Abstract

Through a synthesis of Antonio Gramsci and Pierre Bourdieu’s ideas the aim of this work is to reveal how, in establishing the existing cultural hegemony, the term ‘democracy’ has been hijacked, becoming an instrument of political subjugation rather than a condition for human emancipation. It will be argued that it is necessary to rethink political discourse by taking up democracy as a central guiding political concept, thereby reviving its original meaning.

It will be necessary to first highlight the crisis in Australia’s liberal democracy where, on a whole range of issues, conditions necessary for democracy have been systematically undermined. By analysing the ideas and political methods of those hostile to democracy, it will be argued that ironically, they have been more successful at implementing Gramsci’s political strategy of a war of position. This was achieved through, to use Bourdieu’s terminology, a manipulation of capital distribution, the structural dynamics of fields and the habitus of political agents, leading to the displacement of democracy by corporatocracy.

Yet if democracy were to be reclaimed and upheld, a counter war of position could be effectively launched. But it will be necessary to provide reasons for reclaiming democracy on philosophical grounds as well as strategic. The question of why organising social relations democratically rather than through an oligarchy will be raised and explored.

However, to defend democracy it is not enough to show its desirability. It will also be necessary to confront a number of serious difficulties that presently
exist in Australian politics. Global capitalism has shifted the balance of power away from labour, as transnational corporations break free of constraints set by national governments. To add to the complications, social divisions are multiplying and widening, making it more difficult to find common ground for political unity among the dominated.

In attacking all attempts at theoretical cohesion, postmodernism has effectively eliminated the intellectual basis for opposing corporatocracy. Moreover, advocates on the left of Australian politics share the same assumptions as their opponents, despite claiming to be at the cutting edge of radical politics. This has unwittingly helped legitimise scepticism towards grand narratives of emancipation. As an ideal to focus the counter-hegemonic struggle against corporatocracy, democracy could also facilitate unity while avoiding dogmatism and totalitarianism.
Acknowledgements

There are many people that I would like to acknowledge as having played an important role in assisting and inspiring me throughout my work on this thesis.

My academic supervisors Dr Arran Gare and Dr Peter Love provided much time and energy with their suggestions on research and the structure of my ideas and how to expand on them.

Editor, proof-reader, indexer and writer Helen Moore who shares a similar academic background in Philosophy, History, English and Media, has been of great assistance in improving my grammar, spelling and ensuring consistency in the style of my expression, footnotes and bibliography. To Helen I am most grateful.

I wish to express thanks to my family. To my mother Marcia, sisters Jillian and Nichole and brother-in-law Anthony, much thanks for all your love and support, from help with administrative tasks, technical support, and emotional reassurance along the way.

I dedicate this thesis to my late father Robert Gordon Garvey 1944-2010 who always had time for me, and worked so hard to provide me with an education that allowed me to produce this thesis.
Declaration

The following examinable outcome:

- contains no material which has been accepted for the award to the candidate of any other degree or diploma, except where due reference is made in the text of the examinable outcome;

- to the best of the candidate's knowledge contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text of the examinable outcome; and

- where the work is based on joint research or publications, discloses the relative contributions of the respective workers or authors.

Signed:________________________________________

Date:____________________________
Contents

Abstract i

Acknowledgements iii

Declaration iv

Contents v

Introduction 1

Chapter 1: The Collapse of Democracy in Australia 6
  Democracy’s Character 6
  The Intentional Undermining of Democracy 30
  Alienation in Australian Politics 53

Chapter 2: The Political Offensive of the New Right 65
  Social Liberalism in Australia 66
  The Emergence of the New Right 72
  The New Right’s Influence on Policy 90

Chapter 3: The Imposition of Consent and Its Perversion of Democracy 102
  What is Cultural Hegemony? 103
  Bourdieu as an Answer to the Limitations of Marxism 116
  Consequences for Democracy 131
Chapter 4: Democracy Reframed as a Master Discourse 139
  Legitimacy of Social Change 141
  Rationality and the Merits of Democracy 148
  Reframing the Political Agenda 154
  Decision-making for the Long Term 161
  Outstanding Issues Confronting Democracy 168

Chapter 5: Emergent Challenges to the Struggle for Democracy 188
  Globalisation: Tipping the Balance on Class 188
  The Proliferation of Difference 201
  Reclaiming Nationalism 227
  Postmodernity and ‘Progress’ 235
  Problematic Assumptions of the Political ‘Left’ 248

Chapter 6: Conclusion 265

Bibliography 274
Introduction

In developing the ideas of Antonio Gramsci and Pierre Bourdieu, the general aim of this thesis is to demonstrate how the term ‘democracy’ has been illegitimately seized and used to undermine genuine democracy within Australian politics. Only through recovering and reviving democracy’s more traditional meaning and deploying it into everyday political discourse will Australians develop the conceptual means to re-orient political affairs in a manner that is conducive to the cultivation of humanity’s powers.

But to begin with, it is necessary to distinguish ‘cultural hegemony’ from Gramsci’s use of the term ‘ideological hegemony’. Ideology (a Marxist notion) connotes that ideas historically have been nothing but psychological weapons of the ruling classes, used to maintain social control of an exploited majority. In emphasising culture instead, this leaves open the idea that the development of common beliefs, norms and values can be done freely, openly and democratically for the common wellbeing of all. As such the establishment of an alternative cultural hegemony may not necessarily always be exploitative. Nevertheless, it will be argued that the cultural hegemony that has been established and maintained within Australia over the past three and a half decades has been overwhelmingly detrimental.

