# 1AC

## 1AC

### 1AC – Plan

#### The United States federal government should adopt the principle of separating platforms from commerce.

### 1AC – Democracy

#### The advantage is democracy:

#### Corporate consolidation subverts democratic governance. The size of dominant platforms concentrates political and economic power.

Lande & Vaheesan ’20 [Robert; Professor of Law @ University of Baltimore School of Law and Sandeep; Legal Director @ Open Markets Institute, JD @ Duke; “Preventing the Curse of Bigness Through Conglomerate Merger Legislation,” *Ariz. St. LJ* 52; AS]

Corporate size often translates to political power. An extensive body of research has found that firm size is correlated with more political activity.41 Larger firms make larger contributions to political campaigns and devote more resources to lobbying members of Congress and government agencies.42 Judicial reinterpretations of the First Amendment have granted corporate political activity broad constitutional protection. 43 Their power is not confined to these “narrow” political activities. Large businesses also use their wealth power to fund sympathetic media coverage and scholarly research. This corporate political activity benefits executives and shareholders at the expense of the rest of society.

Corporate power in politics and public life is not an academic concern and today attracts critics from across much of the political spectrum.44 A large segment of the public is deeply concerned about corporate clout and influence in American politics. From the progressive left to the nationalist or conservative right, many individuals and organizations have expressed worries about powerful corporations capturing the political system and using it to advance their narrow aims. An ideologically diverse set of figures and groups have raised concerns about the political power of large corporations and started offering remedies.

A. Corporate Size Translates to Political and Economic Power

Corporate size often translates to political and economic power. An extensive body of research has found that firm size is correlated with political activity. 45 Larger firms make larger contributions to political campaigns and other activities and devote more resources to lobbying members of Congress and government agencies. 46 They can also use their power to fund sympathetic media coverage and scholarly research.47 This corporate political activity has tangible benefits for executives and shareholders. An influential 2014 study found that members of Congress in voting on bills are responsive to the views of two groups: large businesses and the wealthy.48 In contrast, they are largely indifferent to the political concerns and preferences of the middle and working classes.49

Large firms exercise political power through campaign contributions. An extensive body of empirical literature has found that large firms make larger campaign contributions to members of Congress and political action committees than small firms do.50 Campaign contributions are an important way to build and maintain political influence. While the findings on the question are mixed, campaign contributions may increase the likelihood that the member’s votes and other actions are aligned with the donor’s interests.51

Political contributions can give corporate donors access to those in power. Lending credence to what research had found,52 Mick Mulvaney, the current director of the Office of Management and Budget and former acting director of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, openly admitted this dynamic in a speech before bank lobbyists.53 He stated that, as a member of Congress, he granted preferential access to lobbyists who had donated to his political campaigns.54

Large firms also wield political power through lobbying, an arguably much more important form of political activity than political contributions.55 They often have large staffs of lawyers and lobbyists to present their messages to politicians and regulators.56 Relative to smaller firms, large firms devote more resources to lobbying activity. 57 This lobbying allows corporations to shape the narrative around an issue and influence members of Congress and regulators. Lobbying is often an effective strategy for casting doubt on the public benefits of legislation and regulation. 58 Corporate lobbyists can create counter-narratives that proposed legislation restricting their client’s activities would either not advance or undermine the public interest.59 For instance, despite triggering the worst economic crisis in nearly eighty years, large banks and financial institutions in the United States, through all-encompassing lobbying and public relations blitz, subsequently avoided structural breakups and significant restrictions on their activity.60

Indeed, the present weak enforcement of antitrust may, in part, be a product of corporate power and influence over the federal antitrust agencies.61 “Regulatory capture” occurs when a regulatory agency or enforcer is so greatly influenced by businesses that it fails to act in the public’s interest.62 Instead it acts in ways that benefits the players in the industry that the regulators were charged with policing.63 One possible cause of regulatory capture is that the agency often has limited resources compared to the regulated companies. 64 When the regulated business is a multi-billion-dollar company, the disparity in resources can be especially large and regulatory capture becomes more probable.65

The FTC and DOJ’s reluctance and unwillingness to challenge some huge mergers could, in part, be caused by the considerable influence massive companies have over them and the political environment in which they operate. For instance, FTC Commissioner Rohit Chopra recently voiced concern over the power of big tech in a trade regulation context, stating: “All too often, the government is too captured by those incumbents that use their power to dictate their preferred policies.”66 Consistent with the “capture” theory, mergers can produce large companies with substantial resources to hire the requisite numbers of lawyers, lobbyists, and experts to “capture” a regulatory agency or enforcer.

The power of large corporations extends beyond the political, regulatory, and legal realms. Their power can be characterized as hegemonic. They can shape the parameters of public debate through a variety of means. They use their advertising dollars to boost supportive outlets and voices and marginalize critical ones 67—and even co-opt individual and organizational voices that are conventionally perceived as progressive.68 They also own media outlets (think of Amazon founder Jeff Bezos and his ownership of the Washington Post) and fund think tanks that can propagate their preferred narrative on a range of issues.69 Big businesses have also become adept at manipulating academic debates to their own ends, donating to universities, sponsoring new academic centers, and paying ideologically-aligned scholars to produce academic defenses.70 Indeed, present-day antitrust embodies the extraordinary influence of corporations. Over the past several decades, corporate-funded economists and lawyers have played an outsized role in antitrust debates.71

Furthermore, corporate size confers power through the control of economic resources. At a large corporation, a handful of individuals— executives and directors—make decisions that affect entire cities, regions, and even the nation. A decision to open a plant in one city, instead of another, or to relocate a plant from the United States to a foreign country can affect large numbers of people. Senator Sherman recognized how concentration of assets in a few hands amounted to private government. 72 He asked his colleagues to “consider . . . whether, on the whole, it is safe in this country to leave the production of property, the transportation of our whole country, to depend upon the will of a few men sitting at their council board in the city of New York.”73

Corporate size means that every nominally private decision has major public implications.74 They can use their control of key resources to stop unfavorable government action and induce favorable action.75

Consider the recent contest among states and cities to host Amazon’s second headquarters. Amazon invited state and local governments across the country to compete for this second headquarters in exchange for a pledge to create 50,000 local jobs.76 States and cities showered Amazon with a range of carrots amounting to billions of dollars in tax incentives. 77 Exemplifying the lengths to which governments were willing to go to lure Amazon, New York Governor Andrew Cuomo (half-) jokingly even offered to change his first name to Amazon if Amazon chose New York City. 78 This frenzied competition illustrates the power of a large corporation over democratically elected governments. And this episode is not an outlier but representative of how large corporations use their power and the threat of relocation to pressure and twist governments for their own ends.79

#### Concentration holds the populace hostage to the whims of corporate power. Reviving antitrust enforcement is key to economic democracy.

Sitaraman ’18 [Ganesh; Co-founder and Director of Policy @ Great Democracy Initiative; Professor of Law @ Vanderbilt University; “Taking Antitrust Away from the Courts”; The Great Democracy Initiative, September 2018; *Vanderbilt Law Research Paper* 19(2); AS]

Introduction: The Second Age of Monopoly Power

We live in a second age of monopoly power. The first age, which spanned from the Gilded Age of the late 19th century through the Progressive Era in the early 20th century was marked by the growth of corporations into “trusts.” From 1894 to 1904, hundreds of corporations disappeared as the “Great Merger Movement” led to consolidation and concentration in many sectors of the economy.1 Decried in the general public, the trusts were caricatured as octopuses with tentacles extending across sectors of the economy and into government.

In response to the first age of monopoly power, Americans across party lines rallied to fight the trusts and monopolies that threatened freedom and democracy. Republican John Sherman of Pennsylvania authored the Sherman Anti-Trust Act of 1890 and was joined by the Republican “Trustbuster” Teddy Roosevelt in seeking to rein in powerful corporations. Democrat Woodrow Wilson signed the Clayton Anti-Trust Act and the Federal Trade Commission Act, supported by advocate and later Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis. Right and left, Americans of that era understood that massive economic concentration was a threat not just to a free and competitive marketplace, but a threat to our constitutional democracy. As Theodore Roosevelt put it, “There can be no real political democracy unless there is something approaching an economic democracy.”

In recent years, we have entered a second era of monopoly power, with growing concentration across sectors of the economy. Four airlines now control 80 percent of the market.2 Three drug stores control 99 percent of the market.3 Four beef companies control 85 percent of the market.4 The Fortune 100 now makes up nearly 50 percent of GDP, with the top 20 firms capturing more than 20 percent.5

Commentators across the ideological spectrum have noticed and criticized America’s monopoly problem: from progressives like Joe Stiglitz and neoliberals like Bloomberg’s Noah Smith to conservative Breitbart columnist Virgil and establishment centrists at the Brookings Institution and The Economist. 6 Even Congress has gotten involved, with members of the House creating an Antitrust Caucus and the Senate Judiciary Committee holding hearings on the question of the goals of antitrust.

There is widespread interest in corporate consolidation because the concentration of economic power is a threat not just to the American economy but also to freedom and democracy. Economically, monopolists have the ability to hold consumers hostage, raise prices on goods and services, and deliver worse quality goods and services – which is especially problematic when their goods or services are essential in a modern economy. Rising concentration also contributes to widening inequality. As mega-corporations use their market power to squeeze suppliers and consumers to gain higher profits, those benefits accrue to their executives and shareholders, most of whom are on the wealthier side of the population.7 Some economists have shown that growing concentration is leading to inter-firm inequality and with it, increased inequality in society.8 Others have found that concentrated markets lead to lower wages.9 The rise of monopolies also threatens America’s innovative and entrepreneurial status. Powerful companies don’t want competition and are likely to use their market (and political power) to stop, delay, or otherwise prevent disruptive innovators from gaining traction. In recent years, economic researchers have confirmed this: not only is the rate of new companies plummeting across sector and geographies, but consolidation is an important factor contributing to the decline in new business formation.10

#### Structural separations preserve democratic governance by challenging the structures that produce economic concentration.

Khan ’20 [Lina, Chairperson @ Federal Trade Commission, JD @ Yale Law School; “The End of Antitrust History Revisited,” *Harvard Law Review* 133(5), p. 1655-1683; AS]

I. THE CURSE OF BIGNESS

Wu's The Curse of Bigness is structured around three key tenets: (i) that antitrust and antimonopoly are central to America's political tradition and critical safeguards of a democratic republic (pp. 16-19); (2) that the structure of our economy inextricably shapes our experience as citizens (pp. 39-44); and (3) that the decades-long project to defang antitrust is the product of an intellectual revolution that redefined how we assess competition through adopting "consumer welfare" as the law's only goal (pp. 88-91, 135).

First, Wu makes clear that his aim is to help recenter antitrust as a key “check on private power as necessary in a functioning democracy” (p. 19). Revisiting the legislative history of antitrust, he notes that lawmakers passed antitrust laws with the expressly political goal of preventing economic autocracy and prohibiting coercive conduct (pp. 30– 31).14 He analogizes antitrust to constitutional law, both in function and in import, following a tradition of scholars who have explored what it means for antitrust to serve a constitutional role (p. 54).15 Wu draws out two distinct aspects of this constitutional dimension. He argues that the passage of the antitrust laws reflected a “[c]onstitutional choice in industrial and national policy,” suggesting that lawmakers passed antitrust laws in order to codify a set of foundational principles that were to set the backdrop of American life (p. 17). Analogizing antitrust to the checks and balances of the U.S. constitutional system, Wu also underscores how constitutional design and antitrust law both reflect a distrust of concentrated power (p. 31). The steady erosion of antitrust, then, is a threat not just to open markets and fair competition, but to the basis of democratic governance.

Second, Wu makes the case that economic concentration inextricably shapes our experience as citizens and that how we structure our markets is foremost a political question that demands critical public engagement (p. 33).16 This tenet is most directly an echo of Justice Brandeis, whose 1934 book is a namesake for Wu’s.17 Justice Brandeis analyzed the phenomenology of concentrated private power, examining how living in a nation of monopolies and oligopolies — being subject to their whims and arbitrary dictates — shaped the experience of civic life.18 Wu, channeling Justice Brandeis, answers that it leads to “a certain inhumanity,” likely to both “rob the American people of their character” and “suppress[] industrial liberty” (p. 41).19 The analysis focuses on how having one’s life largely governed by unaccountable private power tends to undermine liberty and self-determination. “We like to speak of freedoms in the abstract, but for most people, a sense of autonomy is more influenced by private forces and economic structure than by government” (p. 40), Wu writes, explaining that Justice Brandeis viewed “real freedom as freedom from both public and private coercion” (p. 41). The threat to liberty posed by monopoly — which can be understood as a form of private sovereign — remains a “major blind spot for contemporary libertarianism, which is rightly concerned with government overreach but bizarrely tolerant of mistreatment or abuse committed by so-called private actors” (p. 41 n.\*).20

A striking corollary to the idea that extreme economic concentration undermines personal and political liberty is that it can also facilitate the rise of fascism. A major current underlying Wu’s book is that failing to police the growth and incursion of extreme concentrations of private power will not just come at the expense of certain republican ideals but, instead, threatens democracy altogether (p. 139). Wu argues that the German Republic’s acceptance of monopolies and concentrated industry in key markets helped give rise to Hitler, and that the mid-century push for reviving antitrust in the United States was driven, in part, by fears that — absent intervention — America, too, could fall subject to the same fate (pp. 79–82).21 In the lead-up to the passage of the Anti-Merger Act of 1950, both of the bill’s chief sponsors discussed how halting the rising tide of economic concentration was critical for avoiding totalitarianism.22

Third, Wu pegs the enfeebling of antitrust to an intellectual shift ushered in by the Chicago School (pp. 83-92). The Chicago School began with a group of economists and lawyers primarily associated with the University of Chicago (pp. 84-85). Its key founders included Professors Aaron Director, Milton Friedman, and George Stigler and the group grew to include figures such as Professor Ward Bowman and then-Professors Frank Easterbrook, Richard Posner, and Robert Bork (pp. 84-85). Backed by money from the Volker Fund, the group established a project to "promote private enterprise."123 Their scholarship applied neoclassical price theory to the study of legal rules and, in particular, to the analysis of antitrust.24 Under the guidance of Director, students and researchers studied various antitrust doctrines through the lens of price theory, criticizing prevailing case law and theories of harm.25 Perhaps the "most influential" of these efforts, Wu notes, was Bork's paper revisiting the legislative history of the Sherman Act and concluding that the sole purpose of the antitrust laws was to maximize consumer welfare (p. 88). Although a long list of scholars would subsequently debunk Bork's claim,26 the Supreme Court adopted Bork's fictitious account.2 7

The embrace of consumer welfare by courts and enforcers alike "threw out the broader concerns that had long animated the [Sherman] Act and its enforcement" (p. 89). Under the new paradigm, harm to competition would manifest solely as harm to allocative efficiency in the form of higher prices or lower output. Wu observes that Chicago's framework pledged economic rigor yet neglected to consider a host of economic costs, including stagnation and stunted innovation (p. 90). "In truth," Wu writes, "Robert Bork's attack on antitrust was really laissezfaire reincarnated" (p. 91). With the codification of Chicago's ideas, antitrust "lost its traditional goals" (p. 103).

Several factors enabled ideas once considered "lunatic fringe" 28 to redefine antitrust. Channeling the work of Professor William Kovacic, Wu notes that Chicago's triumph relied on key concessions from and alliances with the Harvard School, comprised of centrist scholars and enforcers such as Professors Donald Turner and Phil Areeda and thenJudge Stephen Breyer (p. 103).29 Kovacic's analysis focuses on how the institutional concerns that occupied Harvard School thinkers (such as their misgivings about expansive private rights of action under the U.S. antitrust system) led them to embrace some of the same prescriptions as Chicago. 30 Wu adds that these scholars were also haunted by critiques that antitrust enforcement had become arbitrary and unjustifiably aggressive, nothing short of "the blind firing of muskets at companies that just seemed bad" (p. 103). Meanwhile price theory, along with the consumer welfare standard, appeared to promise a disciplined and rigorous approach to enforcement. A decades-long attack by Chicago on the existing paradigm had left Harvard School academics more susceptible to - and perhaps less critical of - Chicago's interventions (p. 105). As the ideological makeup of the federal judiciary shifted, courts adopted Chicago's theories much more readily.

Within a decade the Chicago movement began encountering some resistance from what is referred to as the "Post-Chicago School," a group of economists and lawyers that "emerged to challenge many of [Chicago's] basic premises" (p. 107). Whereas Chicago scholars had introduced general theories, Post-Chicago academics sought to qualify them, circumscribing the set of conditions under which Chicago's predictions would hold. Yet despite their interventions, "the antimonopoly provisions of the Sherman Act went into a deep freeze from which they have never really recovered" (p. 108). Our economy today reflects this neglect, with highly concentrated product and labor markets along with a tech industry that, while once open and dynamic, is increasingly closed and controlled (pp. 114-26).

Wu closes by sketching the outlines of a Neo-Brandeisian agenda that would resuscitate antitrust. He recommends a merger enforcement program that would fulfill Congress's mandate to arrest mergers even when concentration is in its incipiency, and he proposes that antitrust agencies open up merger review to greater public scrutiny and accountability (pp. 127-30). He urges a return to the "big case" tradition that targeted AT&T and Microsoft (pp. 93-101), and implores enforcers to recover corporate breakups as a mainstay antitrust remedy, observing that the administrative difficulty of structural remedies is often overstated and the benefits (including the "self-executing" nature of breakups) underappreciated (pp. 132-33). Finally, Wu calls for antitrust to abandon consumer welfare as its stated goal and return to a "protection of competition" test, which is more faithful to legislative history and earlier precedent (pp. 135-37). Building on scholarship by Professors Barak Orbach and Eleanor Fox, 31 among others, Wu observes that the goal of preserving competition is "focused on protection of a process," whereas promoting consumer welfare prioritizes "the maximization of a value" (p. 136). Refocusing antitrust on protecting the competitive process, Wu argues, would bring enforcement more in line with actual business realities while also reflecting congressional intent.

#### Democratic antitrust policy remedies structural inequalities. Corporate consolidation denies small business access to capital and solidifies racial disparities.

Klobuchar ’21 [Amy; US Senator @ Minnesota, JD @ UChicago; *Antitrust: Taking on Monopoly Power from the Gilded Age to the Digital Age*, Knopf; AS]

HE HAVES AND HAVE-NOTS: HOW GOVERNMENT POLICY, INCLUDING STRONG ANTITRUST LAWS, CAN REDUCE INCOME INEQUALITY AND RACIAL DISPARITIES

America’s democracy—and America’s economy—should work for everyone, not just the privileged few. This is an economy that works extremely well for the wealthy but leaves so many American families and working people behind, causing anger and resentment that is dividing our country. In an article titled “A Rigged Economy,” Joseph Stiglitz—a winner of the Nobel Prize in economics, a Columbia University professor, and the chief economist at the Roosevelt Institute—explained in November 2018, reviewing the past forty years of American history, “The U.S. has the highest level of economic inequality among developed countries….Whereas the income share of the top 0.1 percent has more than quadrupled and that of the top 1 percent has almost doubled, that of the bottom 90 percent has declined. Wages at the bottom, adjusted for inflation, are about the same as they were some 60 years ago!”

According to the Economic Policy Institute, income inequality has risen in every American state since the 1970s, with the top 1 percent, in 2015, receiving 26.3 times as much income as families in the bottom 99 percent. And the divide has only worsened in recent decades. According to the AFL-CIO’s new Executive Paywatch database, a CEO of a Fortune 500 company hauled in, on average, $13.94 million in 2017—an average that was 361 times the compensation of the average American worker. “When adjusted for inflation,” the AFL-CIO notes of production and nonsupervisory workers, “the average wage has remained stagnant for more than 50 years.”

And it isn’t just urban and suburban workers who have been affected by the nation’s economic policies. For farmers in rural America, net income has dropped nearly 50 percent over the past five years. Most people are actually surprised by this one: the poverty rate for kids in rural areas is more than four percentage points higher than in urban areas. And in many parts of our country, both in inner-city and in rural communities, living in poverty is an intergenerational problem. This poverty involves more than a lower income level, it also means a lack of quality schools, health care, and jobs. Poverty is clustered in specific regions and in specific rural, suburban, and city neighborhoods.

Communities of color have been particularly impacted by low wages, persistent poverty, lack of access to capital, and lax antitrust enforcement. In a 2017 article published in Washington Monthly, Brian Feldman traced the decline of Black-owned businesses in the era of corporate consolidation. “The decline of black-owned independent businesses traces to many causes,” he explains, “but a major one that has been little noted was the decline in the enforcement of anti-monopoly and fair trade laws beginning in the late 1970s.” In 1985, there were sixty Black-owned banks. By 2017, that number had fallen to twenty-three. While there were, in the 1980s, fifty Blackowned insurance companies, that number has plummeted to just two companies. The country saw an uptick in Blackowned businesses after the Great Recession, but the number of minority-owned start-ups and companies should be much higher, with access to capital being a major issue. The pandemic has hit minority-owned businesses particularly hard. “The number of active Black-owned businesses in the U.S.,” a columnist for the Chicago Tribune reported in mid-July 2020, citing research done at the University of California, Santa Cruz, “plummeted 41 percent during the early months of the pandemic from February to April, more than twice the 17 percent level of white-owned businesses.”

Twelve percent of the U.S. population is Black, yet statistics show that just 3.3 percent of new businesses— that is, those less than two years old—are Black-owned. This is especially troubling for our democracy, because business ownership is tied to economic and political power. Yet the nation’s history of racism has made it very hard for Black businesses to succeed. One horrific example? In what became known as the Tulsa Race Riot of 1921, a prosperous African American community, Greenwood, known as Black Wall Street and full of churches, homes, schools, and an array of Black-owned businesses, was tragically destroyed by a white mob, with hundreds of people killed in the violence. Yet Black entrepreneurs, through the decades, have built—or had to rebuild— valuable businesses. Minority-owned businesses, in fact, played a significant role in the success of the civil rights movement, including in the Montgomery bus boycott, so ensuring that minority-owned businesses remain vibrant— and continue to be able to compete effectively in today’s marketplace—is critical to social and economic justice and to keeping American communities strong.

The growing inequalities of wealth in America need to be remedied, and concrete actions must be taken to drive this change. In addition to changes to the nation’s antitrust laws and enforcement, we need tax reform and other changes that would ask our wealthiest citizens to pay their fair share of taxes and that would strengthen labor unions and the American economy. For example, I’ve been a big supporter of Representative Jim Clyburn’s legislation to fight persistent poverty. House majority whip Jim Clyburn has urged Congress to adopt a “10|20|30 formula” that would direct that at least 10 percent of federal investments be made in persistent poverty communities where 20 percent or more of the population has lived below the poverty line for the last 30 years. “In the United States,” Clyburn notes, “there are 485 counties where 20 percent or more of the population has been living below the poverty line for the last 30 years.” Representative Clyburn and I have also introduced comprehensive broadband infrastructure legislation to expand access to affordable high-speed internet in an effort to combat the digital divide.

While the COVID-19 pandemic shed a gigantic spotlight on income and racial disparities, these disparities have been with us for a long time. To reduce income and racial disparities, there are, in fact, all kinds of additional tax, education, health-care, and wage policies that we must champion, including to make the tax system more fair. For example, we need to roll back the excesses of the 2017 Trump tax bill and raise the corporate tax rate from 21 to 25 percent so that we can fund and rebuild American infrastructure and create good-paying jobs. The wealthiest members of our society, as well as big corporations, need to pay their fair share of taxes so that we can make necessary investments in education, infrastructure, and health care and in people and communities in need.

We need to make one- and two-year community college degrees and training certifications free for those who pursue them so that we can incentivize people to go into fields where there are or will be job openings. We need to make four-year college degrees more affordable and help with student debt. We need to fix our roads and bridges and rail and expand broadband. We need to expand access to health care and make prescription drugs and medical treatments more affordable, and we need to get to universal health care as a moral imperative. After all, health care is a right, not a privilege. We also need to invest in impoverished communities and in quality child care, protect people’s retirements, raise the minimum wage to $15 an hour, and pass the Paycheck Fairness Act to ensure the payment of living wages and to help eliminate gender and racial pay disparities.

But to truly ensure that the gains of competition and free enterprise go to entrepreneurs and workers (as opposed to the monopolists who seek to stifle competition), we must also focus on our competition policy and thus even the playing field for small businesses and workers. Today, many Americans are saddled with credit card debt and are working long hours to keep up with paying their bills, while some Americans need to work two—or even three or more —jobs just to get by. During the Great Recession, more than 5 percent of Americans held multiple jobs, with the rate of multiple job holding declining just slightly, to 4.9 percent, as of 2017. Many people started “side hustles” such as driving for Uber or Lyft to supplement their income or added another job as a waitress or independent contractor.

To help American workers, in addition to all of the tax, education, and social services changes that rightfully dominate economic discussions, we must also zero in on a new competition policy for America. As with all things, to truly make it better for workers, this issue of antitrust enforcement and reform must be pushed to the center and included up front in political debates and discussions, in party platforms, and in candidate stump speeches. We can make change, but only if we push for it.

#### Democratic governance provides social goods and remedies global problems – climate change, economic crises, and nuclear war are all exacerbated in an autocratic world.

Kolodziej ’17 [Edward; May 19; Emeritus Research Professor of Political Science at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; EUC Paper Series, “Challenges to the Democratic Project for Governing Globalization,” https://www.ideals.illinois.edu/bitstream/handle/2142/96620/Kolodziej Introduction 5.19.17.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y]

The Rise of a Global Society

Let me first sketch the global democratic project for global governance as a point of reference. We must first recognize that globalization has given rise to a global society for the first time in the evolution of the human species. We are now stuck with each other; seven and half billion people today — nine to ten by 2050: all super connected and interdependent. In greater or lesser measure, humans are mutually dependent on each other in the pursuit of their most salient values, interests, needs, and preferences — concerns about personal, community, and national security, sustainable economic growth, protection of the environment, the equitable distribution of the globe’s material wealth, human rights, and even the validation of their personal and social identities by others. Global warming is a metaphor of this morphological social change in the human condition. All humans are implicated in this looming Anthropogenic-induced disaster — the exhausts of billions of automobiles, the methane released in fracking for natural gas, outdated U.S. coal-fired power plants and newly constructed ones in China. Even the poor farmer burning charcoal to warm his dinner is complicit.

