this paper beyond the case of immigration, see Sassen (2008).
3. In using "weaponized" I seek to emphasize a particular component of the militarized border – the materiality of border control. Militarized is a form of control which includes but cannot be reduced to the weapons being used. One reason for making the distinction is the role of the armaments industry in this shift, a subject I briefly address later in this essay.
4. See here Benhabib (2004), and my response to Seyla Benhabib in Sassen (2007a).
5. A few basic figures help illustrate this geographic structuring; I develop the institutional aspect in Sassen (2007b): chapters 5 and 6. About 30 countries account for over 75% of all immigration; 11 of these are developed countries, with over 40% of all immigrants. More generally, the latest estimate is of a worldwide immigrant resident population of 185–192 million in 2005. This is under 3% of global population, but up from the 2.1% of world population in 1975; and up from the 175 million or 2.9% of world population estimated for 2000 (IOM 2006).
6. Please find sources for these various items in Massey (2005); for continuous updates see http://www.inci.ox.ac.uk.
7. This literature is particularly vast in the case of North American scholarship on Western Hemisphere immigration. I discuss it briefly in Sassen (2007b: ch. 6). For an excellent analysis of the Mexico-US border see Mark Overneyer-Velázquez (ed.) Beyond la Frontera: The History of Mexico–U.S. Migration. Oxford: Oxford University Press 2011.

8. On the question of control as a political choice, see Andreas (1998). See also generally Cornelius (2005).
9. As of 2007, the INS function is part of the Department of Homeland Security.
10. Historically, only about 2% of the INS budget was allocated to employer sanction enforcement, and few sanctions were imposed after the passing of the legislation as part of the 1984 Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA). In 2005, US Immigration and Customs Enforcement, which succeeded the INS, strengthened enforcement efforts: it won 127 criminal convictions in 2005, up from 46 in 2004, and won US$15 million in settlements from Wal-Mart and 12 subcontractors for violations. To address the failure of employer sanction enforcement, the government has started the Basic Pilot Program, part of Homeland Security. It is an electronic search machine that combines Social Security and immigration databases to verify an employee's status. While today's program is small and voluntary, with about 6,000 employers enrolled, it can be extended to each of the country's approximately 8 million employers. Violations of the law would subject employers to stiff fines, with jail sentences for repeat offenders. However, the program is problematic in technical and legal terms. This combination has created a mixed opposition – from civil rights organizations to big business. A Government Accountability Office report issued in August 2005 criticized the program for its inability to identity fraud, for flaws in the databases, and for the possibility that employers will abuse the system.
11. In using this term I am partly playing off a concept that is today much used in analyses of the new interactive communication technologies: the notion is that these technologies become performative (deliver their "goods") in the context of social systems or configurations that go well beyond the technology itself (Sassen 2008: ch.7). In the context of the border I seek to emphasize that the border can be activated into diverse specific formations, not only the one that has to do with dividing and closure.
12. The IADB also found that, for Latin America and the Caribbean as a whole, in 2003 these remittance flows exceeded the combined flows of all foreign direct investment and net official development assistance.
13. Elsewhere I have examined how when public sector firms are privatized, and, more generally, when economies are deregulated, regulations do not simply disappear. Rather, they are transformed into private corporate specialized services (accounting, legal, etc.), and oriented toward the private interests of the firms and markets at issue (see Sassen 2001).
14. For a development of this aspect, see Sassen (2007b: ch. 6).
15. A detailed examination of these issues can be found in Sassen (2007b: chs. 5, 6, and 9).
16. See, for example, Spiro (2008) and Koh (1998).
17. For instance, to mention just one of the more recalcitrant EU members, in 2000 the UK incorporated the bulk of the European Convention of Human Rights into domestic law. The British Parliament adopted the Human Rights Act of 1998 in November of 1998; it became effective in the UK in October 2000.
18. For more detail, see Sassen (2008: ch. 9).

References

Andreas, P. (1998) "The Escalation of U.S. Immigration Control in the Post-NAFTA Era", *Political Science Quarterly*, *113*(*4*): 591–615.

Benhabib, S. (2004) *The Rights of Books: Aliens, Residents, and Citizens*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Cornelius, W. (2005) "Controlling unwanted immigration: Lessons from the United States 1993–2004", *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, *31*(*4*): 775–794.

International Organization for Migration (IOM) (2006) *World Migration 2005: Costs and Benefits of International Migration*. Geneva: IOM.

Jacobson, D. and G. B. Ruffer (2006) "Social Relations on a Global Scale: The Implications for Human Rights and for Democracy", in M. Giugni and F. Passy (eds.), *Dialogues on Migration Policy*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, pp. 25–44.

Koh, H. H. (1997) "How Is International Human Rights Law Enforced?", *Indiana Law Journal*, *74*: 1379.

Koh, H. H. (1998). "The 1998 Frankel Lecture: Bringing International Law Home", *Houston Law Review*, *35*: 623.

Massey, D. S. (2005) *Backfire at the Border: Why Enforcement without Legalization Cannot Stop Illegal Immigration*. Washington, DC: Center for Trade and Policy Studies, Cato Institute.

Overneyer-Velázafuez, M. (ed.) (2011) *Beyond la Frontera: The History of Mexico–US Migration*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Sassen, S. (2001) *The Global City: New York, London, Tokyo*, 2nd edn. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Sassen, S. (2007a) "Response to Seyla Benhabib", *European Journal of Political Theory*, *6*(*4*): 431–444.

Sassen, S. (2007b) *A Sociology of Globalization*. New York: Norton.

Sassen, S. (2008) *Territory, Authority, Rights: From Medieval to Global Assemblages*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Spiro, P. J. (2008) *Beyond Citizenship: American Identity after Globalization*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

World Bank (2006) *Global Economic Prospects: Economic Implications of Remittances and Migration*. Washington, DC: World Bank.

World Bank (2009) *World Development: Reshaping Economic Geography*. Washington, DC: World Bank.

Transnational activisms and the global justice movement

Donatella della Porta and Raffaele Marchetti

Transnational activism can be defined as the mobilization around collective claims that are: (a) related to transnational/global issues, (b) formulated by actors located in more than one country, and (c) addressing more than one national government and/or international governmental organization (IGO) or another international actor. While forms of transnational activism have existed since a distant past, economic and political globalization have increased their frequency, as well as attention to them. Within the wider process of global transformations, the global justice movement (GJM) (sometimes called anti-globalization movements), represents a key, though not unique, instance of transnational activism.[1]

In the last decades, the intensification of transnational protests has been followed with attention in various fields of the social sciences, and beyond (Langman and Benski 2019; Chase-Dunn and Nagy 2019). Not only political science and sociology but also anthropology and geography have had a specific focus on transnational social movements, which have produced a substantial body of empirical research and theoretical reflections. At the same time, social and political theory has been an integral part of this renewed interest for transnational protest. In particular, concepts developed in normative theories – such as (global) civil society, cosmopolitanism, and deliberative democracy – have been used to investigate the innovations these forms of activism brought about. By clarifying the contextual variations at stake, these studies created a bridge between empirical and normative analysis (on the rapprochement between empirical political sciences and normative political theory, see Bauböck, 2008).

Forms of transnational activisms

Transnational activism entails transnational actors. Global civil society, international nongovernmental organizations, transnational social movement organizations (TSMOs), the GJMs are concepts developed to name these actors. In social theory, *global civil society organizations* (GCSOs) is a much used, and much debated term to indicate civil society organizations that represent themselves as a global actor, networking across national borders and challenging international institutions. Similarly, empirical research in international relations has addressed the birth of *international non-governmental organizations* (INGOs), pointing at the recent increase in their number, membership, and availability of material resources, as well as their influence on policy choices.

The related concept of TSMOs was introduced to define the INGOs active within networks of social movements. While nongovernmental organizations and social movements developed in parallel to national politics, the formation of INGOs and TSMOs has been seen as a response to the growing politicization of international politics. Research on the GJM has thus understood it as the loose network of organizations and individuals, engaged in collective action of various kinds, on the basis of the shared goal of advancing the cause of justice (economic, social, political, and environmental) among and between peoples across the globe (Della Porta 2007).

Focusing on the interactions between these actors and IGOs (initially especially the United Nations, later on the European Union and other organizations), the first studies emphasized, in particular, their capacity to adapt to the IGOs' rules of the game, preferring a diplomatic search for agreement over democratic accountability, discretion over transparency, and persuasion over mobilization in the street. Some of these actors have been highlighted as having not only increased in number but also strengthened their influence in various stages of international policy-making (Della Porta, Kriesi, and Rucht 2009). Their assets include an increasing credibility in public opinion and consequent availability of private funding, as well as specific knowledge, rootedness at the local level, and independence from governments. They are usually considered as actors who enhance pluralism within international institutions by representing groups that would otherwise be excluded and, by turning the attention on transnational processes, making the governance process more transparent. Some of these claims have been challenged, however. Research indicated that, in contrast to business organizations and other economic actors, the actors of global civil society are usually loosely organized and poorly staffed, consisting mainly of transnational alliances of various national groups. Their inclusion in international politics has also been selective: only those organizations that adapt to the 'rules of the game' obtain some access, though usually of an informal nature, to some IGOs. Finally, rootedness at the local level and independence from governments remain variable.

Studies on INGOs and TSMOs highlighted that many of them had nevertheless become increasingly institutionalized, both in terms of acquired professionalism and in the forms of action they employ, devoting more time to lobbying or informing the public than to marching in the street. In this regard, networks constitute a key organizational form (Marchetti and Pianta 2011). A *transnational network* can be defined as a permanent co-ordination among different organizations (and sometimes individuals, such as experts), located in several countries, based on a shared frame for one specific global issue, developing both protest and proposal in the form of joint campaigns and social mobilizations against common targets at national or supranational level. Transnational networking is characterized by voluntary and horizontal patterns of co-ordination, which are trust-centred, reciprocal, and asymmetrical. Networks are in fact eminently non-static organizations: flexibility and fluidity are two major features which allow for adapting effectively to changing social conditions and to keep porous the organizational boundaries (Anheier and Katz 2005; Diani 2003). Transnational networks play a major role in terms of aggregation of social forces and development of common identities.

These actors have also innovated the repertoire of contention. The main activities by transnational networks include spreading information, influencing mass media, and raising awareness, but also lobbying, protest, and supplying of services to constituency. At a more general level, transnational networks are usually characterized by their advocacy function towards the promotion of normative change in politics (Keck and Sikkink 1998; Risse-Kappen 1995) that they pursue through the use of transnational campaigns. In more recent time, innovative forms of transnational protests have been invented and spread. Among them, a new form of transnational protest is the *counter-summit*, defined as the encounter of transnational activists in parallel to official summits of international institutions. Together with counter-summits, *global days of action*

represent a second new form of protest that brought activists to march, on the same day, in many countries. Finally, since 2001, transnational activism intensified in the *World Social Forum*, as well as its many macro-regional and national version (Della Porta 2009a, 2009b; Smith *et al.* 2007; Della Porta, Kriesi, and Rucht 2009; Pianta and Marchetti 2007; Smith 2007; Tarrow 2005b). Within these events and campaigns, new frames of action developed, symbolically constructing a global self, but also producing structural effects in the form of new movement networks. Not only have supranational events increased in frequency but they have also constituted founding moments for a new cycle of protest that has developed at the national and subnational levels on the issue of global justice. Even though transnational protests (in the forms of global days of action, counter-summits, or social forums) remained a rare occurrence, they emerged as particularly 'eventful' in their capacity to produce relational, cognitive, and affective effects on social movement activists and social movement organizations.

Global claims: a global civil society?

The GJM has contributed to redefine a number of political issues around global justice and to initiate a process of norm change at the international/global level. While the symbolical reference to the globe is considered by some scholars as nothing really new – referencing the traditional internationalism of the workers' movement or the transnational campaigns against slavery – others have instead stressed the centrality of the global dimension today. Transnational communication helped not only a definition of problems as global but also the cognitive linkages between different themes in broad transnational campaigns. Whereas in the 1980s social movements had undergone a process of specialization on single issues with 'new social movements' developing specific knowledge and competences on particular sub-issues, the GJM has linked together a multiplicity of themes related with class, gender, generation, environment, race, and religion. In fact, different concerns of different movements were bridged in a lengthy, although not always immediately visible, process of mobilization (Della Porta 2007, Daphi, Anderl & Deitelhoff 2019). Accordingly, the GJM developed from protest campaigns around 'broker issues' that tied together concerns of different movements and organizations. These processes resonate with some theoretical reflections about the emergence and functioning of a global civil society, characterized by norms of autonomy, respect for differences, and solidarity.

In transnational protest campaigns, fragments of diverse cultures – secular and religious, radical and reformist, younger and older generations – have been linked to a broader discourse with the theme of social (and global) injustice as a common glue, while still leaving wide margins for separate developments. In many reflections on contemporary societies, civil society is referred to as an actor being able to address the tensions between particularism and universalism, plurality and connectedness, diversity and solidarity (Della Porta and Diani 2010). It is, in this sense, referred to as 'a solidarity sphere in which certain kind of universalizing community comes gradually to be defined and to some degrees enforced' (Alexander, 1998: 7). Research on civil society has stressed civility as respect for the others, politeness, and the acceptance of strangers as key values (Keane 2003) as well as autonomy from both the state and the market.

The GJM has been said to contribute to and reflect on the spread of composite and tolerant identities (Eschle and Alexander 2019). The most innovative feature of this relational, cognitive, and affective process of transnational activism is precisely the capacity to combine the emphasizing of pluralism and diversity with a common definition of the self around a global dimension. At the transnational level, local and global concerns were linked around values such as equality, justice, human rights, and environmental protection. Transnational movements also confirm the growing importance of a conception of autonomy, as emancipation from state power and the

market that has always been central to the definition of civil society. Particularly inspired by new social movements and the movement for democracy in Eastern Europe (Misztal 2001), concerns about personal autonomy, self-organization, and private space, independently from both the market and the state, became central (Kaldor 2003: 4). In particular at the global level, the enemy is singled out in neoliberal globalization, which activists perceive as characterizing not only the policies of the international financial organizations (the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, and World Trade Organizations) but also the free-market and deregulation policies by national governments (Hardnack 2020). These policies are considered as responsible for growing social injustice, with especially negative effects on women, the environment, the South, and other marginalized groups. Responses to such threat are different and vary from a reflexive continuation of the welfare policies, against both risks of colonization by state power but also of re-economization of society (Jean Cohen and Arato 1992), to the reform or re-foundation of international and would-be global institutions (Patomäki and Teivainen 2004). Rooted global visions, autonomy, respect for diversity, and solidarity are in fact paramount political principles around which the GJM coalesced (Marchetti 2009).

Within a global vision, *place-basedness* plays a central role as in opposition to mainstream interpretation of globalization. Contrary to the universalizing perspective that regards the local as provincial and regressive, this principle maintains the importance of localism as an unavoidable and critical resource for social and political life. Rather than accepting mainstream images of dangerous nationalism and bigoted regionalism, the place-based paradigm re-affirms the local and the present as the essential elements for a real political emancipation, though always keeping open and lively the dialogue with the external for cross-fertilization. In this sense, culture plays a relevant role in that it is only through a process of cultural development and self-awareness that collective subjectivity can flourish. Without falling back in a self-enclosed localism, rooted micro-politics, from indigenous movements in Amazon forest to neighbourhood associations in Florence, is thus seen not as a loophole to escape, but as key process for the reorganization of the space from below (Dirlik and Prazniak 2001; Osterweil 2005).

Autonomy is also crucial for distinguishing this perspective from its alternative paradigms. In opposition both to anonymous processes of globalization, and to naïve romanticism and local power positions, the autonomy principle asserts the legitimacy of communal authority. Highlighting pleasures, productivity, and rights of communities, local sovereignty remains grounded on a deep conception of democracy that rejects distant authority. Self-determination is claimed to be able to offer sound solutions to social requirements through a revolution of everyday life where social aims are focused on taking advantage of cultural heritage and traditions rather than seizing power. In many instances, autonomy is interpreted as part of a long process of decolonization which entails struggle against any form of domination, be it intimate, practical, or ideological. The principle of autonomy is mainly twofold for it entails both political independence and economic independence. Concerning the latter, it defends the strengthening of local economies as representing more democratic, sustainable, and economically effective way of production. Food-sovereignty – reoriented towards community needs rather than global market imperatives – forms part of the ideal hereby implied. This indigenous, autonomist, anarchist, and environmentalist perspective aims thus at what has been called global de-linking (Hines 2000; Starr and Adams 2003).

Diversity constitutes a further crucial component. Here the contention confutes the supposedly homogenizing process of globalization that would create a single societal model in which individuals would be deprived of their cultural specificity and reduced to anonymous consumers. In opposition to the single capitalist interpretation of space, time, and values, pluralism is here pursued through a double process. While local cultural worlds are reaffirmed from below,

universalizing globalism is critically de-constructed without falling into the equally hegemonic perspective according to which any partial or plural alternative remains incomplete and deficient of something. A different political epistemology is advocated for, one that is not in need of a centralized and unified point of reference. The image envisaged here is thus not a single project, but rather a plurality of cultural projects, a movement of movements, 'a world in which many worlds fit', as the Zapatistas would say. Such complex pluralism is an inevitable result once the point of departure is from below and without central planning, but such diversity is rather considered as a source of mutual learning than as an obstacle. Once this myriad of identities is networked, a new kind of globalism is revealed in the form of a subaltern cosmopolitanism (de Sousa Santos and Rodríguez-Garavito 2005; Tarrow 2005a).

Solidarity represents a final key principle that stresses the importance of transnational collaboration in overcoming local political difficulties. A key factor underpinning the possibility of solidarity is the development of a new interpretation of socio-political problems requiring collective action. The recognition of world interdependence constitutes the turning point for nurturing a process of problem generalization in which local issues circumscribed to the vernacular be no longer. Following from the acknowledgement of the inter-linking of global and local, the principle of solidarity aims to generate a sense of group collective identity, thus of shared fate, which would enhance inter-local coalition to promote global change. In opposition to the neoliberal logic of individual atomization, local groups would consequently feel they are not alone in their effort and, if acting together, they are able to impact on their lives (Brecher, Costello, and Smith 2000; Smith, Chatfield, and Pagnucco 1997).

Global movements and deliberative democracy

Following from the previous political reflections is the profound reinterpretation of the central theme of democracy as developed by transnational activists. In this respect, it is especially important to note the conception of participatory and deliberative democracy which is elaborated and prefigured in the GJMs and related transnational networks.

In normative theory and beyond, several studies have indicated that the crisis of representative democracy is accompanied by the (re)emergence of other conceptions and practices of democracy. Empirical research on political participation has stressed that, while some more conventional forms of participation (such as voting or party-linked activities) are declining, protest forms are increasingly used. Citizens vote less, but they are not less interested in or knowledgeable about politics. While some traditional types of associations are decreasing in popularity, others (social movement organizations and/or civil society organizations) are growing in resources, legitimacy, and members.

The GJM builds upon some visions of democracy that have long been present in the social sciences' normative and empirical analysis of democracy. These visions however have been (or risk being) removed or marginalized in the 'minimalistic' conceptions of democracy that became dominant in the political as well as the scientific discourse. Social movements do not limit themselves to presenting demands to decision makers; they also more or less explicitly express a fundamental critique of conventional politics, thus shifting their endeavours from politics itself to meta-politics (Offe 1985). Their ideas resonate with 'an ancient element of democratic theory that calls for an organisation of collective decision making referred to in varying ways as classical, populist, communitarian, strong, grass-roots, or direct democracy against a democratic practice in contemporary democracies labelled as realist, liberal, elite, republican, or representative democracy' (Kitschelt 1993: 15). Their critique has traditionally addressed the representative element of democracy, with calls for citizen participation.

While participatory aspects have long been present in theorizing about democracy and social movements, recent developments in transnational activism can be usefully discussed in light of the growing literature on deliberative democracy, with its focus on communication (Della Porta 2005a, 2005b). Several of the scholars who participated in this debate located democratic deliberation in voluntary groups (Joshua Cohen 1989), social movements (Dryzek 2000), protest arenas (Young 2003: 119), or, more in general, enclaves free from institutional power (Mansbridge 1996). Deliberative participatory democracy refers to decisional processes in which, under conditions of equality, inclusiveness, and transparency, a communicative process based on reason (the strength of a good argument) may transform individual preferences, leading to decisions oriented to the public good (Della Porta 2005a, 2005b). In particular, deliberative democracy 'requires some forms of apparent equality among citizens' (Joshua Cohen 1989: 18); as it takes place among free and equal citizens, as 'free deliberation among equals' (Joshua Cohen 1989: 20). Deliberation must exclude power deriving from coercion but also an unequal weighting of the participants as representatives of organizations of different sizes or as more influential individuals. Additionally, deliberative arenas are inclusive: all citizens with a stake in the decisions to be taken must be included in the process and able to express their views. This means that the deliberative process takes place under conditions of plurality of values, including people with different perspectives but facing common problems. Moreover, transparency resonates with direct, participatory democracy: assemblies are typically open, public spheres. In Joshua Cohen's definition, a deliberative democracy is 'an association whose affairs are governed by the *public* deliberation of its members' (Joshua Cohen 1989: 17, emphasis added).

While not always coherently practised, these norms are more and more present in the discourse of contemporary social movements. If norms of equality, inclusiveness, and transparency were already present in social movements, attempts to develop alternative, deliberative, visions and practices of democracy constitute a novelty. Deliberative democracy differs from conceptions of democracy as the aggregation of (exogenously generated) preferences. A deliberative setting facilitates the search for a common end or good (Elster 1998). In this model of democracy, 'the political debate is organized around alternative conceptions of the public good', and, above all, it 'draws identities and citizens' interests in ways that contribute to public building of public good' (Joshua Cohen 1989: 18–19). In particular, deliberative democracy stresses reason, argumentation, and dialogue: people are convinced by the force of the best argument. Deliberation is based on horizontal flows of communication, multiple producers of content, wide opportunities for interactivity, confrontation based on rational argumentation, and attitude to reciprocal listening (Habermas 1981, 1996 [1992]). Decisions rely upon arguments that participants recognize as reasonable (Joshua Cohen and Sabel 1997).

What seems especially new in the conception of deliberative democracy, as developed within transnational networks, is the emphasis on preference (trans)formation with an orientation to the definition of the public good. In this sense, the GJM and related networks seem to agree that 'deliberative democracy requires the transformation of preferences in interaction' (Dryzek 2000: 79). They also see their own action as 'a process through which initial preferences are transformed in order to take into account the points of view of the others' (Miller 1993: 75). In the GJM these norms entailed a renewed attention to practices of consensus, with decisions approvable by all participants – in contrast with majority rule, where decisions are legitimated by vote.

When applied to the realm of political struggle, these innovative conceptions of democracy have generated a critical attitude towards national and transnational politics. Experimenting in their organizational praxis, transnational activists have elaborated demands for radical changes not only in policies but also in politics. If the social movements of the 1980s and the 1990s were described as more pragmatic and single-issue oriented, research on the GJM testifies to

its continuous interest in addressing the meta-issue of democracy, with some continuity and innovations vis-à-vis past experiences (Della Porta 2007, 2009a, 2009b). Transnational networks emerged as political actors, mobilizing in various forms in order to produce institutional changes, but also trying to practise those novelties in their internal lives. The pre-figurative role of internal democratic practices acquires a particularly important role for the GJM organizations, which stress a necessary coherence between what is advocated in the external environment and what is practised inside.

Social movements are also more and more cited as important participants in democratic processes. As Pierre Rosanvallon recently observed, 'the history of real democracies cannot be dissociated from a permanent tension and contestation' (Rosanvallon 2006: 11). In his vision, democracy needs not only legal legitimation but also what he calls 'counter-democracy'. Citizens' attentive vigilance upon power holders is defined as a specific, political modality of action, a 'particular form of political intervention', different from decision making, but still a fundamental aspect of the democratic process (Rosanvallon 2006: 40). Actors such as independent authorities and judges, but also mass media, experts, and social movements, have traditionally exercised this function of surveillance. The latter, in particular, are considered as most relevant for the development of an 'expressive democracy' that corresponds to 'the *prise de parole* of the society, the manifestation of a collective sentiment, the formulation of a judgment about the governors and their action, or again the production of claims' (Rosanvallon 2006: 26). Surveillance from below is all the more important given the crisis of representative, electoral democracy.

Social movement organizations take the democratic function of control seriously, mobilizing to put pressure on decision makers, as well as developing counter-knowledge and open public spaces. In fact, research indicates that the GJMs organizations interact with public institutions, at various territorial levels (Della Porta 2009a). In many cases, especially not only at the local level, but they also collaborate with public institutions, both on specific problems and in broader campaigns. They contract out specific services, but they are also often supported in recognition of their function in building 'counter' democratic spaces (Rosanvallon and Goldhammer 2009). In particular, these organizations perceive themselves as controllers of public institutions, promoting alternative policies but also, more broadly, calling for more (and different) democracy. While stressing the need for more public and less private, more state and less market, they also define themselves especially as autonomous from institutions and as performing democratic control of the governors. By creating public spaces, they contribute to the development of ideas and practices (Della Porta 2009b). If electoral accountability has long been privileged over the power of surveillance in the historical evolution of procedural democracy, social movement organizations contribute to bringing attention back to the 'counter democracy' of surveillance. Democratic surveillance acquires a special meaning given the perceived challenge of adapting democratic conceptions and practices to the increasing shift of competence towards the transnational level. In this transition, transnational networks contribute to the debate on global democracy, not only by criticizing the lack of democratic accountability and even transparency of many existing IGOs and of the wider globalization process but also by asking for a globalization of democracy and actually constructing a global public sphere (Smith 2007).

Participation as non-hierarchical and horizontal public engagement constitutes in fact a major element of the political visions constructed by the GJM (Marchetti 2008). Here the critical target consists of all those indirect forms of political representation accused of eroding the political trust between the elected and the electors, or, in the most radical interpretation, of hiding the deception of the ruling class. Contrary to this supposed elitist view, a model of democratic participation is reasserted in which active engagement of the entire citizenry is expected at all levels and genuinely collective decision-making process thus implemented. In more technical terms,

the principle of participation is often associated, as said, with the deliberative turn in political thinking. This input-oriented process is supposed to generate better information, higher solidarity, greater engagement and democratic skills, and enhanced trust in public institutions. In this conception of politics, public institutions are then seen more as facilitators of self-organized open spaces from below, rather than as traditional economic and political leadership from above. Different to previous left ideologies, political parties are for the most part mistrusted while self-organized civil society is called to join politics in first person. Also innovative is an interpretation of politics, according to which self-organization is directed towards changing society rather than taking power and control the state (Fung and Wright 2003; Polletta 2002).

Subaltern, thick, and rooted cosmopolitanism

The GJM has not only inspired a new conceptualization of deliberative democracy but also a peculiar version of the long-standing tradition of cosmopolitanism. In recent years, a sophisticated body of work, mainly (but not exclusively) coming from sociologists and social movement theorists, has provided a robust restatement of cosmopolitan thinking in terms of social cosmopolitanism which is very much indebted to political activism. This third wave of cosmopolitan thinking was generated as a reaction to the first two phases: in opposition to the first ethical phase, which is accused of being too abstract and thin (being linked only to the idea of common humanity), and in opposition to the second institutional phase, which it accused of being too close to a western, dominating agenda and too far from grassroots experience (i.e. resembling the global governance model). In response to these limits, this later version suggests new ways of conceptualizing the socio-political nexus that remains more inclusive and locally rooted. Rather than starting from a normative question of justice (ethical cosmopolitanism's question: *What does global justice imply?*) or a formal question of institutional design (institutional cosmopolitanism's question: *Which institutions best serve global justice?*), here the starting questions are about the agency: *Who needs cosmopolitanism? Who is the genuine actor of cosmopolitanism?* The answer is the marginalized and excluded people of the world. This marks from the beginning a stark divergence from previous cosmopolitan thinking towards a more socially considerate reflection. What emerges is a third cosmopolitan understanding that combines the aspiration to achieve transnational and global justice with attentiveness to local struggles and realities as they actually exist (Marchetti 2008: ch. 4).

It is highly significant that social cosmopolitanism emerged from an antagonism towards previous cosmopolitan theory. A number of oppositional claims on specific key problems with cosmopolitanism are of particular concern to social cosmopolitanism. They are the following: (a) the domination problem, according to which cosmopolitanism is considered too close to neoliberal capitalism; (b) the cultural problem, according to which cosmopolitanism is understood to rely on too minimal a set of abstract prescriptions that are far from popular experience; (c) the motivational problem, according to which cosmopolitanism fails to connect norms to practices; and (d) the political problem, according to which cosmopolitanism fails to champion the claims of local groups, remaining too attached to élites. In response to this critical focus, this new version of cosmopolitanism presents itself as subaltern, thick, embedded, and rooted. It claims to be subaltern because it focuses on those voices that come from minorities, often from the south of the world, and not from the western centres of global governance (de Sousa Santos 2002). It is thick because it is imbued with solidaristic principles of social justice, and is not minimalist in terms of liberal non-harm (Delanty 2006). It is embedded because it is inserted within a social context characterized by intense mutual obligations and feelings of attachment to a comprehensive political experience, rather than referring to loose institutional relationships (Appiah 2006).

Finally, it is rooted in that it emerges from local practices and remains tightly connected with political struggles from below, in opposition to élitist management (Tarrow 2005b).

In contrast to the supposedly constitutive *flâneurisme* of cosmopolitanism, social cosmopolitans highlight the inevitability of relying on local factors for building up a viable political community. Social cohesion and solidaristic ties are needed for any political project. Any political struggle needs, in fact, to be embedded within local factors, within local struggles, to be effective and able to mobilize people. Social and political bonds are key elements for generating local and particularistic mutual obligations, which in turn are the true bases for eventual political solidarity, be it local, national, or transnational. The traditional side of communities is important, but this does not mean falling back on a blind acceptance of customs. Previous cosmopolitan thinking developed a problematic denigration of traditions, customs, and all that is related to local conservatism, including ethnicity and religion. Social cosmopolitanism conversely triggers a new understanding of the social. Pre-given traditions are a fundamental social bond, although they are not the only binding elements. Political visions remain the key component for reforming actual societies towards more democratic systems, but they can only work if they are embedded and engage critically with local traditions. Accordingly, the democratization process cannot be imposed from above (and a fortiori cannot be coercively imported), but it has to grow out of the *Lebenswelt* (lifeworld) − it has to empower individuals within traditions, not against them. A cosmopolitan framework built from below would serve as a facilitator of egalitarian and reciprocal encounters. It would provide the necessary overall framework for a potential reciprocal enrichment rather than for a homogenizing process. Only by beginning from the local can transnational solidarity be built through the formation of transnational and overlapping communities. Unity within locally rooted diversity: this is the model of (transnational) democracy that the social cosmopolitanism defends.

While reflections on global justice and cosmopolitanism had developed particularly strongly at the turn of the Millennium, a few years later the financial crisis that hit the world with different strength and in different forms has triggered also a political crisis, challenging not only the efficacy but also the legitimacy of some institutions. Criticism addressed especially the role of international financial institutions in the deregulation processes that had been conducive to the economic breakdown and in the imposition of austerity policies that further increased inequalities within and between states. This also brought about a backlash against transnationalization and exclusive forms of communitarianism. The progressive social movements that had been at the bases of the mobilization for global justice experimented some difficulties in organizing international protests (Della Porta 2020a). Even large and established NGOs were criminalized at national and international levels for their intervention in support of migrants' and social rights. These challenges notwithstanding, cosmopolitan visions remained however alive, being adapted to challenging circumstances, including the emergencies produced by a dramatic global threat such as the pandemic (Della Porta 2020b; Delanty 2021).

Note

1. A different response to globalization was formulated by far right movements in terms of nationalistic populism (Bornschier 2017; Broz, Frieden, and Weymouth 2021).

References

Alexander, J. C. (1998). 'Introduction. Civil Society I, II, III: Constructing and Empirical Concept from Normative Controversies and Historical Transformations'. In J. C. Alexander (ed.), *Real Civil Society: Dilemma of Institutionalization*. London: Sage.

Anheier, H. and Katz, H. (2005). 'Network Approach to Global Civil Society'. In H. Anheier, M. Glasius, and M. Kaldor (eds.), *Global Civil Society Yearbook 2004/5*. London: Sage.

Appiah, K. A. (2006). *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers*. New York: W. W. Norton.

Bauböck, R. (2008). 'Normative Empirical Theory and Empirical Research'. In D. Della Porta and M. Keating (eds.), *Approaches and Methodologies in the Social Sciences: A Pluralist Perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bornschier S. (2017). Globalization, Cleavages, and the Radical Right. In J. Rydgren (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of the Radical Right*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Brecher, J., Costello, T., and Smith, B. (2000). *Globalization from Below: The Power of Solidarity*. Cambridge: South End Press.

Broz, L., Frieden, J., and Weymouth, S. (2021). 'Populism in Place: The Economic Geography of the Globalization Backlash'. Forthcoming in *International Organization*.

Chase-Dunn C. and Nagy S. (2019). Global Social Movements and World Revolutions in the Twenty-First Century. In Berberoglu B. (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Social Movements, Revolution, and Social Transformation*. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham.

Cohen, J. (1989). 'Deliberation and Democratic Legitimacy'. In A. Harmilin and P. Pettit (eds.), *The Good Polity*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Cohen, J. and Arato, A. (1992). *Civil Society and Political Theory*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Cohen, J. and Sabel, C. F. (1997). 'Directly-Deliberative Polyarchy'. *European Law Journal*, *3*(*4*): 313–342.

Daphi, P., Anderl, F., and Deitelhoff, N. (2019). Bridges or divides? Conflicts and synergies of coalition building across countries and sectors in the Global Justice Movement, *Social Movement Studies*, online.

Delanty, G. (2006). 'The Cosmopolitan Imagination: Critical Cosmopolitanism and Social Theory'. *British Journal of Sociology*, *57*(*1*): 25–47.

Delanty, G. (ed.) (2021). *Pandemic, Politics and Society*. Berlin: De Gruyter.

Della Porta, D. (2005a). 'Deliberation in Movement: Why and How to Study Deliberative Democracy and Social Movements'. *Acta Politica*, *40*(*3*): 336–350.

Della Porta, D. (2005b). 'Making the Polis: Social Forum and Democracy in the Global Justice Movement'. *Mobilization*, *10*(*1*): 73–94.

Della Porta, D. (ed.) (2007). *The Global Justice Movement: A Cross-national and Transnational Perspective*. Boulder, CO: Paradigm.

Della Porta, D. (2009a). *Another Europe: Conceptions and Practices of Democracy in the European Social Forums*. London: Routledge.

Della Porta, D. (2009b). *Democracy in Movement: Conceptions and Practices of Democracy in Contemporary Social Movements*. London: Palgrave.

Della Porta, D. (2020a). *How Social Movements can Save Democracy*. Cambridge: Polity.

Della Porta D. (ed.) (2020b). 'Europeanization from below? Still Time for another Europe'. Special Issue of *European Journal of Cultural and Political Sociology, 7*(*3*).

Della Porta, D. and Diani, M. (2010). 'Social Movements and Civil Society'. In B. Edward (ed.), *Handbook of Civil Society*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Della Porta, D., Kriesi, H., and Rucht, D. (eds.) (2009). *Social Movements in a Globalizing World*. London: Macmillan, expanded paperback edition.

de Sousa Santos, B. (2002). *Toward a New Legal Common Sense: Law, Globalization and Emancipation*. London: Butterworths LexisNexis.

de Sousa Santos, B. and Rodríguez-Garavito, C. A. (eds.) (2005). *Law and Globalization Below: Toward a Cosmopolitan Legality*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Diani, M. (2003). 'Networks and Social Movements: A Research Programme'. In M. Diani and D. McAdam (eds.), *Social Movements and Networks: Relational Approaches to Collective Action*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Dirlik, A. and Prazniak, R. (eds.) (2001). *Places and Politics in an Age of Globalization*. Lanham, MD: Rowan & Littlefield.

Dryzek, J. S. (2000). *Deliberative Democracy and Beyond*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Elster, J. (1998). 'Deliberation and Constitution Making'. In J. Elster (ed.), *Deliberative Democracy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Eschle, C. and Alexander, K. (2019). 'Globalizing collective identities: from the global justice movement to the "global wave"'. In A. Elliott (ed.), *Routledge Handbook of Identity Studies*, 2nd ed., pp. 392–404.

Fung, A. and Wright, E. O. (2003). *Deepening Democracy: Institutional Innovations in Empowered Participative Governance*. London: Verso.

Habermas, J. (1981). *Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns*. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp.

Habermas, J. (1996 [1992]). *Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discursive Theory of Law and Democracy*. Cambridge: Polity.

Hardnack, C. (2020) 'The Global Justice Movement in the US and the Anti-Neoliberal Master Frame'. Forthcoming in *Socialism and Democracy*.

Hines, C. (2000). *Localization: A Global Manifesto*. London: Earthscan.

Kaldor, M. (2003). *Global Civil Society. An Answer to War*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Keane, J. (2003). *Global Civil Society?* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Keck, M. and Sikkink, K. (1998). *Activists beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Kitschelt, H. (1993). 'Social Movements, Political Parties, and Democratic Theory'. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, *528*: 13–29.

Langman L. and Benski T. (2019). Global Justice Movements: Past, Present, and Future. In Berberoglu B. (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Social Movements, Revolution, and Social Transformation*. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham.

Mansbridge, J. (1996). 'Using Power/Fighting Power: The Polity'. In S. Benhabib (ed.), *Democracy and Difference: Contesting the Boundaries of the Political*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Marchetti, R. (2008). *Global Democracy: For and Against. Ethical Theory, Institutional Design, and Social Struggles*. London and New York: Routledge.

Marchetti, R. (2009). 'Mapping Alternative Models of Global Politics'. *International Studies Review*, *11*(*1*): 133–156.

Marchetti, R. and Pianta, M. (2011). 'Global Networks of Civil Society and the Politics of Change'. In D. Barrier, M. Pianta and P. Utting (eds.), *Social Mobilization, Global Justice and Policy Reform in Europe: Understanding When Change Happens*. London: Routledge.

Miller, D. (1993). 'Deliberative Democracy and Social Choice'. In D. Held (ed.), *Prospects for Democracy*. Cambridge: Polity.

Misztal, B. (2001). 'Civil Society: A Signifier of Plurality and Sense of Wholeness'. In J. R. Blau (ed.), *The Blackwell Companion of Sociology*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Offe, C. (1985). 'New Social Movements: Changing Boundaries of the Political'. *Social Research*, *52*: 817–868.

Osterweil, M. (2005). 'Place-based Globalism: Theorizing the Global Justice Movement'. *Development*, *48*(*2*): 23–28.

Patomäki, H. and Teivainen, T. (2004). *A Possible World: Democratic Transformation of Global Institutions*. London: Zed.

Pianta, M. and Marchetti, R. (2007). 'The Global Justice Movements: The Transnational Dimension'. In D. Della Porta (ed.), *The Global Justice Movement: A Cross-National and Transnational Perspective*. Boulder, CO: Paradigm.

Polletta, F. (2002). *Freedom Is an Endless Meeting: Democracy in American Social Movements*. Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press.

Risse-Kappen, T. (ed.) (1995). *Bringing Transnational Relations Back In: Non-State Actors, Domestic Structure and International Institutions*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Rosanvallon, P. (2006). *Democracy Past and Future*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Rosanvallon, P. and Goldhammer, A. (2009). *Counter-Democracy: Politics in the Age of Distrust*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Smith, J. (2007). *Social Movements for Global Democracy*. Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press.

Smith, J. et al. (2007). *Global Democracy and the World Social Forum*. Boulder CO, Paradigm.

Smith, J., Chatfield, C., and Pagnucco, R. (eds.) (1997). *Transnational Social Movements and Global Politics. Solidarity beyond the State*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press.

Starr, A. and Adams, J. (2003). 'Anti-globalization: The Global Fight for Local Autonomy'. *New Political Science*, *25*(*1*): 19–42.

Tarrow, S. (2005a). 'Cosmopoliti radicati e attivisti transnazionali'. *Rassegna italiana di sociologia*, *46*(*2*): 221–247.

Tarrow, S. (2005b). *The New Transnational Activism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Young, I. M. (2003). 'Activist Challenges to Deliberative Democracy'. In J. Fishkin and P. Laslett (eds.), *Debating Deliberative Democracy*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.

40

The transnational social question

Thomas Faist

The world's greatest inequalities seem to be defined by national borders in addition to and overlapping with well-known markers such as class, race, and gender. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, manifold inequalities characterize relations between social groups. For example, access to food, nutrition, formal education, and medical care is vastly unequal. Consequences such as malnutrition, ill health, low life expectancy, and inadequate social protection against risks threaten the lives of many. The most commonly used measure, inequality among countries' per capita incomes, accounts internationally for two-thirds of overall income inequality. Average incomes in the richest countries far exceed those in the poorest countries, with estimates of incomes that are 40–50 times greater in the former (Bourguignon and Morrisson 2002). Unlike conditions in the mid-nineteenth century, when income inequality could be explained by class understood as the ownership of the means of production, the situation at the start of the twenty-first century is different. While in the late nineteenth century, around 1870, about 50 per cent of income differences could be attributed to ownership of the means of production, and about 20 per cent to location, that is, the country in which one was living, this relationship has almost reversed. In 2000, more than half of global income differences could be attributed to huge gaps in average income between countries, whereas the share attributed to class has declined considerably, to around a quarter (Milanovic 2016). In other words, if we were to construct a global map of income inequality, showing where each household or individual stood vis-à-vis everyone else in the world (that is, combining information on within- and between-country inequality), the relative standing of each household or individual would be shaped in large part by whether they lived in a poor or a wealthy state. In general, while the markers of inequality may have somewhat changed over the past 200 years, the available empirical data on national incomes show unequivocally that inequality between countries in the twentieth century was higher than the inequality exhibited within any single national state (Oxfam 2017).

The current global situation is thus reminiscent of the living conditions that obtained for a majority of the population in a large part of nineteenth-century Europe. At that time and in that particular world region, the "social question" was the central subject of extremely volatile political conflicts between the ruling classes and working-class movements. Nowadays, the protests of globalization critics, for instance at the World Social Forum, certainly cannot be overlooked. There is also an abundance of political groupings and NGOs rallying across national borders in support of

numerous campaigns such as environmental, human rights and women's issues, Christian, Hindu, or Islamic fundamentalism, or food sovereignty (Evans 2006; Breman et al. 2019).

Then and now the social question has several distinct elements: first, the perception of large-scale inequalities between social groups; second, political contention around inequalities; and third, institutionalized efforts at dealing with inequalities, such as—historically in large parts of Europe—social rights within nationally-bounded welfare states or, more recently, social standards meant to apply worldwide. Given this context, the starting question is: Are we perhaps witnessing the gradual emergence of sanctionable global social norms by way of transnational social rights beyond national state borders?[1] In other words, is there a discernible development of global social policy in the twenty-first century, implying a move from national to post-national solidarity and the corresponding rights and duties as well as policies? At the same time, the focus on the transnational aspect of the social question does not mean the occlusion of inequalities, contentions, and rights within and across national states. Quite to the contrary: one of the central issues is how solidarities on one scale may contribute to or exclude solidarities on another through institutionalized mechanisms. For example, national welfare states in Europe can be cast as enabling the social protection of large parts of the population at the expense of those who are not admitted or covered by way of immigration control. As can be seen in systematic analyses across OECD immigration states, admission policies in those countries have favoured highly qualified workers, based on human capital considerations and underlying assumptions about this category of persons being politically liberal—an indication that class-based skills selection is connected to assumptions about cultural desirability. In contrast, regulations concerning low-skilled workers have become stricter over time, reflecting the trend that it is legitimate to simplify access, admission, and membership for highly skilled workers and those making capital investments. Indeed, it has become simpler for them to gain access, and there are fewer rules, whereas the stipulations concerning those categorized as low-qualified workers have become more numerous and complicated (Beine et al. 2016). The seminal change in migration control is the move from a decline in selection by ethnic or national origin to selection based on class and cultural characteristics such as presumed liberal attitudes.

Historically, one of the solutions to stark social inequalities and pressing issues of the old social question in Europe, North America, and Australia has been the national welfare state and thus the institutionalization of social rights. For political thinking and debate on social inequality, two postulates were of crucial significance: equality of opportunities or conditions and democracy. These postulates were already the subject of political discourse more than 150 years ago when they were analyzed by Alexis de Tocqueville (1986 [1835 and 1840]) in the light of the development of democracy in the United States. In the past, social rights have been tied to (national) citizenship status. (Social) citizenship can be understood as a continuous series of transactions between rulers and subjects. In the tradition of T. H. Marshall (1964 [1950]), social citizenship captures the tensions between democracy and capitalism. The central focus is the inherent tension between the idea of democracy, which is based on the notion of equal citizenship, and the social inequalities brought about by capitalism. Marshall argues that the expansion of citizenship rights, and especially the growth of social rights in the course of the twentieth century, enabled a historic compromise between social classes. In his view, social rights and social policies stabilize welfare capitalism as a legitimate system of social inequality on the national level. The possibility of this happening today on a global scale is more a normative utopian idea. There is no feasible concept of institutionalized citizenship with the postulate of equal political freedom, or of equal political rights, in any kind of global polity, although there is a tendency towards an establishment of social standards in loose association with human rights. The main difference between rights and standards is that the latter are not enforceable by persons through the legal system. Unlike social rights which can, in

principle, be claimed in court, social standards are an instance of "soft law" which implies voluntary self-regulated compliance on the part of the agents concerned.

The new transnational social question of the twenty-first century has not made obsolete the issues dealt with in the old social question of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, which has found expression in national welfare states in the OECD world. Rather, it has added yet another layer, namely cross-border interdependence with a global horizon. Debates around social inequalities and protection often occur on various scales simultaneously—local, national, and global; hence the phrase the transnational or transnationalized social question.

The perception of growing interdependence

A cross-border horizon relates to the increasing perception of cross-border interdependencies, such as cross-border migration, military threats, environmental degradation, and climate change. There are empirically identifiable global trends in meta-principles such as the postulates of equality and democracy which show a shift in public awareness concerning transnational exchange and interdependence (Inglehart 2003, Furia 2005).

The anticipation of mass migration from Eastern to Western Europe in the early 1990s may serve as an example here. The question arose as to whether social rights could also be conferred on persons abroad, for instance in the form of a basic minimum income (de Swaan 1992). Not unlike the emergence of national social welfare in the nineteenth century, such a development, so the argument runs, could be conceivable on a transnational scale. In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, de Swaan argued, the (national) ruling classes felt threatened by the "vagabond poor" to such a degree that some states introduced welfare measures to offset this menace. The perceived threat of mass migration from Eastern Europe and the global South, so the argument continues, had meanwhile become so great that northern states could see benefits in contributing towards a welfare state at the supranational level. It is in the meantime clear that in the light of restrictive and effective controls at the borders of European immigration countries, also towards forced migrants, there is no compelling reason for implementing this measure to prevent migration. An argument similar to migration could be made relating to environmental destruction, the most visible form of which is today discussed under the label climate crisis and environmental destruction. Yet, again, social destitution and escape from deteriorating conditions by millions of people are not likely to impinge directly upon the welfare of the OECD countries. Approximately 80–90 per cent of forced migrants have ended up in the same or neighbouring countries.

