

**EXCLUSION AND THE GLOBAL POLITICAL ECONOMY:
FROM CRITIQUE TO RETHINKING**

By

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is about exclusion in the neoliberal global economy. It takes as its starting point the picture of the world painted by Gramscian, feminist and postcolonialist theories of global politics. Each of these critical theories of international relations seeks to reveal and explain how neoliberalism affects workers, women, and postcolonial peoples. Each also argues that the current world order is not inevitable. It is the product of decisions made by specific actors pursuing specific objectives, and it is questioned and resisted by other actors who experience it as an imposition and a series of limitations on their own desire to shape their lives.

The thesis accepts this contention, but it maintains that critical theories suffer from two limitations. First, they are developed by starting from the lives of discrete actors and represent only those actors' experience and understanding of world politics. Secondly, these theories are associated with political projects that answer their actors' primary concerns without necessarily taking into account others'. The result is the risk of substituting one exclusionary order—the one they all critique—for another. It is the contention of this thesis that from a theoretical and normative point of view, it is necessary to draw on different criticisms of global order to account for exclusion in its various forms and to minimise or eliminate it through a transformation of world order.

Using the psychology literature on empathy, the thesis shows that human beings have the capacity to develop an awareness of, and an appreciation for, one another's suffering, but that this capacity is diminished by dominant ways of representing some categories of people. By looking at those who are excluded by neoliberalism and how they have reacted to it with global protests that have been taking place since the 1990s, we can see how many critics of neoliberalism have become more sensitive to the way globalization affects not only themselves but others far away. We can also see that they have made a conscious effort to understand others and associate them in the process of rethinking globalization on more inclusive terms.

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Ce qu'il y a de commun entre eux tous n'est pas une nature, mais une condition, c'est-à-dire un ensemble de limites et de contraintes: la nécessité de mourir, de travailler pour vivre, d'exister dans un monde habité déjà par d'autres hommes.
—Jean-Paul Sartre¹

*Cada escritor tiene su mundo. Conozcamos todos los mundos a través de todos los libros.
Cada libro es una puerta a cada mundo.*
—author unknown²

Bolokòni kelen te se ka bèlè tà.
—Bambara proverb (Mali)³

INTRODUCTION

Theoretically this thesis finds its inspiration in the third debate in International Relations theory. I argue that critical IR is indispensable to a fuller understanding of world politics and that a normative practice of world politics must take seriously the contribution of critical theory, which can be understood as ‘theory of history in the sense of being concerned not just with the past but with a continuing process of historical change’.⁴ Critical theory helps to shed light on actors and phenomena hidden from view in the traditional paradigms of IR scholarship. By examining world politics through the experiences of workers, women, and postcolonial peoples, it is possible to identify and explain social problems considered solved or simply overlooked by traditional scholarship. Epistemologically, therefore, the thesis argues that experience is a source of knowledge of social reality. The thesis also maintains that subjectivity is not necessarily a source of false knowledge; it is only a source of partial knowledge. It is when bridges are

built across subjects' standpoints that we can come closer to understanding and solving contemporary global social and political problems.

Beyond the epistemological relevance of this debate, there is also a normative and political debate. Some traditional scholars in the field as well as all critical theorists acknowledge the inescapable normative dimension of theorizing about international politics. Theories of international politics not only determine the actors and the nature of relations between them; they also implicitly or explicitly determine what possibilities exist in international politics (realism) and the limits of change (liberalism institutionalism). For instance, a conviction that human nature is self-interested leads to scepticism about the possibility of harmonious relations on a global scale. A conviction that humans are rational by nature has led to the conclusion that harmonious relations on a global scale are possible with proper institutions that harness this essential rationality for the benefit of humankind.⁵ Finally, the conviction that human nature is socially constructed, as opposed to fixed, allows for a wider range of institutions and global orders. More importantly, perhaps, it makes space for social choice because the possibilities of political life are not at the outset restrained by putatively natural constraints. In other words, there are always alternatives to the current order even when bringing them about is difficult.

The subjects of IR theory are in practice the actors of world politics. They shape the global order and they are shaped by it. In so doing they create a framework in which they and other social actors live their lives. They define political communities whose institutions and practices instantiate certain moral principles. In International Relations, the political community *par excellence* has been the nation-state. Although the nation-

state has been associated with realist theories of international politics, liberalism has also treated it as its basic unit but has added republican institutions and a capitalist economy as conditions of the good life within and among nation-states. Before the emergence of critical IR theory, the only significant challenge to nation-state as subject of international relations came from Marxists and world systems theorists who have privileged social classes. Each paradigm supposes different communities and different relations between social actors on a global scale. Yet, differences between the paradigms (and between theories within each paradigm) exhaust neither our knowledge of international politics nor the possibilities for reconstructing international order.

Critical theories of IR emerged in response to what scholars and political actors saw as the limitations of traditional scholarship. Although the nation-state, liberalism, capitalism, and socialism aimed to realize humanity's purported aspirations for physical and material security, they all fell short of the objectives they set for themselves and sometimes worked against the aspirations of many people. Critical theorists in IR argue that a complete picture of world politics requires a closer look at real actors in their life circumstances than is allowed by a conceptual framework that 'sees' only nation-states. Critical theorists have urged their audiences to acknowledge the subjectivity of those who have been overlooked both in theorizing and conducting international politics. Politically, they have also explicitly supported hitherto marginalized subjects of world by making visible their conditions and resistance to the global order.

Subjective Critiques of IR Theory

We may outline three subjects that are key to the third debate: (1) the more sophisticated complex of social classes discussed by neo-Gramscian theorists; (2) women, whose agency is a mainstay of feminism; and (3) postcolonial peoples, whose experience is the object of postcolonialism. These subjects are not coherent wholes despite claims to their collective existence. Most people are not only, or even primarily, a worker or a woman or a non-Western person. We can legitimately question the relevance of class analysis in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries given the number of situations encountered by workers. As well, what it means to be a 'woman' is subject to debate since women also define themselves by labels other than gender. Likewise, racial and cultural groups are not homogenous since colonized peoples experience colonization differently. Ultimately, the internal coherence of these categories is dubious. In spite of this, authors continue to operate within self-identified neo-Gramscian, feminist, and postcolonial paradigms of world politics.

For each of these critical theories, there is a central phenomenon that explains world order. For neo-Gramscians, capitalism is crucial to making sense of world order since production is the most important aspect of social relations. For feminists, gender explains the subordination of women and the nature of social relations in politics, economics, and culture. For postcolonialists, the body of knowledge that guides dominant actors in world politics is more reflective of European culture than of natural laws of politics or universal morality. Critical theories highlight the way capitalism, gender, and Eurocentrism lead to exclusion.

Taken together, different perspectives on world politics explain many processes, events, and problems of world politics. At the level of epistemology, there is already a considerable convergence in critical theories, especially in terms of the situatedness of knowledge, and the need to historicize and contextualize knowledge claims. Nevertheless, research remains fragmented along ontological lines, with preferred actors (social classes, women, postcolonial peoples) and central concerns (capitalism, gender, Eurocentrism). This is a potential source of conflict since exclusion gets defined with reference to each subject's experiences of it. Each subjective experience of world politics is equated with the human condition and the normative projects associated with each subject reflect its priorities.

When Cox claimed that theory is always for someone and for some purposes he meant that 'All theories have a perspective. Perspectives derive from a position in time and space, specifically social and political time and space'.⁶ Each paradigm accounts for a subject and a particular problem. To adjudicate among different perspectives that are to some extent all facets of the same reality is hardly simple. There are diverging, and sometimes contradictory, claims made, and different social projects associated with the knowledge produced from the different perspectives. In spite of the pluralism present in the third debate,⁷ the concrete consequences of theory in terms of political practice are such that the acceptance of alternative views is not guaranteed.

In the critical literature, the themes of resistance and dissent are often used to describe the practices of those who oppose hegemonic actors in world politics. The critique of traditional theories is matched by a critique of traditional actors of international politics. In the 1990s, both states and economic actors have been the target

of criticism, in particular with respect to the apparent proximity between state policy and the wishes of economic actors like corporations and investors. A close examination of the consequences of state policy on the social and economic circumstances of many people shows the relevance of critical theories in IR. The numerous demonstrations that have occurred against regional trade agreements, the World Trade Organization (WTO), the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, and many others seem to provide evidence for the claims of critical theorists.

The subjects of critical theories—workers, women, postcolonial peoples and other groups—*are* the protesters. The global scope of the ‘alter-globalization’ or global justice movement and the range of standpoints represented in it are particularly striking. The experience of the participants points to a democratic deficit in the current global social order.⁸ As we will see below, the actors that critical IR focuses on are central to this protest movement against a world order characterized by widespread exclusion and poverty even in areas that are nominally at peace. Protests occur because many actors experience the failures of the current world order that which has emphasized market-orientated social relations within and between states to achieve national and international security and prosperity. At the same time, the numerous organizations active in this movement are not always on the same page; that is, they bring to the protests specific perspectives and specific alternatives that may be incompatible (in their current form) with those of other participants.

The precise character of the movement is also a matter for debate. Participants, media, officials and even academics dub the movement against neoliberalism ‘anti-

globalization'. This is not an accurate label to describe most of those who protest. Participants themselves are partly responsible for the fact that this label is affixed to them. From the start of the debate, globalization was associated with the economy and the economic policies were neoliberal. From a public relations point of view, it was convenient for protesters to call themselves 'anti-globalization' as a way of clearly identifying their opposition to the neoliberal global economic order. However, in addition to being inaccurate, this label has also become a source of discredit since it suggests that protesters have little knowledge of the nature of social relations at this particular historic juncture; that is, they are already globalized; economics is only part of this globalization; and the movement against neoliberalism is itself an exemplar of globalization.

The contradiction between the label and the make-up and modus operandi has not gone unnoticed. While the media continue to refer to the opposition as the anti-globalization movement, participants and writers increasingly refer to it in ways that better delineate what it is *against* or what it is *for*.⁹ Thus, expressions like 'global anticapitalism', 'anticapitalist movement', 'global democracy movement', 'global justice movement', 'movement against global corporatism', 'global civil society movement', 'movement against corporate globalization', 'global resistance movement', 'alternative globalization movement', and combinations of these component terms are somewhat more accurate. It has also been described as 'a movement of movements', some of which are against globalization except for the purpose of organizing resistance to neoliberal policies, while others want a different globalization, even a capitalist one, albeit regulated. In the end, the simple expression 'movement against neoliberal globalization' is the most inclusive.

Nevertheless, what all critics share, is the will to reform or transform world order. For Jan Aart Scholte, 'if civil society associations are to be effective public educators and campaigners on economic globalization, they need to devote considerable energy to determining: precisely what is going on in the global economy; exactly what they want; and specifically what should be done to reach desired goals'.¹⁰ The first requirement is close to being realized, at least when considering the literature on global politics and the breadth of street-level criticisms. The second requirement is met by a range of actors, from the proponents of global governance centred on international organizations to those who want to recreate small, autonomous, truly self-governing communities. There is as yet no consensus regarding the shape of future world order and no consensus on the third requirement on how to change world order.

Empathy and global social relations

Together, the critical theories that have emerged in IR in the past generation have shown the partiality of traditional theories and the consequences of making policy on the basis of such limited understandings of the world. In this sense, critical theories have a certain coherence. Yet, critical theories are not automatically compatible simply because they have a common object of critique, i.e., traditional theories or the world order they help shape. The actors whose perspective they account for likewise object to the current world order, but they do not necessarily pursue the same alternative. If they want to address exclusion both normative theorists and activists must make a conscious effort to

understand forms of exclusion other than those that brought them to theorizing global politics or to engage in activism against the global order.

This thesis will argue that, ultimately, the social problems that critical theorists raise can only be properly explicated and addressed jointly, and by taking as the starting point the experience of the actors of world politics. The exclusion and oppression that is of concern to critical theorists and practitioners alike is better viewed as a series of horizontal, intersecting personal and group oppressions rather than as a top-down phenomenon where a discrete collective actor can be said to dominate other discrete collective actors. Depending on the context, oppressors may very well be oppressed and vice versa. It is the capacity to project oneself in the condition of others that is most likely to provide a knowledge of the world that goes beyond one's immediate, specific, experience of exclusion.

In short, the model for social relations that appears most apt in tackling exclusion in its various forms is one that consists in engaging with others on the basis of where they currently stand rather than where we want them to move to. In such a relation between self and other, the disposition of an actor is one that privileges, at least momentarily, the condition of the other. Psychologists have called this disposition toward others 'empathy'. It often manifests itself in situations where an actor happens upon a situation where another person is in distress and in apparent need of help. Empathy helps explain why agents faced with the distress of others are sometimes inclined to help or otherwise try to address the situation.

Empathetic subjects relativize their subjective experiences in their apprehension of others; in critical theorists words, they engage in self-reflexivity. This is not to say that

they become selfless, but only that they put in perspective their preferences, needs, wants, or understanding of the situation in light of someone else's experience. In some circumstances, this privileging of others' conditions leads to a consideration of how best to help them surmount their difficulties. Even more importantly, it sometimes leads to an inquiry into the structural causes of others' difficulties, such as the social order, or the existence of social practices that regularly result in some groups' suffering. It is this latter manifestation of empathy that will guide the analysis here. Harnessed in this way, empathy helps lay the foundations for structural change rather than mere help or charity. Because it is other-focused it helps empathizers open up to others and change their conception of the self-other relation from one of indifference to others' suffering to one of concern for their well-being.

The numerous protests mentioned above have brought to the attention of many actors the existence of forms of exclusion associated with global neoliberalism. In most instances, protesters take to the street in the name of a specific set of grievances. However, the convergence of different groups of protesters and different grievances also provokes contacts between previously separate actors unaware of each other's existence and exclusion. Some of these actors responded to the widespread discontent with neoliberalism's exclusionary effects by searching for an ethical framework that can address not only their specific concerns, but those of other actors as well. The six-year-old World Social Forum (WSF) exemplifies this attempt. The global movement whose participants meet annually at Porto Alegre is characterized by its acknowledgement of the global nature of social relations and by an a priori commitment to attempting to address their own situation without undermining others' capacity to do the same as part of the

same political space. Thus while critical theory accounts for the diversity of the protesters and the fact that they protest, empathy accounts for some of the protesters' reaction to one another which take the form of an effort to understand and accommodate the diversity of views.

Globalization, Neoliberalism, and Exclusion

Global politics is in part about social relations. As was also argued above, these relations need not be envisaged on conflictual or contractual bases, as much theorizing in IR would have us believe. What is more, I have expressed reservations about partial rendering of global order and the redrawing of boundaries around new subjects. In this section, I begin to present the illustration of what an empathetic approach to the problematique of exclusion might look like in the context of world politics. Specifically, what I seek to show is that exclusion can neither be traced back to the agency of a single villain, nor be said to affect only one marginal group.

Globalization is a multi-dimensional phenomenon.¹¹ Globalization is often used to refer to the economic dimension of world order, but it also includes the movement of people and ideas, as well as the geographical extent of several phenomena (environmental destruction, organized crime). Globalization is a dynamic process rather than a discrete project put forth by an identifiable actor. It is not driven by any one subject; it is the product of the relations between subjects across the global and its point of arrival is indeterminate.¹² All are not equal before globalization, however. As we shall see later, this process impacts many people negatively. Many groups are excluded from

the benefits of economic globalization and from the mechanisms whereby the global order is constructed. This exclusion is not discussed in any radically new terms in spite of its prevalence and the apparent failure of existing economic models to deal with it.

While the global pretensions of economic liberalism have been a staple of international and global politics for the better part of the last two centuries, the end of the Cold War appears to have boosted the case in its favour. Of course, the movement was well underway at least ten or fifteen years earlier, beginning with the oil shock of 1973 and the coming to power of Margaret Thatcher in the United Kingdom and Ronald Reagan in the United States.¹³ But the collapse of the Berlin Wall has discredited what had been the inspiration for forms of socially-orientated government interventionism in the economy. Since the early 1990s, the intellectual climate among policy, media, academic elites, and public intellectuals has favoured a return to the market.

International governmental organizations with an economic mandate have acquired a new prevalence and embody the liberal philosophy in unmistakable terms. Parallel to them exists a booming civil society and academic literature that does not seem to be able to provoke significant changes in policies. In fact, the diversity and richness of experiences that civil society represents may be partly responsible for the lack of obvious influence on the agenda of discussions in international fora. Indeed, when we peer into non-governmental organizations and social movements that express this activism, we see many of the limitations of standpoint. Labour is present as always, but it must share the margin with other actors interested in gender, culture, or even world views whose universalism does not necessarily sit well with particular identities (e.g., the human rights, ecology, or peace movements).

But the activists who have made themselves heard over the last decade are exactly what critical theories of IR see as their subject. They embody the normative ideals that critical theorists say lie at the heart of theorizing. But by focusing on specific groups and their project, critical theorists also impede the development of a mutual understanding of the predicaments of their subjects. This division of the movement against global neoliberalism contrasts with the relative unity of proponents of neoliberal globalization. Notwithstanding their extensive control of economic and military resources that affords them tremendous power, the proponents of liberal investment and trade globalization have the advantage of forming a smaller, more intellectually homogenous, group. This allows them to develop closer ties and to decide jointly on a common course of action. If, for example, 149 heads of state can agree on broad trade and investment agenda in the context of the World Trade Organization, they can also argue that they have a global plan to address the problem of development and poverty. In the face of this bold assertion, the cacophony of otherwise credible criticisms of neoliberalism appears unable to provide alternatives.

The question of alternatives is an important one. That lives are interrelated across space is more a matter of fact than one of perspective. Whether it be in terms of trade, finance, or ecology, decisions made by actors affect other actors in countless ways. Furthermore, relations on a non-commercial basis have also developed as part of the process of globalization. Cultural exchanges, migration, miscegenation, and so forth have created closer bonds that people may not wish to break. Therefore, it is reasonable to suggest that a global alternative needs to be found so that communities do not revert back to a kind of sovereignty.

If exclusion is to be addressed, its consideration must start from the lives of those who are excluded. Much theorizing about development and poverty has been done in the context of modern Enlightenment thinking, itself motivated by normative concerns. Inasmuch as IR has dealt with the issue of poverty as exclusion, it has 'submitted to the deference of the already-powerful'¹⁴ who were at the origin of modernity. For this reason, writes Julian Saurin,

we may begin with a simple indictment of International Relations (IR): how can one give credence to a discipline which purports to explain international action and international order, when it has *almost nothing* to say about seventy-five per cent of the world's states, and simply discounts from its analysis eighty-five percent of the world's population? What philosophy of history, what theory of social change, what notion of human agency does such a staggering omission entail?¹⁵

A study of globalization ought to address these questions. Answering them does not in itself provide a solution to the problematique of exclusion, but it helps to create an ethical framework in which the eighty-five percent of the world population are acknowledged to exist and in which they become actors in shaping the global order.

There are many reasons why poverty is a useful entry point into the problematique of exclusion. First, and this is nothing new, poverty blurs the distinction between the economic and the political that continues to inform decision-making. Furthermore, it blurs the distinction between identity questions that inform much critical theorizing about world politics and material questions that traditional class and liberal-economic analyses focus on. Insofar as economics is about agents making decisions with respect to others, it involves social relations as well as a certain structuring of those social relations in a way that poverty is caused, sustained, or increased for some agents who occupying particular positions in the global order created by modernity.¹⁶

Second, poverty is not limited to a particular group or social category. While we speak of poor countries or poor states, there is significant poverty inside developed countries and wealth inside non-developed countries. In addition, there is an increase in disparities between different groups. Poverty also cuts across gender, cultural, and racial categories although it may be said that more members of a given group are poor than members of another.

Third, poverty is a matter of culture as much as a matter of class and material wealth. The standard definition of poverty used in academic and policy circles is one of material wealth. Even when non-material factors are considered they are judged in terms of how they may contribute in the future to economic growth or provide higher incomes. We can conceive of other definitions of poverty that emphasise social value not measurable by way of economic indicators. Even Marx's concept of alienation has more to do with culture than simple material needs. The relative position occupied in society can classify one as poor even if material needs are met in absolute terms. Poverty is a subjective concept as some may not see themselves as poor and in need to 'be developed', or to develop according to a liberal model.¹⁷

Fourth, given that the particular model was developed on the basis of a particular standpoint occupied by scholars who are, among other things men, a number of concepts that are at the core of liberalism have a gender dimension. The emphasis on production, modernization, industrialization, and development has meant that reproductive work or activities failed to meet the criteria of those who defined the desirable social order that should be created. A proper account of global relations requires attention to them.¹⁸ The economic and social roles ascribed to men and women by many liberal theorists and the

privileging of economic rationality over other forms of understanding and organizing social relations has had gender-specific consequences. While not seen as productive, women's work has nevertheless proven essential to the perpetuation of a system that affects women themselves in negative ways. Finally, as with other subjective views of poverty, economic growth and material measures of wealth may not be a priority in that it entails a restructuring of women's lives that is undesirable.¹⁹

Fifth, the question of poverty as it is addressed by development studies lead inevitably to the manipulation of nature in the pursuit of growth. Liberal economic thought treats humans and nature as 'resources' in the making of social order. Expressions such as human resources or human capital take away part of humans' subjectivity in that they are organized and used by others to achieve an end not determined by themselves. Their subjectivity consists in making themselves utilizable²⁰ for those in positions of economic power. The linear conception of time and the teleology of liberalism present would-be agents with a sense of inevitability to which they must conform, lest they be disenfranchised.

All signs point to the persistence of poverty and inequality, despite growing national and global economies, whether the criteria used are those of international governmental development organizations or those of their critics.²¹ Concurrently, there is a nominal concern with poverty in international and domestic policymaking. Policies proposed in response to the problem of poverty rely on a worldview that has already informed two centuries of liberal economy, with the crucial difference that more people and more aspects of human life fall under the purview of the market. There are obstacles to bringing together the opponents of liberal globalization. The chosen identities of the

movements that express this discontent-and the identity of those they see as the major cause of their predicament-continue to separate them. Because poverty affects such a wide range of groups with different identities and allegiances, it provides both a challenge and the most fruitful ground to develop empathetic relations between the variety of political subjects involved.

What a consideration of the 'real lives'²² and the 'real worlds'²³ might lead to is the conclusion that the question of (economic) exclusion, development and poverty as it has been defined in economics and development studies has misstated the problem. Poverty is indeed widespread and it is lived as part of a single system, but this does mean that one single model that originates from a single standpoint can address it. How poverty is experienced in class, gender, and culturally mediated ways is crucial to understanding it. More pointedly, we need to put in relation the different forms of exclusion in order to make intelligible to global actors the effects of their behaviour.

Plan of the Thesis

The thesis will be divided in five chapters. Chapter I looks at the problem of epistemology and subjectivity in international relations theory from three broad perspectives, namely neo-Gramscian, feminist and postcolonial perspectives. The rationale for circumscribing three paradigms consists in their common adherence to situated knowledge. Each is examined as a theoretical effort aiming to provide an alternative reading of world politics in response to the failings of other theories to account for several dynamics of world politics and the subjects who drive them. In

addition I emphasize the normative aspect of these critical viewpoints by showing how they aim to change reality as it is currently experienced. The chapter then examines the methods by which class, gender, and culture-based subjects assert themselves. Here, I draw attention to some potential problem in the quest for subjectivity, namely the essentialism that sometimes slips into critical theories and the practices theorists intend to promote.

Chapter II examines two strands of critical theory that have been used to address directly the problems of essentialism and objectification in international theory. I first consider the contribution of authors who promote what may be termed a ‘postmodern politics of difference’. The literature on the postmodern politics of difference approach to social relations is more diffuse than the cosmopolitan one, but it may be gleaned from a number of publications that seek to reconceptualize moral spaces away from the nation or the social class traditionally defined. Here, authors like David Campbell, Michael Shapiro, and William Connolly occupy a central position. I then turn to Andrew Linklater’s application of discourse ethics and to the creation of a cosmopolitan world community. Linklater’s *The Transformation of Political Community* forms the backbone of the cosmopolitan movement in IR theory and will be discussed in some detail. In many ways, these two alternatives to traditional IR theory stand in opposition to each other as one tends to reassert modern, rational, individual subjects, while the other is committed to radically redefining the subject. As a whole, this chapter anticipates the problems associated with knowledge acquisition and misuse that must be taken seriously when discussing the possibility and means of empathy.

Chapter III discusses empathy as an alternative to the perspectives discussed in Chapter II. The chapter first presents the concept of empathy in the psychology literature. I argue that empathy is a significant dimension of peoples' social relations, in particular in situations that involve someone's distress that are perceptible to social agents. As it highlights the importance of empathy to social relations, the chapter contends that globalization brings into contact social actors that once were unaware of their mutual existence and that empathy can develop as part of these relations. The chapter then examines two studies of global politics that have addressed the moral implications of globalization.

Chapters IV and V look at exclusion in global politics and the response of social actors to it. After defining poverty and exclusion Chapter IV presents the forms that exclusion takes in the current context of globalization. It argues that an attempt to create a world order that guarantees peace and prosperity for all has resulted in the exclusion of significant segments of the world's population and to a more precarious situation for others. I argue that the neoliberal model of globalization restricts the agency of social actors at the same time as they enjoy political and civil rights. Thus the chapter is interested in the structural constraints imposed on labour, women and postcolonial societies by neoliberal policies.

In chapter V, I examine the response of social actors to exclusion in neoliberal globalization. I show that that mass protests of the last decade have been a direct reaction to the conditions faced by people in the neoliberal order. Opposition to neoliberalism has caused a convergence of separate struggles at protests and it has allowed a common consciousness of exclusion to emerge among actors who hitherto unaware or

unconcerned of others' own experiences of exclusion. The chapter argues that protests have helped to foster among some participants empathic relations and inspired them to search for another, non-market ethos of globalization that addresses adequately exclusion in its different forms. I consider the World Social Forum as such an attempt to create a space where greater concern for others' needs can develop and in which participants consider how best to respond to them.

Endnotes

¹ 'What is common to all of them is not a nature but a condition, that is to say a collection of limits and constraints: the necessity to die, to work to live, to exist in a world already inhabited by other men'. Jean-Paul Sartre, *Réflexion sur la question juive* (Paris: Gallimard, 1954), 72.

² 'Each author has his own world. We know all worlds through all books. Each book is a door on each world'.

³ 'A single finger cannot pick up a stone'.

⁴ Robert W. Cox, 'Social Forces, States, and World Order: Beyond International Relations Theory', in Robert W. Cox with Timothy J. Sinclair, *Approaches to World Order* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 89.

⁵ This is a rationality of a particular nature that also limits the options. Liberal IR, and in particular its economic dimension, typifies 'rationality' as I use it here.

⁶ Cox, Social Forces, 'States, and World Orders', 87.

⁷ Ole Wæver, 'The Rise and Fall of the Inter-Paradigm Debate' Debate' in Steve Smith, Ken Booth and Marysia Zalewski, eds., *International Theory: Positivism and Beyond* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 155.

⁸ Jan Aart Scholte, *Democratizing the Global Economy: The Role of Civil Society* (Coventry: Centre for the Study of Globalisation and Regionalisation, University of Warwick, 2004), Part 2.

⁹ Greg Buckley, *Globalization: Tame It or Scrap It?* (London: Zed, 2004), 111; Notes from Nowhere, eds., *We Are Everywhere: The Irresistible Rise of Global Anticapitalism* (London: Verso, 2003); Naomi Klein, *Fences and Windows: Dispatches from the Front Lines of the Globalization Debate* (Toronto: Vintage, 2002), xv; Tom Mertes, *A Movement of Movement: Is Another World Really Possible?* (London: Verso, 2004); Susan George, *Another World is Possible if...* (London: Verso, 2004), ix; Paul Kingsnorth, *One No, Many Yeses: A Journey to the Heart of the Global Resistance Movement* (New York: The Free Press, 2003), 221; Simon Tormey, *Anti-Capitalism: A Beginner's Guide* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2004).

¹⁰ Scholte, *Democratizing the Global Economy*, 67.

¹¹ Jan Aart Scholte, *Globalization: A Critical Introduction* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000).

¹² Farhang Rajaee, *Globalization on Trial: The Human Condition and the Information Civilization* (Ottawa and West Hartford, CT: IDR/C/Kumarian Press, 2000), 8.

¹³ Robert W. Cox, *Power, Production, and World Order: Social Forces in the Making of History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987), 286-287.

¹⁴ Julian Saurin, 'Globalisation, Poverty, and the Promises of Modernity', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 25, no. 3 (Winter 1996), 657.

¹⁵ Saurin, 'Globalisation, Poverty, and the Promises of Modernity', 658. Saurin writes specifically about postcolonial societies. As powerful as the statement may seem, it understates the problem of exclusion and it does not capture the tendency toward downward mobility of hitherto privileged people.

¹⁶ Jenny Edkins, 'Legality with a Vengeance: Famines and Humanitarian Relief in Complex Emergencies', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 25, no. 3 (Winter 1996).

¹⁷ Arturo Escobar, 'Discourse and Power in Development: Michel Foucault and the Relevance of His Work to the Third World', *Alternatives* 10, no. 3 (Winter 1984-1985) and *Encountering Development* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994).

¹⁸ Jan Jindy Pettman, *Worlding Women: A Feminist International Politics* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996), 159-160.

¹⁹ James H. Mittelman and Ashwini Tambe, 'Reconceptualizing Global Poverty: Globalization, Marginalization, and Gender', in Paul Wapner and Lester Edwin J. Ruiz, eds., *Principled World Politics: The Challenge of Normative International Relations* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2000), 169-172.

²⁰ I write 'utilizable' rather than 'useful' to denote the objectified status of the poor. They are means to the ends of the more powerful actors and they are seen to have a responsibility to fulfil that function.

²¹ World Bank, *World Development Report 2000/2001: Attacking Poverty* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2001), Chapter 1; World Bank, *World Development Report 2005: A Better Investment Climate for Everyone* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2004); UNDP, *Human Development Report 2003: Millennium Development Goals: A Compact among Nations to End Poverty* (New York: United Nations, 2003).

²² Saurin, 'Globalisation, Poverty, and the Promises of Modernity', 660.

²³ María Lugones, 'Playfulness, "World"-Travelling, and Loving Perception', in Gloria Anzaldúa, ed., *Making Faces, Making Soul: Haciendo Caras* (San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 1990).

CHAPTER I

In 1985, Kalevi Holsti published a book entitled *The Dividing Discipline*¹ in response to what he perceived to be the disarray of the discipline of International Relations. He noted that since the seventeenth century, there had been essentially one paradigm that dominated the study and practice of international relations:

That paradigm, in which the world is portrayed as an anarchy (meaning political fragmentation), with no overarching authority to organize the fundamental activities of the essential constituents—the nation states—has sustained a long tradition of philosophical and empirical work which has had as its core concern explaining why and how nation states go to war, conduct their diplomacy, construct institutions or customs leading to peace, order, and objectives.²

For Holsti, the emergence of new paradigms like world systems theory or liberal-inspired world society cast some doubt on the unity of the field. Theories can approach the questions enunciated above from different angles. In his diagnosis of the state of the field, he used three criteria to determine whether a theory belongs to a different paradigm.

First, the theory must address the causes of war and the conditions of peace, security, or order in a novel way. If, for instance, a theory considers war a miscalculation, an irrational act, or a manifestation of a conflict between national bourgeoisies, it departs from the dominant realist paradigm. Relatedly, if a theory's conception of security or order disregards military threats to concentrate on prosperity or the absence of any form of domination, it also falls under the purview of different paradigms. Second, as the above quotation makes clear, the essential actors and units of analysis that define the

discipline are primarily states. However, in the decades prior to Holsti's *Dividing Discipline*, works on interdependence and dependency and world-systems theory suggested that there might be more to international politics than the power politics of war and peace of superpowers. In world systems theory, the attention paid to the structural operations of capitalism displaces the notion of actor considerably. Third, the 'images of the world system/society' remind the reader of Kenneth Waltz first study of the source of conflict in world politics.³ Whatever the main actor of international politics, the question that needs answering is whether the source of conflict is in human nature, in the nature of states (insofar as states are given), or in the structure of the states system.

For its mention of fragmentation as a characteristic of IR in the mid-1980s, *The Dividing Discipline* did not anticipate later developments in the field. The diversity and pluralism Holsti saw in IR theory meant essentially the questioning of the state-centric tradition by theories belonging to only two other paradigms, namely world society (a variant of the liberal interdependence thesis) and world systems. As we will see in the next section, many units of analysis and actors are introduced in the field that Holsti's book does not begin to consider. As well, and this is important in critical theory, he does not suggest that war, peace, or order might be contested concepts. The only core IR concept whose definition is multifaceted is power, but this is nothing new (cf. Morgenthau and Wight). Finally, epistemology—how theorists go about producing knowledge of the world—received little attention, although a hint of reflexivity is present in the recognition that the discipline is essentially Anglo-American, and that the position occupied by the theorists may very well influence what they study and the questions they ask.⁴

The present chapter details the challenge critical theorists posed to orthodox theories and the field of IR from specific subjective and epistemological standpoints. Part one is organized around three themes central to the critique of orthodoxy. It covers the epistemological, subjective, and normative dimension of theorizing in the field. Part two examines three key critical schools of thought in international relations. Two important critical theories are omitted, however. They are what has been termed the ‘politics of difference’ that stems from the work of several European poststructuralist and postmodern philosophers, and the Habermas-inspired work of Andrew Linklater. Because they are ambitious attempts to provide an ethics according to which social actors can relate, they will be examined separately in the next chapter.

The Critical Turn in IR

Critical theories launched what has been called the ‘third debate’ in IR theory.⁵ If IR had remained narrow up until this point, the third debate threw wide open the doors of the field to different perspectives. This section outlines the nature of the challenge posed by critical theory to traditional theory in the study of international politics.

Critical theory stems from a deeper consideration of the philosophical problems of knowledge. While traditional IR theory is laden with philosophical assumptions concerning the nature of knowledge, they have rarely been probed seriously enough to alter the study and practice of IR. In fact, even the limited diversity of IR in the early 1980s was more than Holsti was willing to concede. Nevertheless, Richard Devetak notes that ‘the term *critical theory* came to be used as the emblem of a philosophy that

questions the prevailing order of social and political modernity through a method of immanent critique. It was largely an attempt to recover a critical potential that had been overrun by recent intellectual, social, cultural, economic, and technocratic trends'.⁶

Unlike theorists who consider world politics amenable to the same scientific explanation as natural phenomena, critical theorists try to make sense of world politics as a historical process. Rather than taking the current order for granted, as though it were a timeless reality or a cyclical system, critical theorists consider it a product of human thoughts and actions. The kind of community (nation-states, social classes, cultures) and the kind of relations they enter with other communities are open-ended processes. There are no clear origins or finite destination. As a human process, history bears the mark of different perspectives and preferences that can be traced to the context in which social actors are embedded. Theory is therefore always associated with someone, and it represents the perspective of a particular person or group.⁷

Epistemology

Epistemology is the branch of philosophy that concerns itself with knowledge and the way it is acquired. Put most simply, it asks the question of how we know. Through epistemological debates, theorists attempt to establish the criteria of true knowledge, that is, the conditions under which knowledge claims are certain. The two epistemological positions that have dominated social sciences are empiricism and rationalism. The first argues that knowledge can only be produced by observation; the second maintains that truth can be discovered through the use of reason.

In critical IR theory the preferred appellation for all traditional theories has been 'positivism' irrespective of whether they were empiricist or rationalist. Steve Smith sounds a note of caution in pointing out that in the context of IR theory, 'Positivism has involved a commitment to a unified view of science, and the adoption of methodologies of the natural sciences to explain the social world'.⁸ Indeed, some are called positivist despite the fact that they do not partake in what is defined as positivist in the philosophy of science.⁹ The example that stands out in this regard is Hedley Bull whose rationalism is nonetheless branded positivist because he takes for granted actors like the individuals and the states.

Of course, saying that an epistemology is either empiricist or rationalist tells us nothing about who does the research and what counts as an 'observation' or as 'rational'. If we ignore what the modern philosophers meant by rational or reason, and we speak to different people, we will likely come across different and even contradictory accounts of what is rational. Why, then, accept the privileged scholars' evaluation of a given reasoning or course of action? Not surprisingly, theorists convinced that their epistemological position and their methodology is accurate will reject the alternatives on grounds on irrationality or falseness. It is an easy step to take since they get to define the criteria by which others must abide. What empiricist theorists see and observe is subject to dispute. According to Steve Smith, 'positivism's importance has been not so much that it has given international theory a method but that its empiricist methodology has determined what could be studied because it has determined what kinds of things existed in international relations'.¹⁰

To insist that the world be looked at as it is *now* prevents from considering alternative worldviews. The basic constituents of the world, the nation (the people), the state, the individual, or the social class are not uncontested concepts. The name ‘*International relations*’ seems to impose that we look at the nations and their state. Once these are taken to be real it becomes easy to maintain that they are actors and behave as persons; they are reified. They show up on a map or there are institutions that embody them. But in both cases, they are abstractions that are given a tangible existence on paper (the map), in buildings (the location of the institutions), or in symbols (which can be seen or heard like flags, monuments, or anthems). Overcoming the state-centrism of realist and liberal IR is also difficult for Marxist theories of international politics. The practical origins of the field (as an aid to statecraft) and its associations with the power politics of great powers¹¹ make it uncongenial to any conception of world politics as the relations between non-state actors. Epistemological issues influence what counts as valid knowledge in academic circles.¹²

Despite resistance to criticism, the epistemological foundations of social science have been challenged. In this respect, the first inroads were probably made by Thomas Kuhn and the notion of paradigm.¹³ In conventionalist epistemologies such as Kuhn’s, objects exist only insofar as scholars agree that they are ‘real’. A more recent expression to convey this idea is the ‘epistemic communities’ approach found in some liberal institutionalist writings in IR where a paradigm is shared by theorists in the full knowledge that there are other ways to see the world, or that a given issue area requires a distinct epistemological approach.¹⁴ Where one theorist sees states, another sees social classes; this is the case of world systems and dependency theories versus realism. Where

one sees the violent interaction of states, another sees cooperation; this is the case of liberal institutionalism versus realism. Where someone sees free and open negotiations producing win-win outcomes, another sees unequal power and exploitation; that is the case of world systems and dependency theories versus neoliberal institutionalism.

This is not critical theory yet, however. What is striking about Kuhn's work is the numerous references to 'men of science' who, while they disagree on world views, are all part of a privileged category of 'scientists' or 'men of science'. In International Relations, the boundaries of the field and the official scientific seal of approval have been largely dependent on a focus on the state and the adoption of a positivist epistemology. While research could be conducted outside these narrow bounds, it was not considered IR.¹⁵ It remains unclear who has enough credibility to assert an alternative paradigm and have it recognized as a valid perspective in the field by the established scholars. Nevertheless, Kuhn's paradigm and the questioning of 'normal science' (his main target is Popper's logical positivism) run parallel, despite its differences, to some critical theories in the social sciences on the foundations of knowledge.

Although Kuhn's work was not geared toward the study of social phenomena, IR is itself a convention as Kuhn understood that word. In his seminal article on critical theory applied to IR, Cox expresses the matter in the following terms:

Academic conventions divide the seamless web of the real social world into separate spheres, each with its own theorizing; this is a necessary and practical way of gaining understanding. Contemplation of undivided totality may lead to profound abstractions or mystical revelations, but practical knowledge (that which can be put to work through action) is always partial and fragmentary in origin. Whether the parts remain as limited, separated objects of knowledge, or become the basis for constructing a structured and dynamic view of larger wholes, is a major question of method and purpose. Either way, the starting point is some initial subdivision of reality, usually dictated by convention.¹⁶

A paradigm captures only a fraction of reality. In its orthodox form, the discipline of international relations ‘sees’ states and specific kinds of relations, but there exist other international and global phenomena that escape it. In critical theory, those who theorize are social actors in relations with other social actors. Critical theory assumes that these other social actors (non-specialists who are distinct from theorists) have the capacity to know themselves and their world. This is why Cox argues, via Gramsci, that all social actors may be construed as intellectuals.¹⁷ To the extent that they can apply what faculties they have to understanding their world, they do so continually in the conduct of everyday life.

Subjectivity

What the foregoing entails is the potential for many conventions and theories of international politics. Neither formal training nor particular offices gives privileged access to knowledge.¹⁸ The capacity to know (and the capacity to act accordingly) is what I term ‘subjectivity’. Conversely, ‘objectivity’ is used to mean that which exists independently of what we think of it, and that which is spoken of or acted on. The goal of this section is to show how the conception of the relationship between subjects and objects has influenced the discipline of IR, and how it is central to critical theorizing about world politics. In time, this will lead us to a consideration of objectification as a feature of traditional theory.

Jim George traces the matter of subject and object dichotomies present in IR to Western classics of philosophy and to the way they have been read and promoted. According to George ‘the major traditions of contemporary social and theory and,

ultimately, of international relations, were derived from a particular way of framing Western history and philosophy'.¹⁹ Beginning with Greek philosophers, the idea that 'man' could know the world and act in or on it to achieve the good life has taken root. Through the Renaissance and the Reformation, and with the Enlightenment, myth appears to have receded to yield its place to the human mind and its directing influence in human affairs.²⁰

Although the Enlightenment is usually conceived as a turning point in Western thought and a point of departure for modernity, George's view is that it is at most a 'critical juncture' in a drawn-out process that started before the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries. The 'Cartesian synthesis', he writes, 'is of special significance, not just because it marks a crucial juncture in the modernism story (as Western rational man accelerates away from the age of myth) but as the point where the continuity of Western thought is (paradoxically) systematized into a recognizably modernist form'.²¹

By looking at IR, the link between the Cartesian subject and the nation-state is not clear. Indeed, the nation has a material existence only through the state, its symbols, and its institutions. Inasmuch as it is recognized, it is a collective rather than an individual actor. Such contradictions are not so surprising given traditional IR theorists' reluctance to confront the assumptions of their discipline, namely that of a prior social contract among free and rational individuals that founded the nation-state. Traditional theorists are right when they say that they study the world as it is. This is true to the extent that when the discipline of IR was created, the state was already in existence. Its origin was thought unproblematic and debate about its foundation was left to political theorists.²²

Furthermore, to the extent that theorists recognized the relative novelty of the nation-state, the prevalent teleological view of history and the onset on modernity precluded a reconsideration of its validity or legitimacy. From Carr's *Twenty Years' Crisis*²³ to Morgenthau to Keohane and Nye, from Waltz to Bull and social constructivist IR in the 1990s, the state has remained the central subject of IR. More importantly, the traditional IR theorists' own subjectivity is in many ways intertwined with the state's because they see in it a *fait accompli*.

Among the schools of thought that make up traditional IR, one stands out for its lack of a subject. In Marxist fashion, world systems theory locates a moving force in the economic infrastructure. The state is merely a function of the larger capitalist world economy. Nevertheless, world systems theorists do share with the tradition a scientific outlook and a teleological view of history that curtails the number of social problems and options that can be envisaged to address them. Moreover, world systems theory has always had difficulties establishing its status as a valid account of international relations.

From realism to neoliberal institutionalism to world systems, then, there was little recognition of the wide range of subjective theories. In orthodox theories, forces act on human beings that limit subjective choice. This helps to explain critical theorists' reaction to theories that aspire to scientific status. Critical IR theorists began to argue in the 1980s that traditional theorists manufactured reality at least as much as they described it or adapted to its constraints. The approach that dominated the field was technical cognitive and aimed at social control for the purpose of realizing the goals of given actors that were mistaken for natural laws of human behaviour.²⁴ The scientific claim to objective and

universal truth allowed theorists to define the terms of the debate, and not look back, or not look at what other participants in world politics had to say about it.

Since all theorists are part of a community, itself a moment in, or a form taken by, a historical process, the attitudes they adopt vis-à-vis that community and other communities (nations, cultures, groupings, etc.) are shaped by the discourses and norms that prevail in their own and in which they have been at least partially socialized. Whether scholars are aware of it or not, their theories have a perspective of which they must become conscious. This perspective leads to a knowledge that is at best partial because some aspects of reality remain hidden from the theorists unless they learn to adopt alternative perspectives.

Yet there were, and still are, simple questions that theorists could ask themselves to identify the context of their observations. By this I mean that theorists can easily adopt the attitude some critical theorists call self-reflexivity by querying the origins of their own assumptions and worldview.²⁵ The social context that generates ideas in theorists is potentially important. Thus, the class, sex, race, or culture of a person might be associated with some experiences that constitute this person's 'reality' and shapes this person's worldview. For its part, the international (or global) context provides a wealth of situations that could form the 'empirical' ground for theory. Although international relations theory is meant to explain the occurrence of all international events, much attention is paid to world-historical events. For example, the emergence of the separate discipline of IR owed much to the concern over the destructiveness of World War I and the desire to prevent it. The apparent failure in the 1930s of the discipline in its idealist

incarnation and the occurrence of World War II likewise caused IR theorists to turn in large numbers to realism.

As a purposive activity, theorizing about international politics is bound with activities and practices that extend beyond the walls of the university or foreign offices. The realization of the role subjectivity in international relations theory comes from the disjuncture between the truth claims of IR theorists and the experiences of an audience. Self-reflexivity applies equally to the recipients of a given representation of international politics. Like professional theorists, Cox' everyday intellectuals may enquire into the influence that teaching, commentary, and public discourse might have had in shaping their own worldview. The realization that IR theory is but a subjective representation of world politics raises the possibility that other subjective understandings might pertain.

It is likely that theorists would answer these questions differently if they could keep track of the way their own worldview has evolved in interaction with their social environment. Their interests—and sometimes the mere existence of objects—are dependent on social, historical and spatial factors. The contextualization of knowledge along these lines has found a clearer exposition in the school feminism referred to as standpoint feminism, as it captures well the importance of the location of the observer. The concept of standpoint is one that this study will utilize to express the epistemological positions from which international relations ought to be examined.

In Nancy Hartsock's work, standpoint follows from Marx's study of the proletariat's ideology.²⁶ Because waged workers occupy a distinct position in the capitalist order, their epistemological and moral outlooks are different.²⁷ In Sandra Harding's work, by contrast, the model for standpoint feminism is not explicitly Marx but

rather the idea that perspective (in spatial terms) depends on location, whether this location is relative to production or in other aspects of social life. Using Marxist and liberal points of departure, respectively, Hartsock and Harding go on to study actors and experiences that Marxists and liberals did not address. Standpoint entails a self-conscious subjective orientation to the social order as it is associated with the active role that a subject takes in struggling against the social order.²⁸ Knowledge emerges because a person is confronted to a social situation and makes an intellectual effort to understand it. It is new knowledge because they experience this aspect of social reality from a perspective that is different from that of others. The aim of standpoint feminism, and of standpoint *tout court*, is to achieve ‘strong objectivity’ in knowledge, as distinct from the ‘weak objectivity’ that characterizes knowledge produced from perspectives oblivious of others.²⁹ Consequently, more is known about the world than previously even though total knowledge is never achieved.

In addition to having an influence on what social agents see, standpoint impacts on the problems or challenges social actors face in their daily life. The knowledge they develop is directly related to the desire to cope with the problems encountered. Theory is therefore normative.

Normativity

There are three ways in which the normative content of IR theory can be approached. First, through epistemological critique, it is possible to argue that the separation of fact and value on which traditional theory rests is spurious. In this vein the work of Weber and Carr on the epistemology of sociology and history, respectively,

shows that even some respected orthodox theorists have been aware for some time of the problem of values in research. Second, by taking seriously critical theory's view of subjectivity, it is possible to mount a critique of the subject whose values inform theory. At this stage, critical theorists only state that all theories are normative; they do not necessarily propose an alternative and explicit set of norms to reshape global relations. Third, a study of the normative content of IR theory may seek to restructure global relations by generalizing practices already in existence (in a smaller community hitherto ignored) or by developing an entirely new body of norms.

Chris Brown's definition of normative theory attempts to capture the various ways in which theory might merit the label 'normative'. He writes that the subject matter of normative theory is not self-evident.³⁰ A basic distinction in forms of theorizing is between empirical and normative where 'In principle, at least, empirical theory is descriptive, explanatory and predictive. It attempts to provide an accurate account of how the world works'.³¹ Normative theory, by comparison, deals specifically with the moral dimension of theorizing about society. Brown defines normative theory in the following terms:

By normative international relations theory is meant that body of work which addresses the moral dimension of international relations and the wider questions of meaning and interpretation generated by the discipline. At its most basic, it addresses the ethical nature of the relations between communities/states, whether in the context of the old agenda, which focussed on violence and war, or the new(er) agenda, which mixes these traditional concerns with the modern demand for distributive justice.³²

Brown sounds a note of caution, however. For him the use of the adjective 'normative' suggests the 'idea of standard setting and prescription, and the danger that two different kinds of intellectual activity will be confused: the setting of standards, and the study of

how (and what and by whom) standards are set'.³³ Understood in this way it can refer to theory concerned with the moral assumptions behind, or the moral implications, of a theory. In other words, it does not necessarily (though it may) present an alternative. Ultimately, Brown's position is that all theory is normative because, at the very least, the theorist chooses to take the world as it is, which has normative implications.³⁴

According to Steve Smith, IR theory has taken a 'forty years' detour'³⁵ as far as dealing with normative questions is concerned. What Smith meant by this is that from the 1940s to the 1980s, scholars in the discipline clung to a scientific conception of research. IR theory was about discovering natural laws, the knowledge of which would then define the policies to be pursued. Any extended discussion of the normative content of theory was eschewed in favour of technical rationality. Rather than trying to demonstrate the unimportance of norms in IR, the detour only expressed the hegemony of a set of ideas associated with the realist interpretation of international politics. Thus Morgenthau could state as an assumption that the statesman had a moral duty to the state by virtue of the office he occupied, but there does not appear to be any consideration of the limits, if any, of that obligation. In other words, does the state's interest as defined by 'political men' rank so high as to trump the interest or needs of foreign, subnational, or transnational actors? The obverse side of that coin is under what conditions it is legitimate to intervene on behalf of an individual if it means violating the principle of sovereignty.

Even the above considerations are very limiting, however. Ethical questions in IR have largely been approached through the cosmopolitan/ communitarian debate exemplified by the preceding two scenarios.³⁶ In her study of ethics and IR, Molly Cochran doubts whether the dichotomy of individual and state can adequately capture the

dilemmas faced by actors in global politics given that there is more to politics than individual and state actors. She contends that ‘the cosmopolitan/communitarian debate is principally concerned with ontological questions and leaves untheorized the rival foundational assumptions upon which these ontologies stand’.³⁷ In other words the debate has not delved into the basis on which we can say individuals and states truly exist—how do we know that they exist?—or that they are the primary subject of ethics. Moreover, alternative epistemological positions might very well establish the existence of other actors besides individuals and states, and air their own normative claims.

The resurgence of normative theory in IR has revealed that the ‘subject needs to concern itself more with normative issues, but rather the far more problematic thought that the subject is unavoidably normative’,³⁸ no matter how much theorists may attempt to separate fact and value. The separation of fact and value that characterizes traditional theorizing is all but impossible because it presumes that the theorists can rise above the social setting in which they have grown up and evolved. This impossibility is a central contention of critical theory. For Smith, the refusal to consider the impact of researchers’ values on the research they do is an indication of the existence of gate-keepers for the discipline of IR against those who might subvert it.³⁹ But why should traditional IR theory be protected from criticism, especially if empirical evidence can be found to support the challenge?

The mere fact that the persons who operate within the discipline cling to a certain conception of their specialty indicates that they value it or that they are at least content enough with it not to question it. Here, a number of explanations can be invoked. For a long time, IR has revolved around the nation-state, especially, though not exclusively in

realism. Defined in such narrow terms, IR is clearly delimited by its subject. Within this framework, traditional IR scholars very much constitute a community; they have their own networks, their own conferences, their own journals, and often their own academic departments or schools. The subject has defined the field to a considerable extent and its preservation has ranked high. According to Smith, explicit normative theorizing provokes resistance because it challenges the foundations of a frame of reference that brings some comfort to those who share it.⁴⁰ This view of the normative motivation of IR theorists can account for the debates internal to the discipline and what we may call 'academic politics'.

What may be more important however, is the social role that IR theorists play. As professional intellectuals, IR scholars have a particular relationship with the broader social and global order. This relationship is even more important where ideas and their diffusion are crucial.⁴¹ What surfaces is the relationship that exists between those who adhere to the disciplinary canon and the state and its officials. Often, the relationship only takes the form of deference to the state and its representatives or suggestions as to what may be done to help meet the national interest.⁴² At other times, scholars become involved in the thick of the action.⁴³ More indirectly and regardless of whether or not they engage with state officials, theorists play a role insofar as they train generations of students who then staff, among other places, foreign offices. The media also routinely call upon them to comment on international affairs. In such cases the commentary is normally consistent with the theoretical frameworks that dominate the discipline.

In taking the state for granted, many IR theorists overlook the disjuncture that may exist between society and the government that formally represents it. The decision to

adopt the state's or its representatives' standpoint implies an acceptance of the legitimacy of the decisions made at that level, because the only ontologically relevant actor in the discipline is the state.⁴⁴ Ironically, academics might equally be expected to seek to emancipate the society from the conventions that currently guide international practice because as intellectuals they are also responsible to social actors.⁴⁵ The reason for insisting on deferring to the state's rather than to other actors' view has therefore little to do with a single objective reality.

Both dispositions entail a decision with moral implications on part of theorists of the justness of policy-makers' goals and a moral choice to help them realize these goals. In Smith's words: 'To be heard, to be listened to, then, involves either saying what policy-makers want to hear so as to support their existing policy commitments and values, or saying something that is incrementally different, but which still fits in with their fundamental view of the world'.⁴⁶ This relationship can be likened to that of architects and engineers; the state officials express a moral vision and public philosophy for the nation-state while the IR theorists advise them on how to realize it and protect it from the elements that may erode it.

Despite the quest for a scientific IR, many of the classics of IR theory that are ritually invoked as a justification of the continuing importance of the state in realist IR did not discount normative concerns. Machiavelli, Carr, and Morgenthau were quite explicit about their striving for *virtú*, the national interest, and peace as ethical ends of statecraft. Indeed, if the state has acquired this status in IR theory, it is because in much of western thought it embodies the highest morality.

As R.B.J. Walker argues, in traditional IR theory, ethical life is achievable only inside the state, while the outside is characterized by anarchy, danger and the absence of morality: 'Within states, universalist aspirations to the good, the true and the beautiful may be realisable, but only within a spatially delimited territory'.⁴⁷ Conversely, 'Between states, the lack of community can be taken to imply the impossibility of history as a progressive teleology, and thus the possibility merely of recurrence and repetition.... To refer to international relations is to suggest that what goes on between states is in principle quite different from what goes on within state', hence 'the radical impossibility of establishing principles that are applicable to international relations'.⁴⁸ It follows that everything pertaining to the foreign realm is beyond the reach of an explicit theory of morality.

Although the subject of IR has traditionally been the state, 'scientific' theorizing along Marxist lines has also borne the mark of norms. While Lenin's theory of imperialism is presented as a theory of history, it can hardly be separated from the young Marx' contention that the point is to change history or Lenin's own call for a vanguard to bring about a proletarian revolution.⁴⁹ Dependency and world systems theories also mix the diagnosis of a problem (inequality and dependency) with aspirations for a more just world order, even if no path has yet been defined. Cardoso and Faletto, for instance, examine the prospects for socialism in Latin America;⁵⁰ Wallerstein for his part argued that his theory was meant to voice the interests of the 'largest and more oppressed parts of the world's population'.⁵¹ The volitional dimension of his research is therefore not in question. What is at issue is whether these authors' understanding of the operations of international relations is accurate and whether their actors can develop a consciousness

conducive to changes of structures and institutions despite the pressure of the forces of capitalism.

Using a method similar to Walker's contextualization of Machiavelli's writings, it is easy to see how the commitment to a particular actor (albeit as the bearer of a structurally determined role) is normative. The supposed social contracts that founded modern nation-states were a reaction against the domination of the Christian paradigm that dominated Europe prior to the Enlightenment. The impetus for individual thought in Bacon, Descartes, or Kant and the subsequent realization that humans could remake their world were in their own ways evidence of critical theorizing. Moreover, today's critical theory is often traced back to authors like Kant, Hegel, and Marx who are also associated with traditional IR theory.⁵²

That being said, identifying the normative bias in a theory is easier than producing an alternative to it. *Critical* theory may or may not be also *normative* theory. Whether deconstruction (in the sense of critique) is followed by reconstruction depends on the theorists considered. More importantly still, the ground on which the alternative account will be built can be the subject of many disagreements. Which subject among social classes, women, and colonized people is most likely to provide a reasonably universally applicable normative theory? As Richard Wyn Jones writes,

It is important to recognize that by focusing on emancipation, critical theorists (of all strands) are setting themselves extraordinarily demanding targets.... For critical theorists, therefore, the ultimate criteria by which the adequacy of a theory is measured is *extradisciplinary*. Thus it is all too easy for the concern with emancipation to fall by the wayside, especially that the disciplinary mainstream is quick to measure alternative approaches by its standard of adequacy....⁵³

But the 'disciplinary mainstream' is far from being the only obstacle to alternative norms. A theorist writing in any given strand of critical theory can produce a normative

alternative but there is no necessary convergence between different critical theories and their normative goals. The subjectivity that causes bias in empirical knowledge claims also causes bias in moral claims. For Molly Cochran, normative theorists do more than reveal bias; they propose a course of action for others to follow. For Cochran, normative theory has to achieve more than a simple coexistence of different but separate political entities. Cochran's

understanding of normative IR theory takes as its subject matter the criteria of ethical judgement in world politics and seeks shared principles for extended moral inclusion and social reconstruction in international practice. That is, it aims to move beyond the understanding of IR as a *modus vivendi* by illustrating reasons for obligations owed in international practice that cannot be attributed to self-interest alone.⁵⁴

'Therefore', Cochran adds, 'I focus upon forms of normative IR theory which work to cast wider nets of moral obligation among persons, obligations that go beyond an ethics of coexistence, to generate more just interpersonal and intersocietal relations'.⁵⁵

The merit of Cochran's normative theory is it confronts head-on the problem of normative theorizing in a context of diversity. It urges critical theorists to transform themselves into normative theorists as well. It also suggests that the moralities associated with subjective standpoints ought to be neither subjective sovereignties nor a priori standards to which other must adhere. As I argue in the last part of the chapter, the built-in subjective bias of theories, including critical ones, make it unlikely that any given standpoint can serve as an appropriate normative theory. For example, a generous reading of Machiavelli or Hobbes' state-centrism, or Kant's perpetual peace project yields an understandable argument in favour of the creation of the state or the adoption of a common set of norms as a way to avoid particular social ills in given contexts. However,

when we consider that these authors place expectations on others to conform to them, we are inevitably confronted with the question of the moral authority they possess to make such a demand.