To illustrate this, a strong notion of what democracy is and what it entails will be presented. Contrary to popular belief, the first experiments with democratic institutions came from the Middle East and were later transferred to ancient

1 See Marx, Karl; Engels, F. The German Ideology, (ed) Arthur C.J., International Publishers, New York, 1977, p. 64. Yet since each ruling class achieves its rule on a broader basis of support than the previous class (p. 66) ideology will no longer be reducible to manipulation, once all class divisions are abolished.
Greece. It was the Athenians, however, who developed the political concept of democracy. To resolve democracy’s limitations, it will be necessary to draw upon the ideas of later thinkers. Rousseau’s notion of the ‘general will’ demonstrates how individual liberty could be reconciled with the pursuit of the common good. Hegel then illustrates how this common good could be facilitated by state intervention into civil society. However, it is necessary to draw upon Marx’s criticisms of Hegel to reveal how capitalist privilege undermines democratic deliberation. Addressing the limitations of these earlier thinkers, a Marxist notion of democracy will be upheld, arguing that it will require people overcoming their alienation from labour (and therefore in all spheres of human activity). Only through eliminating this alienation will democracy thrive, freeing humanity to realise its creative potential. The political importance of liberty to the aims of democracy will also be shown.

These ideas will then be contrasted to the idea of liberal democracy. To demonstrate its limitations within Australia, a number of policies that have attacked the conditions necessary for democratic decision-making will be examined. In addition, citizens’ attitudes towards politics will reveal a growing incidence of alienation, withdrawal and hostility towards ‘otherness’.

To understand in more detail what has brought about this systematic erosion of democracy, it is important to examine historically what led to this crisis. The influence that Hegel’s political philosophy had in Australia earlier in the twentieth century through the ideas of T.H. Green and his followers will be presented. In concerning itself with the common good, social liberalism attempted to resolve class antagonisms and, among other things, extend the rights of women. Despite some shortfalls, these policies placed Australian citizens in a better position to raise further democratic demands. With the rise
of political consciousness in the late 1960s and early 1970s, powerful interest groups within the business community began to organise in response. With the development of think tanks and public relations firms, the ideas of what is widely called the ‘New Right’ targeted not only influential politicians but also the broader public. In particular, the ‘organic intellectuals’ of the New Right – consisting of a pragmatic blend of neo-liberalism and neo-conservatism – managed to control the parameters of what could be discussed. This made it increasingly difficult for opponents to convey to the public their own political ideas.

It will therefore be argued that proponents from the New Right have been successful in establishing and reinforcing a cultural hegemony, which has been lucrative for the interests of the corporatocracy. Yet in reaffirming the old Marxist thesis that ‘ideology’ favours and is controlled exclusively by the ruling class, it will nevertheless be necessary to expose some of the rigid limitations of ‘historical materialism’ and adopt a more subtle explanation of how cultural hegemony has developed. In this, the ideas of Pierre Bourdieu and his concepts of ‘capital’, ‘fields’ and ‘habitus’ will be introduced. Taking account of both structure and human agency, it will be shown that through the use of these concepts, policy has worked to concentrate power, influence and professional credibility, generating anti-democratic sentiments throughout the public. Hence the maintenance of cultural hegemony has entailed consciously undermining conditions for the democratic component of liberal democracy.

Considering this, it will be argued that the meaning of ‘democracy’ has become inverted to make citizens more compliant to their enslavement, derailing criticism of the existing global capitalist system. Yet it will be
suggested that the current crisis could be reversed if citizens were to recommit themselves to upholding democracy in its more authentic sense.

It will be argued that citizens opposed to the agenda of the New Right ought to use democracy strategically in reframing everyday political discourse. However, as crucial as this will be in launching a counter war of position, this approach should be considered as more than just a political manoeuvre to gain power. In the tradition of political philosophy the reason why democracy is superior to other methods of ordering social relations will be explored. In turn, it will be argued that the dominant political paradigm of the New Right has utterly failed humanity. It should therefore be replaced by a democracy that facilitates a more meaningful existence as human creative powers become their own to direct.

However, a number of serious problems remain for the case of democracy. Its revival may be strategic in assisting opposition to the New Right. It may also even be desirable in itself. However, this quest intends to help resolve a number of tricky dilemmas as well as serious problems facing Australian politics. Any democratic transition will face matters such as the grounds of self-defence, institutions, and to what degree the national economy would depend upon markets as opposed to a central plan. Moreover, the mobility of transnational corporations has undermined the political autonomy of national governments, shifting the balance of class forces to the advantage of the corporatocracy. Meanwhile, social inequalities and forms of exploitation are multiplying and increasing in complexity, making it more difficult to provide grounds for political solidarity. To counter this social atomisation in the presence of growing corporate power, the ideas of nationalism will be explored. Through uncovering how the idea of nationalism developed, it will
be argued that it is not inherently detrimental to the struggle for democracy. As such, a revised version of nationalism will need to be developed.

Another problem to address is that, although helpful in exposing the limitations of Western notions of ‘progress’, postmodern theorists have undermined the theoretical means to mount a credible opposition to the dominant political paradigm. It will therefore be necessary to demonstrate how the project of human emancipation can be reformed, taking into consideration the limitations of Western modernity.

To do so will require identifying and overcoming some of the political failures of the past. The beliefs and conduct of those claiming to be the most radical among the Left within Australia will be examined. Identifying some of the philosophical assumptions that, ironically, they share with opponents regarding human nature, rationality and progress, it will be argued that this has led to the Australian Far Left unwittingly legitimising the postmodernist scepticism towards narratives of emancipation. Intolerance towards intellectual differences furthermore discourages inquiry into these important philosophical questions. Therefore, the principle of intellectual freedom needs to be taken up and defended as an important condition for uprooting prejudices and assumptions, especially those of Western modernity.