Transnational social protection: social standards but no social rights

Public policies that affect social protection in the local, national, and international realms have undergone significant changes over the past decades. This is visible in the way international, national, and transnational institutions have framed socio-economic and human development. Crucially, social policy and development thinking have moved from a focus on the national state to more emphasis on local government and international institutions (Mkandawire 2004) and terms such as "global social policy" (Deacon 1997) have flourished. Correspondingly, social rights as human rights have been points of departure. Social rights in international conventions— usually not enforceable in courts—constitute the shared vocabulary from which political debates start. After the Second World War, United Nations organizations, such as the International Labour Organization (ILO), began to consider social rights in conjunction with basic rights, along with political and civil rights. Explicit reference to the General Declaration of Human Rights (1948),

the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966), and even the rights of citizens to a social contract on the national state level is widespread, and so is an emphasis on the universality of human rights and citizens' rights (Brysk and Shafir 2004). They are universal in the sense that, for instance, all member states of the UN are signatories to the International Covenant on Social and Economic Rights. The essential social rights laid down in Articles 22–27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) are the fundamental right to school education, the right to work and to join or form a trade union, and the rights to a basic or minimum income, food, clothing, housing, medical care, and social security.

On a transnational scale, social standards have been legitimated as referring to social rights. The transnational regulation of employment and social standards comprises international institutions and regimes such as the ILO, social clauses in trade agreements, public codes of conduct, and the UN Global Compact; but also includes more private transnational regulatory forms such as codes of conduct for specific businesses, international framework agreements, or social labels. The governance of social and labour standards is characterized by a wide diversity of work regulations involving the traditional agents, viz. the state, the trade unions, and employers' associations, but also new actors such as social movements and NGOs. A salient point is that sanctionable rights and obligations have to an increasing degree been substituted by employers' voluntary self-regulation, especially in the case of transnational businesses. Such standards are therefore frequently private, voluntary transnational arrangements, or soft law, and their regulation relies on cooperation, rather than sanctions. The major issue for the future is therefore whether in transnational political multilevel systems such norms can be legally claimed at all.

The development of social rights and social standards must be seen within the context of a world that is highly fragmented with respect to the vast range of opportunities that citizens' social rights provide in different countries. Not surprisingly, the citizens of those states that are marginalized and are not integrated to a significant degree through trade and investment in the world economy have hardly anything to do with, for instance, labour and social standards as defined by international conventions. To a greater degree than in the OECD world, in so-called developing countries the formal, and implicitly also the informal, means of providing social protection are determined by transnational factors. Such factors are institutional, such as the World Bank, the IMF, and the World Trade Organization (WTO), which determine parameters through rules and the provision of finance; commercial, such as transnational capital and investments of foreign investors; civil-societal, through transnational non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the significant role they play in development aid or cooperation; and kinship systems through migrants and their financial remittances to their countries of origin. The heavy-handed dominance of OECD countries in the architecture of international organizations also accounts for the resistance of states, not only in marginalized countries but also in newly industrializing and transformation countries, to common social standards through mechanisms such as the WTO. There has been, at least on the part of international organizations, a move from structural adjustment policies vis-à-vis countries in Africa, Latin America, and Southeast Asia to policies that favour a combination of a liberal market approach with market-based insurance and targeted policies for the poor and needy, and a heavy focus on social capital and local community, characterized by keywords such as empowerment and capacity-building.

Various factors discourage one from expecting the establishment of sanctionable global social norms in the form of transnational social rights and social citizenship, but such a conclusion could be altered as a result of the mobilizing force of a politics of rights and obligations. Most important, the framing of the transnational social question as one of social rights or, more broadly, democracy and equality, brings to the fore the crucial issue in political debates and conflicts—the legitimacy of orders of inequality. Given the obvious absence of a Marshallian world on a global scale in which

capitalism and democracy are linked by a world welfare state, many persons around the globe readily associate globalization (a convenient shorthand for seminal processes of social transformation; cf. Polanyi 2001 [1944]) with unfair social outcomes and oppose it precisely for this reason. The anti-globalization movement builds on the feeling that prevailing patterns of trading relations and income distribution are unjust and morally reprehensible. If it is true that opposition to globalization and opposition to global inequality are closely linked, tolerance of inequality becomes a key factor in the political calculus. The perception of global inequality and tolerance could therefore make a difference. Thus, concerned persons must have some normative notion of what a proper, justifiable, and fair distribution of income should be—a kind of everyday normative political theory. People's beliefs about inequality are relevant because their views and above all practices feed into the political process. Considering people's attitudes, social inequalities are transnational or even global in the sense that those who care about intra-state inequality are also very likely to speak out against the gaps between rich and poor regions (Lübker 2004). There is thus a direct link, at least on the attitudinal level, between perceptions of inequality within demarcated welfare states on the one hand and global concerns on the other. The political stance on equality depends very much on whether people prioritize social equality within national states or whether they take a global view. This has consequences for policy decisions. For example, if equality in national states takes precedence, restrictive immigration control applies. By contrast, if global equality is held to be desirable, more open borders are favoured (Faist 2019).

Theories: normative and political sociological approaches to social rights

The relatively autonomous world political system, with national states as its main constituents, is central to the inequalities in the distribution of social rights. Place of birth and residence is one of the main determinants of one's position in a transnational hierarchy of inequality (Shachar 2009). Social rights are institutionalized within national states and are distinct from objective rights, which protect individuals from violence or restraint. The latter thus include, for instance, freedom of association, freedom of opinion, and religious freedom. Social rights are also defined as positive rights as opposed to negative rights, which are rights to liberty, i.e. political and civil rights. Positive rights require the active intervention of the state. The relationship between negative and positive rights is not dichotomous, however. Political rights are necessary, at least in democracies, in order to create social rights. Conversely, the major theorists of citizenship—Aristotle, Cicero, Niccolò Macchiavelli, Edmund Burke, Alexis de Tocqueville, John Stuart Mill, Hannah Arendt—have all argued that, in order to participate fully in public life and to achieve recognized social membership, one needed to be in a certain socioeconomic position. Furthermore, others have pointed out that the formal equality of rights is by no means sufficient for them to be effective. They must be accompanied by substantive liberties and by institutions enforcing them (Marshall 1964 [1950]).

For the conceptualization of emergent transnational social rights and social standards, there are two types of approaches, one stemming from normative political philosophy, and the other from political sociology. In normative political theory, in turn, two branches can be distinguished: a world citizenship—or cosmopolitan—perspective, and a nationality perspective. In a cosmopolitan citizenship perspective, social rights are part of a desirable world citizenship. An optimistic perspective may refer to Max Weber's social and economic history (Weber 1980 [1922]) and argue that citizenship was first conceived and practised at the municipal level in ancient Greece and medieval Europe before it moved up one level and became de jure and de facto congruous with membership of a territorial national state. Citizenship rights beyond the national state would therefore be an evolutionary leap forward (Heater 2004). Ultimately, however, this would require a global

political community with socio-cultural resources such as reciprocity and solidarity to be drawn on as required. This would be a rational development of identities beyond the national level. Such a global political identity is today conceivable only as a transparent, constructed affiliation (Habermas 1998). This perspective would certainly be attractive in terms of the allocation of life chances according to legal citizenship. World citizenship would not acknowledge any privileges passed on by descent or birth within a certain territory, the most prominent of which is, indeed, citizenship. We would all formally have the same status as members of an all-encompassing global polity. Such a community would, however, be greatly endangered by a "tyranny of the majority" (de Tocqueville 1986 [1835 and 1840]) because of the unavailability of exit options. Equally important, positive rights would require a willingness to redistribute goods. This notion is even less probable and less conceivable on a global scale than it is in regions like Europe (cf. Faist 2001). EU social policy is mostly regulatory rather than redistributive, except for agricultural subsidies.

This critique of the concept of world citizenship highlights the central elements of a republican version of national cosmopolitanism. The republican version conceives of social rights primarily as a close form of solidarity on a national scale. As a consequence, the following conditions can be fulfilled only in a national state: First, citizens of the respective legal citizenship, that is nationality, are counted as valid members of a framed political community viz. polity and in this way reproduce the socio-cultural basis for citizenship, namely reciprocity and solidarity. Second, a common allegiance has a bonding effect on the citizens and enables them to agree on substantive rights and obligations that form the basis for their membership. Third, citizenship confers participatory rights and political representation. Ultimately, world citizenship from this perspective appears to be little more than a vague cosmopolitan idea in a world lacking a fundamental moral consensus. A further criticism is that at best world citizenship would weaken the bonds that hold citizens of a national state together. And only these national bonds ensure that citizens maintain their ties to the rest of humanity (Walzer 1996). This critique of the concept of world citizenship could be disputed, however, based on empirical findings that suggest that world and national citizenship are not necessarily zero-sum notions and that the claim has to be qualified (Furia 2005). Also, it neglects the fact that national citizenship is in itself a mechanism that perpetuates transnational social inequality.

The debate over cosmopolitan vs. national perspectives can also be found in theories of justice. There has been a vivid debate on the moral significance of state boundaries, and thus the appropriate frame to which norms and rights should refer, which could address transnational inequalities. In *A Theory of Justice*, John Rawls (1971) proposed a clear principle of distributive justice: In a nutshell, this "difference principle" says that economic inequalities within a national society are unjust unless they benefit everyone, including the least advantaged. He argued that distributive justice between different states ("peoples") is not possible because there is nothing to distribute. In his view, the society of states is not a scheme of cooperation for mutual advantage and so there is no social product whose distribution is a proper matter for redistribution. Rawls's critics hold otherwise. First, under conditions of interdependence, national societies are not sufficiently separate to justify their being treated as self-contained entities (Beitz 1979). This argument concludes that the world has to be seen, in certain respects, as a single society, and therefore the "difference principle" applied, so as to benefit the least advantaged. Yet one of the questions that arises is whether such a world society is a scheme of mutual advantage, as Rawls held about national societies; think of the world economic order which systematically disadvantages peoples in the periphery. Second, there is a widespread argument that rich countries are responsible for the poverty of poor countries and that therefore they should acknowledge obligations to the latter. While theories of imperialism and dependency (e.g. Frank 1971; Wallerstein 1983) no longer enjoy widespread intellectual and political currency outside the global South, this argument is still strong in political theory. For example, according to such a claim,

environmental degradation, mass poverty, malnutrition, and starvation are the price paid by the poor to support the lifestyle of all the inhabitants of the advanced industrial world. Thus, global redistribution, such as a tax on the use of natural resources, would be a requirement of global social justice (Pogge 2002). Critics of this position, mostly liberally minded economists, argue that free trade, i.e. an end to industrial and agricultural protection in the advanced industrial world, would do more to help the poor than this kind of world welfarism (Bhagwati 2004). In sum, since Rawls did not apply the difference principle to the international realm, his strongest critics contend, this absence allows for not addressing extreme global inequalities (Barry 1991). In this view, the application of a principle of justice would require a transnational or global difference principle, not just an international one.

Responding to some of this criticism, Rawls later specified that a global difference principle would be untenable because liberal states would then improperly impose social-liberal doctrine on (potentially) non-liberal states. It constituted a kind of intolerance because it would refuse the right of other peoples to live by principles of their own (Rawls 1999). Rawls thus argues in favour of a pluralist idea of principles and an acknowledgement of history in setting norms. This comes out clearly in his answer to a vexing question: What is the extent of obligation of richer towards poorer countries? Most theorists would agree that we have different and more extensive obligations towards those closer to us—family, friends, and fellow citizens—than we have towards distant strangers (see, however, Singer 1972): the key question is how different and how much more extensive? Rawls argues that our obligations extend only to helping societies that are not capable of sustaining internal schemes of social justice to reach the point at which they would be so capable, and he argues against the transfer of actual resources. For example, help could be extended to support the right kind of civil society and state administration which could serve as incubators of social rights.

An even stronger consideration of communal allegiances and pluralism can be found in the work of Amartya Sen, who gives primacy to the idea of freedom in realizing human capabilities (Sen 1999). This basic premise makes room for a world in which people value very different allegiances. While it is useful to start with the European historical trajectory, we may—in the end—need to go beyond this particular experience of the link between of social rights and (political) citizenship. A starting point may be the inclusion of contributions from the different regions of the world to discourses on the transnational social question and social rights. Amartya Sen, for example, approached the question of inequalities not from an institutional vantage point but from the perspective of individual resources. Based on liberal political theory, he has proposed the concepts of entitlement and capability. In his work on famines he does not argue for a "right to food". He places the law (social rights) in "between food availability and food entitlement" (Sen 1981: 165–166). For Sen, entitlements are not (moral) rights but a term for a person's actual ownership and exchange capabilities. Nonetheless, his argument, namely that hunger needs to be tackled at the level of entitlements, and that market mechanisms alone will not achieve this end, does point in the direction of policies that alter legal and socio-political structures. In his later work, Sen defended the idea of a "metaright" to public policies that would help make the right to food realizable (Sen 1999).

These normative considerations must be supplemented by socio-political reflections that can be empirically validated, in order to shift the focus from desirable situations to actually emerging legal constructs and especially their institutional context. In particular, world polity theory, a neo-institutionalist approach (Meyer et al. 1997), has been a fertile ground for testing theoretical assumptions. It examines whether there are institutional forms, such as educational systems and social insurance systems that are common to all states. The underlying idea is that institutional isomorphism, i.e. cases in which national states adopt similar forms of, for example, organizing

schooling, can be traced to a Weberian notion of rationalization. This implies that institutions strive to appear "modern" in adapting dominant ways of organizing social, economic, and political life. Role models can be found in, among others, international organizations such as UNESCO for the educational field, or the EU's "Bologna Process" for university education. Yet, while this kind of neo-institutionalist theory greatly enhances our understanding of the spread of some forms of formal institutions (almost) globally, it has not yet fully examined how such institutions are structured to contribute to the diffusion of social rights. There is clear evidence, for instance, that in many countries in sub-Saharan Africa and in Southern Asia the expansion of the education system, structured into primary, secondary, and tertiary schooling, contributes to even greater social inequality because it is exploited by local elites to secure privileges for their own offspring (Bevans 2004). Similar observations could be made in OECD states such as Germany, where educational inequalities along social class and disability have persisted over the past decades and those along ethnicity are staggering. Another question that has not yet been explored by advocates of the world polity approach is whether or not certain functions are fulfilled by altogether different systems, for instance informal systems of social security. Such systems cannot simply be categorized as "traditional", as they are primarily the consequence of unfulfilled promises made by postcolonial states and international organizations. Consequently, and this insight goes beyond the discussion of this particular approach, social rights and other, more informal, commitments must not only be sought in state–citizen relations but also in other arrangements such as family, kinship and communal systems, or clientelistic political practices.

World polity theory steers our attention to the processes of drawing the boundaries that constitute the objects of enquiry, such as states, markets, or systems more generally. It thus raises questions of the "state" beyond the nation-state and draw attention to the emergence of a world public sphere. Thus, an open approach to boundaries may be a first step towards capturing the transnational social question. In his "Basic Sociological Terms", Max Weber did not define society (*Gesellschaft*) or community (*Gemeinschaft*). Instead he discussed the associative and communal relationships (*Vergesellschaftung* and *Vergemeinschaftung*) (Weber 1980 [1922]: 21–23). Drawing explicitly on Ferdinand Tönnies, Weber argued that associations and communities are based on different patterns of interaction and solidarity. This approach serves as an inspiration to pursue the question about the appropriate epistemological stance in dealing with the transnational social question. Instead of starting with the national state and the system of nation-states or with a borderless world, it may be more fruitful to use concepts such as social space to delineate the social formations relevant for the subject areas of social inequality and social protection (Faist 2019).

In sum, normative theories of world citizenship allude to a world society as a horizon of meaning and expectation that already embraces meta-norms such as equality (of opportunity), democracy, and global justice. Political-sociological approaches, on the other hand, such as the world polity approach, not only refer to global horizons of expectation, as the world citizenship approach does, but also to institutional types of multilevel political systems and multi-agency constellations—such as international regimes at state level, or networks of state and non-state organizations. It would be premature, however, to speak of world social regime or policy models akin to welfare state regimes found in the OECD world (cf. Esping-Andersen 1990).

With the help of approaches such as "critical cosmopolitanism", we may systematically combine normative theory with empirical observations. This approach goes beyond exclusively European universalistic principles (Delanty and He 2008). The conceptual premises, analytical approaches, methodologies, and methods of contributions to the transnational social question should be scrutinized. One way of doing so is to unearth the different meanings and interpretations of (social) rights and citizenship in various world regions (e.g. Mamdami (1996) on Africa and Taylor (2004) on Latin America).

From the social to the socio-ecological question

One of the fundamental challenges to the striving for social equality has been the human-made climate crisis, the slow-onset and fast-onset environmental destruction of human habitat in the Anthropocene. Like the threat of nuclear war, the destruction of ecological foundations underlies life chances. Thus, this destruction preempts and precedes all other aspects of the transnational social question. It is instructive to look at the climate crisis–migration debate to get a clearer picture of the stakes involved regarding social inequalities. So far, two generations of scholarship have discussed the climate crisis–migration debate in a rather narrow framework, without considering in full that climate change is mainly an add-on to environmental destruction. The first generation dealt with the vulnerability of specific groups such as the poor, women, and children; the second with resilience, which supposedly helps to adapt to climate change. These perspectives have occluded the finding that climate change is part of a wider process of environmental destruction which indeed has varied impacts on different categories of people with respect to social inequalities (McLeman, Schade, and Faist 2016). By using a mechanistic approach to nature, the first generation of scholarship on climate change and migration seriously underestimated the adaptive capacities of humans in the face of seminal ecological changes. The second generation of scholarship focused on a particular kind of agency. The main protagonist has been the resilient migrant who engages in successful adaptation to climate change. This newer generation has propagated a mostly market-liberal version of mobility—a mobile and docile migrant who acts in an anticipatory and preventative manner, implying reduced responsibility of the state.

Climate crisis, or environmental destruction more generally, is intricately related to globe-spanning political-economic inequalities which cause, drive and increase the destruction of human habitat. Evidence of the latter is already visible in the increasing numbers of people who choose to leave dead land or are compelled by force to do so (Sassen 2014). Taking a combined nature-culture lens, the question is how migration in the wake of climate crisis leaves deeper structures of social inequalities intact and reinforces exclusionary mechanisms. Also of interest is how norm entrepreneurs who push for the recognition of "climate refugees" under the umbrella of the Geneva Convention for Refugees have drawn attention to the dire fate of many migrants who engage in or are even forced into climate-induced mobility—thus constituting the transnational socio-ecological question.

With respect to changing perceptions of climate destruction, some analysts speak of a "metabolic rift" (Foster 1999). This term refers to ecological crisis tendencies under capitalism. Marx (1962 [1867]: 192) theorized a rupture in the metabolic interaction between nature and culture, which derives from the mode of capitalist production and the growing rupture between urban and rural regions. Marx held this rift to be irreconcilable with any kind of sustainability. In the meantime, however, we have learned that while capitalism has remained a pervasive force, it is "local at all points" (Latour 1993: 117). Conflicts over mitigation of and adaptation to climate change have occurred over the past years, far away from spectacular world gatherings. It has been neither (global) climate governance nor (local) adaptation but rather climate conflicts that have been propelling some progress in addressing rampant carbonization. What needs to be determined in future research is the combination of responses to climate change which encompasses both exit and voice. It is well-worth remembering that the urgent questions raised by environmental degradation, given the tens of millions of people displaced each year in their home countries, is not a scenario of the future but describes the present. For example, there is evidence suggesting a link between global warming and a greater risk of civil violence in much of sub-Saharan Africa, possibly tied to variations in the El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) (cf. Burke et al. 2009: 20670–2; Hsiang, Meng and Crane 2011).

Outlook

Given the high political relevance of the transnational social question, including the socio-natural question, it is important to ask how social scientists might intervene in public debates on social inequalities reaching across borders. Academic and public debates often raise the question whether and in what ways social scientific research may form a basis for rational political decisions. While social science research indeed has implications for public policies, the main proposition here is that such a question is ultimately misleading. While social scientists serve as scientific experts, advocates of certain political and policy positions, or public intellectuals, and thus offer crucial information for describing and understanding social inequalities and social protection, one of the most important public functions of social scientists is to offer concepts and interpretations that can guide political debates in the public sphere.

Note

1. The term transnational refers to cross-border interactions of non-state and state actors which could be regional or global. International denotes relations between states. Global is more specific than transnational in that it points to worldwide relationships.

References

Barry, B. (1991) *Theories of Justice: A Treatise on Social Justice*, Vol. 1, Berkeley: University of California Press.

Beine, M., A. Boucher, B. Burgoon, M. Crock, J. Gest, M. Hiscox, P. McGovern, H. Rapoport, J. Schaper, and E. Thielemann (2016) 'Comparing Immigration Policies: An Overview from the IMPALA Database', *International Migration Review*, 50(4) 827–63.

Beitz, C. R. (1979) *Political Theory and International Relations*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Bevans, P. (2004) 'The Dynamics of Africa's In/security Regimes', in I. Gough et al. (eds.) *Insecurity and Welfare Regimes in Asia, Africa and Latin America*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bhagwati, J. (2004) *In Defense of Globalization*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bourguignon, F. and C. Morrisson (2002) 'Inequality among World Citizens: 1820–1992', *American Economic Review*, 92(4) 727–44.

Breman, J., K. Harris, C. K. Lee, M. van der Linden (eds.) (2019) *The Social Question in the Twenty-First Century: A Global View*, Berkeley: University of California Press.

Brysk, A. and G. Shafir (eds.) (2004) *People out of Place: Globalization, Human Rights, and the Citizenship Gap*, New York: Routledge.

Burke, M. B., E. S. Shanker, J. A. Dykema, and D. B. Lobell. (2009). 'Warming Increases the Risk of Civil War in Africa', *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 106(49), 20670–4.

de Swaan, A. (1992). 'Perspektiven einer transnationalen Sozialpolitik', *Journal für Sozialforschung*, 32(1), 3–17.

de Tocqueville, A. (1986 [1835 and 1840]) *De la démocratie en Amérique*, 2 Vols, Paris: Gallimard.

Deacon, B. (1997) *Global Social Policy: International Organizations and the Future of Welfare*, London: Sage.

Delanty, G. and B. He. (2008). 'Cosmopolitan Perspectives on European and Asian Transnationalism', *International Sociology*, 23(3), 323–44.

Esping-Andersen, G. (1990) *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*, Cambridge: Polity Press.

Evans, P. (2006) 'Counterhegemonic Globalization: Transnational Social Movements in the Contemporary Global Political Economy', in J. Timmon Roberts and A. B. Hite (eds.) *The Globalization and Development Reader: Perspectives on Development and Global Change*, Oxford: Blackwell.

Faist, T. (2001) 'Social Citizenship in the European Union: Nested Membership', *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 39(1), 39–60.

Faist, T. (2019) *The Transnationalized Social Question: Migration and the Politics of Social Inequalities in the Twenty-first Century*, Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Foster, J. B. (1999) 'Marx's Theory of Metabolic Rift: Classical Foundations for Environmental Sociology', *American Journal of Sociology*, 105(2), 366–405.

Frank, André G. (1971) *Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America*, Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin.

Furia, P. (2005) 'Global Citizenship, Anyone? Cosmopolitanism, Privilege and Public Opinion', *Global Society* 19(4), 331–59.

Gough, I., G. Wood, A. Barrientos, P. Bevan, P. Davis, and G. Room (2004) *Insecurity and Welfare Regimes in Asia, Africa and Latin America: Social Policy in Development Context*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Habermas, J. (1998) *Die postnationale Konstellation*, Frankfurt a. M.: Suhrkamp.

Heater, D. (2004) *World Citizenship*, London: Continuum International Publishing Group.

Hsiang, S. M., K. C. Meng, and M. A. Crane (2011) 'Civil Conflicts are Associated with the Global Climate', *Nature*, (476) 438–41.

Inglehart, R. (ed.) (2003) *Human Values and Social Change: Findings from the Values Survey*, Leiden: Brill Academic Publishers.

Kivisto, P. and T. Faist. (2007) *Citizenship: Theory, Discourse and Transnational Prospects*, Oxford: Blackwell.

Latour, B. (1993) *We Have Never Been Modern*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Linklater, A. (1999) 'Cosmopolitan Citizenship', in K. Hutchings and R. Dannreuther (eds.) *Cosmopolitan Citizenship*, London: Routledge.

Lübker, M. (2004) 'Globalization and Perceptions of Social Inequality', *International Labour Review*, 143(4), 91–128.

McLeman, R., J. Schade, and T. Faist (2016) *Environmental Migration and Social Inequality*, New York, NY: Springer.

Mamdani, M. (1996) *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Marshall, T. H. (ed.) (1964 [1950]) *Citizenship and Social Class*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Marx, K. (1962 [1867]) *Das Kapital*, Vol. 1 (MEW, Vol. 23), Berlin, Germany: Dietz.

Meyer, J. W., J. Boli, G. M. Thomas, and F. O. Ramirez. (1997). 'World Society and the Nation State', *American Journal of Sociology*, 103(1), 144–81.

Milanovic, B. (2016) *Global Inequality: A New Approach for the Age of Globalization*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Mkandawire, T. (ed.) (2004) *Social Policy in a Development Context*, Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan.

Oxfam. (2017) *An Economy for the 99%*, Oxfam Briefing Papers, Oxford: Oxfam International.

Pogge, T. (2002) *World Poverty and Human Rights*, Cambridge: Polity Press.

Polanyi, K. (2001 [1944]) *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time*, 2nd edn., Boston: Beacon Press.

Rawls, J. (1971) *A Theory of Justice*, Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.

Rawls, J. (1999) *The Law of Peoples*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Sassen, S. (2014) *Expulsions: Brutality and Complexity in the Global Economy*, Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.

Sen, A. (1981) *Poverty and Famines: An Essay on Entitlement and Deprivation*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Sen, A. (1999) *Development as Freedom*, New York: Anchor Books.

Shachar, A. (2009) *The Birthright Lottery: Citizenship and Global Inequality*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Singer, P. (1972). 'Famine, Affluence, and Morality', *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, 1(1), 229–243.

Taylor, L. (2004) 'Client-Ship and Citizenship in Latin America', *Bulletin of Latin American Research*, 23(2), 213–27.

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. (2005) *Report on the World Social Situation 2005: The Inequality Predicament*, New York: United Nations.

Wallerstein, I. (1983) *Historical Capitalism*, London: Verso.

Walzer, M. (1996) *Thick and Thin: Moral Argument at Home and Abroad*, Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press.

Weber, M. (1980 [1922]) *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*, 5th edn., Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr.

Social suffering and the new politics of sentimentality

Iain Wilkinson

The concept of social suffering is used to refer us to experiences of pain, damage, injury, deprivation, and loss that are both caused and conditioned by society. In research and writing on social suffering it is generally understood that human afflictions are encountered in multiple forms and that their deleterious effects are manifold; but a particular focus is brought to ways in which social processes and cultural conditions both constitute and moderate the ways in which suffering is experienced and expressed. Here researchers attend to how the subjective components of distress are rooted in social situations and conditioned by cultural circumstance. It is widely recognized that social suffering takes place as a result of the ways individuals are made to embody society. Social worlds are understood to be inscribed upon the bodily experience of pain; and forms of social structural oppression are held to be manifested in and articulated through a person's symptoms of distress.

Social Suffering also serves as a label for an interdisciplinary field of inquiry that combines the social sciences, humanities, and medical science in an attempt to understand how suffering is made part of people's experience, and how in turn they are liable to respond to this (Kleinman *et al*. 1997). In the sociology of health and medical anthropology this is associated with efforts to broaden the biomedical conceptualization of pain so that recognition is brought to the ways in which both the experience of pain and a person's responsiveness to its 'treatment' are moderated by cultural conditions and social contexts (Delvecchio Good *et al*. 1992; Bendelow 2006; Sik 2020). Social suffering is also featured as part of a critical engagement with conventions of health care practice that aims to make these more attuned to the distresses borne by people through experiences of mental anguish and emotional trauma (Kleinman 1988, 2006). Under these terms, a broader conception of 'health' tends to be incorporated within critical debates relating to the quality of people's working environments and living conditions. Particularly in the contexts of French sociology and psychology, the focus on social suffering is used to highlight the cumulative miseries of ordinary life that are perennially marginalized within arenas of political debate; or rather, are too easily 'explained away' as unfortunate and unavoidable 'side-effects' of social life in capitalist societies (Dejours 1998; Bourdieu *et al*. 1999; Renault 2008). The concern to 'bear witness' to the experience of 'marginality', and especially the plight of the poorest sections of society, has also drawn many to place problems of social suffering at the center of the attempt to draw public attention to the experience of people living in developing

societies. Here the documentation of experiences of people suffering from diseases of poverty is taken up as a means to engage in public debate over the structural conditions that systematically reproduce the material and social deprivation of the so-called 'Third World' (Farmer 1997, 1999, 2005; Mookherjee 2020). Indeed, the advocacy of human rights and humanitarian social reform is made explicit in many instances where social suffering is deployed as a descriptive tool and/ or analytical device for conveying the human consequences of the physical violence, emotional distress, and social deprivation experienced in contexts of war, civil conflict, and totalitarian abuse (Das 1995, 2007; Scheper-Hughes 1992, 1997, 1998; Hammad and Tribe 2020).

It is often the case that in this work critical attention is brought to the symbolic forms of culture by which people's suffering is represented in public life (Sontag 2003; Chouliaraki 2006). Much debate surrounds the potential for texts and visual imagery to be carefully crafted to effect a 'moral education'. It is argued that it is possible to cultivate an 'ethics of emotions' that gives rise to political solidarities in the pursuit of human rights (Barreto 2006; Farmer 2006; Hutchison 2014). In this context, researchers also seek to understand the ways in which victims of suffering might find the cultural and moral resources to recover from their experience via the 'healing' initiated through the social recognition that is brought to their plight (Das *et al*. 2001). Moral sentiments of 'pity', 'sympathy', and 'compassion' are analyzed both in terms of the power relations they set up between the victims and witnesses of suffering and in relation to the contribution they make to bonds of civil society (Nussbaum 1996, 2001; Spelman 1998; Halpern 2002; Berlant 2004).

The new 'visibility' of human suffering that is made possible via modern communication media has given rise to a great deal of analytical controversy and moral concern. John Thompson contends that via television and the Internet, we are regularly brought into contact with extreme forms of death and destruction that would be unknown to previous generations (Thompson 1995: 225–227). Similarly, when highlighting the peculiarity of the cultural and moral landscapes we occupy, Michael Ignatieff observes that such technologies have made us routine 'voyeurs of the suffering of others, tourists amid their landscapes of anguish' (Ignatieff 1999: 11). Accordingly, it is important to recognize that, when working to understand the social production of moral sentiment, researchers are challenged to make sense of cultural processes of reproduction and exchange that are without precedent and for which they struggle to produce an adequate framework of analysis.

We have scarcely begun to chart the moral contradictions that arise for people in connection with the experience of being positioned as remote witnesses of the suffering of other people. While some venture to articulate a moral point of view on the *possible* social consequences of these cultural conditions, very little is known about how these are *actually* working to transform popular outlooks and political dispositions. A great deal of this work operates in a conjectural mode. On a negative account, Luc Boltanski (1999) holds that the widely shared experience of being a 'detached observer' of human affliction intensifies a shared sense of political powerlessness and moral inadequacy; for he contends that people routinely find that they have no adequate means to respond to the imperative of action that the brute facts of suffering impresses upon their sensibilities. A further, and perhaps more despairing, perspective suggests that even where moral responsibilities and possible courses of action are made imminently clear to people, they all too easily deny the call to take care of others (Moeller 1999; Cohen 2001). On a more positive note, a number of writers argue that the public priority and popular support given to global humanitarian social movements in countries such as the United Kingdom speak of a growing level of responsiveness toward the moral appeal made through suffering (Sznaider 2001; Tester 2001). Accordingly, while recognizing that people's experiences of suffering may be 'culturally appropriated' for competing political, moral, and commercial ends, and that there are

also many conflicts of interpretation with regard to their overall impacts on society, some argue that it remains possible for mass media to be used as a positive force within the education of compassion (Ignatieff 1999; Hoijer 2004; Nash 2008).

In summary, where a focus is brought to problems of social suffering, researchers tend to be engaged in an attempt to understand how social and cultural conditions moderate the experience of human affliction. A critical focus is brought to the ways in which bodily experiences of harm and distress serve to expose the moral character and structural force of society within people's lives. While attending to the particular ways in which individuals struggle to make 'the problem of suffering' productive for thought and action, scholars are made attentive to how, through to the level of collective experience, social suffering contributes to wider dynamics of social change. In this context, it is argued that it is not only the case that social science is challenged to operate with a significantly modified agenda of analytical issues and political concerns but also, with some major revisions made to the ways it accounts for its history, motives, and value (Wilkinson and Kleinman 2016).

Historical antecedents

It is only since the 1990s that social suffering has been a focal concern for sociological and anthropological research; however, it has a much longer history as a term for describing components of human affliction. From the late eighteenth century onwards it is possible to find writers making occasional references to experiences and events of social suffering (Wordsworth 1952 [1793]: 9; Frothingham *et al.* 1862: 26; Blaickie 1865: 30; Schilder 1938; van Sickle 1946). For most of this time, the concept was used either as a means to label state policies as the primary cause of people's miseries or to comment in general terms upon the social hardships that result from physical disability or mental illness. In this respect, it can be taken to mark the arrival of a cultural and political outlook that holds that there are many occasions where an inordinate amount of suffering takes place as a result of social circumstance and that the meaning and causes of this experience should be sought through a process of inquiry into the dynamics and character of social life. It also signals the development of a commitment to gathering the resources to oppose the deleterious effects of suffering via programmes of social reform. The mobilization of the concept of social suffering in commentary on public affairs points to a new understanding of the moral meaning of human suffering and of 'the social', as opposed to Divine Providence, as the governing force over people's lives.

In order to grasp the magnitude of sociological issues at stake here, it is important to attend to the late-eighteenth-century origins of the concept of social suffering and the cultural circumstances under which this was forged. It is now widely understood that the second half of the eighteenth century witnessed a revolution in social attitudes toward human suffering; and that this in turn was heavily implicated within nascent conceptions of the 'the social' as a domain constituted by bonds of 'fellow-feeling' (Barker-Benfield 1992; Denby 1994; Ellis 1996; Vincent-Buffault 1986). On many accounts, the public reactions to events such as the Lisbon earthquake of 1755 represent a dramatic shift in the interpretation of the causes and consequences of human affliction that involved both the rejection of Providential thought and the consolidation of a cultural disposition that relates to suffering as an experience for which there is no sufficient moral meaning or purpose (Besterman 1962). While already provided with some intellectual currency through the writings of Pierre Bayle (1965 [1695–1697]), such convictions are voiced in a more popular vein in works such as Voltaire's (1947 [1759]) *Candide* and in many of the 'sentimental' novels of the period. They are also understood to have provided a vital spur to early movements of humanitarian social reform. In campaigns to abolish the slave

trade, movements in opposition to the use of torture in criminal proceedings, and more generally under the attempt to mobilize discourse on human rights, considerable efforts are made to profile excessive experiences of human suffering as a means to set agendas for moral and social debate (Hunt 2007). In this context, both the social realm and the possibility of this becoming a part of a person's political imagination are held to be animated by the force of moral sentiment (Smith [1976 [1759]]).

The politics of sensibility have always courted controversy. At its origins many were inclined to question the authenticity of expressions of fellow feeling and were worried by the possibility that this could be enjoyed as an end in itself or be used as a force of ideological manipulation (Ellis 1996: 190–221). This inevitably involved dispute over the character and force of human society as well as the grounds of human sociality; for these were understood to be established and sustained by the sentiments with which we relate to one another. In questioning the meaning and virtue of moral feeling the reality of the social realm was made a matter for debate and became conceivable as an object for reform. In this respect the acquisition of a sociological imagination is wedded to 'the navigation of feeling'; and the subsequent development of sociology as a 'science' or as 'social literature' may be assessed in terms of the relative importance accorded to this matter (Lepenies 1988; Reddy 2001).

With regard to the main task at hand, it is important to note there are many instances where the character and parameters of contemporary debates addressed to problems of social suffering mark a *return* of interest to issues and questions that were aired in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Being conversant with the fates that befell earlier movements is a necessary part of the attempt to take stock of the present. Certainly, there is much here to draw sociology into debate with the traditions of theory and research that have shaped its disciplinary formations to date; and here researchers may well be brought to question whether the effort to recover an appreciation for the political and moral concerns embedded in early modern conceptions of 'the social' might serve as the means to inspire better conceptions to fit our times.

Key influences

The new gathering of interest around problems of social suffering is not easy to explain. There is no single event that stands out as a decisive factor in making the social components and conditions of human suffering a matter for debate; rather, it appears that a considerable range of cultural developments, intellectual interests, and ethical concerns is involved here. In part, however, this can be attributed to the influence of Pierre Bourdieu and Arthur Kleinman over their respective fields of inquiry. It is often with a mind to contribute to debates featured in the works of Kleinman and Bourdieu that scholars account for their analytical practices and research priorities.

For Bourdieu, the attempt to bring public attention to the force and parameters of social suffering comprises a broader programme of critical inquiry into the moral character of contemporary 'neo-liberal' capitalism, and the increasingly authoritarian forms of technocracy through which the government of populations takes place. In *La Misère du Monde* (1993) (translated in 1999 into English with the title *The Weight of the World*), he draws attention to the *painfully* dull compulsion of everyday life that leaves people with an overriding sense of alienation and engrained attitudes of despairing ennui. Social suffering is held to be an experience takes place within 'the most intimate dramas' of everyday life; and as such, is largely unformulated as a matter of public discourse and remains beyond the purview of official surveys and opinion polls (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 102). It is apprehended through the stumbling language, awkward silences, and humiliated look of individuals living in poor housing conditions and

working for low wages in the most demeaning circumstances. While it is often the case that social suffering takes place in contexts of social and material deprivation, on this account, it more directly concerns the damage done to a person's sense of dignity and worth when the field of possibilities before them is heavily circumscribed by structural conditions that offer no means of respite or escape.

The evidence of social suffering is taken as a moral register of political processes and economic conditions that create social conditions in which people experience themselves and others as alienated, superfluous, and without hope. It is also featured as a moral rebuke to neoliberal state policies that abandon welfarist principles so as to promote the market as a disciplinary force of regulation in matters pertaining to the maintenance of public housing and the quality of people's working environments. In this context, Bourdieu is widely understood to have fashioned his sociological writing as a form of political engagement (Boyne 2002; McRobbie 2002; Vitellone 2004; Charlesworth 2000; Renault 2008).

In Arthur Kleinman's publications the term social suffering has a wider sphere of reference. It is applied to any situation in which experiences of pain, trauma, and disorder take place as a result of 'what political, economic and institutional power does to people and, reciprocally, from how these forms of power themselves influence responses to social problems' (Kleinman *et al*. 1997: ix). Accordingly, while it is used to document the 'corrosion of character' that takes place in situations of material deprivation and social breakdown, it is also identified as a component of the harms done to and pains borne by people in contexts of ill health, interpersonal violence, large-scale social conflict, and cultural collapse. The suffering experienced in contexts of 'advanced' industrial capitalism is set alongside ethnographically detailed accounts of the pains and hardships borne in 'developing' and 'under-developing' sectors of the globe. Here efforts are made to have us recognize the global multiplicity of human conditions and the extent to which experiences of and responses to suffering are comprised by the many contingencies of social life in process.

For Kleinman, a focus on social suffering serves as a means to highlight the moral challenges faced by individuals set in, and moving through, particular socio-political spaces. His interest lies in the extent to which social suffering always takes place within morally charged environments where individuals experience life in terms of 'what really matters' (Kleinman 2006). Social suffering casts the existential plight of individuals in stark relief; but always with attention being drawn to the moderating force of prevailing social structures and established cultural practices on people's moral sensibilities and cognitive dispositions. In this regard, Kleinman presents his work as a contribution to a new 'anthropology of subjectivity' that aims to expose the shifting social grounds of moral experience and its bearing upon the myriad ways in which individuals struggle to make sense of their lives while beset with the task of forging and maintaining relationships with others (Kleinman and Fitz-Henry 2007).

In a more critical vein, Kleinman seeks to alert us to a series of radical transformations that are taking place across the dynamic fields of local experience as forces of 'rationalization', 'mediatization', and 'commodification' acquire a heightened technological and institutional capacity to intrude upon, and routinely discipline, the ways we relate to ourselves and other people (Kleinman 1999). A substantial component of his research focuses upon the experience of social suffering in the context of health care. In this respect it is the ever-intensifying forces of rationalization experienced during the 'medicalization' of people's health problems that occupy his critical attention; particularly in contexts where the possibility of attending to a person's illness experience is sacrificed to a drive for technical efficiency and the dictates of bureaucratic process (Kleinman 1995a, 1988). Kleinman highlights the socio-political and technological processes in which abstruse forms of measurement and analytical practice are used to gloss over the moral

Iain Wilkinson

obstinacy and interpersonal turmoil of human experience. On the understanding that many social procedures and cultural conventions are being disciplined to operate 'without regard for persons', he stands with Max Weber in decrying the dehumanizing force of rationalization.

Kleinman also raises troubling ethical questions in relation to the cumulative impacts of media representations of the suffering of distant others on the 'moral-emotional processes' by which we acquire a capacity for empathy and compassion (Kleinman 1995b; Kleinman and Kleinman 1997). He argues that such experience is now making it all too easy for us to dissociate ourselves from the call to respond to the suffering of others with social care and political action. On this account, the mass dissemination of the imagery of suffering via commercial forms of cultural reproduction and exchange is effecting a major transformation in the experience of social subjectivity; for this 'normalizes' a vivid awareness of others' suffering in contexts that foreclose possibilities for participation in public debate and withhold the option of a compassionate engagement with human needs.

Kleinman calls upon social scientists to bring a renewed focus to 'the particularity of experience' so as to 'affirm that our subjectivities and the moral processes within them are forever in flux – not static, abstract, biologically fixed, or divorced from political, social and economic processes, but fluid, contingent and open to transformation' (Kleinman and Fitz-Henry 2007: 55). He maintains that it is in the context of 'ordinary lives' that we stand to apprehend the moral dilemmas and political possibilities afforded under present conditions of modernity; and that this is where we must start to engage with the task of building better social worlds. Here a priority is placed on documenting human experience in social context and importance is placed on the effort to attend to the varieties of social practice that create our world. Kleinman advocates a critical anthropology that works from experience 'on the ground' to question how local practices might gather the force to change social structure and cultural process.

It is also important to emphasize here, that on Kleinman's account, and on a more limited scale within the programme of sociological inquiry advocated by Pierre Bourdieu, the task of inquiry is by no means accomplished if it only proceeds with the aim of gathering documents of experience, or with a commitment to 'translating' this into the language of academic social science. Here it is argued that social research should be aligned to, and involved in, *caregiving*; and indeed, that researchers should be seeking to advance a 'pedagogy of care' through their work. Following an approach that is akin to the 'critical pragmatism' advocated by pioneers of so-called 'settlement sociology' such as Jane Addams and Florence Kelley, Kleinman is set on promoting a form of social inquiry that proceeds with the understanding that the learning that matters most must operate with a commitment to attend to the moral and political lessons that can be drawn from our direct involvement in the *practice* of caring for others (Wilkinson and Kleinman 2016: 161–205).

Politics and ethics

In both French and American contexts, research and writing on social suffering takes place at 'the intersection of social science, politics and civic ethics' (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 200). For those working in these fields, it is readily acknowledged that the task of understanding social life involves us in open expressions of moral worth and political longing; and further, that it is via a thoroughgoing examination of such commitments that we move to understand how 'the social' is experienced and made in people's lives. This is also taken as the grounds on which to inquire into the social practices that enable people to live through and beyond their experience of suffering and how these might contribute to progressive movements for social change.

A 'critical humanism' tends to feature within most of the work that takes place here (Plummer 2001). This is manifested in the commitment to documenting a great variety of human conditions and possibilities; and, more directly, in a careful attendance to the moral tensions and political frustrations borne by individuals in conditions of extreme hardship and adversity. It is also displayed in the effort to understand how the witness of suffering serves to establish social bonds of empathy and the political imperative to care for others (Tronto 1993). In this context, a privileged position is given to the task of understanding how the cultural capacity to 'feel for' the suffering of others can be nurtured to establish principles of human rights (Turner 1993, 2006); and, more importantly, it seeks to understand how this can be used to inspire the social actions that make for their practical realization in people's lives (Farmer 2006).

It is important to note that while the larger part of debates on the politics of pity and compassion is concerned with matters of abstract principle, in the context of social suffering a privileged role is given to *lived experience* as a guide to moral values and political commitments. In this regard, those engaged with the study of social suffering tend to draw inspiration from traditions of pragmatism; though it would be a mistake to identify this as aligned to the standpoint of figures such as Richard Rorty. Where Rorty's critique of 'human rights foundationalism' leads him to conclude that 'sad stories' do more to advance the recognition of human rights than arguments that appeal to abstract philosophical principle, whether such stories are drawn from experience or not, does not appear to matter too much to him (Rorty 1998). By contrast, this matters a great deal to those with a commitment to studying problems of social suffering. Here researchers tend to be acutely alert to the 'sentimentalist fallacy' outlined by William James as a situation where individuals 'shed tears over abstract justice and generosity and beauty, etc., and never know these qualities when (they) meet them in the street, because circumstances make them vulgar' (James 1907: 153). On these grounds Richard Rorty may be portrayed as 'insufficiently pragmatic', for he is too narrowly focused on problems of language and not sufficiently engaged with the task of understanding the harms that are done to people *in experience* and how such *experience* might be made to change (Kloppenberg 1996).

It is possible to characterize a great deal of research and writing on social suffering as a form of critical praxis that seeks to establish the right of people to have rights (Arendt 1973). Some are inclined to label what takes place here as a politics of recognition. Axel Honneth argues that it is often the case that contexts of social suffering are discussed as part of a 'disclosing critique' that aims to make known the 'pathologies of the social' in which 'the other of justice' is denied moral recognition and respect for their rights (Honneth 1995). For example, Paul Farmer contends that 'a failure of imagination is one of the greatest failures in contemplating the fate of the world's poorest', and aims to use ethnographic texts and photography as a means to shock his readers into questioning the human values and responsibilities that bind them to the victims of suffering (Farmer 2006: 145). He uses whatever 'rhetorical tools' are available to him to convey the experience of individuals dying from AIDS and seeks to offend readers' sensibilities with images of the physical torment suffered by people living in circumstances of extreme material deprivation. Farmer uses such methods to advocate an expanded notion of human rights that gives as much importance to the right to 'freedom from want' as to civil and political rights.

Similarly, Veena Das explains her work as an attempt to devise 'languages of pain' by which social sciences might be crafted as a textual body on which 'pain is written' (Das 1997a: 67). Her ethnographic practice is designed to fashion a re-entry to 'scenes of devastation' and worlds 'made strange though the desolating experience of violence and loss' (ibid.). Here the efforts made to convey the standpoint of women who have been subjected to brutal acts of violence in the internecine conflicts of India's civil wars are intended as a means to 'convert' such experience into a script that can be used to establish ties of empathy and communal self-understanding. Das

presents this as part of a 'work of healing' that creates a social space for the recognition of human rights and possibilities for a retrieval of human dignity (Das 1994, 1995, 2007; Das *et al.* 2001).