Since interdependence surrounds, ensnares, and binds us as a human society, the dilemma confronting the world’s diverse and divided populations is evident: the expanding scope as well as the deepening, accumulating, and thickening interdependencies of globalization urge global government. But the Kantian ideal of universal governance is beyond the reach of the world’s disparate peoples. They are profoundly divided by religion, culture, language, tribal, ethnic and national loyalties as well as by class, social status, race, gender, and sexual orientation. How have the democracies responded to this dilemma? How have they attempted to reconcile the growing interdependence of the world’s disputing peoples and need for global governance?

What do we mean by the governance of a human society?

A working, legitimate government of a human society requires simultaneous responses to three competing imperatives: Order, Welfare, and Legitimacy. While the forms of these OWL imperatives have differed radically over the course of human societal evolution, these constraints remain predicable of all human societies if they are to replicate themselves and flourish over time. The OWL imperatives are no less applicable to a global society.

1. Order refers to a society’s investment of awesome material power in an individual or body to arbitrate and resolve value, interest, and preference conflicts, which cannot be otherwise resolved by non-violent means — the Hobbesian problematic.

2. The Welfare imperative refers to the necessity of humans to eat, drink, clothe, and shelter themselves and to pursue the full-range of their seemingly limitless acquisitive appetites. Responses to the Welfare imperative, like that of Order, constitute a distinct form of governing power and authority with its own decisional processes and actors principally associated either with the Welfare or the Order imperative. Hence we have the Marxian-Adam Smith problematic.

3. Legitimacy is no less a form of governing power and authority, independent of the Order and Welfare imperatives. Either by choice, socialization, or coerced acquiescence, populations acknowledge a regime’s governing authority and their obligation to submit to its rule. Here arises the Rousseaunian problematic.

The government of a human society emerges then as an evolving, precarious balance and compromise of the ceaseless struggle of these competing OWL power domains for ascendancy of one of these imperatives over the others. It is against the backdrop of these OWL imperatives — Order, Welfare, and Legitimacy — that we are brought to the democratic project for global governance.

The Democratic Project

For Order, open societies constructed the global democratic state and, in alliance, the democratic global-state system. Collectively these initiatives led to the creation of the United Nations, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the World Trade Organization, and the European Union to implement the democratic project’s system of global governance.

The democratic global state assumed all of the functions of the Hobbesian Westphalian security state — but a lot more. The global state became a Trading, Banking, Market, and Entrepreneurial state. To these functions were added those of the Science, Technology and the Economic Growth state. How else would we be able to enjoy the Internet, cell phones and iPhones, or miracle cures? These are the products of the iron triangle of the global democratic state, academic and non-profit research centers, and corporations. It is a myth that the Market System did all this alone. Fueled by increasing material wealth, the democratic global state was afforded the means to become the Safety Net state, providing education, health, social security, leisure and recreation for its population. And as the global state’s power expanded across this broad and enlarging spectrum of functions and roles, the global state was also constrained by the social compacts of the democracies to be bound by popular rule. The ironic result of the expansion of the global state’s power and social functions and its obligation to accede to popular will was a Security state and global state-system that vastly outperformed its principal authoritarian rivals in the Cold War. So much briefly is the democratic project’s response to the Order imperative.

Now let’s look at the democratic project’s response to the Welfare imperative. The democracies institutionalized Adam Smith’s vision of a global Market System. The Market System trucks and barters, Smith’s understanding of what it means to be human. But it does a lot more. The Market System facilitates and fosters the free movement of people, goods and services, capital, ideas, values, scientific discoveries, and best technological practices. Created is a vibrant global civil society oblivious to state boundaries. What we now experience is De Tocqueville’s Democracy in America on global steroids.

As for the imperative of Legitimacy, the social compacts of the democracies affirmed Rousseau’s conjecture that all humans are free and therefore equal. Applied to elections each citizen has one vote. Democratic regimes are also obliged to submit to the rule of law, to conduct free and fair elections, to honor majority rule while protecting minority rights, and to promote human rights at home and abroad.

The Authoritarian Threat to the Democratic Project

The democratic project for global governance is now at risk. Let’s start with the challenges posed by authoritarian regimes, with Russia and China in the lead. Both Russia and China would rest global governance on Big Power spheres of influence. Both would assume hegemonic status in their respective regions, asserting their versions of the Monroe Doctrine. Their regional hegemony would then leverage their claim to be global Big Powers. Moscow and Beijing would then have an equal say with the United States and the West in sharing and shaping global governance. The Russo-Chinese global system of Order would ascribe to Russia and China governing privileges not accorded to the states both aspire to dominate. Moscow and Beijing would enjoy unconditional recognition of their state sovereignty, territorial integrity, and non-interference in their domestic affairs, but they would reserve to themselves the right to intervene in the domestic and foreign affairs of the states and peoples under their tutelage in pursuit of their hegemonic interests. President Putin has announced that Russia’s imperialism encompasses the millions of Russians living in the former republics of the Soviet Union. Russia contends that Ukraine and Belarus also fall under Moscow’s purported claim to historical sovereignty over these states. Forceful re-absorption of Crimea and control over eastern Ukraine are viewed by President Putin as Russia’s historical inheritances. Self-determination is not extended to these states or to other states and peoples of the former Soviet Union. Moscow rejects their right to freely align, say, with the European Union or, god forbid, with NATO.

In contrast to the democratic project, universal in its reach, the Russo-Chinese conception of a stable global order rests on more tenuous and conflict-prone ethno-national foundations. Russia’s proclaimed enemies are the United States and the European Union. Any means that undermines the unity of these entities is viewed by Moscow as a gain. The endgame is a poly-anarchical interstate system, potentially as war-prone as the Eurocentric system before and after World War I, but now populated by states with nuclear weapons.

#### Democracy is a universal value. The intrinsic value of political participation, instrumental value in expression, and constructive role in meeting economic needs make it commitment all people have reason to see value in. Public debate, criticism, and dissent cultivate a democratic ethos to remedy political problems.

Sen ’99 [Amartya; Economist and Philosopher, Professor of Economics and Philosophy @ Harvard University; “Democracy as a Universal Value,” *Journal of Democracy* 10(3), p. 3-17; AS]

What exactly is democracy? We must not identify democracy with majority rule. Democracy has complex demands, which certainly [End Page 9] include voting and respect for election results, but it also requires the protection of liberties and freedoms, respect for legal entitlements, and the guaranteeing of free discussion and uncensored distribution of news and fair comment. Even elections can be deeply defective if they occur without the different sides getting an adequate opportunity to present their respective cases, or without the electorate enjoying the freedom to obtain news and to consider the views of the competing protagonists. Democracy is a demanding system, and not just a mechanical condition (like majority rule) taken in isolation.

Viewed in this light, the merits of democracy and its claim as a universal value can be related to certain distinct virtues that go with its unfettered practice. Indeed, we can distinguish three different ways in which democracy enriches the lives of the citizens. First, political freedom is a part of human freedom in general, and exercising civil and political rights is a crucial part of good lives of individuals as social beings. Political and social participation has intrinsic value for human life and well-being. To be prevented from participation in the political life of the community is a major deprivation.

Second, as I have just discussed (in disputing the claim that democracy is in tension with economic development), democracy has an important instrumental value in enhancing the hearing that people get in expressing and supporting their claims to political attention (including claims of economic needs). Third—and this is a point to be explored further—the practice of democracy gives citizens an opportunity to learn from one another, and helps society to form its values and priorities. Even the idea of “needs,” including the understanding of “economic needs,” requires public discussion and exchange of information, views, and analyses. In this sense, democracy has constructive importance, in addition to its intrinsic value for the lives of the citizens and its instrumental importance in political decisions. The claims of democracy as a universal value have to take note of this diversity of considerations.

The conceptualization—even comprehension—of what are to count as “needs,” including “economic needs,” may itself require the exercise of political and civil rights. A proper understanding of what economic needs are—their content and their force—may require discussion and exchange. Political and civil rights, especially those related to the guaranteeing of open discussion, debate, criticism, and dissent, are central to the process of generating informed and considered choices. These processes are crucial to the formation of values and priorities, and we cannot, in general, take preferences as given independently of public discussion, that is, irrespective of whether open interchange and debate are permitted or not.

In fact, the reach and effectiveness of open dialogue are often underestimated in assessing social and political problems. For example, [End Page 10] public discussion has an important role to play in reducing the high rates of fertility that characterize many developing countries. There is substantial evidence that the sharp decline in fertility rates in India’s more literate states has been much influenced by public discussion of the bad effects of high fertility rates on the community at large, and especially on the lives of young women. If the view has emerged in, say, the Indian state of Kerala or of Tamil Nadu that a happy family in the modern age is a small family, much discussion and debate have gone into the formation of these perspectives. Kerala now has a fertility rate of 1.7 (similar to that of Britain and France, and well below China’s 1.9), and this has been achieved with no coercion, but mainly through the emergence of new values—a process in which political and social dialogue has played a major part. Kerala’s high literacy rate (it ranks higher in literacy than any province in China), especially among women, has greatly contributed to making such social and political dialogue possible.

Miseries and deprivations can be of various kinds, some more amenable to social remedies than others. The totality of the human predicament would be a gross basis for identifying our “needs.” For example, there are many things that we might have good reason to value and thus could be taken as “needs” if they were feasible. We could even want immortality, as Maitreyee, that remarkable inquiring mind in the Upanishads, famously did in her 3000-year old conversation with Yajnvalkya. But we do not see immortality as a “need” because it is clearly unfeasible. Our conception of needs relates to our ideas of the preventable nature of some deprivations and to our understanding of what can be done about them. In the formation of understandings and beliefs about feasibility (particularly, social feasibility), public discussions play a crucial role. Political rights, including freedom of expression and discussion, are not only pivotal in inducing social responses to economic needs, they are also central to the conceptualization of economic needs themselves.

Universality of Values

If the above analysis is correct, then democracy’s claim to be valuable does not rest on just one particular merit. There is a plurality of virtues here, including, first, the intrinsic importance of political participation and freedom in human life; second, the instrumental importance of political incentives in keeping governments responsible and accountable; and third, the constructive role of democracy in the formation of values and in the understanding of needs, rights, and duties. In the light of this diagnosis, we may now address the motivating question of this essay, namely the case for seeing democracy as a universal value. [End Page 11]

In disputing this claim, it is sometimes argued that not everyone agrees on the decisive importance of democracy, particularly when it competes with other desirable things for our attention and loyalty. This is indeed so, and there is no unanimity here. This lack of unanimity is seen by some as sufficient evidence that democracy is not a universal value.

Clearly, we must begin by dealing with a methodological question: What is a universal value? For a value to be considered universal, must it have the consent of everyone? If that were indeed necessary, then the category of universal values might well be empty. I know of no value—not even motherhood (I think of Mommie Dearest)—to which no one has ever objected. I would argue that universal consent is not required for something to be a universal value. Rather, the claim of a universal value is that people anywhere may have reason to see it as valuable.

When Mahatma Gandhi argued for the universal value of non-violence, he was not arguing that people everywhere already acted according to this value, but rather that they had good reason to see it as valuable. Similarly, when Rabindranath Tagore argued for “the freedom of the mind” as a universal value, he was not saying that this claim is accepted by all, but that all do have reason enough to accept it—a reason that he did much to explore, present, and propagate.[6](https://muse.jhu.edu/article/16979" \l "f6) Understood in this way, any claim that something is a universal value involves some counterfactual analysis—in particular, whether people might see some value in a claim that they have not yet considered adequately. All claims to universal value—not just that of democracy—have this implicit presumption.

I would argue that it is with regard to this often implicit presumption that the biggest attitudinal shift toward democracy has occurred in the twentieth century. In considering democracy for a country that does not have it and where many people may not yet have had the opportunity to consider it for actual practice, it is now presumed that the people involved would approve of it once it becomes a reality in their lives. In the nineteenth century this assumption typically would have not been made, but the presumption that is taken to be natural (what I earlier called the “default” position) has changed radically during the twentieth century.

It must also be noted that this change is, to a great extent, based on observing the history of the twentieth century. As democracy has spread, its adherents have grown, not shrunk. Starting off from Europe and America, democracy as a system has reached very many distant shores, where it has been met with willing participation and acceptance. Moreover, when an existing democracy has been overthrown, there have been widespread protests, even though these protests have often been brutally suppressed. Many people have been willing to risk their lives in the fight to bring back democracy. [End Page 12]

Some who dispute the status of democracy as a universal value base their argument not on the absence of unanimity, but on the presence of regional contrasts. These alleged contrasts are sometimes related to the poverty of some nations. According to this argument, poor people are interested, and have reason to be interested, in bread, not in democracy. This oft-repeated argument is fallacious at two different levels.

First, as discussed above, the protective role of democracy may be particularly important for the poor. This obviously applies to potential famine victims who face starvation. It also applies to the destitute thrown off the economic ladder in a financial crisis. People in economic need also need a political voice. Democracy is not a luxury that can await the arrival of general prosperity.

#### Democracy is an unfinished project – institutional battles are valuable, and defeatist attitudes ensure the world remains as it is.

Glaude ’16 [Eddie S., Jr., Professor of African American Studies and Religion @Princeton and a PhD in Religion @Princeton, *Democracy in Black: How Race Still Enslaves*, p. 185-197, Print]

CHANGE HOW WE VIEW GOVERNMENT

For more than three decades, we have been bludgeoned with an idea of government that has little to no concern for the public good. Big government is bad, we are told. It is inefficient, and its bloated bureaucracies are prone to corruption. Even Democrats, especially since Bill Clinton, have taken up this view. For example, Obama says, "We don't need big government; we need smart government."

For some on the right, big government is bad because it aims to distribute wealth to those who are lazy and undeserving. "Big government" is just a shorthand for dreaded entitlement programs-all too often coded language for race. In this view, "big government" is the primary agent of enforcing racial equality, taking hard-earned stuff from white Americans and giving it to undeserving others. Government cannot do such a thing, they argue, without infringing on the rights of white Americans. And even government-mandated redistribution will not solve the problem. As Barry Goldwater put the point in 1964, "No matter how we try, we cannot pass a law that will make you like me or me like you. The key to racial and religious tolerance lies not in laws alone but, ultimately, in the hearts of men." From this perspective, government plays no role in changing our racial habits. Why would we want to make it bigger?

But Goldwater failed to realize that governmental indifference can harden hearts, and government action can create conditions that soften them. **People's attitudes aren't static or untouchable**. They are molded by the quality of interactions with others, and **one of the great powers of government involves shaping those interactions-not determining them in any concrete sense, but defining the parameters within which people come to know each other and live together**. Today, for example, most Americans don't believe women should be confined to the home raising children, or subjected to crude advances and sexist remarks by men. The women's-rights movement put pressure on the government, which in turn passed laws that helped change some of our beliefs about women. Similarly, the relative progress of the 1960s did not happen merely by using the blunt instruments of the law. **Change emerged from the ways those laws, with grassroots pressure, created new patterns of interactions, and ultimately new habits**. Neither Obama's election to the presidency nor my appointment as a Princeton professor would have happened were it not for these new patterns and habits.

None of this happens overnight. It takes time and increasing vigilance to protect and secure change. I was talking with a dose friend and he mentioned a basic fact: that we were only fifteen years removed from the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 when Ronald Reagan was elected president and Republicans began to dismantle the gains of the black freedom struggle. Civil rights legislation and the policies of the Great Society had just started to reshape our interactions when they started to be rolled back. We barely had a chance to imagine America anew-to pursue what full employment might look like, to let the abolition of the death penalty settle in, to question seriously the morality of putting people in prison cells, and to enact policies that would undo what the 1968 Kerner Commission described as "two Americas"­ before the attack on "big government" or, more precisely, the attack on racial equality was launched. The objective was to shrink the size of government ("to starve the beast") and to limit its domestic responsibilities to ensuring economic efficiency and national defense. Democrats eventually buckled, and this is the view of government, no matter who is in office, that we have today. It has become a kind of touchstone of faith among most Americans that government is wasteful and should be limited in its role-that it shouldn't intrude on our lives. Politicians aren't the only ones who hold this view. Many Americans do, too. **Now we can't even imagine serious talk of things like full employment or the abolition of prisons**.

**We have to change our view of government, especially when it comes to racial matters**. Government policy ensured the vote for African Americans and dismantled legal segregation. Policy established a social safety net for the poor and elderly; it put in place the conditions for the growth of our cities. **All of this didn't happen simply because of individual will** or thanks to some abstract idea of America. **It was tied up with our demands and expectations**. Goldwater was wrong. So was Reagan. And, in many ways, so is Obama. Our racial habits are shaped by the kind of society in which we live, and our government plays a big role in shaping that society. As young children, our community offers us a way of seeing the world; it lets us know what is valuable and sacred, and what stands as virtuous behavior and what does not. When Michael Brown's body was left in the street for more than four hours, it sent a dear message about the value of black lives. When everything in our society says that we should be less concerned about black folk, that they are dangerous, that no specific policies can address their misery, we say to our children and to everyone else that these people are "less than"-that they fall outside of our moral concern. We say, without using the word, that they are niggers.

**One way to change that view is to enact policies that suggest otherwise**. Or, to put it another way, to change our view of government, we must change our demands of government. For example, for the past fifty years African American unemployment has been twice that of white unemployment. The 2013 unemployment rate for African Americans stood at 13.1 percent, the highest annual black unemployment rate in more than seventy years. Social scientists do not generally agree on the causes of this trend. Some attribute it to the fact that African Americans are typically the "last hired and first fired." Others point to changes in the nature of the economy; still others point to overt racial discrimination in the labor market. No matter how we account for the numbers, the fact remains that most Americans see double-digit black unemployment as "normal." However, a large-scale, comprehensive jobs agenda with a living wage designed to put Americans, and explicitly African Americans, to work would go a long way toward uprooting the racial habits that inform such a view. It would counter the nonsense that currently stands as a reason for long-term black unemployment in public debate: black folk are lazy and don't want to work.

**If we hold the view that government plays a crucial role in ensuring the public good**-if we believe that all Americans, no matter their race or class, can be vital contributors to our beloved community-**then we reject the idea that some populations are disposable**, that some people can languish in the shadows while the rest of us dance in the light. The question ''Am I my brother's or my sister's keeper?" is not just a question for the individual or a mantra to motivate the private sector. It is a question answered in the social arrangements that aim to secure the goods and values we most cherish as a community. In other words, we need an idea of government that reflects the value of all Americans, not just white Americans or a few people with a lot of money.

We need government seriously committed to racial justice. As a nation, we can never pat ourselves on the back about racial matters. We have too much blood on our hands. Remembering that fact-our inheritance, as Wendell Berry said-does not amount to beating ourselves over the head, or wallowing in guilt, or trading in race cards. Remembering our national sins serves as a check and balance against national hubris. We're reminded of what we are capable of, and our eyes are trained to see that ugliness when it rears its head. But when we disremember-when we forget about the horrors of lynching, lose sight of how African Americans were locked into a dual labor market because of explicit racism, or ignore how we exported our racism around the world-we free ourselves from any sense of accountability. Concern for others and a sense of responsibility for the whole no longer matter. Cruelty and indifference become our calling cards.

We have to isolate those areas in which long-standing trends of racial inequality short-circuit the life chances of African Americans. In addition to a jobs agenda, **we need a comprehensive government response to the problems of public education and mass incarceration**. **And I do mean a government response**. Private interests have overrun both areas, as privatization drives school reform (and the education of our children is lost in the boisterous battles between teachers' unions and private interests) and as big business makes enormous profits from the warehousing of black and brown people in prisons. Let's be clear: private interests or market-based strategies will not solve the problems we face as a country or bring about the kind of society we need. We have to push for massive government investment in early childhood education and in shifting the center of gravity of our society from punishment to restorative justice. We can begin to enact the latter reform by putting an end to the practice of jailing children. Full stop. We didn't jail children in the past. We don't need to now.

In sum, government can help us go a long way toward uprooting racial habits with policies that support jobs with a living wage, which would help wipe out the historic double-digit gap between white and black unemployment; take an expansive approach to early childhood education, which social science research consistently says profoundly affects the life chances of black children; and dismantle the prison-industrial complex. We can no longer believe that disproportionately locking up black men and women constitutes an answer to social ills.

**This view of government cannot be dismissed as a naive pipe dream**, because political considerations relentlessly attack our political imaginations and limit us to the status quo. We are told before we even open our mouths that this particular view won't work or that it will never see the light of day. We've heard enough of that around single payer health care reform and other progressive policies over the Obama years. **Such defeatist attitudes conspire to limit our imaginations and make sure that the world stays as it is**. But those of us who don't give a damn about the rules of the current political game must courageously organize, advocate, and insist on the moral and political significance of a more robust role for government. We have to change the terms of political debate.

Something dramatic has to happen. American democracy has to be remade. John Dewey, the American philosopher, understood this:

The very idea of democracy, the meaning of democracy, must be continually explored afresh; it has to be constantly discovered and rediscovered, remade and reorganized; while the political and economic and social institutions in which it is embodied have to be remade and reorganized to meet the changes that are going on in the development of new needs on the part of human beings and new resources for satisfying these needs.

Dewey saw **American democracy as an unfinished project**. He knew that the aims and purposes of this country were not fixed forever in the founding documents, but the particular challenges of our moment required imaginative leaps on behalf of democracy itself. Otherwise, undemocratic forces might prevail; tyranny in the form of the almighty dollar and the relentless pursuit of it might overtake any commitment to the idea of the public good; and bad habits might diminish our moral imaginations.

The remaking of America will not happen inside the Beltway. Too many there have too much invested in the status quo. A more robust idea of government will not emerge from the current political parties. Both are beholden to big money. **Substantive change will have to come from us**. Or, as the great civil rights leader Ella Baker said, "we are the leaders we've been looking for"-a model of leadership that scares the hell out of the Reverena Sharpton. We will have to challenge the status quo in the streets and at the ballot box. In short, it will take a full-blown democratic awakening to enact this revolution.

#### Liberalism is not a monolith – retrieving it for a radical democratic agenda challenges unjust hierarchies of domination.

Charles W. **MILLS** Professor of Philosophy @ CUNY **’12** “Occupy Liberalism,” Chapter 2 in *Black Rights/White Wrongs: The Critique of Racial Liberalism* [h](https://www.oxfordscholarship.com/view/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780190245412.001.0001/acprof-9780190245412-chapter-2)

The “Occupy Wall Street!” movement stimulated a long listing of other candidates for radical “occupation.” This chapter proposes as a target for radical occupation the somewhat unusual candidate of liberalism itself. It argues for a constructive engagement of radicals with liberalism in order to retrieve it for a radical egalitarian agenda. The premise is that the foundational values of liberalism have a radical potential that has not historically been realized, given the way the dominant varieties of liberalism have developed. Ten reasons standardly given as to why such a retrieval cannot be carried out are examined and argued to be fallacious.

The “Occupy!” movement, which has made headlines around the country, has raised the hopes of young American radicals new to political engagement and revived the hopes of an older generation of radicals still clinging to nostalgic dreams of the glorious ’60s. If the original and still most salient target was Wall Street, a long list of other candidates for “occupation” has since been put forward. In this chapter, I want to propose as a target for radical occupation the somewhat unusual candidate of liberalism itself. But contrary to the conventional wisdom prevailing within radical circles, I am going to argue for the heretical thesis that liberalism should not be contemptuously rejected by radicals but retrieved for a radical agenda. Summarized in bullet-point form, my argument is as follows:

• The “Occupy Wall Street” movement provides an opportunity unprecedented in decades to build a broad democratic movement to challenge plutocracy, patriarchy, and white supremacy in the United States.

• Such a movement is more likely to be successful if it appeals to principles and values most Americans already endorse.

• Liberalism has always been the dominant ideology in the United States.

• Liberalism in the United States has historically been complicit with plutocracy, patriarchy, and white supremacy, but this complicity is a contingent function of dominant group interests rather than the result of an immanent conceptual logic.

• Therefore, progressives in philosophy (and elsewhere) should try to retrieve liberalism for a radical democratic agenda rather than rejecting it, thereby positioning themselves in the ideological mainstream of the country and seeking its transformation.

Let me now try to make this argument plausible for an audience likely to be aprioristically convinced of its obvious unsoundness.

Preliminary Clarification of Terms

First we need to clarify the key terms of “radicalism” and “liberalism.” While of course a radicalism of the right exists, here I refer to radicals who are progressives. But “progressive” cannot just denote the left of the political spectrum, since the whole point of the “new social movements” of the 1960s onward was that the traditional left-right political spectrum, predicated on varying positions on the question of public versus private ownership of the means of production, did not exhaust the topography of the political. Issues of gender and racial domination were to a significant extent “orthogonal” to this one-dimensional trope. So I will use “radicalism” broadly, though still in the zone of progressive politics, to refer generally to ideas/concepts/principles/values endorsing pro-egalitarian structural change to reduce or eliminate unjust hierarchies of domination.

“Liberalism” may denote both a political philosophy and the institutions and practices characteristically tied to that political philosophy. My focus will be on the former. The issue of how bureaucratic logics may prove refractory to reformist agendas is undeniably an important one, but it does not really fall into the purview of philosophy proper. My aim is to challenge the radical shibboleth that radical ideas/concepts/principles/values are incompatible with liberalism. Given the deep entrenchment of this assumption in the worldview of most radicals, refuting it would still be an accomplishment, even if working out practical details of operationalization are delegated to other hands.