To summarize, critical theory was a reaction against the limitations of traditional IR theory, whether in its realist, liberal or world systems guises. Critical theory is characterized by a broadening of the epistemological approaches that can be relied upon to produce knowledge of world politics. It is further characterized by the opening up of the state to critical analysis and the introduction of new subjects of international relations whose agency is deemed essential to understanding world politics despite the oversight of which they have suffered. Finally, critical theory examines the value-laden foundations of traditional theories of IR and adopts a self-conscious normative stance with respect to its own study of global politics.

Critical theories of IR

This section addresses the three themes discussed above with reference to critical theory. Here, however, the question of subjectivity is addressed in two ways. The first aims to provide a critique of traditional theory by showing that it is subjective. In other words, I take on the lenses of critical theory to show that orthodox IR theorists privilege specific actors of world politics and overlook others. The second way I discuss subjectivity consists in bringing to the fore the subjectivity of those who seek to alter world order. The presentation of epistemology that follows aims to show that critical theories rely heavily on what some feminist scholars have called standpoint.

Orthodox IR theory as subjective knowledge

In grammatical analysis, the subject refers to the person who speaks or acts. Subjectivity therefore expresses a capacity for reflection and action. In theoretical debates in the social sciences, the subject generally refers to the actor whose behaviour that theory accounts for. According to agent-centred theories, the agent is the actor that is at the origin of social behaviour. Agency entails a consciousness of self on the part of the actor, and the capacity to give it expression in thought and action. There are, however, theories that explain thought and action by structural forces that operate independently of human volition. In this category, structural determinants range from the conviction that humans make their history in conditions they do not choose or under the 'empire of circumstance', to those who argue that no matter what would-be actors may desire, the weight of the structures impels social behaviours that cannot be altered. Despite this distinction between agent-centred and structural theories, most accounts of international relations provide for room for manoeuvre, albeit one limited to adaptation or coping.

The principal characteristic of critical theorists in IR has been to denaturalize the units of analysis and the relations taken for granted by orthodox theorists. Rather than taking the state or the social class as units, critical theorists look for the persons behind the conceptual categories. They identify the social characteristics of those who incarnate the state or the social classes. To the extent that someone speaks on behalf of these collective actors, it is possible to paint a portrait of the 'typical' state official or class representative along sexual, racial, or class lines. Consequently, the attention of critical theorists has been drawn to gender, class, nationality, and geography in feminist, neo-

Gramscian, and poststructural criticisms, and to culture in postcolonial readings of international relations (Cox's more recent work has also engaged directly with culture).

IR theorists, including critical theorists, must make assumptions about the kinds of social entities that exist and make up international relations. The interplay of these entities gives us international relations, the series of practices in which actors engage across the globe. Orthodox IR theories have taken these as fact inasmuch as they simply claim to observe international politics and reckon with the facts of the matter. Some see in this repetition while others see possibilities for limited transformation. In its realist form, the narrative of international relations is one of endless repetition of the same pattern of conflict through time and of the impossibility of escaping it. In the liberal version, the narrative of international politics is an account that takes humans from the state of nature to the nation-state via the social contract and the defence of that compact against external threats. It is one that also takes rational individuals out of a conflictual state of nature to universal peace and harmony (of individuals or states) via the spread of the 'spirit of commerce'. Finally, in Marxist historiography there is an equally teleological succession of class struggles is set to bring about communism and the end of exploitation and violence.

But exactly how IR theorists came to recognize and accept states or social classes or individuals as ontologically given is controversial. The intense interest in subjectivity and the identification of the actor is peculiar to critical theory. The choice of traditional theorists to give voice to them and not to other means that it is the experience of that actor that defines the human experience. The account of society that emerges is an account of social relations as seen through the eyes of that actor. States, social classes and

individuals are concrete people with particular perspectives. The fact that they may be powerful, affluent, male, or Western influences their way of seeing the world and acting in it. Those actors who are overlooked by the theory are not allowed to contribute to our understanding of the social order. Cynthia Enloe makes the point most clearly when she asked ‘Where are the women?’⁵⁶ Likewise, critical theorists can ask ‘Where are the poor?’, ‘Where are the non-Western peoples?’, or simply what other perspectives on world politics exist outside the field of IR. As Gayatri Spivak once put it, we can ask ‘Can the subaltern speak?’⁵⁷ Asking these questions turns the theorist’s attention to actors whose understanding of the world is grounded in experiences that can reveal forces not seen by IR theory.

For neo-Gramscians, the orthodox Marxist focus on two classes defined by the ownership of the means of production is insufficient to render the reality of late twentieth-century globalization. It may at times appear that social reality is one where two classes contend for power. But at times of crisis or when a new order takes shape, it is possible to see how a social and global order is in fact made up of very different actors.⁵⁸ It was the rise of fascism in Italy that provided Gramsci with an opportunity to develop a new framework for analysis. He was interested to understand how in a diverse country like Italy, where regionalism is a significant factor, the Fascists could bring together enough segments of the population to take power unopposed. Although modern capitalism extends into different regions of the world, the situation neo-Gramscian scholars contend with is not one of regional identities, but one of the diversity of modes of production and their integration on a global scale.⁵⁹ As with regional identities, class

identities can potentially be an obstacle to shared conception of the desirable social and global order.

Unlike Marxist, structural Marxist, and world systems theories of international politics, neo-Gramscian IR pays special attention to the activities of key social actors who self-consciously create alliances between different classes or their fractions. The emergence (and change) of the capitalist order, then, is not part of the fabric of history in the form of the dialectic of class struggles. For Cox, 'A principal distinction between structures of world order lies in whether or not the order is hegemonic'. This characteristic of world order is heavily dependent on the behaviour of actors. Cox's definition of hegemony places the emphasis on the purpose, the actions, the consent, and the struggle of different actors that can be identified. By hegemony, Cox 'means dominance of a particular kind where the dominant state creates an order based ideologically on a broad measure of consent, functioning according to general principles that in fact ensure the continuing supremacy of the leading state and leading social classes but at the same time offer some measure or prospect of satisfaction to the less powerful'.⁶⁰

Whether or not, and how long, an order is hegemonic depends on the capacity of actors to press their demands and garner support from other actors. The events that IR theorists study correspond to various reconfigurations of social actors into new, more or less consensual, world orders. It is also possible for new actors to emerge that did not exist. Thus, it is evident to Stephen Gill⁶¹ that Japan is a key actor in the construction of the liberal world order through the Trilateral Commission. However, when the first steps were taken toward global capitalism, Japan was not the willing participant it became after

World War II.⁶² More recently still, the emergence of a third world capitalist classes give global liberalism a more consensual appearance.

The creation of world order is a complex process. Social classes do not act in a bandwagon fashion spurred by an immanent collective material interest to create a capitalist order and project it globally. In the process of opposing or proposing particular agendas, intellectuals play a crucial role. By 'intellectuals', neo-Gramscians refer to those who develop an understanding of their world. To the extent that they are consciously devising accounts of the world, they qualify. But even more important are those intellectuals who perform that role full-time.⁶³ Here we may list bureaucrats, academics, journalists, lobbyists, non-governmental organizations' representatives, and commentators. They are sometimes public intellectuals, sometimes behind-the-scenes advisors to governments or corporate heads, but their knowledge production covers the entire range of issues susceptible to face society. These actors are not a 'distinct and relatively classless social stratum. Gramsci saw them as organically connected with to social class' of which they are the voice.

In neo-Gramscian studies of international relations, those who tend to weigh more heavily in the determination of global order are those who control production. In a capitalist economy, and in the context of a crisis of accumulation, it is those segments of society who have a stake in creating a different order and those providing the theoretical and empirical justification who seek to take centre stage.⁶⁴ The state, in the hope of responding to problems of high inflation, rising unemployment, and falling profit margins, respond by promoting even more actively an 'open' trading system believed to provide market access and stimulate growth. Among intellectuals, it is a wide array of

liberal, internationally-minded intellectuals who provide the knowledge base for a liberal international structure.⁶⁵ The expansionist needs of capitalism appear to command the extension of the capitalist economy to encompass the entire world. Thus, the subject behind the historical period now known as neoliberalism (called hyperliberalism by Cox) is a certain transnational capitalist class together with liberal intellectuals known in IR theory as neoliberal institutionalists. This is known to Kees van der Pijl and Stephen Gill as the ‘corporate liberal’ perspective (or synthesis).⁶⁶ At this stage of the application of critical theory to the global order, the motive force of, or the agent behind the current order is transnational capital and its intellectuals.

But other questions can be asked about those who promote either neoliberalism on the world scale or a state-centric realist-inspired international order.⁶⁷ One crucial one pertains to the sex of those who speak for the state (or any other subject) or theorize about international politics. Feminists ask whether being born and growing up male or female in a social milieu influences worldviews and behaviour. The distinctions that exist between, or that are impressed on men and women are suspected to colour the kinds of behaviour social agents adopt. Feminists are concerned with identifying a common logic behind patriarchal institutions and practices analogous to the Marxist economic infrastructure. This ‘gender infrastructure’, so to speak, is alternatively seen as given or constructed depending on whether feminists focus on patriarchy as a structurally determined or socially constructed.

For Marxist feminist Maria Mies, the critique centres on the relationship between men and women rather than men *or* women as actors. She argues that what is lacking is precisely agency for ‘if they [women and men] allow this issue to enter their

consciousness, they will have to admit that that they themselves, women and men, are not only victims, on the one side (women), and villains (men), on the other, but that they are also accomplices in the system of exploitation and oppression that binds women and men together'.⁶⁸ Unlike neo-Gramscians who see in capitalists the origin of the current world order, Mies does not point directly to an actor behind the patriarchal international order. Instead she writes that feminism is a 'radical attack on *patriarchy or patriarchal civilization as a system, of which capitalism constitutes the most recent and most universal manifestation*'⁶⁹ that 'was historically created by patriarchal tribes and societies'.⁷⁰

From an explanatory point of view, the origin of gendered or patriarchal practices is not evident. Mies' theory sees patriarchy as a structure. The problem of identifying the 'cause' of the gendered discourses and practices of international politics is one raised by Marysia Zalewski. Reporting on debates among feminist critics of IR, she writes:

This is *not* simply a book about men in international relations. This is a book about masculinities in international relations.

This is a book that is informed and inspired by feminist questions. And it is a book that has moved from asking the 'woman' question to asking the 'man' question. We do not assume that women are a problem to be solved. Instead we want to problematize masculinities, the hegemony of men, and the subject of man within the theories and practices of international relations.⁷¹

The picture Zalewski paints in the above quotation does not only point to a patriarchal culture that operates through men and women, or that causes masculinity in men. It also focuses the attention on men as actors rather than as sole bearers of masculine roles. Zalewski and other feminists are more specific about the agent behind both the discipline of IR and the practice of foreign policy. While they concentrate their

attention on gender, masculinity and patriarchal structures, they trace them back not to a distant past (as Mies has done), but to key works of political philosophy that underpin thinking about world politics.

According to feminists, IR theory is informed by a systematic bias in favour of men and their activities. To explain the current international order, feminists argue that the world as we know it now is the product of patriarchal subjects, oblivious, or dismissive of, or squarely opposed to that which is associated with women. For Rebecca Grant,

For the most part ... international relations was uncritical of the social relations that supported the international role of the state. Specifically, one of the features that escaped attention was the practice of using gender roles as the basis for distinguishing between morality for the private citizen and the citizen ready to sanction violence as a member of the public.⁷²

For feminists, social roles are gendered and they are accordingly assigned to women and men. When IR theory emerged, it developed against a background rich in assumptions about the appropriate social roles and behavioural characteristics of males and females.

Thus feminists have been asking what attitude characterizes those making the decisions pertaining to foreign policy. They have identified elements of convergence between different agents, be they states, social classes, social groups or individuals and the theories that seek to explain their behaviour. Chief among these are the 'invisibility' of women and the fact that feminized practices are ascribed a lower value than men's. In the words of Grant 'What started as a practice of placing a lower value on the female role in politics became a means of excluding—intentionally or by tradition—many of the alternative perspectives of human values and behavior'.⁷³ Accordingly, the course of international affairs was from the start set by men who believed themselves to be

uniquely endowed to with the knowledge and resolve to face up to its putative dangers. Orthodox IR theorists who focus on the 'is' rather than the 'ought' of international politics thus consider women's agency as not relevant to understanding international or global processes.

Another set of practices has become the object of attention even more recently, although they date back several centuries. For postcolonial theorists, the colonization of most regions of the world by European powers and its legacy are crucial to understanding global order. Under the label of Eurocentrism, postcolonial theorists identify a third set of fundamental practices that helps shape relations between different states, groups, or cultures. They see the source of global order in the philosophical and cultural legacy of European Renaissance and Enlightenment. The prime shapers of global order are those seeking to realize the designs of European thinkers by 'exporting' a European political model through colonialism.

In his study of modernity and international relations, Albert Paolini asks how a discipline that claims to explain the character of world politics can leave out such questions as identity, subjectivity, and modernity.⁷⁴ Modernity, especially, is a concept applicable to the Western tradition. After all, European philosophers invented the concept and defined it as something inevitable and driven by European actors. Much as in the case of feminism, an examination of the philosophical sources of IR theory reveal that the ideas that underpin the field originate in what is now known as Western Europe.

This is not to argue that modern statecraft does not draw on non-European sources. Some famous non-Western thinkers are used routinely insofar as their view of statecraft or strategy squares with the state-subject of IR theory. Names like Kautilya,

Genghis Khan, or Sun Tzu are well known in Western intellectual circles, and in particular in strategic studies.⁷⁵ More generally, however, orthodox IR theory draws on a Western tradition whose non-Western sources have been forgotten or erased. In the case of liberal and Marxist IR, especially, it is difficult to identify any non-European source. This should not be surprising since both liberalism and Marxism are founded on a view of progress that transcends the past, albeit following a very narrow, well-defined path. This transcendence de facto disqualifies 'backward' societies or models of governance that are identified with the non-European world.

Postcolonialism also challenges the dominant ontological presuppositions of IR. Given the variety of forms community has taken over time, the contention that the world must naturally be comprised of states, individuals, or social classes is in doubt. With respect to the omnipresent state, Paolini asks:

Why is it that international relations, a discourse that sets out to explain the character of contemporary world politics and theorize the behavior of states, makes so little space for questions of identity, subjectivity, and modernity...? Why do we need to make sense of world politics by referring to abstract concepts such as the state, sovereignty, order, and power rather than delving into the elementary realm of culture and identity, which underpin the privileged categories of international relations?⁷⁶

What Paolini is pointing to in his question is a deeper cause for the course of global history. Furthermore, this deeper cause is seen as the product of different actors. From his perspective, the differences among Western, sovereign nation-states do not matter as much as their cultural similarities and their general attitude vis-à-vis non-Western peoples. He sees behind international relations theory the agency of people having a particular culture rather than agency of individuals, states, or social classes.

World history since the Peace of Westphalia points to the link between the (reified) state's subjective needs and its expansion into areas of the world not under its control. While motivations are diverse (religious, economic, strategic), a lengthy succession of European governments has shaped the lives of non-European peoples. According to Edward Said, there was a long-standing Occidental interest in the Orient in Western intellectual and political circles.⁷⁷ He argues that European and North American elites for long defined their cultural and moral identity in opposition to the Orient. Colonization, that is to say the political and economic subjugation of the non-Western people via direct control was an instantiation of the particular subjectivity of Western scholars and leaders. Despite considerable conflicts between Western colonial powers until the mid-twentieth century, the Berlin Conference (1884-1885) stands as an illustration of the relative unity of European powers vis-à-vis the future colonial peoples.

In addition to colonization and military occupation per se, postcolonial theorists are interested in other ways in which Western culture continues to affect the former colonies. In fact, much postcolonial work focuses on literary studies, linguistics, psychology, foreign aid and development, and the way these seemingly apolitical questions cannot be separated from political domination because they set the terms of the relationship between North and South.⁷⁸ This aspect of postcolonial studies will receive greater attention in part two of the study, where I discuss the problematique of global poverty.

Critical subjectivity and its epistemological relevance

The critical theories just reviewed do not stop at explaining the operations of capitalism, patriarchy, or Western domination. They seek to shed light on other social forces that operate in world politics. Critical theorists recognize the subjectivity of men, the bourgeoisie, or Westerners, but this is primarily a critique of that very subjectivity. It is a critique because it denies what orthodox theorists call the objective nature of their knowledge of international politics. What is meant by this is that there is a distinction between a definition of objectivity that considers some knowledge to be true but not universal, and a definition of objectivity that suggests that there is a single ahistorical and universal truth that a single theory can capture.

Critical theorists therefore challenge the objective and universal nature of the claims of traditional theorists, but they also often *assert* an alternative subjectivity. They argue that since knowledge is derived from a perspective, standpoint, or position, those who occupy perspectives, standpoints, or positions different from that of capital, statesmen, or Westerners, they also possess a knowledge of world politics consistent with their experience of it. Consequently, for critical theorists, subjectivity does not refer simply to who acts in the world; it is also epistemologically relevant.

In the critical theories discussed here, the privileged subject becomes the subordinate actors characterized by class positions, gender or colonial experiences. But these subjects are not ontologically given as they might be in orthodox IR (to the extent that they are recognized at all). For critical theorists, subjects are constituted by the actions of the dominant actors and the actions of those subjected to certain practices. Marx's conception of consciousness is in this respect very useful to understanding critical

subjectivity. He distinguished between 'objective' conditions and subjective consciousness.⁷⁹ It is the subjection of a certain number of people to a given set of conditions that determines the objective group. However, the absence of a collective consciousness on the part of the people do not allow for subjective agency.

Not surprisingly, the neo-Gramscians have come closer to the Marxist ideal-type of subjectivity. But for feminists and postcolonialists, it is also the common experience that gives rise to a collective consciousness. While there are differences among feminists (and women as actors), and among colonized peoples, there is a common experience of gender and colonization that critical theorists deem sufficient to demarcate a collective agent. It is the realization of objective conditions and the conscious development of bonds between them that brings about new subjects. The intellectuals who make this happen are an expression of the collective consciousness of social groupings.

In its original 'Coxian' form, neo-Gramscian analysis of world politics makes a greater place for the agency of the subaltern classes within capitalist production. Cox examines ways in which subordinate classes have helped make social history since the Industrial Revolution. While others like Gramsci himself or Stephen Gill focus on the role of the bourgeoisie Cox seeks to explain the forms taken by capitalism, and the emergence of other modes of production, by the political resistance of segments of civil society confronted with the consequences of the market.⁸⁰

While labour activism has not brought about a world communist revolution, the effect of labour can be identified at different historical junctures. The New Deal in the US, the rise of social democracy in Western Europe, the adoption of socialism in Eastern Europe, and other welfare institutions attest to the continued pressures exerted by

workers, their political ideas, and their organizations on dominant actors and the state.⁸¹ In this respect, Cox's work dovetails with Karl Polanyi's.⁸² Polanyi saw a double movement where attempts to create a market society resulted in a sometimes violent reaction of members civil society against the commodification of social life. While Polanyi discusses extensively the role state officials, industrialists, and intellectuals who pushed for, and constructed market society,⁸³ Cox is more specific on the ideas put forth, and actions taken, by civil society's many groups in favour of an alternative order. Cox does not write of a reified society pitted against the market; he focuses instead on specific agents who occupy a specific position and hold specific ideas about their world.

But the multiplicity of subjects that Cox's detailed analysis entails also stands in the way of the normative goals he pursues. Cox outlines at least twelve different types of relations of production⁸⁴ to which correspond at least different class fractions or even entirely different subjects. Any study of late twentieth or early twenty first century resistance to neoliberalism is made that much more difficult by the sheer number of agents. Moreover, the self-effacement of the theorist before the multiplicity of actors poses the problem of coherence in accounting for civil society resistance to capitalism. While he may be able to identify the elements of a counter-hegemonic movement, Cox is all too aware of the divisions that exist between actors, even when considering only material conditions. The importance of capitalism notwithstanding—production or economics conditions may not be the main focus of some of these agents. Capitalist exploitation may be seen as one manifestation of a broader problematique.

This is the case for many feminist critics of IR. While capitalism forms part of the global order they critique, more attention is paid to women's relations with men, and

especially to gender as a social structure. According to Spike Peterson, feminist international relations serve deconstructive and reconstructive purposes.⁸⁵ It is deconstructive insofar as it exposes the bias or fallacy of traditional theories by demonstrating their partial character, notably in terms of the ‘invisibility’ of women. Peterson argues that ‘Deconstructing the errors of androcentric scholarship revealed—and continues to reveal—patterned distortion of truth claims about “social reality”’.⁸⁶ In the face of this distortion, the mere addition of women—insufficient though it may be—‘rectifies’ the systematic exclusion of women as subjects in IR: “adding women” disrupts the existing frameworks as the mapping of “female worlds” reveals the significance of both women’s experiences and of women themselves as actors in accommodation with and resistance to structures of domination’.⁸⁷

However, overcoming the invisibility of women does more than add women to an already-existing framework. Christine Sylvester has branded this approach ‘assimilationist feminism’ because it does not provide a different theory of IR. The invisibility of women in traditional IR scholarship does not mean that women or gender are absent from international politics, but the inclusion of women as subjects does not guarantee that gender will be considered. When the relationship between women and men is considered, or when the way women are referred to is analysed, it is gender that is revealed. The extent to which women and gender are important to international politics is what Cynthia Enloe’s *Bananas, Beaches, and Bases* sought to expose. She writes that ‘By taking women’s experiences in international politics seriously, I think we can acquire a more realistic understanding of how international politics actually “works”.... Thinking

about international politics is most meaningful when it derives from contacts with diverse values, anxieties and memories of people in those societies'.⁸⁸

Feminist IR is therefore not limited to presenting the underbelly of international order and merely describing women's activities or the violence done to women. By looking at the conditions and activities of women, feminists aim to develop alternative accounts of social and global relations based on the behaviour of women as subjects. In other words, feminist scholarship theorizes international politics from a gender-sensitive perspective. This leads both to the identification of a gendered structure that had not been examined, and to the realization that international politics is not inevitably conflictual or competitive because of human nature, or because different groups possess different and irreconcilable attributes.⁸⁹ It also suggests that a rational or liberal 'spirit of commerce' (to use Kant's expression) is not the only avenue for mutual agreement or understanding. The focus on women and their experiences of world politics serves an epistemological purpose in that it makes visible persons and practices thus far invisible to many students and practitioners of IR although they account for a significant proportion of interactions across the globe.

Another 'invisibility' that has plagued international relations as a discipline is that of non-Western peoples. Some orthodox authors are arguably sympathetic to the perspective of the 'Third World'.⁹⁰ Despite this the field of IR makes few references to the nature of the relationship between places from which theory originates and the peoples in other part of the world whom it affects. That there is a non-Western agency that is relevant to IR is not particularly controversial. Several intellectuals have expressed it in theorizing the development of a colonized consciousness and by showing the way

scholars from colonized cultures have theorized their the colonial condition and explained the emergence and strength of the anti-colonial movement.⁹¹ Many orthodox theorists would in fact agree with the normative goals of the anti-colonial movements as well. However, formal decolonization and the recognition of sovereignty do not mean the recognition of the subject status of formerly colonized peoples. What becomes relevant at this point that was overlooked before is that the *contours* of the subject is as important as the fact that an actor is a subject.

For Ania Loomba, postcolonialism first entails an examination of decolonization struggles per se, where it is the direct rule that receives attention and foster opposition. Postcolonialism supposes the revision of ‘dominant definitions of race, culture, language and class in the process of making their [postcolonialists’] voices heard’.⁹² Once it is admitted that postcolonial peoples are subjects unto themselves, it remains to be seen which specific actors embody a given subjectivity. That is to say, how do postcolonial persons (or individuals) recombine as collective subjects? As we have seen, traditional IR theory provides for few subjectivities (individuals, states, or social classes), which may not be applicable to postcolonial peoples.

For Fanon, for instance, the nation constitutes a valid social unit in that it expresses the culture of the colonized. Writing about Africa, he did not perceive the ‘African’ as the subject; instead he turned to national culture and the nation as the locus subjectivity. For him the national independence that was supposed to follow anti-colonial resistance was the proper avenue for peaceful international relations.⁹³ For the Edward Said of *Orientalism*, the subject from whose position Orientalism is critiqued is the Oriental.⁹⁴ However, Said later looked inside the Orient itself to find other subjects that

may not necessarily be subsumed under the overarching category of 'Oriental' that first informed his critique.⁹⁵ The point is taken further by Homi Bhabha and Partha Chatterjee who consider the Oriental and the nation as unsuitable categories because they do not do justice to still more local cultures.⁹⁶

These disagreements over which colonized groups best embody the spirit of postcolonialism do not take away from the central concern regarding the identity of the postcolonial subject. Postcolonialists take seriously the impact of colonization on the people subjected to it.⁹⁷ In most cases, therefore, the subject cannot be reduced to the traditional culture of pre-colonial times. Rather it comes out of a very specific experience that takes something of pre-colonial times and the influence of the colonizers

Epistemology

Knowledge as seen by critical theorists cannot be separated from the circumstances of subject of study. Doing so would presuppose that the theorist rises above those very people s/he is studying. The critical theorist, then, must consider her/his own subjectivity and how it relates that of those s/he studies. What emerges from this is the standpoint of the social actors whose behaviour is analysed or explained or, for that matter, critiqued. What this means is that the concepts and categories used in analysing international relations do not necessarily correspond to a material empirical truth that can be observed from above or outside a standpoint. Knowledge resides in standpoints and the task critical theorists covered here set themselves is to reveal the view from class, gender, or postcolonial and cultural perspectives what it says about world politics.

In critical theory, there is an emphasis on the grounds for knowledge and the *specific* subjective content of knowledge claims. Critical theorists emphasize the experiential dimension of knowledge in that it is grounded in the experiences of social actors like social classes, women, or postcolonial peoples. What makes a theory neo-Gramscian, feminist, or postcolonial is the attention paid to collective subjective experiences and the international or global dynamics they bring to light.

Cox's approach can be described both as historical materialist and historical structuralist.⁹⁸ The latter label ought to be preferred since it makes explicit the method of historical structures at the centre of Cox's work. At the core of this method is that human beings are born into a social order that was determined by humans, but that is also a given for the newborn and the growing child. Agency exists within given historical structures but it is subject to constraints that can be removed or shaken over time only, through what Gramsci has called a 'war of position'. For Cox,

The notion of framework for action or historical structures is a picture of a particular configuration of forces. This configuration does not determine actions in any direct, mechanical way but imposes pressures and constraints. Individuals and groups may move with the pressures or resist and oppose them, but they cannot ignore them. To the extent that they do successfully resist a prevailing historical structure they buttress their action with an alternative, emerging configuration of forces, a rival structure.⁹⁹

Social forces that operate within the social order develop an understanding of the 'rules of the game' or of how this particular order works. For Cox, critical theorists recognize that they do not stand apart from the social forces and the social order they are studying. Consequently, they do not take structures to be immutable feature of international order.¹⁰⁰ By taking a long, historical view of social practices and institutions, Cox is able

to show how collectively held ideas about the world have changed over time following the impetus of social actors.

However, since all theories are partial, there are actors whose experiences are at odds with representation. In Cox's work, the critical theorist seeks to confront theory with social reality, including international relations practice; he emphasizes the dialectical relations between the two and what is witnessed or experienced by actors within a given global order. For instance, he argues that capitalism, and the liberal economic thought associated with it, was grounded in the activities of an emerging bourgeoisie engaged in a dialectical relationship with the nobility.¹⁰¹ What has become the dominant representation of the world in fact corresponds to the experience of the actors in the early period of capitalism. The result of this dialectical relation has been a set of rules and institutions that rectified—from a bourgeois point of view—the injustice of the monarchical order.

Correspondingly, the material from which Gramsci and neo-Gramscians developed their theory corresponds to the now-dominant dialectic between the new transnational bourgeoisie and the new subaltern groups that have developed as part of the capitalist order. Neo-Gramscian theory relies on the intersubjectively held ideas of the various actors embedded the global capitalist order. The dismissal of those occupying subaltern standpoints might lead to the conclusion that capitalism putative normative goals are being met in the form of greater prosperity, freedom, and satisfaction of human needs. Or it may lead to the conclusion that although much remains to be accomplished, there have been enormous benefits to the spread of liberalism across the globe.

What is particularly important in the process of critical theorizing is the attention paid to the ways in which dominant (neoliberal) representations of the global order fails to measure up when confronted to the view from below the global hierarchy.¹⁰² More recently, Cox has broadened his definition of material conditions to include ecological and cultural considerations.¹⁰³ The intersection of a globalizing Western capitalism with local cultures (or civilizations) poses a series of new empirical questions for both theorists and social actors. According to Cox, civilizations are ‘a fit between material conditions of existence and intersubjective meanings’¹⁰⁴ that actors hold about those very material conditions. Since other (non-Western, non-capitalist) civilizations existed before the advent of capitalism, a dialectic between the ‘business civilization’¹⁰⁵ of capitalism and other civilizations can be expected to take place.

To the extent that it is experienced against different cultural backgrounds that it disrupts, global capitalism can no longer be articulated from a single standpoint or one that makes it appear unequivocally positive. A research programme that can account for the direction taken by world order must reconsider epistemological foundations for knowledge: ‘To study civilizations and their role and potential in the world today implies both an approach to knowledge and a focus on topics that enable us to assess how the aforementioned dimensions of civilizations are interacting in the process of civilizational development’.¹⁰⁶ This requires a rejection of the idea that there are no alternatives to world order, specifically, in this case, to the neoliberal order that has been in the making for two decades. It also requires a method for making sense of relations between different global actors. In Cox’s words, ‘This arises in an epistemological context far different from the game theoretic and rational choice notions popular during the Cold War which

assumed a single shared rationality'.¹⁰⁷ The epistemological contexts (in the plural) are best addressed by a recognition of the subjective nature of knowledge and of the subjects from whose lives it is gathered.

Although Cox and his followers have not used the concept of standpoint, their use of the word perspective conveys the same idea that knowledge is produced in context.¹⁰⁸ Perhaps the most direct association between neo-Gramscian perspective and feminist standpoint epistemology is to be found in the work of Nancy Hartsock.¹⁰⁹ Hartsock's version of the feminist standpoint starts from the locations occupied by women in the capitalist structure. However, historical materialism serves only as a springboard to the consideration of other aspects of social relations. In the first place, standpoint epistemology shows how a capitalist order affects agents fulfilling caring roles. Beyond this traditional Marxist conclusion, it also leads Hartsock to conclusions on psychological development and on the impersonal relations that a rationally conceived and rationally ordered capitalist society entails. Understood in this way, epistemology in feminist IR pertains to the reconstructive aspect of feminism, which stems from the recognition of women's subject status. Some feminist IR theorists have relied on existing epistemologies while others have sought different foundations for theory. There are, however, key ideas that run like a thread through feminist theories, and the view that women's experience of gender are a source of knowledge is central.

Because women and their conditions were not acknowledged, IR theory overlooked an entire body of knowledge. In terms of knowledge production, feminism does several things for IR. First, even before we distinguish between different feminist methods, feminism makes an empirical contribution in revealing events associated with

traditional IR concerns but never investigated (rape as a weapon of war, control over women's bodies in population control, gender-specific consequences of the traditional practice of IR¹¹⁰). Second, and more importantly from a theoretical point of view, the theorist can look to the subject's own account of her experiences of global processes. Feminism now becomes less descriptive and more analytical in that it theorizes global politics from women's perspective. No less than traditional theory, then, it explain the existence of phenomena that are central to international relations. Third, the focus on women and their practices can show that relations across space need not be gain-seeking, power-seeking or otherwise antagonistic, as orthodox theories suggest.

Feminism greatest contribution is perhaps the recognition of gender as an organizing principle of IR. Jill Steans argues that the association between sex and gender-roles has naturalized the hierarchy between men and women. Indeed 'Social scientists generally speaking supported the "common-sense" view that men and women had particular characteristics which made them particularly suited to the performance of particular social roles'.¹¹¹ Feminists have argued that this association is spurious and that the criteria used to ascribe roles are culture-specific. Consequently, it is not possible to speak in terms of timeless truth or in terms of a natural order.

Global relations have played a crucial role in raising the socially constructed and cultural dimension of gender. Works by Third World feminists like Chandra Talpade Mohanty¹¹² have pointed to the need for greater intersubjectivity than that displayed initially by (Western) feminists. Similarly, black and Latin-American feminists like bell hooks and Gloria Anzaldúa consider gender relations as part of the historical trajectory of colonization, slavery, and migration.¹¹³ Dialogue between different women differently

positioned in the global order can, in Christine Sylvester's view, produce a much more accurate account of international relations.¹¹⁴

Despite the existence of different schools of feminism, the overriding message of feminist theory is that women stand in a particular position in relation to men. It is this common experience pertaining to sex and gender that suggest the existence of a widespread infrastructure, so to speak, that underlies both the theory and practice of IR. The conclusions of orthodox IR theorists may appear true inasmuch as they are products of a shared standpoint. Likewise, the conclusions of feminists on the prevalence of gender could only come about by looking at global politics from the perspective of women living in it. Women occupy a privileged position to observe the manifestation of gendered social relations and feminists theorize the various ways in which gender structures relations between social groupings, how it operates and how relations may change without altering the subordinate-superordinate relations between them.

Standpoint also manifests itself in historical and cultural terms. Postcolonialists pay particular attention to the knowledge of precolonial times and how it has survived or been altered by the experience of colonization. The greater part of literature that currently exists in the humanities, let alone international relations, originates from Western intellectuals. Theorizing from the postcolonial perspectives takes the form of a recovery of subaltern knowledges that have been either lost or purposefully erased memory by the colonizers. To achieve this, self-identified postcolonialists, perhaps more than other critical theorists, rely on postmodern and poststructural tools.¹¹⁵ In the words of Leela Gandhi, 'the poststructuralist and postmodern intervention in this field [the humanities] delivers the possibility of thinking differently—of knowing difference in and for

itself'.¹¹⁶ Correspondingly, knowledge production involves the unmasking of the modes of domination that exist in a globalized world and the social practices that have existed and exist to organize social life, and that IR (or the humanities generally) discount.

Exactly where the emphasis should be is a matter of debate among postcolonial scholars. On the one hand, there are those who rely extensively on the concept of the 'Other' relegated to the margin of a social setting or of an institution to show how power wielded by colonizers operates globally. In international relations, the centre from which the subject operates can be located the imperial powers or those actors who possess an intellectual or economic stake in 'third world' domination.¹¹⁷ Simply speaking with the voice that goes with one's experiences challenges dominant representations emanating from the Western academy.

Nevertheless, insofar as the links between different regions or cultures are extensive, the question of which actor and which knowledge ought to be privileged cannot be avoided. Writes Bart Moore-Gilbert: 'there has been at times violent disagreement over whether the proper subject of postcolonial analysis as a reading practice should be postcolonial culture alone, however this is defined, or whether—or to what degree—it is legitimate to focus on the culture of the coloniser'.¹¹⁸ The question is significant because the focus of attention risks affecting the standpoint from which knowledge is produced. As a group constituted by colonial policy, the colonized formed a community whose members developed a distinct set of representations and explanations for the ordering of their world.¹¹⁹ They have come to know of their own existence and of their relations with their colonizers in such a way that other standpoints cannot capture equally.

According to Ania Loomba, no one can do the work of the postcolonial peoples but the postcolonial peoples themselves.¹²⁰ The knowledge of the colonial and postcolonial conditions must, in her view, take into consideration the impact of Western ideas and culture on the colonized.¹²¹ The global cultural logic that underlies the agency of both former colonial powers and former colonies can be approached fruitfully through the experiences of former colonial peoples who today remain in an uneasy relationship with what they see as Eurocentrism and its agents.¹²²

Politics and the normative limitations of critical theory

As we have seen in the first section of this chapter, critical theorists argue that all theories have a normative content whether their authors are aware of it or not. While a normative theory is not the goal of orthodox theorists, the seemingly natural laws they purport to discover in relations between humans and between states limit the range of possibilities for action and thus the participation of those who might put forth alternatives. Critical theorists consider these limitation largely ideological.¹²³ In orthodox theory, the normative impetus of social actors is thought to be constrained by natural limits. The task of the theorist is to establish the limits of the feasible. The question is therefore not so much whether theory is normative, as even well-known traditionalists have admitted as much. What is at stake is which normative goals are achievable. The peculiarity of critical theory is to show the much broader range of possibilities by disproving the conclusions of other theories.

Alternatives to the global order identified by neo-Gramscian, feminist and postcolonial theorist can take several forms. Several approaches to alternate visions of

world politics can be envisaged. One consists in identifying the practices that already exist that have not attracted the attention of IR theorists. Another consists in putting forward another set of practices that have yet to be developed. Considering the importance that standpoint has in critical theory, what shall concern me here is the ground from which these alternatives originate. The next chapter will concern itself with two broad alternatives that have attempted to address the problems raised in this chapter and specifically in this section.

If alternatives to the current order already exist, an essentially critical attitude vis-à-vis the orthodoxy in the field may be sufficient. According to such a view, critical theory's role would be to eliminate the obstacles to the expression of a subjectivity that has been silenced in the discipline. Already-existing social formations could regain the place they once occupied in people's lives. Such is the case, for instance, with the attempt to recover traditional institutions that have fallen by the wayside or been purposefully dismantled by an outside intervention.¹²⁴ Another alternative is geared toward the transnational organization of a community of interests to pursue goals consistent with their members' needs. In both these cases, the critique has a limited objective in that it serves to open up space for the existence of many worlds that can coexist,¹²⁵ whether they take the form of territorial entities or transnational identities that occupy a thinking space—that is, they possess an identity—rather than a geographical one.

While it is true that different persons and groups may adhere to different paradigms and have different aspirations, it is also true that they share a common space in which they interact. We can easily argue that the sharing of a deterritorialized thinking space does not remove the geographical or material dimension of subjective existence.¹²⁶ To the extent

that social relations have increased in depth, intensity and complexity, the lives of both existing actors and those that have emerged are intertwined to an unprecedented extent. What has occurred is ‘a transformation of social geography marked by the growth of supraterritorial spaces’ while ‘territoriality and supraterritoriality coexist in complex interrelations.’¹²⁷

The question that poses itself to the normative theorists is how to adapt or react to a global order that brings widely diverging conception of ethics into contact and potential conflict. In other words, what kind of overarching set of norms is appropriate to guide global relations in this context, and what are the origins of these norms? In critical theories, a given perspective, standpoint, or position is seen to provide a unique insight into the human condition. However, it is unclear whether the knowledge and norms deriving from a particular set of experiences in a particular social setting are readily fungible to other social settings and other experiences. The uniqueness of the perspective is not a guarantee of its universality or its superiority to others.

This is a problem of which many critical theorists are aware. Edward Said has argued that in the process of challenging the authority of colonial representations of the world, the native writer must be careful not to reproduce the kind of binary thinking that s/he has deplored in the colonizer. He contends that ‘it is difficult for these movements to be interested in the world beyond their own borders’,¹²⁸ yet tend to look from the inside out in a world where self-contained entities are no longer an appropriate way to define identity. Even critics ought to be upfront about their own biases, disclosing from what point of view they look at and speak to the world. Critical theorists are not free from essentializing tendencies even if they are in principle sensitive to this problem. Others emphasize the

socially constructed character of analytical categories, including social actors. Thus, most feminists take care to point out that men and women are gendered masculine or feminine as a result of discursive and social practices that instil in them specific behaviours. Consequently, claims are true given the current state of affairs, but the categories are not given by nature; they are subject to change.

It is possible to discern behind these warnings the influence of postmodern and poststructural scepticism concerning grand theories and the temptation to generalize. However, these red flags pose a significant problem to those concerned with emancipation, including scholars adopting a particular subjective position. As uneasy with the tendency to essentialism as she is, Gayatri Spivak has argued that it is a valid strategy to be used by subaltern peoples to resist hegemonic actors.¹²⁹ In a review of self-identified postmodern works of international relations, Sankaran Krishna puts forth a similar argument for the necessity of strategic essentializing as ‘a position from the perspective of those who were and are victimized and continue to suffer in various ways from an unequal, capitalist, patriarchal, and neocolonial world order’.¹³⁰ Like Spivak, whose work draws extensively on postmodern and poststructuralist methods, Christine Sylvester is uncomfortable with the proliferation of oppressed peoples and groups that postmodernism brings into the discussion because ‘feminist writings can be marginalized or preempted by those who plead for a more inclusive IR’.¹³¹ There are imperatives associated with the condition of women, and such imperatives call for hyphenated identities¹³² that nevertheless keep gender at the centre of the discussion.

The invocation of an inevitably partial standpoint has definite consequences when the IR critic wishes to propose alternative practices or point to a possible starting point

for them. The bias from which orthodox theories suffer (or the bias of theories other than those of the person who is writing) can also be used to justify one's own bias. Thus, Chinua Achebe, one of Africa's best-known novelists and critics of Western literature, recognizes that he admired Western authors like Joseph Conrad.¹³³ Yet, a significant motivation behind Achebe's own fiction and academic work is the desire to write back and 'revaluate [his] culture' that 'had been branded as inferior and bad by British oppressors, when they did not say that it was non-existent. It appeared to be a vital cultural necessity to fight and rebel against that view'.¹³⁴ The move to critique out of necessity and the almost exclusive focus on what is negative about other perspectives, especially those associated with the dominant group, obfuscates what little contribution it actually makes to knowledge and to emancipation.

Rejection of other standpoints need not be framed in hostile terms to be effective. In feminist theory, there is not need to look at the radical feminists of the 1970s to find a clear link between theory and practice. While feminism may be defined generically as the recognition that women are oppressed and that this oppression deserves theoretical attention and political changes, other feminists define feminism—and feminist identity—in more demanding terms, as the conscious struggle against gender-based oppression in everyday life. While this is not a controversial point per se, when it is coupled with a large number of studies that expose in the most minute details the operations of patriarchy and its pervasiveness, it begs the question of whether there are currently deleterious practices that are not gendered, or practices that are desirable that are not feminist in inspiration.

The decision of critical theorists to focus attention on a given subject's experience of international relations, practical as it may be, does more than simply 'provide a space for' or 'give voice to' it, it also takes a step toward the creation of a distinct field of study. Fields are conventional and critical theories have since given rise to study programmes, institutes, schools, departments, conferences, publishers, journals, professional associations, etc. described by labels like labour studies, subaltern studies, gender studies, postcolonial studies that are defined by their subject and to some extent by a specific epistemological standpoint. They are also defined by political and normative objectives that pit them against other subjects, their world views, and their normative aims.

It is worth noting that social theory typically addresses social *problems*, not simply social phenomena. The questions asked by orthodox and critical theorists alike are motivated by an encounter with specific life circumstances that appear to require adaptation or remediation. Knowledge produced in this context is not knowledge for knowledge's sake;¹³⁵ nor is it knowledge as power for only power's sake.¹³⁶ Theorists are interested in international and world politics because their dynamic is deemed problematic from their subject's perspective. Even the crudest of realists operate within a certain conception of morality that rests with the modern state.¹³⁷ The modern state itself owes to a social contract whose objectives are not altogether morally objectionable.

Unfortunately, the alternate routes chosen by critical theorists and the alternate conceptions of moral community do not necessarily overcome the negative focus of their work. In their normative pursuit, neo-Gramscians, feminists, and postcolonialist also deal with social practices that are deleterious to *their* subject; they attempt to identify the

cause of these phenomena and focus their attention on the origin of the problem. In the endless structure-agency debate in the social sciences, critical theorists are typically heavily on the side of agency in that they try to identify who shaped the social order and who reproduces it instead of taking it as it is. Indeed, this is a fundamental characteristic of critical theory. The argument that the target (the object) of the critique is the global order, the structure, the culture, or the discourse rather than the persons (the subject) who constructed them is disingenuous at best. Yet, the argument ritually invoked to assuage the fears of those who appear to be criticized by the theory. The question to ask when assessing a critical theory, especially one that takes subjective experience as a starting point, is who is more commonly portrayed as the dominant actor and who is most frequently depicted as suffering from that domination. Frequently, the party responsible is clearly identifiable even if it not name specifically.

This problem is compounded by hypothesis-generating nature of theory, critical or orthodox. Once it has been shown that a theory is reasonably true,¹³⁸ it serves as the basis for further social inquiry in a most conventional manner. This explain the growing body of literature—to use a common formulation—on the unequal, patriarchal, and neocolonial world order to which Sankaran Krishna referred (cf. above). In light of this ‘evidence’, it becomes counter-intuitive to hypothesize that one’s subject may be her/himself guilty of exclusionary practices. Reality, truth, or simple methodological considerations such as the exploration of a variety of avenues are not allowed to stand in the way of the growing empirical evidence, and the normative and political goals of the theorists and their subject of predilection. It results from this critical focus a negative portrait of those who boast the

characteristics associated with the hegemonic group, whatever the disclaimers about the risk of generalization or essentialism

Conclusion

The preceding discussion provided an overview of the central features of neo-Gramscian, feminist, and postcolonial critiques of international relations theory. In it I have argued that critical theory in the broadest sense of the term has undermined the certainty of the field far more than its members had anticipated. It has introduced a wide range of actors whose relevance had scarcely been considered prior to the third debate. It has also challenged the epistemological approaches that characterized orthodox IR theory. In so doing, however, critical theory has not been able to overcome one of the central problem it had identified in the canon, namely the propensity to omit, overlook, or exclude some perspectives.

That said, this critique of critical theory is not to be taken as a wholesale repudiation of its subjective, epistemological, and normative content. Indeed, it is difficult to see at this point how one standpoint could be substituted for those of critical theories' subjects. This is even truer if one believes that one cannot rise above other standpoints without a prior direct engagement with them. What is needed, then, is a constant reminder that knowledge is situated and that insofar as views are commonly held, they are intersubjectively arrived at. As the latter section of the chapter has maintained, the normative goals pursued by critical theorists now become a question of whose standpoint and whose norms provide a suitable starting point for alternative practices in global politics. There are interrelated concepts that must be kept in mind at every step of critical

theorizing: Subjectivity, objectivity, and universality. These are not necessarily mutually exclusive concepts although objectivity and universality often prove rather elusive. Harding's definition of strong objectivity is a useful way to approach the issue. No person is an island and so it is necessary to cast one's net as wide as possible so that accounts of world politics do as much justice as possible to who and what exists in that realm and to the kinds of projects that actors would like to see realized.

The reconstruction of the political, therefore, is neither to be eschewed nor undertaken in isolation of what others aspire to. There is no necessary convergence between different critiques of the orthodoxy in International Relations simply because they object to the same theories. What is needed is built on the identification of the forms that the problematique of exclusion takes in international politics. To do so, a constant engagement with the standpoints reviewed above is necessary. Even more important is the commitment not to subsume the study of other forms of exclusion under one's own preferred conceptual scheme. The reconstruction move must occur jointly with others' own emancipation in mind with a constant attention to the way one's own political pursuits impact on others'. This entails the effort to learn from the way others experience the world one is creating, and the flexibility to understand and respond to others' expressions of displeasure or insecurity. The method that I propose in this study is the development of empathy based on the common experience of exclusion.

Whether there is a valid starting point or a method to know the lives of others and achieve the goal of universal emancipation is controversial. Among those grounding their critiques in postmodern and poststructuralist philosophies of knowledge, the absence of an Archimedean point renders the quest either impossible or too risky. Others who have not

given up on modern conception of progress have sought to address the grievances of critical theorists by transcending their subjective standpoints. The next chapter discusses in turn these two normative options under the rubric of a postmodern ‘politics of difference’ and an Enlightenment-inspired ‘global dialogical community’. They are both major attempts to grapple with the problems raised in this chapter and their proponents hold them as desirable responses to the dilemmas raised in the third debate. Chapter three will propose empathy as another alternative to these dilemmas that seeks to overcome limitations of the politics of difference and the dialogical community.

Endnotes

¹ Kalevi Holsti, *The Dividing Discipline: Hegemony and Diversity in International Theory* (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1985).

² *Ibid.*, vii.

³ Kenneth N. Waltz, *Man, the State, and War: A Theoretical Analysis* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1959).

⁴ Holsti, *The Dividing Discipline*, viii.

⁵ See Yosef Lapid, ‘The Third Debate: On the Prospect of International Theory in and Post-Positivist Era’ and Jim George, ‘International Relations and the Search for Thinking Space’, *International Studies Quarterly* 33, no. 3 (September 1989).

⁶ Richard Devetak, ‘Critical Theory’ in Scott Burchill and Andrew Linklater, eds., *Theories of International Relations* (London: Macmillan, 1996), 146.

⁷ Robert W. Cox, ‘Social Forces, States, and World Orders: Beyond International Relations Theory’ in Robert W. Cox with Timothy J. Sinclair, *Approaches to World Order* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 87. The article was first published in 1981.

⁸ Steve Smith, ‘Positivism and Beyond’, in Steve Smith, Ken Booth and Marysia Zalewski, eds., *International Theory: Positivism and Beyond* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 11. ‘Naturalism’ would be a better label.

⁹ I am referring to Comtean positivism as explained by Mark Neufeld. This means (i) truth as correspondence; (ii) the methodological unity of science; and (iii) the value-freedom of science. See Mark Neufeld, *The Restructuring of International Relations Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 32-38.

¹⁰ See Smith, ‘Positivism and Beyond’, 11.

¹¹ Steve Smith, ‘The Discipline of International Relations: Still an American Social Science?’, Paper presented at the annual conference of the Australian Political Science Association, Canberra, October 5th 2000.

¹² Smith, ‘Positivism and Beyond’, 13.

¹³ Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970).

¹⁴ Peter Haas, ‘Introduction: Epistemic Communities and International Policy Coordination’, *International Organization* 46, no. 1 (Winter 1992).

¹⁵ Fred Halliday and Justin Rosenberg, ‘Interview with Ken Waltz’, *Review of International Studies* 24, no. 3 (July 1998).

¹⁶ Cox, 'Social Forces, States, and World Orders', 85.

¹⁷ Robert W. Cox, 'Gramsci, Hegemony, and International Relations: An Essay in Method', in Robert W. Cox with Timothy J. Sinclair, *Approaches to World Order* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 132. The article was first published in 1983.

¹⁸ Which obviously does not exclude the possibility that others become members of the academe or that they become recognized as 'experts' at a later time.

¹⁹ Jim George, *Discourses of Global Politics: A Critical (Re)Introduction to International Relations* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1994), 44.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 45.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 46.

²² It is nevertheless important to note that historical sociologists have sought to account for the contingent nature of the modern nation-state. For them, it was political and economic developments in Western Europe that produced this particular form of community. In this they recognize that the modern nation-state is not inevitable, natural, or universal. It was a solution to political problems of Europe. See Stephen Hobden and John M. Hobson, eds., *Historical Sociology of International Relations* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

²³ Carr's works offer an interesting example of the way the discipline has sought to limit its attention to the state in spite of the better judgement of some of its members. Carr's *Twenty Years' Crisis* continues to be cited as a founding text despite Carr's misgivings about realism, which show up throughout the text. If there were doubts as to his unease with realism and scientific social theory, they ought to have been dispelled with his *Nationalism and After* and *What is History?* Subsequent realists have overlooked these two works.

²⁴ George, *Discourses of Global Politics*, 154.

²⁵ See for instance Neufeld, *The Restructuring of International Relations Theory*, Ch. 3.

²⁶ Nancy Hartsock, *The Feminist Standpoint Revisited and Other Essays* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1998), 113-117.

²⁷ Whether there is a moral outlook in Marxism is debatable. On the one hand, there the assertion in Marx' Theses on Feuerbach that the point is not simply to interpret the world but to change it. On the other, Marx' later scientific aspirations (i.e., in *Capital*) suggest that normative concerns have little to do with the way history proceeds since dialectical materialism is operating independently of direct human influence. Marxian theorists have been explicit about their normative goals but the question remains whether they are beholden to all that Marx' work supposes. See Karl Marx, 'Theses on Feuerbach', in Robert C. Tucker, ed., *The Marx-Engels Reader* (New York and London: W. W. Norton, 1978), 145; also Chris Brown, 'Marxism and International Ethics' in Terry Nardin and David R. Mapel, eds., *Traditions of International Ethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

²⁸ Hartsock, *The Feminist Standpoint Revisited*, 107-108; Sandra G. Harding, *Whose Knowledge? Whose Science? Thinking from Women's Lives* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), 123.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, Ch. 6.

³⁰ Chris Brown, *International Relations Theory: New Normative Approaches* (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1992), 1.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 1-2.

³² *Ibid.*, 3.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ The expression 'sin of inertia' describes this well, as whatever negative or positive aspect of the social order might exist is accepted as a matter of fact.

³⁵ Steve Smith, 'The Forty Years' Detour: The Resurgence of Normative Theory in International Relations', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 21, no. 3 (Winter 1992).

³⁶ Molly Cochran, *Normative Theory in International Relations; A Pragmatic Approach* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), xv.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, xvi.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 490.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 491.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

- ⁴¹ Edward W. Said, *Representations of the Intellectual* (New York: Vintage, 1996); Cox, 'Social Forces, States, and World Orders', 98; David Campbell, *National Deconstruction: Violence, Identity, and Justice in Bosnia* (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1998), 53-78.
- ⁴² This does not imply speaking directly to the policy-makers.
- ⁴³ For example, widely read scholars like Robert Keohane, Joseph Nye, and Samuel Huntington were bureaucrats in their national administrations.
- ⁴⁴ Kenneth Waltz, Fred Halliday and Justin Rosenberg, 'Interview with Ken Waltz', *Review of International Studies* 24, no. 3 (July 1998).
- ⁴⁵ Steve Smith, 'Power and Truth: A Reply to William Wallace', *Review of International Studies* 23, no. 4 (Summer 1997), 510.
- ⁴⁶ Smith, 'Power and Truth', 512.
- ⁴⁷ R. B. J. Walker, *Inside/Outside: International Relations as Political Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 62.
- ⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 63.
- ⁴⁹ Vladimir I. Lenin, *Imperialism—Highest Stage of Capitalism* (Peking: Foreign Language Press, 1975); Vladimir I. Lenin, *State and Revolution* (New York: International Publishers, 1943).
- ⁵⁰ Federico Enrique Cardoso and Enzo Faletto, *Dependency and Development in Latin America* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1977), xxiv.
- ⁵¹ Immanuel M. Wallerstein, *The Modern World System: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century* (New York: Academic Press, 1976), 10.
- ⁵² Richard Devetak, 'Critical Theory', in Scott Burchill and Andrew Linklater, *Theories of International Relations* (London: Macmillan, 1996), 145.
- ⁵³ Richard Wyn Jones, ed., *Critical Theory and World Politics* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2001), 16.
- ⁵⁴ Cochran, *Normative Theory in International Relations*, 2.
- ⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 2-3.
- ⁵⁶ Cynthia Enloe, *Bananas, Beaches, and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics* (London: Pandora, 2000).
- ⁵⁷ Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 'Can the Subaltern Speak?', in Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg, eds., *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1988).
- ⁵⁸ Stephen Gill, 'Epistemology, Ontology, and the "Italian School"', in Stephen Gill, ed., *Gramsci, Historical Materialism and International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 30-31; Cox 1987, 273.]
- ⁵⁹ Cox, *Production, Power, and Word Order*, 32.
- ⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 7.
- ⁶¹ Stephen Gill, *American Hegemony and the Trilateral Commission* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).
- ⁶² Japan began to industrialize in the nineteenth century but its government was by no means the equal (even formally) of the US or European powers. During the interwar period it became part of the historic bloc defined by rival imperialisms rather than a supporter of Pax Britannica. The impetus to industrialize with the Meiji Revolution and its post-war embrace of global capitalism cannot, of course be separated from the use of US 'gunboat diplomacy' and US occupation of the country at the end of World War II. In historical context, 'consent' and 'willingness' are very relative terms.
- ⁶³ Cox, 'Gramsci, Hegemony, and International Relations', 133.
- ⁶⁴ According to Cox, the dominant social groups are '(1) those who control the big corporations operating on a world scale, (2) those who control big nation-based enterprises and industrial groups, and (3) locally based petty capitalists'. There is furthermore an organic relationship between them and the established workers typical of high-technology sectors of the global economy, whose outlook has more in common with that of dominant groups than that of other workers. See Cox, *Production, Power, and World Order*, 358, 377-382.
- ⁶⁵ Gill, 'Epistemology, Ontology, and the "Italian School"', 117.
- ⁶⁶ Kees van der Pijl, *The Making of an Atlantic Ruling Class* (London: Verso, 1984); Gill *American Hegemony and the Trilateral Commission*, p. 131.
- ⁶⁷ There were always debates within the state, the private sector, and academia between neoliberalism and a form of neo-mercantilism which would have seen capitalist economies back away from liberalization efforts in GATT. See Gill, *American Hegemony and the Trilateral Commission*, 133-134.