While engaging with such struggles for recognition, writers such as Farmer and Das tend to present this as merely a point of beginning. Here the foregrounding of people's experiences of social suffering is intended not only as a plea for recognition but also as a means to initiate a wider set of inquiries into the institutional foundations of civil society and the grounds upon which it may be possible to realize people's social and economic rights. For example, Farmer writes:

> [R]ecognition is not enough … We need another modern movement, a globalized movement that will use whatever stories and images it can to promote respect for human rights, especially the rights of the poor. For such a movement to come about, we need to rehabilitate a series of sentiments long out of fashion in academic and policy circles: indignation on behalf not of oneself but of the less fortunate; solidarity; empathy; and even pity, compassion, mercy, and remorse … Stories and images need to be linked to the historically deeper and geographically wider analyses that can allow the listener or the observer to understand the ways in which AIDS, a new disease, is rooted in the historically defined conditions that promote its spread and deny its treatment; the ways in which genocide, like slavery before it, is a fundamentally 'transnational' event; the reasons why breast cancer is inevitably fatal for the most affected women in who live in poverty; the meaning of rights in an interconnected world riven by poverty and inequality. In short, serious social ills require in-depth analyses.
>
> *(Farmer 2006: 185)*

In this context, Das seeks to reposition problems of 'theodicy' as a key matter for analysis and holds that there is much to be gained through the recovery of classical traditions of sociological inquiry into the ways in which populations are liable to come under a compulsive struggle to make the experience of suffering productive for thought and action (Das 1997b). Accordingly, Max Weber's studies of the impact of repeated attempts to solve problems of theodicy on wider processes of rationalization may be set alongside Emile Durkheim's account of the social origins of moral individualism and Karl Marx's focus on the ways power is exercised through the toil of work, as indispensable components of a movement to expose how social forces condition the experience of suffering and set limits on the ways this is acknowledged and responded to in the political realm (Wilkinson 2005). Das calls for the development of 'secular theodicies' that bring a sociological frame of analysis to bear upon the ways in which harms are caused and distributed; and holds that these should also work to account for the many different ways in which experiences of suffering might be 'culturally appropriated' for competing moral and political ends (Das 1997b: 570).

While theodicies traditionally worked to establish a 'higher' divine purpose for suffering that was not immediately apparent to believers, a secular 'sociodicy' proceeds in a more pragmatic vein that holds that it may always be the case that a substantial part of suffering will appear to be utterly 'useless' and without meaning (Levinas 1988). In this respect, the experience of 'useless suffering' may well be identified as the means by which 'bare life' is brought into relief and we encounter the moral demand to be responsible for others (Agamben 1998); though, of course, this is a demand that is all too often denied (Cohen 2001). In this context, the relevance of research and writing on social suffering for human rights might well lie in the extent to which the former can be used to open up avenues of inquiry into the ways in which the latter now serves as a primary means to address problems of 'sociodicy' (Morgan and Wilkinson 2001).

Ongoing issues and work in progress

Social suffering is a troubled field of inquiry; it calls upon researchers to place the harms that are done to people and that we do to one another at the heart of the attempt to make sense of society and our social condition. It challenges social science to attend to the particular ways in which individuals and societies experience suffering as well as the historical and cultural conditions under which this is ascribed with moral meaning. The experience of suffering, particularly in its most acute forms, is identified as a decisive element within the formation of individual personalities and within the overall character of societies. The social practices by which individuals struggle to live through this experience, and the institutional arrangements that are set in place under the effort to minimize its deleterious effects on human life, are held to exert a major influence over the formation of political cultures and the dynamics of social change.

On many accounts, research and writing on social suffering are set to unsettle the conventions of social science. Here it is almost always the case that sociologists and anthropologists are made to question the adequacy of their frames of social representation and analysis. Researchers are made to broker with many destabilizing tensions; to many it appears impossible to surmount the difficulty of providing a morally sufficient account of what suffering does to people. On many of the points raised in the above, it may not yet be possible to provide a clearsighted view on how these can be made productive for further thinking and action.

In the historical record of human suffering, we repeatedly come across the extreme paradox that through experiences that entail the most terrible uprooting of life, people are brought under the compulsion to reach out for what really matters in their lives. This appears to be engrained in the character of the work that takes place here. With a focus on problems of social suffering, social science is continually set to confront its limits; but almost always with a commitment to making these more suited to grasp what is existentially at stake in the human social condition. On these grounds, we are challenged revise the ways we relate to the history of modern times and of the forms of knowledge through which it has been made possible for us to relate to ourselves and others as definitively *social* subjects. We are asked, moreover, to dwell on how social life takes place through our enactments of substantive human values, and how by our actions we might help establish and sustain more humane forms of society.

References

Agamben, G. (1998). *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Arendt, H. (1963). *On Revolution*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Arendt, H. (1973). *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, New York: Harcourt Brace Janovich.

Barker-Benfield, G. J. (1992). *The Culture of Sensibility: Sex and Society in Eighteenth Century Britain*, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Barreto, J. M. (2006). 'Ethics of Emotion as Ethics of Human Rights: A Jurisprudence of Sympathy in Adorno, Horkheimer and Rorty', *Law & Critique*, *17*(*1*): 73–106.

Bayle, P. (1965 [1695–1697]). *Historical and Critical Dictionary*, Indianapolis, IN: Bobbs-Merrill.

Berlant, L. (ed.) (2004). *Compassion: The Culture and Politics of an Emotion*, New York: Routledge.

Bendelow, G. (2006). 'Pain, Suffering and Risk', *Health, Risk & Society*, *8*(*1*): 59–70.

Besterman, T. (1962). 'Voltaire and the Lisbon Earthquake or, the Death of Optimism', in T. Besterman (ed.), *Voltaire: Essays*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Blaickie, W. G. (1865). *Heads and Hands in the World of Labour*, Alexander Strathern: London.

Boltanski, L. (1999). *Distant Suffering: Morality, Media and Politics*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bourdieu. P. *et al.* (1999). *The Weight of the World: Social Suffering in Contemporary Life*, Cambridge: Cambridge Polity Press.

Bourdieu, P. and Wacquant, L. (1992). *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology*, Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press.

Boyne, R. (2002). 'Bourdieu, Social Suffering and Bourdieu: From Class to Culture, *In Memorian* Pierre Bourdieu 1930–2002', *Theory, Culture & Society*, *19*(*3*): 117–128.

Charlesworth, S. (2000). 'Bourdieu Social Suffering and Working-Class Life', in B. Fowler (ed.), *Reading Bourdieu on Society and Culture*, Oxford: Blackwell.

Chouliaraki, L. (2006). *The Spectatorship of Suffering*, London: Sage Publications.

Cohen, S. (2001). *States of Denial: Knowing About Atrocities and Suffering*, Cambridge: Polity Press.

Das, V. (1994). 'Moral Orientations to Suffering: Legitimation, Power and Healing', in L. C. Chen, A. Kleinman, and N. C. Ware (eds.), *Health and Social Change in International Perspective*, Boston, MA: Harvard School of Public Health.

Das, V. (1995). *Critical Events: An Anthropological Perspective on Contemporary India*, Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Das, V. (1997a). 'Language and Body: Transactions in the Construction of Pain', in A. Kleinman, V. Das, and M. Lock, *Social Suffering*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Das, V. (1997b). 'Sufferings, Theodicies, Disciplinary Practices, Appropriations', *International Journal of Social Science*, *49*: 563–657.

Das, V. (2007). *Life and Worlds: Violence and the Descent into the Ordinary*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Das, V., Kleinman, A., Ramphele, M., Lock, M., and Reynolds, P. (eds.). (2001) *Remaking a World: Violence, Social Suffering and Recovery*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Dejours, C. (1998) *Souffrances en France: La banalization de l'injustice sociale*, Paris: Seuil.

Delvecchio Good, M.-J., Brodwin, P. E., Good, B. J., and Kleinman, A. (eds.) (1992). *Pain as Human Experience: An Anthropological Perspective*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Denby, D. (1994). *Sentimental Narrative and the Social Order in France, 1760–1820*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ellis, M. (1996). *The Politics of Sensibility: Race, Gender and Commerce in the Sentimental Novel*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Farmer, P. (1997). 'On Suffering and Structural Violence: A View from Below', in A. Kleinman, V. Das, and M. Lock (eds.), *Social Suffering*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Farmer, P. (1999). *Infections and Inequalities: The Modern Plagues*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Farmer, P. (2005). *Pathologies of Power: Health, Human Rights and the New War on the Poor*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Farmer, P. (2006). 'Never Again? Reflections on Human Values and Human Rights', in G. B. Peterson (ed.), *The Tanner Lectures on Human Values*, Salt Lake City, UT: University of Utah Press.

Frothingham, N. L. *et al.* (1862). *Society for the Relief of Aged and Destitute Clergymen: Extracts from Records Relating to its History and Objects*, Boston, MA: John Wilson & Son.

Halpern, C. (2002). *Suffering, Politics and Power: A Genealogy in Modern Political Theory*, Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Hammad, J. and Tribe, R. (2020). 'Social Suffering and the Psychological Impact of Structural Violence and Economic Oppression in an Ongoing Conflict Setting: The Gaza Strip', *Journal of Community Psychology* 48: 1791–1810.

Hoijer, B. (2004). 'The Discourse of Global Compassion: The Audience and Media Reporting of Human Suffering', *Media Culture & Society*, *26*(*4*): 513–531.

Honneth, A. (1995). *The Struggle for Recognition: The Moral Grammar of Social Conflicts*, Cambridge: Polity Press.

Hunt, L. (2007). *Inventing Human Rights: A History*, New York: W. W Norton & Co.

Hutchison, E. (2014). 'A global politics of pity? Disaster imagery and the emotional construction of solidarity after the 2004 Asian tsunami', *International Political Sociology*, *8*(1): 1–19.

Ignatieff, M. (1999). *The Warrior's Honour: Ethnic War and the Modern Conscience*, London: Vintage.

James, W. (1907). 'Pragmatism's Conception of Truth', *Journal of Philosophy and Scientific Methods*, *6*(*4*): 141–155.

Kleinman, A. (1988). *The Illness Narratives: Suffering, Healing and the Human Condition*, New York: Basic Books.

Kleinman, A. (1995a). *Writing at the Margin: Discourse between Anthropology and Medicine*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Kleinman, A. (1995b). 'Pitch, Picture, Power: The Globalization of Local Suffering and the Transformation of Social Experience', *Ethnos*, *60*(*3–4*): 181–191.

Kleinman, A. (1999). 'Experience and Its Moral Modes: Culture, Human Conditions and Disorder', in G. B. Peterson (ed.), *The Tanner Lectures on Human Values*, Salt Lake City, UT: University of Utah Press.

Kleinman, A. (2006). *What Really Matters: Living a Moral Life Amidst Uncertainty and Danger*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kleinman, A. Das, V., and Lock, M. (eds.) (1997). *Social Suffering*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Kleinman, A. and Fitz-Henry, E. (2007). 'The Experiential Basis of Subjectivity: How Individuals Change in the Context of Societal Transformation', in J. Biehl, B. Good, and A. Kleinman (eds.), *Rethinking Subjectivity: Ethnographic Investigations*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Kleinman, A. and Kleinman, J. (1997). 'The Appeal of Experience; the Dismay of Images: Cultural Appropriations of Suffering in Our Times', in A. Kleinman, V. Das, and M. Lock (eds.), *Social Suffering*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Kloppenberg, J. T. (1996). 'Pragmatism: An Old Name for Some New Ways of Thinking?', *Journal of American History*, *83*(*1*): 100–113.

Lepenies, W. (1988). *Between Literature and Science: The Rise of Sociology*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Levinas, E. (1988). 'Useless Suffering', in R. Bernasconi and D. Wood (eds.), *The Provocation of Levinas: Rethinking the Other*, London: Routledge.

McRobbie, A. (2002). 'A Mixed Bag of Misfortunes? Bourdieu's Weight of the World', *Theory, Culture & Society*, *19*(*3*): 129–138.

Moeller, S. (1999). *Compassion Fatigue: How the Media Sell Disease, Famine, War and Death*, London: Routledge.

Mookherjee, M. (2020) 'The Harms of Global Poverty as Misrecognition: Social Suffering, Invisibility, Alienation', in G. Schweiger (ed.), *Poverty, Inequality and the Critical Theory of Recognition*, Cham: Springer, pp. 203–223.

Morgan, D. G. and Wilkinson, I. (2001). 'The Problem of Suffering and the Sociological Task of Theodicy', *European Journal of Social Theory*, *4*(*2*): 199–214.

Nash, K. (2008). 'Global Citizenship as Show Business: The Cultural Politics of Make Poverty History', *Media, Culture & Society*, *30*(*2*): 167–181.

Nussbaum, M. C. (1996). 'Compassion: The Basic Social Emotion', *Social Philosophy and Policy*, *13*(*1*): 27–58.

Nussbaum, M. C. (2001). *Upheavals of Thought*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Plummer, K. (2001). *Documents of Life 2: An Invitation to Critical Humanism*, London: Sage.

Reddy, W. M. (2001). *The Navigation of Feeling: A Framework for the History of Emotions*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Renault, E. (2008). *Souffrances Sociales: Philosophie, Psychologie et Politique*, Paris: Editions La Découverte.

Rorty, R. (1998). 'Human Rights, Rationality and Sentimentality', in *Truth and Progress: Philosophical Papers*, Volume *3*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Scheper-Hughes, N. (1992). *Death without Weeping: The Violence of Everyday Life in Brazil*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Scheper-Hughes, N. (1997). 'Peace Time Crimes', *Social Identities*, *3*: 471–497.

Scheper-Hughes, N. (1998). 'Undoing: Social Suffering and the Politics of Remorse in the New South Africa', *Social Justice*, *25*(*4*): 114–142.

Schilder P. (1938). 'The Social Neurosis', *Psychoanalytic Review*, *25*: 1–19.

van Sickle J. V. (1946). 'Regional Aspects of the Problem of Full Employment at Low Wages', *Southern Economic Journal*, *13*(*1*): 36–45.

Sik, D. (2020). 'Power from Indirect Pain: A Historical Phenomenology of Medical Pain Management', *Continental Philosophy Review*, 1–19.

Sontag, S. (2003). *Regarding the Pain of Others*, London: Hamish Hamilton.

Smith, A. (1976 [1759]). *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Spelman, E.V. (1998). *Fruits of Sorrow: Framing Our Attention to Suffering*, Boston, MA: Beacon.

Sznaider, N. (2001). *The Compassionate Temperament: Care and Cruelty in Modern Society*, Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Tester, K. (2001). *Compassion, Morality and the Media*, Buckingham: Open University Press.

Thompson, J. B. (1995). *The Media and Modernity: A Social Theory of the Media*, Cambridge: Polity.

Tronto, J. C. (1993). *Moral Boundaries: A Political Argument for an Ethic of Care*, New York: Routledge.

Turner, B. S. (1993). 'Outline of a Theory of Human Rights', *Sociology*, *27*(*3*): 489–512.

Turner, B. S. (2006). *Vulnerability and Human Rights*, Pennsylvania, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press.

Vincent–Buffault, A. (1986). *The History of Tears: Sensibility and Sentimentality in France*, Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Vitellone, N. (2004). 'Habitus and Social Suffering: Culture Addiction and the Syringe', in L. Adkins and B. Skeggs (eds.), *Feminism after Bourdieu*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishing/Sociological Review.

Voltaire (1947 [1759]). *Candide or Optimism*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Wilkinson, I. (2005). *Suffering: A Sociological Introduction*, Cambridge: Polity Press.

Wilkinson, I and Kleinman A. (2016). *A Passion for Society: How We Think About Human Suffering*, Berkeley: University of California Press.

Wordsworth, W. (1952–9 [1793]). 'Descriptive Sketches', in E. de Selincourt (ed.), *The Poetical Works of William Wordsworth*, Oxford: Clarendon Press.

42

Memory practices and theory in a global age

Daniel Levy

Collective memory has become a ubiquitous term dominating the public and scholarly imagination since the late 1980s. True to its multidisciplinary character there has been little agreement on a concise definition (Olick and Robbins 1998). Nevertheless, much of the literature draws on the works of Maurice Halbwachs, for whom memories are not simply mediated but structured by social arrangements and constituted in social frameworks. 'It is in society that people normally acquire their memories. It is also in society that they recall, recognize, and localize their memories' (Halbwachs 1992: 38). Studying and theorizing memory is thus not a matter of exploring the subjective mind or its neurological functions but of identifying shifting social frames within which memories are embedded. Mnemonic forms vary according to social organizations, and the groups to which individuals belong.

Differences notwithstanding there is a minimal consensus that collective memories will be sustained by the social frameworks within which they are produced (Halbwachs 1992), have an intersubjective (Misztal 2003), and intertextual (Olick 2007) dimension. Leaving aside psychoanalytical and neurological orientations, cultural memory is commonly characterized by intentional, organized, and ritualized mnemonic manifestations. Producing memory types that transcend particular experiences and sustain trans-generational long-time memories requires institutionalized repositories. They rely on external media and institutions onto which experiences, memories, and knowledge are inscribed (e.g. archives, museums, libraries, and popular culture).

The decision to refrain from a specific definition of collective memory is driven by the central claim that memory and the theoretical concepts underwriting its study should not be reduced to a static concept but must be addressed in their respective historical contexts. History provides the epistemological underpinnings circumscribing the essential features of memory techniques and attendant social, cultural, and political practices. As Patrick Hutton has pointed out: 'The expressive, collective memory, of oral tradition gives way to the introspective, personal memory of literary culture. Memory, first conceived as a repetition, is eventually reconceived as a recollection. Over the long run, the appreciation of memory as a habit is displaced by one of memory as representation' (Hutton 1993: 16). Changing modes of communication are co-extensive with different apprehensions of memory: 'orality with the reiteration of living memory; manuscript literacy with the recovery of lost wisdom; print literacy with the reconstruction of a distinct past;

and media literacy with the deconstruction of the forms with which past images are composed' (Hutton 1993: 16). During this last stage of media literacy memory has become a self-conscious device which, I argue, is a crucial development for how memory is linked to political, social, and cultural theory (PSCT).

What we are studying when we apply collective memory as an analytic lens to society are changing temporal conceptions of the past–present–future triad. George Orwell's observation, by now a cliché, that 'whoever controls the present controls the past' has long been a central theme in the memory literature. Most conceptual statements and empirical undertakings seem to revolve around this kind of instrumentalist approach. According to this perspective present political concerns and dominant (nation-state) interests are projected onto the past instrumentalizing memory for the political needs of the present (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983). This research tradition is in line with Orwell's perception of a controlling hegemonic party. Challenging this state-centric view, another popular research strand draws on Michel Foucault's notion of counter-memory. The focus here is on sub-national units of analysis such as ethnic minorities, gender, and other subaltern groups with counter-memorial agendas (Foucault 1975). Despite their different vantage points, both orientations essentially consider political and identitarian expediencies in the present as circumscribing the construction of the past.

Far less (theoretical) attention has been paid to the future and its relation to the temporal modes of present and past, beyond Orwell's other instrumentalist insight that 'whoever controls the past controls the future'. On a polemical level this omission has frequently been associated with the critique that memory supposedly is merely backward looking, and that contemporary preoccupations with the past come at the expense of a progressive future agenda (Maier 1993). I am not disputing this charge (the neglect of either temporal dimension, after all, by itself is an important finding), but want to underscore that collective memory involves all three temporal registers. Regardless, the critics of the memory boom who lament the alleged absence of a future vision reproduce this limitation by dismissing memory tout court rather than engaging with its significance for the social articulation of futures.

As Alasdair MacIntyre puts it: 'An adequate sense of tradition manifests itself in a grasp of those future possibilities which the past has made available to the present. Living traditions, just because they continue a not-yet-completed narrative, confront a future whose determinate and determinable character, so as it possesses any, derives form the past' (1984: 223). Memory and its association with a particular past are not an impediment for the future but a prerequisite to enunciate a narrative (bridge) over the present. A shared sense of the past becomes a meaning-making repository which helps define aspirations for the future. In his historical analysis of times and temporalities Reinhart Koselleck points out that the present is situated between past experiences, which is 'present past, whose events have been incorporated and can be remembered', and a horizon of expectations, which refers to 'the future made present, it points to the not-yet, to that which has not been experienced, to that which can only be discovered' (Koselleck 1985: 272). What matters for our discussion is that the preoccupation with the past and the (secularized) command to remember have become sources of political legitimacy and cultural affirmation. They are perceived as central mechanisms for the transmission of values to future generations.

Despite the prominence of memory in public discourse and the proliferation of memory studies, the topic remains a marginal theme in PSCT. It is instructive to briefly consider why memory is addressed as epiphenomenal rather than as an integral and constitutive part of theory. This omission needs to be understood with reference to the genealogy and epistemological conditions under which PSCT originated and evolved. Much of modernity (and along with it the social sciences) was a forward-looking intellectual enterprise, establishing rather a-historical dichotomies between the past and the present (e.g. *Gesellschaft* and *Gemeinschaft*). Time and

memory were frequently subjected to linearity and rationality. The emphasis on change and progress instead of tradition (which was closely associated with memory and conceptions of pre-modernity) left little theoretical space for the incorporation of memory. Paradoxically, it was precisely the perception that progress destroyed the past which triggered the nineteenth-century preoccupation and (re)invention of memory, to paraphrase the famous observation by Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (1983). The invention of traditions was largely a response to provide a sense of continuity (and foundation) for the new nation-state eager to establish a connection to the past (Smith 1986) by imagining community (Anderson 1983). Early twentieth-century references to the past resembled many of the transitions and transformative anxieties associated with modernity that have given rise to the contemporary memory boom. The establishment of museums as a means to preserve the past was perhaps the most emblematic feature of a wave of public commemorations (Lowenthal 1985). Another sign of growing attention to memory at the beginning of the twentieth century was the shift from its association with tradition and ritual to a more scientific realm, embodied in the works of Sigmund Freud and others (Hacking 1995).

Memory as heuristic device in the 'commemorative era'

Yet this plethora of memory phenomena, both in academia and as a political–cultural marker of modernity, has done little to alleviate the theoretical paucity. The conceptual lacuna, that is the missing link of memory in PSCT, is especially surprising considering that memory is a necessary condition for our cognition and values. It is essential for the development of attachments and various forms of belonging. 'It is closely connected with emotions because emotions are in part about the past and because memory evokes emotions' (Misztal 2003: 1). Memory is indispensable for our ability to make sense of the present as it 'functions in every act of perception, in every act of intellection, in every act of language' (Terdiman 1993: 9). From a phenomenological perspective every social act is permeated with memory. Edward Casey notes that

> in the case of memory, we are always already in the thick of things. … Not only because remembering is at all times presupposed, but also because it is always at work: it is continually going on, often on several levels and in several ways at once. … Indeed, every fiber of our bodies, every cell of our brains, holds memories – as does everything physical outside bodies and brains, even those inanimate objects that bear the marks of their past histories upon them in mute profusion.
>
> *(Casey 2000: xix)*

The identity dimension of memory is not confined to this phenomenological perspective but extends to the very core of how we exist in and through history. As Philip Abrams put it:

> Doing justice to the reality of history is not a matter of noting the way in which the past provides background to the present; it is a matter of treating what people do in the present as a struggle to create a future out of the past, of seeing that the past is not just the womb of the present but the only raw material out of which the present can be constructed.
>
> *(Abrams 1982: 8)*

Memory – relating past, present and future – is thus a central faculty of being in time, through which we define individual and collective selves. In short, the stuff around which PSCT revolves.

Memory is situated in *social* frameworks (e.g. family, national, and personal experiences anchored by symbolic markings), externalized in *cultural* markers (e.g. archival repositories such

as memorials and museums, and other forms of cultural production including digital sources), and shaped by *political* circumstances (e.g. wars, catastrophes, and debates generating lasting meanings of these events). Social frameworks and historical circumstances change over time and with them the aforementioned alignments of temporalities (e.g. the discourse of progress in modernity). Studying (and theorizing) memory allows us to shift our focus from time to temporalities, thereby understanding what categories people, groups, and cultures employ to make sense of their lives, their attachments, and the concomitant ideals that are validated – that is, the political, cultural, and social theories which command normative attention.

Following Hans-Georg Gadamer, I suggest that the theoretical surplus of memory consists of its heuristic value:

> Hermeneutics must start from the position that a person seeking to understand something has a relation to the object that comes into language in the transmitted text and has, or aquires, a connection out of which the text speaks. … The place between strangeness and familiarity that a transmitted text has for us is that intermediate place between being a historically intended separate object and being part of a tradition. The true home of hermeneutics is in that intermediate area.
>
> *(Gadamer 1975: 262–263)*

And it is memory that occupies this intermediate realm as it provides the necessary temporal distance and thus the clarifying conditions in which understanding takes place.

The current theoretical and heuristic value of memory, I argue, is primarily derived (though not limited) from the specific context of the aforementioned memory boom, which is challenging existing conceptual categories and their attendant theories. A short look at the origins of the memory boom and some of its political, cultural, and social expressions is instructive for situating memory as an integral part of PSCT. What follows is not an exhaustive explanation of the memory boom let alone a genealogy of memory. Rather it is an attempt to specify the epistemological conditions for the centrality of memory in PSCT.

Recent public and scholarly attention to memory works and the work of memory originated during the 1980s and has shown no signs of slowing down. According to Pierre Nora (2002), two interrelated phenomena explain the current upsurge in memory. One is the 'acceleration of memory' which suggests 'that the most continuous or permanent feature of the modern world is no longer continuity or permanence but change. And increasingly rapid change, an accelerated precipitation of all things into an ever more swiftly retreating past' (Nora 2002: 1). On this view, memory 'has shattered the unity of historical time, that fine, straightforward linearity which traditionally bound the present and the future to the past. In effect, it was the way in which a society, nation, group or family envisaged its future that traditionally determined what it needed to remember of the past to prepare that future; and this in turn gave meaning to the present, which was merely a link between the two' (ibid.: 1). Andreas Huyssen (1995) has addressed the digital age as an instantiation of this acceleration and the cultural responses evidenced in the preoccupation with memory (e.g. the surge of auto-biographies, memoirs, and the popular interest in genealogy). History writing itself has been affected as earlier delineations between memory and history have given way to a blurring of the two (Klein 2000). Together, these developments 'have introduced an element of relativism into historiography. … Accordingly, the problem of memory comes to the fore. History becomes a politics of what we in the present want posterity to remember' (Hutton 1994: 100).

This move from history to memory (a division which is merely analytic and has itself become the subject of historiographic attention) has different vectors, one of them being temporality

and historical time itself. Chris Lorenz has traced the blurring of earlier delineations between memory and history.

> Fundamental controversial parts of the past – that since 1990 have been labeled as "catastrophic", "post-traumatic", "terroristic" and "haunting" – are overstretching the normal "historical" concept of "the past." This is the case because historians normally presuppose that the past does "go away" – and therefore is distant and absent from the present. The presupposition that the "hot" present transforms into a "cold" past by itself, just like normal fires extinguish and "cool off" by themselves, has been constitutive for history as a discipline. This process of "cooling off" is often conceived of as the change from memory to history.
>
> *(Lorenz 2014: 43)*

Comparable 'reflexive' developments are echoed in the proliferation of heritage sites. 'In the movement from history to heritage there is an evaluation of the past in order for the present to judge what legacy it should derive from history' (Delanty 2008: 36). The current heritage movement, whose origins can be dated to the 1970s, represents a self-conscious effort to integrate memory as a meaning making activity. 'An important aspect of heritage is a memory conceived of as a mode of interpretation. The memories that are encapsulated in a heritage allow a society to interpret history and the relation of the present to history. To speak of heritage in such terms is to see it as a cultural model of interpretation' (ibid.: 38). This heuristic device is closely related to the acceleration of memory, which has resulted in the paradox that the less we are embedded in actual 'milieux de mémoire' the more we cultivate 'lieux de mémoire' (Nora 1989). The loss of memory corresponds to an obsession with memory. The 'age of commemoration' is marked by the cultivation and preservation of heritage sites on a global scale. The so-called 'heritage industry' has entwined political (conservativism), cultural (growth of museums and private collections), social (identity forming), and economic (commodification of the past) functions (Lowenthal 1985). A cognate to the heritage industry is the resurgence of nostalgia (Boym 2001). Both are cultural preoccupations that characterize epochal transitions. Nostalgia was also part of the *fin de siècle* memory boom during which the political, cultural and social foundations of modernity were theorized in the context of a paradox in which time threatened memory and memory sought to restrain time.

The second reason for the memory boom speaks to the emergence of identity politics. The nexus of memory and identity is sustained by the basic premise that group identities require a sense of permanence. 'Identities and memories are not things we think *about*, but things we think *with*. As such, they have no existence beyond our politics, our social relations, and our histories' (Gillis 1994: 5). What characterizes the memory boom is that 'the common feature underpinning most contemporary manifestations of the memory craze seems to be an insecurity about identity. We might postulate a rule: when identity becomes uncertain, memory rises in value' (Megill 2007: 43). Nora speaks about the 'democratization' of history. He ascribes the popularity of this emancipatory discourse to three types of decolonization:

> *international* decolonization, which has allowed societies previously stagnating in the ethnological inertia of colonial oppression access to historical consciousness and the rehabilitation (or fabrication) of memories; *domestic* decolonization, within traditional western societies, of sexual, social, religious and provincial minorities now being integrated with the mainstream and for whom reaffirming their 'memory' in actual fact, their history – is a way of having their 'particularism' recognized by a community that had previously refused

them that right, while at the same time cultivating their difference and their attachment to an identity threatened with disintegration.

(Nora 2002: 5)

Previously marginalized groups seek to reaffirm their identities through the discovery and reha-bilitation of their (counter)-memories.

The third type of decolonization is *ideological*. It refers to the re-emergence of long-suppressed memories unleashed by the end of the Cold War and linked to the collapse of totalitarian and authoritarian regimes in Eastern and Central Europe, Africa, and Latin America. This trend is associated with the growing attention to human rights discourses and the appearance of transi-tional justice studies (Levy and Sznaider 2010). Truth and justice are linked with traumatic memo-ries imposing challenges for societies to remember their collective wrongs and pursue different forms of reconciliation through a host of mechanisms including symbolic acknowledgment of past injustices through rituals of forgiveness (e.g. apologies) and related commemorative activities (e.g. post–heroic memorials); the recognition of victims and the responsibility of perpetrators (e.g. truth commissions); material compensation through a variety of restitutive measures; and legal proce-dures (e.g. human rights or war crime trials). Transitology is by now a vast field and its details are beyond the scope of this essay. What matters for our theoretical purposes is that the prominence of memories of past injustices is reflective of and contributes to emerging forms of cultural iden-tifications, collective self-understandings, and political legitimacy. Political legitimation has always depended on collective memory (myth, etc.). What distinguishes today's version is that it is driven by a critical introspection of one's negative pasts, what Jeffrey Olick (2007) has termed the 'politics of regret'. On this view, the central questions 'for a sociohistorical theory of regret concern the ways regret is modern and the way modernity is regretful' (Olick 2007: 130).

The popularity of the memory boom among its entrepreneurs is matched by conceptual developments on the observer level. On the analytical side, these international, domestic, and ideological transformations tie in with the consolidation of memory studies as a field which includes scientific institutes, multi–disciplinary scholarship, curatorial work, oral history projects, and an ongoing stream of publications mirroring and accentuating the commemorative vigour of contemporary societies:

Where baby-boomers worry about the living death of Alzheimer's disease, neuro-scientists search for its biological basis. Where trauma victims seek to overcome their on–going suf-fering from post–traumatic stress, psychologists develop frameworks for treatment. Where past oppression has seemingly become the coin of identity, cultural theorists inquire into the origins of the politics of victimhood. And where societies confront the legacies of their misdeeds, social and political scientists analyze the conditions for successful transition and salutary commemoration. All of these, and more, are constituents of what has come to be referred to as the new 'memory studies', which has acquired its own journals, been elabo-rated in countless edited volumes, has established research centres, received grants, and been the subject of university courses.

(Olick, Vinitzky-Seroussi, and Levy 2010: 2)

Mnemo-history and theory

The theoretical value of memory is best assessed with a mnemo-historical approach. Accord-ing to Jan Assmann (1997), mnemo-history is not about the exploration of the past per se but rather is concerned with how a particular past is remembered. How histories are remembered

(and by extension distorted over time) emerges as the main focus of our analytic pursuits. Jan Assmann reminds us that what matters is not so much the factuality of these memories but their actuality. By historicizing memory as a contingent phenomenon, we can simultaneously elucidate the reasons for distinctive memory cultures and capture the specificities of mnemonic iterations. This process-oriented approach suggests that 'memory is not only storage of past "facts" but the ongoing work of reconstructive imagination. In other words, the past cannot be stored but always has to be "processed" and mediated. This mediation depends on the semantic frames and needs of a given individual or society within a given present' (Assmann 1997: 14). However, there are two conceptual reflections a mnemo-historical approach needs to take into consideration.

The first concerns the specific characteristics of the mnemonic reference group:

> Every group – be it religious, political or economic, family, friends, or acquaintances, even a transient gathering in a salon, auditorium, or street–immobilizes time in its own way and imposes on its members the illusion that, in a given duration of a constantly changing world, certain zones have acquired a relative stability and balance in which nothing essential is altered.
>
> *(Halbwachs 1980: 126)*

An obvious, but sometimes neglected point here is that memory practices are mediated by idiosyncratic group features of temporal experiences and distinctive cultural dispositions towards specific pasts and pastness in general. Attentiveness to the kind of cultural validations specific groups attribute to temporal phenomenon such as progress, change, innovation, history and memory itself is therefore indispensable.

A second concern relates to questions of non-contemporaneity. There is a tendency in the academic literature to privilege a mostly Western conception of memory. Therefore, the need to 'de-provincialize' the notion of memory arises, since it is frequently situated in an ideal(ized) sequence of modernity that is characterized, among other things, by its alleged anachronistic relationship to the past and traditions. Not to mention the kind of linear assumptions which have long informed social and political modernization theories. Much of the literature addressing the memory boom operates with a conception of modernity stipulating a universalism that loses track of the particular conditions that shape memory cultures. They share a 'modernist' bias, which leaves little empirical let alone conceptual space for the existence of non-contemporaneities (Gross 2000). Instead of reproducing a view of memory that presupposes a particular sequence of temporalities, we need to be attentive to different figurations of the temporal triad of past, present and future. A mnemo-historical approach seeks to resolve the aforementioned tension between the synchronic imperatives globalization imposes and diachronic dimensions suggesting a theoretical perspective in which the objects and subjects of our enquiries are historically constituted. Pledging close attention to non-contemporaneities is not a matter of cultural relativism but of analytic pragmatism.

Conclusion: epochal memories and their epistemological foundations

If we accept the premise that memory practices and their heuristic value need to be understood in specific historical contexts, we must explore the distinguishing political, cultural, social, and technological features shaping and transforming the character of memory cultures. We are concerned with the epochal features of memory, being situated between local conditions and global

currents. Which mnemonic practices prevail and characterize a particular epoch and/or culture? During the late nineteenth and for the first three quarters of the twentieth-century memory was identified with the hegemonic aspirations of the nation-state seeking to forge a united and unifying narrative of the past. While nation-state memories were a self-conscious top-down and territorialized effort, the late twentieth and early twenty-first-century signal a self-reflexive turning point attributing legitimacy to nation transforming forms of memory.

Since the 1990s we have witnessed a cultural (and by extension temporal) turn in the social sciences and humanities. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, globalization is posing a challenge to the idea that binding history and borders tightly together is the only possible means of social and symbolic integration. Astrid Erll (2011) captures this transition by distinguishing three periods in the study of (cultural) memory. Starting points are the claims and impulses that the works of Maurice Halbwachs (Halbwachs 1992; 1980) and Aby Warburg (Gombrich 1986) have been generating since the 1930s. This initial phase focused on how memory works in society and culture. 'The focus thus shifted from the dynamics of memory in culture to the specific memories of (allegedly stable and clearly demarcated) cultures – the most popular social unit being the nation-state, which was then swiftly seen as isomorphic with national culture and a national cultural memory. Memory studies thus entered the stage of "national memory studies", which characterized much of the work done in the 1990s' (Erll 2011: 6). As globalization processes came into sharper relief, the pervasive and persistent explanatory power of 'methodological nationalism' in the social sciences in general, and memory studies in particular, appeared if not anachronistic certainly limited. Subsequently, a third phase, trying to escape the national container, emerged. Erll labels this latest shift 'transcultural memory studies' suggesting that 'for memory studies, the old-fashioned container-culture approach is not only somewhat ideologically suspect. It is also epistemologically flawed because there are too many mnemonic phenomena that do not come into our field of vision with the "default" combination of territorial, ethnic and national collectivity as the main framework of cultural memory – but which may be seen with the transcultural lens' (Erll 2011: 8).

Among the progenitors of this Third Wave were numerous works challenging the spatially rooted understanding of culture. Instead, the focus shifted to the uncoupling of nation and state, what some have referred to as the cosmopolitanization of memories (Levy and Sznaider, 2002). Rather than presuppose the congruity of nation, territory, and polity, cosmopolitan memories are based on and contribute to nation-transforming idioms, spanning territorial and linguistic borders. The formation of cosmopolitan memories does not eliminate the national perspective but renders nationhood into one of several options of collective identification. The cosmopolitan turn suggests that particular orientations towards the past need to be re-evaluated against the background of global memory scapes (Levy and Sznaider 2005). Another early commentator on the impact of globalization on memory and was Andreas Huyssen (1995, 2000). His dissections of modernity and changing memory practices have been influential in a variety of academic fields. A more recent prominent exponent of the third wave is Michael Rothberg, who introduced the notion of 'multidirectional memory' (Rothberg 2009). Drawing on the travelling metaphor, Rothberg demonstrates how the multidirectionality of memories conjoins different narratives. On this view, memory politics are not zero-sum contestations but inform each other. Recent controversies about the comparability and potential cross-fertilizations of Holocaust and Post-Colonial Memories are the latest in a series of productive debates leading to the diffusion of memory concepts. Building on these and other influential works from this third wave, the field has greatly expanded during the last decade, geographically and thematically.

This is not to say that memory is no longer articulated within the nation-state, but that we witness a pluralization of memories – both in formal terms and pertaining to its normative

validation − which has given way to a fragmentation of memory, no longer beholden exclusively to the idea of the nation-state. The key interpretive issue here is the transition from heroic nation-states to a form of statehood that establishes internal and external legitimacy through its support for sceptical narratives challenging foundational quasi-mythical pasts, which previously served as generation transcending fixed points. Empirically those post-heroic symptoms of statehood are predicated on a critical engagement with past injustices, manifested, among other things, in the proliferation of historical commissions and the salience human rights norms occupy in public debates about usable pasts.

This transformation of memories involves the fragmentation of memories and their related privatization, reflecting a reconfigured relationship of memory and history. During the last two decades we can observe the appearance of 'memory history' (Diner 2003). The difference to conventional historical narratives is instructive. History is a particularized idea of temporal sequences articulating some form of (national) development. Memory, on the other hand, represents a co-existence of simultaneous pasts. (National) history corresponds to the telos of modernity (as a kind of civic religion). Memory dissolves this sequence, which is a constitutive part of history. 'Memory history' implies the simultaneity of phenomenon and a multitude of pasts. 'Memory history' is a particular form of memory which moves away from a state-supported (and state-supporting) national history. The previous (attempted) monopoly by the state to shape collective pasts has given way to a fragmentation of memories carried by private, individual, scientific, ethnic, and religious agents. To be sure, the state continues to exercise an important role in how we remember its history, but it is now sharing the field of meaning production with a host of other players. This brief sketch elucidates a shift from assumptions of homogeneous time and hegemonic memories to non-contemporaneous and fragmented memories.

Contrary to some of the critics (tellingly mostly historians), the memory boom and memory studies are not just a momentary and distorting fad (Rosenfeld 2009). If the public and scholarly engagement with collective memory started during the 1980s, it has taken on even more urgency during the last two decades. Controversies about commemorative practices and existing monuments have literally exploded. In the early 1990s, studying German commemorative politics, James Young identified a self-reflexive trend among artists and museum curators, and some other guardians of the past. One of the contributions was the notion of the counter-monument referring to monuments lacking monumental qualities (Young 1992). The latest and most prominent but, by no means unique iteration of this self-critical trajectory is the debate about Confederate monuments in the U.S. and related controversies around the atonement of past injustices (Laqueur 2020). Enduring controversies about how to deal with toxic pasts are part of a global narrative that complements or contradicts self-congratulatory national narratives. It is, therefore, not surprising that mnemonic entrepreneurs in Europe, adopted much of the rhetoric that *Black Lives Matter* used against symbols of the Confederacy and Slavery. Deploying a social justice framework, the transposition towards European countries came with a strong local inflection directing public awareness not only to their involvement in the slave trade but also with a focus on contemporary and persistent forms of racial discriminations. Echoing this critical development in the public sphere is the scholarly consolidation of the *Memory Studies Association* in 2016, which formalized the burgeoning field of memory studies.

The theoretical thrust of memory is closely tied to these self-reflexive political, cultural, and social engagements with changing conceptions of temporal links. As Barbara Misztal points out: 'Since memory practices are increasingly seen as the central characteristic of contemporary cultural formations, studies of social memory are becoming an important part of an examination of contemporary society's main problems and tensions. Thus, it is concluded that studies of collective memory can provide important insights for a general theory of modernity' (Misztal 2003: 8).

Moreover, the memory boom along with the rise of memory studies contributes to the co-existence of analytic and actor perspectives. Following Anthony Giddens (1987), this supports the status of memory as a double hermeneutic fermenting its relevant status for PSCT. 'The concepts of the social sciences are not produced about an independently constituted subject-matter, which continues regardless of what these concepts are. The "findings" of the social sciences very often enter constitutively into the world they describe' (Giddens 1987: 20). Notably, a recent section called 'Memory Activism' was added to the official focal points of the *Memory Studies Association* (Gutman 2017). Like class, gender, and ethnicity, memory is now being self-consciously deployed for analysis and in mnemonic practices. In other words, memory assumes a reflexive character. This is not to be mistaken as another version of instrumentalism, but rather an attribute of a period during which memory is articulated as 'the essential aspect of reflexivity and the multiple time frames that enter into the construction of an object to the extent that it is envisaged as a production situated in time and space. … it is not so much the temporal dimension in itself as the incidence of a plurality of temporalities involved in the identification and construction of the objects that is in question' (Werner and Zimmermann 2006: 45). Memory encourages us to explore questions 'concerning scale, categories of analysis, the relationship between diachrony and synchrony, and regimes of historicity and reflexivity' (ibid: 32). The conversation on memory has been moving from one about a struggle over the meaning of the past to encompassing theoretical debates over the political, cultural and social meanings of memory itself, that is the extent to which it is theoretically generative.

References

Abrams, P. (1982) *Historical Sociology*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Anderson, B. (1983) *Imagined Communities*, London: Verso.

Assmann, J. (1997) *Moses the Egyptian: The Memory of Egypt in Western Monotheism*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Boym, S. (2001) *The Future of Nostalgia*. New York: Basic Books.

Casey, E. (2000) *Remembering: A Phenomenological Study*, Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press,

Delanty, G. (2008) 'The European Heritage: History, Memory and Time', in C. Rumford (ed.) *Handbook of European Studies* (London: Sage), 36–51.

Diner, D. (2003) *Gedächtniszeiten: Über Jüdische und andere Geschichten*, München: C.H. Beck.

Erll, A. (2001) 'Travelling Memory', *Parallax*, 17(4): 4–18.

Foucault, M. (1975) 'Film and Popular Memory: An Interview with Michel Foucault', *Radical Philosophy*, 11: 24–29.

Gadamer, H.G. (1975) *Truth and Method*, London: Sheed & Ward.

Giddens, A. (1987) *Social Theory and Modern Sociology*, Cambridge: Polity Press.

Gillis, J. (1994) 'Memory and Identity: The History of a Relationship', in J.R. Gillis (ed.) *Commemorations: The Politics of National Identity* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press), 3–27.

Gombrich, E.H. (1986) *Aby Warburg: An Intellectual Biography*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Gross, D. (2000) *Lost Time: On Remembering and Forgetting in Late Modern Culture*, Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press.

Gutman, Y. (2017) *Memory Activism: Reimagining the Past for the Future in Israel-Palestine*, Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press.

Hacking, I. (1995) 'Memory Sciences, Memory Politics', in P. Antze and M. Lambek (eds.) *Tense Past: Cultural Essays in Trauma and Memory* (Routledge: London), 67–88.

Halbwachs, M. (1980 [1950]) *The Collective Memory*, ed. M. Douglas and trans. Francis J. Ditter Jr and Vida Yazdi Ditter (New York: Harper Colophon).

Halbwachs, M. (1992) *On Collective Memory*, Chicago, IL: Chicago University Press.

Hobsbawm, E. and T. Ranger (eds.) (1983) *The Invention of Tradition*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hutton, P. (1993) *History as an Art of Memory*, London: University Press of New England.

Hutton, P. (1994) 'Review Essay: History and Memory', *History and Theory*, 33(1): 95–107.

Huyssen, A. (1995) *Twilight Memories: Marking Time in a Culture of Amnesia*, London: Routledge.

Huyssen, A. (2000) 'Present Pasts: Media, Politics, Amnesia', *Public Culture*, 12(1): 21–38.

Klein, K.L. (2000) 'On the Emergence of Memory in Historical Discourse', *Representations*, 69: 127–150.

Koselleck, R. (1985) *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Times*, Cambridge: MIT Press.

Laqueur, T. (2020) 'While Statues Sleep', *London Review of Books*, 42(12), https://www.lrb.co.uk/the-paper/v42/n12/thomas-laqueur/while-statues-sleep (Last accessed August 8, 2020).

Levy, D. and N. Sznaider (2002) 'Memory Unbound: The Holocaust and the Formation of Cosmopolitan Memory', *European Journal of Social Theory*, 5(1): 87–106.

Levy, D. and N. Sznaider (2005) *Holocaust and Memory in the Global Age*, Philadelphia, PN: Temple University Press.

Levy, D. and N. Sznaider (2010) *Memory and Human Rights*, Philadelphia, PA: Penn State University Press.

Lorenz, C. (2014) 'Blurred Lines. History, Memory and the Experience of Time', *International Journal for History, Culture and Modernity*, 2(1): 43–62.

Lowenthal, D. (1985) *The Past is a Foreign Country*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

MacIntyre, A. (1984) *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*, Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press.

Maier, C.S. (1993) 'A Surfeit of Memory? Reflections on History, Melancholy and Denial', *History and Memory*, 5(2): 136–152.

Megill, A. (2007) 'History, Memory, Identity', in Megill, A. et al. (eds.), *Historical Knowledge, Historical Error: A Contemporary Guide to Practice* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press), pp. 41–62.

Misztal, B. (2003) *Theories of Social Remembering*, Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Nora, P. (1989) 'Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Memoire', *Representations*, 26: 7–25.

Nora, P. (2002) 'The Reasons for the Current Upsurge in Memory', *Transit*, 22: 1–6.

Olick, J.K. (2007) *The Politics of Regret, On Collective Memory and Historical Responsibility,* London: Routledge.

Olick, J.K. and J. Robbins (1998) 'Social Memory Studies: From "Collective Memory" to the Historical Sociology of Mnemonic Practices', *Annual Review of Sociology*, 24: 105–140.

Olick, J.K., V. Vinitzky-Seroussi, and D. Levy (2010) *The Collective Memory Reader*, New York: Oxford University Press.

Rosenfeld, G.D. (2009) 'A Looming Crash or a Soft Landing? Forecasting the Future of the Memory "Industry"', *Journal of Modern History*, 81(1): 122–158.

Rothberg, M. (2009) *Multidirectional Memory: Remembering the Holocaust in the Age of Decolonization*, Palo Alto: Stanford University Press.

Smith, A.D. (1986) *The Ethnic Origins of Nation*, Oxford: Blackwell.

Terdiman, R. (1993) *Present Past: Modernity and the Memory Crisis*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Werner, M. and B. Zimmermann (2006) 'Beyond Comparison. Histoire Croisée and the Challenge of Reflexivity', *History and Theory*, 45: 30–50.

Young, J.E. (1992) 'The Counter-Monument: Memory against Itself in Germany today', *Critical Inquiry*, 18(2): 267–296.