In the United States, of course, “liberalism” in public parlance and everyday political discourse is used in such a way that it really denotes left-liberalism specifically (“left” by the standards of a country whose political center of gravity has shifted right in recent decades). In this vocabulary, right-liberals are then categorized as “conservatives”—in the market sense, as against the Burkean sense. On the other hand, some on the right would insist that only they, the heirs to the classic liberalism of John Locke and Adam Smith, are really entitled to the “liberal” designation. Later welfarist theorists are fraudulent pretenders to be exposed as socialist intruders unworthy of the title. Rejecting both of these usages, I will be employing “liberalism” in the expanded sense typical of political philosophy, which links both ends of this spectrum. “Liberalism” then refers broadly to the (p.12) anti-feudal ideology of individualism, equal rights, and moral egalitarianism that arises in Western Europe in the seventeenth-eighteenth centuries to challenge the ideas and values inherited from the old medieval order, and which is subsequently taken up and developed by others elsewhere, including many who would have been explicitly excluded by the original conception of the ideology. Left-wing social democrats and right-wing market conservatives, fans of John Rawls on the one hand and Robert Nozick on the other, are thus both liberals.1

From this perspective, it will be appreciated that liberalism is not a monolith but an umbrella term for a variety of positions. Here are some examples—some familiar, some perhaps less so:

Varieties of Liberalism

Left-wing (social democratic) vs. Right-wing (market conservative)

Kantian vs. Lockean

Contractarian vs. Utilitarian

Corporate vs. Democratic

Social vs. Individualist

Comprehensive vs. Political

Ideal-theory vs. Non-ideal-theory

Patriarchal vs. Feminist

Imperial vs. Anti-imperial

Racial vs. Anti-racial

Color-blind vs. Color-conscious

Etc.2

It is not the case, of course, that these different species of liberalism have been equally represented in the ideational sphere or equally implemented in the institutional sphere. On the contrary, some have been dominant while others have been subordinate, and some have never, at least in the full sense, been implemented at all. But nonetheless, I suggest they all count as liberalisms and as such they are all supposed to have certain elements in common, even those characterized by gender and racial exclusions. (My motivation for making these last varieties of liberalism rather than deviations from liberalism is precisely to challenge liberalism’s self-congratulatory history, which holds an idealized liberalism aloft, untainted by its actual record of complicity with oppressive social systems.) So the initial question we should always ask people making generalizations about “liberalism” is this: What particular variety of liberalism do you mean? And are your generalizations really true about all the possible kinds of liberalism, or only a subset? (p.13)

Here is a characterization of liberalism from a very respectable source, the British political theorist, John Gray:

Common to all variants of the liberal tradition is a definite conception, distinctively modern in character, of man and society… . It is individualist, in that it asserts the moral primacy of the person against the claims of any social collectivity; egalitarian, inasmuch as it confers on all men the same moral status and denies the relevance to legal or political order of differences in moral worth among human beings; universalist, affirming the moral unity of the human species and according a secondary importance to specific historic associations and cultural forms; and meliorist in its affirmation of the corrigibility and improvability of all social institutions and political arrangements. It is this conception of man and society which gives liberalism a definite identity which transcends its vast internal variety and complexity.3

What generate the different varieties of liberalism are different concepts of individualism, different claims about how egalitarianism should be construed or realized, more or less inclusionary readings of universalism (Gray’s characterization sanitizes liberalism’s actual sexist and racist history), different views of what count as desirable improvements, conflicting normative balancings of liberal values (freedom, equality) and competing theoretical prognoses about how best they can be realized in the light of (contested) socio-historical facts. The huge potential for disagreement about all of these explains how a common liberal core can produce such a wide range of variants. Moreover, we need to take into account not merely the spectrum of actual liberalisms but also hypothetical liberalisms that could be generated through novel framings of some or all of the above. So one would need to differentiate dominant versions of liberalism from oppositional versions, and actual from possible variants.

Once the breadth of the range of liberalisms is appreciated—dominant and subordinate, actual and potential—the obvious question then raised is this: even if actual dominant liberalisms have been conservative in various ways (corporate, patriarchal, racist) why does this rule out the development of emancipatory, radical liberalisms?

One kind of answer is the following (call this the internalist answer): because there is an immanent conceptual/normative logic to liberalism as a political ideology that precludes any emancipatory development of it.

Another kind of answer is the following (call this the externalist answer): it doesn’t. The historic domination of conservative exclusionary liberalisms is the result of group interests, group power, and successful group political projects. Apparent internal conceptual/normative barriers to an emancipatory liberalism can be successfully negotiated by drawing (p.14) on the conceptual/normative resources of liberalism itself, in conjunction with a revisionist socio-historical picture of modernity.

Most self-described radicals would endorse—indeed, reflexively, as an obvious truth—the first answer. But as indicated from the beginning, I think the second answer is actually the correct one. The obstacles to developing a “radical liberalism” are, in my opinion, primarily externalist in nature: material group interests, and the way they have shaped hegemonic varieties of liberalism. So I think we need to try to justify a radical agenda with the normative resources of liberalism rather than writing off liberalism. Since liberalism has always been the dominant ideology in the United States and is now globally hegemonic, such a project would have the great ideological advantage of appealing to values and principles that most people already endorse. All projects of egalitarian social transformation are going to face a combination of material, political, and ideological obstacles, but this strategy would at least reduce somewhat the dimensions of the last. One would be trying to win mass support for policies that—and the challenge will, of course, be to demonstrate this—are justifiable by majoritarian norms, once reconceived and put in conjunction with facts not always familiar to the majority. Material barriers (vested group interests) and political barriers (organizational difficulties) will of course remain. But they will constitute a general obstacle for all egalitarian political programs, and as such cannot be claimed to be peculiar problems for an emancipatory liberalism.

But the contention will be that such a liberalism cannot be developed. Why? Here are ten familiar objections, variants of internalism, and my replies to them.

Ten Reasons Why Liberalism Cannot Be Radicalized (And My Replies)

1. Liberalism Has an Asocial, Atomic Individualist Ontology

This is one of the oldest radical critiques of liberalism; it can be found in Marx’s derisive comments—for example, in the Grundrisse—about the “Robinsonades” of the social contract theory whose “golden age” (1650–1800) had long passed by the time he began his intellectual and political career:

The individual and isolated hunter or fisher who forms the starting-point with Smith and Ricardo belongs to the insipid illusions of the eighteenth century. They are Robinson Crusoe stories … no more based on such a naturalism than is Rousseau’s contrat social which makes naturally independent individuals come in contact and have (p.15) mutual intercourse by contract… . Man is in the most literal sense of the word a zoon politikon, not only a social animal, but an animal which can develop into an individual only in society. Production by individuals outside society … is as great an absurdity as the idea of the development of language without individuals living together and talking to one another.4

But several replies can be made to this indictment. To begin with, even if the accusation is true of contractarian liberalism, not all liberalisms are contractarian. Utilitarian liberalism rests on different theoretical foundations, as does the late nineteenth-century British liberalism of T. H. Green and his colleagues: a Hegelian, social liberalism.5 Closer to home, of course, we have John Dewey’s brand of liberalism. Moreover, even within the social contract tradition, resources exist for contesting the assumptions of the Hobbesian/Lockean version of the contract. Rousseau’s Discourse on the Origins of Inequality (1755) (nowhere cited by Marx) rethinks the “contract” to make it a contract entered into after the formation of society, and thus the creation of socialized human beings. So the ontology presupposed is explicitly a social one. In any case, the contemporary revival of contractarianism initiated by John Rawls’s 1971 A Theory of Justice makes the contract a thought-experiment, a “device of representation,” rather than a literal or even metaphorical anthropological account.6 The communitarian/contractarian debates of the 1980s onward recapitulated much of the “asocial” critique of contractarian liberalism (though usually without a radical edge). But as Rawls pointed out against Michael Sandel, for example, one needs to distinguish the figures in the thought-experiment from real human beings.7 And radicals should be wary about accepting a communitarian ontology and claims about the general good that deny or marginalize the dynamics of group domination in actual societies represented as “communities.” The great virtue of contractarian liberal individualism is the conceptual room it provides for hegemonic norms to be critically evaluated through the epistemic and moral distancing from Sittlichkeit that the contract, as an intellectual device, provides.

2. Liberalism Cannot Recognize Groups and Group Oppression in Its Ontology—I (Macro)

The second point needs to be logically distinguished from the first, since a theory could acknowledge the social shaping of individuals while denying that group oppression is central to that shaping. (So #1 is necessary, but not sufficient, for #2.) The Marxist critique, of course, was supposed to encapsulate both points: people were shaped by society and society (post-“primitive (p.16) communism”) was class dominated. The ontology was social and it was an ontology of class. Today radicals would demand a richer ontology that can accommodate the realities of gender and racial oppression also. But whatever candidates are put forward, the key claim is that a liberal framework cannot accommodate an ontology of groups in relations of domination and subordination. To the extent that liberalism recognizes social groups, these are basically conceived of as voluntary associations that one chooses to join or not join, which is obviously very different from, say, class, race, and gender memberships.

But this evasive ontology, which obfuscates the most central and obvious fact about all societies since humanity exited the hunting-and-gathering stage—that is, that they are characterized by oppressions of one kind or another—is not a definitional constituent of liberalism. Liberalism has certainly recognized some kinds of oppression: the absolutism it opposed from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century, the Nazism and Stalinism it opposed in the twentieth century. Liberalism’s failure to systematically address structural oppression in supposedly liberal-democratic societies is a contingent artifact of the group perspectives and group interests privileged by those structures, not an intrinsic feature of liberalism’s conceptual apparatus.

In the preface to her recent Analyzing Oppression, Ann Cudd makes a striking point: that hers is the first book-length treatment of the subject in the analytic tradition.8 Philosophy, the discipline whose special mandate it is to illuminate justice and injustice for us, has had very little to say about injustice and oppression because of the social background of the majority of its thinkers. In political theory and political philosophy, the theorists who developed the dominant varieties of liberalism have come overwhelmingly from the hegemonic groups of the liberal social order (bourgeois white males). So it is really not surprising that, given this background, their socio-political and epistemic standpoint has tended to reproduce rather than challenge group privilege.

Consider Rawls, famously weak on gender and with next to nothing to say about race. Rawlsian “ideal theory,” which has dominated mainstream political philosophy for the last four decades, marginalizes such concerns not contingently but structurally. If your focus from the start is principles of distributive justice for a “well-ordered society,” then social oppression cannot be part of the picture, since by definition an oppressive society is not a well-ordered one. As Cudd points out, A Theory of Justice “leaves injustice virtually untheorized,” operating on the assumption “that injustice is merely the negation of justice.”9 But radically unjust societies—those characterized by major rather than minor deviations from ideality—will be different from just societies not merely morally but (p.17) also metaphysically. What Cudd calls “nonvoluntary social groups” will be central to their makeup.

Accordingly, Cudd contends that a conceptualization of “nonvoluntary social groups” must be central to any adequate account of social oppression: “without positing social groups as causally efficacious entities, we cannot explain oppression.” Contra the conventional wisdom in radical circles, however, she is insistent that the ontology of such groups can be explained “[using] current social science, in the form of cognitive psychology and modern economic theory, and situat[ing] itself in the Anglo-American tradition of liberal political philosophy.”10 Identifying “intentionalist” and “structuralist” approaches as the two broad categories of competing theorizations of social groups, she recommends as the best option a compatibilist position, holding that while all action is intentionally guided, many of the constraints within which we act are socially determined and beyond the control of the currently acting individual; to put a slogan on it, intentions dynamically interact within social structures… . My theory of nonvoluntary social groups fits the description of what Philip Pettit calls “holistic individualism,” which means that the social regularities associated with nonvoluntary social groups supervene on intentional states, and at the same time, group membership in these and voluntary social groups partly constitutes the intentional states of individuals.11

If Cudd is right, then, such a theorization can indeed be developed within a liberal framework, using the resources of analytic social and normative theory. But such a development of the theory is not merely permissible but should be seen as mandatory, given liberalism’s nominal commitment to individualism, egalitarianism, universalism, and meliorism. These values simply cannot be achieved unless the obstacles to their realization are identified and theorized. Social-democratic (left) liberalism, feminist liberalism, black liberalism all historically represent attempts to take these structural realities into account for the purposes of rethinking dominant liberalism.12 They are attempts to get right, to map accurately, the actual ontology of the societies for which liberalism is prescribing principles of justice. What Cudd’s book demonstrates is that it is the ignoring of this ontology of group domination that is the real betrayal of the liberal project. A well-ordered society will not have nonvoluntary social groups as part of its ontology. So the path to the “realistic utopia” Rawls is supposedly outlining would crucially require normative prescriptions for eliminating such groups. That no such guidelines are offered is undeniably an indictment of ideal-theory liberalism, which is thereby exposed as both epistemologically and ontologically inadequate. But that does not rule out a reconceptualized (p.18) liberalism, a non-ideal-theory liberalism that, starting from a different social metaphysic, requires a different normative strategy for theorizing justice.

3. Liberalism Cannot Recognize Groups and Group Oppression in Its Ontology—II (Micro)

But (it will be replied) liberalism suffers from a deeper theoretical inadequacy. Even if it may be conceded that liberal theory can recognize oppression at the macro-level, it will be argued that its individualism prevents it from recognizing how profoundly, at the micro-level, individuals are shaped by structures of social oppression. Class, race, and gender belongings penetrate deeply into the ontology of the individual in ways rendered opaque (it will be claimed) by liberalism’s foundational individualism.

But what those seeking to retrieve liberalism would point out is that we need to distinguish different senses of “individualism.” The individualism that is foundational to liberalism is a normative individualism (as in the Gray quote above), which makes individuals rather than social collectivities the locus of value. But that does not require any denial that individuals are shaped in their character (the “second nature” famously highlighted by left theory) by oppressive social forces and related group memberships. Once the first two criticisms have been refuted—that liberal individuals cannot be “social,” and that the involuntary group memberships central to the social in oppressive societies cannot be accommodated within a liberal framework—then this third criticism collapses also. One can without inconsistency affirm both the value of the individual and the importance of recognizing how the individual is socially molded, especially when the environing social structures are oppressive ones. As already noted, dominant liberalism tends to ignore or marginalize such constraints, assuming as its representative figures individuals not merely morally equal, but socially recognized as morally equal, and equi-powerful rather than group-differentiated into the privileged and the subordinated. But this misleading normative and descriptive picture is a function of a political agenda complicit with the status quo, not a necessary implication of liberalism’s core assumptions. A revisionist, radical liberalism would make the analysis of group oppression, the denial of equal standing to the majority of the population, and their impact on the individual’s ontology, a theoretical priority. Thus Cudd’s book, after explicating the ontology of involuntary groups, goes on to detail the various different ways—through violence, economic constraint, discrimination, group harassment, and the internalization of psychological oppression—that the subordinated are shaped by group domination.13 But nothing in her account is meant to imply either that they (p.19) thereby cease to be individuals or that their involuntary group memberships preclude a normative liberal condemnation of the injustice of their treatment.

4. Liberal Humanist Individualism Is Naïve about the Subject

A different kind of challenge is mounted by Foucault (though arguably originating in such earlier sources as the “anti-humanism” of Althusserian Marxism).14 Here, as John Christman points out, in contrast to the “thick” conception of the person advocated by communitarianism, in critique of liberalism, we get the theoretical recommendation that “the notion of a singular unified subject of any sort, however thin the conception, [must be] abandoned.”15 As Foucault writes:

How, under what conditions, and in what forms can something like a subject appear in the order of discourse? What place can it occupy in each type of discourse, what functions can it assume, and by obeying what rules? In short, it is a matter of depriving the subject (or its substitute) of its role as originator, and of analyzing the subject as a variable and complex function of discourse.16

The subject is not merely molded by power, but produced by power, and, in effect, vanishes.

I agree that liberalism cannot meet such a challenge, but I think the premise of the challenge should be rejected. Here I am in sympathy with Christman, who, reviewing various critiques of the classic liberal humanist conception of the self, argues for a socio-historical conception that concedes the absurdity of the notion of people springing from their own brow (“originators”) while nonetheless making a case for “degrees” of self-creation:

Selves should be seen as to a large extent formed by factors not under the control of those reflective agents themselves… . This will help accomplish two things: to provide grounds for the rejection of models of agency and citizenship that assume Herculean abilities to fashion ourselves out of whole cloth; and to force us to focus more carefully on what powers of self-shaping we therefore are left with… . The point must be that the role of the self’s control of the self (and the attendant social elements of both ‘selves’) will be circumscribed by the ways in which our lives are shaped for us and not by us.17

A commitment to humanism does not, as pointed out above, require the denial of the obvious fact that human beings—especially the (p.20) oppressed—are constrained by material structures and social restrictions in what they can accomplish, nor that, as products of particular epochs and group memberships, their consciousness will have been shaped by dominant concepts and norms. Marx emphasized long ago that though people make history, they do not make it under conditions of their own choosing, that agency is constrained by structure and circumstance. But, contra Althusser, this was never intended as a rejection of the claim that it is still people who ultimately assert their personhood in struggle.

And in my opinion, the retort applies to the Foucauldian version of the thesis also. To make the familiar left critiques: such an analysis not only deprives us of a normative basis for indicting structures of oppression, not only deprives the subject of agency, but is flagrantly inconsistent with the actual history of people’s resistance to the systems that have supposedly “produced” them as subjects. The anti-colonial struggle, the anti-Fascist and anti-Stalinist struggles, the civil rights struggles of white women, people of color, gays, the recent “Arab spring” all give the lie to such a diagnosis. Radical liberalism is capable of recognizing both the extent of our socialization by the existing oppressive social order and the ways in which, nonetheless, many people resist and struggle against this oppressive social order.

5. Liberalism’s Values (Independently of the Ontology Question) Are Themselves Problematic

Even if the ontological challenge can be beaten back, though, another front remains open. It will be argued that liberal humanist values are themselves problematic in nature and incapable of advancing a radical agenda. But the obvious reply is, Which values? And what exactly is the problem supposed to be: (a) that the values are intrinsically problematic? (b) that the values involved have historically been extended in an exclusionary discriminatory way? (c) that the values have been developed in a fashion that is predicated on the experience of the privileged? These are all different claims.

Start with the first. Admittedly, some values associated with the liberal tradition could be judged to be intrinsically problematic, such as the “possessive individualism” C. B. Macpherson famously attributed to Hobbes and Locke.18 But this is a value specific to right-wing liberalism, not liberalism in general (it does not appear on Gray’s list), and would be opposed by left-wing/social democratic liberalism. Such values as “freedom,” “equality” (moral egalitarianism), and “fraternity/sorority” classically emblematic of the liberal tradition have not usually been seen as problematic by radicals and have indeed been emblazoned on radical banners. Freedom from oppression, equal rights/equal pay/equal citizenship (“I AM A MAN”), (p.21) fraternity/sorority with the subordinated (“Am I not a man and a brother? Am I not a woman and a sister?”) have all served as values for progressive movements seeking social emancipation.

To be sure, it is a familiar point to radicals, if somewhat less so to the non-radical majority, that the population as a whole has not historically been recognized as deserving the protections of these norms, so that the opponents of emancipation have all too often themselves been liberals. Freedom has been construed as justifiably resting on the enslavement of some; equality has been restricted to those deemed worthy of it (i.e., those more equal than others); fraternity has been literal, an all-boys’ club. Domenico Losurdo’s recently translated Liberalism: A Counter-History provides a devastating exposé of “liberal thought [not] in its abstract purity, but liberalism, and hence the liberal movement and liberal society, in their concrete reality.” It is an illuminatingly sordid history of the ideology’s complicity with racial slavery, white working-class indentureship, colonialism and imperialism (“A ‘Master-Race Democracy’ on a Planetary Scale,” in one chapter’s title), and the conceptual connection between the Nazi “final solution” and Europe’s earlier extermination programs against indigenous peoples.19

Yet it is noteworthy that in his concluding pages, Losurdo still affirms the “merits and strong points of the intellectual tradition under examination.” His “counter-history” has been aimed at dispelling the “habitual hagiography” that surrounds liberalism, and the related “myth of the gradual, peaceful transition, on the basis of purely internal motivations and impulses, from liberalism to democracy, or from general enjoyment of negative liberty to an ever wider recognition of political rights.”20 In reality, he emphasizes, “the classics of the liberal tradition” were generally hostile to democracy; the “exclusion clauses” required “violent upheavals” to be overcome; progress was not linear but a matter of advances and retreats; external crisis often played a crucial role; and white working-class and black inclusion in the polity came at the cost of their participation in colonial wars against native peoples.21 Nonetheless, his final paragraph insists:

However difficult such an operation might be for those committed to overcoming liberalism’s exclusion clauses, to take up the legacy of this intellectual tradition is an absolutely unavoidable task… . [L]‌iberalism’s merits are too significant and too evident for it to be necessary to credit it with other, completely imaginary ones. Among the latter is the alleged spontaneous capacity for self-correction often attributed to it… . Only in opposition to [such] pervasive repressions and transfigurations is the book now ending presented as a “counter-history”: bidding farewell to hagiography is the precondition for landing on the firm ground of history.22

So for Losurdo one can accept the indictment of actual historic liberalism, and its failure to live up to its putative universalism, without going on to conclude either that liberalism must therefore be abandoned or that liberalism’s own internal dynamic will naturally correct itself. Rather, the appropriate conclusion is that liberalism can be retrieved, but that it will take political struggle to do so.

Finally, even when the “exclusion clauses” are formally overcome, their legacy may well remain in the form of values now nominally extended to everybody, but in reality articulated in such a fashion as to continue to reproduce group privilege—for example, a “freedom” that repudiates caste status but does not recognize illicit economic constraint as unfairly limiting liberty, or an “autonomy” that does not acknowledge the role of female caregiving in enabling human development, or a “justice” resolutely forward-looking that blocks issues of rectification of past injustices. But what such tendentious conceptual framings arguably call for is a critique and a rethinking of these values and principles in the light of these exclusions (as with left, feminist, and black liberalism). That does not refute their normative worth; it just underlines the necessity for taking the whole population into account in revising them and developing a blueprint of their internal architecture adequately sensitized to the differential social location and social history of such groups, particularly those traditionally oppressed.

6. Liberalism’s Enlightenment Origins Commit It to Seeing Moral Suasion and Rational Discourse as the Societal Prime Movers

Liberalism is often associated with a historical progressivism, but a belief in the possibility and desirability of meliorism (see Gray) certainly does not commit one to Whiggish teleologies. One can oppose conservative fatalism and pessimism in its different versions—Christian claims about original sin, Burkean distrust of abstract reason, biological determinism in its ever-changing and ever-renewed incarnations—without thinking that there is any inevitability about the triumph of progress and reason. A liberalism that is “radical” will necessarily need to draw on the left tradition’s demystified analysis of the centrality of group domination to the workings of the social order.23 As earlier noted (sections 2 and 3 above), a revisionist ontology that recognizes as key social players nonvoluntary social groups in structural relations of domination and subordination will perforce have a more realistic view of the (in)efficacy of moral suasion than an ontology of atomic individuals. (p.23)

Such a revisionist liberalism will acknowledge the role of hegemonic ideologies and vested group interests in the preservation of the status quo, and their refractoriness to appeals to reason and justice. Indeed, it will often be precisely in the names of a “reason” and “justice” shaped by the norms and perspectives of group privilege—of class, gender, and race—that egalitarian social change is resisted. As Losurdo makes clear, no immanent developmentalist moral dynamic drives liberalism’s evolution. It is not at all the case that an endorsement of democratized liberal norms implies any corollary belief that the democratic struggle for a more egalitarian social order is guaranteed to be successful. Progress is possible; defeat and rollback are also possible. In general, a radical liberalism should, in some sense, be “materialist,” recognizing the extent to which both people and the social dynamic are shaped by material forces and not over-estimating the causal role of rational argumentation and moral suasion on their own. Radical liberalism takes for granted that political and ideological struggle will be necessary to realize liberal values against the opposition of those who all too frequently think of themselves as the real liberals. Radical liberalism can be descriptively realist (realizing the centrality of interest-based politics) without being normatively realist (abandoning morality for realpolitik).

7. Liberalism Is Naïve in Assuming the Neutrality of the State and the Juridical System

Again, while such a claim may be true of dominant varieties of liberalism, it need not be true of all. (Note that nowhere in Gray’s characterization is any such assumption made.)

The neutrality of the juridico-political system is a liberal ideal, a norm to be striven for to reflect citizens’ equal moral status before the law and entitlement to equal protection of their legitimate interests. To represent it as a sociological generalization of liberal theory about actual political systems, including systems self-designated as liberal, would be to confuse the normative with the descriptive. Liberalism has certainly historically had no trouble in seeing the illicit influence of concentrated group power in the socio-political systems it opposed (see section #2). The original critique of “feudal” absolutism, the twentieth-century critique of “totalitarianism,” relied in part on the documentation and condemnation of the extent of legally backed state repression in curbing individual freedom. Liberalism’s blind spot has been its failure to document and condemn the enormity of the historic denial of equal rights to the majority of the population ruled by self-styled “liberal” states: the “absolutism” and “totalitarianism” directed against white women and white workers, and the nonwhite enslaved (p.24) and colonized. Patriarchal democracy, bourgeois democracy, Herrenvolk democracy have all been represented as “democracy” simpliciter, with no analysis of the mechanisms of structural subordination that have characterized such polities, or the ideological sleights-of-hand that have rationalized them. But to claim a necessary conceptual connection between such evasions and liberal assumptions is to confuse the contingent necessities of the discourse of hegemonic liberalism—aimed at preserving, whether by justifying or obfuscating, patriarchal, bourgeois, and racial power—with what is taken to be some kind of transworld essence of liberalism. In recent decades, a large body of literature has developed that investigates the impact of class, race, and gender dynamics in the actual functioning of the state and the legal system.24 Radical liberalism would draw on this body of literature in seeking to put in place the safeguards necessary for guaranteeing equal protection not merely on paper but in reality.

8. Liberalism Is Necessarily Anti-Socialist, So How “Radical” Could It Be?

“Socialism” is used in different senses. Assuming that a romanticized return to pre-industrial communal systems is not in the cards for a globalized world of seven-plus billion people, there are three main alternatives so far (two tried, one theorized about): state-commandist socialism, social democracy, market socialism. State-commandist socialism (a.k.a. “communism”) is indeed incompatible with liberalism but would seem to have been refuted as an attractive ideal by the history of the twentieth century.25 Social democracy is just left-liberalism, whether in Rawls’s version or in versions further left, like Brian Barry’s, more worried about the inequalities Rawls’s two principles of justice leave intact.26 Market socialism is yet to be implemented on a national level, but many of the hypothetical accounts of how it would work emphasize the importance of respecting liberal norms.27 In other words, market socialism’s putative superiority to capitalism is not defended by invoking distinctively socialist values but by showing how such uncontroversial and traditional liberal values as democracy, freedom, and self-realization are not going to be achievable for the majority under the present system (or through the appeal to more recent values like sustainability, generated by awareness of the impending ecological disaster, which the present order will make achievable for nobody!)28 Other possibilities are not ruled out, but their proponents would have to explain how their models have learned the lessons of the past in both (a) being economically viable and (b) respecting human rights, the common global moral currency of the postwar epoch, which is best developed in the liberal tradition. Criticism (p.25) of the existing order is not enough; one has to show how one’s proposed “socialist” alternative will be superior (and in more than a vague hand-waving kind of way).