To respond comprehensively to Australia’s political situation with the politics of democracy it will be necessary to combine the struggle for national autonomy (balanced by international justice) against the corporatocracy with a defence of the right to engage with narratives of emancipation.
Chapter 1

The Collapse of Democracy in Australia

To expose the ill effects of the current use of the word ‘democracy’, it is imperative to first offer a precise definition of the term. The validity of ‘liberal democracy’ as commonly understood will be compared with ideas about democracy tracing it back to the Ancient Greeks along with other pre-twentieth-century thinkers. With less public participation in decision-making, this ‘liberal democracy’ will be shown to be superficial and inadequate.

Following this, Australian government policies in industrial relations, education, media ownership, indigenous affairs and so forth, demonstrate how vulnerable liberal democracy is to authoritarian tendencies, eroding citizens’ political, social and economic means to participate within Australian political affairs.

Furthermore, Australians attitudes towards politics will demonstrate the negative repercussions current political practices have had upon the reasoning capacities of citizens. Overwhelmingly negative attitudes in relation to politics will reveal a growth in political alienation in Australian society, fostering indifference, fatalism, and anti-democratic sentiments.

Democracy’s Character

According to John Keane in Life and Death of Democracy, democracy did not originate from the ancient Athenians as is commonly understood. The institution of democratic assemblies emerged amongst other Greek city-states quite separately. In fact such assemblies had already existed five hundred years earlier amongst the Phoenician cities (in the current region of Israel, the
West Bank, Gaza, Lebanon and Syria) which had in turn been influenced by the people of Syria-Mesopotamia (living between the Tygris and Euphrates rivers) where these institutions first evolved.¹

The term ‘democracy’, derived from the Greek words ‘demos’ and ‘kratos’, means the people’s rule.² In other words it is ‘…government of the people, by the people, for the people.’³ The Solon reforms (594 BC), to the fall of Peisistratids (510 BC), and the battle of Plataia (479 BC), saw a greater inclusion of citizen voting rights (women, metics and slaves excluded), the introduction of courts with trial by jury, and direct rule by the Assembly of the people.⁴ Democracy thus implies that political power is distributed equally in the hands of all citizens within the body politic.

It is notable that it was most likely that only the most prosperous families – constituting only about a quarter of the population – had domestic servants. Thus, the common dismissal of Athenian democracy as being dependent upon slave labour was not justified. Considering that motions to grant rights to slaves were quashed by conservative forces, such a scenario never got a chance to be tested.⁵ Nevertheless, Athenian democracy fell far short of its ideal. Aside from restrictions on political participation, there were also imperial ambitions for greater influence over foreign states.⁶

---

² Theophanous, Andrew. Australian Democracy in Crisis: A Radical Approach to Australian Politics, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1980, p. 4
³ Lynch, Tony. ‘Understanding Democracy’ in Dissent, no. 37 Summer 2011/2012, p. 25
⁵ Ibid. pp. 12, 18–20.
It is commonly believed that following Ancient Greece, democratic institutions were eradicated, suddenly to spring up again in the republican city-states of Northern Spain and Italy during the twelfth century. Although as a political concept it remained dormant for over a millennia, a variety of institutions of representative democracy jostled with autocratic regimes in both the east and the west. In the first century BC the Roman Republic created public meetings known as *continones*. These bodies were delegated powers to convict or acquit, authorise laws and decide candidates for public office.\(^7\) In the east, between the eighth and thirteenth centuries, regions of Islam revived assemblies and created new institutions to decentralise political power, creating what is known today as civil society. From the seventh century onwards there were also calls for the open election of rulers.\(^8\)

Later the city-states of Italy and Spain appreciated the inventions of constitutions and representative assemblies. It created the first parliaments known then as *cortes*. As King John’s Magna Carta of 1215 instituted limits upon rulers and upheld the rule of law in England, parliaments spread out throughout the European continent during the thirteenth century. In some regions these managed to survive until they were consolidated by the French revolution.\(^9\)

Yet during this marathon transition towards representative democracy, parliaments held a modest role in political affairs. As John Keane outlines, other bodies and practices played a significant role in advancing inclusive decision making throughout this historical process. Christianity made a

\(^7\) Ibid. pp.126-7.
\(^8\) Ibid. pp.128, 133, 145.
number of important contributions. There was the establishment of church councils and procedural rules (*frequens*) that briefly restrained the papal system in the early fifteenth century.\(^\text{10}\) However, it was the protestant Calvinists, in the lowlands and highlands of Scotland, during the seventeenth century who most importantly developed the art of grassroots political campaigning. In the spiritual quest to convince people to pledge to the Covenant, they popularised practices such as holding limited terms in office, creating various representative councils, and the petitioning of government. With the invention of the printing press they also promoted the demand for universal literacy.\(^\text{11}\) Being a powerful catalyst for inclusive political organising of the oppressed these noble Scots developed the indispensable weapons of collective action, orderly civil disobedience and solidarity.\(^\text{12}\)

The revival of the term democracy coincided with the republican uprisings of the Low Countries against Phillip II King of Spain.\(^\text{13}\) The pamphlet ‘*The Discours*’ written anonymously in 1583 explicitly used the term democracy popularising this political idea. It endorsed the inventions of office holding, elections, parliaments, councils, petitions and covenants. The pamphlet also mentioned citizens and their right to dispose of political representatives along with upholding the demand for the liberty of the press.\(^\text{14}\)

Armed with the articulation of representative democracy, the invention of print and growing aptitudes in grassroots political organisation, a series of

\(^{10}\) Ibid. pp.218,226.

\(^{11}\) Ibid. pp.229-31, 237.

\(^{12}\) Ibid, p.234.

\(^{13}\) Ibid, pp.242-3, 246-8.