43

The gift paradigm

Frank Adloff

In recent years, the phenomenon associated with the name of Marcel Mauss (1990), gift-giving, has been taken up and widely discussed from many different perspectives: in philosophy, sociology, theology, history, and literary criticism, just to name a few of the disciplines (cf. Adloff/ Mau 2006). His essay *The Gift*, published in 1925, deals with the anthropological research on economic and symbolic exchange from a systematic and theoretical point of view and laid the foundation for cultural and economic anthropology (cf. Hann/Hart 2011; Liebersohn 2011). All subsequent social theorists pondering the gift and reciprocity refer to his work; the spectrum of ideas ranging from rational choice theories through normative approaches to attempts to overcome the dichotomy between interests and norms (Osteen 2002).

In the following, Mauss's essay will first be introduced, then fundamental lines of the discussion on gift and reciprocity will be elaborated, before finally the gift paradigm will be worked out from this, as it has emerged in the last 30 years starting from the MAUSS group in the mainly French-speaking discourse. In this discussion, a distinct social theoretical perspective has developed that forms an alternative to individualistic and holistic as well as utilitarian and normative approaches. The gift paradigm rather denotes a positive anti-utilitarianism that shows a closeness to discussions about conviviality, care, and interdependence.

Marcel Mauss's *Essay on the Gift*

The text on the gift is the most important text of the French Durkheimian school after the death of Emile Durkheim, uncle and teacher of Marcel Mauss, in 1917. Mauss wrote a programmatic text with this essay that was to continue and develop Durkheim's project (cf. Tarot 2003). His essay is full of empirically detailed descriptions. Mauss rejects abstract general conclusions, and yet it is full of theoretical ideas that are implied. Mauss works out in various approaches that action takes place in reciprocal aspects. We give, accept, and reciprocate 'things'—a cycle of reciprocity arises, which is often fragile and dependent on trust. Thus, he expanded the Durkheimian theory of social order with important action-theoretical dimensions. Neither markets nor contracts held premodern societies together, but gift-exchanges that created a 'quasi-contract'.

While Adam Smith assumed a natural human propensity for exchange, Mauss rejects the assumption that exchange and thus contracts are at the origin of society. All human institutions

are based on the unity of the differences of freedom and obligation, self-interest, and public spirit, not only in pre-modern societies but also in modern ones (cf. Hart 2007). He does not want to establish a difference between pre-modern societies, based on the gift, and modern societies, based on contract and market.

According to Mauss, the archaic gift exchange represents a system of services between groups. He emphasizes that the mutual presentation of gifts, which creates relationships, is at the same time based on gratuitousness and the duty of giving, accepting, and giving back. He distinguishes between the weak agonistic and strong agonistic gifts. In *The Gift*, in contrast, he does not discuss non-agonistic forms of the gift, which he also refers to as total services (Mauss 1990: 7). These non-agonistic total services remain almost completely in the dark; Mauss considers them original and forerunners of the agonistic gifts—I will return to this later. In *The Gift*, it is a matter of Mauss showing that agonistic gifts occupy an intermediate position between non-agonistic gifts and today's individualistic and legal contracts.

Weak agonistic gifts create a sphere of approximate equivalence and mutual indebtedness. Gifts provoke counter-gifts and thus create permanent mutual debts and obligations that cannot be compensated. Exemplary here is the *kula* ring on a group of islands in Papua New Guinea, in which two pieces of jewelry circulate between the islands in opposite directions. The strong agonistic gift appears, however, in the *potlatch* of the peoples of the Canadian northwest coast, which Mauss also calls a war of wealth. This involves the reciprocal increase of gifts until a clan or chief has to exit the cycle of ever-greater giving; because only one can win at the antagonistic *potlatch*—particularly, in status. The position of super- and subordination alternates until one party can no longer reciprocate and moves permanently to the losing position. Since weak and strong agonistic gifts reduce mistrust and establish social ties, alliances, and solidarities, they prevent war between rival clans. There is no third party that stands above the two clans (neither common interests, nor a state, nor standards). Not coincidentally, Mauss talks about intertribal, or one could also say, international exchange.

In archaic societies, the gift or given object is usually not divorced from the identity of the giver. Mauss asks what it is that motivates the receiver of the gift to give something back, and in his interpretation of gift-giving among the Maori, he arrives at the conclusion that the spirit of the giver 'resides' in the given, compelling the receiver to make a counter-gift. Even after the giver has handed the gift over, it is still a part of him, and through it he has power over the receiver. This interpretation launched a long debate in anthropology, which mostly revolved around attempts to demystify the thesis of things imbued with souls (cf. Lévi-Strauss 1987; Sahlins 1972; Godelier 1999).

Mauss points out that gifts not only can endow and consolidate unstable solidarity and recognition but also permanent hierarchies, exclusions, and inequalities. This is always the case if the disposition of resources among different groups turns out to be so unequal, that gifts can experience no reciprocation. First, it may be that privileged groups do not have to reciprocate the gifts of lower classes (exploitation). Second, debt and power asymmetries are established, when a social group cannot reciprocate gifts due to their level of resources—the paternalistic gift toward the poor would be the typical example here (humiliation/dependence). And third, certain groups can be barred from the flow of material and immaterial goods (exclusion). All three examples have in common that establishing reciprocity between co-equals is unsuccessful.

In his essay, Mauss was clearly pursuing goals connected to the present, positioned as he was in the French tradition of a critique of utilitarianism. Mauss was also involved in the cooperative movement and sought alternatives to both the pure market society and state-centered socialism and Bolshevism. He was thus concerned with a third principle of solidarity, that of a form of reciprocal recognition through gift-giving and resting on social ties and indebtedness. The gift

exchange, which Mauss perceives in the archaic and premodern societies, serves him as a model for the renewal of the contemporary social contract. The danger he saw was that modern social relations would increasingly follow the model of barter, market, and contract—thus Mauss's warning that *homo oeconomicus* still lies in store for us.

Looking at the conclusion of the essay more closely, one notices that for Mauss it was a matter of arguing against charity and of strengthening the principle of the horizontally binding gift. Giving creates a certain obligation to reciprocate, and hence a primary disparity between donor and recipient is given value. Equality is produced over time solely through the oscillation between positions of inequality, from inferiority and superiority attributions. Following Mauss, it can be concluded that as long as gifts can be reciprocated, this oscillation can continue.

Sociological and philosophical strands of thinking the gift

In sociology, the reception of Mauss has mainly been based on the concept of reciprocity. From this perspective, reciprocity appears to be a basic fact of the social and the question of how reciprocity can be explained has been intensively discussed. Is it secured by self-interest or by norms? A good part of the sociological discussion about the gift and reciprocity is characterized by this opposition.

The utilitarian strand of thinking sees reciprocity as an outcome of selfish or self-interested behavior. The underlying logic is a sort of *do ut des*: I give you something to get something back. This strand of theory can be found in neoclassical economics, exchange theory, and rational choice theory. For postwar sociology, the work of Peter Blau (1964) was of decisive importance. Relating closely to Georg Simmel (1950), social exchange for Blau represents an elemental form of sociation characterized by the fact that many individual goals can only be reached through social cooperation. He defines social exchange as 'voluntary action of individuals that are motivated by the returns they are expected to bring' (Blau 1964: 91). Self-interest is thus motive and mover of relations of social exchange. Blau makes clear that there are sharp differences between social exchange and economic exchange, which is more impersonal, is based on contracts and exact prices, and does not create further obligations. In social exchange, however, the evolving obligation is not specified in advance and there is only a generalized expectation of reciprocation, which rests on the necessity to trust other persons (cf. Molm 2010).

Indications of the significance of reciprocal exchange can also be found in rational choice and game theory (Ostrom 1998). Even individual maximizers of utility must cooperate with others and attempt to create productive cooperation. Rational choice theory thus emphasizes that trust and reciprocity in exchange relations essentially depend on their long-term nature and on the condition that actors do not intend to break off the relationship for short-term advantages but rather view it as a long-term flow of giving and receiving. Consequently, game theoretical approaches—such as Axelrod's (1984) now classic investigation of the evolution of cooperation—see social learning as a central mechanism in the generation of reciprocity.

On the one hand, this individualistic and utilitarian approach is contrasted with holistic perspectives, which hardly have any resonance today. For example, Lévi-Strauss (1987) views exchange and reciprocity simply as universalistic categories of human thought. On the other hand, interpretations that focus more on the internalization of norms of reciprocity continue to be prominent. For instance, Alvin Gouldner (1973) presents such a normative interpretation that has been of great influence. He characterizes reciprocity as a universal norm found in every society, and still of importance in modern societies. But Gouldner also deals with the limitations of the norm of reciprocity, arguing that there are always people who cannot reciprocate the benefits they once received, such as children or disabled people. He, therefore, puts forward the

(second-order) norm of beneficence or charity, which requires people to help others without expecting any return or reward.

Pierre Bourdieu, however, developed a theoretical blend of normative and utilitarian perspectives: at first glance gifts seem to be interest-free, but they pay off and are profitable in the long term (Bourdieu 1998). On the one hand, gift-giving seems to be characterized by spontaneous and free action; on the other, it can be seen—on a structural level—as an utilitarian *exchange* of gifts. People treat each other as if there were no connections between their acts of gift-giving, as if there were no duties to give back. Bourdieu aims to unveil the structures of social life that guide us, often unconsciously. In the field of gift-giving, according to Bourdieu, our practices are also deeply rooted in a *habitus* that allows for a rational calculus—aiming at the acquisition of symbolic capital—without deliberately calculating (Silber 2009).

What these approaches just outlined have in common is that they gear toward reciprocity, and largely dismiss the question of whether there is tension between the concept of the gift and that of reciprocity. Gift and reciprocity must be considered together, but at the same time be differentiated from each other. The gift becomes socially effective in the form of reciprocity, however, is not to be reduced to this. Precisely because a response to a gift is not necessary (which would then be barter), the gifts relationship contains a measure of freedom and unconditionality.

Interestingly, philosophy has been more interested in the question of whether there can be such a thing as a pure gift—that is, without self-interest or the desire to be reciprocated (cf. Caputo/ Scanlon 1999). Jacques Derrida pushes the gift into the realm of the impossible. He searches for a concept of the gift that is purely voluntary and does not create an obligation to reciprocate. The normal gift in his view is polluted by the expected return. Thus, a true gift must be totally spontaneous and unobservable; it would be 'the gift that is not a present, the gift of something that remains inaccessible, unpresentable, and as a consequence secret' (Derrida 1995: 29). For Derrida (1994), the gift is inconsistent with the idea of the circle and the circulation—a gift can only exist where the logic of the circulation is interrupted, where something breaks into the circle. Thus, he criticizes Mauss and thus sociology for dealing with everything possible (economy, contract, exchange)—just not the gift, because it has to oppose concepts of exchange or reciprocity.

This strand of thinking largely draws on phenomenological and hermeneutical traditions going back to Husserl and Heidegger. The 'donation' (givenness, *Gebung*, or *Gegebenheit*), as it is called in these contexts, is considered a fundamental requirement of the gift. Like Derrida, Jean-Luc Marion (2002) utterly contrasts gift and exchange, when he takes the reduction of the gift to the givenness into consideration. Namely, he phenomenologically brackets the giver, the recipient, and the given object. Despite the existing differences with Derrida (cf. Hoffmann 2013: 94ff.), Marion also excludes—just like Derrida—reciprocity from the gift. This is because it takes place just at the moment of the disappearance of the giver and recipient, and has nothing to do with the gift of a good.

These theoretical decisions by Marion and Derrida cannot enlighten social and political theory about actual social practices, as long as one has to characterize all of them either as mere exchange, or one has to absurdly search empirically for gift phenomena that make do without the giver, the gift, and the recipient. They present just a speculative adventure (cf. Waldenfels 2012: 214)—only the caveat remains that the gift stands in a tense relationship with reciprocity and exchange.

Of greater social-scientific meaning, however, is Paul Ricoeur's (2005) examination of the gift. He examines Marcel Mauss and the gift from the perspective of a theory of recognition. Thereby, he discusses Hegel, as well as Axel Honneth's (1995) theory of recognition and that of Marcel Hénaff (2010), which was developed from Mauss's theory of the gift. Ricoeur sets aside the notion of states of peace from the idea of the endless struggle for recognition. In states of

peace, the confrontational aspect of recognition remains fenced in like a ceasefire. The question of the one-sidedness or reciprocity of the gift is then placed in parallel with the question of the difference between love and justice. In the first gift (which Ricoeur associates with the *agape*), there is a risk and a generosity that cannot be easily transformed by a response in reciprocity. The second, returning gift is not to be regarded simply as a reciprocal response, but as a second first gift, which also attempts to record the moment of generosity in itself. Ricoeur calls the state thus produced mutuality (*mutualité*) instead of reciprocity (*réciprocité*). Unlike Georg Simmel, Ricoeur does not think that gratuitousness and magnitude are inherent only in the first gift—the response also contains these moments.

With Ricoeur, we can now distinguish two orders of the gift: gifts that are based on rivalry, and geared toward reciprocity; and gifts in a state of peace, where the rivalry ceases. They are not aimed at circular reciprocity, but at an asymmetry of mutuality. Rivalry and reciprocity correspond to the intertribal forms of the gift that Mauss referred to as agonistic gifts. And the states of peace correspond to relationships within a community, which are based on non-agonistic total services.

From Mauss to MAUSS

In France, there has been an intensive discussion in recent decades about Marcel Mauss and the gift, which escapes the theoretical dichotomies within sociology described above and also does not get caught up in the aporias of philosophical debate. It is no exaggeration to say that Ricoeur takes up many things that have already been intensively discussed here before.

Sociologist Alain Caillé is regarded as the guiding spirit behind what has come to be known as the MAUSS ('Mouvement Anti-Utilitariste dans les Sciences Sociales'—Anti-utilitarian Movement in the Social Sciences). This loose network of scholars was set up by Caillé at the start of the 1980s in concert with Gérald Berthoud and a number of other French-speaking academics. At the end of 1980s, the discussions grew into the *Revue du MAUSS*, which has since been published twice yearly. The journal promotes a non-utilitarian and non-normative interpretation of Marcel Mauss's theory of gift and aims at constructing an alternative to existing sociological paradigms (cf. Chanial 2008).

Caillé (2000) is involved in a re-examination of the concept of gift-giving and trying to use the concept for a new social theory. He speaks of two contradictory aspects of gift-giving: Gift-giving is voluntary because it cannot be forced; it is obligatory because a violation of the norm of reciprocity will be socially sanctioned. Furthermore, relationships based on gifts embrace an irreducible moment of unconditionality, trust, and freedom—thus reciprocity remains always just a possibility, it is no automatism.

Giving always carries with it the risk that the attempted bonding will fail. For Caillé, the basis of social life is constituted by 'the political act, through which the actor shifts from war and hostility to alliance and peace' (Caillé 2012: XII), at the level of micro-interactions and at the meso- and macro-levels of society. Giving, accepting, and reciprocating require not only that you give something into exchange but much more that you give yourself in the giving. The phenomenon of giving shows that to a large extent, actions happen 'for free'. Jacques Godbout (1998, 2000) goes so far as to propose a radical alternative to *homo economicus*: the *homo donator*. On a psychological level, he claims the existence of something like the 'lure of the gift' as a counter-model to the 'lure of profit'—a kind of natural tendency to give, a gift drive, that complements the drive to receive.

For Caillé, a fundamental difference exists between the social gift and the gift of a god (the 'givenness', French: *donation*, German: *Gebung*); a difference that is partly blurred by contemporary philosophical currents. Namely, Derrida and Marion ignore that the logic of the gift is

to be regarded as a form of peace policy and social cohesion. If 'givenness' becomes the model of the social gift, the latter then can only appear as inferior and impure. For this reason, Caillé (2000, 2014) emphasizes that the impossible altruism of givenness and total unconditionality has to be clearly distinguished from the social gift, which is based on a conditional unconditionality (*inconditionnalité conditionnelle*). Conditional and unconditional action aspects merge with one another. According to Caillé, this is the only way the complex interplay of interests, altruism, duty, and spontaneity can be socially set in motion.

Thus, the empirically existing gift rests on a paradox, since it cannot be attributed to one set of motives. It stays between the poles of obligation and freedom/creativity on the one hand, and between self-interest and interest for the other (*aimance*, empathy, lovingness) on the other. According to Caillé, the interest in gift-giving is not identical to a utilitarian notion of interest. It is more an end in itself and is not the same as duty, love, or economic exchange. Giving can tend toward one of these poles, but the gift normally avoids becoming one-sided. When gift-giving approaches one of these extremes, it transforms into love, an ethic of duty, or economic exchange (cf. Caillé 2000).

Bourdieu's influential theoretical approach, however, is not in a position to recognize this. For him, the gift would have to rest on the total absence of calculation, so that if there is no perfect gift there is no gift at all. Like Derrida, he conceives of the gift as something that necessarily stands against returns and reciprocity. Thus, such different scholars as Derrida, Blau, Gouldner, and Bourdieu follow the conventional modern dichotomy of motives: the ideology of disinterested gifts emerges parallel to an ideology of a purely interested exchange; both are modern inventions. What is put aside is the idea of an 'in between' category. As Caillé puts it: 'Modern times begin with the decision to split entirely and without hope of return what the ancient societies had tried to hold together – namely, the sacred and the profane, gods and men, the political and the economic, […] gift and interest' (Caillé 2001: 23). Once the radical disjuncture between the logic of egoism and the logic of altruism has been established, the gift becomes unthinkable for modern thinkers.

Caillé emphasizes that recognition theory can be linked with the theory of the gift as long as recognition is not primarily understood as a demand of ego for recognition by alter. Recognition is based above all on mutually and voluntarily giving recognition (Caillé 2019)—and not on receiving recognition from others by demand. Recognition is experienced by those who are met with gratitude by the recipient of a gift. Thus, recognition is experienced by those who givingly open to others in gratuitousness and generosity.

The idea that gifts show a moment of gratuitousness and unconditionality, that they are not closely linked to reciprocity—nor do they have to be—has only in recent years also been taken seriously into account by cultural and economic anthropologists. David Graeber (2011) proves that economic exchange is not a particularly old phenomenon, but gained currency much later. By far, the most common form of economic activity is based on the principle of communism formulated by Karl Marx 'from each according to their abilities, to each according to their needs'. Even modern (capitalist) societies are built on a foundation of communist relationships: 'communism is the foundation of all human sociability' (Graeber 2011: 206). Wherever no accounts are kept about the exchange taking place, we are dealing with forms of the gift—trust, community spirit, dedication, and love—which are decoupled from the principle of reciprocity in a specific way. In exchange, however, everything is based on the principle that relationship and exchange can be terminated at any time, which also implies that one can pay his debts, and then everything is even. In this sense, the communist (non-agonistic) gift does not recognize debts.

Hence, there are gifts that are not reciprocated in a strict sense. In any case, the response should not be made a component of the gift's definition, because it is independent of reciprocity

(Descola 2013). This non-agonistic logic of the gift is a common phenomenon within groups worldwide. Hence, one should distinguish between non-agonistic gifts that are based on mutuality, sharing, communism, and weak reciprocity, and agonistic gifts geared toward rivalry and strong reciprocity. The latter is particularly an 'international' phenomenon. As long as groups (or individuals) oppose one another as strangers, the gift serves as a test and a challenge aimed at the question: alliance or hostility?

Mauss's essay looks only at the wide dissemination of the agonistic gift, which aims at political alliances between groups. But the fact that Mauss completely ignored talking about non-agonistic gifts in his essay has subsequently resulted in linking the gift concept too closely with rivalry and competition, and has led to the confusion that we have already encountered (is non-reciprocity possible, how much exchange lies in the gift?). Thus, it can be concluded with the MAUSS group that a willingness to cooperate is manifested in humans' tendency to give. We are willing to expose ourselves to risks, because the gift always has an uncertain side, and it is expressed by the pretense that we have a reliable basis for cooperation, which first actually needs to be created. The agonistic gift performatively produces opportunities for cooperation in the first place—it simulates social order to allow itself to become real (Adloff 2016).

From gifts to care, conviviality and interdependence

In recent years, the gift paradigm has become broader on the one hand, and more political on the other. Caillé (2014, 2020) can also be regarded as the guiding spirit behind the two convivialist manifestos aiming at a broader public; the first originally appeared in 2013 (*Convivialist Manifesto*), the second came out in 2020 (*The Second Convivialist Manifesto*). The gift paradigm has played a major part in shaping the convivialist political concept and movement. A group of chiefly a few dozens French academics and intellectuals published the convivialist manifestos on which they managed to agree on. The manifestos identify two main causes of current ecological, social and political crises: the primacy of utilitarian thinking and action, and the way in which belief in the beneficent effects of economic growth is accorded absolute status (cf. Latouche 2009). As a counter to these developments, the manifestos set out a positive vision of the good life (and not only a negative critique of social phenomena): the prime concern, it says, is the quality of social relationships and of humans' relationship to nature. The term it employs in this connection is 'convivialism' (from the Latin 'con-vivere', to live together), which alludes to Ivan Illich's (1973) book *Tools for Conviviality* (cf. Humbert 2011). The term is meant to depict a new public political philosophy (cf. Caillé et al. 2011).

At the theoretical level, convivialism seeks to synthesize a number of different, highly influential, political ideologies: liberalism, socialism, communism, and anarchism. Practically speaking, convivialism is already being lived out in a whole range of social constellations—first and foremost, of course, in the context of family and friends, in which it is the logic of gift and not utilitarian calculation that counts. After that, there are the hundreds of thousands of associative projects at work in civil society, the social and solidarity economy, cooperative ventures and mutual-aid societies, peer-to-peer networks, social movements, and many more. The quintessential organizational embodiment of this type of action are civil society associations, in which the principle of gratuitousness, of mutual giving and taking, operate to full effect. For political change, one cannot rely (as socialism does) entirely on state institutions, convivialism claims. Liberalism too, with its emphasis on markets, overlooks the possibilities of social self-organization. By contrast, associative free and gratuitous exchange between people can serve as the basis for a convivial social order that distances itself from a version of the good life defined in purely material terms.

This also means that the approach to social change is essentially construed in pluralistic terms (cf. Wright 2012). What is therefore needed is a relativistic kind of universalism—a pluriversalism, convivialism claims. From a political point of view, this normative demand is highly significant. Thus, Paul Gilroy (2004: xi), who uses the notion of conviviality in the context of the debate about multiculturalism, stresses that the very fact of the concept's 'radical openness' is of importance, given that the notion of (cultural) identity quickly leads to the objectification and essentialization of designated groups. Studies on conviviality thus currently focus on everyday practices of living with cultural differences (cf. Heil 2015; Costa 2018).

On a theoretical level, the gift paradigm, the MAUSS group as well as convivialism are also seeking new alliances. Caillé and Vandenberghe (2016, 2021), e.g., aim for a neo-classical approach in the social sciences. This approach is meant to be anti-utilitarian in two ways: in a negative sense because it rejects the rational choice model with its expansive, even hegemonic claims to truth, and as a positive anti-utilitarianism, geared toward a theory of social action and social order that not just accounts for dimensions other than instrumental-strategic action—such as care, creativity, recognition, and sympathy—but actually puts these dimensions center stage.

The quintessence of an integrated neo-classical social theory, as Caillé and Vandenberghe envisage it, is a special focus on social dimensions like communication, care, gift, reciprocity, recognition—i.e., non-individualistic concepts, not based on self-interest (cf. Adloff 2016). A term they particularly champion is interdependence, pointing to a potential 'third paradigm' between individualism and holism.

However, this approach cannot be limited to human interactions. One also has to consider the values human societies are given by nature. In terms of metatheory and social theory, including the dimension of nature into the concepts of anti-utilitarianism, care and gift is an absolutely essential step. Caillé, Chanial, and Flipo (2013) advocate 'un animisme méthodologique', arguing that we should methodologically treat nature as a quasi-subject endowed with quasi-subjectivity, as a non-human gift-giver that needs to be included in our logics of giving, taking, and reciprocating. This, they hold, would make reciprocities and alliances with non-human life possible, putting an end to our instrumentalization and exploitation of nature. This is akin to Bruno Latour's (2017) project of overcoming the ontological dualism between nature and society and to create a politics of 'Gaia'. Indeed, such a project should take relations, not the individual subject, as its point of departure and reference. Thus, creating a common language for a future neo-classical sociology beyond the species of humans needs to entail a renunciation of substance ontology and an emphasis on relations and interdependencies.

We can note that the gift paradigm and convivialism have reflected discussions of fragile and posthuman convivialities in recent years. The problem of a generalized utilitarianism in the course of the neoliberalization of societies in recent decades is accordingly addressed, and the interdependencies between humans and non-human entities are also discussed from a perspective that decisively questions the anthropocentrism that continues to dominate in the sciences and in politics. Thus, a general theoretical perspective of a positive anti-utilitarianism has been established, which justifies speaking of a theoretically as well as practically influential gift paradigm that tries to overcome the divisions between culture and nature, altruism and self-interest.

References

Adloff, F. (2016). *Gifts of Cooperation, Mauss and Pragmatism*. London: Routledge.
Adloff, F. and Mau, S. (2006). 'Giving Social Ties: Reciprocity in Modern Society'. *Archives Européennes de Sociologie* 47, No. 1, pp. 93–123.
Axelrod, R. (1984). *The Evolution of Cooperation*. New York: Basic Books.

Blau, P. (1964). *Exchange and Power in Social Life*. New Brunswick: Transaction.

Bourdieu, P. (1998). *Practical Reason: On the Theory of Action*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Caillé, A. (2000). *Anthropologie du don. Le tiers paradigme*. Paris: Desclée de Brouwer.

Caillé, A. (2001). 'The Double Inconceivability of the Pure Gift'. *Angelaki: Journal of the Theoretical Humanities* 6, No. 2, pp. 23–38.

Caillé, A. (2012). 'Preface to the Chinese Translation of the Gift'. *La Découverte/Revue du MAUSS* 39, No. 1, pp. I–XIV.

Caillé, A. (2014). *Anti-utilitarisme et paradigme du don. Pour quoi?* Lormont: Le Bord de L'eau.

Caillé, A. (2019). *Extensions du domaine du don. Demander-donner-recevoir-rendre*. Arles: Actes Sud.

Convivialist International. (2020). 'The Second Convivialist Manifesto: Towards a Post-Neoliberal World'. *Civic Sociology* 1, No. 1.

Caillé, A., Chanial, P., and Flipo, F. (2013). 'Présentation'. *La Revue du MAUSS* 42, pp. 5–23.

Caillé, A., Humbert, M., Latouche, S., and Viveret, P. (2011). *De la convivialité. Dialogues sur la societé conviviale à venir*. Paris: Éditions La Découverte.

Caillé, A. and Vandenberghe, F. (2016). 'Neo-classical sociology: The prospects of social theory today'. *European Journal of Social Theory* 19, No. 1, pp. 3–20.

Caillé, A. and Vandenberghe, F. (eds.) (2021). *For a New Classic Sociology. A Proposition, followed by a Debate*. London: Routledge.

Caputo, John D. and Scanlon, M.J. (eds.) (1999). *God, the Gift, and Postmodernism*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Chanial, P. (ed.) (2008). *La société vue du don. Manuel de sociologie anti-utilitariste appliqué*. Paris: Éditions La Decouverte.

Costa, S. (2018). 'Convivialisme, conviviality, Konvivenz: réponses convergentes aux "puristes de la difference"?', in: A. Caillé et al. (ed.) *Des sciences sociales à la science sociale. Fondements anti-utilitaristes*. Lormont: Le Bord de l'eau.

Derrida, J. (1994). *Given Time: I. Counterfeit Money*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Derrida, J. (1995). *The Gift of Death*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Descola, P. (2013). *Beyond Nature and Culture*. Chicago: Chicago University Press.

Gilroy, P. (2004). *After Empire. Melancholia or Convivial Cultures*. London, New York: Routledge.

Godbout, J. (1998). *The World of the Gift*. Montreal: McGill–Queen's University Press.

Godbout, J. (2000). 'Homo Donator versus Homo Oeconomicus', in: A. Vandevelde (ed.) *Gifts and Interests*. Leuven: Peeters, pp. 23–46.

Godelier, M. (1999). *The Enigma of the Gift*. Chicago: Chicago University Press.

Gouldner, A. (1973). *For Sociology. Renewal and Critique in Sociology Today*. New York: Basic Books.

Graeber, D. (2011). *Debt: The First 5,000 Years*. New York: Melville.

Hann, C. and Hart, K. (2011). *Economic Anthropology. History, Ethnography, Critique*. Cambridge: Polity.

Hart, K. (2007). 'Marcel Mauss: In Pursuit of the Whole. A Review Essay'. *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 49, No. 2, pp. 473–85.

Heil, T. (2015). 'Conviviality. (Re-)negotiating minimal consensus', in: S. Vertovec (ed.) *Routledge International Handbook of Diversity Studies*. Oxford: Routledge, pp. 317–24.

Hénaff, M. (2010). *The Price of Truth: Gift, Money, Philosophy*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Hoffman, V. (2013). *Skizzen zu einer Theologie der Gabe*. Freiburg: Herder.

Honneth, A. (1995). *The Struggle for Recognition. The Moral Grammar of Social Conflicts*. Cambridge, Mass.: Polity Press.

Humbert, M. (2011). 'Convivialisme, politique et économie. Ivan Illich et le „bien vivre ensemble', in: Caillé et al. (eds.), pp. 99–129.

Illich, I. (1973). *Tools for Conviviality*. New York: Harper & Row.

Latouche, S. (2009). *Farewell to Growth*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Latour, B. (2017). *Facing Gaia: Eight Lectures on the New Climatic Regime*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Les, Convivialistes (2014). *Convivialist Manifesto. A Declaration of Interdependence*. Duisburg: Centre for Global Cooperation.

Lévi-Strauss, C. (1987 [1950]). *Introduction to the Work of Marcel Mauss*. London: Routledge & Kegan.

Liebersohn, H. (2011). *The Return of the Gift. European History of a Global Idea*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Marion, J.-L. (2002). *Being Given: Toward a Phenomenology of Givenness*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Mauss, M. (1990 [1925]). *The Gift. The Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies*, transl. W.D. Hallis. New York/London: Norton.

Molm, L. (2010). 'The Structure of Reciprocity'. *Social Psychology Quarterly* 73, No. 2, pp. 119–31.

Osteen, M. (2002). 'Introduction: Questions of the Gift', in: *The Question of the Gift. Essays across Disciplines*. London: Routledge, pp. 1–41.

Ostrom, E. (1998). 'A Behavioral Approach to the Rational Choice Theory of Collective Action: Presidential Address, American Political Science Association, 1997'. *The American Political Science Review* 92, No. 1, pp. 1–22.

Ricoeur, P. (2005). *The Course of Recognition*. London: Harvard University Press.

Sahlins, M. (1972). *Stone Age Economics*. Chicago: Aldine.

Silber, I.F. (2009). 'Bourdieu's Gift to Gift Theory: An Unacknowledged Trajectory'. *Sociological Theory* 27, No. 2, pp. 173–90.

Simmel, G. (1950 [1908]). 'Faithfulness and Gratitude', in: Kurt H. Wolff (ed.) *The Sociology of Georg Simmel*. Glencoe, Ill.: The Free Press, pp. 379–95.

Tarot, C. (2003). *Sociologie et anthropologie de Marcel Mauss*. Paris: La Découverte.

Waldenfels, B. (2012). *Hyperphänomene. Modi hyperbolischer Erfahrung*. Berlin: Suhrkamp.

Wright, E.O. (2012). 'Transforming Capitalism through Real Utopias'. *American Sociological Review* 78, No. 1, pp. 1–25.

44

Post-capitalism

The return of radical critique

Albena Azmanova

At the close of the twentieth century, Nancy Fraser formulated the comprehensive agenda of progressive politics as a triple commitment to redistribution, recognition, and participation (Fraser 1996). These strategies for fighting economic inequality, status hierarchies, and political subordination aspired for a democratic overhaul of capitalism, not of transcending it. The proposed alignment between issues of economic, political, and cultural injustice constituted, however, a radical pivot in critical social analysis. This was a decisive step in overcoming the cultural turn in social critique which, with the demise of communism, the surge of free-market ideology, and the rise of "identity politics" had marginalized claims for egalitarian redistribution. Inadvertently, the replacement of the Marxian engagement with the political economy of capitalism by concerns with the cultural logic of dehumanization had given impetus to neo-liberal, flexible, "networked" capitalism, claimed Luc Boltanski and Eve Chiapello (2005 [1999]). Neoliberalism has been animated by an ethos that celebrates self-fulfillment through personal autonomy and initiative, co-opting the libertarian and humanistic currents of the late 1960s for the purposes of endless capital accumulation (ibid).

The hegemony of neoliberal capitalism had been presaged by a condition Jürgen Habermas identified as an "exhaustion of utopian energies" in Western societies – the vanishing of anticipations of an alternative life contained in the present. In late capitalism, he observed, even as utopian projections of the present into a better future have not altogether disappeared, one particular utopia has come to an end, namely, the socialist utopia centered on the emancipation of labor from alien control (Habermas 1989: 50, 52–53).

The growth of economic disparities in the late twentieth century and the recession of the second decade of the twenty-first, decidedly re-focused public attention to economic injustice. With this, a recovery of the intellectual critique and social criticism of capitalism began, which has spawned a plethora of blueprints for transcending capitalism – from Paul Mason's *Post-Capitalism: A Guide to Our Future* (2015) to Aaron Bastani's *Fully Automated Luxury Communism: A Manifesto* (2020). Rather than offer an inventory of the post-capitalist imaginaries that have emerged since the eclipse of the cultural turn, this chapter will review the strands of recent critique of capitalism and assess their valence for charting a path beyond capitalism.[1]

The Marxian matrix of emancipatory critique

Emancipatory social critique has inherited from Karl Marx, through Georg Lukács and the Frankfurt School authors, a broad matrix for the analysis of capitalism as a social formation – that is, a comprehensive system of social relations, an institutionalized social order that is irreducible to a "market economy".[2] This social order is shaped by the operational logic of the system – namely, the competitive production of profit (capital accumulation). The systemic dynamic of capital accumulation is enacted through institutions which structure the social relations – the private ownership of the means of production, the "free" labor contract, and the market as a mechanism of commodity exchange. In turn, these structured dynamics ensure specific distributive outcomes in the form of inequalities and exclusion. Together, these three trajectories of domination – a *systemic* one sourced from the constitutive dynamics of the system, a *structural* one sourced from social institutions with structuring effect, and a *relational* one regarding distributive outcomes – compose the full spectrum of critique of capitalism (Azmanova 2000a: 37-43, 50-54).

While Marx's analysis of nineteenth-century industrial capitalism had focused on exploitation as a form of structural domination (enabled by the institution of the private ownership of the means of production) and alienation as a form of systemic domination (rooted in the dynamic of capital accumulation), emancipatory social critique in the late twentieth century remained in the remit of relational domination as it centered on concerns with the unequal distribution of power rooted either in economic inequality, political exclusion or cultural discrimination. Intellectually and politically, the critical enterprise in late capitalism came to be directed against the unequal distribution of power, targeting disparities in social status, political voice, and access to resources. These were to be remedied through redistribution, political inclusion, and cultural recognition. Thus, at the height of the neoliberal hegemony in the 1980s and 1990s, the critique of capitalism became reduced to relational forms of injustice – inequality, poverty, and exclusion resulting from the unfair distribution of material and ideational resources. Issues of exploitation and alienation rooted, respectively, in the structural and systemic logics of domination, had all but disappeared.[3]

The eclipse of identity politics

The renaissance of radical critique originated within concerns with relational domination. In an effort to redeem radical forms of critique within a *Zeitgeist* that had equated redistribution with progressive economic policy, Fraser (1997:26) drew the distinction between "affirmative" and "transformative" redistribution. While the former amounts to transfers from rich to poor, the latter consists in policies that decouple basic consumption from employment: from universalist social-welfare programs and steeply progressive taxation, to a large nonmarket public sector and significant public or collective ownership. The notion of "transformative redistribution" which aligns with earlier work on labor decommodification (cf. Offe 1984) altered the register of critique of capitalism. Attention began to shift away from relational domination that perceives of injustice in terms of power asymmetries to questioning the broader parameters of capitalism as an institutionalized social order (Fraser 2014, 2015), or a "life-form" – a bundle of normatively structured social and cultural practices (Jaeggi 2014, 2015).

The financial crisis of 2007–2008 and the subsequent economic recession brought the critique of the political economy firmly back into social analysis. The prolonged social crisis in the first decade of the twenty-first century engendered diagnoses of a terminal crisis of capitalism and the search for radical alternatives, rather than taming capitalism through its democratization

and humanization. Wolfgang Streeck (2014, 2016) observed that under the pressures of declining growth, oligarchy, starvation of the public sphere, corruption, and international anarchy, the capitalist system has entered a terminal decline; he argued that palliative measures such as redistribution and financial regulation can do no more than delay its ultimate demise. Slavoj Žižek (2019) claimed that global capitalism is on the verge of vanishing entirely under the unbearable lightness of the automation of work, the rise of immaterial and intellectual labor, the virtualization of money, and the dissipation of class communities. These diagnoses of capitalism's terminal demise built on ecosocialism's longstanding position that even in our age of "non-material" information technology, capitalism still relies on resources soon to be used up (Sarkar 2014).

The recent search for alternatives to capitalism was facilitated by the disruptions of the neoliberal order by anti-establishment protests in the aftermath of the economic crisis of 2008–2009. Even as public protest did not alter the neoliberal policy formula, it put an end to the neoliberal hegemony by calling into question the neoliberal policy mix of free markets and open economies as the sole credible policy path. As the anti-establishment insurgencies, including the populist far-right mobilization, lifted the veil of inevitability that had enabled the neoliberal hegemony, they opened what Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe (2001[1985]: 49) have called a "space of indeterminacy" – the possibility for change without a preset direction. With the horizon of anticipations thus unblocked, the search for alternatives has ranged from projects for radicalizing democracy by expanding economic equality and political inclusion so as to challenge relations of subordination (Mouffe 2018) – still within a logic of countering relational domination, to blueprints for a renewed socialism and communism (e.g., Honneth 2016; Ingram 2018; Piketty 2019; Judis 2020; Dean 2020).

The return of structuralist critique

Radical critique of capitalism and the attendant alternatives it articulates has tended to proceed as analysis of structural domination. Critique of neoliberal capitalism typically targets the structuring institutions in both domestic and global iterations of capitalism – from forms of control of capital (e.g., focusing on financialization of the economy) to the "Washington consensus", the policy formula of liberalized product and labor markets used by Washington-based financial institutions in an effort to impose a model of development on the world. These structuring institutions are seen to engender the injustice of poverty, economic inequality, harmful working conditions, and environmental destruction. Thus, to perceive the full spectrum of injustice occurring in the global economy, David Ingram (2018) argues, we need to take into account the coercive nature of the global economic order, not only the unfortunate distributional outcomes this order engenders. Ingram proceeds from an understanding of capitalism as a sociopolitical system centered on the structure of the private ownership of the means of production, instituted in the legal separation between private capital and social labor (Ingram 2018: 205). He approaches underdevelopment above all as resulting from a social coercion endogenous to the structured environment of the global economy – environment that represses free agency. Social coercion, thus understood, is a function of structural incapacitation of the agency of the poor, which renders them more vulnerable to economic and political coercion (ibid.: 190).

Structuralist critiques of neoliberal capitalism typically search for solutions in the remit of democratic socialism. Thus, maintaining the analytical focus on the structural dynamics that produce inequalities has led Axel Honneth to conceptualize "social freedom" (in contrast to the autonomy of the individual) – as freedom realized together with others, a notion akin to Etienne Balibar's "equaliberty" (Honneth 2016; Balibar 2014). This has opened new paths to socialism as a viable alternative to capitalism, to be obtained through a novel historical experimentalism

ranging from solidarity funds to socializing the market from below via guaranteed minimum income (Honneth 2016: 62, 70–71).

In an analysis representative of an emerging consensus on the left, David Ingram concludes his comprehensive scrutiny of global capitalism by espousing a market socialist economy composed of worker-controlled cooperatives and the removal of the legal separation between private capital and social labor (Ingram 2018: 205).[4] In a similar vein, within a structuralist critique of capitalism as an economic system defined by market exchange, private ownership of the means of production, and the employment of wage earners, Erik Olin Wright reviews available paths to post-capitalism (Wright 2019). He assesses five "strategic logics" for anti-capitalist mobilization – smashing, dismantling, taming, resisting, and escaping capitalism – which target changes within these core structures of capitalism and/or neutralize harms produced by these structures. These strategies are carried out either through bottom-up, civil society-centered initiatives of resisting and escaping capitalism or through top-down, state-centered strategies of taming and dismantling capitalism. Wright advocates a sixth strategic configuration – eroding capitalism by persistently building more egalitarian, democratic, and participatory economic relations. This is to eventually displace capitalism from its dominant role in the system. Within this analytic register, Thomas Piketty (2019) has advocated "participatory socialism", to be obtained via gradual reform of capitalism through increased worker representation on company boards, a basic income, and a "capital endowment" for every citizen, funded through increased wealth taxation.

While Marx discussed capitalism as a system of social relations organized around *commodity production* (i.e., a system centered on the generation of goods produced for market exchange in view of obtaining profit), most contemporary discussions of capitalism center on the *institutions that structure* this process – namely, the market, wage labor and the private property of the means of production. Such analyses see the ultimate overcoming of capitalism as a matter of socialized labor. However, this familiar scenario of progressive politics is inadequate to the exigencies of our historical moment.

This is the case because, even if the purportedly radical agenda of eradicating the private ownership of productive capital is to be achieved, this would not automatically eliminate the extractive and destructive ways in which wealth is produced and consumed. Some of the gravest social injustices of our time – generalized social precarity and environmental devastation – are outcomes not of the unequal distribution of wealth or the private nature of the control of capital (i.e., of the structuring institutions of capitalism and their distributive outcomes) but of the very dynamics that constitute capitalism, namely, the pursuit of profit. As the experiment with state socialism in East and Central Europe made clear, societies in which the means of production are collectively held and resources are distributed relatively equally might still be engaged in practices harmful to human beings, their communities, and the natural environment. Moreover, the deepening of global market integration in the late twentieth century has increased the competitive pressures of capital accumulation as personal livelihoods are increasingly dependent on the successful participation in profit-generating activities. These competitive pressures subject even solidaristic forms of capital ownership (such as cooperatives and social enterprises) to the logic of capital accumulation.

In the current context, the proliferation of forms of ownership and professional tenure has reduced the relevance of property ownership to social stratification. The fact alone that workers' retirement pensions tend to be invested in the stock exchange makes workers personally reliant on the fortunes of global corporations. This complicity with the pursuit of profit will only deepen should workers be systematically represented on their companies' boards or should they even obtain full ownership of these companies.

The deficiency of analyses that focus on relational and structural forms of injustice typically resides in their reliance on an agential notion of power – that is, power is considered an attribute

of individual or collective actors. This precludes critics from perceiving the injustice of *systemic* domination – that is, domination resulting from the subordination of all actors to the constitutive dynamics of capitalism, including those who profit from the structured and institutionalized distribution of benefits and losses. This renders analyses blind to such systemic forms of injustice as generalized precarity, self-commodification, and alienation from one's working life. However, these forms of suffering are at the center of the social justice of our times – they are what aggrieves the 99 per cent (Azmanova 2020a).

Just as capitalism cannot be reduced to a market economy, it is equally irreducible to its structuring institutions; it is above all a social system constituted by the competitive pursuit of profit – that is, by the combination between an ethos of competition, the pursuit of profit as a motivation of economic practice, and the productivist nature of employment. These dynamics permeate actors' social existence and embed their rationality. We have no reasons to be confident that democratic decision-making, institutionalized in democratic political systems and forms of ownership, would not commit to, and be entrapped by, these dynamics. The socialization of productive assets is not logically incompatible with, or impervious to, the very constitutive dynamic of capitalism – the competitive production of profit. In view of the exigencies of our times, this means that neither the traditional social-democratic agenda of redistribution nor the Socialist agenda of elimination of private property constitute a radical critique of capitalism, able to chart an exit from it.

The vigor and paucity of systemic critique

A powerful strand of systemic critique of capitalism has emerged in analyses of capitalism's impact on democracy. To the extent that the quality of democracy as a political system of collective self-authorship depends not only on robust institutions but also on peculiarities of the demos, one needs to question the manner in which socio-economic dynamics affect subjects in their individual existence and their social togetherness.

From a rational choice perspective, Claus Offe (2013) has traced the link between developments in the capitalist economy and voter behavior in order to account for the increasingly unequal political engagement in Western democracies. The "austerity state", he notes, has a distinct stratification effect: it depresses the participation of those with lesser income, education, and class status because the less privileged strata of the electorate sees the policy choices offered to them as not attractive enough to make them participate in the democratic "game".

The pathological relationship between public authority and citizens in contemporary liberal democracies is further rooted in ideational logics that guide the process of politicization – the way social concerns gain validity as "political deliverables" – issues that are a salient object of public policy (Azmanova 2020a: 43–44). In the framework of neoliberal capitalism, the realm of legitimacy had narrowed, as issues of social safety and economic stability have vacated the "legitimacy deal" between public authority and citizens – even as a social safety net is deemed of value, the neoliberal policy discourse has presented it as unfeasible in view of the demands and constrains of global economic competition. This has diminished the responsibility of the state and enhanced its discretionary powers, without damaging its legitimacy. This configuration of state–society relations explains the relative weakness of social protest at the nadir of the economic crisis (ibid.: 115–135). In a similar vein, Nancy Fraser's analysis of financialized capitalism leads her to conclude that capitalism's drive to endless accumulation tends to destabilize the very public power on which it relies (Fraser 2015).

Finally, systemic critique of capitalism expands to the infiltration of the logic of capital accumulation into mundane everyday practices, including the sphere of intimacy – a development

that affects not the distribution of life-chances in society but the very notion of life-chance: of a sense of self-worth and visions of meaningful life. This trajectory of analysis originated in Georg Lukács'(1971[1923]) theory of reification and was recast by Jürgen Habermas (1984) in the thesis of the colonization of the life-world by the systems of administrative power and economic production – a line of inquiry Habermas abandoned as he pursued the communicative turn in critical theory with the elaboration of discourse ethics. However, the phenomenon of the social system's subjugation to "economic functional laws that take on a life of their own" has been taken up more recently within systemic critiques of capitalism (cf. Hartmann and Honneth 2006: 41; Azmanova 2010, 2020a, 2020b; Chamberlain 2018). At the center of these new inquiries are novel antinomies and "paradoxes of capitalism" through which capitalism reproduces itself not despite, but through forms of emancipatory action (Fraser 2009; Azmanova 2016).

In a yet bleaker diagnosis of the demise of democratic subjectivities, Wendy Brown traces the thorough "economization" of society: the economic logic of markets has penetrated our collective perceptions of fairness and personal visions of self-worth. Economistic logic has permeated all aspects of our lives: it has contaminated statehood, the system of education, the courts, even the way we think about and value ourselves and our lives. The tragedy is not only that the super-rich have hijacked democracy through their wealth and an electoral system that predicates outcomes on available cash. The harm has reached further: the demos has disintegrated into bits of human capital, while the state itself actively produces voters as economic actors (Brown 2015).