9. The Discourse of Liberal Rights Cannot Accommodate Radical Redistribution and Structural Change

Marxism’s original critique of liberalism, apart from deriding its (imputed) social ontology, represented liberal rights—for example, in “On the Jewish Question”29—as a bourgeois concept. But that was more than a century and a half ago. Lockean rights-of-non-interference centered on private property, “negative” rights, are indeed deficient as an exclusivist characterization of people’s normative entitlements, but such a minimalist view has been contested by social democrats (some self-identifying as liberal) for more than a century. A significant literature now exists on “welfare” rights, “positive” rights, “social” rights, whose implementation would indeed require radical structural change. The legitimacy of these rights as “liberal” rights is, of course, denied by the political right. But that’s the whole point, with which I began—that liberalism is not a monolith but a set of competing interpretations and theorizations, fighting it out in a common arena.30 The US hostility to such rights is a manifestation of the historic success of conservatives in framing the normative agenda in this country, not a necessary corollary of liberalism as such. As earlier emphasized, liberalism must not be collapsed into neo-liberalism. Nor is it a refutation to point out that having such rights on paper does not guarantee their implementation, since this is just a variation of the already discussed imputation to liberalism of a necessarily idealist conception of the social dynamic (section #6), in which morality is a prime mover. But such a sociological claim is neither a foundational nor a derivative assumption of liberalism.

Moreover, in the specific case of the redress of racial injustice, one does not even need to appeal to such rights, since the situation of, for example, blacks in the United States is arguably the result of the historic and current violation of traditional negative rights (life, liberty, property), which are supposed to be the uncontroversial ones in the liberal tradition, as well as the legacy of such practices as manifest in illicitly accumulated wealth and opportunities. Here again the hegemony of Rawlsian “ideal theory” over the development of the mainstream political philosophy of the last forty years has had pernicious consequences, marginalizing such issues and putting the focus instead on principles of distributive justice for an ideal “well-ordered” society. But an emancipatory liberalism would be reoriented from (p.26) the start toward non-ideal theory and would correspondingly make rectificatory justice and the ending of social oppression its priority.31

10. American Liberalism in Particular Has Been so Shaped in Its Development by Race that Any Emancipatory Possibilities Have Been Foreclosed

Liberalism in general (both nationally and internationally) has been shaped by race, but that does not preclude reclaiming it.32 Moreover, it is precisely such shaping that motivates the imperative of recognizing the multiplicity of liberalisms, not merely for cataloging purposes but in order to frame them as theoretical objects whose dynamic requires investigation. The conflation of all liberalisms with their racialized versions obstructs seeing these ideologies as historically contingent varieties of liberalism, which could have developed otherwise. A Brechtian “defamiliarization” is necessary, a cognitive distancing that “denaturalizes” what is prone to appear as the essence of liberalism. Jennifer Pitts’s A Turn to Empire, for example, which is subtitled The Rise of Imperial Liberalism in Britain and France, and Sankar Muthu’s Enlightenment against Empire, both seek to demarcate within liberalism the existence of anti- as well as pro-imperialist strains, thereby demonstrating that liberalism is not a monolith.33 Admittedly, other scholars have been more ambivalent about some of their supposed exemplars; see, for example, Losurdo, already cited, and John Hobson’s recent The Eurocentric Conception of World Politics, which develops a detailed and sophisticated taxonomy of varieties of Eurocentrism and imperialism that demonstrates the compatibility of racism, Eurocentrism, and anti-imperialism.34 (For instance, many European liberal theorists were anti-imperialist precisely because of their racism—their fears that the white race would degenerate as a result of miscegenation with inferior races and the deleterious consequences of prolonged residence in the unsuitable tropical climates of colonial outposts.) But the mere fact of such a range of positions illustrates that a liberalism neither Eurocentric nor imperialist is not a contradiction in terms.

In the United States in particular, as Rogers Smith has demonstrated, liberalism and racism have been intricately involved with one another from the nation’s inception, a relationship Smith conceptualizes in terms of conflicting “multiple traditions,” racism versus liberal universalism, and which I see as a conflict between “racial liberalism” and non-racial liberalism.35 My belief is that formally identifying “racial liberalism” as a particular evolutionary (and always evolving) ideological phenomenon better enables us to understand the role of race in writing and rewriting the most important political philosophy in the nation’s history, from the overtly racist liberalism (p.27) of the past to the nominally color-blind liberalism of the present. From the eighteenth- to nineteenth-century accommodation to racial slavery and aboriginal expropriation to the twentieth-century tainting of welfare and social democracy on this side of the Atlantic,36 race has refracted crucial terms, concepts, and values in liberal theory so as to remove any cognitive dissonance between the privileging of whites and the subordination of people of color. Correspondingly, the shaping of white moral psychology by race and the distinctive patterns of uptake of abstract liberal values (“equality,” “individualism”) in such a psychology then become legitimate objects of investigation for us.37 One begins from the assumption that these norms will be color-coded in their actual operationalization, so that any efficacious framing of an interracial political project will need to anticipate and correct for this differential understanding rather than being naively surprised by it. But such racialization (as popular interpretation and reception) is going to be a common problem for any American ideology with emancipatory pretensions. Liberalism is certainly not unique in that respect, as the history of the white American left and socialist movements illustrates. As Jack London famously put it at a meeting of the Socialist Party in San Francisco “when challenged by various members concerning his emphasis on the yellow peril”: “What the devil! I am first of all a white man and only then a Socialist!”38 Herrenvolk socialism existed no less than Herrenvolk liberalism.

#### Criticism of liberalism and universalism prove the necessity of our method – dominance of liberalism makes persuasion and change more likely.

Charles **MILLS** Distinguished Professor of Philosophy at The Graduate Center @ CUNY **’17** *Black Rights/White Wrongs: The Critique of Racial Liberalism* p.11-14

“Liberalism” may denote both a political philosophy and the institutions and practices characteristically tied to that political philosophy. My focus will be on the former. The issue of how bureaucratic logics may prove refractory to reformist agendas is undeniably an important one, but it does not really fall into the purview of philosophy proper. My aim is to challenge the radical shibboleth that radical ideas/concepts/principles/values are incompatible with liberalism. Given the deep entrenchment of this assumption in the worldview of most radicals, refuting it would still be an accomplishment, even if working out practical details of operationalization are delegated to other hands.

In the United States, of course, “liberalism” in public parlance and everyday political discourse is used in such a way that it really denotes left-liberalism specifically (“left” by the standards of a country whose political center of gravity has shifted right in recent decades). In this vocabulary, right-liberals are then categorized as “conservatives”—in the market sense, as against the Burkean sense. On the other hand, some on the right would insist that only they, the heirs to the classic liberalism of John Locke and Adam Smith, are really entitled to the “liberal” designation. Later welfarist theorists are fraudulent pretenders to be exposed as socialist intruders unworthy of the title. Rejecting both of these usages, I will be employing “liberalism” in the expanded sense typical of political philosophy, which links both ends of this spectrum. “Liberalism” then refers broadly to the (p.12) anti-feudal ideology of individualism, equal rights, and moral egalitarianism that arises in Western Europe in the seventeenth-eighteenth centuries to challenge the ideas and values inherited from the old medieval order, and which is subsequently taken up and developed by others elsewhere, including many who would have been explicitly excluded by the original conception of the ideology. Left-wing social democrats and right-wing market conservatives, fans of John Rawls on the one hand and Robert Nozick on the other, are thus both liberals.1

From this perspective, it will be appreciated that liberalism is not a monolith but an umbrella term for a variety of positions. Here are some examples—some familiar, some perhaps less so:

Varieties of Liberalism

Left-wing (social democratic) vs. Right-wing (market conservative)

Kantian vs. Lockean

Contractarian vs. Utilitarian

Corporate vs. Democratic

Social vs. Individualist

Comprehensive vs. Political

Ideal-theory vs. Non-ideal-theory

Patriarchal vs. Feminist

Imperial vs. Anti-imperial

Racial vs. Anti-racial

Color-blind vs. Color-conscious

Etc.2

It is not the case, of course, that these different species of liberalism have been equally represented in the ideational sphere or equally implemented in the institutional sphere. On the contrary, some have been dominant while others have been subordinate, and some have never, at least in the full sense, been implemented at all. But nonetheless, I suggest they all count as liberalisms and as such they are all supposed to have certain elements in common, even those characterized by gender and racial exclusions. (My motivation for making these last varieties of liberalism rather than deviations from liberalism is precisely to challenge liberalism’s self-congratulatory history, which holds an idealized liberalism aloft, untainted by its actual record of complicity with oppressive social systems.) So the initial question we should always ask people making generalizations about “liberalism” is this: What particular variety of liberalism do you mean? And are your generalizations really true about all the possible kinds of liberalism, or only a subset? (p.13)

Here is a characterization of liberalism from a very respectable source, the British political theorist, John Gray:

Common to all variants of the liberal tradition is a definite conception, distinctively modern in character, of man and society… . It is individualist, in that it asserts the moral primacy of the person against the claims of any social collectivity; egalitarian, inasmuch as it confers on all men the same moral status and denies the relevance to legal or political order of differences in moral worth among human beings; universalist, affirming the moral unity of the human species and according a secondary importance to specific historic associations and cultural forms; and meliorist in its affirmation of the corrigibility and improvability of all social institutions and political arrangements. It is this conception of man and society which gives liberalism a definite identity which transcends its vast internal variety and complexity.3

What generate the different varieties of liberalism are different concepts of individualism, different claims about how egalitarianism should be construed or realized, more or less inclusionary readings of universalism (Gray’s characterization sanitizes liberalism’s actual sexist and racist history), different views of what count as desirable improvements, conflicting normative balancings of liberal values (freedom, equality) and competing theoretical prognoses about how best they can be realized in the light of (contested) socio-historical facts. The huge potential for disagreement about all of these explains how a common liberal core can produce such a wide range of variants. Moreover, we need to take into account not merely the spectrum of actual liberalisms but also hypothetical liberalisms that could be generated through novel framings of some or all of the above. So one would need to differentiate dominant versions of liberalism from oppositional versions, and actual from possible variants.

Once the breadth of the range of liberalisms is appreciated—dominant and subordinate, actual and potential—the obvious question then raised is this: even if actual dominant liberalisms have been conservative in various ways (corporate, patriarchal, racist) why does this rule out the development of emancipatory, radical liberalisms?

One kind of answer is the following (call this the internalist answer): because there is an immanent conceptual/normative logic to liberalism as a political ideology that precludes any emancipatory development of it.

Another kind of answer is the following (call this the externalist answer): it doesn’t. The historic domination of conservative exclusionary liberalisms is the result of group interests, group power, and successful group political projects. Apparent internal conceptual/normative barriers to an emancipatory liberalism can be successfully negotiated by drawing (p.14) on the conceptual/normative resources of liberalism itself, in conjunction with a revisionist socio-historical picture of modernity.

Most self-described radicals would endorse—indeed, reflexively, as an obvious truth—the first answer. But as indicated from the beginning, I think the second answer is actually the correct one. The obstacles to developing a “radical liberalism” are, in my opinion, primarily externalist in nature: material group interests, and the way they have shaped hegemonic varieties of liberalism. So I think we need to try to justify a radical agenda with the normative resources of liberalism rather than writing off liberalism. Since liberalism has always been the dominant ideology in the United States and is now globally hegemonic, such a project would have the great ideological advantage of appealing to values and principles that most people already endorse. All projects of egalitarian social transformation are going to face a combination of material, political, and ideological obstacles, but this strategy would at least reduce somewhat the dimensions of the last. One would be trying to win mass support for policies that—and the challenge will, of course, be to demonstrate this—are justifiable by majoritarian norms, once reconceived and put in conjunction with facts not always familiar to the majority. Material barriers (vested group interests) and political barriers (organizational difficulties) will of course remain. But they will constitute a general obstacle for all egalitarian political programs, and as such cannot be claimed to be peculiar problems for an emancipatory liberalism.

#### We must appropriate the social contract – ceding to dominant hegemonic interpretations denies the untapped potential of radical democratic political theory.

Charles **MILLS** Poli Sci @ Northwestern **‘7** *Contract and Domination* co-published with Carol Pateman p. 104-105

Appropriating the Contract

My recommendation, then, is that we — egalitarians, feminists, critical race theorists, and progressives in general in political theory who are concerned about real social justice issues — work toward a paradigm shift in contract theory. not conceding the contract to mainstream theorists. but seeking to appropriate it and turn it to emancipatory ends According to the Kymlicka quote cited earlier, contract is really just a “device which many different traditions have used for many different reasons" (1991: 196). Rawls, similarly, sometimes refers to his updating of the contract (the veil, the original position) as an “expository device" ( l999h: I9). So given this essentially instrumental identity of the contract, there is no principled barrier to developing it in a radical way: the domination contract as an “expository device" for non-ideal theory. Once one recognizes how protean the contract has historically been. and how politically pivotal is its insight of the human creation of society and of ourselves as social beings, one should be able to appreciate that its conservative deployment is a result not of its intrinsic fea- tures, but of its use by a privileged white male group hegemonic in political theory who have had no motivation to extrapolate its logic. Far from being a necessarily bourgeois or necessarily sexist or necessarily racist apparatus. contract theory has a radical potential barely tapped. and can serve as a vehicle for translating into conventional discourse most, if not all, of the crucial claims of radical democratic political theory.

The key conceptual move is simply to strip away the assumptions and corresponding conceptual infrastructure of an individualism once restricted to bourgeois white males and still shaping the contract's fea- tures today. and replace it with an ontology of groups (1. Young 1990). Rousseatfs class contract. Pateman's sexual contract, my racial contract (ideally combined, of course), can all then be conceptualized as still being within the contract tradition in the minimal defining sense out- lined above. viz, the assertion of, indeed insistence upon, the historic role of human causality in shaping the polity, and the commitment to the substantive realizration of moral egalitarianism in its necessary transformation. By contrast. the assumptions of the mainstream con- tract in its contemporary form. presuming universal inclusion and general input, handicap the apparatus in tackling the necessary task of corrective justice by, in a sense, assuming the very thing that needs to be substantively achieved. Once one adds women of all races, and male people of color (to say nothing of the white male working class), one is actually talking about the majority of the populations being excluded in one way or another from the historical contract, and its present descendant! A theoretical device whose classic pretensions are to repre-sent universal sociopolitical inclusion actually captures the experience of just a minority of the population, since inequality has not been the exception but the norm in modern societies.

Far from the domination contract representing “minority" concerns, then, it actually provides an accurate depiction of the situation for the majority. And far from being anti-Enlightenment. it has a much better claim to be carrying on the Enlightenment legacy. Getting the facts right is supposed to be an essential part of the Enlightenment mission. and in its mystified picture of the origins and workings of modern poli- ties, mainstream contract theory certainly does not do that. And if the Enlightenment is supposed to be committed to moral egalitarianism and a transformation of society to realize this imperative, then ignoring the ways in which class. gender, and race void nominal egalitarianism of substance is hardly the way to achieve such equality. Through the more accurate descriptive mapping of the domination contract, the emanci- patory reach of the egalitarianism of the prescriptive contract can then gain its full leveling scope rather than being, as at present, effectively conﬁned to achieving the freedom and equality of a few.

In sum, a case can be made that radical contract theory, which deploys the domination contract as its descriptive mapping device, is, far from being a theoretical usurper. the true heir to the social contract tradition at its best, and it is mainstream contract theory that has betrayed its promise. If war is too important to be left to the generals. one could say that social contract theory is too important to be left to the social contract theorists We should reclaim it.

#### Denying gains is politically and rhetorically disastrous – if you can’t persuade people to be liberals, you can’t persuade them to be anti-systemic actors.

Charles **MILLS** Poli Sci @ Northwestern **‘7** *Contract and Domination* co-published with Charles Mills p. 31-33

CM Like Macpherson, we both have obvious sympathies with the left (or, as the joke has it, what's left of the left). So if you think of yourself as a political progressive today, what do you do? Well, one reaction is to aim at more realizable goals, given the prevailing climate. Though I don't use the phrase in The Racial Contract, I've been arguing in more recent work for a "non-white-supremacist capitalism." In other words, if capitalism limits our horizons, then at least let's have a capitalism that lives up to its "society open to talents" advertising. Obviously I'm making several assumptions here. One is that white supremacy can be conceptually and (more importantly) causally separated from capitalism. Another is that non-white-supremacist capitalism would be morally preferable to, more just than, white-supremacist capitalism. On the first, it's often pointed out to me by people on the left in campus or conference audiences where I'm speaking - or often claimed, I should say - that capitalism caused racism and white supremacy in the first place. And my response is that even if that's historically true (and I'm certainly sympathetic to the claim), it doesn't follow that in the present period sufficiently powerful material forces can't be marshalled to struggle for a nonracial capitalist order now. On the second, it's sometimes been argued to me that there'd be no difference. And I think that's just false - I think that racist capitalism has peculiar features, peculiar oppressions, of its own, and that eliminating them would represent real moral progress. Note that these objectors' position implies that the black civil rights struggles of the 1950s and 1960s would not have been worth supporting by the white left, since for the most part they weren't anticapitalist in character but antisegregation, anti-Jim Crow, antiwhite- supremacy. They were struggles for equal inclusion in the polity and the capitalist economy. So you'll recognize the position - it's basically the racial equivalent of the liberal feminist argument. That would be my first response to you, that while I agree completely that commodification has spread everywhere, to areas Marx would never have dreamed possible, isn't it still better in a market, property-dominated society to have property not distributed in such a racially inequitable way?

CP I agree that it is better to have a racially equitable distribution of property, just as it would be better for women to have an equitable share of global property, wealth, and income. But why must we let (a certain form of) capitalism limit our horizons? In practice, a neoliberal form of capitalism has gained great power but I do not see why we should merely accept that power when we are doing political theory and thinking about "the good society." This is why I have been challenging the widespread assumption that the institution of employment, which, like David Ellerman, I have come to see as the lynchpin of capitalism, is a necessary part of democracy. Even in practice, prevailing economic doctrines are being challenged, especially in Latin America, and also by many grass-roots movements around the world. I agree that we should argue for a racially- and sexually- equitable property distribution but I disagree that this precludes keeping much broader goals in mind at the same time. There are different ways of working toward a change in the distribution of resources and some ways of going about it may be conducive to more than one political aim, as I have argued elsewhere, for example about a basic income for all citizens.

CM You're right, of course, that one can be an activist, or a theorist (what "activism" comes to for most academics), on more than one front. In a classic left framework, that would have been negotiating the relationship between reform and revolution. So struggling for reforms within the system wouldn't necessarily rule out struggling against the system itself. But I guess for me the global defeat of the socialist project (in the Marxist sense) has been so overwhelming that I'm just pretty dubious about the current possibilities for antisystemic change of that kind. What's been happening in Latin America has indeed been inspiring, and I'm all for it. But that's social democracy, left-liberalism, not socialism in the classic sense of working-class ownership of the means of production. If that's what you mean by "socialism," then fine, I'm happy to support such redistributivist programs, and to endorse basic income arguments. We certainly have a lot of models for that, for example in Western European social democracy. What we don't have are models for an economically functioning and politically attractive postcapitalist socioeconomic order. As you know, there are many people formerly on the orthodox left who concluded that the collapse of state socialism did indeed vindicate the original criticisms of the Austrian school, i.e. that market mechanisms are crucial for informational reasons. Hence the work in recent years on trying to work out viable models of market socialism. But apart from the intrinsic problems of modeling such an alternative, there are also the extrinsic problems of trying to win over a population thoroughly socialized (at least in this country) to associate anything even slightly left with totalitarianism, the antichrist, etc. After all, "liberal" was successfully transformed by the right into a term of invective decades ago. So if people run scared of liberalism - milquetoast, boring, (once) respectable liberalism - how are you going to convince them to be socialists?

#### Critique of democracy makes the abstractions of modernity matter more than the concrete experience of colonized peoples in response to the many different oppressive agents.

Frederick **COOPER** History @ NYU **‘5** *Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History* p. 22-23

Can one really provincialize Europe? One way to do so is to dig more I deeply into European history itself, and there is no more central myth to / be dissected than that of narrating European history around the triumph of the nation-state. Much recent scholarship has exaggerated the centrality of I the nation-state in the "modern" era, only to exaggerate its demise in the present.40 Post-Revolutionary France, as I will explain in chapter 6, cannot be understood as a nation-state pushing into colonies external to it. The Haitian Revolution of 1791 revealed how much questions of slavery and citizenship, of cultural difference and universal rights, were part of debate and struggle across imperial space.41 This complex, differentiated empire, expanded into continental Europe by Napoleon, did not produce a clear and stable duality of metropole/colony, self/other, citizen/subject. Political activists in the colonies, until well into the 1950s, were not all intent upon asserting the right to national independence; many sought political voice within the institutions of the French Empire while claiming the same wages, social services, and standard of living as other French people. If one wants to rethink France from its colonies, one might argue that France only became a nation-state in 1962, when it gave up its attempt to keep Algeria French and tried for a time to define itself as a singular citizenry in a single territory.

A fuller version of the story of European colonial empires in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries can also come from telling it alongside the histories of the continental empires with which they shared time and space, the Habsburg, the Russian, and the Ottoman, and those empires that lay outside Europe, notably the Japanese and the Chinese, not to mention two powers with wide reach and an ambivalent sense of themselves as imperial powers: the United States and, after 1917, the Soviet Union. At times colonialism was layered: late-nineteenth-century Sudan, for instance, was colonized by Egypt, which was part of the Ottoman Empire but itself experienced heavy British intervention.42 The sharp separation of a certain kind of empire-which produces colonial and postcolonial effects-not only precludes the posing of important questions about critical historical moments and interrelated processes, but reproduces a form of Eurocentrism. Central Asian Muslims conquered by the tsars and subjected to the violent and modernizing project of the Soviets do not receive the attention devoted to North African Muslims colonized by the French; 1989 is not marked in postcolonial circles as a milestone of decolonization.43

The narrowing of the range of inquiry is based on certain assumptions: that these empires were not truly colonial, and above all that they were, except for the Soviet case, not "modern." The latter argument reads backward the collapse of the Ottoman, Habsburg, and Russian Empires in 1917-23 into a thesis of the inevitable transition from empire to nation-state. But excellent historical research has shown that far from being beleaguered holdouts against claims to the nation, these empires produced a strong empire centered imagination that captured the minds of many self-conscious minority activists within their territories until World War I, a theme developed in chapter 6.

At the heart of colonialism, Partha Chatterjee has argued, is the rule of difference. .'44 It might be more useful to emphasize the politics of difference, for the meanings of difference were always contested and rarely stable. As broad comparative study suggests, all empires, in one way or another, had to articulate difference with incorporation. Difference had to.be grounded in institutions and discourses and that took work. "Modern" empires were in some ways more explicit about codifying difference-and particularly codifying race-than aristocratic empires, for the giving way of status hierarchies to participation in a rights-bearing polity raised the stakes of inclusion and exclusion. Just where lines of exclusion would be drawn-in terms of territory, race, language, gender, or the respectability of personal or collective behavior-was not a given of the "modern state," but rather the focus of enormous and shifting debate in nineteenth- and twentieth century Europe. The openings and closures of such debates deserve careful examination. 45 New imperial endeavors confronted the dilemmas of older ones: geographic dispersion, extended chains of command, the need to make use of regional economic circuits and local systems of authority and patronage. The most technologically sophisticated, bureaucratized, self-consciously rational empires were compelled to give elites of conquered and subordinated people a stake in the imperial system and to produce subordinates and intermediaries who also had a stake in the system, a problem also faced by the Romans and the Ottomans. The most powerful empires were often in danger of being hijacked by their agents, by settlers, or by indigenous collectivities in search of alternatives to cooperation with an imperial center. Within empires, Enlightenment thought, liberalism, and republicanism were neither intrinsically colonial nor anticolonial, neither racist nor antiracist, but they provided languages of claim-making and counter claimmaking, whose effects were shaped less by grand abstractions than by complex struggles in specific contexts, played out over time.

Ideologies of imperial inclusion and differentiation were challenged by people acting within the ideological and political structures of empire, as well as by people who tried to defend or create a political space wholly outside. At certain moments, empires needed to soften differentiation and enhance incorporation, when the need for colonial soldiers rose-in the French Caribbean of the 1790s or European campaigns of 1914-or at many other moments when people in the middle of relations of authority proved too important to making colonies work, too reflective of the actual ambiguities of colonial societies. At other moments, sometimes in reaction to activism in the colonies, rulers became more intent on articulating a colonizer/ colonized dualism, a more national conception of the polity. But such conceptions were as hard to sustain in practice as the fiction of belonging to a unified polity. And colonial elites did not always agree on which direction they should lean. Among colonizing elites-even if they shared a conviction of superiority-tensions often erupted between those who wanted to save souls or civilize natives and those who saw the colonized as objects to be used and discarded at will. Among metropolitan populations, colonized people sometimes provoked sympathy or pity, sometimes fear-as well as the more complex sentiments that emerged during the actual encounters and political struggles in the colonies themselves.

IMPERIAL SPACE AND THE VARIETIES OF POLITICAL IMAGINATION

The backward projection of the post-196os world of nation-states into a two-century-long path of inevitability affects our understanding not only of the relationship of national and imperial regimes but of the diversity of opposition to them. Pan-Arab, pan-Slavic, and pan-African movements put political affinity into a nonterritorial framework. Territory-crossing politics today, far from being a new response to a new globalization," have a long pedigree-and, beginning with antislavery movements, a record of some effectiveness.