- ⁶⁸ Maria Mies, *Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale: Women in the International Division of Labour* (London: Zed Books, 1986), 6.
- ⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 13.
- ⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 36.
- ⁷¹ Marysia Zalewski, 'Introduction: From the "Woman" Question to the "Man" Question in International Relations', in Marysia Zalewski and Jane Parpart, eds., *The "Man" in International Relations* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1998), 1.
- ⁷² Rebecca Grant, 'The Quagmire of Gender and International Relations', in V. Spike Peterson, ed., *Gendered States: Feminist (Re)Visions of International Relations* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1992), 85.
- ⁷³ Grant, 'The Quagmire of Gender and International Relations', 86. The way international politics is portrayed, and what it seemingly required of its practitioners, tends to promote the idea that IR is a domain unfit for women. Anne Sisson Runyan, 'The "State" of Nature: A Garden Unfit for Women and Other Living Thing', in Peterson, ed., *Gendered States*.
- ⁷⁴ Albert J. Paolini, *Navigating Modernity: Postcolonialism, Identity and International Relations* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1999), 5.
- ⁷⁵ Kautilya, *Arthashastra* (Mysore: Mysore Printing and Publishing House, 1967); Sun Tzu, *The Art of War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971).
- ⁷⁶ Paolini, *Navigating Modernity*, 5.
- ⁷⁷ Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage, 1979).
- ⁷⁸ Fanon, *Les damnés de la terre* (Paris: François Maspero, 1970); Albert Memmi, *Portrait du Colonisé* (Paris: J. J. Pauvert, 1966); Arturo Escobar, *Encountering Development* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994).
- ⁷⁹ Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, 'Manifesto of the Communist Party', in Tucker, ed., *The Marx-Engels Reader*, 480, 483ff.
- ⁸⁰ Robert W. Cox, 'The Idea of International Labour Regulation', in Cox with Sinclair, *Approaches to World Order*. Originally published in 1953.
- ⁸¹ There were of course other conditions that helped or hindered labour in their demands. Balance of power, rival imperialisms, Pax Britannica, and Pax Americana were all contexts in which some possibilities emerged for workers to secure regulations that went at least part of the way to address their grievances. These contexts are the historical structures Cox often mentions as enabling or disabling conditions that can be self-consciously exploited. Even these structures are social artifacts and not fixtures of the social world. See Cox, *Production, Power, and World Order*, chs. 5-7.
- ⁸² Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation: The Economic and Social Origins of Our Time* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1944).
- ⁸³ Polanyi's discussion of how 'society protected itself' is rather cursory. The resistance to commodification appears to be structurally determined rather than created by social actors. See Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*, ch. XXI.
- ⁸⁴ Cox, *Production, Power, and World Order*, 32.
- ⁸⁵ V. Spike Peterson, 'Introduction', in V. Spike Peterson, ed., *Gendered States: Feminist (Re)Visions of International Relations Theory* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1992), 6.
- ⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 7.
- ⁸⁷ *Ibid.*
- ⁸⁸ Cynthia Enloe, *Bananas, Beaches, and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2000), 4-5.
- ⁸⁹ J. Ann Tickner, *Gender and International Relations: Feminist Perspectives on Achieving Global Security* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992); Betty A. Reardon, *Women and Peace: Feminist Visions of Global Security* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993); Jean Bethke Elshtain, *Women and War* (New York: Basic Books, 1987); Cecile Jackson and Ruth Pearson, eds., *Feminist Visions of Development: Gender Analysis and Policy* (London and New York: Routledge, 1998); Anne-Marie Goetz, 'Feminism and the Limits of the Claim to Know: Contradictions in the Feminist Approach to Women in Development', *Millennium: Journal of International Relations* 17, no. 3 (Winter 1988); Patricia Maguire, *Women in Development: An Alternative Analysis* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts, 1984).
- ⁹⁰ E. H. Carr refers to and 'gives voice' to some states that others never mention—and sometimes adopt a Third World perspective as a goal of theories. Dependency and world systems theories easily come to

mind.⁹⁰ Dependency theory, in particular, could be labelled a third world perspective. World systems theory is for its part inspired by a desire to see the plight of the poorest peoples of the world.

⁹¹ Fanon, *Les damnés de la terre*; Frantz Fanon, *Peau noire, masques blancs* (Paris; Seuil, 1952); Albert Memmi, *Portrait du colonisé* (Paris: Pauvert, 1966);

⁹² Ania Loomba, *Colonialism/Postcolonialism* (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), 20.

⁹³ Fanon, *Les damnés de la terre*, 163.

⁹⁴ Said, *Orientalism*, 20.

⁹⁵ Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage, 1991), xxiv.

⁹⁶ Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993); Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994). A similar argument is made by Bhabha with respect to the state that acts as a rejoinder to Chatterjee's. See Homi K. Bhabha, ed., *Nation and Narration* (London and New York: Routledge, 1990).

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 52.; Bill Ashcroft, *Postcolonial Transformation* (London and New York: Routledge, 2001), 35-40; Paolini, *Navigating Modernity*, 65-66.

⁹⁸ Cox, 'Social Forces, States, and World Orders', 97-101; Cox, *Production, Power, and World Order*, 395-396.

⁹⁹ Robert W. Cox, quoted in Sinclair, 'Beyond International Relations Theory', in Cox and Sinclair, *Approaches to World Order*, 8.

¹⁰⁰ Coz, 'Social Forces, States, and World Orders', 89.

¹⁰¹ Cox, *Production, Power, and World Order*, 117-118.

¹⁰² Stephen Gill, 'Globalisation, Market Civilisation, and Disciplinary Neoliberalism', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 24, no. 3 (Winter 1995), 402.

¹⁰³ Robert W. Cox, 'Civilizations and the Twenty-First Century: Some Theoretical Considerations', *International Relations of the Asia-Pacific* 1, no. 1 (2001).

¹⁰⁴ Cox, 'Civilizations and the Twenty-First Century', 110.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 112.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 123.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 123-124.

¹⁰⁸ Nancy Hartsock, 'The Feminist Standpoint: Developing the Ground for a Specifically Feminist Historical Materialism' in Nancy Hartsock, *The Feminist Standpoint Revisited, and Other Essays* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1998), ; Sandra G. Harding, *Whose Science? Whose Knowledge? Thinking from Women's Lives* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991), 121; Jill Steans, *Gender and International Relations: An Introduction* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press), 169.

¹⁰⁹ Cox and Hartsock appear to have made parallel arguments.

¹¹⁰ That is, never investigated as a social problem to be overcome and as the result of a particular way of conceiving the relationship of women and men. The widespread manifestation of these practices and the effort put into them suggest that much thinking has in fact gone into their promotion. This thinking, however, has not not taken the form of critical theorizing or of an analysis of gender in international relations.

¹¹¹ Steans, *Gender and International Relations*, 11.

¹¹² Chandra Talpade Mohanty, 'Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses' in Chandra Talpade Mohanty, Ann Russo and Lourdes Torres, eds., *Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991).

¹¹³ bell hooks, *Ain't I a Woman: Black Women and Feminism* (Boston, MA: South End Press, 1981); Gloria Amzaldúa, ed., *Making Faces, Making Souls = Haciendo Caras: Creative and Critical Perspectives by Feminists of Color* (San Francisco: Aunt Lute, 1990).

¹¹⁴ Sylvester writes: 'Recuperating "homesteadings" as a means of expanding knowledge and potential requires that homesteaders from the past and those looking to the future show willingness to cooperate in revealing the stories, identities, variables, and perceptions that were rooted out and evacuated so that some could roost where others were refused homes. It requires also a certain ability to occupy a variety of landscapes simultaneously rather than defend one homeplace as the true site of all identity'. Christine Sylvester, *Feminist Theory and International Relations in a Postmodern Era* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 3.

¹¹⁵ E. San Juan, *Beyond Postcolonial Theory* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998); R. Radhakrishnan, 'Postmodernism and the Rest of the World' in Fawzia Seshadri-Crooks and Kalpana Afzal-Khan, eds., *The Pre-occupation of Postcolonial Studies* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000).

¹¹⁶ Leela Gandhi, *Postcolonial Theory: A Critical Introduction* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 41.

¹¹⁷ Samir Amin, *L'Eurocentrisme: critique d'une idéologie* (Paris: Anthropos, 1988); Arturo Escobar, *Encountering Development: The Making and Unmaking of the Third World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995); Neil Lazarus, *Nationalism and Cultural Practice in the Postcolonial World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

¹¹⁸ Bart Moore-Gilbert, *Postcolonial Theory: Contexts, Practices, Politics* (London: Verso, 1997), 11.

¹¹⁹ Ania Loomba, *Colonialism/Postcolonialism* (London and New York: Routledge, 1998), 35.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 42.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 51.

¹²² See Kalpana Sashadri-Crooks, 'At the Margins of Postcolonial Studies: Part 1', in Seshadri-Crooks and Afzal-Khan, eds., *The Preoccupation of Postcolonial Studies*, 19-20.

¹²³ I write 'largely' to make space for Vico's quip that men (*sic*) make their history, though not in conditions of their choosing. The socially constructed nature of the limits on possible courses of action does not mean that constraints are non-existent. The discovery or the decision that a social practice is not set in stone does not in and of itself make that practice disappear in the short run. Given appropriate changes in practices initiated by some social agents, over time the limits may disappear.

¹²⁴ George C. Bond and Angela Gilliam, *Social Construction of the Past: Representation as Power* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), 8-12; George B. N. Ayittey, *Traditional African Institutions* (Ardley-on-Hudson, NY: Transnational Publishers, 1991).

¹²⁵ R. B. J. Walker, *One World, Many Worlds: Struggles for a Just World Peace* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1988); R. B. J. Walker, *Inside/Outside: International Relations as Political Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993). In the latter book, Walker maintains that Machiavelli can be better understood in reference to his time and place, when realist statecraft could be a way to escape the influence of a hierarchical political system with the Holy See at its top.

¹²⁶ Jan Aart Scholte, *Globalization: A Critical Introduction* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000), 59.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 8.

¹²⁸ Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage, 1991), 311.

¹²⁹ Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, 'Subaltern Studies: Deconstructing Historiography' in Donna Landry and Gerald MacLean, eds., *The Spivak Reader: Selected Works of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 214.

¹³⁰ Sankaran Krishna, 'The Importance of Being Ironic: A Postcolonial View on Critical International Relations Theory', *Alternatives* 18 (1993), 389.

¹³¹ Sylvester, *Feminist Theory and International Relations in a Postmodern Era*, 8-9.

¹³² *Ibid.*, 53.

¹³³ Chinua Achebe, 'Chinua Achebe on *Arrow of God*: Interview with Michel Fabre', in Bernth Lindfors, ed., *Conversations with Chinua Achebe* (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 1997), 6.

¹³⁴ Achebe, 'Chinua Achebe: Interview with Lewis Nkosi', in *ibid.*, 45.

¹³⁵ Jürgen Habermas, *Knowledge and Human Interest* (London: Heinemann, 1972).

¹³⁶ Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977*, ed. Colin Gordon, (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1980). The contrast between 'interests' and 'power' is particularly interesting in the context of the two-way debate between Habermas and Foucault. The latter's work is much less sanguine about the innocent intentions behind social theorizing.

¹³⁷ Jack Donnelly, 'Twentieth-Century Realism', in Terry Nardin and David R. Mapel, eds., *Traditions of International Ethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 95, 97-99;

¹³⁸ This is in keeping with my assumption that all theories reveal at least a portion of the social world.

CHAPTER II

In the previous chapter, I examined three variants of critical theory that have emerged since the 1980s. They are alternate modes of theorizing global politics that challenged dominant theories in the field of IR. Of the three families of critical theory, postcolonialism and feminism make use more or less explicitly of a poststructural method of studying classical texts, domestic and foreign policy discourse, and political practices. This use operates in two ways. First, it allows a critique of some of the assumptions that underlie orthodox theorizing and the way orthodox representations of the world shape everyday discussions of international affairs. It is common, then, for non-postmodernist authors to draw extensively on the work of Michel Foucault or Jacques Derrida to portray IR theory as a discourse that relies on conceptions of self and other engaged in a dichotomous relationship that requires the subsuming or the subduing of the other. In this optic, foreign policy is the practical manifestation of theoretical representations of international reality. Second, other critical theorists also use poststructural and postmodern thought to warn against the dangers of universalization, reification and ‘othering’ that are believed to be typical of orthodox theorizing. There are doubts among critical theorists that the dispersal of collective identities in the name of a non-essentialist, and non-adversarial conception of self and other poses a definite problem for

emancipation of those who, as a matter of historical reality, do share conditions that make them a collective subject.

These are problems that do not deter postmodernists, however, for they argue that this dispersal of fixed identities into contingent identities is the surest way to avoid the struggle for power and myriad conflicts that are taken for granted in international relations. In this chapter, I first examine the postmodern 'politics of difference' that emerges from the displacement of the subject in favour of a perpetually changing reality that no theory can capture and that no ethos ought to try and discipline in the name of a transcendent moral truth. I begin the section on postmodernism with a definition of the concept before moving on to a study of two book-length presentations of what a postmodern 'politics of difference' might entail. Connolly's *Identity\Difference* and *The Ethos of Pluralization* are read exegetically as representative of this current of thought.

The postmodern IR literature does not lend itself to easy characterization because it does not have genuine founding texts. Moreover, the closest thing to founding texts, *International/Intertextual Relations* and the special issue of *International Studies Quarterly*, are not altogether coherent theories of IR¹ because they are edited collections focused on critiquing the narrowness of the field, and on theorizing the field rather than theorizing the world. However, the work of William Connolly has done much to bring together some of the insights of other works. In particular, Connolly has dealt with at length with the exclusionary (and sometimes violent) nature of collective identities (*Identity\Difference*) and he has also tried to develop a more systematic view of the politics of difference (*The Ethos of Pluralization*). Finally, his work has also influenced

by postmodern IR authors who launched this line of theorizing in the late 1980s and early 1990s, and with whom I will end my discussion of the politics of difference.²

The chapter then turns to Andrew Linklater's *The Transformation of Political Community*. Unlike Connolly, Linklater's normative theory addresses international relations head-on and it attempts to read modernity as a historical phenomenon that allows for the expression and recognition of a greater number of subjects of ethics than has been the case before. It further purports to engage directly with the criticisms formulated by feminists and postmodernists against the discipline of international relations. The section first presents the philosophical underpinnings of Linklater's normative theory, which lie in the work of Jürgen Habermas. It then moves on to Linklater's own argument for a detailed look at his understanding of the development of the dialogical ethics since the Enlightenment and what it portends for global justice.

I would argue that *The Transformation of Political Community* is a major text that seeks to address the critiques formulated by postmodern and feminist IR without repudiating the modern tradition embodied by traditional texts in IR and in politics. Since he was one of the early proponents of Critical Theory in the field, Linklater's book is the culmination of over two decades of engagement with IR theory as political theory, and as a normative pursuit.³ It is noteworthy that what I have termed critical and normative IR in the last chapter is the product of a bifurcation in which Linklater has stayed his Habermasian course and while other turned to postmodernism.⁴

A Postmodern Politics of Difference

What is postmodernism?

The term 'postmodernism' is common to several fields of enquiry as well as to various modes of expression.⁵ In the philosophy of knowledge, it refers to skepticism toward the legacy of the Enlightenment as it pertains to theory and the capacity to know the world as it really is. According to Jean-François Lyotard's *Postmodern Condition*, postmodernism describes the status of knowledge in the most developed (*sic*) societies.⁶ They are the societies whose members have the most systematically applied the principles of the Enlightenment in the conduct of their affairs. Lyotard noted that since the end of the nineteenth century the enthusiasm toward science and its application to the management of social relations has waned as large segments of the population no longer adhere to a central metanarrative. There is skepticism toward all-encompassing stories about the evolution of humanity and the certainty that they provide.

Different intellectual traditions have represented human history as following a particular path. As one such tradition, IR has its roots primarily in the Enlightenment, via the works of seventeenth and eighteenth century European political theorists. Long before the discipline of IR came into existence however, the Enlightenment was the more direct consequence of a prior disillusionment of a growing number of people with the Christian moral paradigm and its institutional form, Christendom. Jim George writes that 'the dominant story of Western history and philosophy has been read and celebrated as an integral feature of the human quest toward modern enlightenment. On this account Western modernity is conceived of as emerging out of the darkness of primitive myth

toward the brilliant light of the Greek classical age, out of the dark ages of Aristotelian and Christian speculation toward the dawning of modern consciousness in European Renaissance and the age of science'.⁷ The Enlightenment specifically challenged the God-given moral and social order that prevailed from the fall of the Roman Empire.⁸ It was an exhortation to know and to dare to question the received ideas of the epoch and especially the putatively immutable nature of the social order.

The Enlightenment and modernity provided specific conceptions of history and the role of 'man' in it. In the area that concerns us, international relations, a dominant storyline was provided by the great texts of Western philosophy and the founding texts of the discipline.⁹ For example, Machiavelli's state does not originate in a social contract as do Rousseau's and Locke's, and the 'Melian Dialogue' in Thucydides' *History of the Peloponesian War* has little to do with modern conception of the state though, it suggests a kind of proto-realist theory of IR. Nevertheless, IR theorists have found these texts useful to account for the existence of states and, in a normative vein, in preserving virtue, life, peace, property, prosperity, or freedom.

Seen from a postmodernist's perspective, orthodox IR theories appear to be mere mythical stories of how the world came to be the way it is rather than the inevitable fulfilment of history's purpose. According to postmodernists, this tradition of thought in the field bears the mark of a particular conception of the subject, that is, the persons who made history. According to Richard Ashley, the subject who founds, heads, and speaks for the state appears as a heroic figure.¹⁰ The focus on security against foreign threats to be deterred or eliminated and the aura of deep seriousness surrounding foreign policy suggest that usual modes of apprehending social life are inappropriate to international

politics. The foreign realm is thought to require a particular character and knowledge to face up to its dangers because it escapes the moral rules that prevail inside.¹¹

Poststructuralism as the method of postmodernism

In the introduction to a 1988 special *Millennium* issue on critical theory in IR, James Der Derian observed that the field of IR was ‘undergoing an epistemological critique which calls into question the very language, concepts, methods, and history (that is, the dominant discourse) which constitutes and governs a “tradition” of thought in the field’.¹² He further remarked that

The reasons for this development are many and complex, but they are usually traced to an overdetermined (yet woefully under-documented) ‘crisis’ of modernity, where its foundational unities—the autonomous subject, the sovereign state, grand theory—and its synthetic oppositions—subject/object, self/other, inside/outside—are undergoing serious and sustained challenges.¹³

Subjectivity is central to the crises of modernity Der Derian mentions above. The emergence of global social movements, the spread of ideas outside the parameters defined by orthodox IR, and the inability of the traditional approaches to explain major developments in world politics (e.g., the end of the Cold War, transnational movements) belies the view that individuals, states, or classes are the only relevant subjects of international relations. A greater attention to subjectivity reveals the fundamentally contestable foundations on which both theories and international orders rest.

As we have seen in the previous chapter, subjectivity comes with an array of empirical statements and normative concerns. The latter may take the form of dissatisfaction with an existing order or an explicit proposal for an alternative one. As a methodology, therefore, poststructuralism help to discover hitherto unseen or

unacknowledged practices of international politics while postmodernism serves the critical and normative purpose of questioning unjust social constraints on subjective expression and self-realization. According to Pauline Rosenau, ‘The post-modern project is ceaselessly to query and interrogate, rather than to “affirm a new identity, authority or disciplinary unity”’. It claims to ‘destabilise and render open to question all claims to an absolute foundation’¹⁴.

The ‘sovereign man’ of the Enlightenment is not the only knowing subject and his organization of the world into a states system is not the only conceivable framework for social life; ‘there are in principle many possible interpretations of sovereign man as there are possible historical limitations that might be created as absolute foundations of free and rational human beings’.¹⁵ What does not change despite the multiplicity of potential candidates is self-certainty and his belief in a knowable transcendent truth. Thus, ‘to be recognized [by the experts] as a serious voice of criticism, one must speak from the standpoint of a sovereign subject who freely obeys some necessary limitations as the very foundation of its sovereignty, its very capacity to be a reasoning man’.¹⁶ By asking how the state came about in the first place, postmodernists question the modern narrative beginning with Enlightenment’s conception of ‘man’. They dispute the natural character of the individual, the social contract, and the state system. They challenge the story of its ‘evolution’ as told by political theorists and treated as fact by orthodox IR theorists. A key question postmodern IR theorists attempt to answer is how the modern, capitalist nation-state came to be considered the norm in international politics, so much so that other ways of organizing social life are marginalized in intellectual and political debates.

Subjectivity, emancipation, and violence

One may argue that the expected deference to the narrative in fact goes against the ostensible aims of the Enlightenment. The attitude that the Enlightenment fostered is one that some postmodernist are seeking to recapture¹⁷ against the age of reason's own closure. This closure occurred not in the name of God's laws, but in the name of structural constraints found in nature. Indeed, modernity has produced two contradictory orientations. A self-consciously normative one that led to the questioning of religious myths and received wisdom, and one scientific that ultimately placed constraints on the very options that the first orientation might have opened up.

Ultimately, the scientific enterprise typical of modernity undermines the emancipatory enterprise of that same modernity. On one hand, true human knowledge is said to proceed from the application of human intellectual faculties to the study of the world (a manifestation of intellectual freedom). On the other, once knowledge has been produced according to a given method, it is not to be questioned anymore (a moment of closure). Once a theory is taken to be true, enlightenment consists in recognizing its truth. The questioning of the sovereign subject is also a questioning of its moral authority. International relations theorists have long proceeded on the assumption that the state was the highest moral and political authority. In fact, it is in the name of this authority that other actors' subjectivity is sidelined and that some of the most violent acts of the modern epoch are committed.

For David Campbell and Michael Dillon, the subject of modern thought is also the subject of violence. They note that endowment with reason does not ipso facto eliminate violence from politics. According to them, therefore, there is a need to ontologize

violence as an important element in modern politics: 'Precisely because the subject of violence is ... a reasoning subject, the complicity of reason in the violence of the modern political subject cannot be elided. Reason, too, falls under, rather than outwith, the plural sign of the political subject of violence'.¹⁸ On the subject of violence, the discipline of international relations occupies a special place. It is the discipline whose members are the most resistant to a reconsideration of the natural necessity of conflict. Insofar as humanity can transcend the violence of the state of nature, it is only according to very specific guidelines laid down by liberalism and historical materialism, which themselves led to violence as they attempted to implement and export their model.

Consequently, the attention paid to political and strategic questions ought not to come at the expense of the suffering caused by modernity's economic legacy. In war, a party to the conflict can cast blame on the enemy for having initiated the hostilities (the self-defence argument). In economics, the dominant actor may argue that the poor have simply failed to behave according to the laws of nature (economic reasoning), hence their failure to maximize their life chances. It is, in essence, a failure to be rational that disqualifies them from the treatment due humans. As we will see in part two of the thesis, what is unique about modernity in its liberal-capitalist expression is the reconciliation between the principle of the autonomous and rational subject and the extensive means of control deployed to channel individual or group energies in a specific direction. Indeed the capitalist conception of the subject is one where subjectivity is severely restricted to those who meet or accept the pre-given criteria of normalcy or appropriateness that the subject discovered in nature or in Reason. Ultimately, the totalizing view of modern theories leads to a denial of subjectivities that do not fit the 'needs' of the systems. In the

words of Jean-François Lyotard, one motto of modern society could be ‘Be operationalizable, that is, commensurable, or disappear’.¹⁹ The postmodern view of ethics consists in revealing the way social thought and social practices operate in an exclusionary or violent manner. Moreover, the issue of commensurability entails the question of how to deal with difference.

Deconstruction and ‘pluralization’

One of the key criticisms of postmodernism is its apparent lack of alternative its proponents have to the modern states system or to capitalism. In *Identity\Difference*, Connolly sets out to explore the politics of difference: ‘If difference requires identity and identity requires difference, then politics, in some sense of that protean word, pervades social life’.²⁰ But the question of identity and difference is not interesting merely for its own sake; it is interesting in the context of what Connolly calls the ‘problem of evil’. This problem stems from the realization that evil, in the form of suffering, is omnipresent to human beings in many different forms. According to Connolly, in the particular trajectory followed by Western cultures, Christianity has had a particular way of resolving the problem philosophically. An infinitely good God faces off with an infinitely evil Satan. The ethical task of humanity is to steer a course as close as possible to God while realizing that the good is unattainable.

The response to the problem of evil is contradictory, however. Connolly asks ‘If a god is omnipotent and good, who or what is responsible for evil?’²¹ Moreover, if god is omnipotent—whoever is responsible for evil—why should it be that evil occur? The omnipotence of God should suffice to overcome the infinite evil of Satan since Satan is

not himself omnipotent. Connolly's question entails a human agent behind evil deeds, not just the hand of Satan. Indeed, he argues that for 'suffering' to become 'evil' someone has to be responsible for it. Precisely because God is infinitely good and omnipotent, the source of evil and the solution to it must be located elsewhere. Fallen angels of Christianity and the devil are obvious candidates for the role. However, the ascription of evil to otherworldly forces does not suffice given the Christian belief that 'man' has free will.²²

If evil does not originate (entirely) outside the human world, where are we to find it if not in other persons or groups? The quest to create the good community creates the paradox of ethics. The conception of the good, ethical self relies on the existence of some alternative that represents that which the community abhors:

The definition of difference is a requirement built into the logic of identity, and the construction of otherness is a temptation that readily insinuates itself into that logic—and more than a temptation: a temptation because it is constantly at work and because there may be political ways to fend it off or to reduce its power; more than a temptation because it typically moves below the threshold of conscious reflection and because every attempt to come to terms with it encounter stubborn obstacles built into the logic of identity and the structural imperatives of social organization.²³

In other words, from the moment an identity seeks to establish itself, it must determine what it is not. The other serves as model for what the self strives not to be. From the point of view of statecraft, of social organization and maintenance, the determination of the rules of the just society must be accompanied by a conception—and a manifestation—of injustice or abnormality. This manner of proceeding has been investigated most thoroughly by Foucault with reference to a wide variety of deviances in the modern context.²⁴

The preservation of identity, according to Connolly, goes hand in hand with tendencies to righteousness. Within a given social grouping like the nation-state, an occurrence or an act that cannot be apprehended through the established moral framework is dismissed as wrong, abnormal, or otherwise undesirable in light of the values prevailing inside. For those eager to preserve the social order, it poses a distinct challenge because it cannot be handled with the available conceptual and institutional tools.²⁵ Externally, the community is confronted to other entities that question its own aspiration to universality. This is the problem of identity and foreign policy that postmodern IR critics have most consistently raised as the defining feature of the modern age. A third case scenario is that of settler societies that, for the purpose of creating the ethical community, have sought to convert, assimilate, or eliminate those they encountered.

The interplay of actors, their identities, and their practices is endless and can never fall into the categories of moral or social scientific theories. Far from taking place at an ethereal level, the deconstructive approach to theory and systems of rules relies on a perpetual confrontation to the social reality that exceeds theory.²⁶ Thus, for Richard Ashley, the unity of the state as subject is questionable as a matter of empirical reality as much as for moral reasons. The subject is intersected by competing identities that statecraft keeps in check. But the identity that is created and sustained by statecraft, foreign policy, and IR theory is arbitrary when considered in light of the alternatives.²⁷ These alternatives constitute what Ashley calls transversal struggles. He contends that the power of IR theory 'depends upon its silence with respect to what are, without doubt, the most consequential of global political conflicts. Its power depends upon the exclusion

from the frame of theory of the “transversal struggles” by which the ambiguity and indeterminacy of history are disciplined...’.²⁸

The overriding characteristic of today’s politics, according to Connolly, is closure. In the face of the narrowing down of possibilities, he urges that people ‘think thoughts that stretch and extend fixed patterns of insistence’.²⁹ According to him, the field within which humans now operate is so restrictive that most challenges would be welcome. That is, no challenge would be so radical so as to endanger a social order. For Connolly, the geographical extent of totalist worldviews renders the necessity of critical thinking more urgent because it threatens to quell difference in places where other ways of being have thus far been possible. Identity and ethics are paradoxical pursuits and they are pursuits without end. Instead of achieving total knowledge and total identity, a politics of difference of the sort Connolly envisages takes the form of an ‘agonistic ethic of care’ that ‘ambiguates assumptions it itself is often compelled to make about the truth of the identity it endorses’.³⁰ Unlike orthodox theorists, he seeks a ‘nontotalist’ theory that serves a useful purpose for social agents without falling into either universality or righteousness.³¹

While the possibility of another way of being disrupts the certainty of identity, it also provides the possibility of change in oneself.³² Identity is not essential and therefore is subject to change. Connolly’s strategy to diffuse the danger of domination by one agent is to promote a lived conception of identity that takes into account the logic of identity: ‘A lived conception of identity that takes itself to be both historically contingent and inherently relational in its definition might create possibilities for the strife and

interdependence of identity\difference exceeding the models of conquest, conversion, community, and tolerance'.³³

This contrasts with the modern, Western, tradition, where the most that has been achieved in terms of respect for difference is pluralism, in which a body of common rules exists that recognizes formally the existence of a plurality of identities. Pluralism is consecrated by legal documents, public policies, and rights that formalize tolerance and recognition. For Connolly, this approach is problematic. Its upshot is to depoliticize matters that are very much political. Life in communities is the definition of politics, but the effect of pluralism is to define once and for all—to codify—identities. The political process is fixed as the identities are given an air of permanence.³⁴ Inevitably, though, there periodically emerge new identities that do not correspond to the existing norms and thus disrupt the social order. For Connolly, pluralism has a conservative bias because it stops the play of difference by creating an 'established pluralist constellation'. There is a 'conservative presumption into pluralist judgement by implicitly treating the congealed results of past struggles as if they constituted the essential standard of reasonableness or justice itself'.³⁵

Prior to modernity and on the emphasis on liberal individualism, the worth of the individual was more dependent on the consequences of her/his behaviour on the community, family, tribe, and so forth.³⁶ On that account, the spirit of the individual that prevailed ought to be recovered by destabilizing the modern conception of the self and through the promotion of what he terms 'pluralization'. In Connolly's words, 'The finely grained arrangements of self regulation operative today must be countered by more sustained, organized, and multi-frontal counter-pressures, pressures that interrogate the

established definitions of necessity, truth, normality, utility, and goodness while they identify and strive to reconstitute the larger institutional imperatives that drive the politics of normalization'.³⁷ A crucial method for this is to retrace the evolution of given identities and the circumstances that made them salient among other possibilities. The account of identity Connolly puts forth takes the form of 'counter-histories of normality' that bracket received wisdom about the identities bestowed on social actors.³⁸

This self-conscious genealogy of identities is meant to reveal the fundamental falsity of representations of the past and to remove obstacles placed in the way of emerging identities of the day: 'A genealogy calls theories of intrinsic identity and otherness into question in order to tap agonistic care for difference from the experience of not being exhausted by the identities that fix a particular life'.³⁹ The kind of response that difference requires—especially when injury has been committed—cannot be reduced to a code; what is needed is an ethos of critical responsiveness to identities that are shifting. For Connolly, the irreducible relational nature of identity means that the identity of actors, including hegemonic ones, can change simply through the recognition of difference in others. As the self recognizes others' uniqueness, the self de facto relativizes her/his own.⁴⁰

Pluralization is 'to multiply lines of connection through which governing assemblages can be constructed from a variety of intersecting constituencies',⁴¹ so that the individual never remains alone and so that the community does not remain fixed. Pluralization works at all levels of social life. In Connolly words:

A pluralization culture embodies a *micropolitics* of action by the self on itself and the small-scale assemblage upon itself, a politics of disturbance through which sedimented identities and moralities are rendered more alert to the deleterious effects of their naturalizations upon difference, a politics of enactment through

which new possibilities of being are propelled into established constellations, a politics of representational assemblages through which general policies are processed through the state, a politics of interstate relations and politics of nonstatist, cross-national movements through which external/internal pressure is placed on corporate and state-centered priorities.⁴²

Not surprisingly, it is this method that has attracted the most criticism. In international relations, the postmodern and poststructuralist literature has focused most of the attention on the oppressive ideas and actors that make up the modern order. Both realist and non-realist authors have criticized postmodernism as a 'valueless invocation of non-ethical or anti-ethical perspectives concerned merely to deconstruct, relativize, and negate rather than engage constructively and politically with the most profound problems of the age'.⁴³

Whither subjectivity and ethics?

A central contention of the postmodern attitude (as I have called it) and poststructuralism is that there is no privileged subject. The contours of subjects are ill defined, and to the extent that subjects are clearly defined they remain fleeting. In epistemological terms, this means that no standpoint affords so comprehensive a perspective that someone may claim particular expertise on international affairs. In this section, I first deal with Connolly's conception of subjectivity and identity, and, second, with the problem of relativism that some authors have raised with respect to the postmodern ethic.

What Connolly has called an 'agonism of difference' and the promotion of 'pluralization' are a permanent destabilization of the subject's identity and of the ethos promoted by that subject. This destabilization is as much that of 'our' identity as 'theirs'

insofar as all identities are mutually dependent. Although he argues that even fundamentalist identities must be allowed to exist,⁴⁴ there remains Connolly's own judgement about the 'othering' character of all fixed identities. What are we to make of those collective actors who insist on keeping a fixed identity? The answer to this question would be relatively unproblematic if actors existed entirely independently from one another spatially. Assuming that all members of the collective are satisfied with its organization, there is no conflict if this collective is entirely self-contained and need not have relations with the outside. In such a case Connolly's could express his moral disapproval while exercising toleration toward the distant other.

It could easily be argued that this is the realist understanding of international relations where states 'tolerate' one another's existence provided that the sovereignty of each is respected. Yet, critical IR theories precisely target the state and its representatives. Meanwhile, many other subjects of IR get sympathetic treatment under the postmodern pen. Nevertheless, the reaction among theorists whose subject is faced with *concrete* conditions of oppression has been guarded. For E. San Juan, postmodernism has the unfortunate effect of causing a proliferation of oppressed peoples and groups. The question of subjectivity (or agency) cannot be dealt with by dissolving the subject: 'Of primary importance in this debate on the politics of difference and identity is the salient question of agency, the intentionality of transformative practice, enunciated in concrete historical junctures'.⁴⁵ According to E. San Juan, postmodernism has the effect of causing a proliferation of oppressed peoples and groups even though some are more oppressed than others. The commitment to redefining the subject that informs a politics of difference is a nuisance to those who need to work collectively to resist domination.

A disseminated subject renders a response to the historical and material phenomena of colonialism and neo-colonialism difficult. For San Juan, the postmodern practice of disseminating identity is inappropriate because it provides no ground for resistance. He contends that 'What strikes [him] as fatal is the repudiation of foundations and objective validity that undermines any move to produce new forms of creative power and resistance against the globalized inequality and oppressions'.⁴⁶ Power is needed in order to resist those processes postcolonial peoples are most consistently subjected to, and in San Juan's words 'power is always situational, not dispersed in abstract space'.⁴⁷ The specific positions occupied by subjects therefore serve as quasi-unavoidable axes for emancipatory struggles.

Many feminists put forth a similar argument.⁴⁸ According to Seyla Benhabib, feminists and postmodernists 'have discovered their affinities in the struggle against the grand narratives of Western Enlightenment and modernity'.⁴⁹ Still, she maintains that the postmodern death of the subject is not compatible with feminist politics because its conception of subjectivity is a linguistic one.⁵⁰ Derrida's polemical statement that 'there is nothing outside the text', though it is not to be taken literally, omits the material (in the broadest sense of that term, which includes the body) conditions of those for whom sex and gender are obstacles to their aspirations. Thus Benhabib writes: 'I want to ask how in fact the very project of female emancipation would even be thinkable without a regulative principle on agency, autonomy, and selfhood?'.⁵¹ Any 'regulative principle' tends to run counter to the exhortation to subjective self-reinvention and instability that a politics of difference supposes.

Yet, a certain stability of the subject is seen as a necessity for the creation of an emancipatory movement. The perpetual re-examination of self 'is bound sooner or later to find itself calling the parish boundaries into question'.⁵² The absence of a ground—that is, a definite position in time and space—means also the absence of criteria 'which would serve feminists in their tasks of social criticism and radical political transformation'.⁵³ Postmodernism is apt at revealing endless conflicts of perspectives and ethical claims. Useful as it may be, Benhabib wonders: 'When cultures and societies clash, where do we stand as feminists, as social critics and political activists?' For 'if cultures and traditions are more like competing sets of narratives and incoherent tapestries of meaning than the social critic must herself construct out of these conflictual and incoherent accounts the set of criteria in the name of which she speaks' and thus violate the postmodern ethos.⁵⁴

From a Marxist perspective, the postmodern emphasis on mobile subjectivities also appears misguided. In *History Without a Subject*, David Ashley argues that postmodernism fits nicely with post-Fordist capitalism. Post-Fordist production and consumption patterns are to the material world what postmodernism is to culture and ideas. Advertising in capitalist societies also uses symbols and signs to promote products that provide cultural meaning rather than simple material comfort. The postmodern condition in contemporary capitalist societies may be interpreted as an extreme expression of Marx's contention that 'all that is solid melts into the air'. But in Marx's society (nineteenth-century Britain) there was a material reality that could be referred to in the last instance, and of which he thought he could make sense. In the postmodern condition, even that material world appears to melt into discourse, signs, and symbols. Yet, as Walden Bello argues, this discursive economy (literally speaking) of post-modern

capitalism still requires a 'real' economy that includes waged labour characteristic of a traditional capitalist relations of production.⁵⁵

The postmodern subject that Connolly advocates can only exist if, as he acknowledges, economic inequality is minimized.⁵⁶ However, a struggle that would bring about a solution to (extreme) economic inequality may require a subject homogenous enough to undertake a sustained intellectual and active political effort to that end. Contemporary capitalism and the postmodern politics of difference disperse the subject, albeit for different reasons and with different goals in mind. In the most advanced societies, it may appear that labour is no longer a valid analytical and political category, or a relevant subject of history. A closer look at the conditions in which people work would suggest otherwise. The pluralized subject Connolly advocates assumes a relatively equal standard of living and the capacity to make choices that are not consistent with the state of the world in the current form of capitalism.

This critique of subjectivity refers to what I have defined as material in the broad sense of the term. But there are other obstacles to the realization of Connolly's pluralized world. The celebration of difference and exhortation to further differentiation among social agents omits the dangers associated with self-regarding subjects. Although he thinks that only those who care for their own lives are likely to care for others,⁵⁷ Connolly does not present the logic by which the care of self would be extended to others. His approach to the bond of self and other is fundamentally a logical one. The logic of identity has to be understood and worked out intellectually before it becomes obvious why and how one should care for oneself *and* for others. He deconstructs the

concept of identity by conducting a reasoned critique of it that omits concrete subjective conditions that require concrete solutions.

It is in the context of concrete relations and concrete answers that moral relativism risks manifesting itself. Ultimately, the conflict of self and other is about survival, so the stakes are high and the means used to achieve that end may be extreme.⁵⁸ Yet Connolly responds to the warning of moral relativism by arguing that the critique of relativism comes from a lack of appreciation of the straightjacket their own moral clarity imposes on others.⁵⁹ Thus, he welcomes most forms of disruptions of received ideas that might promote pluralization. In this, Connolly shows an excessive amount of concern with oppression in all its manifestations. Among those operating under the umbrella of postmodernism and poststructuralism, the use of labels like oppressive, disciplinary, violent, and so forth and the advocacy of strategies of resistance, disruption, transgression, and interrogation suggest that power operates permanently and everywhere, and that it must be shaken. In the figurative sense, we are perpetually at war.⁶⁰

While the language of reason (in political discourse) and technical rationality (in policy-making) can be used to obfuscate the domination of those subjected to their application, the language of transgression tends to identify domination in all aspects of social life, in a way that Foucault has called 'rhizomatic' because it extends in all directions at once, and covers the entire range of social situations. In their critique of Foucault, Derrida, and Lacan, Jules Ferry and Alain Renaut contend that, paradoxically, the rejection of modernity promotes a kind of hyper-individualism that breaks social bonds.⁶¹ Using another formulation, we may argue that the deconstruction of structures

from perpetually shifting standpoints operates like nineteenth-century anarchism, by overwhelming the system to the point of collapse.

The instability that Connolly and others advocate is arguably already a feature and a consequence of the 'richness of life'. As noted above, a politics of difference relies on a certain empirical reality to illustrate the misguided nature social scientific and moral theories. However, the widely expressed desire to establish social orders of one sort or another ought to make us aware that the yearning for stability may be real. Stability and order as such do not have to mean oppression; rather, oppression results from the imposition of an unjust order.

A 'postmodern pragmatism'

The foregoing critique of postmodernism is widespread. Postmodernists appear to omit the reality of everyday politics, where social actors have to make decisions with respect to their immediate neighbours. They also seem neglect the reality of concrete ties that bind social actors across the globe. While those ties are sometimes the product of a violent or oppressive history (colonialism and global capitalism), they exist for the people who inhabit the world. It is therefore incumbent on social actors to acknowledge these ties and the responsibility for one's actions' effects on others.⁶² Thus, what has been termed postmodern IR has addressed the question of responsibility as it derives from the interconnectedness of human beings in global politics. This latest thrust of postmodern IR has recognized that beyond the critique of theories and practices that cause suffering and exclusion there exists also a need for engagement with others on the basis of the already-existing ties between social actors.

The entry point into this debate has been ‘humanitarian interventions’.⁶³ In the 1990s, there have been a series of internal wars and other events (famines, natural catastrophes) that have motivated interventions on the part of the ‘international community’, that is, essentially western industrial liberal democracies. A central characteristic of these interventions is their problem-solving character.⁶⁴ They were ostensibly meant to restore or create order in the form of sovereign nation-states that mirrored more or less closely those of the powers that intervened. Interventions assumed the desirability of a system of sovereign states with relatively (ethnically) homogenous capitalist economies tied to the global economy.⁶⁵ They were meant to restore—or ‘fix’—an international order that was becoming unstable. In the field of international political economy, it is postwar international development and later structural adjustment programmes that purport to solve the social and economic problems of the societies to which they are applied.

In the face of concrete actions undertaken by governments, it is incumbent on others to decide on a course of action. Campbell recognizes readily the need for action that goes beyond critique and mere statement of responsibility. Faced with choices with regard to others’ suffering, agents must act on the responsibility that they have at the same time as they acknowledge the limited character of their solution to the problems they want to address by becoming engaged politically, by adopting a course of action. Campbell writes that ‘the politics of the decision, and the double imperative of interventions are important’.⁶⁶ Not to act, let alone not to critique a wrong action, would be an ethical failure.

In an elaboration on the ‘politics of the decision’ Campbell writes: ‘the duty within the decision, the obligation that recognizes the necessity of negotiating the possibilities provided by the impossibilities of justice, is not content with simply avoiding, containing, combating, or negating the worst violence—though it could certainly begin with those strategies. Instead, this responsibility, which is the responsibility of responsibility, commissions a “utopian” strategy’. This strategy is one ‘which in respecting the necessity of calculation, takes the possibility summoned by the calculation as far as possible, must take it as far as possible, beyond the place we find ourselves and beyond the distinction between national and international, public and private, and so on’.⁶⁷

This recognition on the part of an author closely associated with postmodern IR is, at least implicitly, also a recognition of the need for an alternative practice of world politics. It is the recognition that the critique of the sovereign nation-state and its foreign policy is not sufficient. It is to admit that simply to oppose the spread of a particular economic model may not be sufficient if no alternative exists.⁶⁸ The failure of traditional theories is that the solution is already known before those being helped are even consulted as to what they want. Against this, Campbell proposes an engagement with others that is open-ended rather than closed by the conviction of the intervening actor that it has the solution. Indeed,

we have to constantly judge and act [and] because this involves a permanent provocation between our responsibility to the Other and the wide ranging practices that seek to diminish it, we cannot rest with the notion that an ethical theory [a universal conception of the good that ought to guide action], no matter how good, might be adequate to the phenomenological and ethical implications of radical interdependence.⁶⁹

Intervention, or simple action, therefore ought to be mindful of the consequences of actors' behaviour on the well-being of others. In putting one vision forward, actors must be cautious not to negate the visions of others. They must be willing to revise their priorities or their identities if these should be dependent on the negation, control, or disregard for others. Campbell expresses the need for action in very concrete terms:

This would involve the deployment of the critical attitude and its enactment through the substantial investment of social resources, meaning those funds of economic, political, and social capital held by those in the context being considered. Once strategies are decided upon and implemented, they, in turn, have to be subject to the critical attitude, and so on...*ad infinitum*.⁷⁰

Campbell has in mind a move 'from ethical theory to ethical relation' which challenges the subject of ethics in world politics and the nature of ethics.⁷¹ Relevant actors exist within, outside, and across states. Social actors are global actors in their own terms because they can operate without the permission of states and because they are not always represented by states' foreign policy. In other words, it is not only the states that embody worthwhile political principles and that have a 'right' to act globally. Other actors who emerge (or who have always been around but marginalized) can legitimately intervene in the debate and expect to be heard and taken seriously even if their action is not inscribed in an existing normative and readily intelligible framework.⁷²

'There will always be an agonistic and sometimes antagonistic relationship between the numerous identities and settlements which variously contain difference',⁷³ but the participants in social relations must minimize adverse consequence of the power relations that are inherited from a common but violent history or that may develop in the course of the interaction. The tension between self and other is not a small detail in this discussion. Much of what precedes refers to encounters with difference but not

necessarily to an already-existing conflict. Ethical relations and dialogue are made that much more difficult by the existence or perception of a structural conflict between two or more social agents. The ‘cynicism’ of certain strands of postmodern thought regarding the permanent, omnipresent, operations of power in society are an obstacle to the concrete practice of ethical relations even if all relations entail a responsibility toward others.

As I have pointed out in chapter one, critical IR has been influenced by postmodernism/poststructuralism even if, ultimately, the method for analysing texts and social reality has proven more useful to them than the ‘postmodern attitude’ and politics of difference, which most find unsatisfactory. Having to choose between relativizing their own subject’s knowledge and using its experiences as a foundation for knowledge, they have opted for the latter. In practice, however, the perceived need to think ‘strategically’ and the frequent resort to ‘strategic essentialism’ undermine communication nearly as much as the radical skepticism of postmodernists toward the possibility of understanding others and toward knowledge in general.

However, there has been an alternative developed in international relations that has sought to address the concerns raised in the previous chapter and this assessment of postmodern politics. The remainder of the chapter turns to this alternative with an examination of Andrew Linklater’s *The Transformation of Political Community*.

Cosmopolitanism and Dialogue

Habermasian Critical Theory and normative theory

In his editor's introduction to Jurgen Habermas' *On the Logic of the Social Sciences*, Thomas McCarthy notes that Habermas' work began to address the dichotomy of social sciences and humanities at a time when Kuhn's work on paradigms was news only in the scientific world. Habermas

challenged the existing division of labor between the sciences and the humanities. Thus Habermas's main concern was to challenge the hegemony of the 'empirical-analytical' conceptions of social science, to show, in particular, that access to symbolically structured object domain of social enquiry called for procedures similar in important respects to those developed in the text-interpreting humanities.⁷⁴

Critical theory in International Relations has mounted a similar attack on traditional IR theory by forcing a debate on the role of subjectivity and subjective experience in the study of international politics. But Critical Theory as seen by Habermas (and Andrew Linklater in IR) is not to be reduced to the humanities only, or to focus solely on text-interpreting methods. The project of the latter-day Frankfurt School of Critical Theory is to find where the empirical and the discursive/interpretive meet. Accordingly, Habermas is as resistant to positivistic social science as he is to the Foucauldian approach to analysis that informs Connolly.⁷⁵

In Habermas' view, if a knowledge is divorced from its historical context of emergence, it is theories that then guide historical development. According to Habermas, modern social sciences, or the 'sciences of action purport to generate techniques for the regulation of social action in the same way that the natural sciences generate techniques for the control of nature. The 'nomological sciences, the methodology of which exclude a

connection to history, take over the “direction and action and knowledge”.⁷⁶ In other words, once a given pattern of social relations has been taken to be natural or inevitable, its invocation sets limits on subsequent social and historical developments because they are believed to be at odds with natural laws. In addition, from a research point of view, the nomological sciences disqualify other avenues of research and therefore define the standard of valid research methods or what the relevant or valid subjects of research are.

Because he is mindful of historical context, Habermas is also concerned with the specific conditions that prompted theorists to address an issue. Thus his *Knowledge and Human Interests* sets out to show the subjective content of even universality-aspiring theories and philosophies.⁷⁷ Nevertheless, Habermas is reluctant to go as far as the postmodernists and poststructuralists in destabilizing the subject of history. It is here that we see the positivistic influences of Habermas’ Critical Theory and his refusal to break with the Enlightenment. Rather than calling for a dispersal of subjectivity, his normative theory rests on self-consciously modernist grounds, and particularly on a version of the rational Kantian individual subject. The attitude he adopts vis-à-vis the ‘real world’ is similar to that which prompted Auguste Comte’s development of positivistic social science: the conviction that historical developments were not necessarily deleterious to humans and that they may be studied in their own terms and sometimes be seen as natural and benevolent.⁷⁸ Habermas is not a positivist, but he is weary of radical critiques of the social order that appear to reject the entire Enlightenment legacy.

The Habermasian considerations of a Critical Theoretical study of IR are therefore threefold.⁷⁹ First, there are always normative questions. They are the moral arguments for or against the extension of the community. Second, given that the world is

structured a certain way here and now, there are questions concerning the prevailing empirical reality; put differently, what are the structural constraints on normative choices that global actors (states and individuals, primarily) may want to make? Third, and related to the normative-empirical nexus, there are questions about which avenues might exist that have not been explored, for it is possible that the structural constraints are not permanent. Critical Theory's role, therefore, is to examine the potentialities for change in the historical context.

The modern state as moral community

Linklater's interest in political community grows out of early modern European history. Although its primacy and sovereignty are often treated as a timeless reality, the state, as the subject of much of orthodox IR theory, is neither timeless nor a sui generis form of community. It is not a type of community that was simply thought up by a few philosophers and created ex nihilo. Rather, it emerged in the context of Christian civilization whose reach went much further than the eventual borders of modern states. Moreover, the modern state was the result of an emancipatory movement as 'During its rise the state sought to free itself from the moral and religious shackles of the medieval world'.⁸⁰ The creation of states was therefore a form of partitioning of a greater community called Christendom.

However, given the proximity of other states and the shared civilizational background of modern states, the question of how they and their populations should relate posed itself. The notion of an international society of states was a convenient analogy that transposed internationally the relations that individuals had with one another

domestically. The notion that humans' obligations at some level transcended the state and its population has been present from early on in the history of modern states because that notion existed before the sovereign state emerged.⁸¹

The boundary between inside and outside remains a matter of some controversy, however. Linklater states bluntly that 'The first and most obvious point is that the state is a system of inclusion and exclusion in its own right, with precise distinctions between citizens and aliens, and concepts of sovereignty and territoriality'.⁸² Nevertheless, this exclusive-inclusive matrix does not detract from the fact that modern states existed in relation to other states, and from the fact that contacts between some of their inhabitants took place. As both orthodox and critical theory show, there are myriad ways interstate and global relations can be approached, although only a handful of perspective actually get aired consistently. For Linklater, debates over the limits of political community can be summarized in 'three distinct competing visions of community—the nation-state, the society of states, or a community of humankind'. The bulk of the literature in IR has 'addressed the reasons for preferring the state, for example, as opposed to the society of states, or the community of humankind as opposed to the narrower communities with which human beings have generally identified'.⁸³ From a policy-making point of view, this requires judgement on the extent of moral obligation and responsibility to others. In other words, who is the subject of ethics: the state, the states (in the plural) as they form a society, or the entire humanity?

This is the common theme of communitarianism and cosmopolitanism, particularism and universalism, and of 'the one and the many' in a context where moral codes are society-dependent and they appear to be incommensurable.⁸⁴ The development

of a universal moral code must necessarily come up with a way to approach difference. This is especially true when considering relations between social entities that have developed separately for most of history. It remains true also of relations between the narrower communities mentioned above, and discussed as part of the politics of difference. The goal Linklater sets himself is the development of a universal ethics, but one that 'is not to replace the customary moral differences with a single, universalized moral code but rather to find the right balance between the universal and the particular'.⁸⁵

Linklater nevertheless falls clearly on the side of cosmopolitanism in addressing the question of exclusion in international politics: 'This book considers communities as systems of inclusion and exclusion. The problematical aspects of the social bonds which unite and separate, associate and dissociate, are its principal concern'. Moreover, the book seeks 'to reaffirm the cosmopolitan critique of the sovereign states-system and to defend the widening of the moral boundaries of political communities'.⁸⁶ The traditional focus on the state has overemphasized the difference between one's fellow nationals and foreigners, with the result that the same rights have not been extended to foreigners that were granted to compatriots. Linklater's *Transformation of Community* consists in articulating

visions of the triple transformation of political community to secure greater respect for cultural differences, stronger commitments to the reduction of material inequalities and significant advances in universality to resist pressures to contract the boundaries of community while encouraging societal tendencies which promise to reduce these basic moral deficits.⁸⁷

Here, Linklater emphasizes the normative thrust of modernity as expressed by cosmopolitanism. While he recognizes the existence of some practical obstacles to transformative practices, he also maintains that constraints are not natural; they are

historical and as such they are subject to change as a result of human agency. Linklater's primary object of critique is neorealism (structural realism) precisely because it has gone furthest in establishing the putatively fundamental structure of international relations. Normatively speaking, structural realists have gone furthest in entrenching the interests of powerful actors for whom the management of the status quo is a prime objective. This leaves out the alternatives of those for whom the international order is unjust: 'Immutability claims bolster structured inequalities of power and wealth which are alterable in principle. Such claims sanctify historically-specific configurations of power which the weak may resent and which the strong are far from powerless to transform'.⁸⁸ The failure to transform the global order is due either to the interests of the powerful or the conviction—fostered by theory—that the order is unalterable.

To keep with the distinction used earlier in the chapter, we can say that scientific IR is a manifestation of the instrumental reality of modernity that clashes with modernity's normative thrust. But as a matter of empirical reality, it can be maintained that normative pursuits have continued. They have taken the form of an increased regard for culture in international relations. For Linklater, this growing interest shows the potential for certain forms of cosmopolitan thinking.⁸⁹ But discussions of ethics in IR have thus far erred on the side of particularism and universalism. This means that solutions to ethical dilemmas in world politics have centred on the state or the universal individual as subjects of international ethics. The former is necessarily exclusionary because it creates an inside and an outside realm, while the latter papers over differences and shows disregard for public expressions of those differences.⁹⁰

The sovereign state that dominates IR thinking has proven to be a tyrannical (*sic*) concept, according to Linklater. Realists have made IR theory into a theory of survival in a presumably hostile environment and thinking beyond the egoism-anarchy problematique has been dismissed as unrealistic. Yet modern theory is also a moral theory that provides elements that can take moral thinking beyond the state. For Linklater,

The principal countervailing trend, which is best represented by writings of Kant and Marx, placed bounded communities at the centre of social and political analysis. Their writings analysed the processes of change influencing the future of such communities and the fate of the unique distinctions between domestic and international politics, inside and outside, the inner circle of harmony and progress and the outer circle of eternal recurrence of competition and conflict which typified the Westphalian era.⁹¹

In this interpretation of Kant and Marx, there are no self-evident limitations to moral thinking and to the extent of the moral community. In Kant's work, history leads 'man' from the state of nature to civilized society. Although Kant's perpetual peace project takes the form of a society of states rather than a cosmopolitan society of individuals, Linklater sees in it a sign of the 'growing responsiveness to the demands of cosmopolitan morality'.⁹² In Linklater's view, this was a progressive development inasmuch as it expanded the scope of community from the local to the national level and beyond.

While Kant tried to show what was possible in theory, Marx saw it happening concretely with the emergence and spread of capitalism. In Marx, there are social and economic preconditions to progress in human affairs. They take the form of the capitalist mode of production as a necessary stage in human emancipation. What is specific about capitalism is the existence of concrete oppression in the economic realm that contradicts official political and legal principles of freedom and equality.⁹³ The disjuncture between

moral claims and the material reality seems to render exclusion less and less tenable when the moral claims are proven false. Thus, Kant and Marx constitute the foundation on which Linklater constructs his normative theory of IR:

Kant believed that the universalisation of commerce and the dissemination of republican principles of government in eighteenth-century Europe formed the prelude to the emergence of powerful cosmopolitan sentiments. Marx held that the internationalisation of production and exchange presaged the rise of more universal forms of political cooperation which were embodied first of all in the emergence of transnational bonds and affinities between the members of the world's proletariat.⁹⁴

Together, Kant and Marx 'provided insightful commentaries on the long-term processes of change which disrupted the state's capacity to unify citizens in opposition to aliens'.⁹⁵

It is on this intellectual legacy that Linklater builds his normative project.

An ethic of dialogue

For Linklater, cosmopolitanism cannot be understood today the way it was when it first emerged. Contemporary cosmopolitanism is debated in a context in which absolute Western moral superiority is in question and in which diversity is a more concrete reality than was the case in the past.⁹⁶ Cosmopolitanism now refers a 'belief in moral equality [that] holds that sound reasons have to be offered for treating individuals differently' and it 'argues that political communities should widen their ethical horizons until the point is reached where no individual or group interest is systematically excluded from moral consideration'.⁹⁷ Moral consideration and the right to participate in a community of dialogue that extends beyond the local and the national is a fundamental premise of Linklater's normative theory of IR. This commitment is made possible by the assumption that a common humanity characterizes individual and group perspectives despite their

differences. A universally valid ethic and a just order is seen to emerge from the overlap of subjective perspectives that can be discovered through an open dialogue.⁹⁸

Dialogic communities can be said to exist already. However, they are characterized by their limited geographical and subjective scope; a greater or lesser number of persons are not admitted into the discussion because they reside outside the community or because their perspective departs from the dominant view. According to Linklater,

Most communities rest on special ties of social disposition but they are always vulnerable to the claim that they unjustly exclude those who do not share the dominant identity. The goal of dialogic relations with the members of systematically excluded groups therefore emerges as a normative ideal. As in international relations, where it is necessary to enlarge the boundaries of the community to engage non-nationals as equals in open dialogue, membership of wider communication communities does not presume that others must have the same cultural orientations or share similar political aspirations. All that has to be assumed is that cultural differences are no barrier to equal rights of participation within a dialogical community.⁹⁹

Although the modern state is the dialogic community par excellence, international politics has led to the development of linkages that transcend national borders. Linkages that exist across states require that the borders of the dialogic community be extended as differences between insider and outsider lose some of their moral relevancy. While there can be no certainty that others will be persuaded by one's moral code, the reverse cannot be asserted either.¹⁰⁰ An ethic of dialogue rejects pre-judgement of the outcome of the dialogue precisely because the ultimate result is not yet known. Ethics resides in the process of exchanging ideas and interpretations with the hope that commonalities will come out over time.

Dialogue thus understood is a kind of 'applied self-reflexivity'. It does not require the abandonment of a community's own set of moral principles or the verbalization of

those principles; it acts as an intellectual check on their imposition beyond the community in the name of universal truth and order. In Habermas' and Linklater's conception of history, dialogue has allowed some moral truths to accumulate so that at least in principle they are no longer subject to dispute. The establishment of these moral truths is best exemplified by the number of international conventions pertaining to the treatment of identifiable groups of people (workers, women, children, indigenous populations) or to the treatment of humans writ large (slavery, human rights).