\(^{14}\) Ibid, pp.254-7.
revolutionary upsurges against monarchical tyranny gathered momentum. In 1649 King Charles I of England was tried and executed. Until 1660 parliament became the successor of ultimate political authority. The Dutch also came close to achieving independence for the United Provinces in the 1780s. Finally, there were the notorious revolutions of France and America which emboldened other democratic struggles around the globe.

However, most streams of ‘liberal democracy’ place emphasis upon formal devices – procedures and institutions such as parliamentary elections, freedom of speech, freedom of information, the right to protest, freedom of the press and so forth. However, are such formal mechanisms, as important as they are, effective enough to ensure real power for its citizens? To answer this question it is first necessary to understand the genesis of liberal democracy.

Liberalism developed in opposition to conservative absolutism encouraging rebellion to various forms of authority. Early liberal thinkers include John Locke, David Hume, Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill. According to Chandran Kukathas above all else the liberty of individual choice is upheld:

In challenging the claims of absolutist regimes, and questioning the wisdom and propriety of conferring privileges on some members of society, liberalism put forward the principle of liberty as the one which ought to inform the laws, and guide the governors, of all societies. The purpose of the state was not, in the end, to further its own good but

---

16 Ibid, pp.468-71.
better to enable individuals to pursue their own ends. It was, in the end, no part of the purpose of the state to run the lives or shape the thinking of its subjects, for individuals had their own purposes and their own beliefs. Its real purpose was to protect the liberty of the subject.\(^{19}\)

However, different conceptions of liberty and how it is to be pursued have created different approaches to liberalism. According to Michael Sandel, the republican notion of liberty as ‘sharing in self-government’ has been displaced by the libertarian notion of liberty as choosing one’s own ends free from external interference. Rather than being concerned with providing the conditions for citizens to develop, liberal politics becomes more concerned with economic prosperity.\(^{20}\) So although other conceptions exist, liberalism is commonly understood as advocating the defence of individual choice.

However, this liberalism had to accommodate a number of changes in the composition of society. As the bourgeoisie emerged in Western Europe, civil liberties such as the right to vote were strongly advocated.\(^{21}\) For a time the bourgeoisie were content to share state power with the landed nobility as a means of suppressing discontent amongst the growing new working class. By the 1870s, however, they no longer needed to share their authority, and advocated a roll back of the role of the landed nobility.\(^{22}\)


\(^{22}\) Ibid. pp. 19, 41.
The emergence of the working class, particularly in Britain, resulted from a dispossession of small landowners due to the enclosure acts from the thirteenth to the eighteenth centuries. After the Industrial Revolution, workers were required to read instructions and keep written records, generating greater demand for literacy education amongst the general population. As members of this class became more numerous in the nineteenth century, civil rights demanded by the bourgeoisie were achieved. According to Alan Wolfe, liberal democracy emerged before the First World War as a compromise between the capitalists’ demands for liberalism and the working class’s demands for more democracy. Previously liberalism and democracy had been separate movements.

Considering that some reforms favouring the working class were granted, it did seem that the working class had an equal say under this form of rule. This belief could therefore be used to demobilise the working class, preventing them from formulating more radical demands. According to Wolfe’s assessment of this so-called liberal democracy:

In the West, democracy has come to mean bourgeois democracy; it is now defined, not by standards of participation and equality, but by the existence of certain formal political features such as elections, a constitution, and agreed-upon rules of political discourse. A system

---

26 Ibid. p. 3.
27 Ibid. p. 8.
with a democratic structure is presumed to be democratic, whatever the degree of psychological health and equality experienced by its citizens.\textsuperscript{28} Most streams of liberal democracy (social liberalism will be explored in Chapter 2) either downplay or ignore the importance of human self-realisation within the political process.\textsuperscript{29} As such, democracy is not considered to have a life of its own and hence something worth enthusiastically struggling for:

\begin{quote}
\ldots there is no enthusiasm for democracy, no idea that it could be a morally transformative force; it is nothing but a logical requirement for the governance of inherently self-interested conflicting individuals who are assumed to be infinite desirers of their own private benefits\ldots .\textsuperscript{30}
\end{quote}

Such a superficial view of liberal democracy calls for equality to create a level playing field for economic competition rather than an equality of outcome necessary for democracy’s long-term sustainability.\textsuperscript{31} As Rose and Kamin suggest:

\begin{quote}
The ancient regime was characterized by artificial barriers to social movement. What the bourgeois revolutions did was to destroy those arbitrary distinctions and allow natural differences to assert themselves. Equality, then, is equality of opportunity, not equality of ability or result. Life is [assumed to be] like a foot-race. In the bad old days the
\end{quote}

\begin{footnotes}
\footnotetext[28]{Ibid. p. 6.}
\footnotetext[29]{John Stuart Mill is another exception. See \textit{Considerations On Representative Government}, [University of Michigan University Library] Harper and Brothers Publishers, New York, 1862, pp. 39, 62, 64, 80.}
\footnotetext[30]{Macpherson, C.B. \textit{Life and Times of Liberal Democracy}, 1977, p. 43.}
\end{footnotes}
aristocrats got a head start (or were declared winners by fiat), but now everyone starts together so that the best win – best being determined biologically. In this scheme, society is seen as composed of freely moving individuals, social atoms, who, unimpeded by artificial social conventions rise or fall in the social hierarchy in accordance with their desires and innate abilities. Social mobility is completely open and fair, or may require at most a minor adjustment, an occasional regulatory act of legislation, to make it so. Such a society has naturally produced about as much equality as is possible. Any remaining differences constitute the irreducible minimum of inequality, engendered by natural differences in true merit. The bourgeois revolutions succeeded because they were only breaking down artificial barriers, but new revolutions are futile because we cannot eliminate natural barriers. It is not quite clear what principle of biology guarantees that biologically ‘inferior’ groups cannot seize power from biologically ‘superior’ ones, but it is clearly implied that some general property of stability accompanies ‘natural hierarchies’.32