As I will argue in the final essay in this volume, there is a danger that ahistorical history encourages an apolitical politics. To write as if "post Enlightenment rationality" or "the cunning of reason" or the "insertion of. modernity" were what shaped the political possibilities of colonial situaitions is to give excessive weight to the determining power of agentless abstractions and offer little insight into how people acted when facing the possibilities and constraints of particular colonial situations. We lose the power of their example to remind us that our own moral and political choices, made in the face of the ambivalences and complications of our present situation, will have consequences in the future.

The view of an atemporal modern colonialism goes along with a notion of resistance as heroic but vain. Only at the end, in some views at least, could it have much effect-in an anticolonial moment in which iconic figures like Nkrumah and Fanon stand in for an epoch. But the heroic moment proved ephemeral, and much of the impetus behind postcolonial theory has been the failure of decolonized states to fulfill an emancipatory project-a disillusionment that then turns its critique toward the emancipatory project itself, now seen as fatally linked to its imperial genealogy.46 The view expounded in these pages acknowledges the impetus behind this version of postcolonial theory but takes a different view of the history. I argue that colonial regimes and oppositions to them reshaped the conceptual frame- works in which both operated. Struggle was never on level ground, but power was not monolithic either. The intersection of locally or regionally rooted mobilizations with movements deploying a liberal-democratic ideology, with attempts at articulating a Christian universalism, with the mobilization of Islamic networks, with the linkages of anti-imperialist movements in different continents, or with trade union internationalism helped to shape and reshape the terrain of contestation. Collaborators and allies of colonial regimes-or people simply trying to make their way within empire- also pushed rulers of empire to change the way they acted􀂛 Subtle and dramatic changes at critical conjunctures are both part of the story.

The conjuncture of the post-World War II era indeed produced a situation in which longer-term political processes, with diverse goals, focused on fundamentally transforming the colonial state. Revolutionary mobilization, especially in Indonesia and Vietnam, as well as the climax of India's nationalist movement, had effects well beyond the immediate territories involved. But attempts at change within empires had a profound effect too (see chapter 7), for the danger that social movements operating within imperial frameworks could effectively make demands upon colonial states for resources equivalent to those of the other-metropolitan-:-members of the polity raised the question of whether a postwar empire could aspire to legitimacy without taking on an impossible burden of social and economic expenditures, with the threat of violence lying behind the demands. That such demands were phrased in a language of citizenship, progress, democracy, and rights both reflected social movements' serious engagement with the categories of colonizers and profoundly changed the meaning of those categories because of who was speaking. At the same time, movements outside of such frameworks-sometimes denounced by colonial rulers as atavistic, demagogic, or antimodern-raised the stakes for colonial regimes to contain tensions within familiar institutions and allowed African political movements room to maneuver between different visions of the future. One needs to appreciate the sense of possibility of these years and to understand what ensued not as an imminent logic of colonial history but as a dynamic process with a tragic end.

#### Commitment to democracy challenges racialized structures. Rejecting the solidarities of pluralistic, radical struggles for multiracial democracy falls prey to Eurocentric essentialism.

Christopher **MURRAY** PhD Candidate IR LSE **’20** *Anti-imperial world politics: race, class, and internationalism in the making of post-colonial order* p. 238-243

Throughout this study I have demonstrated how analysis of anti-imperial globalism from ‘above and below’ allows us to foreground plural and contested visions of the post-colonial state and political community to world politics. This framework provides more than more nuanced history. It provides a critical response to the notion that the post-colonial nation-state in its post-1945 form was the only or most desired form of political organisation after empire; while at the same time, a better understanding of the structural constraints of those who pursued a more progressive and inclusive state as the means to end colonial rule. Anti-imperial globalism from above can be seen to represent all the lessons that mainstream IR has traditionally wrung from decolonisation: struggles for sovereignty and recognition, the assertion of ‘non-Western values’, the construction of regional inter-governmental orders. However, rather than reproduce a unitary actor ontology, I have shown how these politics were shaped through their relational co-implication with other political discourses and visions. Anti-imperial globalism from below was also a part of the world politics which helped shape the post-1945 order. These politics stressed the dialectical relationship between global racial disparity and domestic social injustice: two ‘levels of analysis’ traditionally kept as distinct by mainstream IR.

Sovereignty and recognition were only worth pursuing to the extent that they would remake imperial-colonial power relations at state and international levels, and not reproduce them in a new form. Likewise, ‘non-Western’ culture and knowledge were valued to the extent that they could bring about a more modern politics, and could form the basis for class collaboration in political organising. Global order was necessary only to the extent that it could provide fairer and more peaceable relations between societies. Throughout the anti-imperial struggles of the 20th century, we can see the relationship between different anti-imperial globalisms from above and below at work. This does not mean political uniformity across a seamless global transition from empire to nation-state. Instead it reveals a plurality of different ideas about resistance, reform, and progress, which were connected through their reaction to more prevalent events and racialised structures.

International and transnational solidarities were a prevalent feature of activist and ethnic minority nationalist politics after WWI. They arose in response to the global crises of the Great War and the subsequent crises and great power conflicts left in its wake. WWI provided a global demonstration for many colonial subjects that the emperor had no clothes when it came to world civilization’s deeper promise of democracy, progress, peace, and prosperity. This feeling was underpinned by the demonstration of black and Asian colonial forces fighting for the integrity and expansion of imperial territory. Race leaders, like Marcus Garvey, W.E.B. Du Bois, and J.E. Casely Hayford, were indicative of a rising transatlantic black power and a growing intolerance for the colour line. For some, their politics also demonstrated the limit to which essential representations of ‘blackness’ could be used to argue for greater inclusion of black populations into the liberal capitalist order, without a more fundamental reform of that order. Radical thinkers like Hubert Harrison and Cyril Briggs, suggested an alternative politics through their critiques of these race leaders. Each argued that global transformation would need to come from colonised populations on the ground: harnessing the actually existing potential for ethno-cultural and class collaboration within communities on both sides of the Atlantic. This included a rejection of imperial ‘civilisationism’, but not globalism, inter-racialism, or federalism. Harrison and Briggs show that, historically, it has not been the idea of ‘world civilisation’ itself that is imperial, but white societies’ claim of ownership to it, and their claim of the right to lord its standards over other societies.

The various political mobilisations spurred by the Italian invasion of Abyssinia and the expansion and decline of the COMINTERN showed a connected and galvanised black internationalism. Yet, they also reveal divergences in the way that ‘revolution’ could be articulated rhetorically by different black intellectual activists in different social milieu. Revolutionary politics were not like an instruction manual passed down from the Enlightenment as a way to show non-European people the road to sovereign statehood. Rather, ideological texts, like Marxist-Leninism, were one part of a larger pool of resources used, in a selective and creative fashion, to guide and mobilise anti-imperial struggles. These struggles were directly precipitated by the colonial encroachments and racism experienced by people throughout the empire, and they helped bring about a dominant global discourse of revolution. However, they were also informed by more widely prevalent discourses about the need for political integration and world government. These were interpreted by different people in different ways, and did not follow one logical path from colonial enslavement, to sovereign statehood, to world government. Claude McKay and others saw the potential for revolution in the mismatch between black subjectivity and global modernity. They argued that black subjects were inherently ill-suited to modernity, and therefore would continue to represent its limits and potential for transformation outside of formal institutions. These more anarchistic conceptions resonated with those of federalists, like James, Padmore, Du Bois, and Jones, who argued that the state needed to be remade as a radically democratic and egalitarian institution. McKay, Padmore, and Du Bois shared the belief that white supremacy, globally and in colonial societies, was an impediment to any truly revolutionary course of action. McKay’s first-hand experience with the COMINTERN and white labour led him to largely give up on organised political movements. Du Bois concurred that ‘the wages of whiteness’ were a roadblock to inter-racial collaboration, and so he argued for strategic and temporary segregation as a path to multiracial democracy. Padmore, James, and Jones argued for black sovereignty for Africa and the Caribbean, but each imagined this as a path to federalism, which would embody and defend multiracial democracy,

social freedom, and egalitarianism. Each saw these forms of political organisation – not as abstract -- but already in place through various patterns of labour organising, particularly the longstanding tradition of West Indian labour federation.

While more of a subject for contention in previous generations, the idea that Africans and the diaspora shared a path to development with the West became dominant in the post-WWII discourse of African, Caribbean, and black American Third Worldists. This reflected both a perceived need to establish robust development economies to pay for state independence, and to enter into new forms of international cooperation with the Great Powers. At least in the case of many African and Caribbean nations, the rhetoric of non-alignment often concealed new forms of imperial dependence between emerging post-colonial states, the United States, and the Soviet Union. Though they mattered more than some post-colonial leaders wanted to, or could, admit, Cold War geopolitics and colonial legacies with Britain and France delimited the possibilities for political union and more direct and equal popular sovereignty.

Again, racialised discourse and policy played an important role. New African leaders sought to promote traditional cultural difference in order to legitimate democratic and socialist reforms. Various African Socialist programmes were devised with progressive intentions, but, in practice, often served ethno-nationalist and authoritarian ends. Promoting a single traditional ‘African difference’ often put the ruling party and majority ethnic group at the head of multinational constituencies, which could not conform to this totalising statist vision without coercion. Native African opposition was labelled ‘reactionary’, ‘nativist’, or ‘neo-colonial’, if it was not amenable to new development targets and state building policies. These political divergences were often framed in terms of ethnic difference—some Africans were more ‘fit for modernity’ than others. Obversely, both in Africa and the Caribbean, black sovereigntism could be used to justify exclusion and suspicion of non-black residents – or progressive, ‘communist’ ideas -- on the grounds that they were inauthentic or neo-colonial. This combination: new leaders maintaining hierarchical ties with the Great Powers and former empires, and legacies of imperial racialisation, are both necessary to explain why the interwar politics of anti-imperial globalism and progressive federalism from below did not survive the transition of power in African and the Caribbean. This is not to say that no movements for multi-racial unity and social egalitarianism exist today– far from it. But arguments that these values could become foundational for the conduct and form of state and world government – the basis for international relations between former empires and colonies -- are far scarcer today than they were in 1919, 1935, or 1957.

These histories offer context and lessons for analysis of contemporary international relations. First, IR should expand or depart from its overemphasis on order, and make space for an analysis more attuned to justice claims. This is not to say that IR scholars must devote themselves to the political theoretical work of ethics or normative evaluation. However, scholarship concerned with the constitution of international relations should be attentive to the ways that movements and arguments for justice play a key role in shaping politics and identities between societies. Order based in a norm of sovereignty has often been a potential or actual impediment to the justice claims of marginalised groups, and thus cannot be assumed as the taken-for-granted end goal of world politics. Justice claims and movements might, of course, involve demands for sovereignty, but IR should not only pay attention to them when they do. The West Indies Federation and United States of Africa did not come to fruition in the form imagined, but we should expect that global injustice and inequality will continue to inspire reformist and revolutionary politics, including those to remake the state as a progressive force, or to seek new forms of inter-societal unity.

Second, the politics of the ‘non-West’ are not reducible to recognition of the particular or the different, any more than ‘the West’ should continue to claim its privileged access to ‘universal knowledge.’ Claims to difference are often arguments for alternative universalisms, and might also contain a potential or actual impetus to shape the world in the claimants’ image. A valuable contribution of scholarly work to ‘provincialise Europe’, is not necessarily to demand that we recognise cultures and politics outside Europe, but to show that trans-boundary power, imperialisms, and totalising ideologies always come from a particular place, though they might create global forms of engagement and conflict. Scholars should also be cautious when promoting recognition, that they are not enacting colonial recognition. IR can and should study recognition claims, but should not define groups of people in terms of fixed characteristics or essences.

Third, empires engender thick social relations and boundary-crossing discourses, which have determining effects on social practice. These social relations and discourse can provide an important analytical orientation for future inquiry into empire, racialisation, their legacies in, and effects on, contemporary international relations. The recent interest in race in IR carries with it the potential for a proliferation of anti-racist sentiment, which can simply ascribe ‘racism’ to individuals and attitudes, without a deeper exploration of why racialisation persists in many societies throughout the world. This is not to draw a false equivalency between different racisms. Rather, I merely suggest that the academic goal when it comes to racialisation should be understanding, not litigation or defence. IR has recently begun to draw upon related disciplines for better understanding social relations and boundary-crossing discourses: global historical sociology and intellectual history. From the tools offered by these disciplines we can fashion a historical-relational approach to empire and race in IR, which can provide a richer understanding of the power relations shaping contemporary world politics.

# 2ac – nu r5

## democracy adv

### overview – 2AC

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### framework – 2ac

#### Empowering political community. Separating the plan from its justifications denies the constitutive connective between politics and discourse. Politics is authorized by laypeople circulating, discussing and normalizing policy.

Henrik Paul **BANG** University of Canberra · IGPA Institute for Governance and Policy Analysis **’15** *Foucault’s Political Challenge: From Hegemony to Truth* p. 27-31

Reconfiguring the topography of the common

Agamben is the one who best describes how the conversion of political authority into a superpower is brought about by those who see the problem of political power from the vantage point of an opposition between law and bare life. He makes use of Foucault’s early distinction between sovereignty and biopower, turning what Foucault describes – first as an opposition in Abnormal (A: 2003), and later on in Security, Territory, Population (STP: 2007) as a difference between sovereignty and security – into an identity, correlating the exceptionality of sovereignty with the exception of bare life. Hence, Agamben can translate the radical suspension of politics in the exception of bare life into the law of modern democracy, as defined by both Arendt and Kant. Biopolitics becomes democracy’s accomplice as a bare life between life and death. Hegemony becomes a mediation of Foucault’s notion of biopower as control over life and Schmitt’s notion of sovereignty as the power to decide on the state in which normal legality is suspended. The signature of hegemony shifts to one which positively intervenes between human and natural life as a new, more liberating form of domination for governing, neither the subject nor the enemy, but the sacred life of the people as a population. Or, as Rancière synthesizes Agamben’s attempt to overcome the opposition between absolute power and human rights (2010: 65–66), Democracy’s secret – the secret of modern power – can then emerge into full view. State power, now, is concretely concerned with bare life, itself no longer the life of the subject that the power wants to repress, nor the life of the enemy that it has to kill, but, Agamben says, a ‘sacred’ life – a life taken within a state of exception, a life ‘beyond oppression’. This signature of hegemony ‘beyond oppression’ presents itself as a command from above to show duty to otherness in political communities. Democracy as obedience to the rights of the Other in the res publica sweeps aside the heterogeneity of political dissensus in the name of a more radical heterogeneity. According to Rancière, this is to neglect how ‘dissensus is not a conflict of interests, opinions or values; it is a division inserted in “common sense” ’ (2010: 69). Dissensus is an ongoing dispute over what is given, and the frames in which we perceive and understand things as given. This is also how Foucault interprets politeia : democracy is not a matter of human rights; it is about the capability and knowledgeability of political subjects to place the scenes of dissensus in time and space. Rancière illustrates this point with the political struggles of women in Western history (2010: 69, emphasis in original): Women, as political subjects, set out to make a twofold statement. They demonstrated that they were deprived of the rights that theyhad thanks to the Declaration of Rights and that through their public action that they had the rights denied to them by the constitution, that they could enact those rights. They acted as subjects of the Rights of Man in the precise sense that I have mentioned. They acted as subjects that did not have the rights that they had and that had the rights they had not. This is what I call a dissensus: the putting of two worlds in one and the same world. Expressing political subjectivity in a political community is not a matter of being liberated from something or someone by something or someone. It is to reject, in one’s actual practice of freedom, being subjected to any political institution or human being. It is to deny that there is a superpower living in a sphere not only different from but also superior to the political community of free and equal subjects. It is to dismiss any categorizing of political actors by a Herrschaft making distinctions between superiors and subordinates, rulers and ruled, strong and weak, and so on. In a way, Foucault is pursuing exactly the same dual tactics as does Rancière above when he states that ‘nowadays, the struggles are against the forms of subjection – against the submission of subjectivity – is becoming more and more important’ (EW3: 351). He denies that mechanisms of subjection ‘merely constitute the “terminal” of more fundamental relations’ (EW3: 352), such as ideological or economic structures. Furthermore, like Rancière, Foucault is skeptical toward those who reduce subjectivation to a matter of ‘unfolding’ the program for a universal reason freed from domination in history, as if it were ‘possible to say that one thing is of the order of “deliberation” and another is of the order of “oppression” ’ (EW3: 354, emphasis in original): I do not think that there is anything that is functionally – by its very nature – absolutely liberating. Liberty is a practice . So there may, in fact, always be a certain number of projects whose aim is to modify some constraints, to loosen, or even to break them, but none of these projects can simply by its nature, assure that people will have freedom automatically, that it will be established by the project itself. Finally, like Rancière, Foucault denies that the exercise of hegemony in, and through, discursively structured and institutionalized asymmetries of power and signification is at the core of politics (FL: 444): It is within the field of the obligation of truth that it is possible to move about in one way or another, sometimes against effects of domination that may be linked to structures of truth or institutions entrusted with truth. It is a shame Rancière never sees this affinity between Foucault and himself when it comes to identifying how a political subject combines power, self-governance and knowledge as one who ‘can’, ‘will’ and ‘understands how to’ practice her freedoms inside a political community. Rather, he believes that ‘Foucault ... was never interested in this question, not at a theoretical level in any case. He was concerned with power’ (2010: 93). But he was interested. Unlike Mouffe and Rancière, Foucault does not analyze agonistic democracy in the shadow of antagonism and dissensus; nor does he reduce it to a manifestation of either hegemony or the popular will (EW3 1994c : 342): Rather than speaking of an essential antagonism, it would be better to speak of an ‘agonism’ – of a relationship that is at the same time mutual incitement and struggle; less of a face-to-face confrontation that paralyzes both sides than a permanent provocation. To Foucault, agonistic democracy does not derive from any exception but from the unceasing tension between freedom and truth, politeia and parrhesia in ongoing processes of authorization and normalization. Problematization is at the core of these processes as chronic two-way contestations of the discursive practices of authority and community inside political systems: the problematization of how people are governed (govermentality) depends on the ethical elaborations of the subject (knowledge) for making a difference (power), whether acting as an incumbent of political authority or as a lay member of a political community. Therefore, rather than speaking of authorization and normalization as opposed to practices of subjectivation and intersubjectivation in political communities, and vice versa, we should consider their mutual autonomy and dependence (EW3: 343): The analysis, elaboration, and bringing into question of power relations and the ‘agonism’ between power relations and the intransitivity of freedom is an increasingly political task – even, the political task that is inherent in all social existence. The relation of political authority as power-knowledge to governing, subjectivation and the practice of freedom is the basis of recurrently problematizing and criticizing any claim to political primacy in history. If Rancière had delved deeper into Foucault’s analyses of government by truth, he would surely have seen that Foucault’s critique of the sovereign state and the security state grows out of his conception of the political as an ensemble of discursive practices of power and freedom. 11 The state is not identical with the political, but one of its emergent properties. The duality of political authority and community It is easy to understand how Foucault could become identified with both the state of exception and the political community of exception. If one, for example, reads only Foucault’s early work on madness and discipline, the power/resistance dichotomy is the first that leaps out at one, as an indication of ‘the necessity of combat and the rules of strategy’ (DP: 308). The same holds good for his later lectures in STP (204), in which he speaks of ‘the coup d’Etat [as] the irruptive assertionof raison d’Etat ’. Statements like these cannot but leave the impression that Foucault’s politics is about sovereignty vs. law, power vs. resistance, hierarchy vs. anarchy, police vs. laypeople and so on. However, when Foucault focuses so much on statism and power/resistance in modernity, it is not because he thinks that hegemony and antagonism are at the core of the political, but precisely in order to problematize them both. To him, problematizing conflict means showing how things could be different (PK: 64): If one is interested in doing historical work that has political meaning, utility and effectiveness, then this is possible only if one has some kind of involvement with the struggles taking place in the area in question. I tried first to do a genealogy of psychiatry because I had had a certain amount of practical experience in psychiatric hospitals and was aware of the combats, the lines of force, tensions and points of collision which existed there. My historical work was undertaken only as a function of those conflicts. Foucault was from his young days actively engaged, practically as well as analytically, in problematizing how modern science and society continuously and systematically seek to cover up their exclusions behind a veil of rationality and legitimacy. To him, critique is not primarily to ‘scrutinise and restrain arbitrary power’ (Keane 2013: 245). It is, more than anything else, to problematize how, the more undistorted and thickly legitimated political decisions and actions appear and are believed to be, the better, more smoothly and unproblematically hierarchization, disciplinary subjection and policing function. In presupposing that political domination presents no special problems to democracy when first proved to be effective and legitimate for protecting and serving ‘We, the People’, modern reason turns a blind eye to its exclusions of otherness as ‘anomalies’ in or ‘deviations’ from the existing order. Authentic otherness is excluded from view a priori by reference to the necessity for removing any temporal or arbitrary disorder from society’s underlying general or necessary order. This is also Agamben’s and Rancière’s critique of modernity and the very reason why they both argue that the political is prior to law, just as dissensus is prior to consensus. But to Foucault it is the existence of the political authority relationship between political authorities and laypeople in their political communities that makes it all possible. It is not the state, whether as a sovereign state or as a security state, that identifies the political. Nor is it the democratic political community, which, as Rancière puts it (2010: 213, emphasis in original), breaks with consensus [in its] abolition of every form of arkhe , of every way of producing a correspondence between the places of governing and a ‘disposition’ to occupy these places. The politics of hegemony and dissensus are but two examples of the selftransforming capacity of political authority as a relationship involving freedom and power in both directions which could be balanced through the good parrhesia of freedom and truth. Foucault illustrates the fundamental duality of political authority and political community in his lectures from 1977 until he dies in 1984. He sets out by problematizing the conception of sovereignty as a unified entity, making up the space of the political as a coercive superpower over subjects within the prince’s or king’s territory. He shows how the original dilemma of sovereignty is its neglect of the facts that: ● one cannot govern a population as one governs a territory; ● g overning the construction of space is not the same as protecting and serving a home or place; ● t he functional delimitation of the political from all other necessary aspects of group life is a condition of demarcating the political territorially. The political is a general societal condition like those of the economic, the cultural and the religious; it is a constitutive aspect of all social and human relations, from the local to the global. Furthermore, its generality lies in its transformative capacity to do what could not be done without it: authorizing and normalizing the way policies are articulated, performed, delivered and evaluated**.** The fulfilment of these tasks does not depend on the maintenance of a centralized form of legitimate domination for acquiring effective control over subjects and society. It is necessary to accomplish them, however small the actual degree and extent of control the political authority may possess in relation to other political and nonpolitical forces, such as an informal ruling elite or an economic class. In this way, it is the notions of function, space, population and, most of all, the power-knowledge of subjectivation that show why Foucault wants to ‘decapitate the king’ and connect the politics of exception to the policy of cooperation for handling or solving common concerns. The analysis of political authority and democracy as revealing the identity of opposites does not only block a problematization of the juridical–statist identification of the political with an overarching norm that needs a hegemonic superpower to assert itself in the validation, rather than in the suspension, of this norm (Agamben 2005: 86). It also hinders the recoding of the political as a complex or ensemble of discursive practices for deciding on and doing policies in an acceptable manner, which is distinctly open to the possibility of self-governance and co-governance from below. Finally, to make the quest for social control within one’s territory the primary task of democratic government is not merely to reduce the common interest to a superpower’s national interest; it is also to disregard how a central political authority, in the long run, can only become stronger by enabling and empowering the population to get better at governing and taking care of itself as a community of equal subjects. Beyond opposition to difference Inside the political, democracy and parrhesia could be made to work together as the simultaneous manifestation of contingency and necessity; but only if we can transcend the mal adjustment of the democracy of equals and the ascendancy of parrhesia that the politics of exception expresses. This either turns the citizens into a superpower of dissensus and rupture or includes the parrhesiast as one more alterity in the community of equals ‘constituted through polemicizing over the common’ (Rancière 2010: 104). In any case, the result is that ‘the game of democracy and of truth-telling, do not manage to combine and suitably adjust to each other in a way which will enable this democracy to survive’ (GSO: 181). Rather, it insulates the political authorities from the political community with which they are endogenously connected as parties to a political authority relationship that requires the commons’ acceptance and recognition in order for it to continue in, and through, history. Political authority is constitutively open to exception made by political authorities or laypeople in their political communities. However, a minimal degree of cooperation between them is required for their continuous restructuring of their political regime and their relevant nonpolitical contexts – sometimes in the face of violent ruptures, difficult struggles and high-consequence risks (Bang 2009a, b, 2014). Obviously, if self-governance and co-governance are to become the basis of political community, then parrhesiast political authorities are required who can see the truth, are capable of telling it, are devoted to the pursuit of common concerns, and are generally reliable, honest and incorruptible. However, this is not the signature of hegemony, but the sign of a political authority with integrity that decides and acts (GSO: 178) on the basis of a democratic structure, a legitimate ascendancy exercised through a true discourse, and [as someone] with the courage to assert this true discourse. Thus, Foucault’s political analysis of government by truth is not founded on any claim to the primacy of either conflict or consensus, and does not give priority to either the political authority or the political community. In fact, the conception of the good political parrhesia moves political analysis beyond all rulers–ruled oppositions. It compels political researchers to conduct their analysis in light of the possibility that a good cooperative circle of political communication and interaction between political authorities and laypeople could be made to occur, if only both parties to the authority relationship would accept and recognize the real and necessary political difference between the interdependent logics of politeia and parrhesia . Hence, to critique modernity in Foucault’s manner is not equivalent to identifying the political with an extraordinary decision, which then is coercively imposed on people. Nor does it compel us to conclude that the circle of political authority and political community merely expresses the political construction of ‘a paradoxical world that puts together two separable worlds’ (Rancière 2010: 39). That only becomes the case if acceptance and recognition of political authority is equated with a forced compliance induced through disciplinary subjection and policing. Then, evidently, the ethical life among equals inside political communities will appear as always and intrinsically opposed to political authorities’ world of lived necessity. The virtue of being a political lay actor in a democratic political community is not just that one can act without a command, ‘ as if a command was not needed’ (Bauman 1995: 59, my italics). It is, rather, to know that a command/obedience relation is not necessary for cooperating with political authorities in the articulation and performance of common concerns. What is needed is merely the acceptance and recognition of the difference between being a political authority and a lay member of a political community. Placing political cooperation before consensus and dissensus The duality of political authority and political community comes out clearly in Foucault’s specification of the difference between parrhesia and democracy (GSO: 183–184): Not everybody can tell the truth just because everybody may speak. True discourse introduces a difference or rather is linked, both in its conditions and its effects, to a difference: only a few can tell the truth. And once only a few can tell the truth, once this truth-telling has emerged into the field of democracy, a difference is produced which is that of the ascendancy exercised by some over others. True discourse and the emergence of true discourse underpins the process of governmentality. If democracy can be governed, it is because there is a true discourse. Does this signify that Foucault, after all, is speaking of parrhesia as power over others? Well, some would probably say he is, but I think he is not, at least not in the normal sense of domination as class power or symbolic violence, manifesting a conflict of interest or meaning in which resistance is repressed and wills are subdued by the stronger class or superior will to knowledge (Bourdieu 1992, Devine and Savage 2005, Lukes 2005, Poulantzas 1975). We must remember that the good parrhesia grows out of democracy in the authority relationship, and, therefore, that the authority relationship between authorities and laypeople, in the ‘original position’, must be functional before it can, for example, take shape as a command/obedience relationship. To stress the importance of ascendancy for the good political parrhesia is not the same as claiming that politics will always be dominated by circulating power elites or classes. As distinct from elitists like Michels, Mosca and Pareto, Foucault does not classify people inside the political according to the power and control they actually hold. He merely wishes to point out the difference between those few who are the occupants of the political authority roles and the many ‘ordinary’ members who are not. This may also be why he himself, in the end, felt compelled to make an explicit distinction between power and domination, as in this interview from 1982 (FL 1996 : 417): Domination is a particular case within the different possibility of power relations. You can have a power relation without this type of domination. But what makes me uncomfortable with these analyses – at least those by Habermas – is the fact that when he speaks about power, he always understands it as domination. And he translates ‘power’ by ‘domination.’ To exercise political ascendancy is not the same as exercising command and control over others. Political authorities need not be coextensive with the politically relevant members; nor do they have to be driven by the goal of appropriating power above all else (cf. Easton 1965b: 214–215). Furthermore, however little actual control laypeople may possess under given circumstances, it is still necessary for them to systematically articulate and perform policies that most people will accept and recognize as binding, at least most of the time. However, the point is that some basic faculties are required to be in a position to exercise good political parrhesia . You cannot just walk in from the street and do so. Special political competences are required, developed from day-to-day experiences with the risks, problems and challenges that have to be dealt with in, and through, systematic political decision and action. Political authorities may sometimes function as puppets for certain dominant socioeconomic interests or identities. Yet, no matter how little actual control they possess, they are still directly and immediately responsible for how policies are authoritatively formulated, programmed, ‘packaged’ and carried out for society and the population in day-to-day political life. Likewise, laypeople in their political communities may be downtrodden by a totalitarian or authoritarian regime and hindered in all ways from exercising their creative political capacity to affect the production of political outcomes. Nevertheless, not even the most totalitarian regime can afford to ignore the political fact that it could not exist for a moment if laypeople suddenly refused to accept and recognize themselves as bound by authority, for whatever combination of reasons. The Eastern European and Chinese revolutions should at least have taught us that much. What we should emphasize much more today is the possibility of introducing the model of good parrhesia as an alternative to the models of the extraordinary decision-maker and the ordinary exception. What laypeople do in their political communities is not reducible to a matter of repoliticizing what has been depoliticized by the police. It is not merely this notion of democracy as dispute and struggle that is intrinsic to understanding what political community is all about. It is, more than anything else, the ability of laypeople to continuously problematize how policies are articulated and performed in time-space. Whereas politicization is tied to the logic of dissensus and consensus, problematization is connected with the logic of accepting and rejecting. Where problematization is continuous, politicization is discontinuous. Thus, problematization provides ‘ordinary people’ inside their political communities with a much more long-lasting and general political significance and relevance than is possible in politicization. It makes the never-ceasing spontaneity and creativity of ordinary citizens the ground for developing the politics of truth of the parrhesiast, by igniting and keeping the political authority responsive to conducting the circle of the good parrhesia.