The formal recognition that all humans are equal and that all people have a right to self-determination are the most general manifestation of moral progress. Moral development is seen as progressive but indeterminate in that it has not culminated with the modern nation-state as the embodiment of universal reason. Instead, 'the progressivist interpretation argues that reason itself has a history and conceptions of freedom are revised and enlarged over time. Universalisable truths emerge out of the struggle between opposing perspectives and from the tensions within social structures'.¹⁰¹

In terms of moral development, three stages of moral understanding emerge. They are pre-conventional, conventional, and post-conventional morality, which Linklater describes in the following manner:

At the level of pre-conventional morality, subjects obey norms fearing that non-compliance will lead to sanctions imposed by a higher authority; at the level of conventional morality, they obey norms from a sense of loyalty to existing social groups of peers; at the level of post-conventional morality, subjects stand back from authority structures and group loyalties and ask whether they are complying with principles which have universal validity.¹⁰²

The culmination of moral development is the adoption of discourse ethics whereby 'norms cannot be valid unless they can command the consent of everyone whose interests stand to be affected by them' and consent can only be wooed (*sic*) if others are allowed to

express their interests in ‘open and unconstrained dialogue’.¹⁰³ Discourse ethics does not seek a definitive answer to moral dilemmas but the creation of an intellectual and institutional framework conducive to the resolution of moral dilemmas and the elimination of exclusion. In Linklater’s words, ‘Discourse ethics sets out the procedures to be followed so that individuals are equally free to express their moral claims, able to explore the prospects for resolving their moral differences and capable of reaching an appropriate compromise in the absence of consensus’.¹⁰⁴

Modern societies, with their laws granting legal equality, freedom of speech and freedom of association to their members appear somewhere along the continuum from exclusion to inclusion, and from the local to the global level. More to the point, constitutional principles that entrench these rights have been associated with liberalism, democracy and accountability on the part of decision-makers.¹⁰⁵ The institutions of democracy and the rule of law provide the framework and processes (election campaigns, suffrage, consultations) whereby wants, needs, concerns, and interests can be voiced without fear of reprisal.

A global dialogic community

There are ethical sources that have made possible ‘participation within the pluralist, solidarist and post-Westphalian forms of political organisation’.¹⁰⁶ The post-Westphalian order Linklater advocates is seen to arise at the confluence of constitutionalism, modern capitalism, and the belief that peaceful change can occur by extending the moral boundaries of communities. Constitutionalism has proven useful to impose checks on the power of rulers. Whether it is in the context of Aristotelian

democracy, in a monarchy with a Magna Carta, or under the pressure of the emerging bourgeoisie in capitalist societies, constitutionalism represents at a broad level a recognition that there are limits to rulers' prerogatives. Domestically, *raison d'État* cannot be invoked at all occasions to justify heavy-handed state action.¹⁰⁷ Internationally, however, it remains a common argument.

Despite this, for Linklater constitutionalism exists in an embryonic form at the international level. Even the development of balance-of-power principles in eighteenth and nineteenth-century Europe qualifies as a kind of proto-constitutionalism in that they were 'the constitutive principles of European international society' that mirrored domestic constitutional principles.¹⁰⁸ Such a view of the balance of power differs from the usual realist understanding of the phenomenon. Whereas most realists view the balance of power in technical terms (Waltz having perfected theory in this respect), Linklater looks at it in moral terms, as the development of a moral contract between international actors leading to joint—and therefore social—action to maintain it.¹⁰⁹ The sovereignty of states in international society mirrors the sovereignty of individuals in domestic society, and it becomes the basis for the development of a body of international laws. Over time, these laws come to encompass more issues than the recognition of state sovereignty. They cover other aspects of interstate relations and act as a moral force even when no state enforces them. More recently, the move to punish (*sic*) violations of human rights can serve to illustrate the gradual extension and deepening of a post-Westphalian moral order¹¹⁰ that relies on agreed-upon legal procedures.

Although most scholars had not intended it, the national model of dialogic community was turned against the nation-state itself because its claims to eliminate

exclusion clashed with the exclusionary nature of the state.¹¹¹ Repeated challenges to internal and external exclusion have extended the realm of moral community and citizenship:

[I]f citizenship is to be understood ‘as a series of expanding circles which are pushed forward by the momentum of conflict and struggle’ then the next stage of its expansion should be ‘to go higher in our search for citizenship, but also lower and wider. Higher to the world, lower to the locality’. Few political theorists have attempted to develop this embryonic vision of an alternative to the sovereign nation-state.¹¹²

In the post-Westphalian order, the state does not necessarily disappear, but its centrality to political life is reduced to the extent that it no longer has the monopoly or the priority of political allegiances.¹¹³ Were a government to declare that citizens’ moral responsibility is to the national collectivity, the resistance to the narrowing down of the moral horizon would emerge domestically, internationally, and transnationally. Inasmuch as the post-Westphalian order would be becoming a reality, this challenge would be successful at maintaining cosmopolitanism and perhaps set a new benchmark for further broadening of the moral community.

Inclusion as subsuming?

I see three main lines of critique to Linklater’s global political theory. The first pertains to the distinction I have made in chapter one between normative theory and critical theory. The second concerns the subjects of ethics in a global dialogical community. The third addresses the number of alternatives to current modes of exclusion that Linklater alludes to in his work (patriarchal, Eurocentric, and material).

Linklater is heir to a tradition of Critical Theory that began with a critique of modern society and capitalism. In the early Frankfurt School, theory was more critical

than normative. In other words, authors like Horkeimer, Adorno, and Marcuse focused their attention on exposing the downside of modernity in the way human beings were alienated from a material and psychological point of view. Their normative thrust resided in their explicit disagreement with the current order and the desire for a more just society. In the later Frankfurt School work of Habermas, which provides the foundation for Linklater's theory, the normative takes for granted some of what the earlier Frankfurt School critiqued. Linklater omits the downside of modernity in order to focus almost exclusively on its beneficial aspects.

To be sure, Linklater's book is not a theory of international politics but political theory of the kind of political processes that might bring about the 'good life' in the post-Westphalian era. Nevertheless, the book suffers from the omission of much of the substance of the critical theories that motivate the search for a normative theory of world politics. References to the exclusion of women and domestic groups within liberal democratic states and to the European colonialism that belies the moral thrust of modernity abound. But Jean Elshtain argues that the theory operates at such an abstract level that it is difficult to see what Linklater has in mind and how his use of the concept of exclusion relates to the experiences of concrete social actors. She writes: 'The problem in this case is addressing social and political life, whether "domestically" or "internationally", in so abstract a manner that it is nearly impossible to discern what connection *this* formulation had to do with what some of us sometimes still call "the real world"'.¹¹⁴

Elshtain deplores the absence of real communities in Linklater's account of dialogical communities. Discussions of liberal democracies and their failings take the

form of philosophical renditions of the ideal community without examples of problems that empirical research would help reveal. The concept of exclusion occurs frequently, but with few instances of exclusion serving as illustrations. Elshtain is concerned that few of the points made by Linklater would be recognized as relevant by the people whose exclusion the theory aims to address and eliminate. Elshtain's review suggests, and Randall Schweller's asserts that 'Linklater argues by fiat rather than by the weight of hard evidence, which is in scant supply here'.¹¹⁵ Indeed, Elshtain sees the *Transformation of Political Community* as a series of injunctions to reconcile different identities to become subjects of universal duties and rights¹¹⁶ that do not point to a clear mechanism by which this could be brought about. Linklater appears to assume that the meaning of exclusion, dialogue, understanding, justice, and so on can be grasped by readers (or listeners in a dialogue) all the while dispensing with accounts of these phenomena in everyday global politics.

Linklater's conception of history, and thus his view of the development of a proto-global dialogical community, is made explicit by Molly Cochran. She argues that Linklater's history follows the Hegelian narrative as adapted by Marx. She writes: 'It is from a Marxian account of periodization, derivative of Hegel's philosophy of history, that Linklater models his notion of a philosophical history of intersocietal relations as the general flow of mankind towards freedom over time'.¹¹⁷ This statement ought nevertheless to be nuanced by saying that the version of Marx that Linklater takes as a model is the early one, where Marx urges social actors to change the world, not simply to explain it as philosophers have done. Social actors are therefore not mere bearers of a

historical mission in Linklater's view of history; they have an active historical role in bringing about progress.

Concretely, for Linklater, social life begins 'in tribal communities [that] are naturally estranged from one another. This represents a state of unfreedom since persons are unaware of their capacity to change what is a seemingly unalterable order, and because they are not compelled to address their estrangement from outsiders'. However, in the face of the limited scope of social relations, individuals must look beyond the tribe in order to meet their material needs. While they engage in commodity exchange, the dominant view of the community is challenged; and 'From the challenge to tribal ways, the person gains for the first time a conception of herself apart from the whole, a consciousness of individuality. As a result, a higher, more open form of societal relations is ushered in'¹¹⁸ in the form of the state. The impetus to move to greater ensembles does not stop when the state is created. From here on, expansion takes the form of imperial expansion or the development of international trade. Hegel provides the logic of history, while Kant and Marx provide the institutional (i.e., perpetual peace and the moral foundation for international organization) and material (capitalism) manifestation of progress in unifying the world.

What is troublesome with this conception of history is that it skirts the question of violence in creating these ever expanding social spheres. An empirical analysis of the sort Elshtain laments would cast some doubts on the fundamentally positive view of modernity Linklater takes. In Hegel and Marx, violence is thought to be part of the fabric of history and so receives little critical attention. Likewise, in Kant, Hegel, and Marx, as terrible as war and alienation of the proletariat may be, they are deemed necessary and

desirable stages on the road to universal emancipation. Conflicts, destruction, and death are simply seen as functions of history. One need not be a postmodernist to acknowledge this historical reality. Other modern scholars are keener to recognize the dubious methods used to create and maintain the modern state. For instance, Anthony Giddens' *The Nation-State and Violence* stands out as a candid acknowledgement—within the liberal tradition—of what has gone into the creation of political systems that some political theorists explain by a mythical social contract, and describe using an abstract philosophical language of freedom, rights, and dialogue.

Linklater's philosophical abstractions are matched by his focus on legal texts (e.g., constitutions, conventions, treaties) and formal institutions (international organizations). Liberal democracies are characterized by the rule of law and the procedures used to arrive at it. But Neo-Gramscians, feminists, and postcolonialists are more interested in the discourses that shape social actors and the ways in which the formal principles are subverted and thus perpetuate forms of exclusion. Even in its Frankfurt School incarnation, Critical Theory attaches considerable importance to the context where worldviews and moral norms are developed. Yet, the idea that subjects are embedded in a social context has been mostly omitted from the story Linklater tells.

According to R. B. J. Walker, *The Transformation of Political Community* is tautological because 'the primary conclusion is already announced as the major premise'. Linklater notes that modern politics has been characterized by ever expanding boundaries of community. His observation of this process since the Enlightenment is the foundation of his argument. What is already happening, in his understanding of modern history, is precisely what he calls for. The empirical dimension of the book (what *is*, according to

Linklater) merges with the normative one (what *should be*, according to Linklater). The only real question is how best to remove the obstacles to the process and accelerate it.

For Walker, the ‘critical’ credentials of Linklater’s Critical Theory are unclear because cosmopolitanism (Linklater’s objective) is part of the same paradigm as the modern state he otherwise claims to critique. Walker writes that ‘it is simply not the case that “cosmopolitanism”, as Linklater understands this term to refer to an affirmation of all those universal rights and duties, can offer “a critique of the sovereign states-system”. It cannot do so because cosmopolitanism is *already* a constitutive principle of the “sovereign states-system”’.¹¹⁹ Walker is doubtful that a critique of the international system can emerge from within modernity’s institutional structure. Put differently, Linklater’s critique amounts to a change within the system whereas Walker would rather see the current system give way to another configuration of political actors (neither individuals nor states).

As it stands, the transformation of political community is not strictly speaking a transformation because it operates along a historical continuum from small, tribal communities to the state and then on to the now emerging cosmopolitan order. The kinds of identities and subjectivities that can develop are constrained by the terms of modernity, and particularly the Kantian view of modernity. Thus, for Walker ‘it is quite futile to stay working to resolve dualisms of universality and difference on the terms they [*sic*] have been given to us by state sovereignty and the modern subject as specific relations between universality and difference’.¹²⁰

The end result, in Walker’s view, is a hierarchicalization (*sic*) of political community where instead of locating subjectivity and identity at the state level, we locate

them higher up the ladder toward universalism and cosmopolitanism. There is no obvious space for identity and subjectivity off the beaten path of modernity. More importantly, this challenges the notion that history and politics are open-ended processes. The narrowness of the range of options 'go[es] to the core of what we mean by politics, of what kind of legitimate authority is being constituted by and over what kind of subjects, and will not be engaged by trying to bring a cosmopolitan ethics to bear on what we already know politics to be'.¹²¹

On the question of subjectivity, Linklater's theory is particularly vulnerable. On the question of moral development, there is an explicit Kant, Kohlberg, and Habermas connection whose critique Linklater does not take seriously enough. In his discussion of the role of the ethic of care, he writes that 'To depict the skills associated with the ethic of care and responsibility as inferior to the ethic of abstract principles of justice is to overlook the existence of powerful moral reserves which can considerably enrich the public sphere'.¹²² Although Linklater rejects the notion of inferior level of moral development, he sees a feminist ethic of care as a contribution to discourse ethics rather than as an ethos unto itself.¹²³ The ethic of care and other 'non-rational' modes of ethical thinking are used to support the historical process that started with the Enlightenment, that is, long before there was something called 'feminism'. The feminist subject of ethics and politics stands out only as a stage in the process leading to post-conventional morality and a global dialogical community. This understanding of the relationship between care and rights runs afoul of Gilligan's argument and downplays the relevance of care and of those who relate to other in this way.

On the matter of colonization and the integration of non-Europeans in modern history, Linklater's reliance on Kant also poses major problems to the expression of alternative subjectivities. Emmanuel Chukwudi Eze argues that the Kantian conception of subjectivity privileged the modern European individual over other subjects. This, Eze maintains, owes to racial theories that were important to Kant's work. This is an aspect that students of Kant fail to discuss: 'This scholarly forgetfulness of Kant's racial theories, or his raciology, I suggest, is attributable to the overwhelming desire to see Kant only as a 'pure' philosopher, preoccupied only with 'pure' culture- and color-blind philosophical themes in the sanctum sanctorum of the traditions of Western philosophy'.¹²⁴ The true human nature (essential goodness, rationality, and perfectibility) is embodied by Europeans, and they are accordingly given a prominent role in historical evolution.¹²⁵

There is no doubt that Linklater would repudiate this conception of human nature or the idea that he subsumes feminism under a primarily Kantian philosophy. However, the legacy of colonialism and patriarchy is one that has shaped subjectivities along different lines that he asks feminist and postcolonial subjects to abandon in favour of a more generic modern, individual, and rational subject. The extension of 'rights' beyond a small male and wealthy European elite was not the result of a sole debate of ideas and 'the force of the better argument'. Insofar as struggles are protracted processes still underway—whatever the formal recognition granted individuals—they help maintain subjective identities that cannot simply be ignored or required to merge into the hegemonic paradigm they see as the problem.¹²⁶

On the material front, Linklater's use of Marx is limited to bringing in the material dimension of existence (to complement the ideational side of Kant) and the role of global capitalism in bringing the world together. What is omitted here is that capitalism may not be a necessary stage toward a more just global order. Marx saw capitalism as historically and scientifically inevitable. By taking its spread for granted, Linklater downplays the destruction that it might cause before an alternative, more equitable mode of production can finally emerge. Things must get worse before they get better, or humanity must come to the edge of the precipice before it opts for a different route. The brief history of the post-Cold War suggests that equality, human rights, and independence coexist remarkably well with the implementation of policies that result in the denial of basic necessities and the infliction of extreme suffering.

What appears positive from an abstract historical point of view (the spread of modernity and capitalism) appears destructive from a subjective point of view (violence and exploitation) when it happens concretely. The central critique we can formulate against Linklater's normative theory is that a global ethic need not take the form of the extension of hegemonic Western conceptions of morality and economic development. Morality does not inhere only in modernity and reason, and development conceived in terms of capitalism comes at the expense of other models and the people who favour them.

Conclusion

As I have noted at the beginning of this chapter, both the postmodern politics of difference and the cosmopolitan dialogic community have attempted to address the question of subjectivity directly and to provide conditions for its free expression. The postmodern route has been to challenge metanarratives, or grand theories, that have characterized political theory and social science, including international relations. In lieu of these unattainable moral and empirical truths, postmodernists have sought to privilege the voices and perspectives of those who have been left out, oppressed, or explicitly repressed by these discourses by making space for them. Derrida and Foucault inform some of IR's severest critics, and form the backbone of an alternative approach to relations with other political groupings. In the case of Connolly, this means advocating a continuous self-reinvention of the subject in a manner that resists attempts at 'fixing' identity, and that is merely consistent with the 'richness of life'. A politics of difference, or 'pluralization' in his parlance, acts as an acknowledgement of difference and a safeguard against control and violence.

Linklater, on the other hand, does not see the Enlightenment tradition primarily as one of control and violence. To be sure, there are problems, but the trend as he sees it is one that is leading to an expansion of moral community initiated and sustained by the ideas of the Enlightenment. He attempts to show that the modern state was a crucial stage in human history and the realization of the idea of universal emancipation. Although exclusion has characterized and is still characterizing the modern state, it nonetheless is more inclusive than it was and the dialogic ethics that distinguishes democratic debate is

spreading abroad to other regions and higher, to a supranational level. In time, a cosmopolitan order will emerge.

For all their differences, and especially their rival views on history, these two solutions to ethical problems in global politics have some similarities. Both, I would argue, promote a form of individualism that may not lead to ethically acceptable practices. Connolly is right to distinguish between *individualism* and *individuality* and to privilege the latter. All things considered, it is more respectful of difference. However, the *individuality* he advocates—a self that is unique, unlike the generic self of *individualism*—is both unstable and not necessarily other-orientated. By this I mean that much of the attention of the subject is focused on the self and providing for what s/he needs or wants to achieve self-realization.

The cosmopolitan subject of Linklater comes closer to the liberal individualism that Connolly critiques. Instead of erring on the side of irreducible difference, Linklater errs on the side of sameness. Recognizing all subjects' fundamental equality may provide them with an opportunity to voice concerns without fear of reprisals. Yet, equality in right does not mean equality of influence or that what some say must be taken seriously. For instance, a consultative process leading to a binding decision may allow many groups to come and express their views on the matter at hand, but the final decision may be based on a dismissal of some of these perspectives on the ground that they are mistaken, not realisable, or marginal. No punishment will follow the expression of heretical views, but no positive response will necessarily be forthcoming.

As well, Connolly and Linklater can both be faulted for insufficient attention to real subjects of the 'real world'. In the politics of difference, this omission is

understandable enough: a list of excluded or oppressed people would never be satisfactory because it could not capture the extent of the problem. By the same token, the omission of concrete exclusion casts doubt on whether or not the postmodernist is truly aware of the problem s/he wants to address. In the dialogic community, equality risks getting confused with sameness. When it comes to dealing with exclusion and oppression, sameness means assuming that others have the same aspirations or that they have yet to realize where their true interests lies. Linklater presumes that the overlap between different perspectives already exists and that dialogue will allow its identification. In other words he expects to find what he knows to be true already. What I suggest is that neither he nor others know what the 'good life' is and that what the future will be has to be decided and that the method for this must not privilege one subject.

In the remainder of the thesis, therefore, I provide one approach to grappling with diverging subjectivities in an otherwise integrated world where there are many linkages between these subjectivities. I argue that the elimination of exclusion requires a positive move toward others, but a move that does not simply consist in making others into one's image. At the same time, I argue that the difference and concerns of others cannot be accepted at face value in the name of irreducible differences and incommensurable subjectivities. The next chapter attempts to resolve this contradiction by looking behind the criticisms formulated by social actors to identify the motivations that animate them, namely the desire for emancipation from constraints that are placed on them, not least by one's own normative pursuits and actions.

Endnotes

- ¹ Which is consistent with the political philosophy of the editors and contributors.
- ² David Campbell and Michael J. Shapiro, eds., *Moral Spaces: Rethinking Ethics and World Politics* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999).
- ³ See Andrew Linklater, *Men and Citizens in the Theory of International Relations* (London: Macmillan, 1982).
- ⁴ See Richard K. Ashley, "Political Realism and Human Interests", *International Studies Quarterly* 25, no. 2 (June 1981); Richard K. Ashley, "Three Modes of Economism", *International Studies Quarterly* 27, no. 4 (December 1983); R. B. J. Walker, ed., *Culture, Ideology, and World Order* (Boulder, CO, and London: Westview Press, 1984).
- ⁵ David Ashley, *History without a Subject: The Postmodern Condition* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1997), 7.
- ⁶ Jean-François Lyotard, *La condition postmoderne: rapport sur le savoir* (Paris: Minuit, 1979), 7.
- ⁷ Jim George, *Discourses of Global Politics: A Critical (Re)Introduction to International Relations* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1994), 55.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, 44-46.
- ⁹ Richard K. Ashley, 'The Geopolitics of Geopolitical Space: Toward a Critical Social Theory of International Politics', *Alternatives* 12, no. 4 (October 1987), 404; R. B. J. Walker, *Inside/Outside: International Relations as Political Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).
- ¹⁰ Richard K. Ashley, 'Living on Borderlines: Man, Poststructuralism, and War', in James Der Derian and Michael J. Shapiro, *International/Intertextual Relations: Postmodern Readings of World Politics* (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1988), 265.
- ¹¹ Michael Dillon, *Politics of Security: Towards a Political Philosophy of Continental Thought* (London and New York: Routledge, 1996); David Campbell, *Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998).
- ¹² James Der Derian, 'Introducing Philosophical Traditions in International Relations', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 17, no. 2 (1988), 189
- ¹³ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁴ Pauline Rosenau, 'Once Again into the Fray: International Relations Confronts the Humanities', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 19, no. 1 (Spring 1990), 102. Author's citations omitted.
- ¹⁵ 'Living on Borderlines: Man, poststructuralism and war', in James Der Derian and Michael Shapiro, eds., *International/Intertextual Relations: Postmodern Readings of World Politics* (Lexington: Lexington Books, 1989), 266.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 267.
- ¹⁷ Richard Devetak, 'The Project of Modernity and International Relations Theory', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 24, no. 1 (1995), 41.
- ¹⁸ David Campbell and Michael Dillon, 'The End of Philosophy and the End of International Relations', in Campbell and Dillon, eds., *The Political Subject of Violence*, 2
- ¹⁹ Lyotard, *La condition postmoderne*, 8.
- ²⁰ William Connolly, *Identity\Difference: Democratic Negotiations of Political Paradox* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), ix.
- ²¹ *Ibid.*, 1. My emphasis.
- ²² *Ibid.*, 7.
- ²³ *Ibid.*, 9
- ²⁴ Michel Foucault, *Histoire de la sexualité* (Paris: Gallimard, 1976); Michel Foucault, *Histoire de la folie à l'âge classique* (Paris: Gallimard, 1975); Michel Foucault, *Surveiller et punir* (Paris: Gallimard, 1975).
- ²⁵ Connolly, *Identity\Difference*, 11, 38.
- ²⁶ William E. Connolly, *The Ethos of Pluralization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), 182.
- ²⁷ Ashley, 'Living on Borderlines', 290.
- ²⁸ *Ibid.*, 296.
- ²⁹ *Ibid.*
- ³⁰ Connolly, *Identity\Difference*, 14.

- ³¹ Ibid., 57.
- ³² Ibid., 57.
- ³³ Ibid., 48.
- ³⁴ Ibid., 81.
- ³⁵ Connolly, *The Ethos of Pluralization*, xiv-xv.
- ³⁶ Connolly, *Identity\Difference.*, 96.
- ³⁷ Ibid., 86.
- ³⁸ Ibid., 181.
- ³⁹ Ibid., 182.
- ⁴⁰ Connolly, *The Ethos of Pluralization*, xvi.
- ⁴¹ Ibid., xx.
- ⁴² Ibid., xxi.
- ⁴³ George, 'Realist "Ethics", International Relations, and Post-Modernism', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 24, no. 2 (1995), 195.
- ⁴⁴ Connolly, *The Ethos of Pluralization*, ch. 4.
- ⁴⁵ E. San Juan, *Beyond Postcolonial Theory* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998), 7.
- ⁴⁶ Ibid., 8.
- ⁴⁷ Ibid.
- ⁴⁸ Sandra Whitworth, *Feminism and International Relations: Towards a Political Economy of Gender in Interstate and Non-governmental Institutions* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994), 50-53; Seyla Benhabib, 'Feminism and Postmodernism: An Uneasy Alliance' in Seyla Benhabib et al., *Feminist Contentions: A Philosophical Exchange* (New York: Routledge, 1995).
- ⁴⁹ Benhabib, 'Feminism and Postmodernism', 17.
- ⁵⁰ Ibid., 20.
- ⁵¹ Ibid., 21.
- ⁵² Sabina Lovibond, quoted in *ibid.*, 26.
- ⁵³ Ibid.
- ⁵⁴ Ibid., 28.
- ⁵⁵ Walden Bello, 'No Logo: A brilliant but flawed portrait of contemporary capitalism' <<http://www.zmag.org/CrisesCurEvts/Globalism/nologo.htm>>, accessed 21 April 2006. In defence of Naomi Klein—though not of postmodernists—*No Logo* does discuss the material dimension of the global economy. Klein visits factories and interviews workers who speak to their working conditions. Bello's critique target the symbolic dimension of the economy.
- ⁵⁶ Connolly, *The Ethos of Pluralization*, 193.
- ⁵⁷ Connolly, *Identity\Difference*, 10.
- ⁵⁸ Ibid., 192-193.
- ⁵⁹ Connolly, *The Ethos of Pluralization*, 194.
- ⁶⁰ Jean Bethke Elshtain, 'The Problem with Peace', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 17, no. 3 (Winter 1988).
- ⁶¹ Jules Ferry et Alain Renaut, *La pensée 68: essai sur l'anti-humanisme contemporain* (Paris: Gallimard, 1988), 28.
- ⁶² David Campbell, 'The Politics of Radical Interdependence: A Rejoinder to Daniel Warner', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 21, no. 1 (Spring 1996).
- ⁶³ Jenny Edkins, 'Legality with a Vengeance: Famines and Humanitarian Relief in "Complex Emergencies"', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 25, no. 3 (Winter 1996).; David Campbell, 'Why Fight: Humanitarianism, Principles, and Post-Structuralism', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 27, no. 3 (December 1998); David Campbell, 'Justice and International Order: The Case of Bosnia and Kosovo', in Jean-Marc Coicaud and Daniel Warner, eds., *Ethics and International Affairs: Extent and Limits* (Tokyo: United Nations University Press, 2001).
- ⁶⁴ Robert W. Cox, 'Social Forces, States, and World Orders: Beyond International Relations Theory' in Robert W. Cox with Timothy J. Sinclair, *Approaches to World Order* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).
- ⁶⁵ David Campbell, *National Deconstruction: Violence, Identity, and Justice in Bosnia* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1998), Ch. 5, *passim*. Campbell argues in the book that multiculturalism

could have been an option; peace plans could have been drawn up and institutions could have been created that would have promoted concord rather than ethnic politics. See pp. 219-240.

⁶⁶ Campbell, 'The Politics of Radical Interdependence', 136.

⁶⁷ David Campbell, 'The Deterritorialization of Responsibility: Levinas, Derrida, and Ethics after the End of Philosophy', in David Campbell and Michael J. Shapiro, eds., *Moral Spaces: Rethinking Ethics and World Politics* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 46.

⁶⁸ Arguably, such alternatives do exist since there are already economic models and political communities that do not correspond to the model that problem-solving theory seeks to uphold. The notion of resistance expresses the fact that those who resist may want to preserve something they already have. Their status quo may be desirable and that is their alternative to what is being imposed on them.

⁶⁹ Campbell, 'The Politics of Radical Interdependence', 139.

⁷⁰ Campbell, 'The Politics of Radical Interdependence', 140.

⁷¹ David Campbell, 'Justice and International Order', 107, 109.

⁷² Michael J. Shapiro, 'The Ethics of Encounter: Unreading, Unmapping the Imperium', in Campbell and Shapiro, eds., *Moral Spaces*, 60.

⁷³ Campbell, 'Justice and International Order', 110.

⁷⁴ Thomas McCarthy, 'Introduction' in Jürgen Habermas, *On the Logic of Social Sciences* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1988), vii.

⁷⁵ Michael Kelly, *Critique and Power: Recasting the Foucault/Habermas Debate* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1994).

⁷⁶ Habermas, *On the Logic of the Social Sciences*, 18-19.

⁷⁷ Jürgen Habermas, *Knowledge and Human Interests* (London: Heinemann, 1972).

⁷⁸ According to Anthony Giddens, Comtean positivism was a reaction to the unbridled enthusiasm of modernity's social change radicalism (*sic*). This radicalism can also be found in contemporary social theories that deem the world socially constructed and therefore transformable through deliberate action. Indeed, many critics of the current global social order adopt the label 'radical'. See Anthony Giddens, 'Positivism and its Critics', in Tom Bottomore and Robert Nisbet, eds., *A History of Sociological Analysis* (New York: Basic Books, 1978), 238-243.

⁷⁹ Andrew Linklater, 'The Question of the Next Stage in International Relations Theory: A Critical-Theoretical Point of View', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 21, no. 1 (Spring 1992), 84-85.

⁸⁰ Andrew Linklater, 'The Problem of Community in International Relations', *Alternatives* 15, no. 2 (Spring 1990), 136.

⁸¹ This is central to the work of Martin Wight and Hedley Bull. See Martin Wight, *Systems of States* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1977); Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics* (London: Macmillan, 1995).

⁸² Linklater, 'The Question of the Next Stage in International Relations Theory', 83.

⁸³ Linklater, 'The Problem of Community in International Relations', 136.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 140.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 141.

⁸⁶ Andrew Linklater, *The Transformation of Political Community: Ethical Foundations of the Post-Westphalian Era* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998), 2.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 3.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 21.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 24.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 27.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 35.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 36.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 38.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 36.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 40.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 47.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 57.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 79.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 85.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 86.

- ¹⁰¹ Ibid., 89.
- ¹⁰² Ibid., 91.
- ¹⁰³ Ibid., 91-92.
- ¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 92.
- ¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 169.
- ¹⁰⁶ Ibid.
- ¹⁰⁷ Ibid.
- ¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 170. Martin Wight and Hedley Bull are obvious sources for Linklater.
- ¹⁰⁹ Ibid.
- ¹¹⁰ Ibid., 171.
- ¹¹¹ Recall Linklater's assertion that the state is a system of inclusion and exclusion.
- ¹¹² Ibid., 193. Linklater's citations excluded.
- ¹¹³ Ibid., 195.
- ¹¹⁴ Jean Bethke Elshtain, 'Really Existing Communities', *Review of International Studies* 25, no. 1 (1999), 141.
- ¹¹⁵ Randall L. Schweller, 'Fantasy Theory', *Review of International Studies* 25, no. 1 (1999), 147.
- ¹¹⁶ Elshtain, 'Really Existing Communities', 143.
- ¹¹⁷ Molly Cochran, *Normative Theory in International Relations: A Pragmatic Approach* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 82.
- ¹¹⁸ Ibid.
- ¹¹⁹ R. B. J. Walker, 'The Hierarchicalization of Political Community', *Review of International Studies* 25, no. 1 (1999), 153.
- ¹²⁰ Ibid., 154.
- ¹²¹ Ibid., 155.
- ¹²² Linklater, *The Transformation of Political Community*, 68.
- ¹²³ Fiona Robinson, *Globalizing Care: Ethics, Feminist Theory, and International Relations* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1999), 23-27.
- ¹²⁴ Emmanuel Chukwudi Eze, 'The Color of Reason: The Idea of "Race" in Kant's Anthropology', in Emmanuel Chukwudi Eze, ed., *Postcolonial African Philosophy: A Critical Reader* (Cambridge, MA, and Oxford: Blackwell, 1997), 103.
- ¹²⁵ Ibid., 125-127.
- ¹²⁶ Beate Jahn, 'One Step Forward, Two Steps Back: Critical Theory as the Latest Edition of Liberal Idealism', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 27, no. 3 (1998), 624.

CHAPTER III

The previous two chapters have discussed critical and normative IR to map out the contribution of critical theory to understanding world politics. First, I argued that traditional theories in the field are limited in terms of the political questions they address. Second, I argued that traditional approaches are based on a handful of subjective standpoints whose view of the world omitted many other actors and their perspective on world politics. Third, I maintained that even the critical and normative literature runs the risk of excluding those subjects not central to their own research and normative agenda. Fourth, I have reviewed two strands of normative theorizing that have attempted to respond the exclusionary biases present in both traditional and critical theories. I have concluded that their proponents inadequately engaged with the substance of the critique (discourse ethics) or that they were reluctant to attempt such an engagement (politics of difference).

It must not be presumed from this that critical and normative IR theories have added nothing to what we know about world politics. However, a key problem has not been addressed: That the multiple subjectivities that animate everyday world politics must be understood in their own terms in order to address their grievances. The chapter therefore considers a way in which the challenge of difference can be met without ignoring, eliminating, or subsuming other identities under one's own. In other words

there are ways of relating to others for the specific purpose of responding favourably to their needs and desires through accommodation or through an extensive rethinking of one's objectives. In the construction of social order, certain actors are privileged and play a greater role. Others see their own aspirations downplayed or ignored, though they do not cease to exist. Political activism serves partly to remind others, especially powerful actors, of the existence of marginalized groups and the debates that ensue are sometimes struggles for power and for a role in shaping social order.

In an attempt to sidestep the conflicts that can develop between different social actors this chapter partly steps out of the political science and international relations literature to consider empathy an alternative approach to dialogue and intersubjective understanding. Empathy has, to a small degree, worked its way from aesthetics to psychology to IR in a few publications, yet it remains undertheorized as a political tool for dealing for understanding and relating to others in a way that does not seek to assert hegemony or strategic influence over them.

Empathy as a way of relating to others has to be considered in two ways here. First, to the extent that critical theorists are concerned with the exclusion of certain people from accounts of world politics and from actual participation in a global order that affects them, empathy can be an important resource for theorists to call upon in theorizing world politics. In fact, unless they are themselves members of the group whose experience they examine, some effort to understand others' experiences is necessary and this effort can profit from empathy. Second, critical theorizing about global politics is about social actors who are trying to secure recognition in the political sphere by speaking to their condition and sometimes directly opposing those who would exclude

them from the discussion. Here, it is the social actors themselves who can draw on empathy as a way to create better conditions for dialogue. As we will see in the last chapter, some participants in global protests and in events aimed at rethinking global politics do exhibit empathetic attitudes when they encounter those who suffer from the current world order. Thus, empathy exists both as a matter of experience (people feel it even if they do not theorize it and name it) and as a conscious move toward others to try and understand their suffering and remedy it.

Empathy is nevertheless fraught with risks. Even with the best of intentions, actors who try to identify with and to provide help to others may not have the competency required to do so or they may not be welcome. Nevertheless, I would argue that some of these fears can be explained by the lack of theoretical attention to empathy in political writings. Since empathy is part of a range of dispositions human beings adopt in social life, a second and perhaps more attentive look is in order to elucidate the contribution that it can make to intersubjective understanding. Although empathy explicitly relies on emotions as a mode of relating to others, it also involves concept formation and mental representations of social actors, their life circumstances, and the relations they have with one another. The closeness of interpersonal relations where empathy first arises tells us about human moral potential and the capacity to understand the condition of those who are seemingly distant but related to us in numerous ways.

This chapter is divided in three parts. In the first part I retrace the origin of the concept of empathy from its coinage as *Einfühlung* to its first occurrence in the psychology literature. I argue that empathy is a particular way of considering someone else's situation that relies on emotions and understanding of another's subjectivity. As

such empathy is defined as a mode of communication whereby agents are attuned to one another's emotions. I argue that empathy is a potentiality with which human beings are born and that develops as part of close and sustained interpersonal relations. Though the relationship between children and caregivers plays a crucial role in its early development, it remains active beyond childhood. Thus, section two on 'empathy in social relations' argues that the broadening of the social horizon and more distant relations do not render empathy obsolete. Indeed, I contend that empathy occurs even after adult social agents develop a conception of self as separate from others. An attendant consequence of the awareness of self-other distinction is the capacity to inquire into the ultimate causes of others' suffering.

Part three deals with the question of empathy toward collective actors. While the empathy literature concerns primarily face-to-face relations between individuals, theorists of empathy maintain that the capacity to empathize exists also in relation to groups precisely because it can prompt inquiries into the cause of others' suffering that go beyond the individual empathized with. In other words, the person whose suffering the empathizer sees is can also be considered one instance of a larger social phenomenon that affects large numbers of people. Empathy therefore ceases to be simply a punctual emotional reaction to one individual; it becomes a more general disposition toward those whose suffering can be explained by the existence of given practices that make up a given social order.

Empathy and Social Relations

In her book *Feminist Theory and International Relations in a Postmodern Era*, Christine Sylvester writes: ‘Empathy brings heretofore “instances” into politics on their own (fractured) terms and it also makes us think critically about our relations to the stories we hear, about our social constitution as men and women, our I-to-i connections. Above all empathy is the capacity to participate in another’s ideas and feelings’.¹ She argues that empathy accounts for women’s unique attitudes and behaviour with respect to social relations. She further contends that the women she studies provide a model of relating to others because they privilege relations and mutual transformation to fixed identities that are in irresolvable conflict. This section seeks to expand on this definition of empathy by tracing its origins in the psychology literature.

What is Empathy?

According to Nancy Eisenberg and Janet Strayer, although the term ‘empathy’ dates back less than a century, the underlying idea has been in existence for longer.² Since the word was coined, ‘empathy has been an important concept in contemporary developmental, social, personality, and clinical psychology’.³ The concept of empathy as it is used today was coined in 1909 by the early psychologist Edward Bradford Titchener. Titchener translated the concept of *Einfühlung* from German aesthetics into empathy for use in psychology and for the study of a particular way of relating to others.⁴ In aesthetics, a branch of philosophy concerned with beauty and appreciation, *Einfühlung*

referred to ‘the projection of the self into the object of beauty’ or the ‘aesthetic satisfaction as the activity of “inner imitation”’.⁵

Specifically, *Einfühlung* is a particular way of relating to an object that is outside the subject, but to which the subject relates. When Titchener applied it to psychology and relations with other persons, he defined empathy as “‘the feeling’ of our own *concernment* in the imagined situation. We have a natural tendency to feel ourselves into what we perceive or imagine’. Titchener adds that ‘This tendency to feel oneself *into* a situation is called empathy,—on the analogy of sympathy, which is feeling together *with another*’.⁶ Empathy, of course, does not mean to feel *with* another but *in* another, as if there was an identity of emotions and sensations between the empathizer and the person empathized with.

In the introduction their volume *Empathy and its Development* Eisenberg and Strayer provide eight definitions of empathy used by the contributors.⁷ Definitions revolve around a few key ideas. First, empathy takes for granted the existence of different subjectivities. Although adults may make a clear distinction between self and other, empathy remains as a possibility and as a mode of relating to others. Thus empathy does not require complete and permanent identity of persons in order to operate. Second, empathy relies specifically on emotions, feelings, and sensations as a mode of identification of self and other, where the condition of others is the ground where subjects meet. Third, empathy specifically entails the privileging of the other’s own condition; whether the empathic relationship occurs spontaneously or is the product of a conscious attempt to understand others in their own terms, it is *their* conditions and emotions that are the centre of attention.⁸

Eisenberg and Strayer thus define empathy as

sharing the perceived emotion of another—‘feeling with’ another. This vicarious affective reaction may occur as a response to overt perceptible cues indicative of another’s affective state (e.g., a person’s facial expressions), or as a consequence of inferring another’s state on the basis of indirect cues (e.g., the nature of the other’s situation). Thus we define empathy as an emotional response that stems from another’s emotional state or condition that is *congruent with the other’s emotional state or situation*.⁹

Their definition is similar to that used by Martin Hoffman who defines empathy as ‘processes that make a person have feelings that are more congruent with another’s situation than with his own situation’.¹⁰ Hoffman’s most recent study on the role of empathy in social relations suggests that because empathy is other-focused it can conflict with other ways of conceptualizing oneself and of relating to others. This point is especially important when considering the emphasis placed on the individual in moral development and moral philosophy. Liberal conceptions of the rational autonomous subject sit uneasily with empathy as this ‘vicarious affect’ Hoffman deems it to be. Likewise, the standpoint conceptions of the subject place so much emphasis on a specific set of experiences as the foundation of knowledge that they do not readily make empathy between different subjectivities possible.

These different experiences nevertheless belong to a certain human condition. According to Katz, social actors are not unfamiliar with what it means to be human in a general sense since the feelings of others likely have occurred in the empathizers themselves. He writes:

In the process the observer is stimulated by an external cue and responds by automatically and unconsciously associating the object with a familiar activity or sentiment, or attitude of his own. It is important to appreciate the fact that the similarity between the subject and the object existed before the moment of actual stimulation or excitation.¹¹

The nature of the similarity between subject and object (or the empathizer and the person empathized with) is difficult to identify. On the one hand, there are conceptions of subjectivity that assume all human beings to be essentially the same (Hobbesian, Kantian-rational, utilitarian-rational). On the other, there are conceptions of the subject as socially constructed, in particular in the context of their social experiences. Empathy takes for granted a 'thin' identity of human subjects that makes identification possible despite differences. Indeed, Katz writes of 'similarity' and not 'sameness' or 'identity'.

This thin identity operates on at least two levels. On the first level, human beings are confronted with a few fundamental biological needs that are preconditions to the pursuit of other goals. To achieve survival goals they rely on a range of intellectual capacities that are specific to humans. The fact that we speak of the 'humanities', the 'human sciences', or the 'social sciences' suggests that there is something real enough about the bond between human beings to create a 'meta-field' that studies primarily human interactions. Of course, this is not to argue in favour of an anthropocentric view of the world that is oblivious to humans' embeddedness in nature; it is simply to assert that at the level of communication, cross-cultural (in the broad sense the term) or intersubjective understanding may be easier than, for example, cross-species communication.

Elements of the second similarity can be seen in the kinds of themes addressed in artistic and scholarly productions in human societies. At a very general level, Aristotle's contention that 'man' is a political animal proves to be true when we consider how many cultures tackle the question of collective life, norms that ought to guide social relations, and how people ought to relate to those not identical to themselves. Each worldview and

conception of social order can be construed as a political theory, that is to say as representation of collective life that is either shared by individuals or that it proposed in response to human needs. The need to be part of a social fabric is virtually as important as the need to meet biological requirements.

Empathy in social communication

For the time being however, let us consider how Titchener construed emotions and sensations as one foundation of knowledge. Writing of the way he understands the working of his enquirer's mind, Titchener writes: 'My mind is of the imaginal sort,—I wish we had a better adjective!—and my ideational type is of the sort described in psychology as mixed'.¹² He argues that as subjects grow older the relative importance of language over images increases. That is to say that relations are mediated by language rather than by images and the sensations and emotions they elicit in social actors. Because of the shift to a verbal way of relating to others, it is necessary to renew the capacity to form images related to the words of the language adults have learned to speak. He defines his thought process as a mix of internal speech and imagery.¹³

Concepts, according to Titchener, are formed by images held in one's mind. When a person thinks of 'man' or 'freedom' or 'exclusion', a series of images corresponds to the word used. Titchener discusses the concept of 'man' and what a man 'looks like': any given man has a skin colour, a posture, and other individual characteristics.¹⁴ At the same time, however, for there to be a conceptual category of 'man', there needs to be characteristics that are widely shared that define the type of person called a 'man'. As concept, 'man' is an image with unclear contours, the

exactness of which is not beyond dispute. Titchener construes such images as impressionist paintings that provide a general sense of the object without specifics. The specifics are in some respects not necessary to understand what the other person means when s/he utters a word.

As the expression aptly states, the word conjures up images in the listener or reader's mind. In the process of development, given images (in the mind) and given outward signs are associated with given sensations that a subject feels when the word is used. These sensations can also be associated with physical responses (kinaesthesia—e.g., a shudder expressing horror, an increase in heart rate the mere thought of a traumatic or joyous event) that are not explained by the physical state in which a social agent finds her/himself.

Titchener introduces an important caveat, however. He argues that experience and knowledge are more than the accumulation of images and attendant sensations as data. Experiences, images, and sensations are part of a process that unfold in time.¹⁵ Language—which is used to express verbally or in writing—is fluid as meanings change over time and in contact with the reality lived by subjects.¹⁶ Social life provides each subject with a steady stream of experiences and images that elicit emotions that the subject tries to grasp. The coinage of a (new) concept is the most obvious manifestation of the reaction of the subject's mind trying to apprehend a reality that always exceeds the capacity of a theory to make it intelligible.

A complex set of social relations poses the problem of intelligibility. The development of a specific subjectivity—an identity—is the product of multiple relationships and influence that shape social agents. Scholars interested in moral

development (psychologists) and moral philosophers account for the emergence of social norms by relying on different sources from reason to experience, from standpoint to emotions, that result in conflicting visions of the good society and the appropriate behaviour to achieve it.

The role of empathy in moral development can therefore be considered one of the means by which social agents can relate to others, identify with them and go some way toward addressing grievances. Insofar as emotions are part of the many ways that social agents experience the world, ‘The sensationalism of modern psychology [i.e., in Titchener’s time] is simply an heuristic principle, accepted and applied for what it is worth in the search for the mental elements,—whereas the older sensationalism, just because it was a preconceived theory, required that the facts conform to it, whether they would or whether they would not’.¹⁷

Empathy in Social Relations

This section considers the development of empathy in social relations. Empathy here refers to the emotion-based knowing of someone else’s internal states (emotions) and therefore it entails a social relation. At the same time, the states of mind are subjective in that they occur in discrete persons and reflect these persons experiences. The identity that empathy establishes between self and other is not a permanent one. Subjectivity shifts between self and other as a person empathizes with, or distances her/himself from, others. In the psychology literature, some contexts are seen as more conducive to the development and manifestation of empathy. A relation between a caregiver and the

people cared for is so close and intense that empathy is more likely to develop. That said, empathy does not disappear in adult life even if it is mitigated or hindered by other ways of thinking about others.

In the social sciences and political theory, Aristotle's contention that 'man' is a political animal has considerable currency (though not all explicitly state this as an assumption, and not everyone adheres to this view—e.g., Hobbes). Exactly why and how the need for social relations exists is taken for granted in Aristotle's conception of human nature. In theories of empathy, the bonds that develop between humans are explained by species-specific survival needs that could not be met without ongoing social relations, including the capacity to empathize.

Regardless of the foundational reasons, if any, for the existence of empathy or behaviours that express an emotional connection between different persons, it is probably fair to surmise that empathy constitutes one faculty that intervenes in social relations. Thus empathy and emotions are not to be understood in strict opposition to reason. This point can scarcely be overemphasized. This existence of empathy does not preclude the existence of other modes of relating to others that are also 'natural' in the sense that they part of a repertoire of abilities that humans call upon in their social relations.

In a monograph on empathy in social development, Martin Hoffman seeks to develop 'a comprehensive theory of prosocial moral behavior and development that highlights empathy's contribution to moral emotion, motivation, and behavior but also assigns special importance to cognition'. He also aims 'to examine empathy's contribution to the principles of caring and justice, to resolving caring-justice conflicts, and to moral judgement'.¹⁸ Hoffman focuses the attention on five types of social

interaction where empathy manifests itself: (i) the innocent bystander; (ii) the transgressor; (iii) the virtual transgressor; (iv) the multiple claimants situation; and v) the care-justice dilemma. In each of these situations, the empathizer occupies a distinct position relative to other people. S/he also has a different type of relation with them. Accordingly, each situation requires a different reaction in order to help others or otherwise alleviate their suffering.

Bystanders, transgressors, and virtual transgressors

International relations differ from interpersonal relations in crucial ways. Contacts between different actors are less direct than in interpersonal relations so it is easy for actors to ignore the existence of others or to interpret their relation to others as one of bystander to sufferer. The nature of the relation between the empathizer with those who suffer is difficult to establish. In the relation between bystander and sufferer, a social actor witnesses or otherwise becomes aware of the condition of another person. This awareness of the other's suffering may or may not elicit feelings of empathy but insofar as it does, it poses the dilemma of whether to act. Bystanders may wonder whether they are under any obligation to do anything about others' suffering because they are not the cause of it. In interpersonal relations, the harm done by one person to another is often readily observable and the transgressor sometimes reacts to the harm done and acknowledges his or her responsibility.

How one actor's behaviour impacts others half a world away is much harder to ascertain. Establishing responsibility for the harm done—or establishing transgressor status—is no easy task. Indeed, 'It could be argued that the modes of exclusion which

exist in the workings of the global political economy are at once less explicit and more insidious than those which emerge out of the sovereign nation-state'.¹⁹ With respect to the latter, it is easy to see how the practice of state-building is a violent process. Independence and unification wars (as state-building practices) are violent practices that are readily observable; they include widespread destruction and death; they are often (though not always) limited in time; and the proximate cause of suffering is rarely in doubt: it is war itself. There are several reasons for the lack of explicitness and the insidious nature of exclusion in the context of capitalism. One is the language used to account for global relations, especially the naturalization of inequality. Another pertains to the geographical dispersion of subjects whose lives are interrelated. A third is the absence of a common representation of the problem of exclusion.

While there is some consciousness of globalization in terms of the relations between distant peoples and lands, there remains a certain estrangement between the concrete actors whose practices affect one another over long distances. For all the traveling and circulation of information and ideas, there is insufficient face-to-face contact of the kind that occurs in smaller communities. In interpersonal relations the effect of an act on others can be seen immediately, and the interplay of interpretations of events more easily yields common accounts of the relation. Over greater distances, causes are often far removed from their effects. In other words, it may be possible to document the links between industrialization in the North and desertification in the South, but the causal mechanism is not something that can be grasped instantly.

The language of equality, freedom, and rights is particularly misleading. Whether we consider individuals or states, formal equality and freedom of expression do not

translate into a response to the grievances expressed, at least not the kind of response that is demanded by the critics. In world politics, multilateralism is purportedly the norm that regulates international relations. International relations are primarily about relations between states and so exclude other actors. Even if states were the only agents that mattered, one would need to recognize the *de facto* inequality between them that cannot compensate for their *de jure* status as sovereign equals. Furthermore, multilateralism is historically grounded,²⁰ and its state-centrism cannot cope with the global agents that appeared at the margin of the multilateral world order but also because of it.²¹

More importantly, perhaps, the ideas that underpin economic development are intangible. It is difficult to demonstrate how a way of thinking about social life (liberal capitalism) leads to suffering thousands of kilometres away. It requires theorizing on a global scale so that ideas are shown to shape practices and institutions of world order, with definite consequences on some people. Outside the walls of academia and government, movements developed that challenged the traditional practice of IR. Critical practice—i.e., contestation, protests—calls attention to the real-life actors who make up political world. Through the inconspicuous politics of everyday life and at visible historical junctures like mass demonstrations, emerging global actors have become more visible than previously.

Mutual awareness does not guarantee that empathy will develop. Theories of empathy assume the existence of different subjectivities *and* similarities between subjects, but they also recognize the circumstances in which contacts occur and social relations develop. The nature of the contact matters enormously for the future of the relation and the possibility of empathy. Thus, Inayatullah and Blaney argue that

harmonious social relations require an attitude of openness toward others. It is especially important for them to avoid 'the authoritative tone of lecturing'.²² However, the past and present of relations between social groups or cultures on a global scale does not always conform to this ideal. Encounters have often been confrontational when at least one actor did not adopt an attitude of openness toward the others.

The expansion of international relations to encompass the entire globe has taken the form of severe transgressions of other subjects' spaces, identities, and aspirations. Inayatullah and Blaney single out colonial ventures and twentieth-century development studies and neoliberalism as attempts to eliminate, subdue, or make over the others. These practices and policies exemplify the transgression of powerful actors (western actors, men, large businesses) against others, negating their subjectivity and causing their suffering in the process. In cases of transgression, the empathizer is aware of his or her role in causing distress in others. Harm may have been done unwittingly or willingly, but when the result of the transgressor's actions becomes apparent it can elicit empathetic feelings that overshadow the intent to harm. Transgression may also be virtual in the sense that the empathizer is not responsible for the suffering of others but believes s/he has had a role in it.

Distancing

As natural as empathy may seem, it can be undermined by a number of things. It is therefore important to explain why in everyday life, and in politics in particular, empathy rarely manifests itself. One obstacle to empathy is the acute stress experienced by the empathizer who is faced with someone else's suffering. A second is the ascription

to others' suffering a timeless, naturally or divinely ordained quality that moots any search for a solution to their suffering. A third is a tendency by some actors to blame those who suffer for their conditions, deciding in the process that they do not deserve help or redress, or that any assistance is provided solely out of charity. This is not a trivial matter for several reasons. Depending on the nature of the feelings experienced by the empathizer the reaction may be one of distancing, helping in an altruistic yet inappropriate manner, or inquiring further into the source of the other's suffering with a view to address the root causes. The reaction of a would-be empathizer also depends on the theoretical framework s/he use to apprehend the situation and the role of the sufferers in bringing about their distress. Seeing others' suffering can give rise to distancing reactions as much as it can foster empathy.

Most illustrations of empathy in the psychology literature concern role-taking with respect to physically painful events. There is a presumption that the other person is identical to the empathizer and that s/he is indeed suffering. In terms of capacity to feel pain, there is no significant difference between different human beings although how pain is interpreted may differ across cultures. Conceptually, therefore, the process of projecting oneself into another's (physically) painful situation is relatively easy. Empathy in this context acts as prosocial motivation where observers 'are motivated to help by sharing a ... generalized distress reaction'²³ to others because of the fundamental sameness in the physical make-up of the person. This generalized distressed reaction is the most conducive to helping or otherwise addressing the causes of a person's suffering.

When considering adults' emotional reactions to others' suffering, Batson *et al.* distinguish between empathy per se and personal distress. They define empathy as an

emotional reaction of relatively low magnitude that occurs in non-emergency situations while they describe personal distress as the emotional reaction associated with emergencies.²⁴ There can be considerable variations in the way the bystander describes her/his own feelings of empathy or distress. In situations of distress, emotions can be described as alarming, upsetting, or disturbing whereas in situations of empathy the empathizer reports feelings of sympathy, compassion, softheartedness, or tenderness.²⁵

‘There is considerable evidence’, Batson *et al.* argue, ‘that adopting the perspective of another who is suffering increases empathic emotional reaction to witnessing that that person suffers’.²⁶ But those who empathize in this way may empathize too much to be able to respond; the reaction may be so violent as to be unbearable for the empathizer. Thus, write Batson *et al.*,

emotions that fall under the general heading of personal distress (feeling alarmed, upset, disturbed, distressed, and the like) evoke egoistic motivations to have one’s own emotional arousal reduced, whereas the emotional reactions that fall under the general heading of empathy (feeling sympathetic, compassionate, soft-hearted, tender, and the like) evoke altruistic motivations to have the other’s need reduced.²⁷

In some instances, the intensity of the feelings of the empathizers takes the focus away from the person who is suffering. Hoffman labels this empathic reaction ‘egoistic drift’.²⁸ Although the identification of the empathizers with the ‘victim’ is genuine, it provokes such strong emotions in them that their reaction is one of self-protection. The empathizers’ first reaction is not to be self-centred, but the overwhelming emotions threaten their own well-being. In the absence of an adequate response to deal with the empathizers’ distress, the external source of the distress is relegated to a safe distance. ‘Compassion fatigue’ (or ‘empathic over-arousal’) provides a variation on the theme of egoistic drift. With compassion fatigue, the sustained experience of feelings of empathy

saps the empathizer psychologically. In Hoffman's words: 'This empathic "over-arousal" can be defined as an involuntary process that occurs when an observer's empathic distress becomes so painful and intolerable that it is transformed into an intense feeling of personal distress, which may move the person out of the empathic mode entirely'.²⁹

The 1990s, in particular, saw frequent mentions of 'aid fatigue' or 'donor fatigue' with respect to development assistance. It has been argued that the efforts of aid donors to help developing societies to modernize and industrialize have failed and that citizens of industrial states have become skeptical of the merits of official development assistance.³⁰ Thus while there is broad agreement that help should be provided on ethical grounds, the continued suffering of the people being helped perpetuates distress in the providers of help (taxpayers in this case) who literally cannot bear to deal with the issue of poverty anymore and so turn away from it. It is not a lack of feeling for those who suffer that impedes helping behaviour, it is the extreme discomfort associated with the failure to address this otherwise important problem. The benefit for the empathizer of reduced distress when another's suffering is alleviated does not happen. Instead, the suffering of others is the source of permanent disquiet.³¹

More serious forms of distancing involve a rationalizing of others' suffering. In this case, turning away from the problem is not a reaction of self-protection to painful events, but a direct consideration of others' situation that results in a finessing of their suffering. As most philosophical and religious traditions have maintained, human life is bound up with suffering and much human activity seeks to mitigate this. Much human philosophizing on suffering is also about coping with it when it occurs as much as it is about transforming the world to alleviate suffering.

The second form of distancing, the acceptance of suffering as inescapable, is common. The Protestant Reformation was partially a reaction to the excessive emphasis on suffering of Christianity as a condition to go to Heaven after death. But Protestantism itself relies on the notion of predestination to explain why some remain poor, in particular in an opportunity-rich capitalist system. In his *Discourse on Method* René Descartes wrote that he sometimes found it useful to change his desires than change the world.³² Auguste Comte's positivism was a reaction to the criticisms of his contemporaries about the effects of modernization.³³ Buddhism's contention that all suffering derives from human desires and bodily experiences suggests that those who suffer can overcome suffering by training their mind to avoid it.³⁴ Closer to the subject matter that occupies us here, Thomas Malthus' principle of population³⁵ sees hunger and death as natural occurrences that elicit in him no apparent emotional reactions. Darwin's theory of evolution (the survival of the fittest) has been applied to social and economic development in the form of competitiveness. Joseph Schumpeter's 'creative destruction' sees not only inescapable 'evil' in the crises of capitalism, it sees a benefit in the suffering that occur in times of economic crisis.³⁶

Such explanations of human suffering may be problematic insofar as they give the impression of the impossibility of eliminating or reducing suffering. Yet the powerlessness they convey promotes a form distancing that can be overcome as ways to change the world become obvious to social agents. The conviction that humans make their history within certain historical constraints inherited from the past leads to a rejection of some features of social order. However, the divine and the positivist account

of suffering present obstacles to human agency in that they do not recognize it and do not see how things might be changed.