Liberal democracy, understood accordingly, is not concerned about (and is even hostile towards) allowing all citizens to realise their full potential. The term ‘democracy’ is instead reduced to a fashion brand peddled by politicians who view the public not as citizens entitled to a voice but rather as passive consumers.33

The early utilitarians (excluding John Stuart Mill) can be viewed as encouraging this orientation. Accordingly, society is considered a collection of self-interested individuals competing to dominate one another. Criminal and civil law was required to maintain order within society during this competition. Although some degree of equality was considered desirable, it was rejected as an end product. For instance, in Jeremy Bentham’s theory of diminishing utility, a concentration of wealth left the privileged with a reduced ability to enjoy their goods, thereby reducing the happiness of the greatest number. Yet, he argued that different individuals differ in energy and ability. Therefore, some were entitled to more than others since otherwise there would be less incentive for individuals to work harder for the same rewards.34

Another important consideration to take into account about democracy is to what extent political outcomes should be determined by the people themselves rather than through political representatives.35 The traditional separation between executive and legislative arms of government is undermined by the political party system. In Australia, for instance, policy is largely determined by cabinet while the rest of the party’s representatives are expected to follow the party line. Meanwhile, individual representatives, especially if they are not in government, have less chance to change policy as they cannot rally sufficient representatives to support their proposals.36

36 Ibid. p. 35.
Often overlooked is the political purchasing power of citizens.\textsuperscript{37} However, some liberal theorists such as T.H. Marshall recognised that socio-economic inequalities could be transferred into political inequalities. As well as civil and political rights of citizens, Marshall also recognised the importance of social rights to a minimum income, education and so on to be capable of exercising these other rights.\textsuperscript{38} The question as to what extent such social rights can be maintained within a globalised market economy demanding greater power for transnational corporations requires closer examination. Such social rights do not completely level out disparities in political purchasing power. In Australia, the top 20 per cent of Australians are seven times wealthier than the bottom 20 per cent. In Scandinavian countries, such as Finland, Norway and Sweden, it’s more like three to four times wealthier.\textsuperscript{39} Considering that the capitalist mode of production ensures there will be inequalities in wealth and the ability to acquire wealth, some members of a society will always have a political advantage over other members.

Similar problems arose for John Stuart Mill who also tried to tackle the problem of unequal distribution of property:

> What he failed to see was that the capitalist market relation enhances or replaces any original inequitable distribution, in that it gives to capital part of the value added by current labour, thus steadily increasing the mass of capital. Had Mill seen this he could not have judged the capitalist principle consistent with his equitable principle. Failing to see

\textsuperscript{37} Macpherson, C.B. \textit{Life and Times of Liberal Democracy}, 1977, p. 87.


this, he found no fundamental inconsistency, and was not troubled by it.\textsuperscript{40}

Given these inadequacies, what does democracy in its authentic sense require? According to C.B. Macpherson, pre-nineteenth century theories imagined democracy could only exist either in a one-class society or in a classless society.\textsuperscript{41} For instance, although Rousseau believed in upholding the individual’s right to private property, he stipulated that such ownership could only be moderate\textsuperscript{42} so that ‘no citizen shall ever be wealthy enough to buy another, and none poor enough to be forced to sell himself’.\textsuperscript{43} He therefore envisioned a one-class society of working proprietors\textsuperscript{44} attempting to avoid social divisions of a class conflict society. Likewise, Thomas Jefferson observed that democracy required the condition of economic independence. Assuming there was an abundance of land to satisfy the needs of all, he believed everyone was entitled to as much land as desired so long as it did not deprive others of the entitlement of private property.\textsuperscript{45}

Most notably thinkers such as Rousseau, Hegel and later Marx understood that democracy could not be equated to the forms of its decision-making alone. The psychological make-up of all citizens had to be taken into account. Rousseau argued for the abolition of hierarchical structures in society to allow the qualities of all citizens to flourish.

\textsuperscript{40} Macpherson, C.B. \textit{Life and Times of Liberal Democracy}, 1977, pp. 55–6.
\textsuperscript{41} Ibid. p. 11.
\textsuperscript{42} Ibid. p. 16.
\textsuperscript{44} Macpherson, C.B. \textit{Life and Times of Liberal Democracy}, 1977, p. 17.
\textsuperscript{45} Ibid. p. 18.
Democracy according to Rousseau required all members of a society to participate in making a collective determination of their will. However by this ‘general will’ he does not mean the sum of all particular wills but rather the will of the collective:

There is often a great deal of difference between the will of all and the general will; the latter considers only the common interest, while the former takes private interest into account, and is no more than a sum of particular wills: but take away from these same wills the pluses and minuses that cancel one another, the general will remains the sum of the differences.