Against optimistic accounts of a terminal crisis of capitalism and anticipations of left-democratic insurrections, such critiques of contemporary capitalism advance a somber prognosis of capitalism's mutation. The spread of economic instability and social precarity – itself engendered by the intensified pursuit of profit in conditions of globalized capitalism – has ensued "precarity capitalism" which nurtures conservative and even reactionary instincts, fueling mobilizations of fear and hatred (Azmanova 2004, 2020). The neoliberal rationality is much more than economistic in spirit, it is an ethos that has captured left politics and relations (Dean 2009). It also contains a reactionary moralism that fosters the deadly symbiosis of neoliberal policy and reactionary politics (Brown 2019).

This trail of analysis arrives at the diagnosis of capitalism's sublimation into a neo-feudalism (Wark 2019; Dean 2020) as capital accumulation increasingly takes place through debt and rent rather than profit; expropriation, domination, and force negate the fiction of the "free labor contract"; chronic insecurity fuels the popularity of the occult, and the ruling class thrives on the back of a vast sector of servants whose work exceeds the wage relation. Importantly, capitalist relations of production and exploitation continue under neofeudalism but they are reinforced through logistics of overt oppression typical of feudalism. Not only shared citizenship but human agency itself is disabled – in their absence, democracy becomes a "neoliberal fantasy", to borrow Dean's (2009) apt phrase.

Works that target systemic domination do not tend to reach the optimistic conclusions about available possibilities for radicalizing democracy or a revival of socialism that structuralist analyses typically advance. This analytic negativity has much to do with the social ontology within which these inquiries are conducted: viewing society as a system of social relations (rather than as a functionally integrated system in the style of structural-functionalism, or as a conglomeration of rational individuals with institutionally embedded rationalities) invites conclusions about society's total saturation with capitalism's systemic logic of profit-maximization.

Articulations of emancipatory paths have stylized their systemic critiques on a social ontology that views the social system as a structured yet *fractured* totality – along the lines of Adorno's conceptualization (Adorno 1973 [1966]).[5] This allows to discern points of fracture which facilitate social action and host solidaristic relations. Such a vision of the "plurality and indeterminacy

of the social" had enabled Laclau and Mouffe to (2001 [1985]: 152) to articulate a path for alternative Left politics. This has allowed Jodi Dean (2019) to combine her diagnosis of the nefarious operations of capitalism with strategies for nurturing relations of political belonging. Within a pragmatic sociology of critique Luc Boltanski (2011) discerns a potential for emancipation in the fractured and contradictory nature of social life. In parallel, Nancy Fraser develops a neo-Polanyian interpretation of tensions within neoliberal capitalism to articulate a complex constellation of struggles where the impulse to overcome domination is shaped by its encounter with marketization and social protection. Emancipation, then, requires a new synthesis of marketization and social protection befitting the exigencies of our historical juncture (Fraser 2011, 2013).

To exit capitalism, eliminating the private property of the means of production might not suffice; it might not even be necessary. In the current historical articulation of capitalism – with production chains spanning the globe, and information technology altering the nature of our engagement with productive capital – it is above all the pursuit of profit and the productivist nature of work that engender social harm and environmental destruction. The collective ownership and public stewardship of productive assets would not necessarily eliminate these dynamics. Radical emancipatory critique and social action need above all to target the key operational dynamic of capitalism – the competitive pursuit of profit.

This historicist reading of the health of contemporary capitalism discloses yet another (seventh) strategic logic of anti-capitalist mobilization: that of using the structural levers of capitalism (i.e., markets and private property) to *subvert* the systemic logic of profit maximization (Azmanova 2020b). Never before in the history of capitalism has the multitude – beyond divisions of class, education, age, gender, and cultural background – been so adversely affected by the very constitutive dynamic of capitalism. This presents an unprecedented opportunity for the mobilization of a broad spectrum of social forces – of strange bedfellows, indeed – for transcending capitalism without the help of a terminal crisis, a revolutionary break, or a guiding utopia (ibid.).

Conclusion

Theory's ultimate vocation, Wendy Brown has suggested, is the "opening up of a breathing space between the world of common meanings and the world of alternative ones, a space of potential renewal of thought, desire and action" (Brown 2005: 81). Our dystopian present nurtures nostalgias for abandoned pasts rather than anticipations of felicitous futures. Theory's most important offering in such a time might be to disrupt the opposition between the common and the alternative, between pragmatism and radicalism. It might then be able to focus thought, desire, and action on the relentless yet inglorious undoing of capitalism by suppressing its mainspring – the pursuit of profit. Even without a blueprint, a postcapitalist tomorrow is still thinkable.

Notes

1. For a comprehensive account of the articulations of "post-work" or "postcapitalist" society see the special issue on the politics of postcapitalism of *The Political Quarterly*, Vol. 91, No. 2, April–June 2020.
2. The key ontological unit for Marx is social practice: the "practical", or "sensuous human activity" through which people produce their existence (Marx 1845: thesis I and V). The reality of human existence is not to be reduced to vulgar materiality (ibid.: thesis I); neither is the production of material life to be reduced to the economy in a narrow sense (Engels 1890). Society is to be understood holistically as a system of social relations: it "does not consist of individuals, but expresses the sum of interrelations, the relations within which these individuals stand" (Marx 1857: 265). The economy is the ensemble of practices through which society produces its material circumstances and production is

to be understood broadly in the sense of *social production* of existence or society's reproduction (Marx 1959, Preface).

3. These radical forms of criticism persisted at the margins of progressive politics: in the US, the reparations movement rooted its claims on ideas of past exploitation. In social critique, works on racialized capitalism, following the work of Cedric Robinson (1983), connected the systemic dynamics of capitalism to the relational dimension of unequal attribution of human value, with skin color and ethnicity being the structuring institutions undergirding that attribution.

4. Similarly, Habermas (1990: 11, 16–17) considers markets as being functionally necessary for the reproduction of modern societies, allowing him to articulate a vision of market socialism.

5. In his analysis of capitalism, Adorno often refers to it as the "social whole" and "social totality", which is internally structured (e.g., Adorno 1973 [1966]: 37, 47). Treating capitalism as a social system does not imply that there is no social life outside of capitalism's penchant for the pursuit of profit.

References

Adorno, T. W. (1973 [1966]) *Negative Dialectics* (transl. E.B. Ashton), New York: Continuum.

Azmanova, A. (2004) 'The Mobilization of the European Left in the Early 21st Century', *European Journal of Sociology* 45 (2), 273–306.

———. (2010) 'Capitalism Reorganized: Social Justice after Neo-Liberalism', *Constellations* 17 (3), 390–406.

———. (2016) 'Empowerment as Surrender: How Women Lost the Battle for Emancipation as They Won Equality and Inclusion', *Social Research* 83 (3), 749–76.

———. (2020a) *Capitalism on Edge: How Fighting Precarity Can Achieve Radical Change Without Crisis or Utopia*, New York: Columbia University Press.

———. (2020b) 'Anti-Capital for the XXIst Century: On the Metacrisis of Capitalism and the Prospects for Radical Politics', *Philosophy and Social Criticism* 46 (5), 601–612.

Balibar, E. (2014 [2010]) 'The Proposition of Equaliberty', in *Equaliberty: Political Essays* (transl. by J. Ingram), Durham: Duke University Press; pp. 35–66.

Bastani, A. (2020) *Fully Automated Luxury Communism: A Manifesto*, London and New York: Verso.

Boltanski, L. (2011) *On Critique: A Sociology of Emancipation* (translated by Gregory Elliot), Cambridge Polity Press.

Boltanski, L. and Chiapello, E. (2005 [1999]) *The New Spirit of Capitalism*, London and New York: Verso.

Brown, W. (2005) 'At the Edge: The Future of Political Theory', in *Edgework. Critical Essays on Knowledge and Politics*, Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press; pp. 60–82.

———. (2015) *Undoing the Demos: Neoliberalism's Stealth Revolution*, New York: Zone Books.

———. (2019) *In the Ruins of Neoliberalism: The Rise of Antidemocratic Politics in the West*, New York: Columbia University Press.

Chamberlain, J. (2018) *Undoing Work, Rethinking Community: A Critique of the Social Function of Work*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Dean J. (2009) *Democracy and Other Neoliberal Fantasies. Communicative Capitalism and Left Politics*, Durham and London: Duke University Press.

———. (2019) *Comrade: An Essay on Political Belonging*, New York and London: Verso.

———. (2020) 'Communism or Neo-Feudalism?', *New Political Science* 42 (1), 1–17.

Engels, F. (1890) 'Letter to J. Bloch', Sept. 21, 1890, in Marx, K. and Engels, F. (eds.) *Selected Works,* vol. 2, Moscow: Foreign Language Publishing House (1955); p. 488.

Fraser, N. (1997) *Justice Interruptus: Critical Reflections on the Postsocialist Condition*, London and New York: Routledge.

———. (1996) 'Social Justice in the Age of Identity Politics: Redistribution, recognition and Participation' *The Tanner Lectures on Human Values*, Stanford University.

———. (2009) 'Feminism, Capitalism, and the Cunning of History', *New Left Review* 56, 97–117.

———. (2011) 'Marketization, Social Protection, Emancipation: Toward a Neo-Polanyian Conception of Capitalist Crisis', in Calhoun, C. and Derluguian, G. (eds.) *Business as Usual: The Roots of the Global Financial Meltdown*, New York: New York University Press; pp. 137–157.

———. (2013) 'A triple Movement? Parsing the Politics of Crisis after Polanyi', *New Left Review* 21, 119–132.

———. (2014) 'Behind Marx's Hidden Abode: For an Expanded Conception of Capitalism', *New Left Review* 86, 55–72.

———. (2015) 'Legitimation Crisis? On the Political Contradictions of Financialized Capitalism', *Critical Historical Studies* 2 (2), 157–89.

Habermas, J. (1984) *The Theory of Communicative Action, Vol. 1: Reason and Rationalization of Society* (transl. T. McCarthy), Boston: Beacon Press.

———. (1990) 'What Does Socialism Mean Today? The Rectifying Revolution and the Need for New Thinking on the Left', *New Left Review* 1 (183), 3–21.

———. (1989) 'The New Obscurity: The Crisis of the Welfare State and the Exhaustion of Utopian Energies', in Nicholsen, S. W. (ed.) *The New Conservatism. Cultural Criticism and the Historians' Debate*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press; pp. 48–70.

Harrington, M. (1989) *Socialism: Past and Future*, New York: Little Brown & Co.

Hartmann, M. and Honneth, A. (2006) 'Paradoxes of Capitalism', *Constellations* 13 (1), 41–58.

Honneth, A. (2016) *The Idea of Socialism: Towards a Renewal*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Ingram, D. (2018) *World Crisis and Underdevelopment*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Jaeggi, R. (2014) *Kritik der Lebensformen*, Berlin: Suhrkamp.

———. (2015) 'Towards an Immanent Critique of Forms of Life', *Raisons politiques. Revue de théorie politique* 57, 13–29.

———. (2016) 'What (If Anything) Is Wrong with Capitalism? Dysfunctionality, Exploitation and Alienation: Three Approaches to the Critique of Capitalism', *The Southern Journal of Philosophy* 54 (S1), 44–65.

Judis, J. (2020). *The Socialist Awakening: What's Different Now about the Left*, New York: Columbia Global Reports.

Laclau, E. and Mouffe, C. (2001 [1985]) *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy. Towards a Radical Democratic Politics*, 2nd edn., London and New York: Verso.

Lukács, G. (1971 [1923]) *History and Class Consciousness. Studies in Marxist Dialectics* (transl. R. Livingstone), Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Marx, K. (1845) 'Theses on Feuerbach,' in *Marx/Engels, Selected Works*, vol. 1 (transl. W. Lough), Moscow: Progress Publishers (1969); pp. 13–15.

———. (1857) *Grundrisse: Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy* (transl. M. Nicolaus), Allen Lane/ Pelican, 1973.

———. (1859) *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* (transl. S. W. Ryazanskaya), Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1970.

Mason, P. (2015) *PostCapitalism: A Guide to Our Future*. London: Allen Lane Publishers.

Mouffe, C. (2018) *For a Left Populism*, London and New York: Verso.

Offe, C. (1984) *Contradictions of the Welfare State*, London: Hutchinson.

Offe, C. (2013) 'Participatory Inequality in the Austerity State: A Supply Side Approach', in Schaefer, A. and Streeck, W. (eds.) *Democracy in the Age of Austerity*, Cambridge, UK: Polity.

Piketty, T. (2019) *Capital et idéologie*, Paris: SEUIL.

Robinson, C. (1983) *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition*, London, Zed Press.

Sarkar, S. (2014) *The Crises of Capitalism: A Different Study of Political Economy*. Translated by Graciela Calderon. Berkeley, CA: Counterpoint.

Streeck, W. (2014 [2013]) *Buying Time: The Delayed Crisis of Democratic Capitalism*, London: Verso.

———. (2016) *How Will Capitalism End? Essays on a Failing System*, London: Verso.

Wark, M. (2019) *Capital is Dead*, London and New: Verso.

Wright, E. O. (2019). *How to Be an Anticapitalist in the Twenty-First Century*. New York: Verso.

Žižek, Slavoj. 2019. *Like a Thief in Broad Daylight: Power in the Era of Post-Humanity*. London: Penguin/ Allen Lane.

45

Populism

The concept and the polemic

Filipe Carreira da Silva and Mónica Brito Vieira

Populism has been a term of abuse in the English language since it was first coined in the late nineteenth century. But as soon as it entered the political vocabulary of the day, "populism" and "populists" are swiftly appropriated by those discontent with the socioeconomic conditions of the age. In 1892, the Omaha Platform inaugurates the People's Party of America (or, Populist Party). Four years later, one of the contenders of the 1896 United States Presidential election, Democrat William Jennings Bryan, runs for office with a ticket with a Populist in-print. Over a century later, populism is still very much a term of abuse. Today's "populist revolt," punctuated by figures and movements such as US President Donald J. Trump, Brexit, President Jair Bolsonaro from Brazil, Spain's Podemos party or Greece's SYRIZA, is a wave of discontent whose figureheads are as much vilified as they are capable of attracting a following of die-hard enthusiasts.

In the meantime, populism has helped shape twentieth-century politics and entered the lexicon of the social sciences. As polemic and as concept, populism is one of the most central political ideas of the age. It is likely to remain so for as long as political regimes will seek legitimacy from the figure of the sovereign people.

What is populism?

But, after all, what is populism? Why is it centrally oriented towards the figure of the sovereign people? What are its causes and consequences?

To properly answer these questions, one needs to start with the accumulated historical experience of populist politics and populist scholarship since the late nineteenth century. One common thread is discernible within and across all three main populist waves: the American Populists of the late nineteenth century, the mid-twentieth century Latin American populisms and today's populisms. This transnational thread is not something substantive, such as a particular kind of ideology, a certain discourse or a specific type of mobilization. Instead, this common thread is simultaneously more specific and more abstract than any substantive content: it is a particular way of doing politics. This way of doing politics, or "logic," is shared by all cases of populist politics despite the *polemical* character of the concept of "populism."[1] Often used by conservatives and liberals to deride legitimate popular claims and grievances, it is also used by democrats who are wary of demagogues. In fact, however, the particular populist way of doing

politics is very similar to democratic politics insofar both are undertaken in the name of "the people." In rigor, democracy precedes populism, as populism originates in democracy's paradox. This means that both share the same normative orientation towards equality and equal respect. But this also means that populists differ from democrats in important respects. Populists use the betrayal of these norms in the form of a sense of undeserved inferiority by a part of the people. They do this in order to promote the division of the people in two rivalrous parts where one part is blamed for the suffering of the other part. Finally, populists typically make a redemptive appeal at the restoration of the original democratic promise of equality and inclusion.[2]

This sheds light on existing accounts of populism. These include a combination of one or more of the following aspects or dimensions. First, populism is a political phenomenon. Most agree it is also a socio-cultural phenomenon in the sense of involving society and social values. But what *kind* of phenomenon populism is remains unclear and object of heated discussion.

Second, the notion of "the people" is central in most accounts. This is hardly surprising. The very term "populist" or "populism" derives etymologically from *populus*, the Latin word for "people." Moreover, historical experience shows the concept of "the people" to play a central role in every instantiation of populism. Yet there are almost as many understandings of how "the people" relates to populism as there are of populism itself. Some advocate "the people" to be one of few "core concepts" of populism as a thin-centred ideology. Others see "the people" as a rhetorical element of populist discourse or persuasion. Others still see in the construction of "the people" the ultimate operation of political representation. This variety of understandings is as much a consequence of the polemical nature of the term as it mirrors deep-seated epistemological differences among populist scholars.

Third, there is the opposition between the few and the many. No approach to populism denies the significance of this dichotomy, with most emphasizing its highly moralized nature. Indeed, in populist politics, the many are glorified and the few vilified. But the exact nature of this opposition remains unclear. For some, the *versus* in the "us vs. them" dichotomy is fundamental. There is no possible identification between "us" and "them." As friend and foe, the many and the few hate each other and only wish the destruction of the other. For others, however, as part of one and the same people, the few and the many identify themselves within some broadly shared scheme of social cooperation. Again, both as a polemic and as a concept, the challenge is to shed light into the precise nature of this opposition.

Fourth, populist politics typically involves emotions. What these feelings are, and how we are to account for them, is the source of much debate. Fear is the emotion of choice among social psychologists and political scientists trying to understand what motivates populist vote today. Another emotion typically associated with populism is resentment. Postwar sociologists and political scientists saw in class resentment the key attitudinal trait of populist mobilization.[3] More recent approaches have suggested to study resentment not as a social attitude but as a way of organizing social and political action. In this sense, populism is best understood as a specific instantiation of the politics of emotions, i.e. of how emotions can help pattern collective action along distinctive pathways, pathways that unfold in a relatively independent way from the substantive mental states or feelings they originate from.[4]

Fifth, populism is a modern phenomenon. Although there are important studies of populism tracing it back to Antiquity[5] or the Renaissance,[6] the fact remains that the overwhelming majority of the populist scholarship focuses on the past 150 years. This is for good reason. It has partly to do with the fact, already noted by Reinhardt Koselleck, that all "isms" emerge in the course of the nineteenth century and populism, coined in the early 1890s in the United States, is no exception. But it also points to the fact that the modern age is peculiarly conducive to populist politics.

Although all, or at least some of, these elements are present in every available approach to populism, the precise way they are combined varies from approach to approach. This fact, in addition to the polemical nature of the concept alluded to above, rules out the possibility of finding a "common denominator" among existing approaches in order to reach a consensual solution. Instead, it forces us to make a step back and rethink the very epistemological foundations upon which said approaches operate. Once the epistemological assumptions of the existing models of populism are clarified, the rationale for each approach's particular combination of the constitutive elements of populism soon comes to the fore.

Main approaches

From this perspective, populist scholarship can be divided into two broad categories. On the one hand, there are those approaches who aim at interpreting or explaining the contents that define populism. These approaches can be designated as "ontic" approaches. They typically favour a naturalist epistemology. On the other hand, there are approaches that aim at analyzing the ways in which these contents are organized. This second category encompasses "ontological" or "logical" approaches. These tend to favour some variety of social constructionism.

Ontic approaches comprise the vast majority of the literature on populism. Since the early twentieth century, we have seen historians, sociologists and political scientists devising more or less sophisticated explanations for the emergence of populism, what makes it distinctive and of its consequences for the political system. There are two sub-types of ontic approaches. The first encompasses empirical-deductive approaches. These approaches are oriented towards explaining populism through the discovery of causal relations between structural determinants and its (populist) political consequences. Populism is here a substantive political phenomenon, namely a form of political mobilization of large hitherto excluded swaths of the population triggered by macro-level modernizing processes such as economic development, urbanization, and rapid value change. A good illustration is the functionalist approach developed by Gino Germani to explain the Argentinian case, arguably the most sophisticated sociological theory of populism of the mid-twentieth century.[7] The second sub-type is hermeneutical approaches, whose aim is to provide a thick description of populism through historically detailed case studies. Margaret Canovan's (1981) monumental comparative historical analysis in *Populism* provides a fine illustration of a hermeneutical approach.[8] In such cases, populism is believed to have a specific essence, a sort of historically specific combination of the aforementioned constitutive elements alongside with an unspecified number of others (charismatic leadership and a rural character, for instance).[9] Rich in detail, such ethnographic descriptions resist generalization, however.

The large majority of studies of populism by social or political scientists today are of one of these two sub-types. Populism is, according to this understanding, an entity with a distinctive, measurable and observable content or *ontic* reality. To cite a recent best-selling primer on the subject, which presents itself as intervening in the "long-standing debate over the *essence* of populism," the aim of such approaches is to distil "the *core* of all major past and present manifestations of populism."[10] What exactly this "core" or "essence" is, however, remains a matter of fierce dispute: should we take it for a strategy or mode of organization,[11] a project or repertoire of political mobilization,[12] an ideology,[13] a mode of persuasion,[14] a democratic ethos,[15] a discourse[16] or simply as a style of political communication?[17] As a result, the question of "whether populism is essentially left- or right-wing, fascist or egalitarian, forward-looking and progressive or backward-looking and nostalgic"[18] is repeatedly put and left unanswered. No clear delimitation of populism as a concept and a phenomenon is ever reached. The outcome is a theoretical stalemate with profound political implications. For even if populism could be defined as strategy

or as ideology or as discourse or as style, it cannot certainly be all of these at the same time. As populist movements with very different social bases, organizational strategies, and ideological orientations coexist, general confusion necessarily follows. Take populist vote. The literature is divided among those who assure us that who votes for populist parties is the "Interwar generation," in particular the "working class, the less educated, men, white Europeans, the economically insecure, and those expressing political mistrust,"[19] and those who are adamant that populist voters are "young, often well-educated, unemployed, and precarious workers."[20] With no clear definition in sight, "populism" soon became a catch-phrase for all things anti-democratic and illiberal if not outright racist, xenophobic and violent.

The second group of approaches takes its lead from this difficulty.[21] In this case, the assumption is that our knowledge of the social and political world cannot be easily disentangled from that world proper. By studying populism with social-scientific tools, we help construe the political phenomenon known as "populism" in a certain way. The upshot is that there is no populism as such without some sort of social construction, be it by laypersons or by experts. Populism *is* a cultural construction, not a natural reality independent of our dealings with it. From this perspective, what populism is, how its constitutive elements relate to each other and how these then relate to other concepts (e.g. democracy) becomes a matter of identifying the correct logic behind populist politics.

The forerunner of studying populism in this way was the British sociologist, Peter Worsley. It was Worsley who, at the end of the 1960s, first suggested populism to function as an "emphasis in political culture."[22] This was a radical departure from both the historical analyses that predominated well into the 1950s and the social-scientific studies of the 1960s in, at least, two different accounts. First, against a literature that either praised populism's democratic credentials or derided its anti-democratic impetus, Worsley assumed an unusual agnostic political position: the populist "emphasis" could either reinforce democratic participation or lead to authoritarian solutions. Second, Worsley extended this agnosticism to the way we should conceive of populism. There was no substantive feature that defined populism; the only "reality" to populism was that it functioned in a certain way.

Ernesto Laclau's ontological approach to populism is directly inspired in Worsley's pioneering work. This epistemological option for a logic-based approach to populism can also be found in other important populist scholars, including Canovan's later work[23] and even, to a certain extent, Cas Mudde's definition of populism as a thin-centred ideology[24] and its offspring, the so-called "ideational" approach.[25] Yet Laclau remains the only populist thinker to dispense with contents altogether and favour instead a purely ontological model of populist politics.

The main advantage of Laclau's option to dispense with contents altogether is an unprecedented degree of theoretical consistency and sophistication in the definition of populism. For the first time, populist research has at its disposal a philosophically dense and conceptually clear definition of the phenomenon at hand. As a result, empirical research has benefited significantly from Laclau's normative theory of populism. This has been particularly the case in Europe. The so-called "discourse analysis" of populism, which has proliferated since the late 2000s under the influence of Laclau's former associates and students at Essex, tends to conceive of "discourse" in more positivist and "ontic" terms than what is the case in the original works by poststructuralist thinkers.[26]

General assessment

Despite the real progress made in recent decades and the variety of approaches now available to study populism, the fact remains that this task still faces a number of formidable challenges.

First, there is the proverbial difficulty of defining populism. Despite the progress made in recent years, populism remains a slippery phenomenon. The fact that it has no substantive content rules out rigid definitions that try to encapsulate its "essence," "substance" or "distinctive character," including definitions that try to capture the "minimum common denominator" of populist politics. Ernesto Laclau's celebrated ontological definition of populism as animated by the logic of enmity is an important step in the right direction.[27] Yet, once even Laclau's sophisticated theorization of populism, certainly the most systematic and ambitious to date, does not resist closer scrutiny. This is because of, at least, three different reasons: it mobilizes an ontology (the logic of enmity) that seems inadequate to capture populism; it conflates populism with politics itself; and it tends to reduce reality to discourse. If we are truly to understand what populism is and how it works, we need a definition that is precise enough to distinguish it from other political phenomena (while clarifying how it relates to them) but flexible enough to capture the plurality of historical manifestations associated with populist politics.

Second, populism belongs to no country. Populism is a transnational political phenomenon. This is truer today than ever before. Unlike previous populist waves that were geographically limited to either one country or a region, the current populist wave has, for the very first time, acquired a truly global scale. SYRIZA, Brexit, Trump, Bolsonaro, Podemos, to name just a few, are but different reference points in the same global populist constellation, a constellation that has taken the political global scene by surprise in the early 2010s. Even though most democratic countries have had first-hand experiences with populism, the fact remains that these experiences can be noticeably different. Throughout the decades, populism has absorbed new elements every time it made landfall in a given polity. This means that each concrete historical manifestation of populism requires a careful historical analysis *and* a consideration of the relative position of that particular manifestation in the more general pattern of development of populism as a transnational phenomenon.

Third, populism exists only in relation with democracy. Without the normative orientation towards equality and equal respect and the resentment that its denial produces, there can be no populism. This has been the case ever since populism first erupted as a collective movement in the nineteenth century. Since then, both populism and democracy have changed remarkably. So has their symbiotic relationship. This makes any discussion of the relationship between populism and democracy more complex today than ever before. Yet this also makes it all the more relevant today. Any normative judgement of populism's democratic credentials depends not only on what we think characterizes populism but also on our understanding of representative democracy itself. Democratic regimes vary remarkably, and so do the theories we develop to evaluate them. This variety of options has only grown with time. Yet so has popular dissatisfaction with democracy, often translated into electoral disaffection and increased openness towards alternative political solutions. It is difficult not to notice the relation between this so-called "crisis of representative democracy" and the "populist revolt" of the early twenty-first century. This means that any enquiry into populism today is also an enquiry into democracy itself and its frontiers.

Fourth, populism originates in democracy's failed promise of equality and inclusion. The rising levels of socioeconomic inequality and political exclusion of recent decades make this concern with equality more relevant today than ever. Yet it also makes populism inherently unstable, difficult to predict and hard to tame. This is because while inequality and exclusion have always been a central element in populist proposals for constitutional reform, they have also inspired scapegoating and other forms of political demagoguery that do little to address their real causes and potential solutions. In all probability, this inherent feature of populist politics is likely to worsen in a digitally interconnected world where the acceleration of social change reached unprecedented levels with unpredictable consequences.

Conclusion: the power and fragility of populist politics

Time and again, populism has been swept up in the tumultuous spirit of the times and over-whelmed by anticipation for a goal that crystallized on the horizon. This spirit, however, proved to be precisely that: an apparition that lacked actuality and disintegrated the moment populists attempted to grasp it. The ground slips from beneath their feet and they are left suspended between the dream and the nightmare they brought about. To conclude, therefore, we will briefly dwell on whether populism has an untimely presence in the present. It goes without saying that political failure, and the disappointment that accompanies it, is commonplace. As we know, all too well, situations that, at one moment, appear fluid and radically open to new pos-sibilities can quickly turn. Indeed, if there is a history to populism it can be summed up by this dialectic of hope and disappointment.

Normatively speaking, this means that resentment can no longer be used to discern possibil-ity in the situation: if resentment is unable to describe the tension in the people's revolt between its democratic intentions and its anti-democratic results, it cannot be trusted to provide a reliable means of discerning the latent possibilities in the present. And, if some alternative democratic ideology offers a better explanation of the people's revolt, then surely it also offers a more pro-ductive means by which to ascertain the immanent potentialities contained within the world as it exists.

Once one scrutinizes the logic of resentment defining populism, it is easy to see why pop-ulism remains such an ambiguous phenomenon and its relationship to democracy so contested. Populism can have both a preventative and a restorative role within democracy. Democracy implies self-rule and some level of resentment against being ruled.

Preventatively, resentment towards the ruling elite, and the threat of conflict implied in it, might work against elites transforming their disproportionate power and influence into full-blown disregard for other groups' interests and the common good. Understood as indigna-tion, populism bears a close relationship with the fundamental principles and values grounding democracy, in particular its egalitarian commitments. Restoratively, therefore, populism might point to their violation and address the community at large with a view to the restoration of broken promises and shared commitments. Hence, we see populism being often symptomatic of important democratic exclusions which are largely being overlooked or not dealt with. Populist outbursts work regularly the outward expression of frustration, exasperation, or anger at the lived experience of that exclusion.

Insofar and as long as resentment relates to a normative *fundus*, and that it mobilizes citi-zens around its breaching, it bears a potential of democratic awakening. Yet the potential need not be realized. Resentment is a notoriously fickle and slippery logic of action. At its extreme, it can either fixate obsessively on particular objects or become virtually objectless and all-encompassing. As a result, the understanding to what might be provoking loss or injury might be compromised. There is always a chance that populist denunciation awakens and engages the community in a discussion of what might best restore and protect the norms and principles that have been found to be compromised. But there is also a possibility it simply closes off that discussion. This closure can happen in two mutually reinforcing ways. First, the problem at hand – the causes of collective or systemic injustice faced, and even their reach – lend themselves to misdiagnosis when one fixates in one single "cause" or when every possible cause can be the cause. Second, a problem thus misdiagnosed lends itself to an immediately available solution or a redemptive all-encompassing one. Considerations of how or why the problem might have been misdiagnosed or how and why even agreed ideals might entail different modes of interpretation and implementation, and face opposition within democratic politics, can thereby be ruled out.

Populism is never merely about moral resentment. It is not mere frustration at the violation of a normative *fundus* or at systemic injustices stemming from it. It also establishes a conflictive relationship between rival groups, insofar as responsibility or even fault for such violations are imputed to certain actors and actions. This populist impulse towards moralization and victimization inevitably opens the door to risks. It tends to portray politics as a zero-sum game, where the other's gains are necessarily my losses. When indignation devolves into envy, social cooperation becomes difficult, and the residual normative reference in envy struggles to address the community at large, let alone the perceived offenders. Unlike indignation, envy is both painful and nonconstructive. How can the many cooperate with the few, or the part within the many address the other part within it, if they do not wish the few or the other part to have some good, *even if* they themselves do not want it; *even if* they prefer to deprive others of the good to acquiring it for themselves; *even if* the few or the other part do not harm them? An exclusive focus on envy, comparison of fortunes, and allegedly intentional culpable agents and actions, can sacrifice progressive politics at the hands of passivizing victimization. It can easily distract from, or even preclude engagement with, the collective and systemic inequalities and injustices that might lie behind one's felt injuries and the politics that shapes them. As Michael Ure rightly explains, "it is because socio-political resentment," identifying and addressing collective and systematic injustices, "responds to the political regulation of basic ontological risks and contingencies – misfortune, irreversibility, loss and so on – that it runs the risk of sliding into ontological *ressentiment*," a form of radical envy or envious hatred, "and with it indiscriminate, unremitting blaming, envious spoiling of the good and dangerous attempts to make politics the locus of metaphysical redemption."[28] This radical envy is particularly dangerous because it can become obsessed with the tinniest of marginal gains, and thereby undermine possibilities of trust and cooperation further. In turn, radical envy can initiate "a diabolic cycle in which envy refocuses itself on increasingly minor advantages, and it is tempting to think that the remedy for every failure is a search for yet further dimensions of human life that have not been 'equalized'."[29] At that point any vision of progressive politics can turn into a dystopian vision of egalitarian perfectionism or monism.

The current populist wave poses challenges to democracies, pushing for change under the threat of unrest and civil strife. Demagoguery is a danger, but so is complacency with interest groups, oligarchies and inequality. In face of this, the time is ripe for a re-examination of how democratic populism is. It is important to open up a space to consider the potentially positive role populism may have in democratic political life. Conceived as an outgrowth of democracy, populism has accompanied it through the ages functioning as both a necessary corrective to its unfulfilled promises and a dangerous demagogic dynamic that can open the door to tyranny or domination. But as liberal supremacy is gradually entrenched within the amalgam "liberal democracy," the added value of populism's democratic potential rises proportionally. In moments of crisis like the present, this is particularly significant as populism can unleash repressed democratic resources that can correct irresponsive and opaque representative systems of government. Yet, by the same token, the potential for nondemocratic solutions around a demagogic leader or elite also increases exponentially: the crisis of representative democracy is also the crisis of liberal ideas of limited government, checks and balances, tolerance and pluralism, all pivotal in helping to prevent tyranny.

Acknowledgements

Filipe C. da Silva and Mónica B. Vieira

Notes

1. As a result, few call themselves "populist" for fear of being associated with the different pejorative connotations of the term, ranging from irrationalism to xenophobia and conspiracy mindedness. For a genealogy of this polemic, see Laclau (2005: 1–64). See also Houwen (2011) and Stavrakakis (2017).
2. On this four-step process, also known as the logic of democratic resentment, see Silva and Brito Vieira (2019).
3. For example, Lipset (1955) and Parsons (1963 [1955]). On class-based resentment generated in the frustrated "sacrificial contract" among American working-class men in the 1960s, see Sennett and Cobb (1972, 134–135). On class resentment more generally, see Barbalet (1992; 1998).
4. For example, Nussbaum (2013).
5. For example, Vatter (2012).
6. For example, McCormick (2011).
7. Germani (1965).
8. Canovan (1981).
9. Canovan's typological approach has exerted a significant influence in the populist literature. See, e.g. Taguieff (1995: 24–35).
10. Mudde and Kaltwasser (2017: 5 – our emphases).
11. Weyland (2001: 14); Betz (2002: 198).
12. Jansen (2011: 82); Brubaker (2017: 4–6).
13. Canovan (2002; 2004); Mudde (2004; 2007); Mudde and Kaltwasser (2017); Hawkins, Carlin, Littvay, and Kaltwasser (2019).
14. Kazin (2017).
15. Goodwyn (1976).
16. On discourse generally, see Torfing (1995). On populism as discourse, see e.g. Howarth and Stavrakakis (2000); Pauwels (2011).
17. For example, Moffitt and Tormey (2014).
18. Minogue (1969: 200).
19. Norris and Inglehart (2019: 274).
20. Della Porta, Fernández, Kouki, and Mosca (2017: 53).
21. For example, Laclau (2005: 15).
22. Worsley (1969).
23. Margaret Canovan moves away from hermeneutics and the study of "ideology and policy content of populist movements" in order to "concentrate instead on structural considerations." These "structural considerations" refer to three fundamental characteristics she believes all populist politics possess: anti-elitism, a reference to "the people," and a simple and direct style (see Canovan 1999: 3).
24. Despite his ontic definition of populism as a coherent "ideology," however "thin," Cas Mudde moves in a structural direction when he treats populism as a particular view about how society is and ought to be structured. He goes on to speak of populism as simply setting up a framework – the antagonism between people and elites against the backdrop of popular sovereignty – with no specific contents. Mudde's recognition of populism's fundamental indeterminacy goes together with his distancing from "thicker" ontic approaches, defining populism as demagoguery, charismatic leadership, or simplistic political discourse (see, e.g. Mudde 2004).
25. Mudde's work is the starting point of the so-called "ideational" approach, according to which populism is a thin-centred ideology, frame, discourse or worldview comprising three "core concepts:" the people, the elite, and the general will. See Hawkins and Kaltwasser (2019: 5); Mudde and Kaltwasser (2017: 9 ff.).
26. In brief, the difference at stake here is that "discourse," for both Laclau and Foucault, is a form of organizing knowledge that constitutes social relations in specific ways. Discourse is an effect of the power to define what counts as legitimate knowledge. As a material social system, this understanding of "discourse" cannot be reduced to a linguistic affair. By contrast, empirical-oriented "discourse analysis" studies the use of written or spoken language in a certain social context. Language is the

object of study of discourse analysis, be it text (such as newspapers, personal correspondence and other legal or political documentation) or talk (such as interviews or testimonies).

27. Laclau (2005).
28. Ure (2015: 608).
29. Geuss (2016: 183).

References

Barbalet, J. (1992). "A Macro Sociology of Emotion: Class Resentment." *Sociological Theory* 10: 150–163.

Barbalet, J. (1998). *Emotion, Social Theory, and Social Structure: A Macrosociological Approach*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Betz, H.-G. (2002). "Conditions Favouring the Success and Failure of Radical Right-wing Populist Parties in Contemporary Democracies." In *Democracies and the Populist Challenge*, edited by Y. Mény and Y. Surel, 197–213. London: Palgrave-Macmillan.

Brubaker, R. (2017). "Why Populism?" *Theory and Society* 46: 1–29.

Canovan, M. (1981). *Populism*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Canovan, M. (1999). "Trust the People! Populism and the Two Faces of Democracy." *Political Studies* 47: 2–16.

Canovan, M. (2002). "Taking Politics to the People." In *Democracies and the Populist Challenge*, edited by Y. Mény and Y. Surel, 25–44. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Canovan, M. (2004). "Populism for Political Theorists?" *Journal of Political Ideologies* 9: 241–252.

Della Porta, D., Fernández, J., Kouki, H., and L. Mosca. (2017). *Movement Parties Against Austerity*. Cambridge: Polity.

Germani, G. (1965). *Política y Sociedad en una Época de Transición*. Buenos Aires: Paidós.

Geuss, R. (2016). *Reality and Its Dreams*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Goodwin, L. (1976). *Democratic Promise: The Populist Movement in America*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Hawkins, K. A., R. E. Carlin, L. Littvay, and C. R. Kaltwasser (eds.) (2019). *The Ideational Approach to Populism. Concept, Theory, and Analysis*. London: Routledge.

Hawkins, K. and C. Kaltwasser (2019) "Introduction. The Ideational Approach." In *The Ideational Approach to Populism. Concept, Theory, and Analysis, edited by* K. A. Hawkins, R. E. Carlin, L. Littvay, and C. R. Kaltwasser, 1–24. London: Routledge.

Houwen, T. (2011). "The Non-European Roots of the Concept of Populism." Sussex European Institute, Working Paper No. 120. Available at: http://www.sussex.ac.uk/sei/publications/seiworkingpapers. Last accessed August 18, 2020.

Howarth, D. and Y. Stavrakakis (2000). "Introducing Discourse Theory and Political Analysis." In *Discourse Theory and Political Analysis*, edited by D. Howarth, A. J. Norval and Y. Stavrakakis, 1–23. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Jansen, R.S. (2011). "Populist Mobilization." *Sociological Theory* 29: 75–96.

Kazin, M. (2017). *The Populist Persuasion*. New York: Basic Books.

Laclau, E. (2005). *On Populist Reason*. London: Verso.

Lipset, S.M. (1955). "The Radical Right: A Problem for American Democracy." *British Journal of Sociology* 6: 176–209.

McCormick, J. (2011). *Machiavellian Democracy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Minogue, K. (1969). "Populism as a political movement." In *Populism: Its Meanings and National Characteristics*, edited by G. Ionescu and E. Gellner, 197–211. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson.

Moffitt, B. and S. Tormey (2014). "Rethinking Populism: Politics, Mediatisation and Political Style." *Political Studies* 62: 381–397.

Mudde, C. (2004). "The Populist Zeitgeist." *Government and Opposition* 39: 542–563.

Mudde, C. (2007). *Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Mudde, C. and C.R. Kaltwasser (2017). *Populism. A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Norris, P. and R. Inglehart (2019). *Cultural Backlash*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Nussbaum, M. (2013). *Political Emotions: Why Love Matters for Justice*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press.

Parsons, T. (1963). "Social Strains in America." In *The Radical Right. The New American Right*, edited by D. Bell, 175–192. New York: Doubleday (Orig. pub. 1955).

Pauwels, T. (2011). "Measuring Populism." *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion and Parties* 21: 97–119.

Sennett, R. and J. Cobb. (1972). *The Hidden Injuries of Class*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Silva, F.C. and M. Brito Vieira (2019). Populism as a Logic of Social and Political Action. *European Journal of Social Theory* 22(4): 497–512.

Stavrakakis, I. (2017). "How did 'Populism' Become a Pejorative Concept? And Why is this Important Today? A Genealogy of Double Hermeneutics." *POPULISMUS Working Papers* 6: 1–22.

Taguieff, P.-A. (1995). "Political Science Confronts Populism: From a Conceptual Mirage to a Real Problem." *Telos* 103: 9–43.

Torfing, J. (1995). *New Theories of Discourse*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Ure, M. (2015). "Resentment/Ressentiment." *Constellations* 22: 599–613.

Vatter, M. (2012). "The Quarrel between Populism and Republicanism." *Contemporary Political Theory* 11: 242–263.

Weyland, K. (2001). "Clarifying a Contested Concept." *Comparative Politics* 34: 1–22.

Worsley, P. (1969). "The concept of populism." In *Populism: Its Meanings and National Characteristics*, edited by G. Ionescu and E. Gellner, 212–250. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson.

46

New materialism(s)

Geoff Pfeifer

The term "New Materialism" has come to signal a diverse array of movements in philosophy, social theory, and the social sciences more generally that have emerged on the scene over the last twenty-five years or so. Some of these movements and thinkers understand themselves and their work as falling under that term, while others go by different terminology such as "Vital Materialism." "Speculative Realism," "Post-Humanism," and "Object-Oriented Ontology." In this way then, we should think of the term new materialism as more of an umbrella term that captures this diverse array of work across the humanities and social sciences. Diana Coole and Samantha Frost argue that one way of carving up this diversity of views is to think of them along three subcategories or trajectories: ontology and questions of agency, biopolitics and bioethics, and critical materialism (Coole and Frost 2010). While this is not a perfect grouping, it does tell us a lot about the domains in which new materialist thinking deals and also gives us some sense for the breadth and diversity of its adherents. Though these movements are diverse in this way, and many of them have differing and conflictual commitments and premises, the fundamental set of premises that unites them across such differences is a belief that the standard and long-lasting understanding of the human (or the subject) as the sole active agent in the world is mistaken, and that "things," "objects," and other material phenomena also exhibit a kind of agency that act on and help shape human subjects, other objects, and also the larger social and ecological world in which we find ourselves.

To be sure, and as we will see below, there is no agreement across these thinkers/theories as to what this amounts to, but they all seek to demote the role of the human, so these views can also be seen as non-anthropocentric in a variety of ways (hence the "post-humanist" title that is used to sometimes refer to these movements of thought). Connected to this is a rejection what Quentin Meillasoux (2008) has referred to as the "correlationist thesis." Correlationism is a new name for a long-standing epistemological commitment that exists across a large swath of philosophical and social theories. Correlationism, as Meillasoux describes, is the view that "we only ever have access to the correlation between thinking and being and never to either term apart from the other" (Meillasoux 2008: 5). We cannot, in other words, understand the world apart from human cognition and so simply do not have access, or the ability to make sense of the ways in which the world and its objects might exist apart from thought, nor can we say much about how those objects might affect thought (and wider human existence). The various, and relatively new, traditions

that belong under the new materialist title and that are mentioned above push back on this view, seeking to argue that we can in fact understand the role that objects play in the world apart from subjects and, further, that to understand subjectivity and the social at all, we need to understand the role that the objective world plays in its construction. In fact, Bruno Latour has argued explicitly that objects are the "missing masses" in social explanation (Latour 1992).

Materialism old and new

Such a materialist decentering of the human subject and human agency is, in itself, not what makes the materialism of "new materialism" new, as materialist critiques of such views that center the subject are much older than, and serve to ground, this emerging new materialist tradition. We can think here of the (partial) Marxist critique of the view of the subject the primary agent in history wherein the self, subjectivity, and the social are produced and reproduced by material social and economic structures that pre-exist any one individual and, as such determine to a large degree, the possibilities, choices, and awareness of persons. The Marxist Base/Superstructure model helps define this view. In this model, the non-economic "ideological" structures of society are determined by the material base of the means and relations of production—that is, the factories, machines, and labor and exchange practices as they exist at a given time (see, for instance, Williams 1973 for a classic explanation of this). In this model, our individual awareness, beliefs, and abilities are structured by this economic base as it exists at a given time, and those beliefs and abilities also structure and are structured by the larger set of social relations that are produced by the material economic base in order that it reproduce itself. So here, the agency of individuals is subordinated to the material processes in which they find themselves. Two especially condensed examples of this in Marx's own work can be found in his *Theses on Feuerbach* and *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* wherein, in the former, Marx notes, against Feuerbach and the left Hegelians of his time, that "the human essence" is not something that is wholly interior to a given subject or individual, or something that exists apart from the material social, historical, and economic spaces and practices within which one finds themselves, but rather it is—at least partially—the interiorized product of what Marx calls there the external "ensemble of social relations" (Marx 2000a, 2000b: 172).

As mentioned, the social relations Marx refers to here are the material, economic, and labor practices and traditions that structure one's existence and determine one's place in the social structure as well as the set of choices available to one and so, limit one's freedom. These are the particular combination of the base and superstructure that exist in a given moment. In *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, Marx makes the same point in the famous and often quoted lines where he says, "Men make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please, they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given, and transmitted from the past" (Marx 2000a, 2000b: 328). Again, here Marx is pointing out that human freedom is situated and structured by history and context. That such freedom is not free from determination by external and material social relations. The "matter" of history and social structure intervenes and decenters—or at least constrains—the agency of the individual. Though some versions of thought that fall under the new materialism take this materialist thinking on board and extend it—many of those that fall broadly under Coole and Frost's categories of Biopolitical, and Critical Materialist thinking for instance—some also remain critical—some of those that fall under the Coole and Frost category of ontology—of the kind of Marxist materialism described above. As an example of the latter, we can think of the materialist ontology of Bruno Latour, who is counted among the new materialists and whose Actor-Network Theory (ANT) forms the partial basis of the work of other new

materialists (Latour 1996). Latour is critical of certain types Marxist-inflected materialist critical theory insofar as he thinks that it does not really, even in its analysis of the material world and its structures and its objects, get to the objects themselves but is rather concerned with the role those objects play for us, in our interpretation of them, and our use of them (see, Latour 2004).

Other new materialists, however, retain the core of the Marxist view but, in many ways, take it even further. In each of its versions and in different ways, the materialism of the new materialists further demotes the role of the human and of human freedom, decentering it even more and to the point that, for many of these thinkers, the human and human subjectivity is just one thing among a whole host of other "objects" that sometimes has its own agency and is sometimes the effect of the agency of other objects and structures (some socially generated and determined in the sense that Marx has in mind in his concept of the "social relations" that are determinative in his view of individual subjectivity, some not socially generated and simply environmental). The further point that many new materialists want to make here is that matter itself is dynamic, not fully determined or inert, but rather open, shifting, and changing as the various ways in which it is combined and interacts with other matter shifts and changes throughout time. This is why some new materialists think of matter as "vital" and think of their materialist analysis as a "vital materialism."

Vital materialism

We can see this in the work of prominent feminist new materialist thinkers such as Karen Barad, Elizabeth Grosz, Jane Bennett, Sarah Ahmed, Diana Coole, and Rosi Braidotti. Bennett and Braidotti, for instance, draw on a range of thinkers that include Latour, Deleuze and Guattari, Donna Haraway, Baruch Spinoza, Michele Foucault, and others in building their materialist philosophies in ways that reflect the understanding of a kind of agency that is unmoored from the human subject and found across various components in a given situation or, in more Deleuzian and Guattarian language, a given assemblage (Braidotti 2012). Karen Barad does this also though they do not draw as much from Deleuze and Guattari (though Barad's view is consistent with those who make more explicit use of Deleuze) and also because Barad works in the space of feminist science studies and physics, they also draw on work by Niels Bohr in building their theoretical edifice (Barad 2003). I will say a little more about some of these thinkers and their views before moving on to discussing a few others.