#### Dictatorship of the proletariat is unworkable in a complex modern society. The party requires teleology and totalitarianism.

Andreas **KALYVAS** Politics @ New School ‘**2K** “Hegemonic sovereignty: Carl Schmitt, Antonio Gramsci and the constituent prince” *Journal of Political Ideologies* 5:3 p. 359-362

There are three fundamental reasons for discrediting this ancient form of founding. First, sociologically speaking, there is the new reality imposed by modern civil society. Here let’s recall Gramsci’s famous assessment about the structural transformation of civil society, its growing complexity, its high levels of differentiation brought about by the growth of intermediary voluntary associations and intersubjective relations. Under these conditions, it is **impossible** to adopt a strategy of radical change pursued through **dictatorial means**. Modern civil society has formed a quasi-independen t sphere where consent and persuasion have become a necessity that cannot be neglected.100 Nor can modern civil society be stormed like a medieval castle by the military forces of a heroic prince. If Lenin’s **proletarian dictatorship**—a collective rendition of the ancient prince that preserved the mixture of force and founding—was possible it was because Tsarist Russia was a pre-modern society.

Secondly, from the perspective of the symbolic, modernity is the age of democratic and liberal revolutions through which the masses have emancipated themselves from traditional forms of subordination and exploitation and have conquered a space in which their presence and voice can be expressed. They have changed the symbolic and social relations of power. They have composed a new reality that any radical, transformative political project has to take into account. Modernity is also the age of generalized individualism , in which individuals have become legal subjects with formal rights. Even religion has weakened its hold on the symbolic universe. Godless modernity is the age of human immanence and no political strategy can avoid the world-historica l event imposed by the entry of the masses into politics. None can neglect the new political participants, as they were ignored in ancient times. As Nadia Urbinati correctly shows, ‘democracy’, for Gramsci, ‘is a hegemonic world, its opposite is domination, feudalism’.101 Finally, politically speaking, modernity has depersonalized power. The king has been dethroned and his body appropriated by the people, the new body politic. Political actors can be only collective organizations, never concrete individuals . For Gramsci, ‘the protagonist of the new Prince could not in the modern epoch be an individual hero, but only the political party’.102 The communist party is a collective legislator, the modern, anonymous, faceless founder of new states.

All of these structural sociological , political, and cultural transformations have affected the nature of dictatorship. They have divested it of its instituting dimension with which Machiavelli was so fascinated. Dictatorship was the pre-modern and undemocratic form of new foundations. In the modern age, however, it has become a **strictly repressive and unproductive institution** . ‘The contemporary dictatorships, ’ Gramsci observes, ‘have legally abolished even modern forms of autonomy’ of the subordinated classes (i.e., parties, trade unions, and various cultural associations) and ‘they have tried to incorporate them in the activity of the State: the legal centralization of the whole national life within the hands of the dominant group becomes “**totalitarian**” ’.103 Claude Lefort has nicely captured this difference between the ancient and the modern prince. The **revolutionary party** cannot create a new communist society from a pure act of violence and domination without the actual consent and effective participation of the popular masses, that is, without hegemony. For Gramsci, ‘the will of the modern prince’, Lefort acutely observes, ‘cannot but create a new state that does not resemble the previous ones that we know; the finality of the revolutionary class and that of the party cannot but coincide with the consciousness of the finality of humanity …. [The modern prince] formulates a particular strategy which objective is to obtain and maintain the consent of the masses, to convince them of the legitimacy of the actions they have to follow and of the utility of the sacrifices’.104 For Lefort, the main difference between the two princes is that the ancient could resort to oppression and dictatorship to create a new order, while the modern can rely only on an expansive popular will and democratic mobilization. In other words, the modern prince will either create a new order democratically through consent and popular participation or it will not be a prince at all. The age of dictatorial founding princes is gone. Modernity does not allow for creative individual violence. The foundation of a new state must be hegemonic, that is, popular and participatory. It must be an act of collective self-legislation .

#### 5. Do both – Representing capitalism as a global totality relies on essentialist and phallocentric thinking. Capitalism becomes the force that explains everything but can only be explained in a way that entrenches its power.

J.K. **GIBSON-GRAHAM** (Julie Graham Geography @ Amherst & Katherine Gibson Inst. of Culture & Society Western Sydney) **‘6** *The End of Capitalism As We Knew It 10th Anniversary Edition* 1-5

Given the avowed servitude of left theory to left political action it is ironic (though not surprising) that understandings and images of capitalism can quite readily be viewed as contributing to a crisis in left politics. Indeed, and this is the argument we wish to make in this book, the project of understanding the beast has itself produced a beast, or even a bestiary; and the process of producing knowledge in service to politics has estranged rather than united understanding and action. Bringing these together again, or allowing them to touch in different ways, is one of our motivating aspirations.

"Capitalism" occupies a special and privileged place in the language of social representation. References to "capitalist society" are a commonplace of left and even mainstream social description, as are references - to the market, to the global economy, to postindustrial society - in which an unnamed capitalism is implicitly invoked as the defining and unifying moment of a complex economic and social formation. Just as the economic system in eastern Europe used confidently to be described as communist or socialist, so a general confidence in economic classification characterizes representations of an increasingly capitalist world system. But what might be seen as the grounds of this confidence, if we put aside notions of "reality" as the authentic origin of its representations?

Why might it seem problematic to say that the United States is a Christian nation, or a heterosexual one, despite the widespread belief that Christianity and heterosexuality are dominant or majority practices in their respective domains, while at the same time it seems legitimate and indeed "accurate" to say that the US is a capitalist country?1 What is it about the former expressions, and their critical history, that makes them visible as "regulatory fictions,"2 ways of erasing or obscuring difference, while the latter is seen as accurate representation? Why, moreover, have embracing and holistic expressions for social structure like patriarchy fallen into relative disuse among feminist theorists (see Pringle 1995; Barrett and Phillips 1992) while similar conceptions of capitalism as a system or "structure of power" are still prevalent and resilient? These sorts of questions, by virtue of their scarcity and scant claims to legitimacy, have provided us a motive for this book.3

The End of Capitalism (As We Knew It) problematizes "capitalism" as an economic and social descriptor.4

[Insert footnote 4]

Though we refer on almost every page of this book to capitalism, we find ourselves loath to define it, since this would involve choosing among a wide variety of existing definitions (any one of which could be seen as our "target") or specifying out of context a formation that we wish to understand as contextually defined. One familiar Marxist definition, however, involves a vision of capitalism as a system of generalized commodity production structured by (industrial) forces of production and exploitative production relations between capital and labor. Workers, bereft of means of production, sell their labor power for wages and participate in the labor process under capitalist control. Their surplus labor is appropriated by capitalists as surplus value. The capitalist mode of production is animated by the twin imperatives of enterprise competition and capital accumulation which together account for the dynamic tendencies of capitalism to expand and to undergo recurring episodes of crisis.

[End footnote 4]

Scrutinizing what might be seen as throwaway uses of the term - passing references, for example, to the capitalist system or to global capitalism - as well as systematic and deliberate attempts to represent capitalism as a central and organizing feature of modern social experience, the book selectively traces the discursive origins of a widespread understanding: that capitalism is the hegemonic, or even the only, present form of economy and that it will continue to be so in the proximate future. It follows from this prevalent though not ubiquitous view that noncapitalist economic sites, if they exist at all, must inhabit the social margins; and, as a corollary, that deliberate attempts to develop noncapitalist economic practices and institutions must take place in the social interstices, in the realm of experiment, or in a visionary space of revolutionary social replacement.

Representations of capitalism are a potent constituent of the anticapitalist imagination, providing images of what is to be resisted and changed as well as intimations of the strategies, techniques, and possibilities of changing it. For this reason, depictions of "capitalist hegemony" deserve a particularly skeptical reading. For in the vicinity of these representations, the very idea of a noncapitalist economy takes the shape of an unlikelihood or even an impossibility. It becomes difficult to entertain a vision of the prevalence and vitality of noncapitalist economic forms, or of daily or partial replacements of capitalism by noncapitalist economic practices, or of capitalist retreats and reversals. In this sense, "capitalist hegemony" operates not only as a constituent of, but also as a brake upon**,** the anticapitalist imagination.5 What difference might it make to release that brake and allow an anticapitalist economic imaginary to develop unrestricted?6 If we were to dissolve the image that looms in the economic foreground, what shadowy economic forms might come forward? In these questions we can identify the broad outlines of our project: to discover or create a world of economic difference, and to populate that world with exotic creatures that become, upon inspection, quite local and familiar (not to mention familiar beings that are not what they seem).

The discursive artifact we call "capitalist hegemony" is a complex effect of a wide variety of discursive and nondiscursive conditions.7 In this book we focus on the practices and preoccupations of discourse, tracing some of the different, even incompatible, representations of capitalism that can be collated within this fictive summary representation. These depictions have their origins in the diverse traditions of Marxism, classical and contemporary political economy, academic social science, modern historiography, popular economic and social thought, western philosophy and metaphysics, indeed, in an endless array of texts, traditions and infrastructures of meaning. In the chapters that follow, only a few of these are examined for the ways in which they have sustained a vision of capitalism as the dominant form of economy, or have contributed to the possibility or durability of such a vision. But the point should emerge none the less clearly: the virtually unquestioned dominance of capitalism can be seen as a complex product of a variety of discursive commitments, including but not limited to organicist social conceptions, heroic historical narratives, evolutionary scenarios of social development, and essentialist, phallocentric, or binary patterns of thinking. It is through these discursive figurings and alignments that capitalism is constituted as large, powerful, persistent, active, expansive, progressive, dynamic, transformative; embracing, penetrating, disciplining, colonizing, constraining; systemic, self-reproducing, rational, lawful, self-rectifying; organized and organizing, centered and centering; originating, creative, protean; victorious and ascendant; selfidentical, self-expressive, full, definite, real, positive, and capable of conferring identity and meaning.8

The argument revisited: it is the way capitalism has been "thought" that has made it so difficult for people to imagine its supersession.9 It is therefore the ways in which capitalism is known that we wish to delegitimize and displace. The process is one of unearthing, of bringing to light images and habits of understanding that constitute "hegemonic capitalism" at the intersection of a set of representations. This we see as a first step toward theorizing capitalism without representing dominance as a natural and inevitable feature of its being. At the same time, we hope to foster conditions under which the economy might become less subject to definitional closure. If it were possible to inhabit a heterogeneous and open-ended economic space whose identity was not fixed or singular (the space potentially to be vacated by a capitalism that is necessarily and naturally hegemonic) then a vision of noncapitalist economic practices as existing and widespread might be able to be born; and in the context of such a vision, a new anticapitalist politics might emerge, a noncapitalist politics of class (whatever that may mean) might take root and flourish. A long shot perhaps but one worth pursuing.

#### More than 50% of economic activity is not capitalist – the discourse of capitalist dominance is self-fulfilling.

J.K. **GIBSON-GRAHAM** (Julie Graham Geography @ Amherst & Katherine Gibson Inst. of Culture & Society Western Sydney) **‘6** *The End of Capitalism As We Knew It 10th Anniversary Edition*  p. xi-xv

A politics of language: diverse economies/community economies

As we argued in chapter 5 of The End of Capitalism, any contemporary economic politics confronts an existing object: an economy produced, through particular modes of representation and calculation, as a bounded sphere "whose internal mechanisms and exchanges separate it from other social processes" (Mitchell 2007). This economy is not simply an ideological concept susceptible to intellectual debunking, but a materialization that participates in organizing the practices and processes that surround it, while at the same time being organized and maintained by them. A project of instituting a different economy must restore this obdurate positivity to its negative grounding. It must, in Laclau's terms (1990), produce a "dislocation," enabling a recognition that "other economies are possible." Something outside the given configuration of being must offer itself as an element or ingredient for a new political project of configuring. For us this dislocating element has been an economic language that cannot be subsumed to existing ways of thinking economy, and instead signals the ever-present possibility of remaking economy in alternative terms. The conceptual resources for different languages of economy are abundantly available. Alongside the hegemonic discourse of economy, many counterdiscourses have arisen from alternative traditions of economic thought (for example, classical political economy, feminist economics, economic anthropology, geography, and sociology) and from workingclass, third-world, and social and community movements (for example, the feminist, socialist, cooperative, and local sustainability movements).4 Yet while there exists a substantial understanding of the extent and nature of economic difference, what does not exist is a way of convening this knowledge to destabilize the received wisdom of capitalist dominance and unleash the creative forces and subjects of economic experimentation. Our intervention has been to propose a language of the diverse econ of social studies of economy since The End of Capitalism wasof social studies of economy since The End of Capitalism was published. published. to perform different economies.5 The language of the diverse economy widens the identity of the economy to include all of those practices excluded or marginalized by the theory and presumption of capitalist hegemony. The objective is not to produce a finished and coherent template that maps the economy "as it really is" and presents (to the converted or suggestible) a ready-made "alternative economy." Rather, our hope is to disarm and dislocate the naturalized dominance of the capitalist economy and make a space for new economic becomings—ones that we will need to work to produce. If we can recognize a diverse economy, we can begin to imagine and create diverse organizations and practices as powerful constituents of an enlivened noncapitalist politics of place. We began constructing our language by surveying a variety of economic traditions and languages and conceptualizing three differentiated practices:6

•different kinds of transaction and ways of negotiating (in)commensurability;

•different types of labor and ways of compensating it; and

•different forms of economic enterprise and ways of producing, appropriating, and distributing surplus.

![Table

Description automatically generated]()

Our current representation of what we have called the diverse economy is shown in Figure I.I. In this figure, what is often seen as the economy, that is, formal markets, wage labor, and capitalist enterprise, is merely one set of cells in a complex field of economic relations that sustain livelihoods in regions around the world. Realizing that in both rich and poor countries the bottom two-thirds of the diagram accounts for well over 50 percent of economic activity, we cannot help but be struck by the discursive violence enacted through familiar references to "capitalist" economies and societies.

Considering for a moment just the market-oriented enterprises in the right-hand column of Figure I.I, we recognize in the bottom cell the presence of commodity-producing enterprises of a noncapitalist sort. This should not be surprising—commodities are just goods and services produced for a market; they can be produced in a variety of exploitative or nonexploitative noncapitalist organizations. On the exploitative side, slave modes of producing and appropriating surplus where workers lack freedom of contract are arguably growing—for example, in the United States prison system and in the sex and domestic service industries worldwide (Bales 1999). In addition, feudal surplus appropriation via payments of rent goes on in tenant farming and in many household-based businesses (Kayatekin 2001). But there are also nonexploitative forms of surplus appropriation in the noncapitalist cell: consider the large population of self-employed or independent producers who appropriate and distribute the wealth they produce, and the growing number of collectives and cooperatives that jointly appropriate their surplus and distribute it in ways decided on by the collective membership.

Moving up one cell, we are reminded that difference within the category of capitalist enterprise is as important as the differences between enterprise forms or class processes. Increasingly "alternative" capitalist firms distinguish themselves from their mainstream capitalist counterparts in that part of their production process, their product, or their appropriated surplus is oriented toward environmentally friendly or socially responsible activity. State capitalist enterprises employ wage labor and appropriate surplus but have the potential to produce public goods and distribute surplus funds to public benefit. Nonprofit enterprises similarly employ wage laborers and appropriate their surplus, but by law they are not allowed to retain or distribute profits. Like other capitalist enterprises, these different forms of organization are scattered over the economic landscape. In this representation, no system or unified economy covers the social space and thus necessarily dominates other forms of economy.

Elaborating a vision of the "diverse economy" is one of our strategic moves against the subordination of local subjects to the discourse of (capitalist economic) globalization. Each of our action research projects starts with an inventory by community researchers of local economic practices and organizations that modifies and expands Figure I.I. This process yields a wider field of economic possibility and a revaluation of the local economy in terms of economic resources (as opposed to economic deficiencies) available for projects of economic invention. Representing the diverse economy is a deconstructive process that displaces the binary hierarchies of market/nonmarket and capitalism/noncapitalism, turning singular generalities into multiple particularities, and yielding a radically heterogeneous economic landscape in preparation for the next phase of the projects—the construction of "community economies" in place. In the terms of our language politics, this constructive process entails (1) articulation, or making links among the different activities and enterprises of a diverse economy, and (2) resignification, or convening these activities/enterprises under the signifier of the "community economy." As a practice of development, constructing a community economy is an ethical project of acknowledging relationships and making connections, rather than a technical project of activating generic logics of growth.

Unlike the proliferative fullness of the diverse economy, the community economy is an emptiness—as it has to be, if the project of building it is to be political, experimental, open, and democratic.7 A community economy is an ethical and political space of decision, not a geographic or social commonality, and community is its outcome rather than a ground. The practice of the community economy is a fluid process of continual resignification, discarding any fantasy that there is a perfect community economy that lies outside of negotiation, struggle, uncertainty, ambivalence, and disappointment, discarding the notion that there's a blueprint that tells us what to do and how to "be communal." Indeed, it is a recognition that there's no way not to be communal, not to be implicated with one another, that recalls us to the political task of "building a community economy."

#### Transition fails.

Buchs, PhD, ’19 [Milena, Associate Professor in Sustainability, Economics and Low Carbon Transitions @University of Leeds, “Challenges for the degrowth transition: The debate about wellbeing,” *Futures*, Volume 105, 2019, pp. 155-165]

The social practices lens is also useful for thinking about possible wellbeing implications of rapid social change more generally, and a transition away from a growth-based economy specifically. While the concept of social practices inherently implies the pos- sibility of change (with its focus on agency and creativity), it equally strongly highlights the structural aspects of practices which provide stability and orientation. During times of rapid social transitions, social norms and ‘mental infrastructures’ often lag behind, creating disorientation, social conflict, and negative impacts on wellbeing (Büchs & Koch, 2017: ch. 6).

Stability of structural dimensions of social practices offers orientation and some extent of predictability of how oneself and other people are likely to act in the future, providing a framework within which flexibility and change are possible. This orienting function of structural dimensions of practices is likely to be an important condition for people to form reasonably stable identities and relationships – key ingredients for wellbeing. Examples from classical and contemporary sociological and psychological research suggest that different speeds of changing social structures can establish misalignments and disruptions of social practices which can, in turn, negatively influence health and other wellbeing outcomes. For instance, in his classical study, Durkheim presents suicide at least partly as an outcome of a failure of cultural resources to provide meaning and orientation in the context of other, more rapid social changes (Durkheim, 2006; Vega & Rumbaut, 1991: 375). This idea also links to Bourdieu’s concept of the “hysteresis effect”. Here, Bourdieu emphasises that, especially during phases of social transition, people’s habitus and “objective” social circumstances can become disjointed: as a result of hysteresis, dispositions can be “out of line with the field and with the ‘collective expectations’ which are constitutive of its normality. This is the case, in particular, when a field undergoes a major crisis and its regularities (even its rules) are profoundly changed” (Bourdieu, 2000: 160). This can contribute to a deterioration of people’s wellbeing as it makes them feel “out of place” or let them be perceived that way, “plung[ing] them deeper into failure” (Bourdieu, 2000: 161) because they cannot make use of new opportunities or are mistreated or socially excluded by others.

Empirical research which partly builds on the idea of hysteresis has shown that wide-ranging organisational change can have a range of negative effects on people’s health and mortality (Ferrie et al., 1998; McDonough & Polzer, 2012). One study found that across 174 countries, several measures of wellbeing and social performance, including life satisfaction, health, safety and trust, voice and accountability, were highest in periods of economic stability, but lower in times of GDP growth or contraction (O’Neill, 2015); and other studies concluded that life expectancy can be negatively affected by both rapid economic growth and contraction (Notzon et al., 1998; Szreter, 1999).

Several scholars have recently highlighted the potential for social conflict inherent in (rapid) social change. For instance, Maja Göpel (2016: 49) remarks: “Unsurprisingly, the navigation or transition phase in shifting paradigms as well as governance solutions is marked by chaos, politicization, unease and power-ridden struggles”. Wolfgang Streeck has issued similar warnings (Streeck et al., 2016: 169). It is not difficult to see how such scenarios bear the potential of undermining some of the fundamental conditions that are necessary for the satisfaction of basic needs as discussed above, and hence the danger of generating substantial wellbeing losses for current and near-future generations.

In the current context, it is very difficult to imagine that we might be able to observe a rapid and radical cultural change in which people adopt identities and related lifestyles that value intrinsically motivated activities over pursuing satisfaction and status through careers and consumption. Even more worryingly, political events in Europe, the United States and elsewhere since the ‘Great Crash’ of 2008 indicate that times of negative or stagnant growth can provide a breeding ground for populist, nationalistic and anti-democratic movements. Economic insecurity, a perceived threat of established identities through migrants, and deep mistrust against ‘elite’ politicians are amongst the main explanations for previously unimaginable events such as the Brexit vote, Trump presidency, and recent electoral successes for far right-wing parties in a range of European countries.