Rousseau was not the first to come up with this notion. The term ‘the general will’ can be traced to religious origins and, through the French social commentator and political thinker Charles-Louis Montesquieu, it was transferred to civil law. But it was in the Encyclopédie where this concept became popularised not only in Rousseau’s ‘Discours sur l’économie politique’, but also by his friend Dennis Diderot in the very same volume. In ‘Droit Naturel’ Diderot argues that ‘Private wills are suspect; they may be good or bad. But the general will is always good. It has never beguiled and will never mislead’. In one instance, he advocates the general will of the

47 Ibid. p. 185.
49 Ibid.
species. Hence, it is not only individuals who must consider what they can demand of another and have the right to demand from them, but particular societies must consider their relations towards other societies.\footnote{Ibid. p. 21. This is a useful consideration for discussion in Chapter 4.} Otherwise Diderot’s conception remains consistent with Rousseau’s, although it was the latter who developed the idea in greater detail in his political writings.\footnote{Dictionary of the History of Ideas, ‘The General Will,’ http://etext.virginia.edu/cgi-local/DHI/dhi.cgi?id=dv2-33.}

In striving for the general will: ‘…the essence of the body politic lies in the reconciliation of obedience and liberty, and the words subject and Sovereign are identical correlatives the idea of which meets in the single word “citizen”.’\footnote{Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. \emph{The Social Contract and Discourses}, (tr) G.D.H. Cole, J.M. Dent and Sons Ltd, London, 1973, p. 237.} As such, a strong parallel can be identified between democracy and the promotion of the general will. However, it is in the task of working out how to pursue this where Rousseau’s insights become untenable, as he insisted in preserving existing institutions:

The fundamental contradiction in Rousseau’s thought lies in his incommensurably sharp perception of the phenomena of alienation and the glorification of their ultimate cause. This is what turns his philosophy in the end into a monumental moral sermon that reconciles all contradictions in the ideality of the moral sphere.\footnote{Mészáros, István. \emph{Marx’s Theory of Alienation}, Merlin Press, 1970, London, p. 52.}

For instance Rousseau – as did many thinkers of his times – viewed women as the inferior sex: ‘She was created to be the toy of man, his rattle, and it must
jingle in his ears whenever, dismissing reason, he chooses to be amused.' 55 As such Rousseau did not appreciate the potential democratic benefits of extending education, economic and political rights to women. By contrast, Mary Wollstonecraft in A Vindication of the Rights of Women made a compelling case for the extension of such rights. As she contends; ‘Let their faculties have room to unfold, and their virtues to gain strength, and then determine where the whole sex must stand in the intellectual scale…’ 56

Both Hegel and Marx can be viewed as continuing Rousseau’s project of resolving the apparent contradictions of rights and duties, civil life and political life. 57 Hegel, although sympathetic to Rousseau’s rejection of political orders being arbitrarily constituted, was nevertheless critical of the idea that the general will could be derived from a calculation of particular wills. As such, the basis for which Rousseau calls for a social contract reduces politics into a constraint upon individual egoism, 58 attempting to find common ground amongst particular wills rather than concerning itself with rational freedom. 59 Individuals begin with a primitive sense of the universal. This means universal spirit is divided against itself and through the development of humanity, it must return to itself. Yet it is societies and not just individuals that have been given this responsibility of cultivating themselves. It is through

this task that absolute spirit can become conscious of itself.⁶⁰ According to Hegel, the political state is therefore considered a vehicle for striving to realise legal, ethical and political freedoms based upon reason acquired within human relations.⁶¹ Within this political model academia, religion, art, science, are to remain autonomous and furthermore the state is given the responsibility for providing educational and cultural facilities.⁶² Emphasis is placed upon abstract rights where humans are treated as rational subjects – ends rather than means to an end. Such rights are upheld by the strict maintenance of the rule of law rather than by ruling arbitrarily.⁶³

Although Hegel favoured some democratic reform he was nevertheless sceptical of the feasibility of a direct democracy. He noted how it worked in the past, precisely because societies were small, domestic and other private functions were delegated to slaves and metics. Moreover, the sanctity of individualism had not yet become so prominent. According to Charles Taylor: ‘It follows that not all men can give themselves totally to the public life. For some of the energy of most men will be engaged by the private. But since that state can only be if some men identify totally with it and makes its life their life, there must be a political division of labour.’⁶⁴

For Hegel then democracy needed to be adjusted to consider this. He therefore emphasised a distinction between political activities of the state, and the

---

⁶⁰ Ibid. 1975, p. 366.
⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 409.
private affairs of civil society. Although the state could intervene into the conditions of the market economy (with progressive taxation and the production of public works)\(^{65}\), it could not take over the economy through centralised planning.

For the state to check particular interests with its own desire to uphold the common good, Hegel criticised Plato’s model where one’s birth determined one’s station in society.\(^{66}\) Instead, what determines social positioning ought to be merit, right and dignity.\(^{67}\) This is particularly important as Hegel attempts to demonstrate how state and civil society hold one another to account.

Defending the idea of a constitutional monarchy, the state’s executive body would consist of civil servants and higher advisory officials forming peak committees to liaise with the Crown.\(^{68}\) These civil servants, representing universal interests, are constrained both by the Crown from above and corporations (interest groups) from below.\(^{69}\) Along with corporations, estates understood as ‘circles of association in civil society’ also inform the executive of its particular interests.\(^{70}\) As for the legislature, this consists of the Crown, ministers and the Estate Assembly.\(^{71}\) This Assembly has two houses. One is exclusively reserved for the landed class with the entitlement determined by


\(^{67}\) Ibid. pp. 68–9, paragraph 206.


\(^{69}\) Ibid. p. 99, paragraph 297.