The third form of distancing, blaming those who suffer for their conditions, goes further than mere distancing of empathizer and victim. Blame comes from the identification of the reasons that explain the condition in which suffering people find themselves. For Hoffman, there exists a tendency of some people

to blame victims when causal information is ambiguous or there is a 'factual' basis for doing so (rape victims who jog in dangerous places; spousal abuse victims who stay with the abusing spouse). ... Whether there is factual base, and whether causal information follows or precedes empathic arousal, blaming a victim puts psychological distance between bystander and victim and reduces the bystander's empathic distress and motivation to help.³⁷

While in principle all victims deserve help in overcoming their condition, the failure of the victims to behave in a responsible manner sometimes disqualifies them from help due all people. Thus, when a victim is perceived to be immoral or lazy, the likelihood that a bystander will empathize decreases.³⁸ Put differently, the rights associated with being human are conditional on the acceptance of proper norms of behaviour that place persons inside the moral community. For Hoffman, the attempt to explain the suffering of others over and above the emotional reaction to their suffering reflects an over-emphasis on cognition relative to emotion.³⁹ He remarks that often the first reaction of a person will be to empathize with those who appear to be in a difficult situation, but that it is possible to block this empathic reaction by pointing out to the empathizer the circumstances that led to the victim's difficulties. Should the victim have done something that explains his or her current predicament, the empathizer may cease to empathize altogether because the person who suffers can now be held responsible.⁴⁰

Insofar as any human community entails mores and rules of social behaviour, a departure from those rules makes actors liable to criticism even if they suffer. Everyday life provides a profusion of such examples. For instance, reckless drivers who injure themselves can expect less empathy for their pain because they could have easily avoided it. They are the transgressors and thus eschew moral standing in the eye of some observers. The obstacle to empathy does not reside in a sense of powerlessness in the face of an intractable problem. It resides in the ascription to a person agency that he or she fails to exercise. To be prudent, in the example just mentioned, is a guarantee that if things take a turn for the worse, the observers might see those who suffer as genuine victims of bad luck or circumstances they had no power to influence. The more a person is believed to bear some responsibility, the less s/he will be the object of others' empathy.

Only two groups of people are typically considered innocent: children and the elderly, because both are presumed to be in a vulnerable position by virtue of who they are rather than because of what they do. In a society that privileges various degrees of free will, self-help and hard work others can be blamed for their fate if they depart from the societal standards. In the neoliberal order, individuals have a responsibility to dedicate themselves fully to becoming economically productive. A person's contribution to the economic system defines that person's character and merit. Poverty thus becomes a sign of an *individual* flaw for which the individual may be held responsible. This contrasts with the previous Keynesian view that considered capitalism a flawed *system* whose very logic cause crises, which cause unemployment, which cause poverty. The unemployed thus could be supported because they were not individually responsible for their condition. In the neoliberal model, individuals are to a greater extent expected to

fend for themselves. In the next chapter we will see how the work ethic and personal character have reemerged as explanations for poverty and for the scaling back support for the poor.

Appropriateness of help

The forms of distancing just outlined do not manifest themselves all the time or to the same extent. Forms of help are offered when suffering is obvious and when it gets sufficient airing for others to take notice and develop an empathetic disposition toward those who suffer. We can interpret progress as the accumulated responses to human suffering. The impression that history moves in a generally linear fashion is accurate insofar as social actors respond to suffering and seek ways to improve the lot of others. This process is a product of agency rather than part of the fabric of history. As long as distancing is limited, we can expect improvements in social relations. The extent of distancing varies in that the extent of the blame cast on those who suffer varies considerably. Even in circumstances when people can be blamed for their destitution, notions of compassion, charity, or *noblesse oblige* presuppose the recognition of their humanity and of a certain worth. Thus we can say that empathy almost always manifests itself in some form and leads to the adoption of behaviours that aim to help those who suffer.

The problem that now poses itself to the empathizer is one of choosing which behaviour to adopt in response to others' distress. In considering moral thinking in the context of global social relations, care ethics raises the same problem. Ontologically, epistemologically, and practically, the care ethics is a cousin of empathy: it emphasizes

the relational aspect of identity; it takes emotions to be a source of understanding and a mode of dialogue; and it ponders how we should intervene to help others. It assumes that we are born into relations—parent-child, family, community—and that the nature of these relations matters to a person's well being. Although it may be clear that most social actors have ties to others and that this creates moral obligations, it is hard to determine the appropriate behaviour to adopt toward others. While social actors often care about the fate of others, they do not always know how to act. According to Virginia Held, the fact that people find themselves in relations they do not necessarily choose means that they have to think about how to behave in those relations.⁴¹ Issues like economic justice, she writes 'cry out for relevant principles' that are not easily found. Yet she notes that moral theory 'construes ethics too much in terms of knowledge, or of trying to get a true picture about what we ought to do'⁴² given the specificity of others' situation. Universal principles other than attentiveness, openness, and responsiveness may not exist at all. If they are to guide social action they have to be constructed jointly, if provisionally, as part of social relations characterized by empathy for, or similar dispositions to, others.⁴³

Chapter one of the thesis argued, among other things, that subjective standpoints yield at best partial knowledge of the world. Despite their best efforts, those occupying a particular standpoint have difficulties taking into consideration the entire social reality of others. The exact causes of the problems that affect others are not so evident that a solution is easily devised and implemented. As a result, help motivated by empathic feelings can prove inadequate to the condition of the person whose suffering the empathizer wishes to relieve.

The specific action taken to help others may be based on an erroneous understanding of the phenomenon leading to their suffering. Standpoint theorists maintain that knowledge of social reality is partial. In principle, this precludes the acquisition of a genuine understanding of the social dynamics that leads to the suffering of an individual or group. There are arguably proximate causes to people's suffering, such as the perpetration of an offence that is readily observable by a bystander, or the general condition of destitution in which the sufferers find themselves. Yet, because of partial knowledge, the empathizer cannot always claim to understand the situation faced by others and react appropriately. It may appear obvious that those who are in difficult situations should be helped. Yet, what is to be done is not necessarily known and those the empathizer wishes to help do not necessarily want that help.⁴⁴

In international politics, the paradigms that have guided policy-making have adhered to a variety of elite consensuses. At the beginning of the modern period, the conversion of non-European peoples to Christianity was considered a moral imperative for European powers. Tzvetan Todorov's work on the conquest of the Americas argues that the Spanish intended to bring Christianity to the indigenous peoples of the Americas for the sake of God and for the salvation of the indigenous peoples' own soul.⁴⁵ Even under liberal regimes of the nineteenth century, Christian missionaries served as a vanguard for colonial armies and settlers motivated by secular values. With the separation of religion and state, self-government, civilization, modernization, and development replaced salvation as the official moral imperative.⁴⁶ Development aid from capitalist and communist states after World War II, and neoliberalism today were framed in terms of freedom and the betterment of the condition of humankind. The certitude of

possessing the key to the good life of those ‘being developed’ allows the helpers do ignore the voices of the intended beneficiaries.

Above I argued that in the Keynesian paradigm unemployment and poverty are considered the result of flaws of the capitalist system. Other socially undesirable situations are explained by ‘market failures’ that can be remedied by ‘natural monopolies’. In such situations the authorities can address the problems faced by a population through public policies that mitigate suffering or that provide access to drinking water, infrastructure, health services and other public goods deemed essential to the good life. In liberal democratic capitalist societies, the benefits of these policies have been established since the 1930s. However, the objective was to correct a flaw of the economic system rather than respond to suffering per se. The suffering of the poor was a *political* problem for policy-makers but it was not a *moral* issue.⁴⁷ Yet, even in cases when regulations public services were an elite initiative, as it was in Keynesianism, state intervention was beneficial for most people. Widespread acceptance of Keynesian policies suggests that the decisions of policy-makers responded to genuine needs. Whether empathy intervened in the relations between elites and masses was a moot point.

But even empathizers sometimes do not consider suffering people’s own subjective input into a solution to the problem they encounter. The empathizer operates on the basis of an a priori understanding of the situation of others without inquiring into their perception of the situation and their preferred option to address it. While the empathizer’s *intention* may be praiseworthy, the *resulting* objectification of others as incapable of reflecting and acting on their condition is not.

In the next chapter we will see that the neoliberal policies of governments and international organizations do not in fact benefit those on whom they are being implemented. Thus, even if the sincerity and even empathy of policy-makers toward the excluded is not in doubt, the response they adopt—i.e., neoliberal policies—further hurts those they purportedly intend to help. The one-time coincidence of elite opinion and popular needs no longer applies. The conditions subjects of critical IR theory—labour, women, postcolonial peoples, and others—provide evidence of the moral limitations of neoliberalism yet they did not receive substantial attention until mass protests occurred across the entire globe. Even in this context, however, the effects on bystanders are multiple. Protesters and critics can be dismissed as well-meaning but mistaken. It is not uncommon to hear that protesters have ‘concerns’, ‘worries’, or ‘fears’, all of which refer to irrational responses toward an issue. This contrasts with the rationality and expertise of policy-makers. But this is not only a neoliberal/critics dichotomy. There are strands within neoliberalism (the US is very different from France and Germany for instance) and there are potentially greater cleavages among protesters. Among the critics, there can be a conviction that one’s subject is knowledgeable and the other biased or that one is less distorted and the other more distorted, and thus a conviction that one actor holds more of the solution to the problem.

The reaction to a situation need not be one of epistemological and moral hierarchy, however. In the last chapter, we will look at some actors in the global justice movement’s attempt to avoid recreating conflictual social relations in their attempt to rethink global politics. Rather than seeking singlehandedly to redefine the rules of world politics on the basis of a single standpoint, many in the movement try to establish a

dialogue with the actors of world politics. It will be argued that 'international theory and practice are constituted through accounts of ethical possibility and are lived as a world of (al least implicit) ethical purpose'⁴⁸ enacted by some of the participants in the movement. Such ethical purpose is not limited to critical theorists or dissident actors. Inayatullah and Blaney locate it also in hegemonic actors insofar as they are putting forth their own version of the good life, though it may ultimately fail to answer the needs of numerous other people. This is compounded by the existence of many paradigms that define differently the problematique of exclusion and adhere to competing ethics to address it.

An alternative theory and practice of world politics requires self-restraint on the tendency to privilege one standpoint since it would perpetuate the pattern of exclusion. For Inayatullah and Blaney, then, 'the purpose of critical international theory is to uncover alternative possibilities hidden by our understandings of international relations, to show that these understandings contain within them the possibility of a critical stance toward theory and practice'.⁴⁹ Instead of considering each alternative of world order as a total system of ideas, they suggest considering the immediate problems that the alternative seeks to address. The standpoint from which a worldview develops entails a certain bias but does not discredit the entire perspective. In other words, its claims are not entirely false; it does produce knowledge, albeit partial knowledge. It is the kernel of truth and the ethical aspirations that should be emphasized to establish a dialogue across standpoints.

This moment of connection also partly invokes recognition of the self-contradictory character of two other stances—resignation in the face of the intolerable and radical rejection of all existing values, necessitating an entirely new form of life. The critic's connection to and distance from existing social life is defined, therefore, by his or her capacity to employ the 'symbolic resources' of existing traditions in order to radicalize those traditions.⁵⁰

There are therefore real differences between subjects of global politics, and perhaps also prima facie incompatibilities between their aspirations. Experiences vary and identities are constructed accordingly. Nevertheless, this initial divide is not doomed to cause unresolvable conflicts for ‘although boundaries and categories of some form are inevitable insofar as they are necessary to organize perceptions and to form judgements, boundaries may also be seen as points of connection’.⁵¹ In globalization, contacts take the form of economic relations, migration, world news, and globally significant, symbolic, widely seen occurrences (mass demonstrations, 9-11 attacks, famines), and even face-to-face contacts, as in immigration and travel. Though they are often looked at through the lens of dominant actors, they are increasingly visible and the message does trickle down to some extent to a global audience. The world is a meeting place for people where both conflict and understanding occur in full(er) view of the people. For Joan Tronto, these encounters with other typify ‘the ways in which the modern world is intertwined and the ways in which hundreds of prior public and private decision affect where we find ourselves and which strangers show up at our door’.⁵² Precisely because lives are intertwined, ethical practice should partly consist of the social actors concerning themselves with the nature of the relations that exist and what effects these relations have.

Root causes and transgression: the structural causes of suffering

According to Hoffman, empathy for others’ conditions can co-exist with the conscious decision not to provide help. With limited knowledge, the empathizer’s situation is one of uncertainty as to the appropriate action. Hoffman also points out that

even those who suffer may themselves be unsure of how to cope with their own situation and therefore cannot communicate clear wishes. The absence of definitive explanation and obvious appropriate course of action for both parties calls for self-reflexivity on the part of the empathizer. In such case, however, empathy can stimulate the attention of the empathizer to enquire into the cause of others' suffering and into the best way to address it. This, Hoffman argues, is a strategy that some empathizers adopt in order to 'provide space'—to use a favourite wording of critical theorists—for others to come to terms with their situation, express their interpretation of the situation that led to their distress and how they would like to see it addressed.

The self-reflexivity of empathizers can be taken further and into a consideration of their own relations with those who suffer. Social relations do not entail only relations between bystanders and sufferers. The ties that bind different actors are sometimes complex and difficult to ascertain. Think for instance of the act of consuming a product produced far away, and whose availability to the buyer requires numerous stages and intermediaries. Even harder to identify is the role of discourse in shaping the subjectivity and behaviour of social actors. Social relations sometimes entail more visible, long-term interactions between social agents sometimes characterized by attempts to inform, educate, civilize, or otherwise shape others' subjectivity according to a particular model deemed universally valid.

Classic texts contain numerous references to a superior knowledge that needs to be disseminated for the betterment of humanity. From the allegory of the cave to religious proselytizing and the White-man's burden, from the teleological conceptions of history to the *mission civilisatrice* and the universality of capitalism, many proponents of

progress have adopted practices that led to others' suffering. In the process of spreading a particular conception of social relations, they have caused suffering at the same time as they have increased the number and intensity of relations with others in a way that made autonomy less relevant a concept for making sense of social relations or for restructuring them in the short term. Both the suffering of others and the relations they have with us are more difficult to ignore. It has become more difficult to speak of innocent bystanders merely witnessing—as opposed to contributing to—others' suffering.

When they foster a measure of empathy, contacts help weaken the identities and certainties that have congealed as a result of specific experiences of world politics. Indeed, encounters between actors have often resulted in outright violence (i.e., conquest and genocide), attempts to assimilate others to one's own worldview (i.e., cosmopolitanism and development), or simple indifference such that a conscious effort is required to overcome the tensions at the heart of global relations. Understanding others as they see themselves and their own place in the world supposes understanding the way they see us, as well, and what they perceive our contribution to their difficulties to be. As with empathy, this effort to understand others demands of actors that they let encounters provoke a level of ambivalence with respect to their relations with others. The views of others must not be 'shut out' so that they can protect themselves. Actors are reminded that the world is complex and that their understanding of it limited.

At the heart of this moral vision of global politics is the conviction that the subjects who discover one another 'can find connections and overlaps between their own values and visions and the various "levels and parts" and dominant and recessive moments of the cultural practices of the other'.⁵³ At least part of what exists in others—

experiences, feelings, aspirations—can be found within ourselves. In the mutual discovery there are also mutual perceptions so that each subject is the others' object. Encounters with others are opportunities to examine ourselves as individuals and as a part of a collective agent (nation, class, sex, ethnicity, culture, etc.) that is in constant relation with other individuals and collective agents. An empathic attitude toward others focuses on others' experiences in their relation to us, and the willingness to be changed as a result. Other are not entirely and irremediably other to us. If the objective of re-theorizing and recasting world politics is a more caring relation to others 'More powerful and creative is the capacity to uncover the other within as a source of self-reflection and cultural transformation' for 'establishing dialogue in a world of inequalities and oppressions depends centrally on the capacity to draw connections between various traditions' and cultures' understanding of and responses to oppression'.⁵⁴

The awareness of the interconnectedness of actors is important from a normative point of view. Because lives are interconnected, most actors are not merely bystanders in the suffering of others. They may not necessarily be transgressors either, at least not to the same extent, but their existence makes sense only in relation to others. It is therefore incumbent on ethically inclined people to determine the nature of relations (oppressive, exclusionary, etc.) and their effects on other persons and groups. Martha Minow summarizes well what a caring attitude toward others might entail:

Notice the mutual dependence of people. *Investigate* the construction of difference in light of the norms and pattern of interpersonal and institutional relationships which makes some traits matter. *Question* the relationship between the observer and the observed in order to situate judgments in the perspective of the actual judge. *Seek out* and consider competing perspectives, especially those of people defined as the problem. *Locate* theory within context; *criticize* practices in the light of theoretical commitments; and challenge abstract theories in light of

their practical effects. *Connect* the parts and the whole of a situation; *see* how the frame of analysis influences what is assumed to be given.⁵⁵

Even when empathizers do not act immediately in response to someone's distress, they are not necessarily neutral toward their suffering nor necessarily unethical. They do care and assess the situation, and ponder what the best response might be. In considering the suffering of others, they are attuned to the circumstances in which they and others exist and ponder what to do in those circumstances. They not only care about others' suffering, but they are *careful* about their response to that suffering. While this process may prove inadequate in situations of crisis because a person or group is in acute distress (as in a genocide or a famine) requiring immediate action, it is advisable in situations where a lower level of urgency characterizes the distress of others such as persistent, though not life threatening (in the short term) living conditions. In this latter case, waiting, listening, and focusing attention means enquiring into the situation of others and leaving the sufferers time to 'find their voice' and convey to the empathizer what their needs are and how best they may be met. What is required of the empathizer is not necessarily action; the person empathized with may simply wish for moral support with no 'helping hand' or other direct involvement. In the intervening time, care is manifested in the form of this attempt to understand 'how human suffering and exclusion are shaped by a series of collective social, political, and economic decisions and social and economic relations'⁵⁶ made by individuals or caused by policies. As a learning process caring is a conscious effort on the part of an empathizer to identify the practices that can result in suffering.

When what Minow advocates is applied to the study of politics, concepts like peace, progress, justice, human rights, opportunity, development, and exclusion are shown to correspond to different images and situations for those who utter them, and they

conjure up distinct images and situations for those who hear them. The 'worlds of words'⁵⁷ in which subjects of world politics live are different, notwithstanding the sharing of a vernacular. For J. Ann Tickner, 'security' typifies the misunderstanding associated with the use of language. While it often means the security of the state as a set of institutions, its achievement comes with much insecurity for its citizens and foreigners. Security defined in non-statist terms, that is, from other standpoints, is 'multidimensional and multilevel', Tickner writes, so that it refers to 'the diminution of all forms of violence, including physical, structural, and ecological'.⁵⁸ The realist's conception of providing security for others is meaningless if forms of violence other than war affect them just as much. Likewise, development is understood differently on the basis of the priorities of those who utter the word. Development is as much about culture as it is about science, and the meaning of the verb 'to develop' is perhaps better rendered by its romance languages reflexive form as 'to develop oneself'.⁵⁹

An ethical practice in the context of global politics is one that seeks to prevent or alleviate the suffering when it occurs by addressing its structural causes and changing the behaviour of those actors who contribute to the preservation of that structure precisely so that others, who are currently excluded or oppressed, may develop themselves and determine their life path. The picture that emerges from the ascertainment of the lives of people in neoliberal globalization is that of a political failure. Rather than ready-made solutions derived from theories based on one given standpoint, what is required is constant attention to actually existing social relations and their effects on people and the realization that others are not only different from us, but also from one another.

Harmony is not automatic, whether along liberal (the harmony of interests) or critical lines (Eurocentrism or gender or neoliberalism is *the* root cause of oppression). It is incumbent on normative theorists and ethically committed actors to consider what kind of ethical practice is best able to ensure harmony among the numerous and very different subjects of world politics. Scepticism toward grand narratives appears to be in order since no one possesses the one true solution to suffering, which is admittedly a multidimensional, changing, and complex phenomenon. It is only by listening to those we purport to help that we may know how to do so. Their knowledge and understanding of the situation and their impact on ours are our guide to a genuinely ethical practice focused on their needs.

Moral thinking about exclusion in global politics precludes the current model that is based on a system sovereign nation-states operating within a cosmopolitan philosophical and legal framework and a capitalist global economy. It ought also to preclude solutions that privilege other grand theories of world politics or a priori known path toward human emancipation. One such alternative is communism, which still has adherents in the global justice movement and which is the source of some tension within it. The appropriate response is instead phenomenological because it starts from the experiences of subjects of world politics whose suffering prompted the pondering in the first place. The subjects of exclusion are, crucially, also moral subjects; it is their conditions and their needs that prompted the enquiry into exclusion. These conditions exist in concrete places where subjects experience globalization.

From individual to collective agents

Anyone who tries to make the case that the morality of interpersonal relations is relevant to politics is faced with the difficulty of showing how interpersonal relations are akin to broader social relations. Most theorists tend to recognize the existence of feelings or empathy and care for others in everyday life but they also consider them inappropriate or unworkable on a larger scale, and in particular for entire groups. However, a more thoughtful definition of empathy and care and how they manifests themselves reveals that they can be modes of relating to others even in global politics. When empathy and care for particular individuals prompt an examination of structural determinants of individuals' suffering, they also raise the question of collective action and collective actors.

Shared conditions and the development of empathy

One of the characteristics of the psychological study of empathy is the focus on one-on-one or face-to-face relations. As this thesis has argued in the first chapter, however, collective actors emerge from conditions in which individuals find themselves. Gramscians, feminists, and postcolonialists devote much attention to the common experiences shared by the individuals that make up collectives like working classes, women, of postcolonial peoples that span the globe. For those born into existing social institutions or otherwise subjected to practices over long periods of time, these collective subjects acquire a reality and meaningfulness that is difficult to overlook without denying what they know to be a feature of their life and their place in the social order.

Yet, as chapter two has shown, two main alternatives to the exclusionary order have relied on opposite conceptions of the individual subject to provide a basis for normative thinking. I have argued that Linklater has sought to entrench the notion of an autonomous rational subject with the result that other subjective standpoints have not been given sufficient attention. I have also contended that a self-focused politics of difference has approached individual subjectivity from its other end, assuming at the same time as promoting a subject who can never truly understand others and should resist others' attempt to understand it.

The relational character of social life makes it difficult to sort out individual subjects from collective ones that emerge as part of social practices. The immediate context influences the way people define themselves as individuals so that who they are is not given once and for all. However, given persons may be faced with certain conditions frequently enough that they are shaped by them and define themselves by this experience. Hoffman argues that empathy occurs more easily among individuals who are similar to one another in some respects. Over and above the biological sameness of all human beings, the intensity of the social bonds provide what he calls a structural similarity that accentuates empathy: 'the degree of similarity, hence the tendency to empathize with one another should be greater between people of the same culture who live under similar conditions, and especially between those who interact frequently, than between people from different cultures or who rarely interact'.⁶⁰

This helps explain why most critical theories have been built on a limited number of standpoints. The intense relations between individuals in those standpoints narrow the distance between them. This is not to say that individuals naturally share a community of

mind and a political identity because they share objective conditions; it only means that the ground they occupy is potentially more fertile to the development of a collective subjectivity if efforts are made to produce collective representations of the individuals' conditions. Marx' urging workers to unite,⁶¹ Christine Sylvester's contention that the gender experiences of all women are a foundation for empathy, or Fanon's view of the Manichean world view of colonized peoples show the importance of shared conditions in understanding each other as individuals and constructing a collective identity.

The structural similarities of which Hoffman writes perhaps find their fullest expression in the subject conceived as a person naturally endowed with physical and intellectual capacities that allow them to understand the world. Those similarities, however, are different from those that emerge from lived experience, that is, from a social standpoint. In the latter case, empathy occurs against a common material (or experiential) background whose conceptual representation is more readily grasped by the individuals who share it. The conjunction of intellectual capacities (the capacity to make sense of the world) and material conditions (the lived experiences) allows the individuals to empathize despite their individual differences. In political practice such as social movements or activism, mutual understanding and collective action often follows 'standpoint lines'; what looks like like-minded individuals are often persons who share a set of experiences that lead to certain common attitudes vis-à-vis an issue or another group.

According to Hoffman, the awareness of different histories happens at the same time as the development of self-other distinctions. Writes Hoffman:

Owing to the emerging conception of self and others as continuous persons, as separate histories and identities, children become aware that others feel joy, anger,

sadness, fear, and low esteem not only in the immediate situation but also in the context of a larger pattern of life experience. Consequently, ... they can also respond with empathic distress to what they imagine to be the other's chronically sad or unpleasant life condition.⁶²

Not only are empathizers aware of their standpoint and history, they are also aware of the standpoint and history of others. These transcend the particular instance of their interaction. For Hoffman, it is possible that empathy occurs because of a punctual event involving the two agents, or it can occur with respect to the general condition the empathizer knows the other to be in.⁶³

When apprehending actors' behaviour, this is an element that cannot be ignored entirely, says Hoffman. Specific persons in specific circumstances have a strong initial 'pull' in eliciting empathy, but the awareness of others' history and experiences serves as a lens to interpret the social dynamics in which actors are involved. There occurs a conceptualization of others in their life circumstances. Their history and experience—their standpoint—become relevant to understanding their subjectivity: 'One responds partly to one's mental image of the other rather than to the stimulus immediately presented by the other. It may also follow developmentally that once a person engages in such distancing he may no longer respond only to another's immediate stimulus value; he may always assume, or wonder about, the other's life beyond the situation'.⁶⁴

Yet it is not only individuals who have histories; it is also groups. At this stage Hoffman speculates on the development of representations of other collective actors that can be conducive to empathy. 'It seems likely', he writes, 'that with further cognitive development, especially the ability to form social concepts and classify people into groups, children will eventually be able to comprehend the plight not only of an

individual but also of an entire class of people such as those oppressed, social outcast, victims of war, or mentally retarded'.⁶⁵ In other words, the individual with whom one empathizes at a given point in time may be but one exemplar of a broader social problem that affects an entire category of people.

As we have seen earlier, there are political strategies associated with critical theory. Essentialism is one such strategy that explicitly eschews bridge-building across standpoints out of conviction that understanding is elusive or that one group deserves undivided attention because of the import of its plight. This only undermines the capacity to empathize in favour of a more power-political approach to social relations. There is empathy among some people but others remain outside the moral community, or they form communities of their own whose concerns and plight are of little interest because empathy does not develop.

Multiple empathy claimants and the care-justice debate

Hoffman remarks that political ideologies can follow from this capacity to empathize beyond individuals' situation. This sometimes entails agreement to a reordering of society that results in higher costs to the empathizer for the purpose of addressing the cause of others' suffering.⁶⁶ As a psychologist who studies empathy, Hoffman does pursue this point any further. Nevertheless, the development of a comprehensive understanding of the social world and its inhabitants requires a capacity to conceptualize the relationships that individuals and groups entertain with one another. In this particular instance, what is of interest is the cause of group suffering.

Although it is not surprising that critical theories arise from given standpoints, it does not follow that those not living in the very same circumstances cannot understand the perspective of others. If such were the case, no community could take shape because there would remain unbridgeable gaps between subjective experiences. Even if communities emerged, the collective standpoints would remain separate identities with clearly defined boundaries. The research on empathy shows that it is possible to identify with others beyond the immediate situation, beyond the sole individual, and beyond the one group.

This sometimes results in the recognition of very different, separate subjects of empathy. A new dilemma then poses itself for the empathizer. Which group's suffering ought to be privileged in the transformation of the social order? The ambivalence of the empathizer between different subjects is a manifestation of this dilemma. Hoffman notes that it is common for empathizers to experience shifts in those who are the focus of empathy. Victims may have a history of relating to their victimizers so that it is difficult to sort out the actor at the source of the problem. The victimizer may have once been the victim (or *a* victim).⁶⁷ The dilemma for the empathizer is to define the nature of the practices that occur: Who is their source? Who committed the initial transgression? Is it a case of vengeance? Is it a case of legitimate resistance to a continuous affront (e.g., oppression or exclusion)? Is it sheer viciousness? Or is it mere disregard for the consequences of one actor's behaviour on others? Moral judgment and responses vary according to the answers given.

Given that social life entails relations between many individuals and groups, we might legitimately expect to encounter many other actors whose condition elicits

empathic feelings. What is more important is that the condition encountered by all these victims may have different explanations. By this I mean that no single set of practices explains the relative state of exclusion in which individuals and groups find themselves. Consequently, no single remedy will be suitable to alleviate their suffering. The recognition of the diversity of standpoints and lived experiences is only one step, however. From an empathizer's perspective it presents a further moral dilemma that takes the form of multiple moral claimants. The claimants' suffering cannot be addressed in the same way, at the same time, or to the same extent.

In cases of multiple moral claimants, social agents feel empathy for a variety of other actors and they are placed before a dilemma of priorities. From the point of view of the empathizer, all sufferers in principle deserve to be helped. Yet, the situation appears to call for a resolution that favours one group over others. As the care-justice debate in moral development and moral philosophy shows, there exists a bias in favour of justice over care. Ethical principles that favour equality and sameness of treatment are embedded in legislations, policies, and institutions that consistently fail to address the problems encountered by some actors.

Some people who suffer are even 'invisible' in the dominant paradigm. Consequently, some multiple claimants situations are not perceived as moral dilemmas; there seems to be only one claimant.⁶⁸ This means that an empathizer may be oblivious to other claimants who also have stakes in a moral issue. The empathy felt for one actor may displace other claimants' own legitimate concerns and needs. Strong empathetic feelings for one actor gives an impression of moral clarity with respect to who needs help. Immediate or future consequences of a course of action on others are pushed out of

the mental or moral picture: they are invisible or they are not considered important enough to warrant immediate attention, too.

The ability to empathize with a variety of others and beyond the immediate situation means that the empathizer does not necessarily achieve moral clarity. The empathizers project themselves in the position of all those who may be affected by a practice; they are aware that others may be harmed by social practices or actions meant to alleviate some other group's suffering (or the empathizers' own).⁶⁹ Yet, Hoffman contends that there is nonetheless a tendency in such cases to privilege one's own primary group, that is to say people with whom the empathizer shares an identity prior to the event that causes empathy with other groups.⁷⁰ Given the importance of proximity and common history in the development of empathic feelings, it is little wonder that many people can easily be taught to see their 'moral geography' as one made up of concentric circles where those closest are privileged over those farther away.⁷¹

This is a critique familiar to the proponents of care ethics as well. Like theorists of empathy, care ethics theorists take seriously the role of interpersonal relations as a ground for the development of ethics. Morality, in their view, is not embodied in abstract rules; rather it exists in the bonds that social agents weave between themselves in their social interactions. Care's critics have countered that social relations conceived in terms of care only account for and may only be appropriate to relations in the private sphere, where family and friends are the people to whom one relates. Seen from the perspective of liberal-inspired individual rights and justice, the ethics associated with caring is dismissed as parochialism rather than true morality because it falls short of universal principles.

The rights and justice-based critique of care and empathy stands in contrast to the way care ethics theorists and Hoffman see the relation between them. Writes Hoffman: ‘Psychologists have long studied justice and caring: Justice is central to Kohlberg’s cognitive moral theory; caring is central to people like me who study moral affect and motivation’.⁷² For him empathy corresponds to the way care is experienced emotionally by a social agent. Care manifests itself in social relations between actors, but it has a psychological expression in the feeling of empathy and the motivation to be responsive to others suffering as part of a caring relationship. Care and justice are facets of a question rather than separate questions. Empathy is congruent with both care and justice. For Hoffman, empathy contributes to the development of moral principles in that it prompts questions about others’ welfare.

Justice, defined as equality of rights that can be adjudicated impartially, is an attractive proposition and response to suffering. Given the kind of social order liberalism emerged to challenge—the privilege of birth and socio-political hierarchies—it is easy to understand the appeal of absolute rules of impartiality that characterize liberal rights discourse. It does simplify the moral dilemmas by commanding an intervention or a form of redress for those who have been treated unfairly.

But as I have argued in the previous chapter with reference to Andrew Linklater’s cosmopolitanism, liberalism assumes a generalized subject that is already given. In that optic, there is little perceived need to engage with concrete subjects occupying concrete standpoints in time and space since their status is presumed settled and their rights and needs known. By contrast, a more attentive disposition toward others during social encounters with others make social actors more sensitive to particular needs or

dispositions that the liberal conception of the subject papers over. Attention to subjects in their concrete circumstances of existence is important for the purpose of meeting their needs or expectations as they emerge from these circumstances, and as they express them.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have argued that empathy is a reaction particularly appropriate to the identification and assessment of others' suffering. I have also argued that empathy proceeds from direct, face-to-face, contact with others as well as from the conceptualization of others as separate persons or groups faced with their own circumstances. I have argued that although globalization entails relations over long distances, the intensity of the contacts between the actors of global politics creates conditions in which empathy can emerge. The obstacles to empathetic and caring relations are therefore not so much practical as they are attitudinal. Ethical thinking and ethical practice require a voluntaristic approach to caring about others and to understanding them. Empathy recognizes the existence of different identities—the existence of a self and of others—but it also takes for granted the relational aspect of these identities.

For understanding to take place, then, complete and permanent identity between self and other is not required. Starting from the premise that social theories and social ethics correspond to social experiences of human subjects, and in particular social problems, I have considered social exclusion as a consequence of a way of organizing

social relations rather than as a deliberate will to power directed at the victims of exclusion or as a deliberate attempt to use them as objects in the pursuit of subjective goals. I have then introduced empathy as a particular ethical response to the problem of exclusion in globalization. This chapter seeks to make exclusion and those who live it visible by showing how particular ways of structuring social relations result in suffering.

The remainder of this thesis aims to bring into focus key subjects of exclusion in what is summarily described as 'globalization'. Chapter four will argue that naturalistic and teleological interpretations of social life or historical development that underlie dominant thinking about global order have tended to encourage a bystander attitude with respect to the occurrence of exclusionary practices by legitimating their subordination or dismissing it as a part of the natural order. It further argues that critical theories of IR account particularly well for the varieties of exclusion that characterize the global order taking shape. I focus on economic development and its purported goal to solve the problem of scarcity. Thus, I will look at global economic relations in the post-Cold War period as a particular way of bringing subjects of world politics into a coherent system that does not respond to the aspirations of a large number of them. This next chapter, then, will serve to show how the global relations of capitalism are responsible for the suffering of numbers of people by denying them agency in the construction of the global order.

In what follows I see evidence of the discontent with the globalizing thrust of the last decade. The mass demonstrations that have caught the attention of media, policy-makers, and scholars can no longer be simply dismissed.⁷³ The demonstrations against neoliberal globalization and their transformation into a search for an alternative to

neoliberalism will be the object of chapter five, where I will contend that the encounters of actors of global politics at demonstrations have promoted awareness of the extent and the forms of exclusion that exist in neoliberal globalization. It is the encounters of globalization's discontents that have allowed feelings of empathy to emerge and underlie ethical practices like the World Social Forum.

Endnotes

¹ Christine Sylvester, *Feminist Theory and International Relations in a Postmodern Era* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 166.

² Nancy Eisenberg and Janet Strayer, 'Critical Issues in the Study of Empathy', in Nancy Eisenberg and Janet Strayer, eds., *Empathy and Its Development* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 3.

³ Eisenberg and Strayer, 'Critical Issues in the Study of Empathy', *ibid.*

⁴ Edward Bradford Titchener, *Lectures on the Experimental Psychology of the Thought-Processes* (New York: Macmillan, 1909), 21.

⁵ Lauren Wispé, 'History of the Concept of Empathy', in Eisenberg and Strayer, eds., *Empathy and Its Development*, 18.

⁶ Edward Bradford Titchener, *A Beginner's Psychology* (New York: Macmillan, 1915), 198.

⁷ Eisenberg and Strayer, 'Critical Issues in the Study of Empathy', 3-4.

⁸ This last statement will be clarified in the next section when I turn to the development of empathy in social life.

⁹ Eisenberg and Strayer, 'History of the Concept of Empathy', 5.

¹⁰ Martin L. Hoffman, *Empathy and Moral Development: Implications for Caring and Justice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 30.

¹¹ Robert L. Katz, *Empathy: Its Nature and Uses* (New York: The Free Press, 1963), 87.

¹² Titchener, *Lectures on the Experimental Psychology of the Thought-Processes*, 7.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 9.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 14.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 27.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 28.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 34.

¹⁸ Hoffman, *Empathy and Moral Development*, 3.

¹⁹ Robinson, *Globalizing Care: Ethics, Feminist Theory, and International Relations* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1999), 96.

²⁰ Robert W. Cox, 'Multilateralism and World Order', in Robert W. Cox with Timothy J. Sinclair, *Approaches to World Order* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 494-495.

²¹ Cox, 'Multilateralism and World Order', 514.

²² Naeem Inayatullah and David L. Blaney, *International Relations and the Problem of Difference* (New York and London: Routledge, 2004), ix.

²³ R. A. Thompson, 'Empathy and Emotional Understanding: The Early Development of Empathy' in Eisenberg and Strayer, *Empathy and Its Development*, 123.

²⁴ C. Daniel Batson, Jim Fultz and Patricia A. Schoenrade, 'Adults' Emotional Reactions to the Distress of Other', in Eisenberg and Strayer, *Empathy and Its Development*, 165-166.

²⁵ Batson et al., 'Adults' Emotional Reactions to the Distress of Other', 166. In keeping with what their subjects report, Batson *et al.* deliberately omit any distinction between empathy and sympathy.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 172.

- ²⁷ Ibid., 179.
- ²⁸ Hoffman, *Empathy and Moral Development*, 59-60.
- ²⁹ Ibid., 198.
- ³⁰ Howard LaFranchi, 'Shape of UN resolution emerging', *Christian Science Monitor*, 25 September 2003, 1; James T. Morris, 'Aid for a World in Crisis', *The Washington Post*, 25 December 2002, A29; Kiyotaka Shibasaki, 'International panel discusses future of development aid', *The Daily Yomiuri*, 18 July 1997, 7; Jusuf Wanandi, 'Japan's new role in Asia-Pacific', *The Jakarta Post*, 29 August 1997, 4; Canute James, 'Caribbean braced for big cut in aid from donors', *Financial Times*, 17 October 1995, 5; Severine M. Rugumamu/United Nations Development Program, 'EU-ACP Partnership: An Appraisal', <http://tcdc.undp.org/CoopSouth/1999_dec/03%20EU-ACP%20Partnership%20artic.pdf>; C. Lansberg, 'Lomé (2): Mistaken Pilgrimage', *West Africa*, no. 4079 (18 December 1995); Jock R. Anderson, 'Selected Policy Issues in International Agricultural Research: On Striving for International Public Goods in an Era of Donor Fatigue', *World Development* 26, no. 6 (1998).
- ³¹ There are utilitarian implications of empathy-motivated help. Empathizers experience a reduction in their distress when they provide help, though that benefit is not what prompts them to act in the first place.
- ³² René Descartes, *Discours de la Méthode* (Paris : J. Vrin, 1964), 80.
- ³³ Anthony Giddens, 'Postivism and Its Critics', in Tom Bottomore and Robert A. Nisbet, eds., *A History of Sociological Analysis* (London: Heinemann, 1979), 238-239.
- ³⁴ Edward Conze, ed., *Buddhist Scriptures* (London: Penguin, 1959).
- ³⁵ Thomas Robert Malthus, *Essay on the Principle of Populations* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1959).
- ³⁶ Joseph A. Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy* (New York: Harper & Row, 1950), Part II, Ch. VII. This needs to be qualified by Schumpeter's ultimate conclusion that socialism is inevitable given the limits of capitalism. Creative destruction is a progressive force only so much; its consequences will lead to the adoption of socialism in order to overcome the social upheaval caused by it.
- ³⁷ Hoffman, *Empathy and Moral Development*, 94.
- ³⁸ Ibid., 107.
- ³⁹ Ibid., 110.
- ⁴⁰ See Patricia Molloy, 'Face to Face with the Dead Man: Ethical Responsibility, State-Sanctioned Killing, and Empathetic Impossibility', in David Campbell and Michael J. Shapiro, eds., *Moral Spaces: Rethinking Ethics and World Politics* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 1999).
- ⁴¹ Virginia Held, *Feminist Morality: Transforming Culture, Society, and Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 72-73.
- ⁴² Ibid., 77.
- ⁴³ Ibid., 76.
- ⁴⁴ Hoffman, *Empathy and Moral Development*, 78-79.
- ⁴⁵ Tzvetan Todorov, *La conquête de l'Amérique: la question de l'autre* (Paris : Seuil, 1991).
- ⁴⁶ Susan George and Fabrizio Sabelli, *Faith and Credit: The World Banks Secular Empire* (London: Penguin, 1994).
- ⁴⁷ It was a moral issue only insofar as it undermined national stability.
- ⁴⁸ Inayatullah and Blaney, *International Relations and the Problem of Difference*, 4.
- ⁴⁹ Ibid.
- ⁵⁰ Ibid., 5.
- ⁵¹ Robinson, *Globalizing Care*, 101.
- ⁵² Joan C. Tronto, 'Women and Caring: What Can Feminists Learn About Morality from Caring?' in Virginia Held, ed., *Justice and Care: Essential Readings in Feminist Ethics* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1995), 111.
- ⁵³ Inayatullah and Blaney, *International Relations and the Problem of Difference*, 13
- ⁵⁴ Ibid., 14.
- ⁵⁵ Martha Minow, *Making All the Difference: Inclusion, Exclusion, and American Law* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1990), 213.
- ⁵⁶ Robinson, *Globalizing Care*, 32.
- ⁵⁷ See J. Ann Tickner, 'You Just Don't Understand: Troubled Engagements Between Feminists and IR Theorists', *International Studies Quarterly* 41, no. 4 (December 1997), 612.
- ⁵⁸ Ibid., 624.

- ⁵⁹ I am referring to the French, Italian, and Spanish verbs ‘se développer’, ‘svilupparsi’, and ‘desarrollarse’.
- ⁶⁰ Hoffman, *Empathy and Moral Development*, 62.
- ⁶¹ Karl Marx, *Manifesto of the Communist Party* (Peking : Foreign Languages Press, 1973).
- ⁶² Hoffman, *Empathy and Moral Development*, 80.
- ⁶³ *Ibid.*, 81.
- ⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 83.
- ⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 85.
- ⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 86.
- ⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 96-97.
- ⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 264.
- ⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 265.
- ⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 266.
- ⁷¹ This is of course not the case only with empathy as liberal communitarians make this point, too, though they do not examine empathy’s role in the development of communitarian ethics.
- ⁷² Hoffman, *Empathy and Moral Development*, 224.
- ⁷³ Joseph E. Stiglitz, *Globalization and Its Discontents* (New York and London: W.W. Norton, 2002), 248.

CHAPTER IV

It may appear paradoxical that the inclusion of a greater proportion of the world's population into a single economic framework that is supposed to lead to peace and prosperity results in greater violence and exclusion. Yet, the construction of the current world order in the guise of neoliberal globalization provides significant evidence of this paradox. It is therefore necessary to examine what is meant by exclusion in the context of neoliberal globalization, and the forms it takes. In its capitalist form, globalization is touted as the solution to some of humanity's longest-standing problems. One problem is the search for a peaceful order that allows individuals to operate free of threats to their physical existence. All political philosophies are fundamentally an attempt to create harmonious social relations by setting forth principles to guide relations between individuals or between individuals and the group they belong to. The elimination or mitigation of violence between individuals has its corollary in the elimination or mitigation of violence between political communities. Another key problem to be solved by capitalism is scarcity, such that no one is deprived of the necessities of life and well-being. In other words, global capitalism is supposed to meet the human need for peace and security as well as improve the material condition of humankind by guaranteeing everyone against scarcity.

The neoliberal moment, and its specific version of globalization, was touted as a

significant step toward these goals. Yet, the mass demonstrations of the last few years against the very institutions that embody neoliberal globalization suggest that there is disagreement regarding the beneficial effects of capitalist globalization. They point to the fact that capitalist globalization is driven by actors whose social priorities and vision of global order diverge from that of a wide range of other actors. The criticisms they voice are not altogether new, however. In some cases, notably in the case of labour, the criticism of the social effects of capitalism dates back to the nineteenth century. In most cases, however, the criticisms have gone hand in hand with the development of what I have called critical theory in chapter one. The now self-consciously global, multidimensional critique of capitalism is the product of the convergence of several currents of thought grounded in specific, subjective, experiences of capitalism.

Chief among these experiences is exclusion. Exclusion as it is used here comprises two aspects. One aspect concerns the exclusion of some people from the material benefits of capitalism. It would be difficult to argue that industrialization spurred by capitalism has produced no benefits for anyone. Indeed, some people have had access to some goods and services that may not otherwise have existed. That being said, by taking seriously the critics of capitalist globalization, it is possible to identify significant populations who do not enjoy the fruits of industrialization. It is also possible to point to entire populations that have been hurt by it.

The second aspect of exclusion regards the participation of social actors in decision-making processes that determine the global order in which they live. There is exclusion when social actors live according to rules they had no part in determining. Popular protests against the decision-making processes that lead to the neoliberal global

order are a manifestation of social actors' desire to contribute to the shaping of an order that affects them. In the debate over the model of globalization, exclusion takes the form of an inability to make relatively autonomous decisions with respect to one's own life because of constraints that originate in the decisions and behaviour of others. It also takes the form of the oversight or dismissal of ideas and perspectives that differ from those of neoliberal globalization's proponents.

To understand why protests have occurred, it is necessary to look at the effects of neoliberalism on the actors whom protesters claim to represent. This chapter therefore considers the situation faced by the subjects of world politics introduced in Chapter I. We will see that neoliberalism affects a wide range of social groups that make up a majority of the societies subjected to it. We will also see that accounts of neoliberal globalization that focus on one actor, one standpoint, and one set of experiences would fail to address the various facets of exclusion. To look at exclusion from different perspectives is fundamental to understanding it and to rethinking social relations in a less exclusionary way. What will emerge from this look is that what one group experiences as exclusion is not always recognized by others as such, and vice versa. The social cleavages that exist along class, gender, and cultural lines mean that some groups may fail to appreciate how much other groups, too, are suffering from this system. It is through their respective experiences of exclusion that the groups connect with one another even if these connections are not readily acknowledged.

There are three main parts to what follows. Part one considers the topic of poverty. I argue that poverty is an appropriate lens through which to study exclusion in the global political economy and that the current economic system contributes

significantly to it. Part two looks at the neoliberal paradigm that has informed policy-making for the past two decades. I show that this movement that started in industrial states and in international financial institutions now informs most public policy decisions. Part three uses North America and NAFTA as a laboratory of neoliberalism to show how extensive the effects of this economic model have been. To that end, it examines neoliberalism from the standpoint of class, gender, and culture.

Markets, Poverty, and Exclusion

The most commonly used term to denote exclusion in the global political economy is 'poverty'. For state and international financial institutions' officials its definition is a material one and it is their professed objective to eliminate it.¹ It refers to the measurable income available to people for at least the necessities of life. The approach to eliminating poverty typically privileged by policy-makers is referred to as 'industrialization', 'modernization', or 'development', all of which presuppose a series of policies that any society must adopt in order to develop.² Success in this endeavour is measured quantitatively. By these standards, neoliberalism is a successful model. If we evaluate it by other, qualitative standards, however, the picture is different and the number of people who suffer from its implementation.

Poverty as exclusion

While quantitative poverty can be assessed in a relatively straightforward manner, qualitative poverty is more contentious because of the subjective evaluation it entails.

When speaking in terms of exclusion, the qualitative definition of poverty accounts better for a person's or group's subjective experience of that social condition. The theories of world politics I have discussed in chapter one take as their subject the actors of world politics who experience exclusion as lack of control over their lives.³ The United Nations Development Program's 1997 *Human Development Report* defined poverty as the situation where 'opportunities and choices most basic to human development are denied' to social agents.⁴ The word 'human' is the operative term in this definition. Human development to end poverty supposes more than measurable economic growth or consumption. Mahbub ul-Haq, who is credited with having coined the concept, defines the purpose of human development in the following terms:

The basic purpose of development is to enlarge people's choices. In principle, these choices can be infinite and can change over time. People often value achievements that do not show up at all, or not immediately, in income or growth figures: greater access to knowledge, better nutrition and health services, more secure livelihoods, security against crime and physical violence, satisfying leisure hours, political and cultural freedoms and sense of participation in community activities. The objective of development is to create an enabling environment for people to enjoy long, healthy and creative lives.⁵

The United Nations Development Program's 2005 *Human Development Report* frames the matter in following terms:

Human development is about freedom. It is about building human capabilities—the range of things that people can do, and what they can be. Individual freedoms and rights matter a great deal, but people are restricted in what they can do with that freedom if they are poor, ill, illiterate, discriminated against, threatened by violent conflict or denied a political voice.⁶

The capacity of social agents to meet their needs and exercise their rights in a neoliberal economy is in doubt. Those who produce goods are often unable to do more than meet their basic needs and those of their dependents. Others do not even meet them. In a capitalist system, wealth must be available in excess of the minimum requirements if

others aims are to be pursued. The necessity to earn a wage, and living from paycheque to paycheque restricts the options available and the activities to which people can devote their time, including political organizing and participation in decision-making. The emphasis on participation in decision-making is important because in the context of the global economy it is possible to argue that almost all people are included in the general sense of the term without being included as recognized actors worthy of consideration.⁷

It is therefore important to be specific about what is meant by exclusion and who the excluded are. For Iris Young, 'The concepts of exclusion and inclusion lose meaning if they are used to label all problems of social conflict and injustice. Where the social problems are racism, cultural intolerance, economic exploitation, or a refusal to help needy people, they should be so named'.⁸ Exclusion is a persistent state of disadvantage for a group of people. To name specific forms of exclusion and those affected by it has the merit of highlighting the circumstances of different groups. Policy-makers have not typically considered labour, women, and non-Western peoples agents in the shaping of globalization. While all three groups are included in the global order, they are not included in the decision-making processes that construct the global order.

As I endeavour to show below, the definition of development used by the UNDP does not correspond to the experiences of many actors in the latest thrust of liberalization. Post-World War II liberalization had sought commercial openness but restrained the market. By contrast the neoliberal moment saw more and more aspects of social life encroached upon by economic forces. In many cases, neoliberal globalization is lived as a deterioration of the conditions of existence by social actors who react to it through protests or the search for alternatives.

The banality of suffering

The construction of an investor-friendly global order comes with considerable suffering. Yet, that suffering frequently remains hidden. There is often a real distance between perpetrator and victim, such that an actor may contribute to the pain of others without having an awareness of that contribution. Although globalization can be defined as a consciousness that borders and distance are becoming less and less relevant to social relations, such consciousness is imperfect. A decision to consume the cheapest product or to invest in a stock or pension fund that promises high returns can be made out of genuine ignorance of the implications of that decision. The buyer's or the investor's focus on the enjoyment of the purchase can obscure the social dimension of the act. The absence of knowledge is an obstacle to ethical behaviour vis-à-vis others who operate in the global economy.

From a human rights perspective, Thomas Pogge makes a similar argument regarding poverty in world politics. Extreme poverty has all the hallmarks of human rights violations because it is the result of human actions, not of fortuitous circumstances. For Pogge the reason poverty persists is the lack of morally compelling reasons to eradicate it. The technical means are available to eliminate poverty, and the norms and values that are accepted in western societies would provide the philosophical and moral foundation for acting to that end.⁹ Despite this, little is being done. For him, invisibility has a role in this ignorance or unwillingness. We are aware to some extent that there is poverty and suffering but it is not in full view of everyone on a daily basis. We live in isolation from extreme poverty, he writes; most people we know are not living in these

circumstances and so we have less daily contact with them.¹⁰

Awareness is only part of the obstacle, however. Insofar as the suffering of others is witnessed and acknowledged it may be difficult to pinpoint its cause. Suffering is not solved simply because one knows that suffering exists, but the awareness of its existence can spur enquiries into its causes and possible remedies. Equally important to an ethical practice of global politics is the identification of the relations between distant actors who influence one another's lives. Neoliberal economic theory represents agency in terms of abstract buyer-seller relations motivated by economic gain. Agents are abstracted from their concrete life circumstances as the market depersonalizes social relations. The multiple subjective positions (as buyer, parent, child, neighbour, friend, worker, woman, man, etc.) and the multiple loyalties are not easily reconciled by rational economic behaviour.

A more challenging problem to overcome is the essentializing of those who live with the consequences of other people's acts. In it, the reality of unfulfilling, dangerous, or devalued life is taken to be a result of the essence of the persons or groups who face these circumstances. A person finds himself or herself in a given situation because of natural abilities rather than because of the unfairness of the social order. This form of distancing is predicated on distinctions between kinds of people determined by nature or by individual character flaws.¹¹ Virtuous behaviour on the part of social actors consists in performing the duty to which nature predisposes them. Just treatment is a variable ethical principle whose application depends on the person or group to which the treatment is applied. Differential treatment, remuneration, respect, concern for suffering are not seen as inconsistent with the justice, freedom, and equality principles of political liberalism.

On the contrary, the presumed existence of a just, free, and level playing field leads to the conclusion that actors find themselves in their natural stations.

According to Pogge, those faced with suffering have ways of reconciling their relative indifference with adherence to an ethical code to justify their comfort and someone else's poverty: 'Unconsciously, at least, people tend to interpret their moral values in their favor and then to select, represent, and connect the facts so as to facilitate the desired concrete judgements'.¹² People rationalize situations in a way that is both consistent with the moral values they espouse and their circumstances. This allows some to argue that the invisible hand of the market leads to positive outcomes even though it actually gives the strong what they want. Their domination is consistent with the moral principles they profess to hold. There is no need to consider the morality of neoliberalism because it is already consistent with the public good.

Pogge says there are 'superficial reasons' why people overlook poverty as a moral dilemma. There are forms of distancing vis-à-vis poverty as a moral issue and toward those who live it. Most people ignore the structural causes of poverty and their possible role in perpetuating the structure; they look for local or individual explanations of poverty rather than at the more powerful actors who created the economic system.¹³ There is a reluctance 'to see ourselves as causally connected to severe poverty by the general cognitive tendency to overlook the causal significance of stable background factors in a diverse and changing situation'.¹⁴

For Serge Latouche, neoliberalism is an immoral system, but its immorality is hidden by the organization of social relations and the creation of a social structure that absolves social actors from responsibility for the suffering caused by their actions. The

very statutes that create corporations as principal economic actors make ethical behaviour 'chimerical'. States officials create the legal space for private actors to act in immoral ways. The latter are by law compelled to pursue their investors' interests—though they often fail to do this, too, as recent scandals have shown—above other considerations.¹⁵ Whatever the personal morality of their executives, the institution for which they are responsible impels certain practices necessary to the professional survival of the executive and to the fulfilment of the primary mission of the corporation, namely efficient operations that result in satisfactory profit for the investors. Failure to do so, for example by showing concern for the potential consequences of a corporate policy, means professionally unethical behaviour and professional disgrace. Corporate realism and professional survival requires 'economic man' to act in ways 'moral man' might find repugnant.

Seen from the point of view of the executive, the neoliberal economic theorist, or the policy-maker who subscribes to this view, the consequences of market-driven behaviour are an after-thought. It is the regular performance of a function or everyday practices that results in 'evil'.¹⁶ While massive and systematic injustices and human rights violations happen frequently, 'these events occur in a quasi-generalized indifference, they are caused by no one and everyone at the same time, by the "system" as some say—a system that is no longer typical of totalitarianism or of some rogue state, but a system that has become global'.¹⁷ The global system Latouche mentions here was self-consciously constructed to officialize the neoliberal worldview. It is the product of political decisions made in response to demands of certain social actors. It takes for granted the agency and moral status of what is alternatively called the bourgeoisie, capital, business, the

corporate sector, or investors. Although their aspirations represent a particular perspective and interest, the rules enacted by public officials are expected to yield positive outcomes for the broader global community.

Neoliberalism as Paradigm and Policy

The institutions that have recently attracted most of the attention and criticism have in fact been active since the end of World War II. Known as the Bretton Woods institutions, they were created to promote international cooperation to maintain the economic stability necessary for prosperity. Of the three pillars that were sought, only the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank came into being. The trade pillar, the would-be International Trade Organization, was not created as governments could not agree on a body of rules for international trade. Instead they created the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).

Although the IMF and the World Bank were created to manage monetary relations primarily between industrialized states and to fund the reconstruction of countries destroyed in World War II, they have become principal actors in development debates since the 1970s. The move in the direction of greater trade and financial liberalization in the 1970s was also a move away from the early principles of Bretton Woods. The post-war order had been founded on a compromise between social needs (especially labour) and the needs of investors, and between domestic social objectives (in general) and an international trading regime that was relatively liberal. There was an explicit recognition of the role for government regulations.¹⁸ In the 1970s and 1980s,

however, oil shocks and recessions precipitated the decline of Keynesianism because it was perceived as unable to address high unemployment and high inflation in industrial countries, and the debt crisis in the Third World.¹⁹

In the post-Bretton Woods period states remained active but their role shifted from responding to social needs to creating conditions favourable for investors and conducive to growth.²⁰ The authorities' newfound role in the emerging neoliberal order was one of 'programmed dismantling and the welfare state'.²¹ It is therefore inaccurate simply to say that the state is disappearing or that it is being downsized. States play a dual role of promoting economic globalization to satisfy their globalized economic sectors, whose profitability depends on an open world economy, and to manage vulnerable social categories.²² Instead of protecting populations from market pressures, policy-makers try to promote self-reliance and induce market participation by selectively removing social protection by tightening eligibility criteria for unemployment and welfare benefits, and by reforming labour laws.²³ As well, the resort to a variety of work-for-welfare schemes and training programmes aim to provide would-be workers with the skills and attitudes required to find and keep a job even in the face of poor conditions.²⁴

But it is in the global political economy that the changes have been the most radical. The 1972-1982 period was momentous for the global economy. In 1972, the US government announced the full convertibility of the US dollar on world capital markets thereby ending the Bretton Woods regime of fixed interest rates. A year later, the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) announced the nationalization of oil reserves and an increase in the price of crude oil. Meanwhile governments that had borrowed heavily (especially in the South) to promote industrialization were faced with

high interest rates and with an economic slowdown that included an increase in production costs combined with shrinking markets. In the North, there was both increasing unemployment and high inflation, and in the South the debt crisis was driven by high interest rates.²⁵ In these new conditions and in the absence of a regulated global financial order to manage capital flows, the Bretton Woods institutions refocused their activities on the promotion of policies believed necessary to restore the profitability of investments and, therefore, the conditions for growth.