Rosi Braidotti traces the lineage of her brand of new materialism through the work of Judith Butler, back to its beginnings in the Marxist materialist tradition mentioned above, and into the quasi-structuralist re-reading of Marx through Althusser and his school via Lacan and Spinoza and especially in the late Althusserian conception of "aleatory materialism" (Braidotti 2012). It should be note here also, that Coole and Frost trace the partial lineage of this line of new materialist thinking to Althusser also (Coole and Frost 2010). As Braidotti notes, the Althusserian school began to understand that "contemporary materialism had to be redefined in the light of recent scientific insights, notably psychoanalysis, but also in terms of the critical inquiry into the mutations of advanced capitalism" (ibid.: 20). The theoretical tools that emerge in this line of thinking, for instance, that subjective awareness is not just the product, as in the classically Marxist sense mentioned above, of the economic situation and the relations of production that are built over time by capitalism but also appeal to the embeddedness of the subject in the material world of wider-than-economic relations. Of course, as we have seen, the traditional Marxist understanding of the subject also recognizes this, but the difference in the Althusserian school's interpretation is that those extra-economic relations and conditions are not to be seen as merely superstructural and predicated the more material base of economic and labor relations. Those

things become, in Althusser's view, also part of the material base (Althusser 2005). This emerges, in part, out of his reading of the production individual subjects and the larger social structure in relation to the Lacanian concept of "overdetermination" where, in any given moment, the institutions that exist, and the subjects that attend those, are interpellated in the ways that they are as a result of a host of material determining forces beyond and above those that exist in the classically understood base of the means and relations of production (ibid.).

The recognition here is that the subject's identity and awareness are the product of a whole host of material and historical relations that go beyond traditional Marxist analysis. The Althusserian view here is then that the determination of the subject (and of subjective awareness) "in the last instance" by the economic and the classic conception of the "relations of production" often never arrives, and that such determination takes place by other, equally material means; namely institutions, traditions, and social practices that the more standard Marxist theory takes to be the non-material ideological structures of society (Althusser 2005). Althusser and his followers take those to also be very real, material producers and reproducers of a given set of social relations (and of individual subjective awareness) that work alongside the relations of production and the means of production. So here there is a kind of irreducibility to be found in a given social and subjective formation insofar as it is overdetermined by a host of material causes that congeal in a given time. In a late essay, speaking of this irreducibility, Althusser likens materialist philosophical analysis to jumping on a moving train without knowing the train's origin or where it is headed, referring precisely to this irreducibility of a given social formation (Althusser 2006: 290–291).

Foucault and Deleuze, as Braidotti notes, each in their own ways, build on this kind of analysis. For Foucault, relations of power which are diffuse and spread across various aspects of a given socio-historical situation mark and construct the subject and the social insofar as the subject's material body is always part of, and subjected to, the materiality of the situation. Deleuze and Guattari transform the Foucauldian critique of the role of power into an analysis of the ways in which subjective desire itself is constructed—or "assembled" in their terminology—through a host of forces that are distributed across a variety of "actors"—some human, some not—in a given moment and in such a way that those actors, much like in the Latourian account, have a status as agents insofar as they do part of the work of assembling subjectivity in particular ways, at particular times (Deleuze and Guattari 1987).

For Braidotti, a certain strand of Feminism contributes to, and also builds upon the foundations of this form of new materialist thinking. She cites Simone De Beauvoir as one of these contributors arguing that her particular combination of a "phenomenological theory of embodiment with Marxist—and later on poststructuralist—re-elaborations of the complex intersections between bodies and power" which as she goes on to argue, "goes even further than mainstream continental philosophy in rejecting the dualistic partitions of minds from bodies or nature from culture" (Braidotti 2012: 21). What Braidotti finds in De Beauvoir and others (such as Luce Irigary) in this vein of Feminism is an intersection with the idea coming from the Althusserian/Foucauldian/Deleuzian line of thinking she reconstructs, wherein material power is diffuse across a given social form and critically, and does not only constrain individuals and groups—though it does do this—but also constructs them in particular ways. Adding to this, the Deleuzian-Spinozist thesis of a kind fundamental ontological monism, this particular strand of Feminist thinking, especially around difference, and specifically, sexual difference becomes, according to Braidotti, a critical piece of feminist new materialist thinking:

> The notion of the univocity of being or single matter positions difference as a verb or a
> process of becoming at the heart of the matter. There are only variations or modulations

of space and time within a common block so it is all about patterns of repetition and difference … sexual difference in particular poses the question of the conditions of the possibility for thought as a self-originating system of representations of itself as the ultimate presence. Thus, sexual difference produces subjectivity.

(Ibid.: 29)

Braidotti points here to the idea that sexual difference itself (and this subjectivity by connection) is not fixed, nor is it eternal- it is rather the result of the complex process of production generated in and out of the particular ways in which bodies—social bodies, individual bodies, human bodies, natural bodies, etc.—interact and congeal in a particular place at a particular time and are expressed in that organization at that moment. So here, particular versions of gendered social and cultural norms are only such expressions, but they can tell us a lot about the gendered body and its experiences—these expressions though, are also not eternal nor immutable and this gives us the ability to see oppressive norms around sex and gender as also contingent and changeable. She continues, speaking of her particular brand of new materialist "nomadism":

> The starting point for most feminist redefinitions of subjectivity is a new form of materialism that develops the notion of corporeal materiality by emphasizing the embodied and therefore sexually differentiated structures of the speaking subject. Consequently, rethinking the bodily roots of subjectivity is the starting point for the epistemological project of nomadism. The body, or the embodiment of the subject is to be understood as neither a biological nor a sociological category, but rather a point of overlap between the physical, the symbolic, and the sociological … The body refers to the materialist, but also the vitalist groundings of human subjectivity and to the specifically human capacity to both be grounded and to flow and thus to transcend the very variables—class, race, sex, gender, age, disability—which structure us. It rests on a post-identitarian view of what constitutes the subject … a nomadic vision of the body defines it as multi-functional and complex, as a transformer of flows and energies, affects desires and imaginings.
>
> *(Ibid.: 33)*

Here then, the body is the intersection-point of these material forces. It is neither fixed, nor transcendent, it is a site upon which these processes take place. Here we can see the non-anthropocentric nature of this view- there are many "agents" in operation in our bodily interpellation. Some are human and human generated, some are not. And the body then is, as Braidotti argues, the "intensive and dynamic entity" that is a part of this larger material flow "that is stable enough to sustain and undergo constant, though non-destructive fluxes of transformation" that radiate from the agglomeration of expressive forces coursing through existence at all levels, human and non-human, objective and subjective (Braidotti 2006: 201).

Jane Bennett offers another take on this type of new materialist thinking in her conception of a vital materialism of things. Instead of focusing, as in Braidotti, on bodies and their production in an out of material flows and forces, Bennett looks to what she, hewing closer to Latour—but also relying on Deleuze and Spinoza—takes to be the agency of things and the ways in which they are active and "agental" as a part of a larger "congregant" or "confederate" assemblage (Bennett 2010: 42). Her argument here is not so much that things in themselves have agency alone, but that agency is "enacted" in an assemblage of the human and the non-human in a given situation. Agency is for Bennett, "distributed" across multiple Latourian actants and

emerges in the movement of the assemblage of those actants. Bennett describes the agency of non-human actants in this way:

> By actant I mean an entity or a process that makes a difference to the direction of a larger assemblage without that difference being reducible to an efficient cause; actants collaborate, divert, vitalize, gum up, twist, or turn the groupings in which they participate.
>
> *(Bennett 2012: 149)*

She draws also, as just noted, on Deleuze and Guattari's conception of an assemblage described here as an "ad hoc grouping of diverse elements," a complex, and "living, throbbing confederation" of bodies, energies, and forces that become active in their association (Bennett 2012: 23–24). Bennett also looks to Spinoza for help in describing the theory of material assemblages she is working out.

Here it is not only Spinoza's monism that Bennett is interested in but also his suggestion that all things have a "conatus" (Spinoza 1992). That is, they strive to increase their active abilities and powers. For Spinoza, as Bennett notes here, one of the primary ways that this conatus is expressed is in associating together with other things, as that association is precisely what increases power and activity: "while the smallest or simplest body or bit may indeed express a vital impetus, conatus or *clinamen*, an actant never really acts alone. Its efficacy or agency always depends on the collaboration, cooperation, or interactive interference of many bodies and forces" (ibid.: 21). So a body's power is enhanced when it "collaborates with" other bodies in what Bennett calls a "heterogeneous assemblage" (ibid.: 23). On this view then, agency itself is not owned by one thing or "actant" but rather it is produced—or "assembled"—in this associative process:

> What this suggests for the concept of agency is that the efficacy or effectivity to which that term has traditionally referred becomes distributed across an ontologically heterogeneous field rather than being a capacity localized in a human body or in a collective produced (only) by human efforts.
>
> *(Ibid.)*

The main idea here being that if we want to really understand agency, we need to look to these assemblages in order to see its emergence in them. It exists out there, in the material assemblage, rather inside a human body alone. We should be careful to note that this is not to say that humans are not agents in Bennett's view, though they of course are, they are just not the only agents, and sometimes, they may not be the most important agents in a given assemblage. Bennett's work, perhaps more than any other of the New Materialists—outside of Latour—has had a fairly important impact across disciplinary boundaries. It has been analyzed and made use of, in a variety of social sciences, from education, to political theory, to geography (which was already amenable to assemblage theory), and others and so is perhaps one of the more important of the new materialist theories (see, for instance, Whatmore 2006; Anderson and Kearnes 2012).

Speculative realism

The other main theoretical movement that fits under the moniker of new materialism, is, as pointed out at the outset, often called Speculative Realism. Again, like the thinkers and theories grouped above, there is not total agreement among those that claim the speculative Realist title

as to all of the features that belong to this movement but there is a commitment to the reality of objects and their relations beyond their correlation with human consciousness. There is also a shared movement away from the corellationist view as a result. In this way, many thinkers that consider themselves Speculative Realists, take Meillasoux's work here as their starting point even when they are disagreeing with portions of it. Speculative Realism also has a more narrow audience than the work of other new materialists discussed above (except for maybe the work of Graham Harman and his Object-Oriented Ontology) as it is primarily a movement in the discipline of philosophy.

Speculative Realism includes too many thinkers to fully explore here, a few of which are as already mentioned, Graham Harman, but also Levi Bryant, Nick Srnicek, Ian Hamilton Grant, Ray Brassier, Isabelle Stengers, Steven Shaviro, among others. Each of these thinkers in their own ways develops a philosophy of objects and objective realism via the category of the speculative and often in connection with realist accounts of the world and its objects emerging from the sciences. Meillasoux himself, for instance, argues against corellationism by pointing to what we know scientifically about the world apart from, and prior to, human experience. Here he refers to things like modern scientific techniques for dating material objects (Meillasoux 2008 9–10). And Ray Brassier's work engages—both from a critical and a positive perspective—neuroscience and scientific realism (Brassier 2007).

Harman's realism takes its starting point from an insight provided by Heideggerian phenomenology. He makes use of Heidegger's distinction between our experience of objects (and our wider world) as being "ready-to-hand" in our everyday dealings with the world, and the projects that we are concerned with and those objects becoming "present-to-hand in the moments in which those projects break down or cease working (Heidegger 1962). In the former, material objects that are a part of those projects—think here of say, the computer for the project of the contemporary writer, or to use Heidegger's own example, the hammer for the carpenter— recede from our awareness as individual objects- they become part of the scene and meaning-making activity of the project itself (the writing, the hammering, etc.). But, if for instance, the hammer breaks as I am using it, or one of the keys on my computer sticks as I am trying to write on it, it interrupts the meaning-making activity of the project such that the object (the hammer, the computer) shows up again for me as a thing—as "present-to-hand—disconnected from the project and the meaning it once had (ibid.: 98–99). For Heidegger, this breakdown is a problem to be solved (when our projects break down in these ways, it can lead to meaninglessness, and existential crises). For Harman, there is a different lesson here. These moments are existential experiences of the depth and separateness of the objective world from their entanglement in our consciousness and awareness. This is, for Harman, the first step in acknowledging the "subterranean reality" of objects beyond their correlation with thought (Harman 2012: 186). Harman continues here:

> Object-oriented philosophy pushes this another step further by saying that objects distort one another even in sheer causal interaction. The raindrops or breezes that strike the hammer may not be "conscious" of it in human fashion, yet such entities fail to exhaust the reality of the hammer to no less degree that human praxis or theory.
>
> *(186–187)*

The point here, as Harman goes on to argue is that each of these interactions—breakdowns between human relations to objects, object's relations with one another—show us the limits of our phenomenal knowledge of them. They show us that there is more to objects than what can be gleaned of them in thought. Further, Harman argues that this also points to a "conflict

between real objects and their sensual qualities" (ibid.). Using Heidegger's Hammer example again, Harman continues:

> The broken hammer alludes to the inscrutable reality of hammer-being lying behind the accessible theoretical, practical, or perceptual qualities of the hammer. The reason for calling this relation one of allusion is that it can only hint at the reality of the hammer without ever making it directly present to the mind … This deeply non-relational conception of the reality of things is the heart of object-oriented philosophy.
>
> *(Ibid.)*

In this way then, we only ever have access to the depth of these objects, via their being alluded to in ways that allow us to speculate about their existence and piece them together through such oblique references to what they are not—i.e., they are not (or at least not wholly) their sensuous qualities, they are not (or again, not wholly) their interactions with other objects. For Harman, Object-Oriented philosophy offers us not a "naïve realism," but rather "a weird realism in which real individual objects resist all forms of causal or cognitive mastery" (188). As noted at the beginning of this section on Speculative Realism, Harman's is but one way of making sense of the reassertion of the distinction between concept and object that is at the core of the realist project here. Other thinkers in this new tradition have different ways of working this reassertion out.

Ian Hamilton Grant, in an essay written as a partial response to Harman argues that Harman's view could go further still (Grant 2011). That when speculating about objects through such allusion as Harman recommends, what we come to see is that objects themselves depend on sets of "conditions" for their existence above and beyond our experience of them (and their interaction with other objects), those conditions then, in Grant's view "do not belong to the object—they are not "its" conditions, but rather conditions that "possibilize" it" (43). As an example, Grant points out that "the causes of mountain formation are also the causes of geogony, of ideation, of animals, of fever-dreams, and of telecommunications" (ibid.). What he means here is that all of those things, though they are separate and separable, exist because of a set of conditions, that make them collectively possible at the same time, in this world. So those conditions themselves are, for Grant, more foundational than the objects that they possibilize and also exist apart from human cognition- so they also are separable in the way that objects and concepts are in Harman's view. These conditions then are more than ideal. Grant calls such conditions "powers" and argues that they "are natural history in the precise sense that powers are not simply formally or logically inseparable from what they do, but they are what they do, and compose being in its becoming" (46). His point here is simply that it is not, in his view, only objects themselves that are real in the sense that Harman claims, but so are the processes and interactions that make them possible.

Conclusion

As can be seen by the short snapshot of the broad and multitudinous line of thinking, the theoretical movements that make up this emerging New Materialist tradition are both united in their shared rejection of the centering of the human and human agency, and also the idea that we cannot get beyond the intertwining of the objective world with thought. They offer a diversity of ways of thinking through this return to the objective and the spreading of agency out, across assemblages of human and non-human entities and objects. We can see the ways in which this tradition also offers new ways of thinking the self and the social, the ontological and the

political, and the ethical and ecological as a result. We can also see here how these movements are connected and rooted in longer-standing materialist traditions in the humanities and social sciences as well as the ways in which they attempt to build and transform them.

References

Althusser, L. (2005) *For Marx*. New York and London: Verso.

Althusser, L. (2006) *Philosophy of the Encounter: Later Writings 1978–1987*. New York and London: Verso

Anderson, B. and M. Kearnes (2012) "On Assemblages in Geography." *Dialogues in Human Geography*. Vol. 2, No. 2. 171–189.

Barad, K. (2003) "Posthumanist Performativity: Toward an Understanding of How Matter Comes to Matter." *Signs* Vol. 28, No. 3. 801–831.

Bennett, J. (2012) "Systems and Things: A Response to Graham Harmon and Timothy Morton." *New Literary History*. Vol. 43. No. 2. 225–233.

Bennett, J. (2010) *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things*. Durham and London: Duke University Press.

Brassier, Ray (2007) *Nihil Unbound: Enlightenment and Extinction*. New York: Palgrave.

Bryant, L., N. Srnicek, and G. Harman (eds.) (2011) *The Speculative Turn: Continental Materialism and Realism*. Melbourne: re.press.

Braidotti, R. (2006) "Post-Human, All Too Human: Toward a New Process Ontology." *Theory, Culture, and Society*. Vol 23, No. 7–8. 197–208.

———. (2012) "Interview with Rosi Braidotti" in Dolphin, R. and I. van der Tuin (eds.) (2010) *New Materialism: Interviews and Cartographies*. Ann Arbor: Open Humanities Press.

Coole, D. and S. Frost (eds.) (2010) *New Materialisms: Ontology, Agency, and Politics*. London and Durham: Duke University Press.

Deleuze, G. and F. Guattari (1987) *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Dolphin, R. and I. van der Tuin (eds.) (2010) *New Materialism: Interviews and Cartographies*. Ann Arbor: Open Humanities Press.

Grant, Ian Hamilton Grant. (2011) "Missing Conditions: A Response to Harman" in Bryant, L., N. Srnicek, and G. Harman (eds.) *The Speculative Turn: Continental Materialism and Realism*. Melbourne: re.press.

Harman, G. (2012) "The Well-Wrought Broken Hammer: Object-Oriented Literary Criticism." *New Literary History*. Vol 43. No. 2. 183–203.

Heidegger, M. (1962) *Being and Time* (translated by John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson). New York: Harper Collins.

Latour, B. (1992) "Where are the Missing Masses? A Sociology of a Few Mundane Artifacts." In Wiebe Bijker and John Law (eds.). Cambridge Mass: MIT Press, pp. 225–259.

———. (1996) "On Actor Network Theory: A Few Clarifications." *Soziale Welt*. Vol. 47, No. 4. 369–381.

———. (2004) "Why Has Critique Run out of Steam? From matters of Fact to Matters of Concern." *Critical Inquiry*. Vol. 30, No. 2. 225–248.

Marx, K. (2000a) "Theses on Feuerbach." In David McLellan (ed.), *Karl Marx: Selected Writings*, 2nd edn. Oxford: Oxford UP.

———. (2000b) "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte." In David McLellan (ed.), *Karl Marx: Selected Writings*, 2nd edn. Oxford: Oxford UP.

Meillasoux, Q. (2008) *After Finitude: An Essay on the Necessity of Contingency*. New York and London: Continuum.

Pitts-Taylor, Victoria (ed.) (2016) *Mattering: Feminism, Science, and Materialism*. New York and London: New York University Press.

Spinoza, B. (1992) *The Ethics, TIE, and Selected Letters* (translated by Sam Shirley). Indianapolis and Cambridge: Hackett.

Watson, J. (2013) "Eco-Sensibilities: An Interview with Jane Bennett." *Minnesota Review* Vol. 81. 147–158.

Whatmore, S. (2006) "Materialist Returns: Practising Cultural Geography in and for a More-than-Human World." *Cultural Geographies*. No. 13. 600–609.

47

Political theology

Saul Newman

Political theology is a burgeoning field of academic scholarship. Yet, as a concept, it is notoriously difficult to define. In broad terms, it refers to the relationship between theology and politics, particularly the way in which ideas, categories, symbols, rituals, and practices that derive from theological sources – in a number of different religious traditions – have informed, and continue to inform, ways of thinking about and practising politics, even, and especially, in our modern secular age (see Taylor 2007). Indeed, secularism – another 'essentially contested' concept (see Asad 2003) – is the social condition that gives political theology its meaning and significance. In other words, the long process of secularization that has defined the history of European modernity – the institutional separation of the religious and political spheres and the consignment of religion to the more modest realm of private belief – can also be understood in terms of the translation of theological ideas into secular institutions and practices, in such a way that they continue to leave their trace on our political experience (see Lefort 2006). In this sense, political theology is a certain way of understanding not only secularism but also what has come to be known as the post-secular condition (de Vries and Sullivan 2006; Habermas 2008), characterized by the 'return' of religion in contemporary societies and its implications for the public sphere and the democratic way of life.

The question of the interconnection(s) between the theological and the political has been approached from a wide range of perspectives, often yielding very different conclusions about the nature of this relationship. Political theology spans a whole series of discussions in social and political theory, continental philosophy, and theology about the theological origins and underpinnings of modern political institutions (Kahn 2011), the role of religion in contemporary political discourse and public life, the idea of civil religions (see Bellah 1967), arcane debates in twentieth-century German jurisprudence (Schmitt 2005), the philosophy of religion and the history of consciousness (Löwith 1949; Blumenberg 1985), historical studies of medieval and early modern conceptions of sovereignty (Kantorowicz 1997) and investigations into the politico-theological controversies in Christianity, Judaism, and Islam, along with other religions (see Cavanaugh and Scott 2019). There is political theology done by theologians and religious scholars (see Hovey and Phillips 2015) and there is political theology done by political and social theorists (see Losonczi and Singh 2010; Esposito 2015) – and often what seems like a resounding non-dialogue between them.

This diversity of approaches notwithstanding, we can say that political theology is a way of thinking about the place of the sacred in contemporary politics – whether this is understood in terms of the ongoing influence of religious discourses and institutions in public life, or as the structural void or 'empty place' left vacant by the collapse of the theological world and the assimilation of theological concepts into modern secular political ideas like sovereignty, democracy and the nation state (Newman 2019). In particular, political theology is a way of coming to terms with the problem of political legitimacy – that is, the terms in which our political institutions can continue to justify themselves. Political theology provides a certain language – often lacking in political theory, particularly analytical political theory – to grasp different modes of secular political experience and discourse that are often, in an oblique way, theologically inflected.

History of the concept

The origins of the term political theology derive from pre-Christian antiquity. The Roman scholar Marcus Terentius Varro drew a distinction between what he called *theologia civilis* (or *politika*), on the one hand, and *theologia mythica* and *theologia naturalis*, on the other; in other words, between civic or political religion – the cult images which formed the founding myths and religions of Rome and which therefore had a *political* function – and mythical and natural religions. The term appears again, much later and in a very different context, in Benedict de Spinoza's (2007) *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*, which was written amid the religious conflicts of the seventeenth century. There is the attempt to separate philosophy, as a space of reason and free enquiry, from religious faith and scriptural determination, which often led to superstition and blind obedience (see Strauss 1982). This separation, Spinoza argued, should be preserved by the state and protected from intrusion by fanatical clergy. Yet, while his thinking points toward a form of separation between religion and politics, church and state, Spinoza nevertheless acknowledged the political utility of religion in promoting allegiance to the state.

In the nineteenth century, we find the term re-emerging in the most unexpected of ways. The Russian anarchist, Mikhail Bakunin, used it as a term of abuse against the Italian statesman Guiseppe Mazzini, whom he reproached for illegitimately mixing together religion and politics. According to Bakunin, Mazzini's republicanism and his revolutionary role in the formation of the Italian state was marred by his Christianity and religious idealism. In the eyes of Bakunin, Mazzini had fallen victim to a theological abstraction that led him to turn against the cause of human emancipation and revolutionary socialism. Thus, Bakunin charged Mazzini with being a 'political theologian' and the 'last high priest of religious, metaphysical, and political idealism which is disappearing' (Bakunin 1871). Bakunin's atheistic assault on political theology – that is, on the close relationship between religion and politics and between the church and state, as well as on all transcendental and idealist philosophies that were for him a disguised form of theology (see also Bakunin 1882) – serves as the critical point of departure for the figure with whom the concept of political theology is today almost irretrievably associated.

Carl Schmitt's *Political Theology* I and II

The German jurist and political theorist Carl Schmitt wrote his now famous text, *Politische Theologie,* in 1922 (2005) amidst the turmoil and political instability of the Weimar Republic, and it can be read as a response to the problem of political legitimacy. For Schmitt, this instability was indicative of the deeper crisis of modernity, in which atheism, capitalism, revolutionary politics, technology, and materialist philosophies of immanence all worked to neutralize the political domain and to deny modern societies a place of transcendence once provided by religion (see

Schmitt 2007a). Indeed, the constitutional liberal state was itself an embodiment of this nihilism and loss of political meaning – it had become, in the eyes of Schmitt, a mere administrative machine without genuine political substance and without a transcendent dimension that would act as a point of legitimacy for public order. What was missing in the modern age was the 'spirit' of sovereignty that was essential to any genuine political order. It was this conclusion that led Schmitt to affirm an authoritarian and 'decisionist' account of sovereignty and which explains, at least in part, his attraction to Nazism some years later.

Schmitt's concern is to understand the conditions of secularism and the threat it poses to politics, as well as to find new sources of political authority and legitimacy. As a 'student of Weber', Schmitt accepted the secularization hypothesis, although rejected its liberal conclusions. Schmitt's (2005: 36) own version of the secularization thesis is summarized in the following oft-quoted passage:

> All significant concepts of the modern theory of the state are secularized theological concepts not only because of their historical development – in which they were transferred from theology to the theory of the state, whereby, for example, the omnipotent God became the omnipotent lawgiver – but also because of their systematic structure, the recognition of which is necessary for a sociological consideration of these concepts. The exception in jurisprudence is analogous to the miracle in theology.

Schmitt proposes a 'sociology' of political and juristic concepts based on a series of analogies with theological categories. He draws a structural parallel between the absolute authority of God and the absolute authority of the sovereign; similarly, the state of exception – in which the legal constitution is suspended by the sovereign's decision – is akin to the God's miracle that suspends the laws of nature. By highlighting these structural analogies, Schmitt is not so much reflecting on the persistence of religion in politics, but rather pointing to the place of transcendence left vacant by the collapse of the theological world in the sixteenth century and the way that secular political concepts of the state have subsequently struggled to fill this void. Once again, religion and theology are present in modernity precisely in the form of their absence – an absence that nevertheless leaves an indelible trace on our political experience. As theological authority diminishes, there are a series of displacements and substitutions of its conceptual categories, which find their way into the historical understanding of sovereignty and create a place of transcendence that allows a political order to be instituted. Thus, in the seventeenth century – in the age of deism, in which natural law supplanted the miracle – it was still possible to think of God as the sovereign architect of the world; Hobbes's Leviathan was after all a 'mortal god'. And even in the eighteenth century, the age of Enlightenment rationalism, one finds theological ideas creeping into, for instance, Rousseau's divine-like Legislator. However, this way of thinking becomes increasingly impossible in the nineteenth century, which Schmitt characterizes as the age of immanence, where the world comes to coincide entirely with itself and there is no longer space for transcendence, in either a theological or political sense. Thus, in the modern concept of democracy, in which the division between ruler and ruled is eclipsed, as well as with modern liberal concepts of the state, in which the sovereign coincides absolutely with the state and the state coincides absolutely with the law, the traditional idea of the sovereign as standing above society becomes untenable.

However, Schmitt is doing more here than simply diagnosing a problem. He is offering a solution – the state of exception – whereby the sovereign exerts its authority by suspending the constitutional order and declaring a state of emergency in response to an existential threat to the state. For Schmitt, this unilateral authority – this right to decide in exceptional situations – is at the very heart of the concept of sovereignty: 'Sovereign is he who decides on the exception'

(2005: 5). In other words, sovereignty, as a juristic concept, always inhabits the position of exception in relation to the norm – the normal legal order which it exceeds and, in exceeding it, also founds and determines it. The exception can never be wholly accounted for by the norm, nor can it be seen as deriving from it. This paradoxical logic emerges as part of Schmitt's critique of liberal constitutionalism, which sought to rein in the sovereign exception through the rule of law; and, more specifically, in his debate with the neo-Kantian legal theorist, Hans Kelsen who sought to identify the state with the law and developed a theory of positive law as wholly derived from a self-contained, self-referential series norms with nothing outside it. The problem with these theories, according to Schmitt, was that in trying to rule out the exception, they failed to acknowledge the way in which legal norms and rules actually presuppose an exterior that grounds them, constitutes their limit and has the authority to apply them to specific situations; an authority to decide when and how a norm is applied. It is the sovereign exception that therefore guarantees the law. This is why, for Schmitt, the exception, while related to the legal rule, is nevertheless preeminent over it: 'The exception is more interesting than the rule. The rule proves nothing; the exception proves everything' (Schmitt 2005: 15).

Why is Schmitt so insistent that the sovereign has this exceptional authority? This is not only a juridical question but also an urgent political question, one that is in part answered, albeit it in an oblique way, in the later part of *Political Theology*. Here Schmitt discusses a series of counter-revolutionary Catholic legitimist figures like de Maistre, Bonald, and particularly Donoso Cortes. Cortes, writing, like Schmitt, in a time of political decadence in the wake of the 1848 revolutions, also claimed that sovereignty was necessarily absolutist, coming to the conclusion that the only way of preserving the purity and sanctity of the sovereign decision in the wake of the final collapse of the old monarchical order was dictatorship, something that Schmitt elsewhere endorsed as an alternative to parliamentary democracy (see Schmitt 2000). Like Schmitt, furthermore, Cortes had nothing but contempt for liberalism, seeing in it only the hypocrisy of the bourgeoisie and the inability to make decisions. Liberal politics was nothing but a debating chamber that postpones the decision, drowning it in endless deliberation and equivocation. Yet, it was in revolutionary anarchism that Cortes saw, and even admired, a true enemy. The anarchist, in his absolute rejection of God and the state, is the curious mirror image of the reactionary: both recognize that the state is an absolutist concept, one to affirm it, the other to abolish it (Schmitt 2005: 55). Furthermore, this absolutism on both sides was based on their diagrammatically opposed understandings of human nature: for the reactionary, man was inherently evil and corrupt, and therefore had to be reined in by a strong state; while, for the anarchist, man was inherently good and could therefore be trusted with freedom and self-government. So here we have a sort of politico-theological war between two kinds of 'extremisms': between a radical conservatism that affirms absolute sovereignty and a strong, authoritarian state; and an atheistic revolutionary anarchism that seeks to overthrow the state in the name of the materialism, nature and the immanence of life.

In Schmitt's (2007b) 'concept of the political', it is the existential struggle between 'friend' and 'enemy' that turns religious organizations into political organizations and religious conflicts into political conflicts. And yet this notion of the political has to rely in turn on a theological dimension for it to have consistency and intensity. In other words, the fact that the existential struggle that gives meaning to political life has to be couched in theological terms, as a kind of apocalyptic war in which everything is at stake, shows that 'the political' relies upon a theological supplement to give it shape. Indeed, as Heinrich Meier argues, the question of faith – faith in divine revelation – is central to Schmitt's theory of politics. Faith, and the obedience it commands, is what unites a political community and enjoins them to war and sacrifice (see Meier 1998: 76).

Schmitt's model of political theology, which was aimed at re-establishing political legitimacy through a theologically charged, authoritarian – and one could say *monotheistic* (see Gourgouris

2016) – account of sovereignty, was not without its critics. Political philosopher, Leo Strauss, for instance, pointed to the incommensurability between theology and political philosophy: while the former was a matter of faith in, and obedience to, the message of divine revelation, the latter was about free and rational enquiry into the collective conditions of existence (see Strauss (2006) in Meier). The Jewish philosopher, Jacob Taubes (2003), in whose thinking on St Paul we find an alternative, messianic horizon that allows a much more radical reading of theology, characterized Schmitt as the 'apocalyptic prophet of the counterrevolution', something that took on a terrible significance in the later context of the Nazi revolution which Schmitt supported. Both he and Schmitt were apocalyptic thinkers, but Schmitt thinks 'from above', whereas he (Taubes) thinks 'from the bottom up' (Taubes 2013: 13). Philosopher of history, Hans Blumenberg, who questioned the secularization thesis in favor of the radical novelty and self-assertion of the modern world, also questioned Schmitt's sovereign state of exception, an idea that he believed was out of step with the modern world. According to Blumenberg, Schmitt merely borrows out of date metaphors from an earlier theological language to justify his idiosyncratic version of sovereignty. Schmitt was therefore not so much a 'political theologian' but a political theorist making a rhetorical case and calling on theological images to affirm a strong sovereign.

Yet, perhaps the most serious critique of Schmitt came from Catholic theologian, Erik Peterson, who in his 1935 essay, 'Monotheism as a Political Problem' (Peterson 2011), sought to demonstrate the theological illegitimacy of political theology. Here he shows that any kind of analogy between earthly and divine sovereignty, such as Schmitt draws, is contradicted by early Christian theology. In particular, the idea of the triune God in the Trinitarian doctrine of Gregory of Nazianzus in the fourth century AD, contradicted the idea of a divine monarchy, at least one that could be translated into earthly terms. Therefore, the idea of a single sovereign ruler simply had no basis in theology. Moreover, the attempt within Christianity to use theological ideas to justify certain political formations could not be accepted on the basis of Christian eschatology. In this way, Peterson sought make political theology impossible by pointing out the illegitimacy of translating theological concepts into political concepts. The parallel Schmitt drew between metaphysical and political concepts – which depended on the idea of divine monarchy – was a Hellenistic translation of Jewish monotheism, and was thus more pagan than Christian: 'Only on the basis of Judaism and paganism can such a thing as "political theology" exist' (Peterson 2011: 105).

It was some of these criticisms that led Schmitt to respond in his very last work, *Political Theology II: The Myth of the Closure of Any Political Theology* [1970]. Here Schmitt accused Peterson of a fundamental misunderstanding of political theology. In hanging his whole critique on Eusebius' misuse of theology to legitimize the empire of Constantine the Great, Peterson mixes up what was essentially an intra-Christian struggle with a politico-theological relationship (Schmitt 2008: 64). Moreover, Peterson's critique of monotheism and its serving as the theological basis for monarchy, applied only to the monarch as an individual person, not to the idea of sovereignty as a *juridical* person, which is what Schmitt is principally interested in. As a *political* theologian, Schmitt wants to pull theology onto a political terrain. Indeed, he wants to show that even within theology itself, insofar as it was influenced by the old Gnostic dualist doctrine, there is an immanent *stasis* or conflict, which can become politicized (126). There can be no pure theology pitted against an impure politics. As for Blumenberg, to whose critique Schmitt devotes less attention, he accuses him of a kind of aggressive assertion of idea of modernity as constituting an absolute novelty and a radical break with the past that requires no legitimization beyond its own conditions. Once again, the problem, as far as Schmitt is concerned, is that in this new age of immanence and radical innovation, celebrated by Blumenberg, there is no space for transcendence and therefore no real grounds for legitimacy.

Political theology after Schmitt

While Schmitt's thought continues to serve as the point of departure for most investigations into political theology, subsequent approaches – within political theory, continental philosophy, and theology – have led to a significant broadening out of the concept. After the World War, and in the wake of Auschwitz and the Vatican's collusion with the Nazi regime, theologians – many of whom were inspired by the example of Lutheran pastor and anti-Nazi dissident Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who was executed in a concentration camp – put forward more radical interpretations.

The 'liberation theology' of Johann Baptist Metz (1998), as well as Latin American theologians like Leonardo Boff and Gustavo Gutiérrez (1998) drew on Marxist theory and the philosophy of the Frankfurt School to develop a form of political theology that spoke to movements of resistance, emancipation, and social justice, particularly in the Global South. German theologian Dorothee Sölle (1983) condemned fundamentalism and blind obedience as 'Christo-fascism' and questioned the notion of God as absolute and all-powerful – an idea that translated, she argued, into political oppression and authoritarianism. Thomas J. J. Altizer proposed a form of radical theology based on the idea of the 'death of God' in secular modernity, an event that freed Christian theology from obedience to the idea of divine authority and church doctrine (see Altizer 2012; see also Vattimo 2007: 27–47).

In taking account of the radical implications of secularism, Protestant theologian Jürgen Moltmann developed a form of eschatological Christian theology based on the idea of hope embodied in Christ's resurrection – one that was, at the same time, strongly influenced by critical social theory and theologies of liberation (Moltmann 1967). Moreover, in Moltmann's view, Schmitt's sovereign-centric political thinking was not really a political theology at all, in the sense that it had nothing to do with any genuine Christian theology. Rather, it was a *political religion*, that is, a religion of power, a way of justifying, using the garb of theology, an absolutist sovereign state. In opposition to Schmitt, Moltmann (1999) put forward a new kind of political theology that seeks a more public role for the church in resisting state domination and supporting secular movements for emancipation and racial, social, and environmental justice:

> So the aim of the new political theology is to strip the magic from political and civil religion, and to subject to criticism the state ideologies which are supposed to create unity at the cost of liberty. In this way it places itself in the history of the impact of Christianity on politics, which means the desacralization of the state, the relativization of forms of political order, and the democratization of political decisions.
>
> *(44)*

More recent interventions in radical political theology have sought to demonstrate its relevance to new social movements of emancipation and economic and racial justice, like Occupy and Black Lives Matter (see Miller 2019), being influenced by ideas of radical democracy (see Robbins 20111) and critical race theory (see Lloyd 2012). These new approaches tend to emphasize a theology of immanence rather than transcendence, and, although they go beyond a liberal paradigm of politics[1] and beyond conventional ideas of political representation and civic engagement, one could not imagine a form of political theology more different from Schmitt's. Indeed, to return to Schmitt's old foe, the anarchist, one can even refer to anarchistic forms of political theology that draw on both Jewish (see Martel 2012; Löwy 2017)[2] and Christian traditions (see Christoyannopoulos 2011). Philosopher and theologian, Jacques Ellul (1991) argues that, notwithstanding the anti-clericalism of early anarchist movements and ideologies, there are important resonances between Christianity and anarchism: if authority can only come God, then this

automatically de-delegitimizes any claim to authority by secular political institutions like the state, and releases us from our obligation to obey them. Christianity, if taken seriously, turns us into conscientious objectors to state authority and violence.

Central to what we might call the new political theology, in its various articulations, is therefore a different relationship between the theological and political. While Schmitt drew structural parallels between theological and political categories to justify an authoritarian form of state sovereignty, new political theologians tend to argue for a greater prominence of theology in politics, but in a way that is compatible with secular and democratic society and which works in solidarity with social justice movements. This reflects a long theological tradition of engagement with political issues and progressive causes such as the Civil Rights and anti-war movements – from Social Gospel in the US to prominent public theologians like Reinhold Niebuhr, John Howard Yoder, and Max Stackhouse. In arguing for a more active role for church organizations in public life, the new political theology can be characterized as a form of 'public theology' (see Cady 1993; Breitenberg 2003; Graham 2013; Kim and Day 2017).

Eco-political theology

Political theology has also taken an interest in environmental questions. Moltmann sought to incorporate ecological concerns into a theocentric – as opposed to anthropocentric – form of thinking: the earth is not man's property but God's, and while humans have stewardship of the earth, they do not have the sovereign right to exploit it irresponsibly and without regard to all its other non-human inhabitants (see Moltmann 1985). Moreover, this non-anthropocentric way of thinking also decentres the idea of a sovereign anthropomorphic and transcendent God. Rather, God should be seen as immanent within nature, as living within his own house and as part of his own creation. The emphasis of Moltmann's eco-theology is on our contingency and our entanglement with the earth and with natural ecosystems, upon which our survival depends, to which we therefore have obligations, and whose rights we must therefore respect. More recent approaches have drawn on elements of 'process theology' (see Cobb and Griffin 1979; Whitehead 1979) and the 'new materialism' or 'object-oriented-ontology' in continental philosophy (see Bennett 2009) in order to respond to the implications of the Anthropocene age and the environmental crisis. In emphasizing our immanent connectedness and entanglement with natural and non-human worlds, it often presents a pantheistic political theology that departs not only from Schmitt's anthropomorphic and transcendent way of thinking (see Keller 2015). Central here is the increasing awareness, brought on by the looming environmental crisis, of the common world we share with nature and with non-human life forms, such that we can no longer think of ourselves as autonomous individuals ontologically separated from these ecosystems. This is a realization that can inspire new forms of interspecies cooperation, and indeed new conceptions of political community (see Latour 2017).

Economic theology

An important development in scholarly debates on political theology has been the focus on the economy as a sphere of concepts, practices, and institutions that also have deep theological roots. In displacing Schmitt's sovereign-centric paradigm, *economic theology* seeks to understand the economy as a form of governance over life that often competes with the authority of the nation state, particularly in the time of global networked capitalism (see Newman 2019). Similar to the concerns of political theology, economic theology refers to a secularization of theological concepts. Max Weber famously pointed to the relationship between Protestant ascetic spirituality

and the values of profit accumulation, austerity, and the 'work ethic' found in modern capitalism which, he argued, were motivated by a sense of religious duty and calling rather than simply by greed or utilitarian considerations (see Weber 2001). More recently, philosopher Giorgio Agamben – in an attempt to displace, or at least supplement, Schmitt's transcendent sovereign-centric paradigm of political theology – has investigated the theological roots of liberal government based on ideas of the economy of salvation and God's providence (an idea we find in Adam Smith for instance). Tracing this back to the early church fathers in the second and third centuries, Agamben (2011) shows how the idea of a 'divine economy' developed as a way of defending Trinitarian doctrine and church orthodoxy against Gnostic and Arian heresies: here the ancient Greek concept of *oikonomia*, as the management or administration of the household (*oikos*), was translated in theological terms as the 'divine plan of salvation' and a 'mystery of the economy', and deployed as a way of explaining the idea that God could be both three persons and one at the same time. In Agamben's analysis, this introduces a kind of division within the order of both heavenly and earthly power, between a sovereign who 'reigns but does not govern' and a governmental-administrative machine that governs life in an immanent way through the economy.

Applying political theology today

This diversity of approaches to political theology suggests that the concept can be applied to an understanding of a broad range of phenomena in social and political life. I have shown that political theology refers, at one level, to the problem of political legitimacy – something the contemporary liberal secular order is experiencing an acute crisis of. When, for instance, religious fundamentalists demand a much closer integration of religious values with laws, or when right-wing nationalist populists demand a repatriation of powers from anonymous global networks and liberal elites in the name of the 'will of the people' and the idea of a homogeneous cultural identity, or when people generally express a distrust in political institutions and representative democracy, they are displaying, in one form or another, the desire for sovereignty, for some point of legitimacy that can ground the social order and give meaning to political life, even if this is largely illusory. This is a desire that emerges from what I have called the absent place of the sacred in secular societies that is the chief concern of political theology. This crisis of legitimacy has been accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic and its dramatic consequences for public health, the economy, and the future shape of democracies. Some commentators, including Agamben, have argued that with the extraordinary and arguably disproportionate restrictions imposed by democratic states to combat the virus, we are witnessing nothing less than the Schmittian state of exception, one that would have permanent effects on political life (see Agamben 2020).

On the other hand, the pandemic has also accelerated many countervailing tendencies that can be seen in the explosion of protests around the world, particularly in reaction to police violence, racial injustice, and the ecological crisis. Not only do movements such as Black Lives Matter reflect, in a different way, the crisis of political legitimacy but they also symbolize a new kind of intersection between the theological and the political. Church groups and religious organizations often take part in these protests – thus evoking a more public role for religion – and what are largely secular movements employ rituals, rhetoric, discourses, and symbols that derive from religion and theology (see Kidwell 2019). Particularly striking here is the theological language of the Apocalypse and the millenarian 'end of days' narrative employed by climate justice movements like Extinction Rebellion (XR). Here, political theology, in its more politically progressive form, can help us to apprehend the ways in which the line between the secular and the religious is often blurred, in productive ways, in contemporary social movements and forms of protest.

Political theology thus provides a language for understanding a diverse range of political and social experience, for which there is often no recourse from more familiar forms of political theory. In reflecting on the place of the sacred in political life, and in bringing theological ideas to bear on political institutions and practices – often in a critical way – political theology opens up a new horizon for political and social thought.

Notes

1. Coming from a different perspective, theologian and philosopher John Milbank has criticised liberalism and modern secular reason for its nihilistic 'positivism', developing an alternative radical Christian orthodoxy based on Augustinian theology (see Milbank 1990).
2. For a more extensive discussion of Jewish political theology, including from some of the more messianic and mystical traditions – represented by the thought of Franz Rosenzweig, Martin Buber, Gershom Scholem, Gustav Landauer and Walter Benjamin – see, for instance, Jacobson (2003), Rosenstock (2010) and Rashkover and Kavka (2013).

References

Agamben, G. (2011). *The Kingdom and the Glory: For a Theological Genealogy of Economy and Government*, trans. by Lorenzo Chiesa, Stanford Ca.: Stanford University Press.

Agamben, G. (2020). 'The Invention of an Epidemic' (February 26) *Quodlibet*, Available at: https://www.quodlibet.it/giorgio-agamben-l-invenzione-di-un-epidemia.

Altizer, T. J. J. (2012). *The Call to Radical Theology*, ed. by L. McCullough, New York: SUNY Press.

Asad, T. (2003). *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity*, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Bakunin, M. (1871). *The Political Theology of Mazzini and the International*, trans. by Sarah E. Holmes < http://wiki.libertarian-labyrinth.org/index.php?title=The_Political_Theology_of_Mazzini_and_the_International>.

Bakunin, M. (1882). *God and the State*, trans. by B. R. Tucker https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/michail-bakunin-god-and-the-state.

Bellah, R. N. (1967). 'Civil Religion in America', *Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences* 96 (1): 1–22.

Bennett, J (2009). *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things*, Durham NC: Duke University Press.

Blumenberg, H. (1985). *The Legitimacy of the Modern Age*, trans. by Robert M. Wallace, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Breitenberg, H. E. (2003). 'To Tell the Truth: Will the Real Public Theology Please Stand Up?', *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics* 23 (2): 55–96.

Cady, L. E. (1993). *Religion, Theology and American Public Life*, Albany, N.Y: SUNY Press.

Cavanaugh, W. T and Scott, P. M. (eds.). (2019) *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Political Theology, Second Edition*, New Jersey: Wiley.

Christoyannopoulos, A. (2011). *Christian Anarchism: a Political Commentary on the Gospel*, Exeter: Imprint Academic.

Cobb, J. B. and Griffin, D. R. (1979). *Process Theology: An Introductory Exposition*, Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press.

De Vries, H. and Sullivan, L. E. (eds.). (2006) *Political Theologies: Public Religions in a Post-Secular World*, New York: Fordham University Press.

Ellul, J. (1991). *Anarchy and Christianity*, trans. by Geoffrey Bromiley, Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.

Esposito, R. (2015). *Two: The Machine of Political Theology and the Place of Thought*, trans. by Z. Hanafi. New York: Fordham University Press.

Gourgouris, S. (2016). 'Political theology as Monarchical Thought', *Constellations* 23 (2): 145–159.

Graham, E. (2013). *Between a Rock and a Hard Place: Public Theology in a Post-secular Age*, London: SCM Press.

Gutiérrez, G. (1998). *A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics and Salvation*, 15th edn., Maryknowll, NY: Orbis Books.

Habermas, J. (2008). 'Notes on Post-Secular Society', *New Perspectives Quarterly* 25 (4): 17–29.

Hovey, C. and Phillips, E. (eds.) (2015). *The Cambridge Companion to Christian Political Theology*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Jacobson, E. (2003). *Metaphysics of the Profane: The Political Theology of Walter Benjamin and Gershom Scholem*, New York: Columbia University Press.

Kahn, P. W. (2011). *Political Theology: Four New Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty*, New York: Columbia University Press.