\(^{71}\) Taylor, Charles. Hegel, 1975, p. 443.
birth, while the other house represents the interests of the economy and is subject to popular elections.\textsuperscript{72}

It is the constitution that defines this separation of powers. Thus, the legislative represents universal laws, the executive subordinates’ particular wills to the universal, and the Crown becomes the personification of the subjective decision of sovereignty.\textsuperscript{73}

For Hegel, the state of nature presupposes conflicts over material resources, requiring each party to acknowledge others as interaction partners. In what he terms ‘the struggle for recognition’, Hegel observes that for agreements to be formed, all parties must acknowledge the other and their needs. An official social contract is therefore unnecessary to bind humans together.\textsuperscript{74} And as Hume contends, the social contract is mythological:

\begin{quote}
But when asked the far greatest part of the nation, whatever they had ever consented to the authority of their rivals, or promised to obey them, they would certainly reply, that the affair depended not on their consent, but that they were born to such an obedience.\textsuperscript{75}
\end{quote}

Marx accuses Hegel of elevating the importance of formal laws of the state above human activity.\textsuperscript{76} Instead of being regarded as self-made, for Hegel, the state’s constitution, along with its powers, are regarded as an expression of the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{72} Ibid. p. 445.
\item \textsuperscript{73} Ibid. p. 239.
\item \textsuperscript{75} Hume, David. \textit{A Treatise of Human Nature} [Reprinted from the original edition in three volumes], (ed) L.A. Selby-Bigge, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1973, p. 578.
\item \textsuperscript{76} Jolin and O’Malley. \textit{Marx’s Critique of Philosophy of Right}, 1970, pp. xxiii, xxiv.
\end{itemize}
universal spirit.\textsuperscript{77} As such, the people that it claimed to be representing were to be subsumed by this spirit.\textsuperscript{78} In what is characterised as ‘the cunning of reason’, the universal spirit manipulates the human passions for its own purposes. So even when humans fail to attain the goals they consciously set for themselves, they still unknowingly advance the purposes of this spirit.\textsuperscript{79} Marx rejected the idea that freedom could be equated with the fulfilment of universal spirit. For him what mattered was human freedom to be attained through its agents’ conscious activity.\textsuperscript{80}

Amongst the influences of Marx’s intellectual background were Ludwig Feuerbach’s criticisms of religion along with Pierre-Joseph Proudhon’s criticism of private property.\textsuperscript{81} The institution of private property came to Marx’s attention when Proudhon proclaimed that ‘property is theft’.\textsuperscript{82} As Proudhon elaborates: ‘…property was based first on war and conquest, then on treaties and contracts.’\textsuperscript{83}

This was never far from mind in Marx’s criticisms of Hegel’s political philosophy. In his criticism, he sets out to demonstrate how the checks and balances assuring the prevalence of the universal will would in reality fail. For instance, he identifies the contradictory roles political deputies are expected to

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{78}Ibid. , p. 29.
\footnote{80}Ibid. p. 419.
\end{footnotes}
perform to uphold both universal and particular interests. In response, Marx questions how Hegel’s political division of labour ensures a reconciliation of particular interests with the common good.84 This is particularly problematic when Hegel describes the civil service. According to Marx, moral postulates about ‘merit’ and so forth are no guarantee that this supposedly ‘universal class’ would inevitably work for the collective good of the state. On the contrary, this is a precise point of weakness in Hegel’s political institutions. For there is no effective preventative constraining the civil service from altering the purposes of the state towards its own bureaucratic interest.85 In Marx’s words:

…the necessary ‘knowledge of the state’ is a precondition in the absence of which one lives outside the state, cut off from the air one breathes and from oneself. Thus the ‘examination’ is nothing but a Masonic initiation, the legal recognition of the knowledge of citizenship, the acknowledgement of a privilege.86

The state as ‘the spiritual essence of society’ had become the private property of the bureaucracy ‘over against other private aims’, the members of the estates assembly provided no synthesis between state and civil society since, as the spokesman of private interests, they were ‘the posited contradiction of state and civil society within the state’.87

85 Ibid. p. 108.
86 Ibid. p. 112.
87 In Jones, Gareth, Stedman. ‘Introduction’ in The Communist Manifesto, p. 110.
It is moreover doubtful that this civil service would be able to set up an adequate set of constraints upon markets. And the greater inequality markets create, the more inaccessible posts within the civil service will become. As Ralph Miliband points out, inequalities exist in access to positions in the civil service as well as other posts of the state.\footnote{Miliband, Ralph. \textit{The State in Capitalist Society: The Analysis of the Western System of Power}, Quartet Books, London, 1969, pp. 55–6, 59,108, 111, 115, 124–6, 128–9,}

As a result of such criticisms, Marx was able to go on to highlight the problematic reifications generated by political economy. He revealed how they presuppose certain power relations in notions such as private property, exchange value, and so on.\footnote{Marx, Karl. ‘Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts,’ in \textit{Early Writings}, Penguin Books, London, 1992, p. 322.} Through the language of political economy the social nature of production relations is concealed.\footnote{Ibid. p. 325.} With this reification of production relations, the majority of humans are separated from their means of subsistence. Consequently, they are forced to sell their labour power as a commodity to a minority who exclusively own property. In the process human labour is alienated from itself:

\[\text{\ldots the object that labour produces, its product, stands opposed to it as } \text{something alien}, \text{ as a power independent of the producer. The product of labour is labour embodied and made material in an object, it is the } \text{objectification of labour. The realization of labour is its objectification. In the sphere of political economy this realization of labour appears as a loss of reality for the worker, objectification as loss of and bondage to the object, and appropriation as estrangement, as alienation [Entausserung]\ldots The worker places his life in the object. The greater}\]

\[\text{\ldots the object that labour produces, its product, stands opposed to it as something alien, as a power independent of the producer. The product of labour is labour embodied and made material in an object, it is the objectification of labour. The realization of labour is its objectification. In the sphere of political economy this realization of labour appears as a loss of reality for the worker, objectification as loss of and bondage to the object, and appropriation as estrangement, as alienation [Entausserung]\ldots The worker places his life in the object. The greater}\]
his activity, therefore, the fewer objects the worker possesses. What the product of his labour is, he is not. Therefore the greater the product, the less is he himself. The externalization [Entausserung] of the worker in his product means not only that his labour becomes an object, an *external* existence, but that it exists *outside him*, independently of him and alien to him, and begins to confront him as an autonomous power; that the life which he has bestowed on the object confronts him as hostile and alien.\(^9\)

This has enormous ramifications upon all human activity: ‘So if the product of labour is alienation, production itself must be active alienation, the alienation of activity, the activity of alienation.’\(^9\) This labour is not given voluntarily ‘it is *forced labour*’. Thus, human activity is not consciously guided, but rather is ‘an activity directed against [oneself] himself’.\(^9\) It is an activity regulated in the interests of capital accumulation.