Together with the World Trade Organization created in 1995, they now embody the neoliberal paradigm in its most advanced form thus far under the umbrella of what has been called the Washington Consensus. For Robin Broad and John Cavanagh, this new paradigm has become so influential that it has taken on a quasi-religious character. They write that the ‘power of the Washington Consensus over development theory is hard to overstate. That once vibrant debate about development all but disappeared as the Consensus took on almost religious qualities’.²⁶ The willingness of governments to respond to societal pressures under Keynesianism diminished as more aspects of social life became defined by the neoliberal paradigm. The relative autonomy of societies and cultures and the wishes of local actors that used to be a given in domestic policy-planning were now interpreted obstacles to growth.²⁷ According to Bond and Cavanagh, the relatively tightly-knit package of policies that resulted has been promoted in official speeches, academic and research institutions, and the media.²⁸

The movement that started in industrial states became global. The policy preferences of industrial states influence the research agenda of the experts housed in international agencies. The spread of the neoliberal model around the world took the form

of policy-making over populations without the resort to force in the South or the appearance of an imposition in the North. Yet, the net result of the policies decided in international financial institutions was the exclusion of their 'clienteles' from the decision-making process that affected them.²⁹

The relative success of this attempt is attested by the fact that since the 1980s, the neoliberal vision has become dominant in public policy in most states. In the 1990s, the vanishing of the communist alternative, the source of many critical, yet non-Marxist, alternatives to laissez-faire, has reinforced the intellectual hegemony of the most recent variant of liberal capitalism.³⁰ There was now an overriding concern with retaining 'investors' confidence'. The media often relayed the potential danger of loss of investors' trust should governments adopt policies deemed unfriendly to them. Few government employees risked speaking out against the policies that they had to devise and politicians rarely admitted to giving in to pressures that the financial community exerted on them.³¹

The post-war order's underlying liberal democratic philosophy precluded the use of outright violence or coercion on the part of industrial states toward their own population, or towards the states and peoples of the Third World (most of the time). The downsizing of the state by its own elected officials, the elimination of so-called rigidities in Northern labour markets were matched by the policies of the international financial institutions in developing countries. With this in mind, Susan George writes that 'The same policies have been carried out through the Economic South and East under the guise of structural adjustment, which is merely another name for neoliberalism'.³² What the Reagan, Thatcher, and other governments did in the North, the IMF and the Bank carried out in developing countries. Market 'discipline'—as it is sometimes called—is built into

the policies of international financial institutions.³³ Through the withholding of much-needed funds, public and private actors who control financial resources can constrain reluctant governments or social actors. In effect, their structural power in a market economy allows them to shape the opportunities of less powerful agents.

The institutional and legal transformation associated with neoliberalism could not take hold without considerable ideological legitimation. This is especially true in democratic states. It is therefore important for the proponents of neoliberal reforms to shape the subjectivity of social agents who stand to be affected by them so that they more easily accept the transformation of their life circumstances.

Shaping character and culture

One of the central tenets of liberalism is that human beings are equal, free, and perfectible; what a person *is* is not determined by birth in a given social rank. Through the exercise of their natural freedom and ability individuals can rise socially and economically. Yet this fundamental belief in equality and freedom exists alongside discourses that essentialize social actors. Their freedom and equality with others is an opportunity for their true nature to express itself: they have a chance to prove themselves, so to speak, in that there are no legal limits on the activities they can pursue. A failure to improve their condition (or a deterioration thereof) is now seen as the effect of two possible cause: a lack of character or simply a reflection of the nature of an individual. If under the just liberal capitalist system there is a concentration of people in certain positions, it is evidence of the relative merit of these individuals or of their different natures rather than of a flaw in the system.

This conception of freedom has two relevant implications for our discussion. First and most simply, liberalism assumes the actual existence of freedom. The fact that there are legal texts (a liberal constitution and laws) that recognize everyone's equality and freedom suffices for liberals to say that there is freedom. Indeed, it is common to hear the assertion that all are free without much concern as to how many people are actually constrained or dominated in a myriad, sometimes subtle, ways. The reality of freedom is not questioned. Second, the formal recognition of freedom means that an actor who wishes to effect change in the society as whole or in some people in particular must find a way to do so while nominally respecting the freedom of those who are targeted by the intervention. To put it differently, they must find non-violent and seemingly non-intrusive ways of controlling others since that would be legally and ethically unacceptable given the prevalent liberal framework. Domination must therefore be indirect and it must take the form of a reshaping of others' self-perceptions, behaviours, and life circumstances in a way that adhere to liberal principles. No matter how intrusive the intervention, it has to appear legitimate in light of factual truths ('There is no alternative') or in terms of helping those targeted ('tough love' to 'help' free people from 'welfare dependency' for their own good).

In the realm of work, the 'work ethic' has been an important legitimating mechanism for an economic system that has adverse social consequences. Sharon Beder has shown that since the 1980s there has been an explicit change in official discourse about employment. With longer hours, harder work, and declining wages and working conditions, the importance of the work ethic re-emerged. It was resurrected in Anglo-Saxon countries to exhort employees and the unemployed work harder or find

employment in situations where work was unavailable or unrewarding. She argues that the downsizing trends of the 1980s and 1990s were accompanied by exhortation to find meaning in work for work's sake.³⁴

Absent from the discussion is the actual prospects for work on the one hand, and the conditions of work on the other, when work was available. Workers' situation contrasts with that of executives. Underlying the work ethic is an assumption that the success of the wealthy is the result of hard work. It does not operate only between the very top and the very bottom, but also at other levels of the economic process.³⁵ The view is so widespread as to give the impression that it is natural. 'The work ethic and the respect given to the wealthy, who are supposed to be icons of hard work', writes Beder, 'has been promoted and reinforced by those who benefit most from it through preaching, propaganda, public relations, education and socialisation'.³⁶ The obverse side of the merit argument is that the poor have failed not just economically but morally as well. James Laxer goes as far as to say that there exists a belief among wealthier people that they are inherently superior to others.³⁷ This allows them to enjoy a level of wealth disproportionate to their actual contribution without seeing in it any contradiction. Conversely, the poor or the less privileged are thought to deserve their conditions.

Work ethic discourse has deep roots in the western societies and there is an explicit link between it and capitalist development. Worker identity is important to organize social relations. This explains why the private sector and government officials use it successfully to shape public opinion.³⁸ The objective of the repetition of the message is to give its listeners the 'right attitude', that is, to shape workers' identity and willingness to contribute to the system and ensure its perpetuation. It identifies certain

qualities and posits them as the moral underpinning of the market.³⁹

The language used by policy-makers to promote reforms to social policy is often a variation on the theme of the work ethic, such as the ‘dignity of work’.⁴⁰ In a report on the unemployment insurance reforms of the 1990s in Canada, Nakamura, Wong and Diebert note that ‘The original purpose of Canada’s UI program was to help committed workers with their household expenses while they searched for new jobs, and to guard against downward macroeconomic spirals due to the expenditure cutbacks of the unemployed’.⁴¹ The programme’s reforms’ objective was as much to take care of the fiscal situation of the Canadian state as it was to urge self-sufficiency on the part of beneficiaries, to impart skills required to find and hold employment by responding to employer needs, and, importantly, ‘help them to be more realistic in their job search expectations’.⁴² From the anti-poverty activists’ point of view the language used to promote the reform was suspicious because it suggested that there was a lack of willingness on the part of the jobless to find work.⁴³

A similar mindset prevailed in 1996 in the US when the federal government proposed to ‘end welfare as we know it’. The objective of the US government policy was ‘to move people from dependency on welfare to the dignity of work’.⁴⁴ Rather than explaining the situation of workers by the failures of the economic system, the reform emphasized the personal responsibility of workers and vowed to accompany them in their search for work. The measures sought to influence the behaviour of welfare recipients so that they may find a place in the globalized economy of the 1990s. There was more to regular employment than the well-being of workers and their dependents. Beyond the fiscal problems of the US and the individual need of workers, the government also

construed work as an activity that could enhance the social order. In Bill Clinton's words, the reform was worthwhile because of the 'structure, purpose, meaning and dignity that work gives'.⁴⁵

For Dominique Méda, in advanced capitalist societies 'we do not know why we work anymore'; insofar as work has a purpose it is to sustain a production-consumption cycle where other aspects of life such as listening, contemplation, and action become unimaginable.⁴⁶ For those at the bottom of the socio-economic hierarchy, however, consumption is elusive: they do not earn enough to consume. Absent the pecuniary motivation to work hard, the work ethic enjoins them to exercise their civic duty through the mere activity of working and the dignity of trying to provide for their family or of contributing to the national wealth. In this, the self-image of the poor plays an important role in silencing them. The work ethic is not simply about working hard in the face of unsatisfying compensation for it; it also consists in renouncing complaints and criticism for fear that the complainer may be seen as lacking character.

The work ethic is merely a general principle about the importance of work in the definition of social identity; it appears to be neutral. Yet, the work ethic also operates in modified form along group lines when the economic roles of social actors are sometimes explained or justified by the nature of the persons performing them. One obvious case is the implicit or explicit reliance on gendered conceptions of work in ascribing a different value to women's and men's occupations in a market economy. While most workers find themselves under constant pressures to perform in a competitive environment, women face specific pressures because of their sex. In gendered guise, the work ethic is the performance of a person's 'natural' social and economic roles. In light of the masculine

standard of production, development, and material progress, women perform roles deemed less productive in most economic thought.⁴⁷

Although they are a relatively new phenomenon, gendered views of work are now so widespread that they are considered natural.⁴⁸ Prior to capitalist industrialization, the value ascribed to women's and men's work was more similar than it is now even if men and women performed different functions in their societies. In non-capitalist societies (European and non-European) the economic inequality between women and men was much less pronounced than it became in capitalist societies where a monetary value is attached to the symbolic recognition of the work. But it is not just the ascription of a monetary value to work that explains the difference between women's and men's work. With industrialization and factory work, the introduction of the public-private distinction created two realms of human activities to which males and females were assigned.⁴⁹ Whereas the male-dominated public sphere is the realm of agency, material production, and of moral and political progress, the private sphere is considered merely reproductive in that it relied on women's ability to procreate and raise the next generation. The resulting social roles were nature-given, pre-ordained and privileged masculine agency recompensed with a wage (as opposed to unpaid work) or higher wage (as compared to women's lower wage).

The public-private distinction that emerged with liberal capitalist society in Europe also served as a model for policy during the colonial period in what are now postcolonial societies, and thus spread globally.⁵⁰ In postcolonial societies, reforms required by international financial institutions have in general increased women's marginalization. In the colonial and postcolonial period, the imposition of the same

public-private dichotomy dispossessed women who, in some societies, traditionally had a pre-eminent role in agriculture and land management.⁵¹ The relative power and prestige parity of women and men that characterized many cultures has been undermined by a gendered social and economic order using capitalist Europe as the template. Thus, to the extent that Third World societies industrialized, they did so on the basis of a gendered division of labour.

Within this ideological framework, women's work outside the home is interpreted as a complement to the male breadwinner's family income rather than as a principal source of income for a household. The lower remuneration of women's work in the workplace or the non-remuneration of work in the home is justified by 'ideologies of femininity, marriage and motherhood, which construct and appropriate women's labour in domestic, reproductive and caring work as a labour of love'.⁵²

This puts women in a double-bind. On the one hand, women *as women* are expected to have and raise children and to perform most tasks in the home. On the other, women *as individuals in a capitalist society* are expected to display the same work ethic as men on a labour market that does not take into account time-consuming unpaid work performed in the private sphere or the unanticipated events (e.g., children's doctor's appointments and illnesses, care for other relatives) associated with caring activities outside the workplace. The broader constraints faced by women are overlooked and replaced by moral condemnation. According to Frances Fox Piven, in the US women on welfare have been particularly targeted by criticisms with their economic status likened to an addiction (women as 'welfare addicts' or 'welfare queens') and tied to a lack of sexual and family morality (having out of wedlock children).⁵³ Even if the decision to be on

welfare is an economically rational one given the labour market, Piven notes, that decision is seen as a character flaw according to the prevailing worldview. Ironically, what makes it necessary for such mothers to stay on welfare is the absence of services to look after children and the low wages that cannot pay for private services. More broadly, though, the labour market that women have entered in greater number is in general ill-suited to their situation. Yet, in the face of economic and social pressures women have to change their behaviour to operate in the public sphere.

The labour and gender dynamics just discussed are not limited to industrial societies. Neoliberalism may have originated in them but it is a now global phenomenon. It encompasses what used to be Western colonies. The problem of the place of the Third World in the international order is one that industrial states addressed as soon as decolonization occurred. The decolonization wave that followed World War II gave rise to a large number of countries. The question of what kind of political and economic system they would opt for was crucial. Thus, former colonial powers used foreign aid to keep new countries out of the communist camp.⁵⁴ The strategic and economic interests of donors notwithstanding, aid was considered fully consistent with a moral outlook in which free markets would help promote political freedom, democracy, and world peace.⁵⁵

The postcolonial literature has focused on politics narrowly defined and culture rather than economics (or even political economy). Yet, economic policy is a preferred means of intervention in postcolonial societies. The critique of development in the South has often followed Marxian theories of imperialism rather than postcolonial theory. Yet, according to Arturo Escobar, 'The economy is not only, or even principally, a material entity. It is above all a *cultural production*, a way of producing human subjects and social

orders of a certain kind'.⁵⁶ The nature of the interventions of Northern actors, be they investors, industrial states, or international financial institutions, cannot be separated from culture. For Escobar, foreign aid, development studies and the prevailing economic system are expressions of a particular culture emanating from the West and imposed on non-western peoples.

Through aid, industrial states sought to reconstruct postcolonial societies culturally according to Western standards.⁵⁷ Full inclusion in the moral community of states required more than the institutional trappings of modernity; it also required cultural changes on the part of the populations of the new states. As advocates of this policy, Alex Inkeles and David Smith put the matter bluntly. For them, political modernity required the creation of nations of participating citizens who displayed civic virtue and a civic culture, not the parochial culture of non-Western peoples. Their political culture needed to be reconstructed along national lines and away from kinship, ethnicity, or traditional networks. Economically, they wrote, 'Modern institutions need individuals who can keep to fixed schedules, observe abstract rules, make judgments on the basis of objective evidence, and follow authorities legitimated not by traditional or religious sanction but by technical competence'.⁵⁸ Individuals must accept the division of labour of capitalist economies and strict hierarchies. Moreover, they are to be judged and rewarded based on competence and productivity standards determined by the market.

For Inkeles and Smith, factory work is the means by which the social psychology of postcolonial peoples can be transformed. They see pressures associated with waged work as the only life experiences that can change the culture of postcolonial peoples. The pressures start on the factory floor, but they are generalized to other areas of social life

because of the centrality of work.⁵⁹ The argument of the authors is meaningful given the context in which it was developed. In the early to mid-1970s new states were still emerging and production was about to become globalized following the breakdown of the postwar Fordist compromise in the international political economy.⁶⁰ The dependency of postcolonial states on aid and investments gave power to industrial states in their dealings with postcolonial societies. Since the mid-1970s, the coincidence between investors' need for a cheaper labour force and the anticipated cultural benefits for the South helped justify a policy of complete liberalization in postcolonial states. Conditions were favourable for development experts, governments, and corporate actors to draw postcolonial societies into a more globalized economy.

In the interest of progress the attitude of individuals and whole societies needed to be transformed: an achievement motive had to be impressed on individuals and populations so that they may develop economically. There had to be a determined will to shape the dispositions and behaviour of people toward work in a capitalist economy: 'A government manager or, for that matter, a private entrepreneur, should have to produce "or else". Production targets must be set, as they are in most economic plans; and individuals must be held responsible for achieving them, even at the plant level. The philosophy should be one of "no excuses accepted"'.⁶¹ In a capitalist society, money and recognition must be deserved and the deserving individuals are identified by their willingness to meet the expectation communicated to them.⁶²

The provision of support (or imposition of conditions to support) to individuals, in the case of social programmes, or to governments, in the case of bail-out packages and foreign aid, is dependent the putative merit of the beneficiaries; it is an actor's behaviour

that determines entitlements rather than needs. The determination of who deserves good wages, good working conditions, or aid is hardly a simple matter. The way people are treated on the market follows class, gender, cultural, and sometimes ethnic rationales. The contribution that social actors make is gauged in terms of their economic contribution; they earn income and respect by performing their economic functions.

This is the intellectual and moral climate in which neoliberal policies thrive. Both practical and moral arguments are invoked to justify the liberalization of trade, the deregulation of capital and labour markets, and reforms to social services. The work ethic, the dignity of work, the rigidity of the labour market, large budget deficits and public debts, and the need to restore the conditions of growth and job creation validate the implementation of neoliberal policies domestically and globally. In its moral dimension, the argument is particularly pernicious as it shifts accountability from those who shape the system to those affected negatively by it. In its amoral dimension, it skirts the normative dimension by invoking the natural laws of economics. Those who are affected negatively by social transformations are made to feel that they carry the lion's share the blame. Moreover, insofar as they are portrayed as (and thought to be) inadequate by the dominant social standards, they are the object of a distancing strategy aimed at separating them from those who abide by the social standards. They are vulnerable to social opprobrium and to employer or institutional domination and hesitate to organize politically or to exercise rights they officially possess.

The breadth and depth of neoliberal globalization suggests that this discourse has been very effective. Neoliberalism has left few people unaffected, though the precise nature and extent of the effect vary. There have been losers in the competitive

environment fostered by mobile capital and accommodating states. There has also been an increase in insecurity on the part of hitherto comfortable actors whose capacity to choose their life path has been compromised. Insecurity has sometimes chilled people's willingness to resist investors' demands for fear that they may leave rather than makes concessions. It has raised the anticipated cost of complaining about one's conditions since one could conceivably be made worse off by irritating the more powerful actors. The experience of NAFTA makes this clear.

Neoliberalism in North America

The most advanced expression of the neoliberal order thus far is the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). In North America the signing of NAFTA was the culmination of a set of pressures from the private sector on the state to create favourable investment conditions and expand markets. The downsizing of certain state functions, cuts in parts of the state budget and deregulation began in the early 1980s. Of the three NAFTA members Mexico faced the more severe reforms following its debt crisis, repayment default, and the structural adjustment programmes of the IMF well before NAFTA came along. Mexico also saw self-imposed reforms aimed at preparing the country for its eventual entry into NAFTA. In the US and Canada, neoliberalism was a choice of the governing parties. The US, especially, was not forced to initiate the move to neoliberalism but promoted this model nonetheless. For Canada, the geopolitical context and the failure of the diversification of trade relations were taken to dictate a change of course and a closer economic relation with the leading neoliberal country. In many ways,

NAFTA only constitutionalized neoliberal policies adopted in the preceding decade in all three states.⁶³ Technical as these may seem, the Agreement's Preamble couches the objectives of NAFTA in distinctly ethical terms: friendship, harmony, public welfare, sustainable development, environmental protection, abundant and well-paid employment, and basic workers' rights. In this optic, free trade is only a technical means to a moral end. It is therefore the moral consequences of NAFTA that must be assessed to judge the merits of neoliberal globalization.

Wages and working conditions

It is in the capacity of social actors to pursue their goals that NAFTA has had the most effects. There are only two ways that the vulnerable can hope to better their condition. One is to act through the state by supporting candidates whose platform is more congenial to their needs. The decision of all three governments to implement neoliberal policies in the 1980s and then to consign them in an international pact is evidence of the unavailability of this first option. Despite opposition, the deal came to pass and the state wilfully gave up its role of shielding society from the market.⁶⁴

Another way is to confront the more powerful actors directly. For this, social actors must have resources at their disposal. Through regulations, welfare and unemployment programmes, the state gave more vulnerable people an alternative to their situation: quitting or filing a complaint. With public education or guaranteed loans it gave (and still gives) people opportunities to better their situation through the acquisition of knowledge and skills. Neoliberal policies have been gradually taking away these conditions necessary to the exercise of freedom. NAFTA altered the balance of power

between large investors and others by protecting the former from certain government policies now made illegal. The right of people to organize and pressure the state is not taken away; what is taken away (or given up) is the right of future governments to respond to the demands if they conflict with investors' preferences. It has also legislated into existence a competitive environment that makes it difficult for governments to levy taxes to fund those programmes that are still allowed under NAFTA's terms or to regulate investor behaviour.⁶⁵

The right to circulate freely across boundaries is central to the power of economic actors. The phenomenon of 'job exports' was the first argument used by opponents of free trade and investment. There have been numerous cases of relocation of production facilities. In the United States, it began when Mexico was forced to open its borders to foreign investments after 1982. For Canada, it was in 1989 with the Canada-US Free Trade Agreement and again with NAFTA in 1994. There has been a modest increase in unemployment but most of those who lost employment have been able to work. The effect has been more subtle than the massive layoffs predicted: it has taken the form of stagnating and declining wages and working conditions in the manufacturing sector and the creation of more precarious and service sector jobs.⁶⁶

This has been true in most industries and it is a manifestation of the power disparity between employers and their workforce. Capital is sometimes more constrained than the critics allege and its capacity to move to other production areas does not make investment necessarily more profitable.⁶⁷ Still, in half the cases of labour dispute, employers in the manufacturing sector have warned of closures, and the number of actual closures after successful union activities tripled within two years of NAFTA.⁶⁸ The fear

of capital flight is thus important in securing concessions from governments and societies. The risk of a race to the bottom is very real and it operates across different divides:⁶⁹ North-North when Canada and the US compete with each other; North-South when both of them compete with Mexico; and South-South when Mexico competes with China or the members of the new Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA).

A second effect has been the creation of jobs in sectors where incomes and working conditions are below those of the industrial sector.⁷⁰ Full-time, permanent work with benefits is more scarce now than it has been since World War II. In Canada and the US, the postwar Fordist employment contract still exists but it concerns ever smaller numbers of workers. Only the employees seen as indispensable remain part of the privileged core and more functions are performed by term-contract employees or they are sub-contracted to smaller firms or self-employed workers. In Mexico, the post-NAFTA situation is the lowest point since the 1950s. Not only have Mexicans as a whole been worse off compared to the 1980s because of the 1994 peso crisis, the 1980s themselves were worse than anytime since the 1950s.⁷¹ At the same time as maquiladoras opened in Northern Mexico to take advantage of US investments, many manufactures in the rest of the country closed down leaving the job situation worse.⁷²

A relatively low unemployment rate in the United States and in Mexico, and a decline in the jobless rate in Canada in the 1990s tends to prove the neoliberal argument about favourable conditions for investment and job creation.⁷³ In reality, however, the 1990s were been characterized by the limited number of jobs created given the level of investment, growth, corporate profits, and executive pay. In the period after the 1990-1991 recession, the expression 'jobless recovery' became more commonplace to describe

the gap.⁷⁴ Low unemployment is less evidence of an attractive labour market than of the fact that many people are forced to work at whatever conditions are available, thus being considered off welfare or unemployment rolls. In Canada and the US, reforms to unemployment insurance and welfare programmes have reduced unemployment by restricting access, thus forcing people to work. The low jobless rate is particularly misleading in the case of Mexico, a country where many have no savings, where there is no unemployment insurance and where the government considers a person ‘employed’ if he or she has worked at least one hour in the previous week.⁷⁵

With fewer stable jobs there is competition that acts like a perpetual probation for those who remain at the core as well as for those whose work is already precarious who wish their contract to be renewed.⁷⁶ It means not only working harder and/or longer to be seen in a positive way by employer, or to compete against other corporations or political jurisdictions (other provinces, states or countries); it also means competing against other employees for the few remaining good positions by showing sufficient dedication to be deemed meritorious.⁷⁷

Thus, for their good employment numbers, the NAFTA members are confronted with a ‘job quality’ problem.⁷⁸ The loss of high-paying, full-time work in manufacturing—the sector most directly affected by free trade and the mobility of capital—is mostly compensated by ‘low productivity’ work in the services sector and a wide range of self-employment activities. Across all three countries, these are the fastest growing employment categories and those least stable and remunerated.⁷⁹ Workers on this new labour market find themselves in precarious, demoralizing positions from which there are few escape routes. It would be a serious mistake, however, to believe that this is

only the lot of service sector (e.g., retail, secretarial jobs, etc.) employment or of downsized industrial workers. White-collar positions have been severely affected by changes in regulatory and market climate with some results not unlike those seen among the working poor, the higher salaries notwithstanding.

The 'quality problem' has been the object of several publications in recent years, which contrast the claims that the economy is booming with the reality of the workplace.⁸⁰ The material and psychological dimensions of poorly-paid and precarious work are intertwined. Materially, some people's basic needs and those of their dependents are often only barely met and sometimes not met at all. Psychologically, poverty is experienced as acute distress because the poor are perpetually unable to meet their needs despite considerable effort. They do not have the luxury of vacations or to forget about work at the end of a workday because precariousness forces them to think about short term economic survival. The psychological distress induced by material conditions is only compounded by the stigma of poverty as a sign of moral failure. The poor are vulnerable materially and psychologically in and out of the workplace (more on distress will be said below).

Among white-collar workers, material wealth is less a problem because the salaries are sometimes better. However, Jill Andresky Fraser argues that among white-collar workers it is possible to identify people earning from \$30,000 to hundreds of thousands dollars annually for whom work is not a satisfying experience. More significantly, in these income groups, the number of hours worked is considerable and so it sometimes relativizes the high salary figures. There has been far more than a change in work patterns in the last two decades (the argument used to dismiss the middle class

complaints about work); there has been an increase in length of time worked, the workload, or the pace of work.⁸¹

There are some benefits granted to workers, but they are of the kind that can be taken away easily. Free meals, discounted merchandise, transportation, stock options, etc. are granted as gifts and defined as privileges rather than as employees' rights or as an answer to their needs. Workers have no genuine claim to them since they are acts of 'generosity' on the part of employers.⁸² Shipler notes that some employers use a wide range of tricks (*sic*) to avoid raising wages. For instance, upon being asked why he does not raise wages in order to attract more reliable employees, the manager of a maid service retorted that he offered 'mother hours'—a work day ending at 3pm—and that it was a benefit that compensated for the low wages.⁸³ The invocation of the non-pecuniary benefits of a particular type of employment is not limited to low-wage work, however. In negotiation between governments and public employees, the supposed permanence of civil servants is frequently used to put pressure on the unions to agree to limit pay increases and to divide them from the more precarious, putatively harder working, private sector workforce.⁸⁴ In a slightly different vein, teachers unions' critics often point out that teachers enjoy two months' vacation annually whereas most people have one week, thus making a case for limiting their salary.

What employees can do legally as citizens in their country, they cannot do as workers on the jobsite. Workplaces in effect operate like limited special economic zones for the working poor.⁸⁵ The laws of the society, which would apply in spaces like the street, do not apply in the business. The workplace is the property of the owner and thus the owner's rules apply. Ehrenreich points out that in the positions she occupied, the

employees had to ‘check [their] civil liberties at the door’.⁸⁶ Employers use ethically questionable yet legal practices to discipline their workforce. Within a given workplace there can be rules against discussing wages and benefits. Employers specifically forbid employees to talk about their respective employment contract, which often reveal the different treatment meted out to people performing the same work. Bans sometimes go beyond this to include ‘gossip’, which includes employees’ discussing their frustration with the work they are performing.⁸⁷

It is common for employers to fire workers for speech or activity that questions the prevalent order of the workplace. According to the AFL-CIO (the US’ main labour organization) ten thousand workers are fired annually for union activism and one in three union drive results in someone being fired.⁸⁸ In Canada in recent years, unionization attempts at McDonald’s restaurants and Wal-Mart stores have resulted in failures because employers hired new employees in time for the accreditation vote on the understanding that they would oppose unionization. Wrongful dismissal is forbidden by law, but what is wrongful is open to interpretation. Employers use other arguments that respect the letter of the labour code, such as inability to get along with coworkers, inappropriate behaviour, or inappropriate language. In Canada, for instance, the employee fired for misconduct or who leaves voluntarily is ineligible to unemployment insurance.⁸⁹ In others cases, management’s response has been to close the restaurant or store in keeping with a head office’s policy against unions. In Mexico, the absence of secret ballot and the physical retaliation (the latter being obviously illegal) against union organizers compound other obstacles.⁹⁰ Despite domestic legislations and the North American Agreement on Labor Cooperation complaints against employers often remain dead-letter.

In the case of better paid, white-collar employment, the 1990s saw a change in key terms of employment contracts. For instance, at Intel Corporation in 1991 the standard work contract's termination clause read 'for cause' but was unilaterally changed to 'at will', thereby forcing an employee to agree to instability as a condition of employment.⁹¹ Any apparent lack of commitment to the job entails risks when job performance is evaluated. Unwillingness to work beyond certain hours, complaints shared with coworkers, complaints to or against superiors about workload or conditions, and union activity are all seen as a lack of commitment to the enterprise. Employers keep track of productivity and look for signs of slacking. Surveillance has become a feature of the high-technology workplace. Technology is used to supervise workers who lose the independence typically associated with white-collar employment (though obviously not with secretarial jobs). The reported effect of such practices are jobs that are to varying degrees 'painful, degrading, soul-killing' in one person's words.⁹²

Employees remain free to change jobs but they cannot afford it. Referring to her coworkers, Ehrenreich contends that workers are more constrained than pure market theory assumes. Workers have limited geographical mobility because of the means of transport they use (e.g., a bicycle), or rely on others for transportation (e.g., car pooling). If they leave a job in a neighbourhood but the new job is further from home they cannot get to it or they lose the transportation offered by those who also work in that neighbourhood. Moving houses to get closer to the new job entails moving costs and time wasted. Market theory also assumes perfect information about jobs available. According to it, workers should know who pays more and offers better conditions. They should therefore move toward these jobs, thereby forcing the less attractive workplaces to try

and match the better ones. However, the information is not available to workers because each workplace is its own little self-contained world⁹³ separated from the others and because time is not available to do the required search that might lead to better outcomes.

Any attempt to seek out a better alternative requires an investment in money or in time that workers do not possess. Thus, those who wish to find alternatives to their current source of income need to spend time and energy to look for them in addition to the time spent at their current workplace. Insofar as contacting potential employers has to be done during their regular business hours, it must be done at least partly at the same time as the current workplace's hours. In other words, the job search that leads a person to leave current employment has to be done on the current employer's time. It is seen as a personal activity that the worker should not, in principle, engage in during working hours. Even when the job search occurs outside working hours it cuts into other activities that also have to be performed. Moreover, to the extent that prospective employers request references, employees have to advise their current employer that they are looking for an alternative, thereby showing a lack of loyalty. The process of looking for an alternative entails going out on a limb for a position that may not, in the end, be offered by the prospective new employer or, if it is offered, that is no better than the current one. In the end, the working poor 'are caught in exhausting struggles' because 'Their wages do not lift them far enough from poverty to improve their lives, and their lives, in turn, hold them back'.⁹⁴

According to Ehrenreich workers understand workplace dynamics. They are aware that if the managers realize that work can be done quicker or with fewer workers, there will be pressures to do so or some employees will be laid off or see their hours

reduced.⁹⁵ Accordingly, overzealous employees may incur criticisms of coworkers because they might set a new standard for everyone else to follow. In the end, the working poor ‘underst[and] that there are few or no reward for heroic performance’.⁹⁶ Meanwhile, even white-collar workers find themselves in situations where their own ‘heroic’ efforts are not a guarantee of continued employment.⁹⁷ Although, the work and its rewards is said to operate as a meritocracy, the work ethic undermines merit since hard work is expected no matter the benefits that may or may not accrue to the workers.

Public-private overlap I: the private enters the public

Although all categories of workers have been affected by neoliberal policies, reforms to the welfare state, the decline in highly paid, permanent work in the manufacturing sector, and the concomitant creation of job in the service sector have had particular effects on women. The best employment opportunities in the post-war period were in sectors associated with men and the heyday of labour power also corresponded with the height of the gendered division of labour and the ‘family wage’ as the husband’s wage. While women made progress in terms of access to the workplace, the work they performed corresponded to their presumptive natural abilities. Women’s work was both relatively segregated from men’s work and less remunerated.

According to Lourdes Benería, women’s access to the labour market has not made them necessarily better off overall.⁹⁸ The decline in the manufacturing sector since the 1980s has impacted women’s opportunities. At the same time as the principle that women could perform the same work as men was recognized, opportunities became more scarce. The relative scarcity of jobs rendered competition for them more intense. There is

now competition between men for a place in the core labour force and competition between women and men for a smaller number of good jobs. In this competition, arguments and justifications for hiring or firing workers of one or the other sex rely on gendered conceptions of work.

Neoliberalism, with its emphasis on streamlining production and the organization of social relations to meet economic aims of investors has given gender ideology a chance to express itself anew. For Benería, neoliberalism has exacerbated 'latent and manifest patriarchal attitudes'. She writes:

The literature has emphasized the notion that globalization and the feminization of the labor force have been parallel to the processes of labor market deregulation and flexibilization registered across countries during the past three decades and as a result of neoliberal policies. This has affected both men and women, although not necessarily in the same way. Feminization has been linked to the deterioration of working conditions and as part of the race to the bottom resulting from global competition.⁹⁹

The link between women's work and women's poverty is relatively consistent across societies. In developed countries, former communist states, and post-colonial societies, women's economic conditions have deteriorated throughout the 1990s as governments implemented neoliberal policies and as market relations extended to larger areas of social life. Indeed, NAFTA accentuated the market competition to which the populations were already subjected to. This is especially useful for transnational corporations who have an expanded pool of workers and whom they can hire for specific motives. Writes Cirila Quintero-Ramírez: .

under globalization, capital takes advantage of different historical and industrial characteristics in each country, and the types of women workers in each, in order to maximize profit on investments. Corporations are highly discriminatory in their decisions about what kinds of production to locate within and across countries, which results in *labour segregation*.¹⁰⁰

The climate of competition leads to contradictory outcomes. On the one hand, the need for women to work and the desire of employers to pay them as little as possible means that women are seen as 'ideal' workers. Women can expect to find work fairly easily. On the other hand, the type of work that women find falls short of their needs. In better job categories, women's positions are often the most insecure since they were the last people hired. They have less seniority and thus less recognition from the employer. The motive of the employer who decides to let go those recently hired may be circumstantial in that it derives from an established practice of recognizing previously rendered services as a form of loyalty. However, it is gendered in a sense because relations of loyalty between mostly male employers and mostly male employees developed over time in a societal context that promoted—albeit indirectly—a sense of mutual obligation between men rather than between people of either sex with no reference to supposed natural abilities and attendant merit.

Yet, even this unspoken, diffuse, masculine loyalty has not really protected men when their labour came to be regarded as too expensive. The idea of 'women's work' has been used to justify hiring women rather than men in some industries. This practice is particularly evident in Mexico's export-orientated manufacturing sector.¹⁰¹ The *maquiladoras* that are now common on most continents were created in the mid-1960s to provide employment to men. However, employers elected to hire women rather than the now unemployed men because they expected the female labour force to be more docile in addition to costing less. The hiring of women was a way of undermining union organizing in the workplace because women were thought less likely to attempt it.

The hiring practices of *maquiladoras* with respect to female workers have

changed over time, but always in a manner consistent with the minimization of costs and capitalizing on women's position in society. Elizabeth Fussell argues that in the 1970s, women were preferred for their docility and dexterity.¹⁰² In the 1980s, the acceleration of maquiladora openings caused the employers to seek out yet more female workers but had to hire among older, married women, again preferring them to men. The thinking behind the two hiring policies thus appears to have gone from an essentialist conception of women's agency (docility and 'natural' abilities) to a more comprehensive understanding of gendered social relations. In other words, employers are conscious of the broader social context in which the female workers operate and how this affects women's behaviour at work.

For Cirila Quintero-Ramírez, 'under globalization, which represents the de-regulation and re-regulation of different workplace dimensions (such as working hours, multitasking, etc.) women are ... preferred as workers because it is assumed that they will more easily accept new changes in production, such as job changes and flexible hours'.¹⁰³ It follows from this that investors and employers looking for a global competitive advantage tend to privilege the hiring of females workers because they are able to pay them less and wrest more concessions for them on working conditions. While women may organize less often than men, this is due to obstacles that exist in the private sphere. Outside the workplace, and in particular in the family, women's child-rearing role and housework tasks take time. To organize politically more than they currently do women need care secured for their children or household tasks to be performed by men. Thus women are not so much docile as they are constrained by work that must absolutely be done before anything else.

The public-private nexus works to the benefit of employers looking for a reliable labour force at the same time as it makes it difficult to pinpoint the actor at the source of women's oppression. Writes Lourdes Benería: 'Although they can not have direct control over work done at home, and hence, they can not directly monitor workers, firms can take advantage of the discipline imposed on women by their need to both remain at home to care for children and other domestic activities, and to earn whatever income they can'.¹⁰⁴ Still, Fussell points out that 'Many employers are loath to employ married women with children for fear that they will be less reliable workers and more likely to leave their job after a short period of time'.¹⁰⁵ She observes that women with young children do tend to hold jobs for shorter periods but it is also problematic because women in the maquiladora sector are more dependent on these wages than other female workers.¹⁰⁶ Losing or having to quit employment for family reasons takes a heavier toll on those workers than on those in other sectors like services and self-employment.

There is yet another obstacle to the betterment of women's economic situation despite the putative employment opportunities offered by NAFTA in the 1990s. The proportion of women workers declined as more technology was introduced in the workplace. New equipment frequently requires more skills than current technology. However, the skills in question are more often found in men than in women.¹⁰⁷ Men are consequently favoured. The skills that put men in a better position were a reflection of previous training opportunities available to them. They were made temporarily superfluous ('overqualified') by the transformation of the production processes, hence the hiring of numerous women between the 1960s and 1980s, but were in demand once again in the 1990s. Rather than training women for the new technology, employers hired those

who required less training.

Gender cuts across the public and private spheres. The mostly male employers (and superiors) can only exploit it in the workplace because it is shared by men in the home. Although the husbands of the female workers are themselves in a conflictual relation with the employers as a class, they share in the same gendered ideology with respect to types of work appropriate for the sexes. Consequently, they will not pick up the house and caring work where their wife left off. Female workers therefore face a double burden. Women do work, sometimes long hours in full-time or several part-time jobs, but they are not seen as ‘full workers’, so to speak. While they work, many are not granted the same privileges as their male counterparts because these other characteristics continue to set them apart from the standard. What women are thought to have (‘natural’ skills) or not (the same need for autonomy or income as men) alternatively justifies different pay scales and/or work conditions. In other words, the precise justifications invoked by employers and managers to account for the different treatment calls on various incompatible arguments that find coherence only in their usefulness in marginalizing women.¹⁰⁸ In the home, women continue to perform a wide range of tasks with limited contribution from the man, thus only adding to their overall workload.

Some policies long-demanded by women’s groups were adopted to reduce the burden on female workers so that they could work regular, full-time hours have had unforeseen consequences.¹⁰⁹ In Canada, the Quebec government created a network of affordable daycare centres but the universal character did not necessarily benefit those parents who most needed them. Some parents who did stay at home—but who were not home workers—nevertheless drop off their young children at the centres while some who

work do not find space for theirs. Moreover, under the initial programme, slightly revised since, the tariff was identical regardless of the income of the parents. Thus a high-income family could get its children looked after for five dollars a day while a single mother with precarious employment paid the same rate. A policy designed to benefit primarily working class women benefited equally wealthier members of the society.

Another potentially perverse effect of an otherwise valid policy concerns 'natural helpers'. The Canadian government's recent plan to provide tax credits for the work time lost to family duties like caring for loved ones.¹¹⁰ By 'natural helpers' the government means the people who frequently become involved in caregiving when a relative is in need of care that is not provided by social services. Several flaws inhere in the government policy. First, the need for healthy relatives to take time off work proceeds from a lack of public funding for services for those in need of care. Second, the policy is a response to a situation partly created by the very state that caused the problem by cutting social spending, but it is a policy that cannot compensate for what has been lost. Third, and more significant in the context of the argument made here, the 'natural' helpers are primarily women as a matter of empirical reality. The policy gives a false sense of achievement because it leaves unresolved the question of the state's role in providing social services and the matter of the gendered division of labour.

The problems encountered by women in the workplace are not caused only by neoliberalism and the business decisions of employers, though they are the most powerful actors in shape the social environment. They are also due to men's unwillingness or inability to perform domestic and community work. Men who request time to take care of children or perform household tasks may face an employer's simple refusal or derision on

the part of employers and coworkers for being less than manly.¹¹¹ Indeed, it is not only policy-makers, investors, and managers who assume that certain types of work correspond to the sexes. Male workers and spouses of female workers are as likely to hold this view. The exclusion of women from decision-making positions in the society or from the fruits of what growth occurs is not just a product of neoliberalism; it is also a product of gender, whose manifestations go beyond the workplace and the market.

Precarious work and self-employment

Pay and working conditions are not only becoming less attractive, full-time, permanent positions are becoming more scarce. Workers who have been secure in their jobs and those entering their working life are told not to expect a job for life—i.e., in the same company—or a career in a single field. Some even speak of the ‘half-life’ of a person’s skills or career.¹¹² Trends are visible across North America toward more flexible work arrangements. Since the early 1990s, discussions about the labour market began stoking the virtues of adaptation to changing economic conditions. The economic recovery went hand in hand with warnings to workers to lower their expectations. News reports emphasize that jobs are created but often omit to say that they are primarily part-time or otherwise precarious.¹¹³

The reduction in full-time and permanent positions has led to a dramatic increase in what is alternatively called non-standard, atypical, or precarious employment. Most precarious workers are women (about two thirds¹¹⁴) but the proportion of non-standard employment is increasing for both sexes.¹¹⁵ Non-standard employment can be defined as work that departs from the standard work contract that prevailed under Fordist production

whereby a person was hired full-time and indefinitely; non-standard work is an employment relationship with 'limited social benefits, job insecurity, low job tenure, low wages and high risk to ill health'.

According to Leah Vosko, this type of employment is a direct result of employers' attempts to cut costs.¹¹⁶ Employees are sometimes led to believe that permanence is a possibility if they stay employed long enough in one place, but employers deliberately create turnover to keep salaries low since newly hired workers cannot claim the seniority that longer-standing ones have. Laying off older employees has become a way for management to keep costs down. Likewise the decision to hire women allows another set of justifications for offering less in terms of wages and working conditions.

In the high technology sector, some companies have adopted a policy of deliberately creating turnover. Going beyond the demands of adaptation to a competitive environment, the policy aims to get rid of a certain proportion of a company's labour force in given cycles. Thus, even when all employees participate fully in all training or morale-building activities of the company, those who rank at the bottom will be terminated. Performance evaluations are conducted on a relative basis rather than on an absolute one, and all employees know that some among them will be fired at the end of a given cycle regardless of the absolute quality of their work or the competition faced by the company.¹¹⁷ In lower-paid, less skilled jobs, the techniques for reducing labour cost and creating turnover are more common. Workers tend to be more easily replaceable and work legislation frequently covers such categories less than it does standard work contracts.¹¹⁸ Although the degree of vulnerability differs according to incomes, there is

reluctance from employees to complain about their conditions lest it result in the non-renewal of their contract.

Although precarious workers work for someone, the nature of the relationship is akin to self-employment. Self-employment symbolizes many of the qualities associated with the 'self-made man' who creates his own job through entrepreneurship. The image that is usually promoted is that of the determined individual; that is, he who creates and runs his own enterprise. Self-employment is typical of the capitalist subject. One commentator uses the hockey metaphor of free-agency to describe workers. Peter Diekmeyer urges these 'free agents' to work on their image, to brand and to market themselves to appeal to potential employers: 'Ultimately, we are all free agents in an economy of free agents, and we are best to put ourselves in a good bargaining position for next year's free-agency market'.¹¹⁹ Comparing liberal professions to all contract work Diekmeyer writes that 'Personal-services professionals like doctors, accountants, photographers and temporary or contract workers who charge by the hour realize this instinctively' and that all workers must think in those terms.

Inasmuch as these representations of self-employment are realized, they are best-case scenarios. The constraints on most self-employed workers resemble those of the working poor. The reality of self-employment is that many self-employed workers are poor, dependent, peripheral workers.¹²⁰ These constraints moot the idea of freedom and choice: the self-employed have to sell themselves by underbidding numerous others. Finding employment as an individual on a market of thousands of potential employers is a particularly daunting task given the absence of perfect information about who needs which kinds of skills. Placement agencies have emerged in the 1990s to remedy this lack

of perfect information.¹²¹ Against the service they provide for would-be workers, the agencies receive a sizable portion of the wage that would normally be paid to the worker. Arguably, finding employment provides some benefits to the person who would otherwise have none, but the gains appear more substantial for the agency and the agency's client. The client must pay for the employee's salary and the agency's fee and the work relationship invariably comes with a lower remuneration and the loss of benefits for the worker. It also puts institutional and legal distance between the person who finds a job and the employer, as labour laws predicated on stable work relationship do not cover the new situation.

Although temporary workers are precariously employed, less well paid and have no benefits, employers expect no less of them. But this precariousness affects more than their relations with their superiors; it affects their relations with supposed equals in the workplace. Temporary status entails additional risks if this status is known.¹²² Precarious employees are reluctant to challenge their coworkers who perform the same work as them because the latter have the advantage of permanence and what the permanents think about temporary employees may affect their chance of being renewed. The temporary worker is *in* the company but not *of* the company. What should normally be a horizontal, collaborative enterprise from a functional point of view become a hierarchical one in which the temporary workers must be more careful than others when expressing their views. Precariousness ensures docility toward superiors and toward those who are supposed to be equals in the work process.

For Dominique Méda, the idea of self-employment is delusional in a social context where the efficiency and productivity remain the ultimate objective. Capitalism

and socialism share the ideology of ‘productivism’; social life is defined in terms of economic imperatives to produce as much and as efficiently as possible. They emphasize the production of wealth over other, non-productive, activities.¹²³ The intellectual faculties and the humanity of the workers cannot be separated from work; they can only be realized in work. It is important to recognize that the production imperative does not negate the humanity of the social actors. Humanity is not limited to the capacity and duty to work, but human realization demands that other human dimensions (emotions, reason, aesthetics, etc.) be expressed as part of a productive process rather than for their own sakes. The necessity to earn a sufficient income doing productive work to cover living expenses leaves the self-employed too ‘time-poor’ to exercise their human faculties through non-work activities, even if they manage to reduce their material poverty.¹²⁴ In the end ‘longer work hours ... means less time for relationships, reflection, study and participating in the democratic process. Less time means more rushed fragmented lives’.¹²⁵

The self-employment myth also overlooks the fact that even self-employment requires a certain capital investment, a modern-day primitive accumulation of capital, so to speak.¹²⁶ A worker needs equipment (i.e., capital goods like sewing machines, computers, copiers, tools, etc.), a spare room at home or in a public building, means of communication (separate phone line, fax, email, website). The self-employed further require skills or knowledge that can often be acquired only in trade schools or university where they must pay tuition. Finally, they need to have time available to work undisturbed by children and sick or elderly relatives. All of these presuppose access to financial resources or government programmes not readily available. Workers need cash

advances from relatives or acquaintances when banks will not lend them because of their lack of collateral. For the poor these are virtually insurmountable obstacles.

The difficulties of self-employment are compounded by the transformation of the state. There are now reduced state benefits, like public healthcare, education, and public pensions, if they exist all.¹²⁷ All these aspects of the new world of work combine to make people's financial and personal situation precarious. There is as always the possibility that there is no work to be done (at least on the formal market) after the termination of a contract. The self-employed are not eligible for unemployment insurance. If they are precarious workers, they may not be able to accumulate sufficient hours to qualify for benefits ('employment insurance' in Canada), or there is a lifetime limit on receiving benefits (welfare in the US), or there is no programme (Mexico). This only compounds the loss of benefits once associated with the standard work contract, such as medical insurance and pension funds.¹²⁸ The self-employed are clearly not entirely resourceless. Indeed, they organize themselves to address common problems but they are not necessarily considered legitimate interlocutors by their employers or in public debates, nor are they necessarily successful despite obvious attempts to resist a deterioration of their conditions.¹²⁹

Ultimately, this form of employment entails minimal control over the work performed and over the workers' broader life circumstances.¹³⁰ Not only are these workers' prospects objectively grim, workers are aware that the prospects are grim: 'For long-term low-income people, steady work is neither possible nor expected. They live outside what economists call "the primary labor market" of steady jobs, and patch together an inadequate income from public assistance and temporary, under-the-table,

part-time, and/or extremely low-paid jobs'.¹³¹ The consequence of this type of existence is a greater level of stress than for those permanently employed, even those of the working class. The uncertainty regarding the future compels precarious workers to anticipate the end of their contract and look for alternatives. The precariousness of work means that this job strain does not remain confined to the workplace. Precarious work 'appears to lead to lower job satisfaction, exhaustion and depression, and in the long run, to stress-related illness'.¹³²

The public-private overlap II: the public enters the private

Above we have seen how women's work in the workplace and in the home or community restrict their agency. A similar overlap between the public and private sphere operates for precariously employed workers of both sexes. Two phenomena can be discerned here. One consists of a 'job spill' and a shrinking of personal space or downtime caused by the sheer volume of work that needs to be done. The other, called 'employment strain' below, is typical of those workers who have to think ahead of the current contract in anticipation of its end and about the need to find another one.

'Job spill' occurs when the work expected of an employee cannot be performed in what was once considered a 'regular' workday. Some workers find that the workday is insufficient to do all that needs to be done and so work must be performed outside the office even if hours spent at the workplace still follow the postwar pattern of, say, nine to five, five days a week. Some types of work are more prone to job spill than others since some work does not require the use of equipment that must remain in a factory. Thus management and some services tasks can be performed at home using a person's personal computer or relatively affordable equipment. Likewise, because some of the self-

employed have no clear workplace to speak of and no fixed schedule set by that workplace, there tends to be an overlap between work space and personal space.

When job spill occurs, workers experience it as a shrinking of their personal space. Every aspect of their personal lives seems to be affected by tasks that should normally be completed in the once-standard work week or before the person left the workplace at the end of a once-standard workday.¹³³ Jill Andresky Fraser speaks of this phenomenon as a blurring of boundaries and a 'subtle breakdown of the old rules' that distinguished work space from personal space.¹³⁴ Workers are not told in so many words by superiors that there is no such thing as a private or family life and that work should be done outside the workplace, but the workload increases in such a way that it becomes necessary to take work home or catch up outside formal working hours.

The first step in the loss of personal space is not the work brought home at the end of the day. It is the shrinking and disappearance of the normal downtime during the workday. In places where working conditions are particularly difficult, such as *maquiladoras* or agricultural labour, it is the most basic needs like bathroom breaks that are often overlooked as well as the imposition of a work cadence or schedules that preclude slowing down (fast food production, assembly line work, or trucking), much less time away from the work station.¹³⁵ More common is the reduction in the lunch hour that is either cut or cannot be used as intended. The expression 'lunch hour' takes on a more figurative meaning as that time between twelve and one rather than its literal meaning as the period during which the person has lunch and during which eating is the only activity.¹³⁶ Insofar as this takes place on the jobsite workers 'require neither time-keepers nor shop-floor supervisors to crack the whip, since they will *self-impose*

whatever work schedule—nine-to-nine, six-to-eight (meaning A.M. and P.M., of course), or well into the morning hours—is necessary to get the job done'.¹³⁷ Failing to do so might result in job loss.

When the formal work day ends, upon leaving the office to go home, some employees use the commute to 'catch-up' on telephone calls to clients or coworkers. The widespread availability of mobile phone and email takes away the technical barrier to work on the bus, the train or in the car.¹³⁸ Dinner time, if it remains unchanged from previous decades, may turn out to be a break spent 'relaxing' (cooking is a chore) or with family rather than the beginning of a few hours winding the day down. Thus, it is common for workers to use the evening to finish what was not completed before leaving the office so as not to start the next day behind schedule or to save work at the office.¹³⁹ Evening work further morphs into weekend work since weekday overtime is itself insufficient.

Weekend work is also necessary and expected if not demanded outright. One person interviewed by Jill Andresky Fraser noted that when he is at work, superiors are not interested in the other dimensions of his person and in the fact that he is a father with other things to do. When working he is expected to leave other sides of his person 'where they belong', that is, in the private sphere. He further commented on the asymmetry of treatment by pointing out that when he is in the private sphere as a single parent of two children, his employers expect the worker part him to remain available. In other words, the parent taking care of children, or the person spending time with friends, or doing housework, is not left alone in the private sphere and s/he is not allowed to leave work where it, too, belongs, in the workplace and between nine and five on weekdays.¹⁴⁰ Being

‘on the job’ means wherever a person can be reached, which is made easy with telecommunications technology.¹⁴¹

A third aspect of personal time affected by the workload is vacation time. If weekends are becoming a thing of the past, full weeks away from work are even more scarce. In the US and Canada, as in other industrial states, the right to paid vacations was part of a package of reforms introduced over a century to complement limits to the work week, the minimum wage, and working conditions. But vacation time has shrunk at the same time as competition increased. In Canada, nearly 40 percent of workers do not take vacations even when there is a legal entitlement to them.¹⁴² In the US the figure stands at just over one fifth.¹⁴³ The problem associated with a heavy workload on a daily or weekly basis extend over the entire work year. Taking a vacation, even a fairly short one, would cause the work to accumulate and require catching-up upon the worker’s return. Worse yet, work that needs to be done for a client now cannot be allowed to pile up and be caught-up on later. To that extent, even non-manufacturing work has some common characteristics with piece-work and home-work. The decision to eschew the vacation is therefore a rational one because the employees would otherwise be overwhelmed.

Thus, insofar as there is vacation time, part of it is spent keeping in touch with the workplace precisely to avoid these problems.¹⁴⁴ Because e-mail and voice mail are easily accessible, workers are tempted or expected to check them regularly to respond to requests from superiors, clients, or reduce future workload. In the late 1990s, the number of ‘working vacations’ in Canada stood at almost a quarter. Complete disconnection from work increasingly takes the form of one and two-day vacations (the ‘weekend getaway’ commonly seen in travel advertising). The upshot is ‘minuscule, rampant vacations’.¹⁴⁵

Given the stress of the employees, these holidays are more akin to sick days than to genuine holidays, as if the objective of a vacation was to deal with stress or personal problems (to be fixed) just to be able to work more productively when returning to work.¹⁴⁶ In the words of Andresky Fraser, there is a failure 'to appreciate that any work at all defeats the purpose of a vacation, which is to restore one's own sense of personal balance, enjoyment in life and independence from the office'.¹⁴⁷

Precarious, contractual, or self-employed workers face additional problems: they must look for work permanently and do so in addition to their current job. As precarious workers, they often cannot afford weeks and months without work. Lewchuk et al. use the expression 'employment strain' to designate the effect of workplace life on life outside the workplace. Whereas job strain refers to the way the work is experienced when it is being performed (during the working day and during the time of the contract), employment strain describes the effect of precarious work on workers even when they are not working. In other words, the worries associated with work stay with workers when they end their working day or their contract because they must think beyond their current position to their next source of income.

Distress also occur outside the work environment. Lewchuk et al. write: 'Many workers in precarious employment face constant uncertainty about their future employment prospects and the terms and conditions of their work. Low pay and lack of benefits can create added uncertainties, including workers' ability to provide for their basic household needs'.¹⁴⁸ At any given time, a person may have enough, but there is no short-to-medium term guarantees. Lewchuk et al. continue: 'workers in precarious employment may need to search for work on a regular basis, manage pay systems based

on completed tasks rather than hours expended, balance multiple jobs at multiple work sites, and provide their own equipment and training'.¹⁴⁹ The time that a better-paid, full-time, permanent worker could theoretically spend doing other activities or resting, the precarious worker must use to prepare for life after the current contract. Moreover, because income is insufficient, it is not possible (or it is risky) to refuse employment for the sake of taking a vacation since there is no guarantee that work will be offered after the scheduled vacation.

In a neoliberal economy, few dimensions of life remain untouched by the market. The places where people used to be beyond the reach of the market shrink to the point where economic imperatives redefine what it means to be human and the individual's activities all revolve around work. Some spaces have remained more sheltered than others but even they are affected by the new paradigm. In rural and indigenous Mexico, for instance, a separate social and economic model prevailed until the 1990s, but NAFTA required its abandonment in order to bring indigenous peoples into the economic mainstream of North America, now defined resolutely in neoliberal terms. Thus, if NAFTA transformed the lives of workers already active on the capitalist labour market, it revolutionized those of indigenous peoples of Mexico who had been sheltered from it.

The withering away of culture

As part of the package of reforms adopted by the Mexican government was the usual removal of price-support mechanisms and tariffs on foreign produce. Of more immediate concern to the Mexican population was maize since it is a staple of the Mexican diet and an agricultural sector that employs three times as many people as the

maquiladoras.¹⁵⁰ Free trade entailed the abolition of price-support mechanisms in the form of government-run marketing boards. Its abandonment came some five years before NAFTA but the Mexican government continued to support farmers through other mechanisms such as the *ejido* system that will be discussed shortly. It is the adoption of an open agricultural trade policy that has been particular detrimental to Mexican farmers. As tariffs on foreign produce were removed, farmers in Mexico were faced with a competition they could not match, especially given the subsidies US farmers continued to receive from their own government.

Meanwhile, other crops that were significant for Mexican agriculture were also affected by neoliberal reforms. As Timothy Wise notes, Mexico was the fourth producer of coffee in the world before NAFTA. Both it and its eventual main partner in NAFTA were parties to the International Coffee Agreement (ICA), which aimed to preserve the stability and the level of coffee prices worldwide. The decision of both governments to withdraw from the ICA meant the end of guaranteed prices for Mexican coffee farmers. The exposure of Mexico's coffee farmers to the world coffee market was then compounded by the arrival of a major new actor in coffee production: Vietnam went from quasi-nonproducer in 1990 to the number two producer (behind Brazil) in 2000, lowering the price of coffee worldwide. Finally, in 2002, the Mexican government abolished the Mexico Coffee Institute, which used to promote the coffee grown by close to 300,000 domestic producers.¹⁵¹

Agricultural reforms adopted by the Mexican government of its own accord or mandated by the terms of NAFTA are standard fare in neoliberalism. The structure of the Mexican economy changed from an agricultural one to one that is relatively more

dependent on manufacturing and services. The labour market was flooded with 'free' workers who had to find alternative employment. Yet, the reforms also had cultural effects. The protection of farmers also served to protect indigenous culture in parts of the country inhabited by native populations who relied on agriculture for their continued existence as cultures and as economic actors. The cultural transformations that NAFTA accelerated have had effects beyond the rural spaces in which they occurred when rural peoples were uprooted from their land and sought work elsewhere in Mexico or in the US.

Just as the personal space of workers is shrinking in industrial societies the cultural space of indigenous peoples is withering away.¹⁵² The Mexican countryside exemplifies this situation well. Its place in the Mexican political system is somewhat unique in that it institutionalized what some postcolonial theorists call 'hybridity'. The modern Mexican state emerged from the Mexican Revolution of 1917 in which a broad coalition of social actors opposed the *latifundistas* (large landowners) who controlled the country and its institutions. Among this coalition were indigenous and *mestizo* groups who constituted a majority of the rural population. As recognition of their contribution, a provision was added to the constitution that guaranteed communal control of agricultural lands and government support for an agricultural sector that preserved forms of social organization generally not seen in modern states.