Kantorowicz, E. H. (1997). *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Keller, C. (2015). *Cloud of the Impossible: Negative Theology and Planetary Entanglement*, New York: Columbia University Press.

Kidwell, J. H. (2019). 'Re-enchanting Political Theology', *Religions* 10, 550: 1–14.

Kim, S. and Day, K. (ed.) (2017). *A Companion to Public Theology*, Leiden: Brill.

Latour, B. (2017). *Facing Gaia: Eight Lectures on the New Climatic Regime*, trans. by C. Porter, Cambridge: Polity Press.

Lefort, C. (2006). 'The Permanence of the Theologico-Political?' in *Political Theologies: Public Religions in a Post-Secular World*, ed. by H. De Vries and L. E. Sullivan, New York: Fordham University Press, 148–187.

Lloyd, V. (ed.) (2012). *Race and Political Theology*, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Losonczi, P. and Singh, A. (eds.) (2010). *From Political Theory to Political Theology: Religious Challenges and the Prospects of Democracy*, London and New York: Continuum.

Löwith, K. (1949). *Meaning in History*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Löwy, M. (2017). *Redemption and Utopia in Jewish Libertarian Thought in Central Europe: a Study in Elective Affinity*, London: Verso.

Martel, J. R. (2012) *Divine Violence: Walter Benjamin and the Eschatology of Sovereignty*, Abingdon, Oxon: Routlege.

Meier, H. (1998). *The Lesson of Carl Schmitt: Four Chapters on the Distinction between Political Theology and Political Philosophy*, trans. by Marcus Brainard, Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press.

Metz, J. B. (1998). *Passion for God: The Mystical Political Dimension of Christianity*, trans. by J. M. Ashley. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press.

Milbank, J. (1990). *Theology and Social Theory: Beyond Secular Reason*, Oxford: Blackwell.

Miller, J. E. (2019). *Resisting Hope: Secular Political Theology and Social Movements*, Abingdon: Palgrave Macmillan.

Moltmann, J. (1985) *God in Creation: An Ecological Doctrine of Creation: The Gifford Lectures, 1984–1985*, London: SCM Press.

Moltmann, J. (1999). *God for a Secular Society: The Public Relevance of Theology*, trans. by Kohl, M., London: SCM Press.

Newman, S. (2019). *Political Theology: a Critical Introduction*, Cambridge: Polity Press.

Peterson, E. (2011). *Theological Tractates*, ed. and trans. by M. J. Hollerich. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Rashkover, R. and Kavka, M. (2013) *Judaism, Liberalism and Political Theology*, Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Robbins, J. W. (2011). *Radical Democracy and Political Theology*, New York: Columbia University Press.

Rosenstock, B. (2010) *Philosophy and the Jewish Question: Mendelssohn, Rosenzweig and Beyond*, New York: Fordham University Press.

Schmitt, C. (2000). *The Crisis of Parliamentary Democracy*, trans. by E. Kennedy. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Schmitt, C. (2005). *Political Theology: Four Chapters on the Concept of Sovereignty*, trans. by George Schwab, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Schmitt, C. (2007a). 'The Age of Neutralizations and Depoliticizations', trans. by Matthias Konzett and John F. McCormick, in *The Concept of the Political*, trans. by George Schwab, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 80–96.

Schmitt, C. (2007b). *The Concept of the Political*, trans. by George Schwab, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Schmitt, C. (2008). *Political Theology II: The Myth of the Closure of Any Political Theology*, trans. by Michael Hoelzl and Graham Ward, Cambridge: Polity Press.

Sölle, D. (1983). *Beyond Mere Obedience*, Pilgrim Press.

Spinoza, B. (2007). *Theological-Political Treatise*, ed. by J. Israel, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Strauss, L. (1982). *Spinoza's Critique of Religion*, trans. by E. M. Sinclair. New York: Schocken Books.

Strauss, L. (2006). 'Reason and Revelation' (1948) in Meier, *Leo Strauss and the Theologico-Political Problem*, trans. by Marcus Brainard, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Taubes, J. (2003). *The Political Theology of Paul*, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Taubes, J. (2013). *To Carl Schmitt: Letters and Reflections*, trans. by K. Tribe, New York: Columbia University Press.

Taylor, C. (2007). *A Secular Age*, Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press.

Vattimo, G. (2007). 'Towards a nonreligious Christianity', in J. D. Caputo and G. Vattimo, *After the Death of God*, ed. By J. W. Robbins, New York: Columbia University Press, 27–47.

Weber, M. (2001). *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, trans.* by Talcott Parsons, London and New York: Routledge.

Whitehead, A.N. (1979). *Process and Reality*, ed. by D. R. Griffin and D. W. Sherburne, Macmillan USA.

48
Theories of violence

Larry Ray

Reflections on violence encounter fundamental questions about the nature of humanity, evil and the course of civilization. Many writers, but particularly anthropologists such as Jon Abbink (2000: xi) note that violence is a human universal and interpersonal aggression, physical threat, assault, homicide and armed conflict 'seem to have existed in all known human societies'. However, although violence has been addressed by a wide range of social and political theorists including Hobbes, Burke, Marx, Durkheim, Weber, Freud, Foucault, Giddens, Girard, Žižek and many others, it has not, at least until recently, been of central concern in social theory. Is violence integral and original in the human condition, albeit having been subject to a pacification process, or does it rather appear in exceptional times of crises of institutional governance, legality, civic trust and legitimate power? Is violence a means of organizing power or, as Hannah Arendt argued, antithetical to it? Randall Collins (2008) argues that contrary to a common misunderstanding of violence, especially perpetuated by its representation in popular media, that violence is easy, humans are actually 'hard wired for solidarity'. This makes violence difficult and requires overcoming inhibitions (Collins 2008: 27).

However, the multiple ways in which the term is used, generate confusion as to what it is and how it should be analyzed and explained. Violence can be interpersonal, collective, revolutionary, inter-state, exercised by state agents and private militias, directly physical or psychological, instrumental or expressive, symbolic and structural. There are broad and narrow definitions with different implications for how violence is understood. Is it possible to frame analysis and explanation to encompass these and other dimensions of the phenomena? Susanne Karstedt and Manuel Eisner (2009) remind us that Alasdair MacIntyre ironically asked whether a general theory of holes (those dug by children in the sand for amusement, holes dug by gardeners to plant lettuce seedlings, tank traps, holes made by road makers) was possible? The question was as absurd, he thought as asking for a general theory of violence. This chapter will not attempt to resolve these questions but notes that at present no integrated approach to violence exists. Rather, as Mary Jackman (2002) said, the literature is 'disjointed, and yet narrowly focused' on criminal violence, even if this has changed somewhat over the past two decades with works such as Malešević (2017), Ray (2018), Schinkel (2010) and Wieviorka (2009) that develop more integrated approaches. This chapter will, however, aim to clarify these questions. It is important to recognize though that violence is not textual or a philosophical concept but rather is visceral,

felt, embodied, traumatic and a grotesque violation of the self. It is also important to keep in mind that while most of the violence literature addresses human victims, animals are the prime targets of human violence, with around 70 billion killed globally each year for food alone (FAO 2020). Some theories point to deep connections between inter-human violence and that against other species.

Conceptualizing violence

There is a range of definitions of violence but what does seem clear is that violence is normatively negative: 'to call something "violent"' says Bäck (2004: 223) 'is often to give at least a prima facie reason why it is morally wrong' which means that perpetrators of both 'legitimate' and illegal violence will often appeal to normative justifications. Vittorio Bufacchi (2007) identifies two ways of thinking about violence – a narrow, 'minimalist' and a broader, 'comprehensive' conception. 'Minimalists' regard violence narrowly in terms of intentional physical force and 'bodily response and harm' while comprehensive conceptions include multiple, especially psychological harms and 'structural violence' that is built into unequal power relations (Bufacchi 2007: 23–25). Johan Galtung's (1969) concept of structural violence claims that physical and psychological harm results from exploitive and unjust social, political and economic systems that prevent people from realizing their potential. A further notable comprehensive concept is Pierre Bourdieu's 'symbolic violence' where individuals through their habitus and experience of the social world come to progressively regard its structures and constraints as taken-for-granted and in so doing act with 'tacit complicity' in their own oppression. This is not to say that symbolic domination is 'unreal' or neglects the materiality of violence, but is part of a labour of reproduction through language, institutions, culture and unconscious submission. In relation to patriarchy and gender domination, Bourdieu refers to 'symbolic force' as a 'form of power exerted on bodies' that enforces the compliance of women with a patriarchal symbolic order. Resistance to this and other forms of symbolic violence require radical transformation of the means of reproduction of domination (Bourdieu 2009: 339–342).

Conceiving violence broadly, as structures that limit life opportunities or Bourdieu's forms of distinction and cultural capital, loses focus on its more direct and interpersonal modes. Galtung has been criticized for 'making nonsense of the concept' by merging it with any form of frustration of human needs or indeed of misery (e.g. Keane 1996: 66). Similarly, Collins dismisses Bourdieu's concept as 'mere theoretical word play'. Violence, he argues is difficult and confrontational, most of us are not good at it, and it involves micro-situational processes engaging emotions of fear, tension and entrainment. 'Symbolic violence' by contrast is 'smooth, tension-free, non-confrontational' and without situational contingencies (Collins 2008: 24–25). Violence (as direct, intentional action) further needs to be distinguished from aggression and conflict, since most aggressive confrontations do not result in violence and we, therefore, need to understand the specific dynamics of those that do. These theorists advocate, as Keane (1996: 66–67) says, preserving an 'older and more precise meaning of violence' as 'unwanted physical interference … with the bodies of others, which are consequently made to suffer a series of effects ranging from shock, bruises, scratches, swelling or headaches to broken bones, heart attacks, loss of limbs or even death'. Violence in this view is a 'relational act' in which its object is treated 'not as a subject whose "otherness" is recognized and respected, but rather as a mere object' worthy of harm or death.

Bufacchi (2007) widens the concept from that of bodily harms, in at least two ways. Firstly, since 'harms' are difficult to define, he writes of the 'violation of integrity' of the body and self, which goes beyond physical harm and addresses the 'undoing of the self in trauma'. This further

entails humiliation, creating powerlessness and vulnerability. The consequences of domestic violence for example can extend beyond physical injury to impoverishment, loss of economic independence, loss of home and psychological trauma. Violence in this conception might be an intentional or unintended effect of actions (as with structural violence) or foreseeable consequences of actions such as the arms trade or using a 'smart bomb' that mistakenly kills civilians. Steve Tombs (2007) points to the exposure of workers to hazardous working conditions that result in death or injury which is not conventionally considered to be 'violent', either because the hazard level is within the law or because the motives of the corporation cannot be verified within legal notions of premeditated intent. The effects of these 'safety crimes far outweigh crimes of conventional violence' but are regarded as merely 'regulatory'. Secondly, Bufacchi (2007: 32–33) claims that in opposition to subjective and 'fluid' definitions, his definition is objective and 'universally valid'. Here he rightly insists on violence occurring in a social context involving a perpetrator, victim, and spectator. The objectivity of his definition rests on the role of the latter since they give validity to the suffering of the victim as an 'impartial standpoint' (Bufacchi 2007: 38). This seems more problematic though, in that there is extensive literature on the role of bystanders/spectators notably in relation to the Holocaust, where 'bystander behaviour' has become synonymous with passivity to the plight of others, including the failure to speak out against injustice and/or assist its victims or indeed, active involvement with the crimes perpetrated (e.g. Goldberg 2017). The witness might be a valuable stance for validating the violation of the victim, but there is no guarantee this will provide for objectivity. There is clearly also the possibility, suggested not least by the extensive fantasy violence in popular culture, that spectators will derive vicarious pleasure from witnessing violence.

This possibility bears on another conceptual but also substantive issue of whether violence is instrumental, a means to an end, or can be an end in itself? For Arendt (1970) violence is always instrumental and 'speechless', being the antithesis of power, which is action in concert and an end in itself. To contrast violence and power might appear counter-intuitive as the former is often viewed as both a means to, and emanation of the latter, but for Arendt, they are 'opposites' because violence can only destroy but not create these practices. This is, for example, in contrast to Foucault's conception that explicitly allows violence to play a constitutive role in generating power, as with the spectacles of public torture and death that constituted the order of the sovereign prior to modern disciplinary practices (Foucault 1976). The crucial distinction for Arendt is that violence is always an action, it is always 'done' and causes pain, as opposed to building cooperatively constituted, durable institutions based on communication – a view that has been central in Jürgen Habermas thinking (e.g. Habermas 1977). 'Where violence rules absolutely', she says, 'as for instance in the concentration camps of totalitarian regimes … everything and everybody must fall silent' (Arendt 1965 18). Against the realist tradition of thinkers like Machiavelli, Hobbes, Weber, Sorel and Fanon, violence is not conceded a role in founding the political. However, Arendt's position is more nuanced, or perhaps, contradictory, in that violence is actually given a constitutive role, since 'Cain slew Abel and Romulus slew Remus; violence was the beginning and … no beginning could be made without violating. The tale spoke clearly: whatever brotherhood human beings may be capable of has grown out of fratricide' (Arendt 1965: 20). The danger of revolution though is that violence becomes an instrument of rule and creates a fateful cycle of terror, an 'intoxicating spell' (Arendt 1970: 67) as in the French Revolution and later totalitarian systems. So, 'Violence can always destroy power: but out of the barrel of a gun grows the most effective command, resulting in the most instant and perfect obedience. What never can grow out of it is power' (Arendt 1970: 53). Only when violence ends can real politics begin through constitutional deliberation. The paradox is that the constitutional state guarantees rights but these are tied to membership of the nation which also has the right of

exclusion, creating statelessness and superfluousness populations, subject to violence. The state is not therefore the guarantor of peace but rather its limits, since as Giorgio Agamben in similar vein says, every state sets the limit and decides who will be 'homo sacer' and have the life not worth living (Agemben 1998: 139).

Many discussions of Arendt (such as Menge 2019) point out that while power and violence are not reducible to each other, her bifurcation is overdrawn. Power over bodies, as with Foucault's disciplinary bio-power, constitutes forms of governance and organization, while violence is not always speechless, but often entails complex organization and systematic moral justifications. Further, violence often is instrumental but is not necessarily so. Walter Benjamin's *Critique of Violence* distinguishes between 'mythic' and 'divine' violence.[1] The former is instrumental and engaged in law-making and preserving, illustrated by the death penalty, police violence, coercive techniques, while the latter is not merely a means but (as in the idea of the revolutionary proletarian strike) signals the abolition of state power and the formation of a new historical epoch coming from 'outside' the law (Benjamin [1921] 2007). There is a question as to whether divine violence escapes Arendt's warnings about revolutionary violence and moreover whether a post-revolutionary society would no longer make positive law, preserved by instrumental violence.

Violence might also be an end in itself. Willem Schinkel (2004) argued that seeking 'causes' of violence 'ignores the aesthetics of violence', that is, its intrinsic features pursued for 'its own sake'. In this context he cites the existence of websites devoted to extreme violence, the idea of 'hooliganism as fun' and the preoccupation of art with violence. Everyone, he suggests, possesses the 'will to violence'. Collins (2008) emphasizes the affective dimension of violence which requires a spiralling intensification of confrontation-fear among participants. So, by the way, did Arendt who referred to its 'intoxicating spell' and 'vitality' (Hertzog 2017). Rioters engaging in looting might be instrumental/acquisitive but this is also 'expressive' violence displaying a jouissance and thrill of transgression (Ray 2014).

In what Jack Katz (1988) calls 'Righteous Slaughter', people murder to defend what they believe is 'good', at least at the moment they act. These murders happen quickly, most lack premeditation, are fiercely impassioned, are conducted with an indifference to legal consequences and are therefore unaffected by the risk of certain and severe punishment. Ritual aspects of such killing might involve degradation and defilement of the body which has no instrumental purpose. The ritual and non-instrumental dimensions of violence are also apparent in genocide and other forms of collective violence. Robb (1997) argues that violence is always symbolically constructed behaviour involving semantics of the body. In his analysis of genocide and ethno-nationalist violence, Arjun Appadurai (1998) refers to 'grotesque intimacy'. The ethnic violence in Burundi against Hutus in 1972 involved 'nightmarish cruelty', including killing women with sharp bamboo sticks inserted in the vagina, anus and head (Appadurai 1998). Similarly, the frequent use of rape as a weapon of war is a further example, in which the penis is an instrument of degradation and the enactment of ethno-patriarchal power (Mendible 2005).

Gender violence

This raises another crucial issue, that violence is gendered in ways that illustrate the intersections of the structural and interpersonal. Gendered violence includes family violence such as infanticide, genital mutilation, child marriage, dowry-related violence, battering and sexual abuse, and in the community, sexual harassment, rape, prostitution and trafficking. Gender violence can be viewed through R. W. Connell's and James Messerschmidt's theory of 'hegemonic masculinities'. Drawing on Judith Butler's concept of gender performativity, masculinities are crucial points of intersection of different sources and forms of power, stratification, desire and identity. As with

symbolic violence, 'hegemonic masculinity' refers to cultural representations of masculinity and femininity that define culturally ideal and dominant as opposed to subordinate forms of gender performance. A capacity or willingness to endorse violence, they argue, underpins hegemonic masculinity and reinforces the subordination of women and marginal masculinities, such as gay and racialized minorities (Connell 1995: 77ff.). 'Doing gender' manifests differently in social situations structured by the influences of race, class and age. But violence is a resource for masculine hegemonic performance, based on prevailing idealized cultural conceptions involving the dominance of women, heterosexuality, the pursuit of sexual gratification and independence. So-called 'honour based' violence embodies the material and symbolic modes of domination especially the commodification of women's bodies, as 'marriageable' virgins within a system of patriarchal power (Ray 2018: 154–158). It should be noted though that in systems of structural violence men and boys can also be victims, especially of sexual violence.

At the same time, as Arendt's view that violence appears where power is in jeopardy, violence can be a response to the contraction of outlets for conventional masculine performance. Suzanne Hatty argues that 'Violence is the prerogative of the youthful male, especially when confronted by the contradictions and paradoxes of thwarted desire and personal and social disempowerment' (Hatty 2000: 6). So, youth subcultures of violence might be part of a response to perceived crisis prompted by structural unemployment and the decline of traditional working-class male occupations, combined with increasing women's equality, rather than an expression of a dominant masculinity. Violence here does not so much arise from the performance of masculinity as its frustration in the absence of alternative forms of validation. This situation will also be inflected by structures of class and ethnic these processes should be placed within wider structures of domination and exclusion.

Integrated view of violence

Considering then broad and narrow conceptions of violence, there is considerable analytical value in focussed approaches to violence, but violence (and its rejection) are fundamental parts of the human condition and as Robert Sampson says in his study of the Chicago neighbourhood, 'everything is connected'. Spatial patterns of poverty, disease, premature mortality and violence coincide as complex 'neighborhood-effects' (Sampson, 2012: 22). The spatial organization of the city is structured by wider global socioeconomic processes which in turn configure patterns of violence. Bourdieu indicates that there is a relationship between structural violence and the manifestation of interpersonal violence on the streets, since 'the structural violence exerted by the financial markets, in the form of layoffs, loss of security, etc., is matched sooner or later in the form of suicides, crime and major everyday acts of violence' (Bourdieu 1998: 39–40). Collins still has a point though about the need for a specific, situated and differentiated theory of violence since whatever the structural and cultural contexts in which people act, it is important to ask for proximate reasons for violence – why did this happen here, now? These analytical approaches can be used in tandem and should not mean losing sight of the symbolic and structural contexts in which violence occurs.

Violence, sacrifice and culture

Most narrative myths include stories of conflicting desire and violence, as in the quote from Arendt above, and suggest that violence is a recursive passion reflected in mythic stories of human origins. The Epic of Gilgamesh, the Bible, Greek epics the Iliad and Odyssey, Icelandic sagas, Sanskrit Mahabharata feature rivalry, violence and death. Thus, Walter Burkert says 'Those …

who turn to religion for salvation are confronted with murder at the very core of Christianity – the death of God's innocent son; still earlier, the Old Testament covenant could come about only after Abraham had decided to sacrifice his child. Thus, blood and violence lurk fascinatingly at the very heart of religion' (Burkert 1983: 1–2).

Sigmund Freud's (1950 [1913]: 141) speculative historical anthropology *Totem and Taboo* has been influential in theories of primal violence. He imagined (following Darwin's thesis of the primal horde) that at the dawn of society an alliance of young males rose against the father whom they overwhelm and kill. Moreover, 'Cannibals … as they were, they devoured their victim as well as killing him … The totem meal, which is perhaps mankind's earliest festival, would thus be a repetition and commemoration of this memorable and criminal deed, which was the beginning of so many things – of social organization, of moral restrictions and of religion'. The dead father, however, proved stronger than the living and the deed was symbolically revoked in prohibitions on the killing of the totem as the father-substitute. As in the biblical myth that Cain's descendants founded cities, manufacture, music and culture, Freud regarded murder as the founding act of civilization. Sacrifice then has the role (mitigated later by the legal system) of regulating internal violence, restoring harmony to the community and reinforcing the social fabric, while denying the innocence of the victim. Further, as with Durkheim, (2001: 70) with whom *Totem and Taboo* critically engages, the power of the sacred object derives from the community but also calls into being the community as renunciation of instincts and violence.

Such containments though will be unstable. Indeed, even if sacrificial commemorative processes can contain violence they do so inefficiently and indeed, as Durkheim's analysis of piacular rituals (of mourning death and calamity) suggests, these might themselves be occasions for violence too (Durkheim, 2001: 292–293). They unleash a 'panic of sadness' (*panique de tristesse*) that turns to anger, such that participants 'feel the need to break and destroy something, and this is taken out on oneself or on others' (Durkheim 2001: 297–298). An important distinction here is that mourning is understood as memory work that enables reconciliation with loss while with melancholia the loss is continually revisited, remains vital, intrusive and persistent. Ray (2006) suggested that rituals of public mourning along with unexpurgated historical traumas can be mobilized in the cause of nationalist formation and resentment, as they were in the prelude to the Yugoslavian civil wars in the 1990s. Through mass reburials of victims of atrocities committed by the occupying Germans (1941–1945), collaborationist militias and partisans, unreconciled traumatic memories were mobilized in the service of nationalist agendas in the 1990s. The sacrificial dead of each combatant nation were to be avenged through the defeat of the enemy, opening further spirals of violence and atrocity during the post-Yugoslavian civil wars.

The observation that public spectacles of cruelty have sacrificial significance is central to René Girard's theory of the sacrifice/scapegoat. Girard's theory of the sacrificial scapegoat mechanism presupposes that in order to survive in shared space, people have to find ways of containing destructive impulses and forging sustained bonds of solidarity. Girard drew on Freud's sacrificial theory while raising the objections that, first the original victim was not the father but any member of the community; second, the ritual is continually repeated to restore social peace; and third, the origin of violent impulses is not sexual but mimetic desire. He proposes that we learn to desire what another, whom one takes as a model, desires. An object has value only because it is desired by another, which leads to conflict of desire for the same object, since 'Two desires converging on the same object are bound to clash' (Girard, 1977: 146). Moreover, desire is triangular – jealousy and envy imply a third presence, to whom envy, a feeling of impotence, is directed (Girard, 2004: 40). Not only does possession by one exclude possession by another but desire is also detached from a predetermined object such that

conflict cannot be resolved simply by removal of the disputed object. Ultimately, for Girard desire is objectless and arises from the yearning for the prestige that is attributed to the one who possesses the object. Mimesis risks 'violent contagion' (Girard, 1977: 28), which arises from an unresolved crisis where mimetic desire to acquire the wholeness of the other (which is experienced as a lack or incompleteness of oneself) leads to a feud between incompatible rivals. By simultaneously taking the other as a model and obstacle, subjects form 'violent doubles' locked in a feud in which one's enfranchisement requires another's disenfranchisement. The scene is then set for irreconcilable, spiralling mimetic violence and chaos that can be arrested only by the scapegoat mechanism.

The victim is first demonized by the group whose members see it as responsible for causing the social crisis, and they kill it. Once killed, however, the victim is then worshipped by the group as a harbinger of peace and in this way, as for Freud, violence is sacred. Sacrifice brings relief because collective disorder is transferred to the victim, but its vitality depends on its ability to conceal the displacement (Girard, 2004: 75). Rituals then seek to recollect something they never succeeded in comprehending (Girard 2004: 27). When violence is collective and unanimous, the victim has become a collective embodiment of all scandals and their personal liberation. However, the sacrificial resolution is always unstable and scapegoating is prone to sacrificial crises and spiralling violence, which in a culture born of violence 'inadequately contained' will escape and propagate (Girard 2004: 151). For Girard, violent origin myths disguise sacrificial violence which must be both forgotten and ritualized. Forgotten, because scapegoating is never an activity anyone will acknowledge taking part in, and ritualized in order to perpetuate the 'unanimity that springs from the murder of a surrogate victim' (Girard 2004: 26–27).

While Girard has been very influential in theorizing violence, especially in religious and literary representations, his thesis becomes harder to sustain in relation to the modern, post-sacral world, as his former student Eric Gans has noted (e.g. Gans 2008). Girard himself writes of a 'radical demythification' of the sacred and eventual elimination of vengeance and reprisal (Girard, 1987: 195) and his postulated scapegoat mechanism only works so long as it is unacknowledged. Once it is revealed in post-traditional largely secular societies *violence cannot any longer cast out violence*. But this does not mean that violence cannot become contagious in the way Girard describes in cycles of violent retribution. Actually, for Girard decomposition of the sacrificial order does not mean that violence diminishes, but on the contrary, and logically, the absence of sacrificial displacement increasingly threatens the resurgence of mimetic crises on a catastrophic scale (Girard 1987: 440). Applying Girard to inter-state conflict, Marvin and Ingle (1999) argue that in going to war as soldiers, members of the national community relinquish the totemic protection of the community which they leave, becoming outsiders consenting to their sacrifice. The idea of the nation, crucially tied to willingness to bear arms, is founded upon the sacrificial death of those who have fought in wars.

In a different mode of engagement with Freud, Theodor Adorno proposed a reading that 'radicalises and reverses Freud's theory' (Fischer 2005). For Adorno the civilization process does not taboo violence but rather permits boundless violence against animals and nature. Adorno saw human treatment of animals as bound together in the same historical process, such that each form of domination needs to be addressed in the context of the other. Indeed, human violence against animals becomes a model for inter-human violence and the domination of nature and of other humans cannot be separated. So,

> [t]he possibility of pogroms is decided in the moment when the gaze of a fatally-wounded animal falls on a human being. The defiance with which he repels this gaze – "after all, it's only an animal" – reappears irresistibly in cruelties done to human beings, the perpetrators

having again and again to reassure themselves that it is 'only an animal', … those in power perceive as human only their own reflected image, instead of reflecting back the human as precisely what is different.

(Adorno 1974: 105)

Unlike the timelessness of Freud and Girard, whose theses assume fixed psychological attributes, Adorno historicized modes of domination and violence, albeit also in a rather speculative manner. Violence might have been ubiquitous in human history but like all other forms of human behaviour it is socially and culturally organized and varies greatly in its nature and extent over time and between societies. Norbert Elias' theory of the civilizing process also aimed to 'historicize Freud' and offer a more historically nuanced thesis of the reconfiguration of instincts and controls over time. The civilizing process claims that that between the European Middle Ages and the modern period there was a transformation of social 'habitus' (life-styles, norms and personality) first apparent in a growth of courtly etiquette around eating, sexual behaviour and the body that gradually established new norms of interpersonal conduct in wider society. Elias argued that there has been a long-term trend towards the pacification of civil society that is linked to the emergence of state control of the means of violence and the widening of the scope of civil society as opposed to the military or warrior elite. Thus, 'During the past 500 years we have moved from a formidable violence, which we can imagine only with great difficulty, to a lessening of violence and a greater self-control with regard to aggression' (Elias 1994: 248). One indication of growing repugnance to violence is the decline of carnivals of violence, including public executions and festivals such as the burning of live cats on Midsummer's Eve in Paris and elsewhere (Elias, 1994: 171). Keith Tester (2004: 68–69) rightly points out though that such violence had meanings that were rooted in cultural difference and the ambiguity of cats in relation to humans in early modern Europe, and Elias did not consider the possible sacrificial significance of summoning the social presence through violent ritual. In any event, for Elias the transition to modernity entailed a reconfiguration of violence – perhaps substituted by sport, which institutionalizes calculated violence without loss of self-control, while spectators have the opportunity to vicariously enjoy the excitement of contest without the actual violence of earlier spectacles.

Elias' thesis in some ways runs counter to that of Adorno and Horkheimer for whom western modernity and an instrumental rationalized culture unleashed unprecedented destructiveness. This view informs Zygmunt Bauman's claim that the Holocaust was not a deviation from rational modernity but its apotheosis (Bauman 1999). However, it should not be thought that Elias' thesis was a naively optimistic riposte to those outlined above since it was on the contrary a warning that a civilized habitus was fragile – an argument set out in Elias's (1996: 173) concept of the decivilization, where the process essentially went into reverse, as he argues happened in Nazi Germany. Further, that the reconfiguration of emotions and constraints on behaviour in the civilizing process is dependent on the formation of hidden shame could suggest a further vulnerability. With reference to sexuality, Elias (1994: 152) depicts 'an aura of embarrassment … [that] surrounds this sphere of life' and moreover, the shame taboo around prohibited emotions means being ashamed of being ashamed. Thomas Scheff's analysis of shame dynamics claims that while this can (as for Elias) ferment social bonds, an accumulated sense of shame is transformed into rage when parties get into a cycle of reciprocal shaming. This can happen on interpersonal, group and interstate levels and manifest in extreme and persistent violence (Scheff 2000). Ray (2013) argues that one significant context for the eruption of shame-rage arises from the systematic inequalities of class and race combined with the promise of equality and opportunity in modern societies. The false promise of unbridled consumer consumption also releases mimetic

conflicts that are embroiled with shame dynamics that risk decivilizing downswings. There is here an important dialectic in that the processes that contain violence might also be those that prompt its resurgence.

Conclusion

Theories of violence are diverse and there is no unified theory nor perhaps could there be. Several make claims to a unified principle, such as Collins's theory of confrontation/fear, Girard's scapegoat mechanism, Scheff's hidden shame, but there are multiple types and levels of violence that render the task a challenging undertaking. Violence is highly differentiated and therefore demands differential explanations. If violence is a ubiquitous threat to human security the basis of many theories is, as with Elias, to identify social practices that contain it. These often though turn out to be paradoxical. The state then can both create social peace but also threatens violence and sacrifice through the right to create exception and exclusion bound by the limits of national membership. Violence disrupts the social bond, as for Collins, but also ferments solidarity from street gangs though to militias and armies. Violence is embedded in material and symbolic systems of domination in ways that both reproduce but also undermine them. Its theorization throws into relief some core problems of theorizing the social – the interplay of actors and structures, context and meaning and the fate of modernity and civilization.

Note

1. Note that the in the title of Benjamin's essay, 'Zur Kritik der Gewalt', Gewalt has a broader meaning that English 'violence' to include force, but that is consistent with the wider definitions being used here.

References

Abbink, J. (2000) 'Preface: Violation and Violence as a Cultural Phenomenon', in Aijmer, G. and Abbink, J. (eds.) *Meanings of Violence: A Cross-Cultural Perspective*. Oxford: Berg, pp. xi–xvii.

Adorno, T. (1974) *Minima Moralia: Reflections on a Damaged Life*. London: Verso.

Agemben, G. (1998) *State of Exception*. Chicago: Chicago UP.

Appadurai, A. (1998) 'Dead Certainty: Ethnic Violence in the Era of Globalization', *Public Culture*, 10(2): 225–247.

Arendt, H. (1965) *On Revolution*. London: Penguin.

Arendt, H. (1970) *On Violence*. London: Allen Lane.

Bäck, A. (2004) 'Thinking Clearly About Violence', *Philosophical Studies*, 117: 219–230.

Bauman, Z. (1999) *Modernity and the Holocaust*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Benjamin, W. ([1921] 2007) 'Critique of Violence', in Demetz, P. (ed.) *Reflections*. New York: Schocken Books, pp. 277–300.

Bourdieu, P. (1998) *Acts of Resistance: Against the Tyranny of the Market*. New York: The New Press and Polity Press.

Bourdieu, P. (2009) 'Gender and Symbolic Violence', in Scheper-Hughes, N. and Bourgois P. (eds.) *Violence in War and Peace, an Anthology*. Oxford: Blackwell, pp. 339–342.

Bufacchi, V. (2007) *Violence and Social Justice*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Burkert, W. (1983) *Homo Necans, the Anthropology of Ancient Greek Sacrificial Ritual and Myth*. University of California Press.

Collins, R. (2008) *Violence a Micro-Sociological Theory*. Princeton UP.

Connell, R. W. (1995) *Masculinities*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Durkheim, E. (2001) *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Elias, N. (1994) *The Civilizing Process, revised edn*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Elias, N. (1996) *The Germans*. New York: University of Colombia Press.

FAO (2020) *Food Outlook Rome*: United Nations http://www.fao.org/documents/card/en/c/cb1993en.

Fischer, K. (2005) 'In the Beginning was the Murder: Destruction of Nature and Interhuman Violence in Adorno's Critique of Culture', *Journal for Cultural and Religious Theory*, 6(2): 27–38.

Foucault, M. (1976) *Discipline and Punish*. London: Allen Lane.

Freud, S. (1950 [1913]) *Totem and Taboo*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Galtung, J. (1969) 'Violence, Peace and Peace Research', *Journal of Peace Research*, 6 (3): 167–191.

Gans, E. (2008) *Scenic Imagination*. Stanford, CA: Stanford UP.

Girard, R. (1977) *Violence and the Sacred*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins UP.

Girard, R. (1987) *Things Hidden Since the Foundation of the World*. Stanford, CA: Stanford UP.

Girard, R. (2004) *The Girard Reader*, ed. J. Williams. New York: Crossroad.

Goldberg, R.A. (2017) 'The Bystander during the Holocaust', *Utah Law Review*, 4(2): 649–659.

Habermas, J. (1977) 'Hannah Arendt's Communication Concept of Power' *Social Research*, 44(1): 3–24.

Hatty, S.E. (2000) *Masculinities*, Violence and Culture. London: Sage.

Herzog, A. (2017) '*The Concept of Violence in the Work of Hannah Arendt*' *Continental Philosophical Review* 50: 165–179.

Jackman, M (2002) 'Violence in Social Life' *Annual Review of Sociology* 28: 387–415.

Karstedt, S. and Eisner, M. (2009) Introduction: Is There a General Theory of Violence Possible? *International Journal of Conflict and Violence*, 3(1), https://www.ijcv.org/index.php/ijcv/issue/view/238.

Katz, J. (1988) *Seductions of Crime*. New York: Basic Books.

Keane, J. (1996) *Reflections of Violence*. London: Verso.

Malešević, S. (2017) *The Rise of Organized Brutality – A Historical Sociology of Violence*. Cambridge UP.

Marvin, C. and Ingle, D. (1999) *Blood Sacrifice and the Nation: Totem Rituals and the American Flag*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP.

Meloni, M. (2002) 'A Triangle of Thoughts: Girard, Freud, Lacan' *Journal of European Psychoanalysis*, 14, http://www.psychomedia.it/jep/number14/meloni.htm.

Mendible, M. (2005) 'Dominance and Submission in Postmodern War Imagery' *Peace Review*, 17: 55–63.

Menge, T. (2019) 'Violence and the Materiality of Power' *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy*, https://doi.org/10.1080/13698230.2019.1700344.

Ray, L.J. (2006) 'Mourning, Melancholia and Violence', in Bell, D. (ed.) *Memory, Trauma and World Politics*. London: Palgrave, pp. 135–156.

Ray, L.J. (2013) 'Mark of Cain: Shame, Desire and Violence', *European Journal of Social Theory*, 16(3): 292–309.

Ray, L.J. (2014) 'Shame and the City – 'Looting', *Emotions and Social Structure' Sociological Review*, 62(1): 117–136.

Ray, L.J. (2018) *Violence and Society*, 2nd edn. London: Sage.

Robb, J. (1997) 'Violence and Gender in Early Italy', in Martin, D.L. and D.W. Frayer (eds.) *Violence and Warfare in the Past*. Amsterdam: Gordon and Breach, pp. 111–144.

Sampson, R.J. (2012) *Great American City: Chicago and the Enduring Neighborhood Effect*. University of Chicago.

Scheff, T.J. (2000) *Bloody Revenge: Emotions, Nationalism and War*. Lincoln, NE: Authors' Guild.

Schinkel, W. (2004) 'The Will to Violence' *Theoretical Criminology* 8, 5:5–31

Schinkel, W. (2010) *Aspects of Violence: A Critical Theory*. London: Macmillan.

Tester, K. (2004) *Animals and Society*. London: Routledge.

Tombs, S. (2007) 'Violence, Safety Crimes and Criminology', *British Journal of Criminology*, 47: 531–555.

Wieviorka, M. (2009) *Violence – A New Approach*. London: Sage.

Universalism, human rights, and Islamic relativism

Mehdi Zakerian

The orientation of Islamic intellectuals toward human rights can be observed in debates of universalism and human rights relativism. As a matter of fact, in this discourse, the two spectrums of thought reveal their differences. Universalists strongly believe that values of human rights are universal and pervasive. Human rights and its relevant paradigms such as the right to live, marriage, work, insurance, value the absence of torture and slavery and such characteristics and concepts that are precious to every human being, regardless of their geography and environment. As such, Africans, Americans, Europeans, and Asians, must not be enslaved. Whether one is Muslim, Christian or Jew, torture is appalling. In other words, they believe that what is bad is considered as bad, even if it is done by a powerful person or holy authority. However, universalists note that these purported universal and pervasive values have not been acknowledged and realized in the same way in all societies. In contrast, Islamic philosophers believe that some norms relevant to human rights are specific to certain societies and cannot be imposed on others. Hence, some principles of human rights are not universal. They hold that Islamic norms go beyond the norms of human rights associated with humanism. These religious norms are deeply rooted in the holy books and are therefore superior to humanist norms. Consequently, these debates have led to the formation of two fronts, Universalists and Relativists.

A compromise between these arguments is provided by Elysabeth Mayer (1994), who suggested that despite the fact that human rights are universal in nature, they have to be regarded by taking into consideration the various historical, cultural, and religious backgrounds as well as the principal legal systems. As such, he pointed out that the right kind of universality is one that is attuned to these cultural, religious, and historical aspects. Arnold (2013) accounts for the character of universalism on international, regional and national constitutional levels by suggesting that the universalism of human rights is both a 'concept' and a 'normative reality'. This normative character of human rights is embodied in international and regional agreements as well as in national constitutions. This suggests that a revised and flexible universalism might resolve the issues between the two approaches.

Types of universalism

The varieties of pro-human rights Universalists can be divided into broad groups, representing two basic distinctions: between *de jure* or formal and *de facto* or realist, and between universalism

and relativism. To examine the types of universality, the categories presented in the book 'Constructing Human Rights in the Age of Globalization' will be the main source of reference in this section. Universalists are divided into three groups who defined the study of human rights from the following perspectives:

1 *De facto* Universalists: According to their beliefs, human rights are accepted as a universal value, like bank robbery that is a global wrongdoing. Although bank robberies occur, it is the fault of the burglars, which does not convey that thievery is acceptable. Likewise, although violations of human rights occur in the world, only violators are wrongdoers.
2 Realistic Universalists: They believe that human rights are a universal natural asset. All human beings naturally possess it. The existence of these rights does not depend on acceptance; although some people do not accept the existence of these rights as a fact, they nevertheless possess them. Just as, despite the fact that the earth is round, some people still consider it as flat, some people are ignorant and in need of training to comprehend the truth.
3 *De jure* Universalists: Although values of human rights are not a fact universally acknowledged, they must be universally accepted. They believe that values vary from culture to culture and from time to time. Nonetheless, in their opinion, there are significant values which are "right" or "superior" that must be accepted. In other words, we must make every effort to embrace superior values (Monshipouri et al. 2008).

All three groups of Universalists are opposed to relativism. They reject the claims of Islamic scholars' that human rights are relative.

Universal declaration of human rights

These positions have run into much debate and interminable discussion over a specific set of issues: the questions of whether human rights are entrenched in Western culture and civilization and devoid of the values of other nations, or whether all nations in some historical and cultural sense recognize and share the principles of human rights. Thus, in this section, the events that have reinforced the idea of the universality of human rights in the new millennium, those human rights activities since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, are briefly surveyed. This section is mainly concerned with the reception in different countries of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the ratification of human rights treaties and conventions, as well as the position of international conferences and regional summits on the universality of human rights, to explain the attitude of some countries, particularly the Like-Minded Group (LMG) of nations. The viewpoints of theorists and legal, political, and international figures are also examined in this regard.

One of the main doctrinal sources of human rights thinking is the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Assessing the universality of the Declaration plays a crucial role in the current argument. All countries have acknowledged the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as the source of the human rights system in the international arena and in relations between nations. As a result, the universality of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and international human rights conventions is an advantageous starting point for the discussion. The extent to which countries have paid attention to the Declaration in their domestic conduct, from which regions of the world, and how many have voted in favor of it, is a distinct matter. However, it is critical to the question of the actual recognition or non-recognition of the universality of human rights. Moreover, Non-derogative laws are regarded as universal since they are *jus cogens* [preemptory

norms of international law] and *erga omnes* [obligations owed to the international community as a whole] (Zakerian 2014).

The initial draft of declaration was revised between the first and third sessions of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights from January 27, 1947 to June 18, 1948. The chair of the commission and recording committee was Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, the spouse of the President of the United States. The commission comprised of fourteen countries: Australia, Belarus, Chile, Egypt, France, India, Iran, Lebanon, the Philippines, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom, the United States, Uruguay, and Yugoslavia, representing almost all parts of the world. With the exception of four countries: Australia, France, the United Kingdom, and the United States, the other countries were chiefly regarded as developing countries or part of Eastern Europe. Although many southern countries were then still under Western colonial rule, it is erroneous to assume that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is exclusively the idea of the North.[1]

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted by the UN General Assembly on December 10, 1948, under 217 A (III) Resolutions. Out of the 56 UN member states, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted with 48 votes in favor and 8 abstentions. The governments of Saudi Arabia, Belarus, Poland, Czechoslovakia, South Africa, the Soviet Union, Ukraine, and Yugoslavia abstained. The eight countries nevertheless assured that they were not opposed to the declaration in principle.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights enumerates a set of rights interrelated with civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights. The General Assembly proposed the Declaration as a joint measure expressing common aims for all people and nations and called on all member states and all nations to promote effective recognition and ensure observance of the rights and freedoms therein. Regarding the significance of the universality of these rights, Kofi Annan, the former Secretary-General of the United Nations declared, "These civil, economic, cultural, political and social rights are fundamental to the harmonization of relations between universal, common, independent and interdependent individuals, groups and nations" (Decaux and de Frouville 2018).

This declaration has now become as important as a touchstone for the discussions of the rights that it is routinely incorporated into the state constitutions of countries. Beyond the significance that countries placed on human rights internally and enshrined in their constitutions, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights has also had a significant impact on the regional and international dimensions. The impact of the Declaration on all international organizations is one of the reasons for its universality. The role of the Declaration in regional agreements is a significant confirmation of its universality. The Organization of African Unity (known as the African Union since 2002) states in Article 2 of the Addis Ababa Agreement (1963) that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is one of the core mechanisms for enhancing international cooperation. In the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (Rome 1950), The Council of Europe called on its members to comply with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The San José, Costa Rica (1969) American Convention on Human Rights also proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as its guiding principle. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (UNHCR) in Section VII of the Declaration of Helsinki (1975) accentuated the importance of human rights and fundamental freedoms. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1986) and the Islamic Declaration of Human Rights in Cairo (1990) have also had a profound effect on Arabic declarations. The final document of the Non-Aligned Movement summit in September 1992 in Jakarta and in Tehran in 2007 also validated the universality of human rights, along with cultural diversity. Generally speaking, it can be said that today human rights have become entrenched in more and more agreements, documents, and constitutions. Human rights have been globalized since 1948,

and this process has been reinforced with the implementation of treaties and other regional and international conventions. Moreover, as the former United Nations Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali declared at the Vienna Conference: "The international language of human rights has become relatively homogeneous, although the institutions of some countries are still not compatible with it."

Although a number of countries abstained on the Declaration on December 10, 1948, all but South Africa voted in favor of Article 7 of the 1960 General Assembly Resolution regarding Granting Independence to the Territories and Colonized people. This article reads as follows: "All States shall observe in good faith with a *bona fide* pledge the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the present Declaration." In 1968, at the World Conference on Human Rights, representatives of 84 governments attended the Tehran Assembly and adopted the Tehran Declaration, which affirmed that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights has been committed to by all members. The Tehran Human Rights Conference endorsed the basic principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and set the agenda that we still seek to accomplish today. The declaration called for the abolition of all forms of discrimination against women and acknowledged the indivisibility of all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The Second World Conference on Human Rights was held in Vienna in June 1993 with the participation of 171 countries during the post-Cold War international evolution, and led to the adoption of the "1993 Vienna Declaration and Action Plan." The Declaration lays emphasis on the special importance of human rights, their promotion, and the universality of human rights. Paragraph 1 in Part I of the Declaration states: "The universal nature of these fundamental rights and freedoms is undeniable."[2]

Paragraph 5 of this section clarifies that

> All sorts of human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and closely interrelated. The international community has to consider human rights in a comprehensive, just and equitable way on an equal basis and give homological value to all rights. Concurrently, it is within the responsible accountability of governments to take national, regional, and historical, cultural, and religious backgrounds into account, and foster and shield all human rights and all political freedoms, regardless of political, economic, or cultural system.

A diagram can illustrate the process of universalization of human rights from 1948 to the present. It is noticeable that human rights have been well received by many more countries and that acceptance has coincided with international developments. This supports its claim to universality.

A comparison of the number of countries that have acceded to human rights treaties and conventions by 1989 and the number of countries that have signed human rights treaties and conventions by 2021 – are demonstrated in Tables 49.1 and 49.2 – shows the extent to which the universality of formal acceptance of human rights has expanded in the current millennium, in the post-Cold War era and in response to global terrorist events.

The significance of the number of countries ratifying the Universal Declaration of Human Rights can be understood in this way: when the representatives of the 97 states acknowledge that the set of regulations is legally valid or, conversely, other regulations are against the law, if no government votes against this measurement, if some governments and, most prominently, those who abstained, announce their tacit consent to co-operation – as happened in the General Assembly in 1962 – and 101 governments verify and reiterate all the above-mentioned, it is no longer the case that it merely falls into the categories of binding treaties or non-binding declarations but must be regarded as validated as a law in the eyes of the international community.

Table 49.1 The level of acceptance of countries to the most important human rights conventions in the current millennium

The name of the convention & its abbreviation	Number and percentage of member countries up to			
	1989	1989	Jun. 20, 2021	Jun. 20, 2021
International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)	90	56%	145	76%
International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)	86	54%	173	89%
The Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR-OP1)	38	23%	116	60%
International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD)	124	78%	182	94%

Table 49.2 UN International Treaties on Human Rights, with a regulatory aspect and the number of participating countries

Name of the convention & its abbreviation	Date of approval	Number and percentage of member countries up to	
		Jun. 20, 2021	Jun. 20, 2021
International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)	Dec. 16, 1966	173	89%
International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)	Dec. 16, 1966	171	89%
The Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (OPICCPR)	Dec. 16, 1966	116	60%
The Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR-OP2)	Dec. 15, 1989	89	46%
International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD)	Dec. 21, 1965	182	94%
International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)	Dec. 18, 1979	189	98%
Convention against Torture (CAT)	Dec. 10, 1984	171	89%
Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)	Nov. 20, 1989	196	102%
International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families (ICMW)	Dec. 18, 1990	56	68%

Thus, the member countries, through their re-enactments and amendments of the provisions of the Declaration, have unanimously affirmed and called for the accurate implementation of the Universal Declarations of Human Rights.