#### No global movement.

Petar Kurecic 16, Assistant Professor of Economics at University North, Croatia, 12/26/2016, “Social movements as (in)effective way of struggle against neoliberal geopolitics (i.e. essentially detrimental ideology aimed at destruction of the welfare state)?”, https://www.academia.edu/32030532/Social\_Movements\_and\_Neoliberal\_Geopolitics

Recognition of neoliberalism’s geographies of poverty, inequality, and violence as intertwined across a multiplicity of sites impels us to view its geographies of protest, resistance, and contestation in the same light (Springer, 2011: 553). Because the changes associated with neoliberal policies often had negative distributional impacts on the working class, the poor, the small-business sector, and the environment, diverse forms of resistance and contestation have emerged (Kurecic, 2016: 35)¶ Anyhow, if we have the TNC on one side, then it should probably be most effective to fight its goals and actions with means of social action that transcends national borders – transnational social movements . In other words, transnational demos should be able to fight “the Cabal”.¶ What actually are social movements? Nilsen (2015: 4-5) points out that social movements can be seen as “being simultaneously constituted by and constitutive of praxis, and thus as being situated at the very heart of the making and unmaking of the structures and processes that underpin both social order and social change. Social movements should be understood according to the way how they play a role in shaping and reshaping the current form of given institutional fields and political economies, and taking seriously the basic intention that animates social movements, that is, the intention of moving, of becoming more than what they currently are.”¶ Although neoliberalism’s power to “press upon” stems from its institutional arrangement and hegemonic discourses backed by the United States’ military might (Harvey 2003; Peet 2007), the presence of power that “presses upon” does not negate the possibility of subaltern counter-politics. In fact, the presence of power that presses upon also gives rise to productive power, or the power to resist and transform (Foucault, 1979). The power of those adversely affected by neoliberalism is dependent on their alliances, relations, networks and counterhegemonic discourses (Waquar, 2012: 1063).¶ Social movements typically grow from “cramped spaces”, situations that are constricted by the impossibilities of the existing world with a way out barely imaginable. But precisely because they are cramped, these spaces act as incubators or greenhouses for creativity and innovation (The Free Association, 2007).¶ Social movements of the present day world are definitely thriving because of the two main processes. The first process is the neo-liberally inspired internationalization (which the ideologists of globalization refer to as “globalization”) that increases social inequality in both rich and poor states, concurrently increasing inequalities between the developed and non-developed states, increasing the number of least-developed states. The second is the revolution in information technologies that has invented “new media” and then made them available to significant parts of the world population (in developed states, the percentage of Internet users well surpasses 50%). Internet and its tools have become ubiquitous (Kurecic, 2016: 35).¶ Unfortunately, social movements usually pursue only their national agenda, and their transborder actions are in most cases ineffective. On the other hand, it is very difficult for a politician connected with social movements to be elected in office, on any level, and in any country, hence all the influence, funds, media, and state security apparatuses are acting to prevent any such event to occur. Therefore, the pursuers of progressive agendas always carry an immense burden even before they start a race for office.¶ Castells (2012) has identified over a 100 diffused and on social networks active social movements that have thrived in 2009-2012 period, in various parts of the world, in democratic and developed states (various movements in European states, Occupy Wall Street Movement etc.), as well as in the autocratic regimes of the developing world (for instance, the Arabian Spring movements, protests in Russia against Putin). All these movements used social media as a means of coordinating their actions and announcing their messages to their supporters and to the outside world.¶ However, we have to ask ourselves – what is the results of all these social movements? What has Arab Spring brought to the Arab countries? Stability, prosperity? Not a chance. On the other hand, we are witnessing chaos, terrorism and destruction after the rise of the political Islam. Is Russia a more democratic country than in 2012 before Putin was elected (again) as President? Is Wall Street less predatory and more socially responsible than it was before the Great Recession and the Occupy Wall Street Movement actions? Maybe it is a bit more regulated. Anything more than that – hardly.¶ In that sense, in their fight against neoliberal geopolitics and the bourgeois capitalist state, social movements have not been very successful. Usually, the elite would make a couple of superficial moves that lowered the levels of tension and social action in a certain society that witnessed the build-up of grievance and social action, manifested through social movements. Then the level of dissatisfaction of the “masses” would exhaust and everything would return to normal, one way or the other. This is, unfortunately a rule when it comes to social action tied with social movements. The trends of neoliberal totalitarian dominance over the economy and politics in most countries of the world have not been reversed. If 62 people have more money than the poorer half of the world’s populations, then it is clear that everything and not just something is deeply wrong. The system needs a reset. Nevertheless, social movements have not been able to reset the system, at least so far.

#### fighting for democracy in the U.S. is the best way to facilitate leftist internationalism – democracy as a value is not “Western” lol

Walzer and Britton Purdy 17 – Michael Walzer is a former editor of Dissent and author of the forthcoming book A Foreign Policy for the Left (Yale University Press). Jedediah Britton-Purdy teaches at Columbia Law School. His new book, This Land Is Our Land: The Struggle for a New Commonwealth, will appear this fall. (, 2-16-2017, "A People's Globalism: Notes Toward a New Left Internationalism," Nation, https://www.thenation.com/article/archive/a-peoples-globalism-notes-toward-a-new-left-internationalism/)//gcd

Solidarity with comrades abroad is the oldest definition of left internationalism. We look for people who are fighting for equality, democracy, and freedom anywhere in the world, and we join their fight. Think of this as the foreign policy of the left. This is what all our organizations—parties, unions, NGOs, magazines—should be doing. Mostly, these fights go on within states, because right now the state is the most effective agent of human rights and economic justice. The regulation of laissez-faire capitalism was a social-democratic achievement, and it was achieved only in the state. That is where it must now be defended, by internationalists, against globalization. The European Union promised an expansion of the social-democratic achievement—a promise unfulfilled but one still worth fighting for. The fight takes place in one state after another, and it is in those states that we must find our comrades. Two simple examples: Our comrades in Greece are the people fighting against austerity, and our comrades in Germany are the people fighting against the bankers. Of course, we oppose our own bankers and the neoliberal policies and the unjust wars of our own government—always working with comrades abroad who are resisting those policies and wars in the name of equality, democracy, and freedom. This resistance will probably be a central part of our politics in the age of Trump, though if Trumpism means isolationism we may have to support comrades abroad who need American help. The choice of comrades is the test of left internationalists. Ours is not a self-regarding politics; it requires listening to and cooperating with other people. Which other people? Our comrades abroad are never the rulers of authoritarian states or their collaborators or their apologists. Where there are tyrants, we support dissidents. We support workers struggling to organize independent unions; we support writers whose books can’t be published in their own countries; we support feminists defending gender equality against patriarchal regimes; we support heretics and free-thinkers threatened by a ruling zealotry. Left internationalism is a solidarity of leftists. ATOSSA ABRAHAMIAN Against Global Nationalism The past few years have given rise to a strange political chimera: the right-wing ethno-nationalist party that denounces free trade, international cooperation, and the “global elite” all while cheering for—and even financially supporting—its fellow far-right white supremacists around the world. Rhetorically, these parties put their countries first, in the form of Brexit or Donald Trump, yet they nevertheless remain invested in a worldwide nationalistic project, and go out of their way to help like-minded parties achieve their own far-right ethno-nationalist goals. Call it global nationalism, or the ethno-national internationale. The nationalists have come up with a version of internationalism. Whatever the hell it is, it’s gaining traction, and the left isn’t coming up with much of an alternative. Where to begin? The lesson is that progressives ought to start thinking of their causes as global ones, too, even if they begin as territorially constrained national initiatives. If the success of Bernie Sanders’s presidential campaign is any sign of what’s to come, redistribution, in the form of tax policy and social-welfare programs, will be crucial to winning constituents at home—and key in winning allies and support abroad. It’s understandable to want to deal with domestic problems first and foremost. But an “America first” policy won’t make sense if “America” means American power and American companies and “first” means military domination and corporate profits. The only way Americans will “win,” in Trumpian parlance, is if they have a strong social safety net to ensure that basic rights like education, health care, food, and shelter are covered. That’s what will make Americans, America, and everyone else living in it great. This is harder to pull off than promoting nationalism around the world on Twitter, as the right-wing parties do. The nationalist calculus is that, once these countries are sealed off from the world with walls and tariffs, they’re on their own. The global nationalist rhetoric is a ladder to power that gets thrown away once the parties in question win. A global leftist movement can’t stop there, because it needs to put forth a vision that’s good for people in the long run and that ensures that countries work together both to maintain peace between nations and prosperity within them. Borders do matter. You can’t redistribute anything without boundaries, and you can’t provide for all people in the world equally given our current political infrastructure. The problem is that we’ve never seen a version of globalization that didn’t put companies first and workers last. We forget that what we refer to as “globalization” was actually a series of agreements reached by national governments that simultaneously gave enormous power to the private sector and gutted the public one. You can’t fix that by walling yourself off from the world. You do that by setting an example. A left internationalism will also take care to protect and encourage diversity and multiculturalism within and across national borders. JEDEDIAH PURDY The Bars on the Cage The reasons to revive a left internationalism are morally clear and compelling. Systems of profit and violence, inequality and vulnerability, have gone global, and fights against them must as well. Capital mobility, technology, supply chains, and other factors exacerbating the divide between rich and poor treat borders as mere afterthoughts. The same goes for regional violence and collapse, as in the Middle East, where American intervention has been a toxic catalyst to instability. Climate change reminds us that nations are unnatural, that borders are graffiti on the surface of a changing planet growing more dangerous by the year. Borders, it can seem, mostly trap people in zones of deeply unequal resources and savagely unequal vulnerability. Which country you are born in accounts for about two-thirds of your lifetime income. Borders form the bars on the cages of humanity all across the world. Internationalism is basically an effort to take the mobilization of democratic politics to the scale that globalism has given to 21st-century capitalism. It can seem to be the only decent politics at a time when nationalism—explicit and naked—is the politics of the indecent. The electoral insurrections behind the rise of Donald Trump and other so-called populists of the right, from Brexit impresario Nigel Farage to the quasi-fascist parties of Eastern Europe, thrust forward ethnic and religious ideas of “the nation,” “the homeland,” or “real Americans.” But does being against these grotesque nationalisms mean being for their opposite, and what could that opposite, internationalism, be? There is nothing inherently progressive about defying or dissolving borders. Hawks have their humanitarian interventions, which look more opportunistic and more reckless with every decade. Neoliberals have their globalism, which has built this world of supply chains and mobile capital. Internationalism can sometimes provide cover for invasion, plunder, and less vivid forms of exploitation. Getting beyond the nation-state does not necessarily mean progress. More importantly, getting beyond the nation-state is an illusion, at least for now. Democratic politics requires collective action, and the state is the uniquely effective vehicle of that action. A left globalism would need to work the levers of nation-states. Every form of organizing that leftists care about interacts intensely with national laws. No strategy of horizontal, leaderless, or otherwise extra-state organizing can overcome the fact that nation-states do a tremendous amount to shape the ground where it must work. The conditions of internationalism are inevitably set by nation-states. In this situation, internationalism means building movements and constituencies that are at once national and international. History confirms that this is possible, though hardly easy. International Workingmen’s Associations in the 19th century were alliances of unions fighting for factory safety and shortened work-days in national parliaments and coordination of labor strength toward the possibility of international actions, such as solidarity strikes. In an even less democratic world, abolitionist networks turned their elite and middle-class influence on their national governments toward international reform. Today, ironically enough, religious or national identity is more likely than class interest or economic reform to cross borders: Christian solidarity groups have been pressing for years for Donald Trump’s proposed priority for Christian refugees from the Middle East, and immigrants pressing their new governments to intervene in the affairs of their old ones is a very old story.

#### Maoist militarism especially fails in the U.S. ­– last 200 years of labor organizing were met with overwhelming force.

Sasha Abramsky 20. freelance journalist and a part-time lecturer at the University of California at Davis, bachelors in politics, philosophy and economics from Oxford University and a master’s degree from the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism. “Trump Didn’t Invent State Violence Against Protesters — But He’s Escalating It”. truthout. Aug 15 2020. https://truthout.org/articles/trump-didnt-invent-state-violence-against-protesters-but-hes-escalating-it/

Over the past month, a series of investigative reports have detailed the extraordinary way in which the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has come to see journalists and political protesters as domestic enemies. At least two journalists covering the Portland protests were, apparently, targeted by DHS officers, who wrote “intelligence reports” on their activities, and compiled on them the sorts of dossiers more frequently used against overseas terrorists.

Meanwhile, Customs and Border Protection-operated Predator drones, and helicopters and planes operated by an array of other agencies, have been used to spy on Black Lives Matter protesters in Minneapolis and other cities in the wake of the police murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Tony McDade and others. And, this past week, The Nation magazine reported that the Trump administration was using DHS’s Tactical Terrorism Response Teams to monitor anti-fascist activists, as well as a left-wing podcast host, for supposedly coordinating with foreign governments to attack the United States. Once U.S. citizens are designated as agents of foreign powers, the legal doors are opened to warrantless spying on their actions.

In response, many writers have expressed shock and horror at such “un-American” activities being unleashed by those in positions of power. But, while they surely merit both shock and horror, they shouldn’t merit surprise. Trump’s latest methods, while certainly crude and dangerous, are actually as American as apple pie.

We have a tendency to whitewash our own past, to assign, with hindsight, a nobility of intent that doesn’t truly reflect the goals and the practices of past holders of power. In fact, there is a long and ugly history of U.S. government security agencies labeling any and all dissenters as terrorists.

To take just a few examples: In the fearful days following September 11, the FBI and other law enforcement agencies monitored antiwar groups, human rights organizations and other progressive, nonviolent entities. The ACLU reported on the “Orwellian scope” of the FBI’s domestic surveillance program in this post-9/11 environment.

And, of course, using legal memos written by Department of Justice attorney John Yoo as cover, the Bush administration embraced a wholesale torture program against suspected terrorists that utilized waterboarding, attack dogs, sexual humiliation, beatings, mock executions and other methods banned by the Geneva Conventions. (Yoo has, this summer, reentered the national conversation by providing Trump with legal advice on how he can use the Supreme Court’s Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals ruling as a rationale to craft a series of broad-brush executive orders that, in the areas of immigration, health care and even financial responses to the COVID crisis, would allow Trump to basically rule by diktat).

In the 1990s, as the U.S. consolidated its post-Cold War dominance, groups protesting the World Trade Organization (WTO) were met with the full might of the state. In 1999, anti-WTO protesters were gassed, clubbed and arrested en masse in Seattle. Afterward, the FBI and local law enforcement agencies set up Joint Terrorism Task Forces to monitor left-wing protesters.

But it’s not only in the recent past that the state has resorted to violence and high-tech monitoring in its efforts to squash protest. Pick pretty much any time of social upheaval in the United States and one encounters a stunning, almost automatic, resort to state violence.

One need only think of COINTELPRO in the late 1960s, in which an array of state agencies were sicced on the anti-Vietnam War movement. Or the way the FBI and local police departments in Chicago and elsewhere worked to sabotage the Black Panthers and to kill off its leaders. Or, slightly earlier, the FBI efforts to slime Martin Luther King Jr. Or, in the 1950s, McCarthyism’s marshalling of the full might of the federal government and of Congress to attack communists, civil rights groups, and an array of political progressives.

I remember, as a child visiting my grandparents in Los Angeles in the 1970s and 1980s, talking with older men and women in their social circle who, a generation earlier, had had their careers as musicians and Hollywood artists destroyed by anti-communist witch-hunters. Their fury, their sense of betrayal, remained incandescent. I remember one man in particular, Sam Albert, a debonair musician with a Clark Gable mustache, who had been hauled before the House Un-American Activities Committee to be interrogated about his political beliefs, and had then been drummed out of his job. More than 30 years later, deep into his old age, he was still unable to talk about McCarthy without yelling in fury.

Going back further, during the heyday of trade union organizing, in the early decades of the 20th century, the police, squads of Pinkerton detectives, and even federal troops often served as virtual private militias protecting the interests of big business. On occasion, sheriffs’ officers would beat and even kill farmworkers who tried to organize in California and elsewhere — including sharecroppers in the Deep South — during the 1930s. On other occasions, police, sheriffs and National Guard forces were deployed to counter striking miners, railway workers and others, oftentimes with lethal consequences.

During the Red Scares that followed the Russian Revolution, Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer authorized raids that netted hundreds of so-called Reds, many of whom were, with no due process, unceremoniously deported to the Soviet Union. A little over a decade later, during the Great Depression, tens of thousands of starving World War I veterans and their families mobilized for a huge march on (and occupation of parts of) Washington, D.C., to demand the federal government pay them promised bonuses for their military service in Europe. At President Hoover’s behest, they were met by massive military force — battalions of soldiers, some of them in tanks, sweeping the streets and ultimately burning down the encampments of the so-called Bonus Army.

In the 19th century, the Texas Rangers served largely as a paramilitary force for unleashing racist violence in the contested borderlands between a newly enlarged U.S. and a newly shrunken Mexico. And, of course, many police forces are the institutional descendants of posses formed to track down and kidnap people escaping slavery.

As Trump veers ever closer to authoritarian, dictatorial rule, it’s important not only to point to the uniquely demagogic and tyrannical qualities of Trumpism — of which there are many — but also to look for the ways in which there is continuity on display. Condemning Trump’s hideous embrace of state-sanctioned violence, intimidation and spying techniques against protesters and journalists alike as somehow “un-American” obscures more than it reveals.

When, for example, the Trumpified DHS hacks into journalists’ social media or ferrets around their private financial records, or looks for ways to label Black Lives Matter protesters as terrorists, it is following in the footsteps of Hoover’s FBI in the 1960s or Palmer’s goon squads in the post-World War I years.

When the Trump era ends, as surely it one day will, there must be a national reckoning. The scale of Trump’s malfeasance, and the ramping up of quasi-military law enforcement activities that are — and have always been — inimical to democracy will have to be publicly confronted. Without such a reckoning, there will be no way to lance the political boil that Trump represents.

What these last months have laid bare isn’t that Trump’s national security agenda is anomalous; but, rather, that the system of control embodied by DHS, by Customs and Border Protection, by Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the various other agencies, has evolved to the point where it now primarily serves to aid and abet authoritarianism. These ugly times have provided us a warning: that the military-industrial state, the national security infrastructure that Dwight D. Eisenhower warned about 60 years ago, is now in full bloom. Trump didn’t cause that bloom to come out of nowhere; rather, his presidency is, at least in part, the end consequence, the coming to a head, of decades of fetishization of state-sanctioned violence and brutality.

#### The revolutionary science of dictatorship of the proletariat produces authoritarian revolution. We need an anti-essentialist concept of counter-hegemony to build a democratic alternative.

Ernesto **LACLAU** Political Theory @ Essex **AND** Chantal **MOUFFE** Politics @ Westminster **’14** Hegemony and Socialist Strategy Second Edition p. 50-55

As we have seen, the roots of this transference of class unity to the political sphere go back to Second International orthodoxy. In Leninism as in Kautskyism, the constitutive character of the political moment does not entail that a major role is attributed to super-structures, because the privilege granted to the party is not ‘topographical’ but ‘epistemological’: it is founded not on the efficacy of the political level in constructing social relations, but on the scientific monopoly enjoyed by a given class perspective. This monopoly guaranteed, at a theoretical level, the overcoming of the split between the visible tendencies of capitalism and its underlying evolution. The difference between Kautskyism and Leninism is that for the former the split is purely temporary and internal to the class, and the process of overcoming it inscribed in the endogenous tendencies of capitalist accumulation; while for Leninism, the split is the terrain of a structural dislocation between ‘class’ and ‘masses’ which permanently defines the conditions of political struggle in the imperialist era.

This last point is decisive: hegemonic tasks become increasingly central to communist strategy, as they are bound up with the very conditions of development of the world capitalist system. For Lenin, the world economy is not a mere economic fact, but a political reality: it is an imperialist chain. The breaking points appear not at those links which are most advanced from the point of view of the contradiction between forces and relations of production, but instead, at those where the greatest number of contradictions have accumulated, and where the greatest number of tendencies and antagonisms - belonging, in the orthodox view, to diverse phases - merge into a ruptural unity.6 This implies, however, that the revolutionary process can be understood only as a political articulation of dissimilar elements: there is no revolution without a social complexity external to the simple antagonism among classes; in other words, there is no revolution without hegemony. This moment of political articulation becomes more and more fundamental when one encounters, in the stage of monopoly capitalism, a growing dissolution of old solidarities and a general politicization of social relations. Lenin clearly perceives the transition to a new bourgeois mass politics - labelled by him Lloyd Georgism7 - which is profoundly transforming the historical arena of class struggle. This possibility of unsuspected articulations, altering the social and political identities that are permissible and even thinkable, increasingly dissolves the obviousness of the logical categories of classical stagism. Trotsky will draw the conclusion that combined and uneven development is the historical condition of our time.

This can only mean an unceasing expansion of hegemonic tasks - as opposed to purely class tasks, whose terrain shrinks like a wild ass’s skin. But if there is no historical process which does not involve a ‘non-orthodox’ combination of elements, what then is a normal development?

Communist discourse itself became increasingly dominated by the hegemonic character which every political initiative acquired in the new historical terrain of the imperialist era. As a result, however, it tended to oscillate in a contradictory manner between what we have called a democratic and an authoritarian practice of hegemony. In the 1920s economist stagism was everywhere in command, and as the prospect of revolution receded the class lines grew still more rigid. Since the European revolution was conceived purely in terms of working-class centrality, and since the Communist parties re-presented the ‘historical interests’ of the working class, the sole function of these parties was to maintain the revolutionary consciousness of the proletariat in opposition to the integrationist tendencies of social democracy. In periods of ‘relative stabilization’, therefore, it was necessary to strengthen the class barrier with even greater intransigence. Hence, the slogan launched in 1924 for the Bolshevization of the Communist parties. Zinoviev explained it as follows: ‘Bolshevization means a firm will to struggle for the hegemony of the proletariat, it means a passionate hatred for the bourgeoisie, for the counter-revolutionary leaders of social democracy, for centrism and the centrists, for the semicentrists and the pacifists, f

fror all the miscarriages of bourgeois ideology . . . Bolshevization is Marxism in action; it is dedication to the idea of the dictatorship of the proletariat, to the idea of Leninism.’8 As a renewal of the revolutionary process would inevitably follow upon a worsening economic crisis, political periodization was a mere reflection of economics: the only task left to the Communist parties in periods of stabilization was to accumulate forces around a wholly classist and ‘rupturist’ identity which, when the crisis arrived, would open the way to a new revolutionary initiative. (Characteristically, the ‘united front’ policy was reinterpreted as a united front from below and as an opportunity to expose the social democratic leaders.) Under these conditions a manipulative approach to other social and political forces could not fail to gain ascendancy.

The break with this reductionist and manipulative conception - or the beginnings of a break, as it has never been overcome in the communist tradition - was linked to the experience of fascism in Europe and the cycle of anti-colonial revolutions. In the first casethe crisis of the liberal-democratic State, and the emergence of radical-popular ideologies of the Right, challenged the conception of democratic rights and freedoms as ‘bourgeois’ by nature; and, at the same time, the anti-fascist struggle created a popular and democratic mass subjectivity which could potentially be fused with a socialist identity. In the terms of our earlier analysis, the link uniting the hegemonized task to its ‘natural’ class agent began to dissolve, and it became possible to fuse that task with the identity of the hegemonic class. In this new perspective, hegemony was understood as the democractic reconstruction of the nation around a new class core. This tendency would later be reinforced by the varied experiences of national resistance against the Nazi occupation. But the change in communist policy started with Dimitrov’s report to the Seventh Congress of the Comintern, where the Third Period line of ‘class against class’ was formally abandoned and the policy of the popular fronts first introduced.4 While implicitly retaining the notion of hegemony as a merely external alliance of classes, the new strategy conceived democracy as a common ground which was not open to exclusive absorption by any one social sector. Under these conditions, it became more and more difficult to maintain a strict separation between hegemonic tasks and class identity. A number of formulas - ranging from Mao’s ‘new democracy’ to Togliatti’s ‘progressive democracy’ and ‘national tasks of the working class’ - attempted to locate themselves on a terrain that was difficult to define theoretically within Marxist parameters, since the ‘popular’ and the ‘democratic’ were tangible realities at the level of the mass struggle but could not be ascribed to a strict class belonging. Revolutions in the peripheral world which took place under a communist leadership present us with a similar phenomenon: from China to Vietnam or Cuba, the popular mass identity was other and broader than class identity. The structural split between ‘masses’ and ‘class’, which we saw insinuating itself from the very beginning of the Leninist tradition, here produced the totality of its effects.

At this point, communist discourse was confronted by a pair of crucial problems. How should one characterize that plurality of antagonisms emerging on a mass terrain different from that of classes? And how could the hegemonic force retain a strictly proletarian character, once it had incorporated the democratic demands of the masses in its own identity? The main response to the first question was to implement a set of discursive strategics whereby the relationship established between classes went beyond their specifically class character, while formally remaining on a classist terrain. Consider, for example, the use of enumeration in communist discourses. To enumerate is never an innocent operation; it involves major displacements of meaning. Communist enumeration occurs within a dichotomic space that establishes the antagonism between dominant and popular sectors; and the identity of both is constructed on the basis of enumerating their constitutive class sectors. On the side of the popular sectors, for example, would be included: the working class, the peasantry, the petty bourgeoisie, progressive fractions of the national bourgeoisie, etc. This enumeration, however, does not merely affirm the separate and literal presence of certain classes or class fractions at the popular pole; it also asserts their equivalence in the common confrontation with the dominant pole. A relation of equivalence is not a relation of identity among objects. Equivalence is never tautological, as the substitutability it establishes among certain objects is only valid for determinate positions within a given structural context. In this sense, equivalence displaces the identity which makes it possible, from the objects themselves to the contexts of their appearance or presence. This, however, means that in the relation of equivalence the identity of the object is split: on the one hand, it maintains its own ‘literal’ sense; on the other, it symbolizes the contextual position for which it is a substitutable element. This is exactly what occurs in the communist enumeration: from a strictly classist point of view, there is no identity whatsoever among the sectors of the popular pole, given that each one has differentiated and even antagonistic interests; yet, the relation of equivalence established among them, in the context of their opposition to the dominant pole, constructs a ‘popular’ discursive position that is irreducible to class positions. In the Marxist discourse of the Second International, there were no equivalential enumerations. For Kautsky, each class sector occupied a specific differential position within the logic of capitalist development; one of the constitutive characteristics of Marxist discourse had been, precisely, the dissolution of the ‘people’ as an amorphous and imprecise category, and the reduction of every antagonism to a class confrontation which exhausted itself in its own literality, without any equivalential dimension. As to the discourse of ‘combined and uneven development’, we have seen that the dislocation of stages and the hegemonic recompositions were merely thought of as a more complex movement among classes, whose factual character made room for a narrative of exceptionalities but not for a conceptualization of specificities. In Rosa Luxemburg we come closer to a symbolic-equivalential split which subverts the literal sense of each concrete struggle; but as we saw, her attribution of a necessary class character to the resulting social agent places a rigid limit on the expansive logic of equivalences. Only in the enumerative practices of the popular fronts period does the ‘people’ - that agent central to the political and social struggles of the nineteenth century - re-emerge, timidly at first, in the field of Marxist discursivity.