The *ejido* system existed inside a state that had all the features of the modern nation-state, but that specifically aimed to protect indigenous cultures by creating a special regime governing rural areas of the country. The terms of NAFTA were a direct challenge to this regime because it corresponded to a particular cultural model that

commanded a particular organization of social relations that subjects social behaviour and political decisions to the market.¹⁵³ The market constrains actors' behaviour while NAFTA renders illegal certain policies that contradict the legal provisions of the pact. Indeed, in preparation for the entry of Mexico into NAFTA, the Mexican government abrogated the constitution's article and reformed the *ejido* system to subject *ejidos* to the market mechanisms.

Thus, the end of *ejidos* ought not to be seen simply as the introduction of the market mechanism in the Mexican countryside but also as a cultural re-engineering of Mexico's indigenous cultures. The policies of the Mexican government with respect to the countryside constitute a reshaping of relations between the state and the first peoples of the country.¹⁵⁴ Isabel Altamirano-Jiménez notes that the Mexican government policies followed the model of the international financial institutions even though these were no longer active in the country. By the late 1980s, neoliberal reforms had become a Mexican government choice rather than an imposition of the IFIs.

From the perspective of a modernizing administration, the *ejido* system was an obstacle to modernization. Considerable changes had already occurred in rural and native areas of the country prior to the 1990s,¹⁵⁵ but the expected entry into NAFTA made it difficult to reconcile the official concern for the agrarian lifestyle that underlay *ejido* and the modern, market-driven, social organization that is the hallmark of neoliberalism.¹⁵⁶ Arguably, NAFTA could exist with native forms of governance in its midst but this would have defeated the purpose of the pact since would have left them out of the purview of the market.

The changes that occurred were sometimes subtle. It is worth noting that they did

not take the form of a confiscation of native land the way the conquest of the Americas was conducted by early settlers. Instead, the new legal regime took away the right of rural communities to petition for land.¹⁵⁷ Petitioning for land allowed rural populations to request that land not already under *ejido* or not otherwise in use could be turned into communal property. Thus, to the extent that there were technically available lands, they could no longer be petitioned for.¹⁵⁸ If they were public lands, they were destined to remain so or be bought on the market the way lands are bought in Canada or the US. In the event of an increase in the rural population, the territorial base had to be further subdivided among more people rather than extended to accommodate them. An option for the survival of a native/rural model of governance was taken away.

Ejidors also lost financial support from the federal government of Mexico.¹⁵⁹ In addition to constitutionally protected communal property, the *ejidos* benefited from subsidies that covered expenses associated with the upkeep of communal lands. When work needed to be done or equipment needed to be purchased that were necessary for the functioning of the community, the government would pay for it. The abolition of these subsidies left rural communities short of capital. Given that areas covered by *ejidos* were generally low-productivity lands, the profits generated by the sale of produce was insufficient to obtain capital to reinvest. In other words, *ejidos* broke even because some of their overhead costs were supported by the state. Absent state support, they could not function.

The effects of the subtle changes were dramatic.¹⁶⁰ After 1994, lending by the state fell by three quarters. In the meantime, the number of bankruptcies increased six-fold. The lack of endogenous resources could only be remedied by opening the *ejido*

system to capital from outside. The government therefore allowed outside investors to purchase lands provided that someone from the *ejido* was willing to sell it. Outside investors and corporations used to be banned from owning communal lands. Since 1992, both can do so even if the communal authorities object to it. What is more, *ejido* members were given the right to dissolve the *ejido* by a vote requiring a quorum so small that a majority of members was not required to decide on its dissolution. Groups of investors, joint stock companies or commercial associations may buy if someone is willing to sell. *Ejido* land become a commodity like other lands in the country or like any other product.¹⁶¹

Though no longer subjected to state paternalism, indigenous peoples are the object of forces that undermine local or regional models of development.¹⁶² In official discourse, the opening of rural communities to foreign investments was expected to compensate for the lack of government funds. What in effect amounted to privatization of lands was thought to provide business opportunities for investors and employment for locals. This scenario has not materialized as only 0.2 percent of foreign direct investment in Mexico goes to agriculture and 94 percent of this investment goes to cash crops and hog farming,¹⁶³ thus turning farmers into farm workers and, in any event, making many of them superfluous given the relative mechanization of these industries.

For the most part, then, the Mexican countryside has not literally become integrated into the continental economy. Instead the opening of the Mexican market to produce from the US has curtailed the economic opportunities of Mexican agriculture and eliminated the countryside as a viable space where culture, economics, and politics could come together and respond to local priorities. Its inhabitants must leave these areas to find

alternative sources of income. They try to find employment in cities and export-processing zones to compensate for the loss of farming income. With the abolition of the special regime, 'Social citizenship is being replaced by market citizenship' as the inhabitants of rural zones are forced by circumstances to abandon a certain type of social arrangement—the *ejido*—to participate in the broader Mexican society that is itself being transformed by its inclusion in NAFTA.¹⁶⁴ To survive as individuals the first peoples of the country must give up culture, identity, and a more collective form of social organization.

In the eye of the law they become like other Mexicans, formally equal to them as they live under the same legal and economic regime.¹⁶⁵ This regime is driven by investors who are globally connected rather than by the indigenous peoples themselves. An important element of social choice has disappeared and what emerges is 'a market citizenship that encourages, forces or induces individuals to enter new relations with global networks where economic criteria and market incentives are predominant'.¹⁶⁶ There results a contradiction between the individual freedom acquired by individuals no longer subjected to the *ejido* system and the incapacity of these same individuals to shape the system in which they are now included. Some embrace the new right to enter deals with outside investors to compensate for lost subsidies. The system unwinds because the new rules of the game weaken those who would maintain it. Through it all, there is a convergence between the indigenous peoples of Mexico and the rest of the Mexican population at the same time as the Mexican population become subject to the same rules as the Canadian and US populations. Three legal entities still exist in North America, but their spatial distinctiveness is no longer coextensive with different ways of organizing

social relations.

Difficult economic times in regions of the country give rise to migration pattern within Mexico and towards the United States in the hope of finding employment while migration from province to province compensates the shortages of labour created by emigration to the US.¹⁶⁷ Migrants typically move to areas where rural labour commands a higher wage. Often, such work is available because the local population is not willing to take the positions available. The work performed by such internal migrants is primarily seasonal and does not compensate for the loss of livelihoods in the countryside as a result of farm bankruptcies.

Immigration from Mexico to the US is better documented. According to Peter Andreas,¹⁶⁸ such movement of people has been happening ever since Mexico and the US established significant transborder economic ties in the 1960s. It has only increased with time, and NAFTA was expected to compound this decades-old immigration. The effects of end of subsidies to farmers, of tariffs protection, and of the *ejido* system as a form of social welfare that allowed farmers to make ends meet were predicted. Already in the early days of NAFTA the Mexican government expected neoliberal reforms in the Mexican countryside to result in population movements toward the US. In the early 1990s, the Mexican government was predicting the emigration of one million Mexican per year for a period of fifteen years.

The actual numbers have not been as high as the prediction but immigration has accelerated. For David Bacon, 'It is no accident that the growth of the global system of free trade parallels a similar growth in worldwide migration of the dispossessed'.¹⁶⁹ As we have seen, the investment Mexico manages to attract under NAFTA is insufficient to

maintain people employed in the countryside or in the manufacturing sector. This has been made worse recently by the competition Mexico faces from other low-wage countries. One of the motivations of the US government in negotiating a free trade pact that included Mexico was the expectation that a growing Mexican economy as a result of investment and job creation there and solve the 'immigration problem'. The reasoning of some of the deal's promoters was that foreign investment in Mexico would provide sufficient opportunities to Mexicans and they would be less tempted to cross the border into the United States to find work. The opposite has occurred; conditions have deteriorated hence providing incentives for Mexicans to move North even if prospects there are not necessarily better.¹⁷⁰

Immigration has therefore continued and it is being perceived by an increasing number of Americans as a threat to their economy and their national identity even when it is legal. Some American intellectuals, politicians, and citizens' groups perceive this immigration as an invasion. In a major work of reflection on the meaning of immigration for the US, Samuel Huntington has argued that the recent waves of Mexican migrants to the US are different from previous waves in that immigrants not actively seek to assimilate. There have also been many ballot initiatives put forward by citizens' groups to require proof of identity for anyone (in principle) wishing to access public services in the hope that this would deter illegal immigrants from trying to avail themselves of them, presumably making the move North less attractive.¹⁷¹ From an economic point of view, Huntington points out that should Mexican immigration stop there would be an immediate, upward impact on US wages.¹⁷²

While this is often perceived as evidence of intolerance or racism on the part of

intellectuals like Huntington or on the part of union leaders and workers in industrial states, it is worth noting the clear support of national business groups for high levels of immigration.¹⁷³ Whatever the subtext of the critique of Mexican immigration to the US, this fact ought to give pause. It is doubtful that businesspeople would support immigration if it did not help keep their costs down in the course of doing business by ensuring a plentiful labour supply. Americans of all skin colours and languages are affected by this immigration. The level of exploitation occurring in industries that hire large numbers of foreign workers suggests that there is some validity to the criticism. In recent years, Wal-Mart has faced investigations and fines for its hiring of illegal workers and for wages and work hours violations.¹⁷⁴ On US (and Canadian) farms that function primarily thanks to 'guest workers' it is not a secret that local workers generally will not accept the wages and working conditions offered. Foreign workers are frequently praised (publicly, at least) precisely because they are hard-working and accept the conditions.

Mexicans who stay in their country and those who emigrate to the US face the same criticism as women who enter the job market. They are seen as the cause of declining wages because of their willingness to work for less, but it is political and business decisions that create the social environment in which Mexicans and others must operate. The acceptance of low-paid and precarious work is a reflection of social constraints more than it is evidence of lack of will to resist. Whether they are legal or illegal, workers are constrained by their need to remain employed and provide for their dependents. The competitive environment and the competitiveness culture instils in social actors survival instincts whereby they see one another (as individuals or as groups) as competitors rather than 'companions of misfortune'.

Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter has been twofold. First, it argued that poverty is a major manifestation of exclusion in the global political economy. Second, it showed that theories of global politics that account for the experiences of discrete subjects are inadequate portrayal of the problematique of exclusion in the current global order. Liberalized trade and investment regimes were portrayed as the solution to humans' need for development. In official discourse freer markets were expected to result in widely shared benefits. The emphasis was placed on the operations of the market rather than on state intervention. The latter's role now consists primarily in the creation good conditions for investments and in providing opportunities for capital to seek out the most profitable environment to produce.

Neoliberalism is characterized by the shift from reliance on the state to reliance on market mechanisms. Where economic activity used to be regulated to minimize the impact of powerful actors' behaviour on weaker ones, neoliberalism shifts the burden of adjustment on the weaker actors. They must now adapt to the business decisions of employers and investors and find a place on the market. Exclusion operates in a dual fashion here. First, the adoption of neoliberal policies is in itself a manifestation of exclusion because policy-makers devised the new social order with transnational capital in mind, marginalizing other social actors who objected to the new policies. Second, exclusion occurred because the policies did not lead to a betterment of the working and living conditions of those subjected to them. On the contrary, economic growth has coincided with slow job creation, a deterioration of wages and working conditions, and

an overall decrease in well-being in and out of the workplace. While there has been growth, most have been excluded from its benefits.

A look at the range of social actors that make up society reveals the gap between the promises of free trade and the reality experienced by most people in their everyday lives. The North American Free Trade Agreement, which served as an illustration, makes this clear. On the one hand, its Preamble speaks of job creation, of improving working and living conditions, of enhancing workers rights and of protecting the environment. On the other hand, an examination of the effects of NAFTA on the region's peoples reveals a very different picture.

The upbeat message of the promoters of free trade contrasts with the work ethic and self-reliance discourse that has characterized the neoliberal moment. In a booming economy that benefits everyone, there would be no need to lower the public's expectations. Yet, the urge to find meaning in mere work, whatever the pay and the conditions, is a sign of the failure of the economic model to produce what was promised: jobs, good working conditions, and high incomes. The fact that this discourse emerged before the signing of the agreement shows that reforms were expected to be painful, thus contradicting the official line. Secondly and not surprisingly, empirical evidence gathered from the experiences of the populations living under the free trade regime sharply contrast with that line. Individuals are expected to be at the disposal of potential employers or clients. They must compete against one another for a limited number of good positions and thus they must make themselves as attractive as possible to them. Deregulation and the curtailment of state supports leave them in a more vulnerable position; they do not have the range of options or the bargaining power they used to

enjoy. Policy and business decisions shape a social environment where they face constraints on their freedom.

The conception of the subject that underlies capitalism is one of free and equal individuals competing unimpeded on the market. However, when societies under neoliberal regimes are examined through the lens of the critical theories reviewed in Chapter I, it becomes obvious that they are divided. There is nothing particularly new about this and critical theory has already accounted for it. What is more important in the context of this study is that these cleavages are useful to investors seeking to maximize their gains. Divisions between workers of different regions, differences between women and men, and differences of circumstances between North and South are used to play off groups against one another. Through it all, it is the standard of living of all these people that is lowered, not simply that of one of them. There is a downward pressure in the working and living conditions of most people, be they female or male, Mexican or Canadian or American, working class or middle class, employees or self-employed.

From a theoretical point of view, what does this evidence indicate? It indicates that the contribution of discrete critical theories of global politics is inadequate to account for the phenomenon of exclusion. As social theories, they aim to produce 'true knowledge' of society and its functioning. To that extent, they are substantially successful: class, gender, and cultural dynamics are well accounted for in their own terms. However, they produce limited knowledge regarding the social experiences of all those who live under the current global order. All these theories' subjects share a geographical space (the globe) even if each theory is conceptually separate from the others (a different subject, a different form of exclusion). To the extent that the theories

propose alternatives to the current order they do so primarily with their subject and its experience in mind. Other may be acknowledged, but they are subsumed under the dominant agent and overriding concern. Critical theories thus reach their limits when they try to answer the question ‘What is to be done, and by whom?’.

From a normative and political point of view, the subjective bend of critical theory is problematic because it consists of asserting one subjectivity in the face of other dominant or competing-yet-not-dominant subjectivities. There are labour, feminist, and indigenous projects to address exclusion but they are not necessarily compatible even if they derive from an opposition to the same social order. The process whereby these various projects can accommodate one another is matter of muddling through. Minimally, it is about becoming aware of one another’s existence and peculiar experience. At a deeper level, muddling through means adopting an attitude of openness to others’ projects and interpretation of the world and the willingness mutually to adapt and take others’ aspirations into account in the process of transforming the social order. The numerous and visible demonstrations against the institutions symbolic of neoliberalism over the last dozen years have produced some awareness. The muddling through process has taken the form of the World Social Forum where a considerable variety of social actors engage in a tentative dialogue across standpoints to understand one another’s predicament. This process is the object of the next chapter.

Endnotes

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- ¹⁷² Samuel P. Huntington, 'The Hispanic Challenge', *Foreign Policy*, no. 141 (March/April 2004), 32.
- ¹⁷³ Tom Barry, 'Politics of Class and Corporations', <<http://americas.irc-online.org/am/224>>, accessed 27 November 2005.
- ¹⁷⁴ Steven Greenhouse, 'Labor Dept. Is Rebuked Over Pact With Wal-Mart', *The New York Times*, 1 November 2005, 14.

CHAPTER V

The previous chapter has argued that exclusion is widespread in global politics. It has demonstrated that neoliberalism contributes significantly to this exclusion. Workers, women, and third world peoples live in a space made common by the adoption of a set of policies that force a convergence in domestic economic and social policies and practices resulting in a generalized deterioration in people's life circumstances. As financial resources become more scarce, and as their personal space shrinks, room for social agency diminishes because actors focus on staying afloat. More to the point, the chapter has shown that the study of social exclusion cannot focus on a single subjective experience of it if it aspires to depict the effects of neoliberal globalization. To show by way of academic study that almost everyone is affected negatively is only part of the problem, however. As chapter IV ended, what remained to be seen was whether actors themselves were becoming aware of, and especially sensitive to, others' exclusion, and whether their way of thinking about and speaking to globalization changed as a result.

A major obstacle for the actors who wish to move from protest to an alternative is the link between specific experiences of oppression, in which their critique is grounded, and the normative project, which often addresses these specific experiences. The critique is a series of separate attacks on the adversary that are not conceptually coordinated except at the most general level (anti-capitalism, against exclusion, for justice, etc). In

chapter I, we have seen that the distinction between strictly critical and normative theories is important. Critique is sometimes very effective in pointing the contradictions inherent in an order but a given normative project leaves others wondering about the prospects it holds for them and its capacity to answer their primary concern. Ironically, critical theory's emphasis on the standpoint of the critics (the actors) gives it epistemological power but also a narrowness that is sometimes difficult to overcome. In the worst cases, the various critics are competing for attention and scarce resources and they become one another's opponents.

It is with this problem in mind that the following pages examine the popular reaction to a deterioration of socio-economic conditions as a result of neoliberal policies. Protests of the last decade express social actors' reaction to their own deteriorating conditions. While mass demonstrations aimed primarily to bring the plight of social groups to the attention of policy-makers, they also had the effect of making different social actors aware of one another's plight. And for some of them this was a discovery and an occasion to rethink their relations to others and to accommodate them in their search for a different social order. The frequent mention of the breadth of the protest movement and the creation of a space for dialogue like the World Social Forum (WSF) are evidence that the encounter with others' exclusion has provoked desire to respond to others' suffering and to try to alleviate it. The WSF was created to act as a facilitator for a dialogue between critics of neoliberal globalization.

Since the 1990s, the frequency of so-called anti-globalization demonstrations has increased and the protest movement have spread geographically. They have become one of the most visible expressions of the discontent toward neoliberal globalization. These

events have become such a feature of world politics that the media discuss them well in advance of their actual occurrence, usually in regards to the expected violence, and when international economic organizations hold their summits. Whether a summit brings together only ministers of trade or finance, or heads of state, large crowds can be expected to show up and demonstrate against the extension and deepening of the neoliberal model around the world. No longer can the summits occur in relative obscurity far from the media's and the wider public's attention.

By virtue of its scope and the diversity of its members, the movement against neoliberal globalization is a historically unique phenomenon. Previous global popular movements have organized around single issues or operate within a single paradigm. The actors who critique neoliberal globalization are more numerous and do not operate in isolation of one another. It is, moreover, difficult to point to a single hegemonic actor within the movement that obviously organizes and leads the others. Protests are organized by a diverse set of actors and the make up of the crowds in the street defies easy description. The specific critiques of neoliberalism are as diverse as the actors in attendance but they articulate a common concern. The actors have been brought together by a common experience of neoliberalism, primarily in the form of their instrumentalization at the hands of powerful market actors and policy-makers.

Protests have seen a convergence of separate struggles against the global order. This convergence has had an effect on the participants' consciousness. What started as a series of separate movements has developed into a more self-consciously organic movement whose participants are aware of their diversity and shared concerns. They have also become more willing to acknowledge and engage one another on the basis of

this diversity. Protests created an awareness of the existence of many people with a stake in resisting neoliberalism and in thinking otherwise about global social relations. In Chapter III, we saw how the witnessing of others' conditions can elicit an empathic response that leads empathizers to inquire into the social determinants of their suffering, their own possible contribution to it, and what they can do in response to it. At the Forum there is an attempt by actors to enquire into the conditions of others and into how others perceive their conditions. This mutual recognition and the effort to establish a dialogue is a manifestation of empathy in that it focuses not only on one's own exclusion, but others' as well. The capacity to empathize when faced with suffering has been aided by an intellectual climate skeptical of one-size-fits-all solutions for human emancipation and an awareness of a need for others to be subjects of their own life. This has resulted in a greater disposition toward taking others' views seriously and a willingness to be changed by them.

The World Social Forum is an attempt to create a space where another moral framework operates and ties social actors to one another. In the type of relations they promote between participants, the principles of the Forum create the conditions where empathy can develop. The World Social Forum takes for granted the existence of distinct subjectivities but it also assumes that dialogue and understanding can take place. The subjects' worldviews do not merge but their subjective needs are taken more seriously. The Forum is also predicated on an explicit recognition of the relational nature of globalization. The lives of the subjects of global politics are interconnected, and face-to-face relations at protests and at the Forum provide the opportunity for dialogue to occur.

This chapter looks at the ethical discourse about globalization that has emerged recently. This discourse is characterized by an explicit recognition of the *global* space in which social relations take place, of which the Forum is only a microcosm. Parts one and two discuss the role of protests in bringing about a common consciousness of neoliberal globalization. Part one presents some of the ethical principles that guide the movement against neoliberalism and the search for an alternative global order. Central to this principle is the idea that different groups of actors have different emphases and preferences with respect to exclusion and what is to be done about it. I argue that there nevertheless exist aspirations that are shared by many actors and that there is a willingness to think outside actors' own standpoint to develop values and practices that do justice to these aspirations. In part two, I argue that protests have played a role in the development of a global consciousness of the forms of exclusion associated with neoliberalism. Because so many standpoints are represented in the protests, they provide an opportunity for protesters to develop an awareness of the magnitude of exclusion and a common consciousness of the difficulties encountered by those who make up the world's population.

Parts three and four discuss the World Social Forum. In part three, I argue that the World Social Forum is an attempt to move from the criticism of the current model of globalization to its rethinking, the first step of which is the engagement of the critics with one another. I contend that the movement and its search for an alternative to the current order are characterized by the fact they put human needs at the centre of their discussions. In its organization and modus operandi, the World Social Forum rests on the recognition of social actors' circumstances and goals and on the need to make mutual adjustments to

allow others to pursue their objectives as part of an interconnected global space. Finally, part four addresses the question of the normative significance of the World Social Forum. It argues that the Forum should be looked at as a process that promotes a different ethical outlook and discourse on global politics. It is the objective of the organizers of the World Social Forum to foster dialogue among those who are affected negatively by neoliberal globalization. The WSF attempts to foster in participants a disposition toward others that allows for the transformation of participants' subjective understanding of the world through their contacts with others. Ultimately, it is hoped that alternatives to global neoliberalism can emerge that address as wide a range of concerns as possible.

Which Ethos of Globalization?

Sameness amidst difference

As I have argued in the previous chapter, neoliberal globalization has subjected most people to a common logic that draws them into market relations. Chapter IV presented key axes of exclusion central to neoliberalism. Each in its own way takes away the capacity for social actors to organize their lives. Would-be agents are instead slotted in particular social roles deemed fitting given their nature. More importantly, they fit into an overall policy framework that gives business a preeminent role in shaping global order. Given the leadership of large private sector actors in shaping the current model of globalization we could argue that 'Everything has been globalized except our consent' since much of what has occurred in this area has been done unbeknownst to most people or against their better interests.¹

Life under a system that spans the globe has created certain commonalities between actors otherwise separated by long distances and specific experiences of exclusion. The reason participants in the movement have converged on demonstration sites and the World Social Forum is an indication that they share certain concerns and aspirations yet to be realized.² As argued above, exclusion is the condition in which many social actors live their lives. It takes the form of exclusion from the specific benefits that a given social order, even a neoliberal one, may produce. It also takes the form of exclusion from meaningful participation in the determination of the order. The protests against neoliberal globalization have been directed at a cluster of opponents who together promote their particular model of development. The investors-states-international institutions nexus serves as the focus of the criticism. In the words of George Monbiot,

Corporate and financial globalization, designed and executed by a minority seeking to enhance its wealth and power, is compelling people it oppresses to acknowledge their commonality. Globalization is establishing a single, planetary class interest, as the same forces and the same institutions threaten the welfare of the people of all nations. It is ripping down the cultural and linguistic barriers which have divided us.³

The broadest cleavage among critics of neoliberalism is between the reformists and the anti-capitalists.⁴ Reformists do not necessarily reject political institutions and a role for the market. For them, capitalism provides some benefit and causes some problems. Global trade as such is not the problem. Terms of trade can be recast by strengthening or weakening some institutions so as to cover a wider range of social concerns.⁵ Similarly, the state need not be abandoned if it is responsive to its electorate. Just as national policy-makers enter treaties and conventions that favour investors, they can enter treaties and conventions that embody a different set of principles and favour other actors. Globally and regionally, institutions and organizations like the International

Labour Organization, the United Nations Environment Program, human rights commissions, etc. can be given a higher profile both in terms of formal powers and in terms of visibility.

The other stream, which Manuel Castells call 'anti-capitalist', by contrast, is against all forms of authority.⁶ According to Castells, its members are inspired by anarchist and neo-anarchist views of social revolution, partially cobbled from the remnants of the Marxist left after the dissolution of the Eastern Bloc. Their action is aimed at clearing the space for other social relations that would shun the division of labour, the state as a class instrument of domination, and other institutions that regulate the live of individuals and groups. Their actions against neoliberal globalization take the form of autonomous resistance up to and including violence (destruction of symbols) and their alternative takes the forms of self-governed communities.

It is more accurate to speak in terms of cleavages in the plural since both reformism and the anti-capitalism can follow different paths.⁷ Indeed, even in reformism, various groups can capture the institutions and reform them along preferred lines. Some functions of national and international institutions may be emphasized over others, as might be the case if a kind of neo-Fordism emerged under the pressure of labour. While some grievances may receive significant attention, other may remain unheeded. Likewise, anti-capitalism can take a variety of forms. It poses the problem of the size of the community and the precise values that by which its members would live. The standpoint that is privileged in a community can result in the oppression of dissenters. In this vein, the communist end-point of history component of anarchism sounds alarm bells since the universal subject of history and the ultimate model of society are already known

according to anarchists; it is only a matter of realizing them fully. Finally, given the considerable intermixing of people as a result of migration, the terms of engagement with other communities have to be worked out. 'Foreign' ideas and values are sure to influence some members so that complete autonomy may be difficult.

For all the partiality of their standpoints, most actors in the movement share a worldview that stresses the situatedness of struggles and of the knowledge gleaned through that experience.⁸ Oppression and the common adversary notwithstanding, there are actors of the movement who feel the need for a dialogue. There is a conviction that the movement needs to oppose a common front to proponents of neoliberalism that can address exclusion in general, which includes the exclusion in which critics themselves engage when they see one another as adversaries or competitors in the creation of another order. Parochialism is not seen as a workable a solution lest delinking, separatism, and closure become the preferred option.⁹ Accordingly, those who demonstrate must interact with one another. There is a minimal dialogue taking place and long-term connections and exchanges that are necessary to organize demonstrations on a global scale.

The search for the values of another world

In a statement reminiscent of critical IR theory Susan George spells out a commonly held view among the participants in the movement. She writes that 'People are now also justifiably leery of revolution and other so-called "grand narratives" given the totalitarian systems they have engendered in the past, even when the participants began with the best intentions'.¹⁰ The tendency to privilege a standpoint—one's own—leads to the exclusion or to the domination of others, and to factionalism when others resist. For

George, 'The mortal danger, the worst of all fates that a movement can suffer, is when its participants pick *each other* as the adversary'.¹¹ She suggests three guidelines to follow in relations with other social actors engaged in the search for an alternative model of globalization.

First, it is preferable to assume that all participants want the success of the movement as far as its general goals are concerned. Thus, the objective of opposing neoliberal globalization by opposing key institutions and actors that promote it is relatively unproblematic even if the search for an alternative is a much more complicated question. Second, George argues that it is preferable to err on the side of democracy. Openness to other groups is essential if the movement is to be broad and inclusive. This has a practical (even opportunistic) and an ethical dimension; breadth means credibility while inclusiveness aims to create a community where actors participate actively in determining the social order. Third, since most disputes do not involve all actors, asking other parties to perform an arbitration role can ease the feuding ones into a (renewed) dialogue. According to George, this approach is rarely used despite its potential for conflict resolution.¹²

The diversity of the network is an advantage. It is an argument often invoked by the participants in the movement, even when some members' actions are frowned upon. It is understood that there will be differences and conflicts between various segments of the movement. Susan George's words of caution are therefore made necessary by the very diversity of the movement. Should the values described above be consistently flouted by some actors, there remains the possibility of isolating the more intransigent

elements. For instance, some groups may be taken off mailing lists or not be given a stage at meetings (though they may attend and participate as individuals).

For Castells, the means of communications, the number of actors, and the global extent of the network indicate a qualitative shift in politics. In the context of the movement, networking

is not just an instrument of organization and struggle, it is a new form of interaction, mobilization and decision-making. It is a new political culture: networking means no center, thus no political authority. It means an instant relationship between the local and the global, so that the movement can think locally, rooted in its identity and interests, and act globally, where the sources of power are. It also means that all nodes in the network can and may contribute to the goals of the network, thus strengthening it by its relentless expansion. But it also means that dysfunctional nodes that block the overall dynamic of the network can easily be switched off or bypassed, thus overcoming the traditional ailments of social movements so often engaged in self-destruction through factionalism.¹³

The movement against neoliberal globalization is a process and a social experiment¹⁴ whose goal is the reduction of exclusion through permanent engagement with that problematique. There is a considerable knowledge of the human condition in the myriad actors who make up the movement. Hence, for Susan George ‘The movement needs each of us, all of our talents and skills, because the fight we face is multifaceted and deadly serious’.¹⁵ Whether talents or skills depend on the experience gleaned from a standpoint, or they are the product of formal learning (i.e., study), there is a degree of specialization among the actors of the movement. Not everyone can know about all other concerns. Yet, the consciousness of the ramifications of neoliberalism beyond actors’ own standpoint (an empirical and cognitive matter) coupled with a general attitude of concern about exclusion (an ethical outlook) is an opportunity to ask questions and learn about matters actors know less about.¹⁶

Writing of the movement members' relations with political parties, George raises a basic problem of mediation between different actors faced with their own constraints.¹⁷ Mindful of the interconnectedness of social actors in the globalization debate, she writes that 'Where mistrust exists, it can spiral and cause damage to the movement. Let me put it this way: we can't go on punishing forever the Socialists, Greens, radicals, Communists or whoever else messed up in your country. It's the same old questions about purity. Keep them out and lose for sure or let them, or some of them, in, see how they behave, and (maybe) win'.¹⁸ No one actor can successfully present an alternative. No one has sufficient knowledge or wherewithal to address the range of problems caused by neoliberalism. And some are limited by the circumstances in which they operate and the position from which they resist neoliberalism. Of these actors George says: 'Just don't ask them to go beyond the bounds of what they are able to do, or to take public positions that can compromise them with their own constituencies'.¹⁹

There is no shortage of alternatives that have been proposed to eliminate exclusion and suffering. However, these solutions assume the problem already resolved at a conceptual level.²⁰ This means that someone or some inherent historical logic has already come up with an end point to social evolution. According to this interpretation of history, even if the end point has not been realized yet, it is already known (the end-of-history thesis is the epitome of this reasoning). Political agency is therefore limited to constructing that order under the leadership of the agent who has divined the end-point.

In the face of dominant economic actors, protests seek to reassert the primacy of democratic participation. They are premised on a rejection of the overarching market logic where cost-benefit calculations aimed at maximum individual gain is the prime

motivation for social and economic intercourse. While not denying the existence of acquisitive behaviour in human beings, protesters reassert the relational—as distinct from competitive—character of social relations. Moreover, they reject the idea that there is no alternative and they express the will to construct a different global order where acquisitiveness and the market would be subordinated to other social objectives.²¹

The reaction to the neoliberal global order can therefore be construed as the second movement of a double-movement: an attempt to resist the market's encroachment on non-economic and non-market aspects of social life. But unlike the reaction of society in the 1930s, the reaction expressed by the protest movement and the search for an alternative globalization takes for granted globalization itself. In other words, it is not so much an *anti*-globalization movement as a movement to redefine the terms of the debate away from neoliberal philosophy of competition and individual and corporate gain, and to recast the practice of global social relations with human needs at the centre, and for fairer, more equitable social relations on a global scale.

Protests and Global Consciousness

Given a decade's hindsight, protests against neoliberal globalization appear to be part of the global political reality. Those who support the protesters and those who criticize them expect protests to occur and anticipate an animated debate to ensue about the worldviews in contention and the tactics deployed. This section argues that protests have played an important role in making visible actors and problems that are germane to the globalization debate. The emergence and growth of the protest movement is an indication

that more people have taken notice of the issues at the heart of the globalization debate, and that many have actually identified with those who started the movement. For many actors who became involved in demonstrations—and eventually in the World Social Forum—protests have transformed them from bystanders in the globalization debate into agents determined collectively to try to replace neoliberal policies by something else. Protests have therefore been an early step in the process of rethinking global social relations with exclusion in mind simply by bringing it to the attention of bystanders who subsequently became actors in the search for a solution.

There is nothing new about protests. Slave and peasant revolts have occurred in many epochs and in many places. Protests are a reaction to the conditions of those who rebel against an oppressor or a particular political order. Protests occur because there is also the realization that oppression continues only if the many accept the rule of the few.²² According to Roland Bleiker, they are a rejection of ‘voluntary servitude’. In the first instance, protests are an affirmation that one’s situation need not be accepted as ‘natural’. In the second, they are acts of agency whose objective is to resist or change the social order.

Better communications have enhanced awareness of rights and identities, and enabled social movements to mobilize opinion and strengthen democratic accountability. As a result, a truly global conscience is beginning to emerge, sensitive to the inequities of poverty, gender discrimination, child labour, and environmental degradation, wherever these may occur.²³

The number of protests aimed directly at neoliberalism since the 1990s has been staggering.²⁴ Some of them have struck the imagination of those who had taken no notice of neoliberalism as well as that of those who had been concerned with a more limited set

of issues, especially those associated with their own experiences. They have been for many actors a turning point in their awareness of the flaws of the neoliberal model.

Key events before Seattle 1999

Since the mid-1990s, there have been key moments of opposition to neoliberal globalization. Some of them were mostly unreported or they were not tied directly with anti-capitalist movements elsewhere, much less inscribed in a global trend. Such is the case with the many protests in developing countries since the debt crisis and the Washington Consensus regime imposed on debtor states. Others such as the Zapatistas' rebellion (Mexico in 1994), MAI (various cities in 1997-1998), WTO (Seattle in 1999), G-8 (Genoa in 2001), G-20 (Ottawa in 2001), IMF/World Bank (Washington, DC, annually, and Prague in 2000), Summit of the Americas/FTAA (Québec city in 2001) received ample, if mostly unflattering, coverage. Even those that did not enjoy global coverage sometimes had a deliberate global inscription as the participants gathered in one city to demonstrate against a meeting or summit that took place far away.²⁵

The Zapatista rebellion of 1 January 1994 was clearly not a global event in its organization, but it quickly acquired a global significance. It was a rebellion against specific implications of the North American Free Trade Agreement on the communal land ownership (a 'premodern' regime) of indigenous populations.²⁶ The repeal of article 27 of the Mexican constitution operated as the enclosures movement had in England centuries before. The repeal was also the last in a series of reforms that made the Mexican economy conform to the Washington Consensus and to prepare it to enter a formal trade agreement. The indigenous people of Chiapas had understood the local

consequences of the arcane provisions of an international legal text. Though a far cry from the transnational MAI protests of three years hence, some themes of Zapatista activism became familiar to protest movements elsewhere. Though not covered by most Western media until 1994, the Zapatista movement had been active for some two decades along with many other similar events that had been taking place in the South since the 1980s and it found considerable resonance in world media in the months and years that followed, and even more so in the literature and circles critical of global investment and trade liberalization.²⁷

The years 1997 and 1998 saw a deepening of the consciousness of activists when a coherent, transnational movement organized to disrupt the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Multilateral Agreement on Investment. While the thirty members of the Organisation denied the negotiations were secret, they had been underway for years before anyone got wind of them through a leak of the negotiating text. When the actors opposed to the MAI began to hold demonstrations, two aspects became apparent: the movement was global as social actors from several OECD members states organized coherently to demonstrate wherever the negotiators met to discuss the Agreement; and there was always tension in the air surrounding the protests even when the situation did not become violent as proponents and opponents felt that the stakes were high. It became clear that the OECD was an international organization that institutionalized neoliberalism and charted a course for its implementation, of which the MAI was a major step.

By the time the MAI talks collapsed, it was clear that assertions made by the then WTO Director General, Renato Ruggiero, were to be taken seriously: a constitution for

the world was in the making and the MAI was to be its investment chapter.²⁸ The repeated comparison between the MAI and chapter 11 of NAFTA by opponents of the Agreement served to highlight the global coherence of the economic model being pursued.²⁹ By then the protesters and a growing audience realized that different international organizations were promoting the same agenda. They were also aware that a successful negotiation would generalize to the planet a legal system that has been used frequently to roll back government regulation of investor and corporate behaviour, or to cause a chilling effect on future attempts to meet popular demands for environmental, social, or other protections.³⁰

For an obscure, putatively technical agreement, the MAI became tremendously politicized and publicized. It became impossible to avoid coverage of globalization and its discontents. According to the Canadian MAI negotiator, the effect of the MAI on public consciousness was greater than the debates occasioned by the 1980s' free trade debate.³¹ The fact that the International Chamber of Commerce was its author showed that economic globalization was the result of the agency of business, not that of governments or of the people who elect them, let alone that of the poorer, more vulnerable social actors. The existence of democratically elected governments, accountable to their constituents would have been undermined by the legal constraints of the MAI. By tying the hands of governments for a twenty-year period, it would have tied the hands of their people as well.³² Objections to the MAI were now seen to be consistent with objections to the WTO, the IMF, the World Bank, the FTAA, and other regional economic fora under negotiation. The experience of North Americans with restrictions

imposed by NAFTA's chapter 11 became intelligible to others elsewhere. Indeed, NAFTA is *the* model for other investment and trade agreements.

Seattle 1999 and the emergence of a global consciousness

Partly as a result of the global mobilization of masses and the negative publicity it generated, the MAI negotiations collapsed. Nevertheless, the objective of a comprehensive investment agreement was not abandoned; it was suggested that it be moved to the main global economic forum, the WTO. When WTO members got together in 1999 in Seattle for the Millennium Round of negotiations, the demonstrations were larger than those that greeted the MAI. According to Sam Gindin, 'The Seattle and post-Seattle protests had no ready-made alternatives' but they served as a wake-up call. For Gindin, Seattle was significant because the global political and economic order got named: it was capitalism.³³ There had been pessimism among opponents of neoliberalism about the effectiveness of the opposition, despite the apparent victory against the MAI. The WTO summit of 1999 served as an antidote.

The Seattle protests were a coming together of a vast movement. In the months before the summit and in the weeks following it, no less than 62 protests occurred around the world that were specifically organized with the Seattle meeting in mind.³⁴ For Manuel Castells, Seattle was the coming of age of a movement

that opposes, on a global scale, the values and interests shaping the current globalisation process. Social struggles which explicitly reject unfettered, capitalist globalisation, had been taking place for over a decade, including riots against IMF-inspired austerity policies in various developing countries, as well as identity-based insurgencies which called for global resistance against global domination, particularly the Zapatista insurgency....³⁵

It became apparent that a significant cross-section of the world's population did not 'want in' economic globalization on the terms proposed. Whereas promoters of the WTO's agenda made it a question of freedom and prosperity (free markets and democracy), the opponents made it a question of power, inequality, and exclusion on a global scale. They repoliticized free trade on different terms. Protests put a human face on capitalism, in particular that of those who experience its effects.³⁶ In other words, the protests gave some voice to the excluded and some emerging actors of global politics. The result of the so-called Battle for Seattle was similar to that of the Zapatista rebellion in that 'journalists, politicians, and diplomats were shocked by the vocal and dramatic protests of 30,000 demonstrators critical of the WTO and its gospel of free trade and "globalization"'.³⁷

A common vocabulary of exclusion has developed that is now meaningful to most of those involved in the movement against neoliberal globalization. Expressions like 'social dumping' and 'social deficit' became more common in public debates.³⁸ The balance of evidence regarding the effects of investment and trade liberalization on the world's peoples tilted away from liberalization's proponents.³⁹ According to John French, labour—to say nothing of gender, social justice, and ecology—were issues that the WTO's Renato Ruggiero had not expected to come up at Seattle.⁴⁰ It was especially shocking to the supporters of the WTO that the then US president suggested that labour conditions and social rights ought to be considered relevant to the discussion.⁴¹ Clinton was criticized for giving in to street hooliganism rather than staying on course and on message. Nevertheless, the protests had forced a very public acknowledgement of the links between trade and other matters.

There was also a symbolic dimension to Seattle demonstrations. They occurred in a prototypical global city and they brought together a range of perspectives seldom present in the same location. The organizers of the Millennium Round had traded on the character of Seattle as a kind of global city that represented the promises of the global market:

The Seattle protests seized the world's imagination in part because they were so unexpected in a thriving trade-based U.S. city that was the world headquarters of Boeing and Microsoft, giants of the 'old' and 'new' economy respectively. There was much that was distinctive in Seattle, including the breadth of those participating, the diversity of their concerns, the creativity of their actions and the mobilizational tools that helped bring them together, such as the Internet.⁴²

The inability of the trade ministers to arrive at a common position at the end of the summit underlined the resistance that existed even inside the conference centre. According to Stephen Gill, the action in the street influenced the discussions inside so that some governments' positions became untenable in light of what their constituencies were saying.⁴³ Third World delegates in particular seem to have felt bolstered by the messages coming from the street.

The scenes of the Seattle protests were repeated in somewhat less dramatic fashion during other summits in Washington, DC (IMF and World Bank), Québec city (FTAA), Ottawa (G-20), but the 2001 G-8 summit of Genoa resulted in the death of a protester who was shot by the police. The violence at Genoa was also considerably more intense than elsewhere, even without considering the protester's death. What is striking about the summits is the script-like quality of the arguments for and against the institutions, and the unfolding of street-level events that took place over several years. First, they evince the fact that NAFTA, the MAI, the IMF/World Bank, the G-8, the G-20, the WTO, or the FTAA are pillars of a single system—underpinned by a single,

coherent worldview—that covers most parts of the world. Second, they show that these fora are geographically mobile, so to speak. Whether they are organizations headquartered in a city (e.g., the WTO in Geneva, the IMF/World Bank in Washington, DC, the OECD in Paris) or whether they are deterritorialized institutions (the G-8, G-20, and NAFTA do not have a physical, bricks-and-mortar presence), heads of state, ministers, or delegates travel to various cities for talks or for photo opportunities as a symbol of the global character of policy-making and they are followed by a global opposition movement.

Protests have become ‘a transversal phenomenon—a political practice that not only transgresses national boundaries, but also questions the spatial logic through which these boundaries have come to constitute and frame the conduct of international relations’.⁴⁴ Protests have been transformative moments in which the protesters’ way of thinking about others have been altered following the realization that their fates are intertwined and that global relations are structured in ways that are deleterious to many others. Both ‘the political and mental boundaries erected by existing practices of international relations’⁴⁵ have been undermined. The Zapatistas called this kind of moment the opening of ‘a crack in history’ because it caused a rupture with the dominant narrative and opened up other avenues.⁴⁶ These events redefined the relevant actors of global politics and how politics is conducted.⁴⁷ Participants are actors who air their views and tell of experiences generally not recognized by promoters of global capitalism or protests grounded in Marxist or nationalist thinking. For although Marxism opposes capitalism and nationalism opposes globalization, neither addresses the conditions of many other sub- and transnational groups.

These key events have, if nothing else, put the issue of neoliberal globalization on the public agenda partially on the critics' terms. The actors who make up the protest movement and their views are no longer invisible to each other and the broader public.⁴⁸ They are not single-issue (we might also say single-standpoint) protests; rather, protesters raise a wide range of problems that are inherent to the current global order, such as capitalism itself, (neo)colonialism, patriarchy, ecological destruction, and the commodification of social life generally. According to Joseph Stiglitz, the demonstrations that took place since the mid-1990s and especially since Seattle explain the timid recognition of the failure of the Washington Consensus policies. The fact that the word 'reform' is now uttered by long-time proponents of neoliberalism is due to the protests. While the consequences of the Washington Consensus were well-known before the late 1990s, there was little impetus to address the social and economic crises associated with what he calls 'market fundamentalism'.⁴⁹

As if shadowing the institutions of economic globalization, activities outside the convention centres and hotels display a similar dynamic. With each summit, protests and police interventions occur almost down to the last detail. With each demonstration and authorities' reaction in one 'global city', the protests and crackdowns in other cities during other economic summits become more familiar to the public. It becomes evident that liberalization and resistance to it are global in scope. The violence and destruction can no longer be thought of simply as the product of the lack of civility of people in other countries because it also happens in one's own. The widespread character of resistance, the similarities of the dissenting discourses, and the apparent coordination and information exchange by authorities regarding protesters, render similar events in other

countries less alien. What protesters say and what they do gradually becomes more intelligible across spatial, language, and cultural barriers.

These movements were objectively interrelated in that the participants were struggling without necessarily being aware that they were doing so against the same system in their own circumscribed spaces. After Seattle, there was a realization that neoliberalism has expanded through the cooperation of Northern and Southern elites, not strictly through a North-to-South, top-down, process. Accordingly, there also was the acknowledgement of a 'global North' and a 'global South', that is, that the excluded are found in all regions of the globe and that the expansion of neoliberalism 'is occurring in conjunction with the oppression of political, economic, cultural, racial, gender, sexual, ecological and epistemological differences'.⁵⁰ With the global protests and the emerging global consciousness of exclusion, those who were struggling self-consciously began to organize on a global basis through networks of publications, organizations, and individuals. Personal contacts and relations have developed among protesters and critics of the dominant social model. There have been deliberate efforts on the part of protesters and intellectuals associated with the movement to understand the predicament of those affected by neoliberalism. Participants' and organizers' creation of geographical and online discussion forums that are predicated on openness serves to actualize the principle of openness that makes understanding possible.⁵¹

The World Social Forum: Creating Another Ethos of Globalization?

In his study of protests' impact on world order, Roland Bleiker writes that 'The objective of this disruptive process is not to declare alternative forms of knowledge true or even superior, but to reveal ... that the nature of international relations is intrinsically linked to the stories that are being told about it, and that an unsettling of these stories has the potential to redirect the theory and practice of global politics'.⁵² A potential redirection of world politics is not the same as an actual redirection, however, as the protestors' detractors have pointed out. Protests 'point towards a new political project oriented to discovering, articulating, and building an alternative' because they bring to the fore matters thus far ignored that can be factored into a future social order.⁵³

Many organizers of the protests and the initiators of the World Social Forum were conscious of the need 'to reposition their growing global movement from its perceived stance of opposition to neoliberalism and globalization to a more effective stance based on the promotion of a viable alternative or alternatives to the existing global order and neoliberal project'.⁵⁴ In the minds of the WSF founders, the struggle for an alternative globalization begins with an effort toward a more inclusive understanding of global relations and of the exclusion, oppression, and suffering that appear ubiquitous in global politics. The ethos of alter-globalization is the desire to learn from the experiences and conditions of others and to make them the permanent background to ethical thinking about globalization.

The origins of the WSF

The World Social Forum is a relatively recent initiative. In 2000, one year before it was first held in Porto Alegre, Brazil, a few actors, most of them from the South, organized an anti-World Economic Forum (an ‘anti-Davos’) event in Switzerland.⁵⁵ Participants included the World Forum of Alternative (WFA),⁵⁶ the World March of Women, the Brazilian Landless Rural Workers, the Association for the Tobin Tax and Aid to Citizens (ATTAC), and the French monthly *Le Monde diplomatique*. Since then, a long list of organizations that have been active in advocacy, activism, or research pertaining to economic and political matters in the broadest sense of the term have joined into what is now the World Social Forum.⁵⁷

The holding of the first World Social Forum in 2001 was a joint initiative of ATTAC and several Brazilian non-governmental organizations.⁵⁸ ATTAC itself was created as a reaction to a *Monde diplomatique* editorial on ‘disarming the markets’⁵⁹ which drew an unusual amount of letters from readers.⁶⁰ Already in 1997 there existed significant doubt about the market-driven character of globalization that caused the ideas proposed by the monthly to resonate among a variety of organizations, including unions, farmers’ associations, and social movements.⁶¹ Under the leadership of Bernard Cassen and with the intellectual support of *Le Monde diplomatique*, ATTAC’s reach extended beyond France.

Following discussions between Cassen and Oded Grajew, a Brazilian entrepreneur, and Francisco Whitaker, the secretary of the Council of Brazilian Bishops’ Commission on Justice and Peace, a decision was made to effect ‘a symbolic rupture with everything Davos stands for’.⁶² Cassen, Grajew, and Whitaker hoped to create an

alternative forum that would be global and that would emphasize social rather than market relations. This was to be a primarily southern initiative so that the eventual event's organizers, agenda, and participants would be representative of globe's population and the problems it encountered. In that optic, says Cassen, 'Brazil has the ideal conditions for doing so, as a Third World country with gigantic urban concentrations, a wretched rural population, but also powerful social movements and friendly political bases in many cities'.⁶³

Although there was input from industrial states, Brazilian organizations were the driving force behind the World Social Forum. Thus, the first edition was largely organized by Brazilian Association of Non-Governmental Organizations (ABONG), the Brazilian Justice and Peace Commission (CBJP), the Brazilian Business Association for Citizenship (CIVES), the Central Trade Union Federation (CUT), the Brazilian Institute for Social and Economic Studies (IBASE), the Centre for Global Justice (CJG), and the Landless Rural Workers Movement (MST)—the latter being one of the largest social movement in Latin America.⁶⁴ A delegation composed of representatives of these NGOs approached the state and municipal authorities in Porto Alegre to enquire into their willingness to host the event 'on the understanding that the event would be promoted not by these governments, but by the civil society organizations that embraced the proposal'.⁶⁵

The WSF and the principles of 'another world'

The World Social Forum presents itself in a negative and in a positive dimension. In the negative dimension (the 'anti-Davos' dimension), the WSF expresses an opposition

to the market-led globalization. In its positive dimension, it stands for 'building alternatives to think and organize together in favour of human development'.⁶⁶ The principles of the WSF put the emphasis on the recognition of the multidimensional character of exclusion. They also emphasize the relativization of individual actors' experiences and preferred projects in light of the alternatives that other actors may envisage. They enjoin participants to remain open to the contribution of others to the discussion and to their proposals or wishes. Others are seen as concrete persons rather than generalized others. The WSF's hope is that between Forum, when participants return to their respective regions of the world, they bring with them the experiences and problems of those they have met and exchanged with and make them part of their moral community.

The type of social relations that the Forum's organizers seek to bring about is much closer to the definition of human development used in chapter four than to the neoliberal model. The latter is characterized by a policy uniformity that tends to reduce the margin of manoeuvre of social actors to shape their world through public authorities. In contrast to this uniformity, the WSF posits itself as a space and a process where the actors who are affected negatively by economic globalization engage in an ongoing exchange of knowledge regarding their conditions and the solutions they envisage to their respective problems. Accordingly, the WSF describes itself as

an open meeting place where social movements, networks, NGOs and other civil society organizations opposed to neo-liberalism and a world dominated by capital or by any form of imperialism come together to pursue their thinking, to debate ideas democratically, for formulate proposals, share their experiences freely and network for effective action.⁶⁷

At its most basic level, therefore, the WSF is an attempt to practice what critical theorists have called self-reflexivity; that is, the attitude consisting in becoming aware of the partiality of one's understanding of the world and the existence of other understandings and moral visions. The WSF takes self-reflexivity out of academic writings and makes it a principle of dialogue in the context of the World Social Forum. As we will see in the next section, the diversity and the willingness to engage with one another gives concrete expression to the values expounded in the WSF charter and documentation and it does greater justice to the multiplicity of standpoints from which the current economic model is experienced and understood.

At another level, the Forum is more than mere self-reflexivity on the part of actors because it is a conscious effort of the self toward others. As argued in chapter III, the awareness of suffering can and does sometimes lead to a deliberate effort to address the causes of others' suffering. But this move toward easing the pain of others is not a single-handed one. For the Forum's organizers, the solutions, if they are to take shape, must be a product of mutual comprehension and adjustment. Many participants in the WSF display a certain willingness to inquire into the conditions of others and their experience of exclusion, as their writings on the Forum attest.

Although there is no unifying theory of emancipation and no single subject to lead the way, the World Social Forum does entail a theory of communications that takes for granted that social actors can speak and do speak legitimately to their experience. There is no a priori reason to exclude their understanding of their life circumstances from the debate. Consequently, the solutions they propose to their problems are as a matter of admissible as a matter of principle. Communication also rests on a conviction that

participants can understand the predicament of others if a positive effort is made in that direction. In short, despite the diversity of specific experiences, the model presumes a shared humanity that makes communication and intellectual exchange possible.

The Forum is not meant to devise a single alternative model of globalization to be adopted by all its participants, however. Such an alternative could emerge but the Forum does not aim to bring it about. Indeed, the WSF is a body that is 'not deliberative in nature' and that does not issue declarations (like the World Economic Forum) or take binding decisions as international bodies do (like the World Trade Organization, for instance). The WSF 'does not constitute a locus of power to be disputed by the participants in its encounter' as a parliament or a cabinet would. Indeed, 'No-one is authorized on behalf of the Forum, to express positions claiming to be those of all its participants'.⁶⁸ There are consequently no processes for voting or for acclamation that would yield a common position at the end of its meetings.⁶⁹

Because it is founded on the principle of a dialogue among participants occupying different standpoints and having different aspirations, it is taken as a given that the 'Forum will coexist with contradictions and will always be marked by conflicting opinions among the organizations and movements whose positions lie within the bounds of its Charter of Principles'.⁷⁰ The WSF serves only as 'a space for actors who may construct democratic projects in different contexts, both local and global. Among its organizers and participants there have been different ways to emphasize these different identities of the World Social Forum that are by no means incompatible'.⁷¹ Unsurprisingly, then, the proposals can run the gamut from reforming international institutions to abolishing them. Alternatives sometimes take the form of the preservation

of communal societies (as in Chiapas) to the preservation of the welfare state in advanced industrial economies (as for ATTAC), and from the formal recognition of human rights to the inclusion of marginal social actors in political institutions' decision-making processes.

As an ethical framework for exchanging views with others, the WSF's principles enjoin participants to adopt an open stance toward others' experiences. The principles attempt to check 'totalitarian and reductionist views of economy, development and history' that would marginalize some actors.⁷² 'As a forum for debate', reads the charter,

the World Social Forum is a movement of ideas that prompts reflection, and the transparent circulation of the results of that reflection, on the mechanisms and instruments of domination by capital, on means and actions to resist and overcome that domination, and on the alternatives proposed to solve the problems of exclusion and social inequality that the process of capitalist globalization with its racist, sexist and environmentally destructive dimensions is creating internationally and within countries.⁷³

The WSF is based on few presumptions besides these principles that the participants are urged to actualize in their exchanges. Participants are not expected to abandon their subjectivity, but they are encouraged to bracket it temporarily for the sake of understanding their perspective and needs. Subjectivity and identity is therefore not incompatible interconnectedness; they are relativized by the concern for the existence and identities of others. This disposition toward others aims to make possible for them to exist and act as subjects in their own lives:

As a framework for the exchange of experiences, the World Social Forum encourages understanding and mutual recognition among its participant organizations and movements, and places special value on the exchange among them, particularly on all that society is building to centre economic activity and political action on meeting the needs of people and respecting nature, in the present and for future generations.⁷⁴

Development is also meant to be autonomous inasmuch as actors are urged not to act in ways that constrain others. As it is construed here, ‘To be autonomous is not to be alone or to act in any way one chooses—a law unto oneself—but to act with regard for others, to feel responsibility for others. This is the crux of autonomy, an ethic of responsibility and reciprocity that comes through recognition that others both desire and are capable of autonomy too’.⁷⁵ Social practices or policies promoted by the actors of world politics become dependent on their anticipated effects on others. The Forum, then, helps create a mutually enabling environment on its grounds and a broader moral framework for thinking about social relations in a global context.

Participants and their views

Beyond the principles put forth by the organizers and the World Social Forum, which can be found on its website, the WSF is supposed to be about delegates and participants’ engagements with one another. Since its first edition in 2001, the number of participants at the WSF has increased considerably. From an estimated 15,000 in 2001, their number has grown to over 100,000. Over the years, the origins of the participants have also changed. The World Social Forum has become linguistically, culturally, and ethnically more diverse. It has brought together participants from different social backgrounds, including from the middle-class and from academia. It has become more globalized, both in terms of the actors who are represented and in terms of the issues that are being addressed. Importantly, the WSF has attracted organizations and individuals from industrialized countries who sometimes are struck by the intellectual ebullience of

the Southern movements and who admit to having learned about the world from attending it.⁷⁶

The World Social Forum is, in a sense, globalization from below. It is an initiative of actors who are relatively less wealthy and powerful than those who have thus far shaped the global order:

The representatives of grassroots social movements and progressive organizations from Latin America and the Caribbean have been a major force at both of these meetings. In fact, Latin American and Caribbean activists and progressive organizations are now providing the organizing leadership, along with their European counterparts, for what the mainstream media have come to call the 'antiglobalization movement'.⁷⁷

Along with the diversification of the participants, the number of writings about the WSF has increased considerably. Most writings, whether positive or critical, about the World Social Forum are by participants who share its broad ideals. For US human rights advocate Cynthia Peters, the WSF represents precisely what activists have in mind when they try to effect change to reposition social matters at the centre of the globalization debate. Referring to the motto of the Forum, she writes:

For social activists, the idea that another world is possible underscores everything we do—every neighbourhood meeting, every demonstration, every debate, every letter-writing campaign, every boycott, every civil disobedience, every effort to mobilize others and ourselves. But it's not often that this private premise becomes public slogan, as it was in Porto Alegre last month when 50,000 people from around the world gathered in Brazil for the World Social Forum (WSF).⁷⁸

In Peters' view there is a continuum between the local issues faced by given social actors in their everyday activities and the global issues tackled by those who attend events like the WSF. But interest in the World Social Forum is not limited to its global character, for there is nothing new about global social movements, as communism and anti-colonialism attest. What makes the Forum stand out according to Peters is that its

objective is to build solidarity across different standpoints.⁷⁹ In the context of the Forum, the local-global connection has been created by the neoliberal order that brought to the fore a broad range of questions that lie at the centre of globalization, but that had not previously been considered related.