On the other hand, none of the international and regional human rights treaties has provided grounds for the right of the government to deviate from the rules due to local and indigenous

cultural traditions. The third section in Article 63 of the European Convention on Human Rights merely stipulates that: "The provisions of this convention in the colonized territories must be in accordance with local and indigenous requirements" (Damato, 2006). However, the European Court of Human Rights drew a line that limited this convention in the Tyrer Case, which was tried on April 25, 1978, regarding physical punishment as an indigenous punishment in local culture. The subject of violation of Article 3 in the European Convention on Human Rights is the prohibition of unjustified punishments. The court distinguished between necessities and non-necessities, and ruled that physical punishment is not a necessity, therefore not a permitted deviation, and that this applied to the people of a colony as well; the concept signifies that those subject to colonial rule need to be assisted to achieve civilization and progress like the citizens of the Convention.

Human rights

After the end of the Cold War in the early 1990s, some countries, such as Iran, Indonesia, China, and Malaysia, strongly protested against the universality of human rights. Among these countries, the position of the Islamic Republic of Iran is revealing. One of the former Iranian ambassadors to the United Nations, Mr. Rajaei Khorasani explained Iran's position in the Third Committee of the General Assembly as follows:

> The United Nations is a secular assembly and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is also a secular instrument. Attributes of civil and political conventions are distinguished by their ambiguity and misunderstanding of the concept of religion. Through this notion that secular assemblies are not eligible to deal with religious subject matters, they obligate Muslims to respect the requirements of such assemblies.[3]

The head of the delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran also stated at the Vienna Conference on Human Rights in 1993: "Iran demands a serious, accurate and righteous debate on the principles of human rights since the main problem of Western countries is their misconceptions about human beings and human rights. For this reason, Westerners have so far failed to provide a universally acceptable pattern." He added: "The West desires to play the role of a judge, prosecutor and jury in the field of human rights; at the same time, it seeks to play the role of legislator to define the law." The Indonesian foreign minister told the conference that, "in a world where strong domination over the weak and interference in the affairs of countries are still an agonizing reality, no country or group must position itself as a judge, jury or executive officer against other countries." The majority of the Third World countries advocated the universal *concept* of human rights but would resist the imposed standards.

This group of countries, known as the LMG, believes that the concepts of human rights need to evolve. The notions and tools of human rights are the outcome of the Cold War and the conflicts between East and West. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, for example, emerged at the beginning of the Cold War. Therefore, the concepts were not objectively incorporated into it. For instance, labor and property rights were not addressed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a result of constant conflict with the Soviet Union. Furthermore, thanks to the conflicts between East and West at that time, Articles 28 and 29 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights were not embedded in the treaties due to the specific position of the West. Therefore, this group demands the following to be implemented: First, to produce a new interpretation of human rights; second, that concepts of human rights have to

be dynamically evolved; third, that international cooperation on human rights to the point of consensus would substitute for confrontation.

But as a matter of fact, this kind of standpoint reveals a newly positive attitude by these countries toward the universality of human rights. Until recently, these countries rejected the Declaration and considered it as Western. But these same countries have already declared that their support of a new interpretation of the so-called Declaration. Therefore, at the request of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran, in early November in 1988, through the command of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, all countries that consider themselves governed by Islamic law discussed a new interpretation of human rights at a conference in Geneva. "I am delighted to accept the invitation of Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran to facilitate the process of receiving Islamic interpretations and views on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and today's seminar is the key to this process," said Mary Robinson, Chair of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. Prior to this seminar, China, another LMG country, hosted the 1995 World Conference on Women in Beijing. Thus these countries are not fundamentally opposed to the principles of human rights and only have novel interpretations and perspectives on their purported content. According to some theorists in countries such as the Islamic Republic of Iran, "The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Geneva Conventions and international treaties are not poles apart from the rules of Islam. There are only subtle boundaries in definitions and details, and those boundaries are the disparity between us."[4]

The most noteworthy facet of social change in the Muslim world has been the political and legal struggle over who controls modernity, rationality, and culture, and whose interests are being served in that struggle. Some experts have advocated a major epistemic shift – from a juridical to a theological–ontological status of human personhood as a key condition for the development of human rights discourse in the Muslim world. A point of departure for these experts is their espousal of a foundational theory of human rights based on pluralistic features of Islam, as manifested in its juridical-ethical discourses (Monshipouri and Zakerian 2016).

The countries that also participated in the Sixth Asia-Pacific Regional Human Rights Arrangements, entitled the "Tehran Human Rights Workshop," from February 28 to March 2, 1998, coinciding with the 50th anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Vienna World Conference on Human Rights 1993 affirmed the universality, indivisibility, and interdependence of all human rights while respecting the region's cultural, religious, and ethnic capital on human rights.

> The Deputy of Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran was enthusiastic about interpreting the Universal Declaration from an Islamic perspective," said Mary Robinson, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Chair of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. It seems very crucial to negotiate more on this issue: "I welcome this occasion, and as the High Commissioner, I reaffirm the importance allocated to the indivisibility, the interdependence and the universal relationship of human rights in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.[5]

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran stated at the 27th Conference of Foreign Ministers of the Organization of the Islamic Conference on the Islamic Interpretation of Human Rights: "The Organization of the Islamic Conference is highly inspired by a progressive Islamic approach to human rights in favor of international considerations while over the past few years, part of its focus has been on the fundamental issue of human rights. As a positive

and groundbreaking step, the drafting and approval of the Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam are considered as an initial step in this procedure. Now, after several years of efforts by experts in this regard, the essential ground has been provided to take more innovative steps with the aim of developing the necessary tools for the realization of Islamic law."

Therefore, basically, the Islamic Republic of Iran and the LMG (Like-Minded Group) of countries seek to present their interpretations and views on human rights and do not oppose the universality of human rights principles as such. These countries are notionally concerned about the instrumentalization of human rights or its politicization as a means to stigmatize southern countries by Western nations. Former Iranian Foreign Minister Kamal Kharazi remarked: "The fundamental importance of human rights in the world today requires that, based on the avoidance of double standards and discrimination and taking into account the cultural, moral, religious and legal systems of nations and countries, promoting and trying to deepen it. Applying the issue of human rights as a tool and using it as a pretext for political purposes cannot be compatible with collective rationality and intellectualism in today's world."

To put it in a nutshell, the universality of human rights is feasible when all individuals, nations, and cultures highly respect it. If there is a complaint about human rights because Western thinkers such as Thomas Jefferson, Lafayette, and Rene Cassin have played a role in defining undeniable human rights values, the answer is that norms of human rights have certainly existed in the cultural values of all societies and these individuals only emphasized these norms in their historical period. In fact, it is not difficult to recognize these human rights norms, although, as the new position of the LMG countries asserts, it is complicated to interpret them. The so-called "relativist" criticism of human rights, which believes that international standards of human rights are Western or European by origins, was also explicitly rejected by the 171 countries participating in the 1993 Vienna Conference on Human Rights.

The result of these efforts has been to affirm certain basics:

1   The authenticity of the moral and cultural values of human rights in the cultures, traditions, and religions of all nations;
2   The participation of different countries of the world in the adoption of the Universal Declaration and their greater approach and sensitivity to human rights in the modern international era;
3   Concerns about the instrumentalization of human rights mechanisms by some countries in order to exploit them politically, which basically does not mean opposition to the universality of human rights;
4   The ever-increasing number of states affirming the universality of human rights principles in the new international system;
5   Calls for effective human rights reform in the structure of the United Nations by all countries through the anticipation of the Human Rights Council.

We can summarize these facts as follows: the universality of human rights principles can be said to have been enhanced since the end of the Cold War and into the new millennium and is now being escalated vastly day by day.

Regarding the perceptions and interpretations of human rights by countries, it is firmly stated that the discussion of the universality of human rights and the interpretations is like a circle in Figure 49.1, some might observe white and some black figures of the animal inside the circle, while both groups perceive one animal, the fish (see Zakerian 2002, 2013).

Figure 49.1

Human rights relativism

Cultural relativism

Corradetti (2009) questions whether cultures are condemned to a formally rigid standard of universalist hegemony. While presenting a post-metaphysical reconstruction for the notion of human rights, it opts for an original perspective on the relation between universal validity and cultural pluralism. Pluralistic universalism paves the way for a pluralistic and retrospective rein-terpretation for the fixity of such criteria. Based on Corradetti's studies, human rights principles are embedded within our linguistic argumentative practice, an acknolwedgment which leads to a sort of philosophical prerequisite for pluralism.

In contrast to this kind of pluralistic affirmation of the concept of human rights, relativists oppose all three types of universality. They have another definition of human rights and its uni-versality. From a moral point of view, relativists believe that people with different cultures have different values. At the same time, they reject the claim that there are more or less common val-ues among people of different cultures. They believe that human rights are valuable, but because values are specific to each culture, human rights are themselves specific to each culture, and that consequently there are no universal human rights. Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na'im,[6] a productive human rights writer and scholar, and a Muslim from Sudan, argues that "Human rights need to be more adjacent to the culture, the moral boundaries and the views of the people" (Zakerian 2014), although this view identifies the specific definition of each culture of human rights *De jure* or formally, but acknowledges the validity of each definition of human rights in a *De facto* actualized way, and implies that a universal definition of human rights can only result from overlapping definitions.

The definition of human rights specified in the Middle East by governments and rulers, as well as a number of human rights professors and Muslim theologians, is similar to that of rela-tivists. They nevertheless use the text of human rights documents to legitimize their definition. They do believe that human beings' rights are human rights on which there should be a global consensus. But because the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and many human rights conventions are the derived progeny of the Western countries' attitude toward human rights, they cannot be regarded as universal. In order to delineate human rights, all cultures and nations must reach a consensus, and since such a consensus has not emerged for the current definition of human rights, today's human rights are a relative human right and still far from being universal. Thus, it must be acknowledged that the definition and etymology of the concept of human rights is a vital issue and that agreeing on a common definition of a dispute of universalists versus relativists may end the dispute and pave the way to broadening human rights literature in the

region while affirming the rights of victims of human rights violations. The prospect of such agreement implies that Policymaking on Human Rights in the Middle East has to be revived regardless of political stability within the region, even to the point of confronting its tyrannized sovereign states (Zakerian 2017).

The absolute adherence to all human rights rules, both theoretically and in practice, has been challenged by theorists and practitioners in quite a few countries. According to them, the current norms of human rights do not reflect the actual attainments of all civilized nations of the world. For them, human rights rules should be interpreted and applied based on the cultural differences of each country. In this view, although the foundations of human rights, including freedom of expression, avoidance of torture, etc., are respected principles in all countries and people all over the world, it is within a country's sovereignty to interpret, demarcate, necessitate, and perform its ethics according to its own standards of the Protection of Morals, and that this is a necessary condition for endorsing the ethics of the fundamental principles of human rights.

There have been attempts to address this issue. The European Court of Human Rights in the Case of Handyside stated that although the European Convention on Human Rights provides for a mechanism for the protection of human rights, this mechanism is complementary and helps national human rights systems to defend human rights. The court refers to the notion that states have a 'margin of appreciation' such that differences in local standards, in this case on obscenity, need to be acknowledged in the application of such rights as freedom of expression. The effect of this legal formula is that each State can define human rights according to its own distinctions, but only within this margin.

Nevertheless, the court recognized the fundamental principle that the application of rights concepts must pay attention to the national and local norms of the member countries. More to the point, the court acknowledged that is not possible to find a common European moral concept within the domestic law of the various countries that were party to the convention under which the case was considered. This attitude reflects the fact that laws vary from time to time according to moral characteristics and from place to place. Likewise, these standards can be characterized by swift and long-term alterations of views. The cultural variations of countries could seem very enlightening in their interpretation of the issue of human rights.

Although the above-mentioned case is a roadmap to pursue cultural distinctions on the issue of human rights and to some extent endorses the discussion of cultural relativism, it is critical to note the abuses of some governments in this regard. It is also accurate from another viewpoint to say that today the cultural diversity and cultural relativism claimed by some statesmen of human rights-violating countries is nothing but a disguise for the tyrannical and inhumane treatment of their citizens. For this reason, the concept of cultural relativity is denounced by many human rights scholars. In their view, cultural relativism is a plot to conceal human rights violations. They believe that the issue of the universality of human rights is enshrined in many human rights treaties and declarations; how, then, can cultural relativism be invoked to undermine the conditions for human rights?

The political representatives of countries that pursue cultural distinctions on the issue of human rights respond to this question by saying that the principles, provisions, and norms of many human rights treaties are not achieved in all the civilized nations of the world. In their view, concepts of human rights need to be revised and the issue of the universality of concepts needs to be reconsidered. Because the concepts and materials of human rights are the result of the Cold War and still have the imprint of the Northern countries, these human rights mechanisms and norms do not encompass the culture of all countries.

Human dignity

Jack Donnelly and Rudy Howard-Hassmann (1986: 805) claim that "Human dignity is a universal value, but human rights are deep-rooted in the West and would require a liberal regime to be emerged." In their view, human rights are not equal to human dignity but wrongly are taken to equate to the protection of human dignity.

"To what extent could an affirmation of human dignity strengthen the rules of human rights? If human dignity is the result of the protection of individual and collective rights and freedoms (human rights), then human rights are in practice the same as human dignity. "The concept of human dignity can then be taken as the universal ground for human rights: the consensus sought by those who object to the Western origins of rights concepts. But the problem, as Norberto Bobbio points out, is not a matter of what and how these rights are, what their nature is and on what basis they are founded, or whether they are natural or historical, absolute or relative. It is a matter of finding a safe way to guarantee these rights and prevent further violations" (Zakarian 2014).

These signs of convergence are grounds for optimism that the steps that have been taken at the beginning of the third millennium, have begun to facilitate the emergence of a normative co-thinking in the construction of some fundamental rights, and that consequently, we are not far from the emergence of a single universal morality to share and contribute to all cultures, nations, and civilizations. The collaboration of civilizations, governments, and nations might even be a prerequisite for the observance of human rights and human dignity.

Conclusion

Human rights advocates believe that values of human rights are universal. Human rights and their instances, such as the right to live, marriage, work, insurance, the absence of torture and slavery, and so on, are characteristics and concepts that are valuable to every human being, regardless of their geography and environment. Africans, Americans, Europeans, and Asians, beings as such, must not be enslaved. Torture is appalling for anyone, whether Muslim, Christian, or Jewish, even those who have no religion. In other words, they believe that what is bad is considered as bad, even if it is done by a great person or holy authority. However, in Islamic law, the enjoyment of the rights and privileges of one person with one religion differs from another person with a different religion. Even gender can affect the enjoyment of rights and benefits, as well as chastisement and sentence.[7] With this discrepancy, how can we achieve a consistent definition of human rights? How can one hope to achieve the community ideals and doctrines of Islam consistent with a universal concept of human rights? What is the social contract that both human rights advocates and Muslims jointly believe in? These are the inconsistencies and challenges between human rights advocates and a number of Islamic scholars. For this reason, many Islamic countries are lagging behind other countries in ratifying human rights treaties. In fact, according to such countries, the issue of religion is one of the main factors involved in this contradiction (Dwyer, 1997).

Emmanuel Decaux and de Frouville (2018) surveying the limits of law in the world of globalization and terrorism, from the reform of the Nations Unions or the development of international justice, declared that the notion of sovereignty has been extremely altered. The affirmation of universal human rights is part of this alteration; it created a kind of metabolism. In Islam, many legal intellectuals on both sides are endeavoring to discuss common and different values and counter-values to optimistically find a middle ground for observing the principles of human rights from the perspective of two different ideas of universalism and relativism. All of

these efforts would require the cooperation and consensus of professors, jurists, lawyers, and law and political science students to find acceptable solutions to relativism and universalism on the subject of human rights through negotiation.

Human Rights hold the promise of transforming the world in profound ways. But the processes of change are constructed via the specific cultural and political contexts. Rather than reveal harmony, they mirror conflict and opposition at the first sight. The portrait of human rights as a universal phenomenon itself produces questioning of the beliefs and practices and norms of different communities, and the different stratum of communities (Monshipouri et al. 2008). Nevertheless, accommodation, even with the civil doctrines of Islam, is possible.

Briefly stated, human rights do not belong to one culture as they are not the offspring of a specific country. Human rights are what governments as stewards of all citizens have to define as commitments prior to all others, which is to be a sort of corporate responsibility. Likewise, human rights would be derived from regulating the obligations for governments. The point is, some of these positive and negative laws are not approved in the view of Islamic relativists, while the main argument in the current chapter conveys that these differences can be consented in Islam if they do not conflict with the civil doctrines of Islam, such as justice, the fight against ignorance, accountability, piety, resurrection, namely violating any fundamental rights of humans–*Human Rights*.

Notes

1. However, a number of academics and scholars associate human rights, in terms of their nature, formation, evolution, and current existence, with the West. See Sharam (2006).
2. The Second World Conference on Human Rights, Vienna, 1993.
3. Vienna Conference on Human Rights, 1993.
4. World Conference on Women in Beijing, 1995.
5. The Sixth Asia-Pacific Regional Human Rights Arrangements, "Tehran Human Rights Workshop," February, 1998.
6. Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na'im, a law professor at Emory University, is a leading author and scholar in the field of theoretical and philosophical studies of human rights. An-Na'im was unjustly treated by the Sudanese government for his views, and was forced to immigrate to the United States. His scientific findings provided convincing answers to the claims of Western human rights scholars that only Western culture is capable of and accountable for human rights..
7. Allameh Helli, Tabsare Al-Motalemin Shahid Sani (A Second Martyr), al-Rawdah al-Bahiya in Sharh al-Lama al-Dimashqiyya, and a collection of the book "Javaher al-Kalam" with the title of an original source of Shiite Jurisprudence.

References

An-Naim, A. (2000) Islam and Human Rights: Beyond the Universality Debate, Proceedings of the 94th Annual Meeting of the American Society of International Law, pp. 95–101.

An-Naim, A. (2003) 'Introduction: "Area Expressions" and the Universality of Human Rights: Mediating a Contingent Relationship', in D. P. Forsythe and P. C. MacMahon (eds), *Human Rights and Diversity: Area Studies Revisited*, Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1–21.

An-Naim, A. (2010a) 'Universality of Human Rights: Mediating Paradox to Enhance Practice,' in M. Jovanovic and I. Krstic (eds.) *Human Rights Today – 60 Years of the Universal Declaration*, The Netherlands: Eleven International Publishing, pp. 29–50.

An-Naim, A. (2010b) 'European Islam or Islamic Europe': The Secular State for Negotiating Pluralism,' in M.-C. Foblets and J.-Y. Carlier (eds.) *Islam & Europe: Crises Are Challenges*, Leuven University Press, 85–107.

An-Naim, A. (2010c) 'An-Na'im's Philosophy on Islam and Human Rights', in M. A. Baderin (ed.) *Islam and Human Rights: Selected Essays of Abdullahi An-Na'im*, Farnham: Ashgate, xiii–xxxix.

Arnold, R. (2013) *The Universalism of Human Rights*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2–5.

Corradetti, C. (2009) *Relativism and Human Rights: A Theory of Pluralistic Universalism*, Springer Netherlands, 1–14.

D'Amato, A. (1996) 'Human Rights as Part of Customary International Law: A Plea for Change of Paradigms, Ga. J. Int'l & Comp,' *Georgia Journal of International and Comparative Law* 25, 47.

D'Amato, A. (2006) 'The Concept of Human Rights in International Law', in Michael K. Addoled (ed.) *International Law of Human Rights*, Aldershot: Dartmouth.

Decaux, E. and de Frouville, O. (2018) 'Droit International Public', *Dalloz*, 536.

Delanty, G. and Inglis, D. (eds.). (2010) 'An Overview of the Field of Cosmopolitan Studies', *Cosmopolitanism*, London: Routledge, 1–27.

Donnelly, J. (2003a) 'In Defense of the Universal Declaration Model', in G. M. Lyons and J. Mayall (eds.) *International Human Rights in the 21st Century: Protecting the Rights of Groups*, Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.

Donnelly, J. (2003b) *Universal Human Rights in Theory and Practice*, 2nd edn., Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Donnelly, J. (2007) 'The Relative Universality of Human Rights', *Human Rights Quarterly* 29 (2):281–306.

Donnelly, J. (2008) 'Human Rights: Both Universal and Relative. A Reply to Michael Goodhart,' *Human Rights Quarterly* 30 (1), 194–204.

Donnelly, J. and Howard-Hassmann, R. E. (1986) 'Human Dignity, Human Rights, and Political Regimes', Political Science Faculty Publications,' *The American Science Political Review* 80, 805–807.

Dwyer, K. (1997) 'Beyond a Boundary? 'Universal Human Rights' and the Middle East,' *Anthropology Today* 13 (6), 13–18.

Elysabeth Mayer, A. (1994) 'Universal Versus Islamic Human Rights: A Clash of Cultures or a Clash with a Construct?' *Michigan Journal of International Law* 15 (2), 371–378.

Monshipouri, M., E. Neil et al. (2008) *Constructing Human Rights in the Age of Globalization,* translated by Mehdi Zakerian, Tehran: Institute of Cultural & Social Studies, 502–507.

Monshipouri, M. and M. Zakerian (2016) 'The State of Human Rights in Iran', in M. Mahmoud (ed.) *Inside the Islamic Republic Social Change in Post-Khomeini Iran*, New York: Oxford University Press, 154–155.

Sharam, A. (2006) *Are Human Rights Western? A Contribution to the Dialogue of Civilization*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Zakerian, M. (2009) *The Key Concepts of International Human Rights*, Tehran: Mizan Publication.

Zakerian, M. (2014) *All Human Rights for All*, Tehran: Mizan Publication, 61–65.

Zakerian, M. (2017) *Policymaking of Human Rights in Middle East*, Tehran: Khorsandi Publication, 99–114.

50

Animals in social and political theory

Alasdair Cochrane and Krithika Srinivasan

While the study of animals in social and political theory cannot be called mainstream, it is far less marginal than it once was. Indeed, scholarship from the social sciences has played an important role in the emerging field of 'animal studies', and university courses with such themes as 'animals and society', 'animals and politics' and 'animal geography' have started to emerge in the syllabuses of many university degrees. This area of enquiry explores such issues as the role that non-human animals have in *shaping* our societies and political processes, the different *roles* that animals perform within them, the ways in which animals are *affected* by their place in our societies, and the different *status and entitlements* animals do and should enjoy within our communities. But non-human animals have never been *central* to social and political thought – and that is quite simply because animals have usually been regarded as separate from both 'society' and the 'polis'. As scholars have chipped away at that separation, they have also come to be regarded as legitimate objects of study in social and political thought.

This chapter explores the place of animals in social and political thought over four sections. In the first, we look at the place of animals in traditional Western social and political thought: while animals were certainly discussed by prominent historical scholars, they were usually employed to mark out what is distinct, unique and special about *humans,* and in particular, their forms of social and political life. The idea that animals themselves might be part of society and politics was rarely even considered. In the second section we show how animals began to touch on social and political thinking in the 1970s and 1980s, in part because of the rise of activist struggles for so-called 'animal liberation', and because of scholarship in philosophy on *animal ethics*. We then explore in the third section how animals came to figure more prominently in *social science* by scholars who challenged long-standing dichotomies between society and nature by recognising the agency of non-human others, and their role in shaping all forms of society and political community. In the final section, we then explore how a number of recent scholars have begun to ask what the 'entangled fates' of humans and animals means for 'animal justice'. That is to say, we explore that scholarship which not only accepts the reality that animals are parts of society but which then goes on to ask how this affects what animals are owed.

The exclusion of animals from social and political thought

In the prominent historical texts of social and political theory animals have been widely discussed. However, these can be justifiably described as mostly 'exclusionary' (of animals) for two related reasons. Firstly, discussions of animals are usually intended to reveal what is distinctive and exceptional about human beings. Secondly, animals are presented as this 'radical other' to illuminate what it means to be human: crucially, this has usually meant identifying humans with 'politics' and 'society', thereby relegating animals to the domain of the 'natural'. Without doubt, Aristotle provides one of the clearest and most famous examples of such dichotomous and hierarchical reasoning. According to Aristotle, all natural entities have a *telos:* an end, a purpose, or full development. Because of their unique intellectual capacities, Aristotle believed that men can only reach their full development within the *polis;* this is why he famously says that man by nature is a *politikon zōon* (a political animal) (Aristotle 1992: 1253 a7). Aristotle believes this is because man's moral and intellectual nature can only be properly fulfilled within a political association: that is, by ruling over others, being ruled by others, debating with others, discussing justice and injustice, and so on. The exercise of these political virtues, then, not only differentiates humans from other animals but also marks out what the political community *is*: an arena for moral and intellectual debate and argument. Given that these are capacities and virtues that are unique to human beings, so Aristotle believed, it also serves to exclude animals from our understanding of what politics is.

Aristotle's views on the unique capacities of men were not adopted by all Ancient thinkers. Indeed, there were some, such as Plutarch and Porphyry for example (Steiner 2005a: 96), who were far more generous in their assessment of both animals' rational capacities and their place in society. Nonetheless, it is evident that Aristotle's arguments were and continue to be highly influential. Such influence in Western thought was no doubt compounded by the ways in which certain Christian thinkers fused these ideas with Biblical insights about man's natural dominion over the Earth. For example, Augustine claimed that we have no duties of justice to animals and can kill them because they share no 'rational community' with us (Augustine 1998: 20). Thomas Aquinas extends such arguments even further, denying that we owe any duties of charity to animals, and that any obligation we might have to refrain from acting cruelly towards them rests on the fact that such actions might lead us to treat humans in similar ways. Once again, the grounds and implications for excluding animals are familiar: '… the love of charity extends to none but God and our neighbour. But the word neighbour cannot be extended to irrational creatures, since they have no fellowship with man in the rational life' (Aquinas 1929: 25.3). Put simply, because animals lack our intellectual capacities, they cannot meaningfully be included in our communal life.

Given this intellectual background and tradition, it should be of no surprise that the founders of 'modern' social and political thought continued to exclude animals from their understandings of society and politics. Indeed, Enlightenment thinking's reification of reason was of course so profound that many of its leading thinkers equated the authentic human life to entail freeing ourselves from and overcoming the burdens of nature (Tovey 2003: 209). This is of course well illustrated by the work of political theorists such as Thomas Hobbes, John Locke and Jean-Jacques Rousseau who employed the so-called 'social contract'. These contract theorists asked what individuals in a pre-political 'state of nature' would agree to when entering a political community: what freedoms would they give up, and in return for what? Not only does this means of reasoning cement the dichotomy and hierarchy between nature and society but it does so in a way which leaves animals squarely within the 'natural'. For it was taken for granted that animals lacked the rational powers to understand and consent to any such contract, and were thus unable to extricate themselves from nature and enter into the civic community.

While Karl Marx eschewed employing social contract reasoning in his analysis, his theory of historical materialism nonetheless shared the idea that the full development of human capacities requires emancipation from nature. For Marx, it is the natural condition of scarcity that forces individuals into oppressive relations with one another. Moreover, true liberation not only requires overthrowing these social relations but also moving beyond the 'animalistic' functions (eating, drinking, procreating and so on) that those relations encourage. To be truly free, humans must get beyond labouring to meet their basic needs, and instead achieve abundance through the mastery of nature, so that they can labour freely and universally *as a species* (Marx and Engels 1994: 152). Marx, and the other theorists regarded as the founders of social science, were of course responding to the new world in which they found themselves: the modern, industrialised, capitalist societies of urban Western Europe. This context provides further reason for the neglect of animals in their analysis. For one, these were societies in which the role and place of animals were becoming hidden. Moreover, in establishing a 'social' science to be distinguished from the 'natural' sciences, these thinkers were identifying a clear and unique object of study: the social and cultural life of *people* – i.e. human beings (Carter and Charles 2016: 85).

The rationale behind the exclusion of animals from social and political thought should hopefully thus be clear: animals were regarded neither as members of society nor of our political communities. As we will see, while these assumptions have come under sustained criticism in recent years, they nevertheless still hold a firm place in much contemporary scholarship.

The emergence of animal ethics

One of the drivers for social and political theorists to reconsider the place of animals in their analysis came from a different disciplinary source: moral philosophy. Philosophers have asked questions about the moral value of animals for as long as moral philosophy has been around. However, it was only in the 1970s that *animal ethics* became a discrete and somewhat burgeoning area of enquiry within the discipline. No doubt an important part of this was down to the growing societal awareness concerning the treatment of animals in modern laboratories and farms. For example, Ruth Harrison's (1964) book, *Animal Machines,* was hugely influential, providing detailed and shocking accounts of the processes within intensive farming systems. As a result of this increased public awareness, not only did the social movement around animal protection both expand and radicalise, but it also led to a response from philosophers exploring the moral obligations that we have to animals. The most famous of these responses undoubtedly came from Peter Singer's (1990) seminal book, *Animal Liberation*. As we will see, while Singer's book was a work of moral philosophy, it also had important insights for social and political thought. The same is also true for two of the most prominent approaches to animal ethics that emerged afterwards: theories of animal rights, and care ethics.

In a widely cited passage discussing on what grounds animals might be denied rights, the utilitarian philosopher and social reformer Jeremy Bentham wrote that, '… the question is not, Can they *reason*? Nor, Can they *talk*? But, Can they *suffer*?' (Bentham 1823 [1780]). For a classical utilitarian like Bentham, the focus on suffering of course makes perfect sense: we should judge all actions, policies and social norms in terms of their promotion of utility – that is, on the extent to which they promote happiness and diminish suffering. Given that many animals are clearly capable of suffering (and indeed happiness) they should count in moral and political deliberations about how to act. Singer builds on and extends Bentham's utilitarian ideas. He agrees that it is the capacity to suffer – 'sentience' – which grants an entity moral status. Sentient creatures, he contends, have interests which should be counted *equally* in our deliberations about how to act. This principle of 'equal consideration of interests' requires us to consider the interests

of every sentient being on its own merits. Just as we should not prioritise the interests of men over women (to do so would be sexist), or whites over blacks (to do so would be racist), so we should not prioritise the interests of humans over non-humans (to do so would be 'speciesist'). Crucially, Singer's claim is not that all sentient creatures should be *treated* equally, but that their interests are *considered equally*. Thus, no wrong is done if we deny pigs the right to freedom of religion, because pigs have no interest in freedom of religion. But a wrong is done if we ignore pigs' manifest interest in avoiding suffering, an interest they clearly share with many humans. Once we have considered all interests equally, Singer argues that we must then choose actions and policies which bring about the greatest amount of utility (interest-satisfaction) as possible.

The implications of this theory for our personal moral obligations are reasonably clear – and Singer focuses on the imperatives to become vegetarian and to avoid products tested on animals, for example. But the theory also has wider political and social implications too. In the first place, Singer's book is not just a work of scholarship, but also of activism: a political and social 'call to arms' that helped to inspire, inform and bolster the social movement of animal liberation – a movement which has been subject to considerable analysis by social movement scholars (Jasper and Nelkin 1992). Relatedly, Singer's theory also provides prescriptions for the actions of political institutions, and not just individual actors. After all, policy-makers must consider what laws, actions, subsidies and so on best promote social utility; and it is clear that Singer's theory of animal liberation would have profound implications for policies on farming, pharmaceutical research, the pet industry, the use of animals in sport and much more besides.

One of the most notable responses to Singer's utilitarian animal ethics is the theory of animal rights put forward by Tom Regan (2004). Regan takes issue with the utilitarian way of valuing animals. He claims that utilitarians only value individual sentient creatures insofar as they contribute to overall utility. This means that any individual can and should be sacrificed – including through being deliberately harmed or killed – if that serves this greater good. For instance, under simple utilitarian reasoning, if it could be shown that some painful and deadly invasive procedure on a single animal (or human) could save the lives of a few more, then such a procedure should be done. But Regan argues that sentient animals are not mere 'receptacles' of value like this – instead they have a value of their own: an 'inherent value'. Individuals with inherent value, he claims, have a right to 'respectful treatment': that is, a right never to be, '…treated *merely as a means* to securing the best aggregate consequences' (Regan 2004: 249). Simply put, on this reasoning, animals have certain rights which provide individuals with protections from pressures to sacrifice them for the greater good.

While such animal rights theories clearly ground certain duties in us as individuals, the political implications of the same should not be overlooked. After all, 'rights' are commonly regarded as enforceable claims of justice. To explain, rights mark out claims that it would not just be good or charitable to protect, but which *must* be protected as a matter of *justice* – which must be acted upon at the societal level. Crucially, for many political theorists (Nozick 1980: 499–503, Steiner 2005b: 460) this enforcement requires the coercive power of the state. Put simply, on this view, then, any theory of animal rights crosses from moral philosophy into political theory: it requires explorations into the types of political institutions and structures best able uphold animals' entitlements (Cochrane 2018).

A third type of animal ethic to explore offers a powerful critique of both Singer and Regan's reasoning. For 'care ethicists', like Josephine Donovan and Carol Adams (2007), both utilitarian and rights theories offer a poor basis by which to delineate what we owe to animals. In particular, these scholars argue that these traditional theories put too much faith in the power of logic and reason to determine what we ought to do. Such methodologies, these critics claim, strip away the powerful motivations we have for acting morally: the feelings of care we have for

others with whom we are in relation (Gilligan 1982). Rather than starting with abstract claims about which capacities ground legitimate attributions of moral value or rights to particular creatures, care ethicists argue that we should instead begin with our existing relationships of care in the real world. For some critics, such an ethic can be unduly conservative, limiting the scope and scale of our obligations to only animals with whom we are already in relations of care (cf. Noddings 1984). However, most care ethicists (e.g. Hamington 2017) respond that starting with existing relations does not mean ending with them: we can draw on our manifest sources of sentiment and sympathy (say, for instance, with our companion animals) to explore how they might be extended to different types of animals (say, for instance, those raised and killed in agriculture). Furthermore, care ethicists like Brian Luke (2007) argue that it is important to explore and expose the ways in which our putative feelings of compassion and empathy have been stunted by powerful moral, political, economic and other forces: think, for example, of the ways in which consumers are distanced both physically and emotionally from the realities of the way in which animal food products are manufactured.

While care ethics focuses on individual human relationships with animals, other recent work in animal ethics by Clare Palmer (2011) delineates our duties to animals based on their *societal* place (i.e. societal relations) with them. In this framework, human ethical obligations to animals are determined by whether they are domestic animals, wild animals or animals who exist between or on the margins of these categories. This kind of relational approach might be seen as a 'bridge' between the kinds of care ethics just discussed and the theories of animal justice explored in the final section of the chapter.

In any case, the call in care ethics to avoid overly rationalistic and abstract prescriptions to 'promote utility' or 'respect rights', but instead to attend to the context of the situation in front of us, is one that is attuned to the sensibilities of many social scientists. For this reason, care ethics has perhaps been the most influential of the theories of animal ethics within social theory.

More-than-human entanglements

It is fair to say that the emergence of the field of 'animal ethics' in the 1970s and 1980s spurred scholars from other disciplinary traditions to explore 'the animal question'. Indeed, subsequent decades saw the gradual emergence of a distinct area of enquiry usually referred to as 'animal studies', in which varied aspects of human–animal relations came under academic analysis in a range of disciplines in the humanities and social sciences. Political and social theorists have been crucial to the field's development, for instance by offering important insights into the ways in which animals are entwined into our societies. Indeed, such scholars have been central in breaking down and challenging the aforementioned exclusion of animals from our understandings of politics and society.

While the field of animal studies has certainly grown remarkably in a short space of time, it has nevertheless remained rather marginal and has rarely penetrated mainstream scholarship. The work which has been most influential in overcoming traditional dualisms between society and nature – and in challenging species exclusive understandings of society and politics – has mainly come from other sources. Perhaps the most prominent and influential have been 'actor network theory' (see, for example, Latour 1993), 'social and technology studies (STS)' (see, for example, Haraway 1989) and 'new materialism' (see, for example, Bennett 2010). Each of these theories questions the traditional idea of society as an arena in which only individual human subjects act and interact. This is done in part by challenging the very idea of the individuated rational human subject: such theorists point to the multiplicity of organisms (bacteria, viruses, fungi, etc.) which make up any individual (human) body, but also to the different material forces acting upon that

body to drive it to act in certain ways. And relatedly, these theories acknowledge the agency of non-human individuals and collectives, pointing to the ways in which a variety of social and political processes can only be understood if we are attuned to the role that a huge array of non-human actors have played in their development.

These theories develop understandings of society that go well beyond animals, covering non-living entities as well. Nonetheless, their implications for animals have been taken up extensively by scholars in many disciplines. There is now a substantial body of work in animal studies that draws on ideas from actor-network theory and new materialisms coupled with ideas from care ethics. Often going under the rubrics of relational or more-than-human approaches, these literatures emphasise the importance of understanding society as composed by (shifting) relationships between human and non-human entities, including animals. These relations become the focus of analysis, with attention paid to the agencies of animals in shaping social processes, including the ethical responses or care they evoke (and receive), and to how all entities, human and non-human, are always in processes of 'co-becoming' in networks of relations (Tsing 2015; Whatmore 2002).

These works have been successful in mainstreaming animals in social sciences – at least to the extent where it is no longer uncommon for research in disciplines like anthropology, geography, history and sociology to focus on animals (and other non-humans) as integral constituent aspects of social phenomena. Relational and more-than-human approaches have also addressed questions of ethics vis-à-vis animals. For the most part, they have advocated frameworks that echo some of the tenets of care ethics. Eschewing universal or abstract principles as a guide for human–animal ethics, they argue that our responsibilities and ethical obligations to other animals should be rooted in material and affective relations. The emphasis is on situated, grounded ethics that are in tune with the specific social context and that emerge from the everyday human-animal entanglements. Animal ethics, on this view, is not fixed or universal, but rather contingent and constantly evolving (Buller 2015).

Relational and more-than-human approaches to animal ethics have gained much purchase in the social sciences, arguably because they allow for context-specific analyses that avoid 'judgments from elsewhere', something that the social sciences are wary of because of the legacies of colonial academia and a commitment to social justice. At the same time, they have come under criticism for a 'residual humanism' wherein human interests are privileged over those of other animals (Lulka 2009). This is at least partly tied to the analytical focus on existing relations (usually at the micro-level of individuals or small groups/communities). This leads to the overlooking of broader social structures that shape individual relationships. For example, even the most caring laboratory animal caretaker cannot mitigate the profound harms experienced by laboratory animals by sheer virtue of being laboratory animals, i.e. harms that are tied to their social place, and that emerge from wider social norms and structures, and not the situated ethics that may be practised by the caretaker. The focus on existing relations also excludes other possible ways of relating and animal agencies that have been foreclosed or suppressed by the current relation (Giraud 2019). Together, this often means that approaches based on relational ethics or the ethics of 'entanglement' end up reinforcing societal status-quos with respect to human–animal interactions (but there are exceptions, see for instance (Celermajer et al. 2020)).

Towards justice for animals

It is reasonable to say that while traditional understandings of the 'social' and the 'political' in social and political thought have not yet been completely overturned, they are under serious pressure. It is now uncontroversial to regard the highly influential dichotomies between nature and society prevalent in so much of social and political theory as seriously problematic. Many

social scientists accept that human lives are bound together with the lives of other animals, and that societies and political communities are more-than-human assemblages of a multitude of species. But while this reveals how far social and political thinking has come in relation to animals, it is fair to say that there is still much to be done.

For instance, there is still relatively little work in mainstream social and political theory relating to questions of what we might call 'animal justice' (cf. Nussbaum 2006; Donaldson and Kymlicka 2011; Garner 2013; Cochrane 2018). To explain, social and political theorists have long been interested in *inequality* and the differentiated distribution of risk and life chances across society. Furthermore, they have paid particular attention to how these inequalities map onto the stratifications of class, race and sex. Mapping inequalities along the line of *species,* however, has not been given much scholarly attention. Interestingly, this is true even for many of those who acknowledge and study the more-than-human nature of our social life (Tovey 2003: 213). It is hard to know exactly why this is the case. Perhaps those scholars do in fact maintain a commitment to some form of human exceptionalism after all; perhaps animals are not owed social justice – perhaps *their* diminished life chances and suffering does not matter for some reason. But what that reason for human exceptionalism might be is hard to discern. Another explanation might be that mere recognition of more-than-human entanglements is not adequate, and can even pose dangers. As Eva Giraud (2019: 2) has argued, maintaining a commitment to the complexity and nuances of a situation can make it hard to identify both culpability for that situation as well as responsibility to do anything about it. In other words, such work can have the effect of paralysing *social and political intervention.* As a result, Giraud rightly asks how we can get 'beyond' entanglement in order to tackle the manifest injustices animals face in contemporary societies.

Importantly, there is now a body of scholarship which has begun to move in these directions in significant ways. One of the most prominent works of this type has come from Sue Donaldson and Will Kymlicka (2011) in their book, *Zoopolis*. *Zoopolis* aims to offer a distinctively *political* theory of animal rights. Donaldson and Kymlicka take for granted many of the animal rights defended by animal ethicists, but argue that further differentiated rights and statuses should be awarded to animals based on their *relational position*. For example, those domesticated animals who have been bred to live with humans should be recognised as full members of our society with rights of *citizenship* as such. In turn, wild animals who live apart from society should be recognised as members of their own communities with rights of *sovereignty* over their territories. Finally, those liminal animals – wild animals who live among human settlements – should be regarded not as full citizens, but as legitimate residents with rights of *denizenship*. What Donaldson and Kymlicka are seeking to address is the fact that animals' vulnerabilities and interests are not uniform; what they need in order to flourish very much depends on the relational position in which they stand. Crucially, they are arguing that the particular 'more-than-human entanglements' we have with animals at the societal level point to the different types of political and social arrangements that we should seek to establish.

But work on questions of animal justice does not only take place at this rather abstract level. As well as addressing important questions concerning institutions, structures and status, scholars are also looking at how we can move 'beyond entanglement' in concrete social practices. Some of the most promising work in this regard brings together ideas from the varied approaches discussed so far to develop context-specific analyses that are attentive to the specificities of the relations at stake, but at the same time, make an effort to avoid reinforcing anthropocentric status-quos. Claire Jean Kim's (2015) work, for example, examines how conflicts between the rights of cultural minorities and the wellbeing of animals can be addressed without deprioritising any set of justice claims. Similarly, empirical research on the commodification of animals in a range of spaces – from wildlife to agriculture – offers insightful analyses of how broader

structural processes intersect with everyday materialities and affective relations to impact the lives of animals (Collard 2018; Collard and Dempsey 2013; Wilkie 2005).

Conclusion

Animals have long been excluded from analysis within social and political theory. This was based on the assumption that animals are neither properly social nor political. In fact, humans and human communities were frequently *defined* by how they are distinct from and overcome 'animality'. This traditional view undoubtedly still has some influence in contemporary scholarship. Nonetheless, the rise of animal ethics, animal studies, and social theories recognising more-than-human entanglements has all played a role in breaking these assumptions down. Still, while animals are acknowledged and studied as integral parts of society, their acceptance as full-fledged *members* of the same has been much slower to come. This has inhibited scholarly enquiries which recognise that animals are owed social justice. Fortunately, however, that is starting to change with the emergence of important new research in this direction.

References

Aquinas, T. (1929) *Summa Theologica*, trans. The English Dominican Fathers, London: Burns Oates and Washbourne.

Aristotle (1992) *The Politics*, trans. T. Sinclair, revised edn., London: Penguin.

Augustine (1998) *The City of God Against the Pagans*, trans. R. Dyson, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bennett, J. (2010) *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Bentham, J. (1780) *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*, Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Buller, H. (2015) 'Animal Geographies III: Ethics', *Progress in Human Geography* 40 (3): 1–9.

Carter, B. and Charles, N. (2016) 'The Animal Challenge to Sociology', *European Journal of Social Theory* 21 (1): 79–97.

Celermajer, D., Chatterjee, S., Cochrane, A. et al. (2020) 'Justice through a Multispecies Lens', *Contemporary Political Theory* 19: 475–512.

Cochrane, A. (2018) *Sentientist Politics: A Theory of Global Inter-Species Justice*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Collard, R. and Dempsey, J. (2013) 'Life for Sale? The Politics of Lively Commodities', *Environment and Planning A* 45 (11): 2682–2699.

Collard, R.-C. (2018) 'Disaster Capitalism and the Quick, Quick, Slow Unravelling of Animal Life', *Antipode* 50 (4): 910–928.

Donaldson, S. and Kymlicka, W. (2011) *Zoopolis: A Political Theory of Animal Rights*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Donovan, J. and Adams, C. (eds.) (2007) *The Feminist Care Tradition in Animal Ethics*, New York: Columbia University Press.

Garner, R. (2013) *A Theory of Justice for Animals*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Gilligan, C. (1982) *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development*, Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press.

Giraud, E. (2019) *What Comes after Entanglement? Activism, Anthropocentrism, and an Ethics of Exclusion*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Hamington, M. (2017) 'Care, Moral Progress, and Companion Animals', in C. Overall (ed.) *Pets and People: The Ethics of Companion Animals*, Oxford: Oxford University Press: 51–62.

Haraway, D. (1989) *Primate Visions*, New York: Routledge.

Harrison, R. (1964) *Animal Machines: The New Factory Farming Industry*, London: V. Stuart.

Jasper, J. M. and Nelkin, D. (1992) *The Animal Rights Crusade: The Growth of a Moral Protest*, New York: Free Press.

Kim, C. J. (2015) *Dangerous Crossings: Race, Species, and Nature in a Multicultural Age*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Latour, B. (1993) *We Have Never Been Modern*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Luke, B. (2007) 'Justice, Caring and Animal Liberation', in J. Donovan and C. Adams (eds.) *The Feminist Care Tradition in Animal Ethics*, New York: Columbia University Press: 125–152.

Lulka, D. (2009) 'The Residual Humanism of Hybridity: Retaining a Sense of the Earth', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 34 (3): 378–393.

Marx, K. and Engels, F. (1994) 'The German Ideology Part 1 (Selections)', in L. Simon (ed.) *Karl Marx: Selected Writings*, Indianapolis, IN: Hackett.

Noddings, N. (1984) *Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Nozick, R. (1980) *Philosophical Explanations*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Nussbaum, M. (2006) *Frontiers of Justice: Disability, Nationality, Species Membership*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Palmer, C. (2011) *Animal Ethics in Context*, New York: Columbia University Press.

Regan, T. (2004) *The Case for Animal Rights*, 2nd edn., Berkeley, CA: The University of California Press.

Singer, P. (1990) *Animal Liberation*, 2nd edn., London: Cape.

Steiner, G. (2005a) *Anthropocentrism and its Discontents: The Moral Status of Animals in the History of Western Philosophy*, Pittsburgh PA: University of Pittsburgh Press.

Steiner, H. (2005b) 'Moral Rights', in Copp, D. (ed.) *The Oxford Handbook of Ethical Theory*, Oxford: Oxford University Press: 459–80.

Tovey, H. (2003) 'Theorising Nature and Society in Sociology: The Invisibility of Animals', *Sociologia Ruralis* 43 (2): 196–215.

Tsing, A. L. (2015) *The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Whatmore, S. (2002) *Hybrid Geographies: Natures, Cultures, Spaces*, London, Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Wilkie, R. (2005) 'Sentient Commodities and Productive Paradoxes: The Ambiguous Nature of Human–Livestock Relations in Northeast Scotland', *Journal of Rural Studies* 21 (2): 213–230.

Index