From what we have said, it is clear that the condition for the emergence of the ‘people’ as a political agent in communist discourse has been the relation of equivalence which splits the identity of classes and thereby constitutes a new type of polarization. Now, this process takes place entirely within the field of the hegemonic practices. Communist enumeration is not the confirmation of a de facto situation, but has a performative character. The unity of an ensemble of sectors is not a datum: it is a project to be built politically. The hegemonization of such an ensemble does not, therefore, involve a simple conjunctural or momentary agreement; it has to build a structurally new relation, different from class relations. This shows that the concept of ‘class alliance’ is as inadequate to characterize a hegemonic relation as the mere listing of bricks would be to describe a building. Nevertheless, given its internal logic, the relation of equivalence cannot display its presence simply through the incidental substitutability of its terms; it must give rise to a general equivalent in which the relation as such crystallizes symbolically. It is at this point, in the political case we are examining, that national-popular or popular-democratic symbols emerge to constitute subject positions different from those of class; the hegemonic relation then definitively loses its factual and episodic character, becoming instead a stable part of every politico-discursive formation. In this sense Mao’s analyses of contradiction - despite their near-to-zero philosophical value - do have the great merit of presenting the terrain of social struggles as a proliferation of contradictions, not all of them referring back to the class principle.

The other series of problems facing communist discourse concerned the question of how to maintain the class identity of the hegemonic sector. Formulated in its most general terms, the issue is the following: if in the new conception the hegemonic relation transforms the identity of the hegemonic sector, and if the condition of social struggles in the imperialist era entails that these occur in an increasingly complex terrain dominated by recomposing practices, does it not follow that the class identity of the hegemonic subjects is put into question? Up to what point can we continue to refer to a class core as the articulating principle of the various subject positions? Two answers - or rather, two ways of arriving at an answer - are possible here. And in the end they depend on the two conceptions of hegemony - democratic and authoritarian - that we described earlier. For one of them, characterizing most of the communist tradition, the solution is found in an ad nauseam extension of the model of representation. Each instance is the representation of another, until a final class core is reached which supposedly gives meaning to the whole series**.** This response evidently denies all opacity and density to political relations, which are a bare stage on which characters constituted beyond them - the classes - wage their struggle. Furthermore, the class represented in this way cannot but be the class ‘for itself’, the finalist perspective incarnated in the ‘scientific’ cosmovision of the party; that is, the ontologically privileged agent. In this way, all concrete problems concerning the practice of representation are simply eliminated. The other response accepts the structural diversity of the relations in which social agents are immersed, and replaces the principle of representation with that of articulation. Unity between these agents is then not the expression of a common underlying essence but the result of political construction and struggle. If the working class, as a hegemonic agent, manages to articulate around itself a number of democratic demands and struggles, this is due not to any a priori structural privilege, but to a political initiative on the part of the class. Thus, the hegemonic subject is a class subject only in the sense that, on the basis of class positions, a certain hegemonic formation is practically articulated; but, in that case we are dealing with concrete workers and not with the entelechy constituted by their ‘historical interests’. In the world of the Third International, there was only one thinker in whom the notion of politics and hegemony as articulation found - with all its ambiguities and limitations - a theoretically mature expression. We are, of course, referring to Antonio Gramsci.

#### Authoritarian revolutionary politics creates atrocities, economic and ecological disaster.

Fred **HALLIDAY** IR @ London School of Economics **‘3** “Finding the Revolutionary in Revolution” in *The Future of Revolutions* ed. John Foran p 306-309

A second issue central to discussion of revolution today is that of the historic legacy of revolutions. Writers on revolution like to invoke Marx's observation about the weight of past generations lying on the minds of the present; it has been often stated that all revolutions invoke symbols and claims derived from the past, real or imagined. The revolutionaries of the twentieth century all looked, in some degree, backwards: Lenin and Trotsky to 1789, Mao and Ho to I9I7, Castro to the 1890s, Khomeini to the seventh century. The present discussion of revolution seems, at first sight, not to do this. Political sociologists do look at earlier revolutions, but this is without practical import. Discussion of the possibility of change, particularly that linked to the anti-globalization movement, seems to be curiously ahistorical. The price of this is, however, that not only is inspiration from the past muted but, equally, lessons are not learnt. Here something curious seems to have happened since the collapse of communism: the amnesia of neoliberal discussion, which consigns all that was associated with the communist experiment to the dustbin, seems to be replicated in the case of the radical movements of today. But to do this is questionable. In this latter respect, there are dangers, of an amnesia that is long on enthusiasm but short on responsibility and realism. For the fact is that the history of revolution in modern times is one not only of resistance, heroism and idealism, but also of terrible suffering and human disaster, of chaos and incompetence under the guise of revolutionary transformation, of the distortion of the finest ideals by corrupt and murderous leaders, and of the creation of societies that are far more oppressive and inefficient than those they seek to overthrow. The anti-globalization movement makes much of revolutionary internationalism: tills is not some benign panacea, but a complex, often abused, transnational practice (Halliday I999). All of this entails confronting something that revolutionaries have always assumed but too often failed to discuss: the ethics of revolution. Denunciation of the given and invocations of an ideal other are not enough (Geras 1989). To grasp this involves a shift beyond the political sociology of revolutions, an academic pursuit that focuses in large measure on the incidence of revolutions, to an analysis of the consequences and longerterm records of revolutionary states. In the course of recent years, in writing my own work on revolutions, I have had reason to visit a number of cities that had served as the centers of world revolution and, if not revolution, anti-imperialist radicalism: Beijing, Havana, Tripoli, Tehran. These were the culminations of upheavals that had produced revolutionary regimes by some strange numerical consistency in, respectively, I949, I959, I969, I979· In every case, one could still discern the outlines of the original revolutionary project: a rejection of exploitation, foreign and domestic, a comnlitment to the transformation of society, internationalist support in rhetoric and deed for those resisting oppression elsewhere. But in the 1990S this had all faded: these were not the wave of the future. Whatever else, it could not be said that the initial revolutionary project was in good shape: few in these countries now believed in the ideological project that had initiated the revolution; corruption and inefficiency were widespread; there was a pervasive desire for change, towards a more open, liberal, society; the initial internationalist appeals had faded. Revolution had, in effect, become tired. It was indeed capitalism, not revolutionary socialism and third-worldism, which in the 1990S formed the global vision of the future. This haphazard and impressionistic response has, however, to be compounded by a reflection on the overall legacy of the century of revolutions: neither form of amnesia - counterrevolutionary or revolutionary - is acceptable. Indeed, amnesia invites the repetition of another common saying with regard to revolutions, that those who ignore history are doomed to repeat it. Here perhaps is one of the most worrying aspects of the contemporary radical movement, be it in its national or internationalist forms: the failure to reflect, critically, on the past record of revolutionary movements. This pertains to models of alternative political and social orders. It pertains to the dangers inherent in any utopian, radicalized, mass movement that lacks clear forms of authority and decision-making. It also involves the espousal, spirited but onlinous, of alternative social orders that could work only if imposed by an authoritarian state**.** A pertinent contemporary example is that of radical environmentalism: the program of de-industrialization, and restricted consumption and travel, entailed by such ideas could only be established, and maintained, by a coercive state. In the international sphere, the simple invocation of solidarity may too often conceal interests of power, and manipulation. In the days of authoritarian Communist Parties, but equally in that of national and communal movements today, unconditional solidarity with repressive organizations may be at odds with any commitment to emancipatory values. Such a critical reflection has to apply, too, to the individuals often invoked for contemporary purposes: Lenin was a visionary, but also a cruel, pompous bigot; Che was a man of heroism and solidarity, but his econonlic programs were a disaster and his austere romanticism at times led to cruelty; Mao freed a quarter of mankind from imperialism, but also repeatedly plunged his society into barbarous conflict and socialexperimentation; Khomeini overthrew the Shah, but his social and political program was reactionary and repressive. A similar pause in romanticization might be applicable to some of the supposed components of the anti-globalization front today: few might defend Saddam Hussein, Kim Jong-il or Ayatollah Khamenei, but there is perhaps too little questioning of the commitment to emancipatory values of the PKK in Turkey, Sendero Luminoso, the FARC in Colombia, the Chechen rebels, to name but some. The Zapatista movement has become for many an icon of hope: but, as contributors to this volume make clear, it is not always itself a model of democratic practice. More importantly, one has to ask if this is the most important experience in the Latin America of the I990S to study: it is part of, but only one part of, a broader crisis of the authoritarian PRI regime that beset Mexico and resulted in the rise on the one hand of the PRD and on the other of the election of Fox in 2000. An open assessment of challenges to authoritarian, and neoliberal, policies in Latin America in the I990S would also examine democratization in Brazil and Chile, and the experience of social movements, be they of women, workers or indigenous peoples, who engaged with reformist states. This need for a critical retrospective on the historical legacy of revolutions is, however, linked to another, perhaps even more pressing, issue, one that pervades the pages of this book, namely the relation of revolution to liberal democracy as a whole. Several contributors point out that where liberal democracy is established revolution is off the agenda. But this reflection may be taken further to ask the question of whether, faced with the alternative, one or other outcome is preferable. The implication of much 'revolutionary' writing over the past century has been that liberal democracy is to be denounced, and those who engage with and in it are reformists, dupes, or, in older language, 'class traitors'. Such a view lives on, in some of the contributions to this book, as in parts of the left. Yet this contrast of reform with revolution is not some eternal polarity. It too needs to be set in historical context, and seen for what it is, a product of the particular context of the twentieth century, starting with the split between the moderate and revolutionary factions of the socialist movement in I9I4. The costs of this division are evident enough, and it would be desirable, in the aftermath of the collapse of the revolutionary socialist models, to re-examine it (Therborn I989). Part of this re-examination would involve a questioning of the automatic antinomy of reform and revolution present in much contemporary and recent writing, and of the assumed contradictory relation of revolutionary ideas to those of another critical, and internationalist, trend produced by modernity: liberalism. This has immediate implications for the discussion in this book. In particular, it relates to an issue that is widely present in contemporary academic and political discussion, but that writers on revolution tend to avoid, namely the question of rights. The language of rights was long denounced by the left, and its revolutionary part, as a bourgeois myth, except where it was for tactical reasons deemed pertinent to use it, as with regard to workers' rights, or the right of nations to selfdetermination. The record of the revolutionary tradition, once it came to power, is a very mixed one: a strong commitment to certain social and economic rights, whose abolition by neoliberal policies many in the former Communist states regret; and a sustained, cruel and dogmatic denial of political rights, collective and individual. Yet the program of rights embodied in national, regional and international codes is, as much as any flamboyant radicalism, both a critique and a program that confronts the contemporary world. Faced with the record of the Communist tradition on rights on the one hand, and the aspirations of liberalism on the other, this disdain for rights, and the related adherence to a denunciation of reformism and liberalism, should be questioned. Invocations of a romanticized I968, of the nicer cases of armed struggle, or of Seattle may be fine for mobilization: they are not a serious answer to the problems of the contemporary world.

#### Communist crisis transition destroys democracy – at best, results in ecoauthoritarianism.

Strunz and Bartkowski 18 – Sebastian Strunz is a professor at the Helmholtz Center for the Environment. Bartosz Bartkowski works at the Department of Economics of the Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research (UFZ) in Leipzig, Germany. He has a PhD degree in economics from Martin Luther University. (Degrowth, the project of modernity, and liberal democracy, Journal of Cleaner Production (2018), doi: 10.1016/j.jclepro. 2018.06.148)//gcd

Given the co-evolution of technological and social structures, it seems straightforward that a strong overall disenchantment with modernity often aligns with a rejection of existing liberal democracies. To be sure, most of the radical critiques presumably aim to preserve and nurture liberal values such as free speech, freedom of religion and sexual orientation. Yet, we would like to point out a crucial risk here: the value foundation of liberal democracy cannot be taken for granted – doing so might rather endanger these values. In this sense, radical approaches to degrowth run the risk of undermining and eventually losing in their quest for “true”, “unalienated”, “reembedded”, free, democratic society those freedom-guaranteeing institutions that are already in place. Indeed, it has been argued that modern mindsets, institutions and technologies are inextricably linked: “capitalism, psychological individuation and liberalism emerged together, remain interwoven and mutually dependent in complex ways, and depend absolutely on a continually expanding throughput of energy” (Quilley 2013: 263). By implication, it would be “highly questionable” whether liberal “social and institutional forms would survive the transition to a low-energy regime” (279; see also Bailey 2015). This points to the risk of inadvertently sacrificing liberal values. Note that argumentative patterns such as “true democracy”, “real democracy” vs. “technofascism” and “so-called democratic countries” where people live “at the mercy of immense and impersonal powers” share a structural affinity (i.e. not necessarily substantial conceptual agreement) with some of the more radical modernity critiques sketched in Section 2 (e.g. Heidegger’s juxtaposition of authenticity as opposed to modern life’s in-authenticity). The problem is that if existentialist vocabulary (truth, authenticity) enters the political domain, this jeopardizes political freedoms. Such vocabulary lends itself to engender disdain for all existing institutions and, in consequence, to justify violent means in order to overthrow democracies-in-name-only. In fact, the basic values of liberal democracy have been explicitly questioned in the name of preventing ecological disaster (Heilbroner 1974, Ophuls 1977; see also the critical analysis of eco-authoritarianism in Shahar 2015). Finally, consider that someone as Illich, who clearly championed an anti-authoritarian position, nevertheless proposed Maoist China as a possible example of a society that could be restructured along convivial lines (Illich 1975: 29). Thus he spectre of authoritarianism creeping in through the back door should not be lightly dismissed. Again, we presume that the core values of liberal democracy are cherished by a majority of degrowthists. We just point to the fundamental risk that these liberal values be unintentionally abandoned. Imagine this scenario: disappointment with existing institutions leads to welcoming institutional breakdown in the hope of rebuilding a more just society out of the debris, whereupon “true democracy” fails to materialize and the values of liberal cosmopolitanism are sacrificed somewhere along the way.

#### Withdrawal from cap is impossible. The alternative is more easily coopted and ignores exclusion for those who can’t leave conventional markets.

David **GOODMAN** Environmental Studies @ UCSC **AND** Michael **GOODMAN** Geography @ King’s (London) **‘7** “Localism, Livelihoods and the ‘Post-Organic’” in *Alternative Food Geographies: Representation and Practice* eds Maye Kneafsey and Holloway p. 28-29

In envisioning such spaces, in uneasy coexistence with the industrial food system, localist narratives are liberally seeded with notions of 'secession', interstitial growth, disengagement and, what Kloppenhurg a al. (1996) term, the 'principle of succession', This "finds expression in a strategy of 'slowly moving over' from the food system to the foodshed" (Kloppenburg et a/. 1996: 38; cf. also Hendrickson and Heffernan 2002).

In a recent paper, DuPuis and Goodman (2005: 359) observe that such "normative localism places a set of pure, conflict-free local values and local knowledges in resistance to anomie and contradictory capitalist forces". However, this purified, normative localism erases the polities of the local and consequently fails to acknowledge that contested issues of distributive justice, human rights and identity can arise in these idealised, insulated spaces. DuPuis and Goodman (2005) accordingly propose a 'reflexive local- ism' in which local initiatives are negotiated democratically in an open local politics. A 'reflexive localism' would draw attention to the social relations and the polities of power which are submerged in the vague notions of 'sustainable local development' and 'local control': by and for whom? Such vagueness means that they are open to appropriation and interpretation by political forces of very different hues. A reflexive approach also reinforces a key proposition of livelihoods research, which would recog- nise the 'differential (or adverse) incorporation' of some social classes into the market economy, civil society and the state (Murray 2001; Du Toit 2004). Social classes or strata are differentially positioned to benefit from 'sustainable local development', but these distributive effects are lost in the discursive trappings of normative localism. Sim- ilarly, consumers who are unable to frequent farmers' markets, box schemes (CSAs) or local food cooperatives do not experience the non-market benefits of place-making and 'commensal community'.

From a wider perspective, activist narratives of a normative localism embedded in a secessionist moral economy and interstitial spaces imply that scale construction at the local level is relatively unproblematic. This voluntaristic premise neglects potentially negative outcomes of the dynamic, contested interactions between local forms of soeio- spatial organisation and transloeal actors and institutions. That is, the local is framed as a social space where new economic forms and institutions incorporating ethical norms are allowed to grow and flourish. Again, the reification of the local obscures the contested soeio-spatial processes involved in its construction and the practicalities of secession and local control. Not the least of these challenges to local economic forms is the danger of imitation and co-optation by mainstream corporate actors (Goodman 2004).

#### Reformism avoids worst forms of capitalism – harnesses productive power.

Sheri **BERMAN** Poli Sci @ Barnard **’11** “What Marx Forgot” *Dissent* Fall p. 98-99

Yet Marx and his oeuvre had one glaring gap—politics. In Hobsbawm’s words, “There is no analogous systematic theoretical effort [to Marx’s economic, historical or sociological work] about politics. His writing in this field takes the form, almost entirely, of journalism, inquests on the immediate political past, contributions to discussion within the movement, and private letters.” To use a Marxist expression, this weakness or omission is no accident: it stems from the essential nature of Marxism and reveals something critically important about its failings as a doctrine, ideology, and guide to history. And it also reveals something about the failings of those, like Hobsbawm, who refused to abandon Marxism during the course of the twentieth century. Marx neglected politics because he did not consider it important. For Marx, politics was subordinated to economics:

its nature and forms were determined by the larger economic context in which they were embedded. Politics, he felt, was not an independent but a dependent variable; it did not shape historical development but was shaped by it. Since the inevitable triumph of socialism would have little to do with political effort and everything to do with economic development and the changes in society it wrought, why waste time analyzing politics? Marx also found politics distasteful. Politics in the capitalist era, he and Engels believed, was merely the arena in which class conflict played itself out, the sphere in which the dominant class (the bourgeoisie) exerted its power over the proletariat. With the transition to socialism, the need for domination would disappear and the need for a state, or politics more generally, diminish. As a result, they provided “no concrete guidance” on political issues to their followers, no “strategic or tactical instruction” on how socialists should maneuver in the political sphere. Hobsbawm recognizes that this became a major problem over time. Because capitalism did not in fact collapse and socialism did not triumph effortlessly, socialists found themselves in a pickle by the late nineteenth century. Should they sit around and wait, hoping that somehow the longed-for transition would nonetheless miraculously occur? Or should they act, figuring out some other way to try to bend history to their will? As Lenin put it, what was to be done? Lenin’s own answer was to try to push history forward through the efforts of a revolutionary vanguard able and willing to use whatever means necessary to realize the desired outcomes. Perhaps because the awful consequences of Lenin’s attempt to deal with this failing of Marxism are now clear to all, Hobsbawm focuses instead on another attempt to fill Marxism’s political hole, that offered by Antonio Gramsci. Hobsbawm argues that Gramsci “pioneered a Marxist theory of politics” and, unlike the founders, drew “attention to a crucial aspect of the construction of socialism as well as the winning of socialism.” Gramsci recognized that bourgeois domination was not maintained only directly, through repression, but also indirectly, through the construction of cultural hegemony. Marxist intellectuals, he argued, needed to uncover the nature and workings of this cultural hegemony and help create a proletarian version to counter and replace it. It is hardly surprising that such views have appealed to intellectuals over the years, and the concept of cultural hegemony is indeed a contribution to the understanding of methods of domination. Still, it is not at all clear that Gramsci can in any significant way really be said to have “changed the world”: he inspired no major political movement, and it is hard to see, practically, what his impact has been on the lives of those suffering from the injustices of capitalism. The fact that Gramsci is where Hobsbawm (and his Marxism) ends up shows the limits of his own approach. But Lenin and Gramsci, of course, were not the only socialists to put forward solutions for Marxism’s political problem, nor even the most successful. That honor belongs to a group of theorists, activists, and politicians Hobsbawm essentially ignores—those who moved past Marxism to create a new ideological movement, one that would later come to be called social democracy. During the late nineteenth century, one group of Marxist revisionists, the most famous of whom was Eduard Bernstein, began to recognize that Marx’s predictions about the inevitable collapse of capitalism were untrue and that the capitalist system was actually becoming increasingly complex and adaptable. They began to argue that the correct role for socialist parties was to reform it, using the power of existing democratic states. In short, they agreed with Lenin that a political path to a better world was necessary, but unlike him they believed this path could and should be a democratic one—and that it was possible to eliminate capitalism’s worst effects while harnessing its best ones. Hobsbawm largely ignores social democracy, except to proclaim its exhaustion and death in recent decades. But it was precisely the social democratic movement that ultimately emerged from the pioneering efforts of Bernstein and his colleagues that has been the most important and durable legacy of the Marxist tradition. The founders of social democracy began as Marxists, but left the fold when its flaws and lacunae became too glaring to paper over—something Lenin, Gramsci, and Hobsbawm himself could never bring themselves to do. The result of this apostasy was the creation in the interwar years, and the global spread after 1945, of a new politico-economic order in the advanced industrial world, one that reshaped the relationship between states, markets and society. In social democracies, states committed themselves to protecting their citizens from the worst excesses of capitalism and to reining in market forces in a wide variety of ways, even as they continued to reap many of capitalism’s enormous benefits. The new order that emerged after 1945 helped bring an end to the class conflict and social divisions that had plagued the modern era since the onset of capitalism and helped doom previous democratic experiments. It also generated levels of sustained growth, prosperity, and social equity greater than any the world had previously experienced. The social democratic postwar order, in other words, attempted, and to a large degree succeeded, in reconciling the two “halves” of capitalism that Marx had begun analyzing a century before. This order has certainly frayed in recent decades. But no serious person advocates a return to the pre-social-democratic past—a world of true laissez-faire—or, at least in the short to mid term, a post-capitalist future. Instead, what is needed today is a revitalized social democratic model, one based upon recognition that capitalism is the best way of producing the wealth and technological progress all human beings crave, but the equally important recognition that if left alone, capitalism will produce untold suffering and dislocation. It must be based, in other words, upon the fundamentally Marxist recognition that capitalism’s productive and destructive tendencies are inextricably intertwined, and the democratic revisionists’ conviction that sensible political activism can master both aspects of the capitalist bequest. Because his Marxist sympathies remain intact, Hobsbawm neither recognizes nor appreciates how much the social democratic break with Marxism produced. Without it, we are left with the view that Marxism’s greatest political champions were figures such as Lenin and Gramsci. I imagine most readers of Dissent—let alone the multitudinous beneficiaries of the advanced industrial world’s unprecedented recent decades of peace, prosperity, and democracy—would prefer to follow the likes of Eduard Bernstein.

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#### Growth accelerates socio-ecological stability – interconnection increases cosmopolitan humanism and AGI will enlighten us.

**Karlsson 18** – Associate Professor, Department of Political Science, Umeå University  (Rasmus, The high-energy planet, Global Change, Peace & Security, DOI: 10.1080/14781158.2018.1428946 2018)//\*cd

In retrospect, social democracy’s greatest achievement was not that it managed to strike an appropriate balance between equality and economic growth but that it realized that greater equality, made possible through broad social investments, was in fact the key to sustained economic growth. Similarly, ecomodernism is not so much about finding some ideal balance between environmental protection and material well-being, that golden ratio often referred to as ‘sustainable development’, but rather about highlighting that **only through rapidly** **accelerating** global growth – essentially a renewed modernity – **will** it be possible to harness the technologies necessary to **safely navigate the Anthropocene**. Part of this has to do with restoring the notion of progress as a crucial category for talking about change, autonomy or even drawing basic qualitative distinctions.27 Only by acknowledging that more **people** today live longer, healthier and richer lives **than** at **any time** in human history is it possible to offer a vision of what future progress would look like. In this sense, the work of people like Hans Rosling or Max Roser has b**een crucial for challenging the litany of doom and decline that much of the contemporary Left has come to take as almost axiomatic.**At the same time, it is important to recognize that projecting a positive vision of the future is always going to be more existentially demanding than simply lamenting the loss of a romanticized past.28 Likewise, dreaming of some kind of temporal **rupture** or the downfall of global capitalism may seem more tempting than taking active political responsibility for a future in which **human civilization** simply continues to hum on. This is especially so since a more equal and open world will require ever greater measures of reflexivity, moral imagination and self-actualization on behalf of everyone, including those who are currently privileged by national borders and unfair terms of trade. At the same time, the World **Value Survey** has continuously documented a broad global trend away from traditional ‘survival’ values towards secular-**rational** emancipative values and self-expression.29 Thus, an optimistic reading of history would suggest that **the rise of** Trump and right-wing populism should not so much be seen as a **symbol of the future** as a last **desperate attempt to defend** old patterns of **domination and parochialism**. Nevertheless, despite the enormous technological development that has taken place over the last centuries, it is still common to hear that it is simply not physically possible to imagine a future of universal affluence,30 at least not one that simultaneously protects or even restores the natural world. Sometimes, such technological pessimism is matched by extreme measures of optimism concerning the prospects of behavioural change. Other times, it is part of a more general apocalyptic mind-set which suggests that all that humanity can do at this stage is to ‘hunker down’ 31 or even ‘learning to die as a civilization’ 32. According to Nick Srnicek and Alex Williams: A folk-political sentiment has manifested itself in both radical horizontalist and more moderate localist movements, yet similar intuitions underpin a broad range of the contemporary left. Across these groups, a series of judgements are widely accepted: small is beautiful, the local is ethical, simpler is better, permanence is oppressive, progress is over33 Contrary to such localism and defeatism, ecomodernists would argue that the emerging global scale in fact represents humanity’s greatest hope. Not only have **specialization** and international trade made human societies far more resilient than in the past,34 **accelerating** integration and automation mean that more and more people can work on possible **solutions**. As societies become richer, they become increasingly able to finance breakthrough technological innovation, as for instance illustrated by China’s research into traveling-wave reactors. More generally, progress on intelligent **machine labour** may eventually **lead to** a fundamentally different and far more **sustainable socio-ecological regime**.35 Yet, for now, all such advances remain hypothetical and contingent on sustained public funding over many decades. However, unlike traditional environmentalism which depends on people everywhere accepting the existence of planetary limits and restricting their material wants accordingly, an **ecomodern future** could potentially **be realized through** the committed **leadership of a few** environmentally conscious countries. For this to happen, it is however crucial that these countries take the issue of global scalability seriously.