Even concerns that were underrepresented in some of the main Forum events (Peters singles out gender) have broken out thanks to the smaller events taking place as part of the WSF. The organizers of the World March of Women (WMW) for their part have noted that the WSF presents opportunities for feminists to raise awareness of gender issues. According to the WMW, feminists who attend the Forum can use the occasion to meet with other excluded groups to effect a transformation of the movement for alter-globalization in the direction of greater gender sensitiveness. They remark that there is nonetheless resistance to the inclusion of gender at the core of the Forum's concerns as gender questions are not seen to be of universal relevance.

In the WMW's view the principles of the WSF provide an opening to raise the profile of gender. 'Our challenge', notes the WMW's December 2003 *Newsletter*, 'now is to clearly define our priorities and expectations regarding the World Social Forum as a process and as members of the Social Movements International Network, which was created by the WSF and of which the World March of Women is a founding member'.⁸⁰ The WMW's own Charter, the *Newsletter* points out, dovetails with the principles of the forum as 'In the Charter we refer to values feminists have defended for many years: equality, freedoms, solidarity, justice and peace. Among other things, the Charter will be an extremely useful tool in the World Social Forum process, driving our appeal to build another world based on these values'.⁸¹

For US academic John Hammond, the term anti-globalization routinely applied to demonstrators and WSF participants is a misnomer; the participants would rather define themselves as a 'global justice movement'. Participants in the WSF, Hammond writes,

practice a form of globalization: they make connections across national boundaries, and they offer alternatives, more than protesters at major demonstrations such as the ones in Seattle in 1999 and Genoa in 2002. Different groups have different emphases, but among the most widely voiced projects were defense of the public sector, job creation through small scale cooperative businesses, and participatory democracy.⁸²

According to Hammond, a 'participatory ideology' cuts across actors and issues represented at the Forum. Together, the participants attempt to build solidarity to counter the effects of neoliberal globalization and to learn from one another about ways to oppose the policies of the institutions that implement it. For Arturo Escobar, The members of protest movements against neoliberalism and the participants in the WSF have recognized what Connolly called the 'richness of life' (cf. Chapter II) and they have organized globally using new technologies to raise awareness and hold a dialogue on exclusion and among those who are most affected by it. For Escobar, then,

It can be said that social movements propitiate 'communitarian moments' that is, moments where communities without fixed identities are created through 'difference effects,' and as so many expressions of free difference. The world-wide consciousness of the AGMs is largely and effect of this new sensibility; to this extent, the net has enabled the coming together of a host of social and cultural minorities to produce effects at various levels and in various social and political conditions.⁸³

This variety of actors and the attitudes they bring to the Forum grounds give the World Social Forum much of its symbolic significance. Comparing the World Social Forum to a medieval fair, Susan Richards contends that the WSF is a fair where the actors do not trade goods, 'but ideas and arguments, pleas and perspectives, testimonies

and fresh research. They come out of the ongoing work of NGOs and trade unions. They come out of forums that have been meeting through the year, locally, nationally and regionally. For the WSF is more than a single event. It is only the largest of a network of networks, straddling the globe'.⁸⁴ For the 'market' character of the fair, Richards adds that the currency used by the participants is not money. Rather, the currency is time, and 'time seems to be in plentiful supply'. Because of its open-ended character the most participants consider the Forum a process that must unfold in a way that seeks to avoid marginalizing other participants. There is no historical urgency or absolute necessity to produce short-term concrete results if such results might come at the expense of some social actors.

Open-ended dialogue rather than moral absolutes

The objective of the Forum is not to present an alternative grand narrative of progress to the neoliberal view of capitalist globalization. Nor is it to predict or accelerate the movement toward the end-point of history in light of where the world is or has been, as in the Marxist view of history. While this would meet the goal of opposing and replacing neoliberal globalization, it would also contradict the stated aims of the organizers and those of many participants. Hence the contention of one organizer that alternatives should not aim only to address neoliberalism; the prime concern of the Forum is more comprehensive: 'We want to create alternatives, not just to neo-liberalism, but also to various types of fundamentalism and un-democratic governments'.⁸⁵

Latin American feminists raised the question of fundamentalism through a campaign called *La boca fundamental* (The Fundamental Mouth) at the 2002 Forum.⁸⁶ In the campaigners' words:

Whether religious, political, economic, scientific or cultural, fundamentalism is always political and flourishes in societies which negate the full diversity of the human race and which legitimate the use of violence to subordinate one group to another, or one person to another. Essentially exclusionary and bellicose, fundamentalisms undermine the construction of a project for the human race where all people have the right to have rights, by sacrificing women's lives, with increasingly refined perversity.⁸⁷

Nowhere is the worry about undemocratic governance more obvious than in the debate between Marxist-inspired revolutionary movements and most World Social Forum participants. Peter Waterman reports that a counter-WSF (Mumbai Resistance) took shape parallel to the January 2004 WSF in Mumbai. 'This movement', writes Waterman, 'pursues a Marxism of binary opposition, a Manichean Marxism', and

considers discussion and analysis of the rights and wrongs of globalisation to be a derogation from a 100-year-old Leninist theory of imperialism. It is therefore suspicious of or hostile to the anti-globalisation movement. The only concession it will make to the new movement is that it has managed to capture a widespread and multifarious discontent internationally. It therefore becomes a suitable object for penetration and/or competition.⁸⁸

Waterman argues that the dichotomous thinking of the 'archaic left' mirrors that of the proponents of neoliberalism. In other words, each side in the old debate portrays any other perspective as insufficiently transformative or as a sign of weakness in the face of the adversary. Thus, the fundamentalisms and un-democratic governments referred to above are in the first place neoliberalism and traditional revolutionary Marxism-Leninism. For although both can be said to replace tyrannical social systems (feudalism/monarchy and capitalism/bourgeois state, respectively), they also entail forms

of coercion to bring about their alternative of a better world. Likewise, other forms of governments that have marked the twentieth century, such as fascism (or other hyper-nationalisms) and religious fundamentalism, are paths that WSF participants try to avoid. Each in its own way, these various ‘fundamentalist’ conceptions of world order rely on a unified system of ideas and a single agent imbued with a world-historical role, hence the weariness of the World Social Forum’s participants.

Despite the presence of revolutionaries and other actors inclined to use more muscular means to oppose neoliberalism, most participants adopt a reflective approach vis-à-vis the struggle in which they are engaged, vis-à-vis one another, and toward the other world they believe possible. For Kamal Mitra Chenoy,

the range of views and discussions at the WSF reflects the serious thinking among those present in search of fresh, sustainable, people-centred models of globalisation. But when all regional, national and even local particularities are taken into account, it has become clear that there can be no single ‘alternative’ model.... Yet it is precisely the combination of shared concern and frank discussion of these complexities by major intellectuals, leaders of mass movements and activists—in audiences large and small, from 50 to 50,000—that makes the World Social Forum unique. This is the WSF’s strength and the reason why it will endure: a commitment to democratic debate founded on diversity and openness, and a recognition of the responsibility of intellectuals to question received wisdom from whatever source.⁸⁹

The Forum seeks to reassert the primacy of democratic participation as a virtue in itself. It does not negate political institutions like the modern state though it does not posit it as the only possible or desirable form of community. The autonomy that Zapatistas seek, for instance, existed until the 1990s in the context of a modern-nation state that was its guarantor. For advanced industrial states, the refusal to sign on to agreements that weaken domestic representative institutions helps preserve the existing welfare state and provides an avenue for other actors to press their demands.

Including new actors and regions: WSF 2005 and beyond

According to the Association of Brazilian Non-Governmental Organizations (ABONG⁹⁰) 'people feel attracted to by these events precisely because they do not instrumentalize politics'.⁹¹ For ABONG, genuine politics is a process of collective decision-making by those who will be affected by decisions. ABONG contrasts this with the procedural democracy of the governments that negotiate the creation of the neoliberal order. For the Association, politics at the Forum flows from an affirmation of the right of societies to construct their own future in opposition to institutions perceived to be ever less democratic because they are subjected to financial markets, and impervious to citizens' opinion.⁹² The WSF's principles and mode of operation therefore resonates with many actors. The very number of people and perspectives poses a challenge to the organizers as they seek to remain inclusive while keeping the process manageable.

The changes made over the years attest to the responsiveness of the organizers of the Forum. First and foremost is the decision to include new actors in the Organizing Committee and to reach out to parts of the world little represented in the organization or among participants. The Brazilian chapter of the World March of Women has joined the Organizing Committee for 2005. Women's groups hope to raise issues and discuss the relations of power that concern women, which are often invisible. The WMW-Brazil notes: 'The reality of violence against women take different forms depending on societies or cultures, but the existence of violence against women is a phenomenon, a social fact that manifests itself in a transversal fashion in all social classes, cultures, religions, and geopolitical situation'.⁹³

The WMW-Brazil sees the Forum as an opportunity to seek alternatives to the culture of violence that pervades social life and neoliberal globalization. The construction of another world is possible, according to the WMW-Brazil, but only through deliberate efforts centered on dialogue and convergence to construct alternatives and articulate common actions and campaigns to that end.⁹⁴ As a space that includes women as well as other actors who search for an alternative to neoliberalism, the Forum allows others to hear and respond to the aspirations of women. The World March of Women argues that 'It is the responsibility of our male comrades in social movements to show their solidarity with us publicly, in the name of the other society that we want to build together, and to struggle with feminists against violence'.⁹⁵

In a different initiative to expand the scope of the Forum, the Organizing Committee decided that the 2007 event would be held in Africa.⁹⁶ In previous events Asia and Africa were severely underrepresented at the Forum. Their relative invisibility was particularly problematic in light of the conditions faced by the populations of those regions and the sheer numbers concerned. The Forum held in Mumbai, India, in 2004 served to extend the network to South Asia-based actors who had not attended the Porto Alegre events of 2001-2003. It allowed the participation of local and regional actors who could not travel to Brazil. In addition, because of the particular social circumstances of India, the Mumbai event included a larger proportion of women than previous Forums. Though Africa is to become a node in the WSF movement only in 2007, the Organizing Committee has created a travel fund (dubbed a 'Solidarity Fund') to allow would-be participants from that continent to attend events held in Brazil.⁹⁷

Ultimately, the WSF was created as a discursive environment where dialogue is actively encouraged. The type of relations that develop during events is not determined by the Forum itself, but significant obstacles to more cooperative relations are removed (in principle) when participants adhere to the spirit of the Forum's charter. As we saw in chapter III, empathy is one way that people can relate to others but there is no guarantee that it will occur. When it does, evidence of it is to be found in participants' words and attitudes more than in the Forum as an institution. Although it is concerned with poverty and exclusion in their material dimension, the WSF also deals in intangibles: it seeks a rethinking of social relations that will eventually lead to a change in social practices with positive material effects on those involved.

An Ethical Outlook, Discourse, and Practice

As a space for dialogue and exchange, as a world fair for ideas, the WSF has one drawback that is not easily overcome. Its principles preclude from the beginning a WSF position, that is to say a position authored by the Forum as a collective body. We have just seen that the only WSF-wide position is a series of principles that social actors are encouraged to follow but that cannot be enforced on the Forum grounds, let alone in the participants' countries and societies when they leave the event at the end of the week. Such a unified vision and programme is not the purpose of the WSF. As a movement the critics of neoliberal globalization the participants resist neoliberalism and policies associated with it because it affects them negatively. The defence of group or cultural autonomy is in and of itself an alternative to neoliberalism that allows the would-be

‘victims’ to go about their activities, to *be*, without risk to their well-being. It aims to restore both popular sovereignty and the capacity of individuals and groups to decide their collective fate.

The widespread opposition to neoliberalism is a sign of its failure to address human needs. The recognition of humans’ capacity to know their world entails the recognition of humans’ capacity to decide for themselves the social order in which they live. On the basis of its ostensible scientific character, neoliberal theory negates the subjectivity of many actors. As a power political relation, the relation between business and most others is one in which might is right, which also negates subjectivity. Both privilege one set of actors at the expense of most others.

For World Social Forum organizers Michael Löwy and Frei Betto, the ‘quantitative character’⁹⁸ of social relations is the main ethical failure of neoliberal globalization. They deplore the fetishism of the world economy that animates ‘neoliberal civilization’. They argue that neoliberalism is a church that excludes all views and actors that do not accept its precepts. They write: ‘An impressive corpus of canonical rules and orthodox principles serves to legitimate and sanctify these ritual sacrifices. A large clergy of specialists and managers explains the cult’s dogmas to the profane crowds, expurgating all heretical opinions far away from the public sphere’.⁹⁹ Central to this civilization, for Löwy and Betto, is a privatization and commodification of society (they list land, water, life, feelings, and convictions) that inverts the person-merchandise-person relation, where humans are judged first by their humanity, by a merchandise-person-merchandise, where a person’s worth is dependent on his or her monetary value.¹⁰⁰

The WSF as they understand it stands for the idea that the world is not a commodity, that is, 'nature, life, human rights, freedom, love, and culture are not merchandises'. They reassert qualitative and ethical dimensions of social relations that are incompatible with neoliberalism. The World Social Forum, they write, is 'about qualitative values, ethical and political values, social and cultural values, that are irreducible to monetary quantification. They are values that are common to most groups and networks that constitute the worldwide movement against globalization'.¹⁰¹ The importance given to quantification and money as the universal standard of measurement flows directly from the neoliberal need to ascribe a value to commodities to compare their worth and trade them. These qualitative values are incompatible with the competitive character of the market and the primarily contractual foundations of social relations.

Löwy and Betto contend that solidarity rather than competition is the moral horizon of the WSF. Importantly, this solidarity extends beyond the workers' solidarity of the traditional left. It is a 'solidarity that not only includes brothers, but also sisters; and that extends beyond the limits of the family, the clan, the tribe, the ethnic group, the religious community, and the nation to become authentically universal, global, international'.¹⁰² The emergence of a broad range of substate yet globally connected actors leads Walden Bello to argue that the World Social Forum represents a shift from the 'international community' to the 'global community'. On this view, the actors that inhabit the world community are not just sovereign nation-states, corporations, or independent, economically rational individuals on a free world market hoping to maximize their gains. Instead, 'The new community in the making comprises many

communities tied by common interests and values, but its social expression is inflected by different histories and cultures'¹⁰³ that are conscious that they share the same space.

The World Social Forum faces obstacles in the search for an alternative to neoliberal globalization. At the level of its very principles, it appears to be incapable of presenting any alternatives without by the same token excluding some views and actors from a declaration, let alone a programme of action. Putting the philosophy of the World Social Forum in practice with open-ended discussions without the development of a common position appears to contradict the goals of the Forum itself, if that goal is understood to be the concrete transformation of world order. It is not surprising, therefore, that some participants have raised the question of how the WSF's principles could lead to meaningful change. In other words, how do principles that most participants agree with turn into action without betraying the spirit of those same principles?

According to Susan Richards, there is an 'urgent need to change the nature of global power'.¹⁰⁴ But the institutions that have been used thus far to shape global order mostly fall under non-democratic regimes (like communism and fundamentalism) or they are variations on capitalist themes (like the welfare state, social-democracy, or a global Fordism) that instrumentalize social actors, albeit with less crudeness than neoliberalism. If the latter is preferable to the former, it nonetheless falls short of a change in the conception of social relations that animates many participants in the WSF. Moreover, 'global power' cannot at this stage be institutionalized as WSF participants have little access to the institutions of national or global governance. If access, power, and autonomy were already at hand the WSF would not have been created.

‘Power’ in the context of the World Social Forum is perhaps better construed as the capacity to redefine the terms in which globalization is discussed. For the participants, and increasingly for the public who hear about the WSF without attending it, the terms of the debate are being redefined away from competitive social relations and toward a sense or responsibility toward others. In its fullest expression—which is not always realized even at the Forum—this responsibility takes the form of a voluntaristic seeking of understanding of others’ conditions of exclusion and of the impact of one another’s behaviour on the others. It is an effort to make sense of social exclusion in a much broader perspective that has been prompted by the encounter of the various social groups during protests against neoliberalism.

The proximity of participants, first at protests, then at the Forum, has helped foster face-to-face relations among the proponents of alter-globalization where they can exchange directly with other members of the global community. With forums such as the WSF, the experiences of different actors and groups can be aired so that others develop an awareness of the potential effects of one’s or another’s actions. The WSF is a learning environment to which participants in principle come with a willingness to be changed by what they see and hear. For Teivo Teivanen, the planning and modus operandi of the Forum can be construed as the ‘emergence of a new ethico-political principle’ and as the ‘radical democratization of knowledge’ from which others can benefit.¹⁰⁵

According to Teivanen, the World Social Forum holds prospects that are not yet realized. He argues that the Forum is potentially a place of social learning where the South could overturn the usual hierarchy of the North as teacher and the South as pupil: ‘Learning from Porto Alegre can ... help break the Eurocentrism and neo-colonial

structures of knowledge production that are dominant in our world'.¹⁰⁶ The solutions to the problem of exclusion that Forum participants discuss and seek for their communities take into consideration the linkages among these communities across the globe. The participants recognize that a course of action chosen by a group to answer the needs of its members may conflict with others' needs.

In this respect, those who experience a form of exclusion or oppression can teach others about it—how it is experienced—and how it is related to global social and economic practices. The opponents of neoliberal globalization argue that 'when we talk about autonomy, we are not talking about or advocating a few journeys of independence; much less a withdrawal from the world into a kind of retreat. Something else entirely is happening, something rooted in this concept of autonomy as freedom and connectedness'.¹⁰⁷ Since the decisions made in a part of the world can impact others negatively, the alter-globalization movement seeks to create the conditions for a mutual enabling of the actors of world politics so that none meet their needs at the expense of others.

The objective of consciousness-raising and moral thinking is sometimes met when participants 'discover' actors of whom they were unaware, and when they develop commonalities or realize that commonalities already existed. Susan Richards maintains that the direct contacts she established with participants from other parts of the world at the WSF have made her aware of peoples and places 'which had scarcely crossed [her] mind before this year WSF'. The exchange of 'business' cards at the Forum occurs in a different ethical context than that of a profit-driven enterprise. Richards contends that

cards made it easier to represent to herself the condition of those handing them out.

Reflecting on a card given to her by a Moroccan participant, she writes:

Abdelatif's card—in Arabic and French—takes me to the largest map of the Sahara I can find. There I track down Guelmine where he lives, and I can even see the Saharan oases he has crossed the world to represent. Dimly, I have even begun, through listening carefully, to imagine what it is like to live there, to face the water wars that have broken out in oasis after oasis and the threat posed to their whole way of life by the new disease, which has killed half of their date palms already.¹⁰⁸

Michael Albert's words written after his first Forum in 2002 convey a similar consciousness of others. They are worth quoting at length because they put in perspective the cleavages of the different standpoints and outline a common set of aspirations and a common conception of social life:

I was surprised and elated to find that serious dissidents really do inhabit one world, even as we also benefit from virtually unlimited diversity in cultures. The extent to which the most diverse representatives and participants in Porto Alegre—in the main venues, in the youth camp, in the streets—shared very similar political values and aspirations, despite only fledgling levels of prior communications, was astounding. People from grassroots movements in India talked about abolishing markets. Their language was not only music to my ears, but words of the same language and tone and sentiment that I regularly use. People from networks of economic activists stretching around the world talked about needing economic institutions that promote solidarity rather than anti-social individuality, cooperation rather than competition, and participation rather than exclusion. They celebrated self-management. The spirit they had was original and inspiring, but the content was very familiar despite the lack of prior communication, indeed despite my quite embarrassing ignorance of their existence. The simple and exciting fact is that revolutionary ideas are percolating worldwide. They have remarkable affinity around the globe. Different words are spoken, in many languages, but the same sentiments are celebrated.¹⁰⁹

As noted above, the decision to hold the World Social Forum in Mumbai, India, in 2004 was meant to broaden the cultural and geographical scope of the event. The organizers knew that the make-up of the attendees would be very different at Mumbai, but that it would nevertheless be representative of social cleavages that characterize the

world. In the case of India, the Dalit (the ‘untouchables’) were well in evidence and made a positive impression on participants because of their resourcefulness and their capacity to understand society and organize politically.¹¹⁰ Significantly, the Mumbai World Social Forum added caste to class, gender, and race as a form of oppression. It also demonstrated the need to go beyond the North-South (or West-rest) divides in its recognition that social exclusion exists within otherwise postcolonial societies and that it is also homegrown, that is, not necessarily the product of colonial history and informed by Eurocentrism.

More generally, however, Mumbai was a revelation in even cruder terms of the poverty that exists in a country that is in some ways similar to Brazil. Despite modern industries (information technology is an icon in this respect) and a democratic regime, poverty is extreme and the integration of India in the global order does not appear to address it. Shivani Chaudhri, a Delhi-based researcher, writes that the WSF 2004 put a face on misery:

Porto Alegre was clean, developed, air-conditioned. Mumbai was chaotic, dusty, hot. Porto Alegre was rich. Mumbai was poor. Porto Alegre was gentler on the senses. Mumbai was more brutal. Porto Alegre was more polished. Mumbai was more raw. Both were outstanding, overwhelming events. Both were memorable, in different ways.

WSF 04 was not easy. It was challenging. Mumbai, a teeming city of almost 20 million, has some of the world’s worst inequality and urban poverty. The inhumanness of Mumbai’s poor hits you, hard. All the time. On the streets. On the sidewalks. Right outside the Forum venue. Participants saw the poorest of the poor, everyday, and winced. For many, poverty was no longer a word in development literature. It was breathing right in front of you. The feeling of horror reverberated amongst many who had never seen suffering of this magnitude before. You couldn’t talk any more in workshops about the abstract poor. No, they had faces, and bony bodies. They were living reminders of the need for this ‘other world’ we were fighting for. In some way, along with so many others, they made the Forum seem more real, more urgent, more critical.¹¹¹

A similar reaction to the conditions that prevailed at Mumbai and the people encountered at the Forum there comes from a participant writing under the pseudonym Benmalo:

This misery that stares us in the face, we, who despite our participation in the WSF, are synonymous with cash. This contrast, this confrontation, could also be seen on the Forum's grounds—at least for those who took the trouble of leaving their luxury hotels and who agreed to look at those who greeted them. This confrontation did not take the form of charity, humiliation, exploitation, contempt or hatred. The confrontation took place by way of smiles, looks, political and cultural exchanges, by mutual respect and curiosity. That is the other world that we want.¹¹²

There is at the World Social Forum a confluence of elements that shows that something is afoot in global politics as fragmented movements or processes become a global movement and process.¹¹³ The WSF is unique in that it is all-encompassing in its comprehension of exclusion. It expresses anti-war sentiments (prompted by the invasion of Iraq) and opposition to corporate-led globalization, and it includes a wide range of questions around which the Forum revolves and answers to which its participants seeks. Hence Michael Albert's contention that participants 'weaken and replace hierarchical racial, sexual, political, and class relations with equitable, solidaritous, diversity enhancing, and self-managing structures'.¹¹⁴ For Kamal Mitra Chenoy, the WSF 'is leading to new coalitions and sensitizing one movement about another—as it asks environmentalists to support women's rights; labour to engage with transsexuals; and all to work against inequality, war and oppression'.¹¹⁵

The WSF is now more than a once-a-year festival of protests against neoliberal globalization. It serves as a model for other events. Having pointed to its success in raising questions about globalization in Porto Alegre, Michael Albert writes:

Even more promising, the forum has transcended its single event persona. Instead of just a single international event, called the WSF, there are now local forums for continents (Asia, Africa, Europe), for whole countries, for [federated] states within countries, and for cities and towns worldwide. In Italy there are about a hundred local social forums—and while Italy's accomplishment is way above average, it foreshadows general trends spreading worldwide.¹¹⁶

This alternative discourse is more widespread than many observers assume. According to Simon Tormey, the result of the extensive networking, protests, and social forums is the growth of a rhizome of social relations underpinned by concerns for exclusion. The forms that exclusion takes become more widely known and the willingness to address them increases. Writes Tormey:

A rhizome ... is composed of a perennial stem growing under the ground, shooting out roots in a random tangle. It contrasts with 'arborescent' plants that grow upwards from a single trunk or stem. In a rhizome leaves and flowers appear above the ground, so that we get the impression that there are separate plants growing in the same place. In fact all the 'separate' plants are connected to the same roots.¹¹⁷

The 'untutored eye' is incapable of seeing the rhizome or the underlying philosophy of the movement.¹¹⁸ But its existence is evidenced by the rise of ethical discourses in many places and many groups that oppose neoliberalism and that seek an alternative that is global in that it takes for granted the interconnectedness of the world. While communities or groups may enjoy autonomy, the actors that make them up exercise their autonomy in a way that is mindful of the impacts of their decisions and behaviours on others in the global space. For Thomas Ponniah and William Fisher, 'Networks like those which gave rise to the World Social Forum are organized around shared discourses and shared values, or at least the presumption of shared values'.¹¹⁹ Many actors in the networks assume a basic shared capacity for dialogue and understanding that can alter the way global actors see and treat one another.

The foregoing suggests that the principles and modus operandi of the Forum at one level speak to aspirations and modes of relating to others that can be found in many parts of the world, that is, across space, cultures, and political standpoints. Importantly, it is a model whose spread has thus far not relied on massive public relations or advertising campaigns (like the spread of consumer culture and iconic products) or the imposition of constraints (or disciplines) to be adopted by all. According to the editors of *Opendemocracy.org*, the quest for a redefinition of power that Richards outlines depends on a worldview. Thus they write that ‘A new world is also a new way of seeing’ and that ‘shifts of power and perspective go together’.¹²⁰

The Forum and the larger movement is an iterative process. Ideas, proposals, responses, and thus relations, unfold continuously among the actors. The moral discourse spreads at the same time as it changes to make more space for those previously excluded, or to sideline those whose own ethos evidently contradicts the principles of the WSF. After six editions it symbolizes the search for an alternative global order. While only partial solutions to global and local problems can be aired when the WSF participants meet, it is useful to think of the delegates and audiences as organic intellectuals. They do not play a decision-making role simply by attending the events, but they interact on the Forum grounds and through means of telecommunication and mediate between their respective group and others. On leaving Porto Alegre (or Mumbai in 2004), they bring to bear on their analysis of global problems the perspectives of other participants and diffuse this knowledge in their communities thereby shifting the perspectives there as well.

Conclusion

Contrary to what many critics of the protesters and the World Social Forum argue, the principal problem of the protest movement is not the absence of an alternative; it is rather the presence of too many alternatives that cannot easily be reconciled in a single document or programme of action. Beyond the general principles that underpin the organization of the Forum lie difficulties that a generation of international relations scholars have revealed. The WSF, much like the academic setting in which this and other events are theorized, includes a wide range of actors and a wide range of standpoints. The openness of the Forum, its refusal to exclude anyone but those who rely on violent means, has resulted in a cacophony of voices that is reassuring for the actors who have never before been given such a platform. The 'dissident' character of the WSF has therefore much to please the proponents of a politics of difference.

We can argue that there are certain objective conditions that legitimate opposition to the current globalization thrust. Though not everyone who inhabits globe understands globalization in precisely the same way, there are indications that a consciousness that politics is global (rather than only local or national) is developing both among protesters and the wider public, as the decline in trust in state officials and corporate leaders suggest. The crux of the matter from the protesters' perspective is not simply the development of awareness, though. It is the quest for an alternative to the current economic globalization that takes into account the interconnections between the actors of world politics. Writes Simon Tormey: 'Protests, marches and demonstrations have never in this sense been mere passive aggregates of individuals, but are also moments when

people learn about the grievances and beliefs of others. Indeed if the anti-capitalist phenomenon can be credited with one thing it is this evidently *educative* function that meetings and protests have performed'.¹²¹

The diversity of protesters and their grievances suggests that globalization can be understood and critiqued from many perspectives. Protesters are now more mindful of this reality. To create a climate in which it might be possible to find alternatives to the current order, the initiators of the World Social Forum have made diversity an operative principle of the event. Intellectually, there is a recognition that grand narratives of where the world comes from and where it is heading are inadequate; worse yet, they have led to violence and suffering in the past. There is also a realization that a single group cannot devise a solution to the world's peoples' problems as though it knew what was good for others. Such an approach to emancipation would in fact negate the autonomy of those being helped.

The World Social Forum is an attempt to acknowledge the global character of politics and to rethink the global order on more inclusive grounds. It places at the centre of the discussions the fact that globalization has occurred at the expense of many who have had no voice in determining the form it took. The Forum is open to all those who specifically oppose capitalist globalization, but its principal characteristic is that it is organized so that participants avoid 'one-size-fits-all' answers to human needs. Instead, the Forum tries to promote a conversation among workers, women, farmers, and first and third world populations. Its ultimate objective is to provide a space to voice concerns and build a global order that is mutually enabling for those who live in it.

For the impatient observer of politics interested in concrete policy proposals, or for the academic looking for clear indicators of the meaningfulness and impacts of events like the World Social Forum, the entire exercise may look like a waste of time. However, this would be to discount the effect of the mere exposition to a range of problems previously unknown. The literal proximity of social actors on the streets or at Porto Alegre or the virtual proximity through means of communications are the cause of a transformation in the discursive context in which social actors are immersed and in the way they relate to others. The rise in alternative media outlets is difficult to explain unless there is an audience that seeks out the views they express. At the very least, this suggests a willingness to enquire into the circumstances of those who take to the streets and who are also dissatisfied with the current global order.

Endnotes

¹ George Monbiot, *The Age of Consent: Manifesto for a New World Order* (London: Harper, 2004), 1.

² Gareth Dale, “‘Merging Rivulets of Opposition’: Perspectives of the Anti-Capitalist Movement”, *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 30, no. 2 (2001), 369-372.

³ Monbiot, *The Age of Consent*, 8-9.

⁴ Manuel Castells, *The Power of Identity* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), 152.

⁵ See Monbiot, *The Age of Consent*; Susan George, *Another World is Possible if...* (London and New York: Verso, 2004); Walden Bello, *Deglobalization: Ideas for a New World Economy* (London and New York: Zed Books, 2002); Joseph Stiglitz, *Globalization and Its Discontents* (New York: W. W. Norton 2002); Association pour la tax Tobin et l’aide aux citoyens, <<http://www.attac-france.org>>.

⁶ Castells, *The Power of Identity*, 153-154.

⁷ Simon Tormey, *Anti-Capitalism: A Beginner’s Guide* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2004), Chs. 3 and 4.

⁸ André C. Drainville, *Contesting Globalization: Space and Place in the World Economy* (London and New York: Routledge, 2004), 32-37; Thomas Ponniah and William F. Fisher, ‘Introduction: The World Social Forum and the Reinvention of Democracy’, in Thomas Ponniah and William F. Fisher, *Another World is Possible: Popular Alternatives to Neoliberal Globalization* (London: Zed Books, 2003), 7.

⁹ Even delinking would require negotiating the terms of separation.

¹⁰ George, *Another World is Possible if...*, 95.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 97.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ Castells, *The Power of Identity*, 156.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ George, *Another World is Possible if...*, 99.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 176.

- ¹⁷ The relation to political parties also entails a relation to the state since parties are organizations that aspire to seize the reins of power.
- ¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 183.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 184.
- ²⁰ *Ibid.*, 221.
- ²¹ Linda McQuaig, *All You Can Eat* (Toronto: Penguin, 2001), 190-191.
- ²² Bleiker, *Popular Dissent Popular Dissent, Human Agency, and Global Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 56.
- ²³ World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization/International Labor Organization, *A Fair Globalization: Creating Opportunities for All* (Geneva: ILO, 2004), 3.
- ²⁴ Eddie Yuen, 'Introduction', in George Yuen, Daniel Burton-Rose and George Katsiaficas, eds., *Confronting Capitalism: Dispatches from a Global Movement* (Brooklyn: Soft Skull Press, 2004), xxxix-xlviii.
- ²⁵ Walden Bello, *Deglobalization: Ideas for a New World Economy* (Black Point, NS: Fernwood, 2002), 16-17; Paul Kingsnorth, *One No, Many Yeses: A Journey to the Heart of the Global Resistance Movement* (London: Free Press, 2003), 62.
- ²⁶ *Ibid.*, 6; Naomi Klein, *Fences and Windows: Dispatches from the Front Lines of the Globalization Debate* (Toronto: Vintage Canada, 2003), 209.
- ²⁷ Castells, *The Power of Identity*, 77-78; Joseph E. Stiglitz, *Globalization and Its Discontents*, 3; George Katsiaficas, 'Seattle Was not the Beginning', in Yuen, Burton-Rose and Katsiaficas, eds., *Confronting Capitalism*, 3-5; Richard L. Harris, 'Resistance and Alternatives to Globalization in Latin America and the Caribbean', *Latin American Perspectives* 29, no. 6 (2002), 141-143.
- ²⁸ Josée Johnston and Gordon Laxer, 'Solidarity in the Age of Globalization', *Theory and Society* 32 (2003), 49.
- ²⁹ The MAI provisions in fact granted more legal protections and rights to investors than did the provisions of NAFTA's chapter 11. On the theme of constitutionalism, see also Stephen Gill, 'Globalisation, Market Civilisation, and Disciplinary Neoliberalism', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 24, no. 3 (Winter 1995).
- ³⁰ Linda McQuaig, *All You Can Eat*, Ch. 2.
- ³¹ Johnston and Laxer, 'Solidarity in the Age of Globalization', 49.
- ³² No party would have been allowed to withdraw until five years after the MAI entry into force. Moreover, after a withdrawal, the provisions of the Agreement would have continued to apply to the withdrawn party for a period of 15 years. See <http://www.flora.org/mai-info/9710-p00.htm>, accessed 29 February 2004.
- ³³ Sam Gindin, 'Anti-Capitalism and the Terrain of Social Justice', *Monthly Review* 53, no. 9 (February 2003), 2.
- ³⁴ Mark Laskey, 'The Globalization of Resistance: The N30 International Day of Action', in Yuen, Burton-Rose and Katsiaficas, eds., *Confronting Capitalism*.
- ³⁵ Castells, *The Power of Identity*, 145.
- ³⁶ Gindin, 'Anti-Capitalism and the Terrain of Social Justice', 3-7.
- ³⁷ John D. French, 'From the Suites to the Streets: The Unexpected Re-Emergence of the "Labor Question", 1994-1999', *Labor History* 43, no. 3 (2002), 285.
- ³⁸ These are of course critics' adaptation of the key words of neoliberal discourse. In the 1990s, budget deficits and public debts were symbols of the need to restructure the state and make it more efficient. Likewise, dumping refers to a trading practice officially considered unfair under a liberal trade regime.
- ³⁹ *Ibid.*, 285-286.
- ⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 290.
- ⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 296.
- ⁴² *Ibid.*, 303.
- ⁴³ Stephen Gill, 'Toward a Postmodern Prince? The Battle in Seattle as a Moment in the New Politics of Globalisation', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 29, no. 1 (Spring 2000).
- ⁴⁴ Bleiker, *Popular Dissent*, 2.
- ⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 32, 49.
- ⁴⁶ See Kingsnorth, *One No, Many Yeses*, Ch. 1. It is worth noting that Marcos at first approached social transformation from Marxist perspective but changed his views after being exposed to indigenous populations' conceptions of an alternative social order. See pp. 28-31.

- ⁴⁷ Bleiker, *Popular Dissent*, 4.
- ⁴⁸ Castells, *The Power of Identity*, 159.
- ⁴⁹ Stiglitz, *Globalization and Its Discontents*, 9.
- ⁵⁰ Ponniah and Fisher, 'Introduction', 10.
- ⁵¹ Castells, *The Power of Identity*, 151-152.
- ⁵² Bleiker, *Popular Dissent*, 18.
- ⁵³ Sam Gindin, 'Anti-Capitalism and the Terrain of Social Justice', 2, 8.
- ⁵⁴ Harris, 'Resistance and Alternatives to Globalization in Latin America and the Caribbean', 144.
- ⁵⁵ Thomas Ponniah and William F. Fisher, 'Introduction', 4.
- ⁵⁶ The online Directory of Social Movements describes the WFA as 'an international network of research centres and militant intellectuals from the South and the North. Created in 1997 it aims at supporting the convergence process of the social movements, as well as to the development alternatives that are democratic, pluralistic and sustainable, as opposed to neoliberal globalization and all the various forms of discrimination and domination'. See Repertorio de los movimientos sociales, 'About the World Forum of Alternatives', <<http://www.directory.forum-alternatives.org/es/node/view/285>>, accessed 24 November 2003.
- ⁵⁷ See World Social Forum, 'Who Organizes It?', <http://www.forumsocialmundial.org.br/main.asp?id_menu=3_1&cd_language=2>, last accessed 24 November 2003.
- ⁵⁸ Ponniah and Fisher, 'Introduction', 4.
- ⁵⁹ Ignacio Ramonet, 'Désarmer les marchés', *Le Monde diplomatique*, December 1997, 1.
- ⁶⁰ Bernard Cassen, 'Interview with Bernard Cassen', in Tom Mertes, ed., *A Movement of Movements: Is Another World Really Possible* (London and New York, Verso, 2003), 152-153.-
- ⁶¹ Cassen, 'Interview with Bernard Cassen', 153.
- ⁶² Cassen, 'Interview with Bernard Cassen', 161.
- ⁶³ Cassen, 'Interview with Bernard Cassen', 161.
- ⁶⁴ MST, 'Landless Workers' Movement', <<http://www.mstbrazil.org/index.html>>, accessed 3 March 2004.
- ⁶⁵ Francisco Whitaker, 'World Social Forum: Origins and Aims', <http://www.forumsocialmundial.org.br/main.asp?id_menu=2_1&cd_language=2>, accessed 4 March 2004.
- ⁶⁶ WSF, 'Background: The Events of 2001, 2002 and 2003', <http://www.forumsocialmundial.org.br/main.asp?id_menu=2&cd_language=2>, accessed 3 March 2004; on human development, see chapter four.
- ⁶⁷ World Social Forum, 'What is the World Social Forum?', <http://www.forumsocialmundial.org.br/main.asp?id_menu=4_1&cd_language=2>, accessed 24 November 2003.
- ⁶⁸ World Social Forum, 'What is the World Social Forum?'.
- ⁶⁹ World Social Forum, 'Charter of Principles', <http://www.forumsocialmundial.org.br/main.asp?id_menu=4_2&cd_language=2>, accessed 24 November 2003.
- ⁷⁰ World Social Forum, 'Charter of Principles'.
- ⁷¹ Teivo Teivanen, 'The World Social Forum and Global Democratisation: Learning from Porto Alegre', *Third World Quarterly* 23, no. 4 (2002), 624.
- ⁷² World Social Forum, 'Charter of Principles'.
- ⁷³ World Social Forum, 'Charter of Principles'.
- ⁷⁴ World Social Forum, 'Charter of Principles'.
- ⁷⁵ Notes from Nowhere, ed., *We Are Everywhere: The Irresistible Rise of Global Anticapitalism* (London and New York: Routledge, 2003), 110.
- ⁷⁶ Michael Albert epitomizes that view. See Michael Albert, 'WSF 2002 and Us', *Z Magazine*, March 2002, <<http://www.zmag.org/ZMag/articles/march02albert.htm>>, accessed 9 March 2004.
- ⁷⁷ Richard L. Harris, 'Resistance and Alternatives to Globalization in Latin America and the Caribbean', 143-144.
- ⁷⁸ Cynthia Peters, 'Another World Is Possible', <<http://www.zmag.org/ZMag/articles/march02peters.htm>>, accessed 3 March 2004.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ World March of Women, 'The World Social Forum: A Process for Us to Appropriate', *Newsletter* 6, no. 4 (December 2003).

⁸¹ World March of Women, 'The World Social Forum'.

⁸² John L. Hammond, 'Another World Is Possible: Report from Porto Alegre', *Latin American Perspectives* 30, no 3 (May 2003), 5.

⁸³ Arturo Escobar, "Other World are (Already) Possible", <<http://www.zmag.org/escobarcyner.htm>>, accessed 22 March 2004.

⁸⁴ Susan Richards, 'The World's Fair', <<http://www.opendemocracy.net/debates/article-6-91-950.jsp>>, Accessed 13 March 2004.

⁸⁵ Candido Gryzbowski quoted in Joshua Karliner, 'Globalizing Hope: Another World is Still Possible', <<http://www.corpwatch.org/issues/PID.jsp?articleid=1708>>, accessed 22 March 2004; also Peters, 'Another World Is Possible'.

⁸⁶ Karliner, 'Globalizing Hope'.

⁸⁷ Your Mouth is Fundamental Campaign, 'Against Fundamentalisms', <http://www.muieresdelsur.org.uy/campana/camp_book.htm>, accessed 26 March 2004.

⁸⁸ Peter Waterman, 'Archaic left challenges the World Social Forum', <<http://www.opendemocracy.net/debates/article-6-91-1576.jsp>>, accessed 11 December 2003.

⁸⁹ Kamal Mitra Chenoy, 'Making history: the future of the World Social Forum', <<http://www.opendemocracy.net/debates/article-6-91-1694.jsp>>, accessed 4 April 2004.

⁹⁰ Known in Portuguese as *Associação Brasileira de Organizações não Governamentais*.

⁹¹ My translation of: 'pessoas sentem-se atraídas por esses eventos, precisamente porque neles não há instrumentalização política'. Associação Brasileira de Organizações não Governamentais, 'Nota de Esclarecimento: O V FSM ocorrerá em Porto Alegre', 13 November 2004, <<http://www.abong.org.br/novosite/publicacoes/informes_pag.asp?cdm=2101>>, accessed 14 November 2004. It is worth noting that ABONG is a member of the Organizing Committee of the WSF.

⁹² ABONG, 'Nota de Esclarecimento'.

⁹³ My translation of: 'A realidade da violência contra as mulheres toma formas diferentes segundo as sociedades, as culturas, mas a existência da violência contra as mulheres é um fenômeno, um fato social que se acha de forma transversal em todas as classes sociais, as culturas, as religiões, as situações geopolíticas'. MMM-Brasil/WMW-Brazil, 'A violência contra as mulheres : Aí onde o outro mundo deve agir', <<http://www.sof.org.br/marchamulheres/apoio/violenciaforum1.htm>>, accessed 12 November 2004.

⁹⁴ MMM-Brasil/WMW-Brazil, *Boletim da Marcha*, no. 35 (October 2004), <<http://www.that.com.br/sof/boletim.html#05>>, accessed 12 November 2004.

⁹⁵ 'É de responsabilidade de nossos companheiros homens dos movimentos sociais de se solidarizar publicamente, em nome de uma outra sociedade que queremos construir juntos, com a luta das feministas contra as violências'. MMM-Brasil/WMW-Brazil, 'A violência contra as mulheres : Aí onde o outro mundo deve agir', <<http://www.sof.org.br/marchamulheres/apoio/violenciaforum2.htm>>, accessed 12 November 2004.

⁹⁶ ABONG, 'Nota de Esclarecimento'; ABONG, 'FSM: avançando na luta por um mundo mais justo e solidário', <<http://www.abong.org.br/novosite/fsmfsm.asp>>, accessed 14 November 2004.

⁹⁷ ABONG, 'FSM: avançando na luta por um mundo mais justo e solidário'.

⁹⁸ By which they mean that the worth of an agent and social relations are judged by their contribution to the economy and by their worth in money.

⁹⁹ My translation of 'Un corpus impressionnant de règles canoniques et de principes orthodoxes sert à légitimer et sanctifier ces rituels sacrificiels. Un vaste clergé de spécialistes et de gestionnaires explique les dogmes du culte aux foules profanes, en expurgant toutes les opinions hérétiques loin de la sphère publique'. Michael Löwy and Frei Betto, 'Les valeurs d'une nouvelle civilisation', <<http://www.portoalegre2003.org/publicue/cgi/public/cgilua.exe/web/templates/hm/2I2OM/printerview.htm?user=reader&inford=2254&editionsectionid=127>>, accessed 22 March 2004. A similar argument is made by Susan George and Fabrizio Sabelli about the World Bank. See their *Faith and Credit: The World Bank's Secular Empire* (London: Penguin, 1994).

¹⁰⁰ An ideal-type of this way of thinking can be found in the infamous 'toxic memo' written by former World Bank chief economist Lawrence Summers. See Susan George and Fabrizio Sabelli, *Faith and Credit: The World Bank's Secular Empire* (London: Penguin, 1994), Ch. V.

- ¹⁰¹ My translation of 'Il s'agit de valeurs qualitatives, éthiques et politiques, sociales et culturelles, irréductibles à la quantification monétaire. Des valeurs qui sont communes à la plus grande partie des groupes et des réseaux qui constituent le grand mouvement mondial contre la mondialisation néolibérale'. Löwy and Betto, 'Les valeurs d'une nouvelle civilisation'.
- ¹⁰² My translation of 'Une solidarité qui n'inclue que les frères ("frater", en latin), mas aussi les sœurs, et qui dépasse les limites de la famille, du clan, de la tribu, de l'ethnie, de la communauté religieuse, de la nation, pour devenir authentiquement universelle, mondiale, internationale'. Löwy and Betto, 'Les valeurs d'une nouvelle civilisation'.
- ¹⁰³ Walden Bello, 'Battling Barbarism', *Foreign Policy* 132 (September-October 2002), 41.
- ¹⁰⁴ Richards, 'The World's Fair'.
- ¹⁰⁵ Teivanen, 'The World Social Forum and Global Democratisation', 629-630; Gindin, 'Anti-Capitalism and the Terrain of Social Justice', 12.
- ¹⁰⁶ Teivanen, 'The World Social Forum and Global Democratisation', 630; Ponniah and Fisher, 'Introduction', 7.
- ¹⁰⁷ Notes from Nowhere (ed.) *We Are Everywhere*, 110.
- ¹⁰⁸ Richards, 'The World's Fair'.
- ¹⁰⁹ Albert, 'WSF 2002 and Us'.
- ¹¹⁰ Christine Moliner, 'Between Invisibility and Dignity', <<http://www.opendemocracy.net/debates/article-6-91-1807.jsp>>, accessed 26 March 2004.
- ¹¹¹ Shivani Chaudhry, 'WSF 2004: What Someone Felt', <<http://www.zmag.org/content/showarticle.cfm?SectionID=41&ItemID=4920>>, accessed 4 February 2004.
- ¹¹² My translation of 'Cette misère qui nous regarde en face, nous qui, malgré notre participation au FSM, sommes synonymes de fric. Ce contraste, cette confrontation, s'est aussi vue dans l'enceinte du Forum. En tout cas pour ceux qui ont pris la peine de sortir de leurs hôtels de luxe et qui ont accepté de regarder ceux qui les accueillait. Cette confrontation n'a pas pris les formes de la charité, de l'humiliation, de l'exploitation, du mépris ou de la haine. La confrontation s'est faite par des sourires, des regards, des échanges politiques et culturels, par le respect et la curiosité réciproque. C'est cela l'autre monde que nous voulons'. Benmalo, 'Le forum est au peuple', <<http://www.ciranda.net/publique/cgi/cgilua.exe/sys/start.htm?UserActiveTemplate=2I&infoid=647&sid=40>>, accessed 7 March 2004.
- ¹¹³ Suruci Yadav, 'World Social Forum Plans April Agitation Against IMF and World Bank', <<http://www.commondreams.org/cgi-bin/print.cgi?file=/headlines04/0122-07.htm>> (originally <<http://www.oneworld.net/article/view/77339/1/?PrintableVersion=enabled>>), accessed 22 Jan 2004.
- ¹¹⁴ Michael Albert, 'The WSF and a "Movement of Movements"', <http://zmag.org/content/print_article.cfm?itemID=2793§ionID=41>, accessed 13 March 2004.
- ¹¹⁵ Kamal Mitra Chenoy, 'Dateline Mumbai: the 2004 World Social Forum', <<http://www.opendemocracy.net/debates/article-6-91-1670.jsp>>, accessed 9 January 2004.
- ¹¹⁶ Albert, 'The WSF and a "Movement of Movements"'.
¹¹⁷ Simon Tormey, *Anti-Capitalism: A Beginner's Guide* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2004), 160.
¹¹⁸ Tormey, *Anti-Capitalism*, 161.
¹¹⁹ Ponniah and Fisher, 'Introduction', 3.
¹²⁰ Richards, 'The World's Fair'.
¹²¹ Tormey, *Anti-Capitalism*, 72-73.

CONCLUSION

This dissertation has sought demonstrate that exclusion is pervasive in world politics and that it affects a wide range of social actors. In examining the phenomenon of exclusion, it has taken issue with three major paradigms of world politics that have emerged in the past generation. It has argued that while neo-Gramscian, feminist and postcolonial critiques of the theory and practice of world politics are accurate in their own terms, they account only partially for how life is lived by actual people in their everyday lives. More pointedly, I have argued that none of the grounds for exclusion they discuss—materialism, gender, and culture—paints a fuller picture of global social relations than the others, and that no one actor—workers, women, or postcolonial peoples—possesses an alternative to the current global order that is more likely to address exclusion than the others. I have also argued that in the context of contemporary globalization, the need to make connections across subject positions is more than theoretical; the project of articulating alternatives to neoliberalism requires empathy among the different actors who criticize neoliberalism.

I have argued that exclusion is particularly apparent in the global political economy. Since industrialization began some two-and-a-half centuries ago, material progress has been considerable. In terms of the necessities of life and in terms of luxury consumption, the lives of many people have improved considerably. Yet, it is not merely

industrialization and growth that allowed these improvement; it is also the will to redistribute the wealth created and to regulate the behaviour of the most economically powerful to prevent them from wielding their power. From the late nineteenth century to the 1980s a portion of the riches did benefit a broader segment of the population. Since the 1980s, however, there has been a reversal of the situation. Benefits associated with welfare states have been gradually withdrawn despite resistance on the part of social actors who were not included as actors in policy-making process.

In many instances, actors retained the right to speak to their condition and oppose neoliberal policies; some even gained rights in recent decades. But these rights are restricted by the rights of those on whom they are dependent, who can provide positive or negative sanctions. The reduction in state protection and the deregulation of the domestic and international market has resulted in a shift in power between investors and other social actors. On a deregulated market, the power of workers, women and Third World peoples has decreased relative to those of investors. Deregulation and reductions in social services make them all more vulnerable since they have fewer alternatives. Where they might have organized to defend their interest a generation ago, they now lie low to avoid being sanctioned. Where they previously might have had time and money to organize, they are now too busy making ends meet to press effectively for different policies. Where the state once was willing to respond favourably, the state is now unwilling and unable to do so.

The conflict is not exclusively between the neoliberal state-investors nexus and the mass of more vulnerable or downwardly mobile actors. There is a latent conflict between different categories of excluded social actors. There are degrees of exclusion

with established and precarious workers. There is a gender cleavage in all societies where women are still clearly disadvantaged relative to men. There are historical cleavages between early industrializing states and developing ones, which cannot enter the global order on favourable terms. Thus, exclusion is not solely vertical; it is also horizontal in that it cuts across categories of excluded people. In the search for an alternative to the neoliberal order they are potential competitors and as such can on occasion exclude one another from their respective alternatives.

In the global politics literature, two paradigms have guided the search for an alternative that ought to leave space for everyone to have their voices heard and taken seriously. One re-emphasizes the core tenets of political modernity and extends them to all social actors via modern institutions like the nation-state, human rights, and international organization. The other, which focused on the disciplinary rather than emancipatory character of modernity, is reluctant to speak for others and of their conditions, let alone propose a new institutional framework for action. Neither one is entirely appropriate to the task of addressing exclusion. The former has been fully compatible with an *increase* in exclusion over the last several decades. Indeed, the recognition of human rights by many states and the adoption of democratic institutions has gone hand-in-hand with an increase in economic, social, and political marginalization. The latter's main limitation is of a very different nature. By its constant focus on the all-pervasive character of power and domination, it promotes an ethic of critique that makes it hard to envisage an alternative order for fear of reproducing the problem, and it fosters a hermeneutic of suspicion that makes an already difficult dialogue more difficult still.

The Need for Engagement

Despite these obstacles, there is no substitute for direct engagement. The social relations that now bind people on a global scale are a matter of historical fact. They can be historically remade but they cannot be ignored. Powerful or not, subjects of world politics are bound by complex relations woven by neoliberal globalization. There is also evidence of the negative social consequences of this model and there is a strong moral case to be made in favour of questioning and replacing it. The questioning cannot occur without the meaningful input of those affected by it. Its replacement likewise requires that as many people as possible be associated with any alternative that could emerge. No one subject can be relied upon to 'solve' the problem of exclusion. The Subject is 'dead', as postmodernists say, but it has been replaced by several different subjects with a potential to influence the course of history. From an ethical point of view, I take a joint undertaking to be preferable to heroic leadership.

Any meaningful response to exclusion resides in the nature of the engagement between actors of global politics. In mitigating exclusion, an open and attentive attitude is more appropriate. The object here is the phenomenon of exclusion here rather than an isolated instance of suffering. The moral response is more complex than, say, rescuing a drowning person. An entire group's exclusion require more than a quick intervention and social scientific expertise. We have seen above that instances of suffering can elicit in those who come across them a strong emotional reaction that can lead to a variety of responses. It is common for the reaction to be one of distancing, either because the pain is 'too much to bear' or because the sufferers' pain is a consequence of the natural order

(social Darwinism) or of their own failure (lack of character or imprudence). These rationalizations are central to the neoliberal moral universe. Philosophy, social science, and the dominant public discourse flowing from them foster neither openness nor receptivity.

Despite this unfavourable context, criticisms and actions to draw attention to exclusion have proliferated. Separate criticisms of the neoliberal order have converged at specific moments and in specific places, on the occasion of major world economic conferences and in the venues chosen to hold them. While many participants came out to protest their own exclusion, others also discovered the existence of forms of exclusion different from those that brought them to the demonstrations in the first place. This realization of the effects of neoliberalism on large segments of the world's population has led to outrage on the part of some participants. I take this outrage to be an outward expression of an inner sense of right and wrong—a *feeling* of injustice—however ill-defined. The participants' awareness of each other's experience of neoliberalism and their surprise at the diversity of the positions represented at protests are recurring themes in accounts given by participants and students of these events.

In reaction to this awareness there have been efforts to engage in a dialogue across perspectives. Faced with the suffering of others, some participants have tried to see neoliberalism through others' eyes by temporarily bracketing their own experience of it. Many have shown a reluctance to approach their fellow participants with a ready-made solution to the world's problem. Instead, efforts are made to understand and respond to what others have to say. The creation of the World Social Forum in 2001 is a form of institutionalization of this more open disposition toward others.

From Engagement to Agency

This has not prevented a conflict from emerging between those who want the Forum to remain an ideas fair for alternative social practices of globalization and those who want the Forum to become a collective agent of alter-globalization in the same way that states or corporations are agents of neoliberal globalization. This rift denotes at least a partial straying from the founding principles of the event. No group is supposed to claim to speak for the Forum and ground the legitimacy of its action by invoking it, yet many of those who were behind its creation are musing openly about transforming it into a deliberative forum that could speak with one voice.¹ In 2005 and 2006, this dispute became the elephant in the room. Some writers who initially welcomed the WSF exercise do not mince their words. One author and participant has written of the ‘war’ being waged at the Forum between those who want it to remain unchanged and those who want an activist Forum (an not merely a forum of activists).² This description of the tensions between the organizers and some of the participants is one step further than the earlier concerns that the Forum ‘ha[d] become too big’.³

The World Social Forum may be at a crossroads. If its organizers try to turn it into a collective actor, they will lose participants. If they maintain its original vocation, those intent on devising a concrete alternative might desert it. In keeping with the spirit of this dissertation, I think it preferable to maintain the original vocation of the WSF as a space for dialogue. To reconcile the two positions, the adage ‘think globally and act locally’ is perhaps the best course of action, the slogan-like quality of the phrase notwithstanding. Those who have participated in demonstrations and attended the Forum have gained

considerable knowledge from these experiences. What they heard can be relayed to those they interact with on a daily basis in their society and among their acquaintances. The knowledge they acquired can be put to use in everyday behaviours as consumers, parents, friends, teachers, activists, and neighbours. The critical theories that deal with exclusion are concerned with everyday material and discursive practices that perpetuate exclusion. If everyday life is a space where agents reproduce socially undesirable practices, it also a space where they can hinder this reproduction and where they can reconstruct social relations. Thus, the Forum can play its intended role, but it would do so in a low-key manner, in the form of matter-of-fact changes in people's outlook on world politics and in the form of slowly changing social practices.

Political institutions are another terrain that can be appropriated. The social exclusion caused by neoliberalism is partially due to the loss of control of democratic institutions, even in established representative democracies. Neoliberal reforms in democratic societies take long to implement. Policy-makers cannot take on all actors at once. They must divide them from one another by exploiting existing socially bestowed characteristics (work ethic and morality, gender, culture, and other forms of essentialist hierarchies). It is these divisions that prevent the formation of a large enough bloc to oppose neoliberalism. So long as only one group at a time is being made vulnerable, the others remain on the sideline, supporting or at least not opposing a policy that does not affect them directly. Yet, there is an overall strategy to these seemingly unrelated reforms to social programmes and regulations. They partake of the neoliberal project. It is a project that has clearly been 'outed' in the last decade. Minimally, it is necessary to recreate the margin of manoeuvre lost in the last generation. This can be done by re-

regulating the market and broad support for such a policy requires the agreement of broad segments of society.

There is an international dimension to this re-regulation as well. It cannot happen only at the national level. Much of the economy is already globalized, simply raising tariff barriers and abolishing the IMF, the World Bank, and the WTO, as some advocate, is not a viable solution. The lock-in mechanism engineered in them has worked and a collapse of world trade might be catastrophic. The flaw of these institutions resides in the policies they promote and the rules they uphold, not in their existence as multilateral bodies. To the question “Globalization: tame it or scrap it?”⁴ I would answer that there is a need to tame it. Neoliberal globalization can be tamed only if divisions between different countries and regions cannot be exploited. Settings like the World Social Forum and other types of global dialogue ensure that the message being transmitted by peoples to their own government is sufficiently similar to lead these governments to negotiate a different set of global rules.

This is a transformative rather than revolutionary proposal. It is one that probably cannot appeal to the more radical activists and intellectuals who think that the nation-state, globalization, and global institutions are fundamentally oppressive. I emphatically disagree with their assessment. What matters is who controls the institutions, what discourse flows out of the institutions, what the institutions do, and whether the people continue to have meaningful input into them. The modern nation-state is the single largest repository of knowledge and expertise, and it still retains some legitimacy. It can mobilize resources the way few institutions can. Before that happens, however, social agents must mobilize across social divisions and across geographical spaces and regain

control of their state. This depends on the disposition agents bring to their interactions and the spirit of the World Social Forum can be brought to bear on them.

Endnotes

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³ Naomi Klein, 'What Happened to the New Left?', *The Globe and Mail*, 30 January 2003, A17.

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