In regards to a theory about democracy, Marx, unlike previous thinkers, reached the crux of the matter – alienation and how to phase out all of its forms. As Mészáros demonstrates, Marx was therefore concerned about the notion of positive freedom (liberty). Rather than freedom from natural necessity and the coercion of other beings (in the libertarian sense), freedom is understood as realising one’s own creative potentials.\(^9\) As he explains:

> Freedom is thus the realization of man’s own purpose: *self-fulfilment in the self-determined and externally unhindered exercise of human*
powers. As self-determination, the ground of this free-exercise of man’s powers is not an abstract ‘categorical imperative’ that remains external to the real human being, but an actually existing positive need of self-realizing human labour. Thus means (labour) and ends (need) in this process of humanization mutually transform each other into truly human activity as enjoyment and self-realization, whereby power and purpose and means and ends appear in a natural (human) unity.  

Since practices such as religion, law, morality and science, are all just particular aspects of alienated labour, the supersession of capitalist relations with communism becomes the only possible manner by which all humans, and not just the proletariat, can be emancipated. With a constitutional monarchy, only part of the human population legislate for the whole. In the demos, the people determine themselves how to govern: ‘In a democracy, man does not exist for the sake of law, but the law exists for the sake of man, it is human existence, whereas in other political systems man is a legal existence.’ As such, democracy expresses a unity between particular and universal interests. It is at this particular stage that true democracy apparently no longer requires a state apparatus, as its constitution could never encompass the interests of all.

It is important to stress, as Mészáros does, that this project for realising communism does not have a particular fixed end in history. Its teleology is open-ended; ‘…for there can be no way of predetermining the forms and

---

95 Ibid. p. 186.
97 Ibid. p. 333
98 Ibid. p. 88.
99 Ibid. p. 88.
modalities of human self-emancipation. However, as occurred for instance in Marx’s correspondence and debate with Proudhon, Marx’s ideas were presented as being the only legitimate theory on how to advance socialism. By describing his ideas as ‘scientific socialism’ in contrast to ‘utopian socialism’, it is not surprising that followers of Marx overlook the fact that the struggle for democracy is an open-ended project. There is no one theorist or political leader who has all the correct answers as to how to proceed.

For Marx moreover: “The state, representation and democratic rights had been an expression of a divided individual and a divided society – where this division was overcome, these problems ceased to exist, yielding, in some sense, “an end of politics.” Here Marx was influenced by the Saint-Simonian notion that a government of men could be replaced by an ‘administration of things’. Even if communism could render the state obsolete, Marx failed to provide a positive conception of the state. By conceiving the state as strictly a coercive entity through and through, any social transition towards a direct democracy runs the risk of overlooking aspects of representative democracy that facilitate positive freedoms. This would provide a democratic transition towards socialism rather than a ‘dictatorship of the proletariat’. As such, Marx covers the key characteristics

---

of democracy but fails to provide a foolproof ‘scientific’ theory of its implementation.

**The Intentional Undermining of Democracy**

The limitations of liberal democracy highlighted above have now been exposed in most of the Western world. In particular, federal governments in Australia, for the last three and a half decades, have been *active* in successfully undermining the conditions necessary for empowering citizens in decision-making.

This is perhaps most explicit within the education sector. Considering education as a necessity for exercising one’s civil and political rights, as argued by T. H. Marshall, is overlooked. Instead, access to an education within Australia is limited to levels merely allowing the inclusion of people within the economy.\(^{105}\) Moreover, the humanist curricula adopted by Australian universities between 1910 and 1960 were eventually dropped for an increasingly vocational orientation.\(^{106}\)

Previously Australian universities had adopted three key principles outlined by an international conference of universities held in 1950:

i) The pursuit of truth for its own sake.

ii) Tolerance of divergent opinions.

---


iii) Freedom from political interference.\textsuperscript{107}

Federal state funding for universities was increased only to stimulate innovation in science and technology, which were identified as important for economic growth shortly after the Second World War.\textsuperscript{108} This identification of increasing education to promote economic growth provided a slippery slope for neo-liberal attitudes towards education dominating policy today. With the introduction of the higher education contribution scheme (HECS), education became entirely incorporated into economic policy through a ‘human capital’ theoretical perspective:

Mr John Dawkins, Federal Minister for Education…commented that the renewed interest in human capital theory was due to the ‘heightened recognition of the limits of macroeconomic policies to deal with the economic problems’ and hence the greater attention being given again to microeconomic theories… Within this perspective education and training are seen as microeconomic tools for governments to refine. It is essential to understand that the education debate in Australia is overwhelmingly dominated by this perspective.\textsuperscript{109}

By this stage the federal government was almost entirely responsible for the funding of universities (apart from the HECS fees coming from students). Asserting greater control over universities, federal governments developed ‘national plans’, identifying market demands upon research and then getting


universities to meet them. As Bruce Williams argued, this marked the beginning of a managerialist government approach towards universities.\textsuperscript{110} In 1972 Prime Minister Gough Whitlam transformed the Australian University Commission, set up in 1951 to overseas triennial funding levels, into the more centralised Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission (CTEC) granting his government greater capacity to influence policy. Later John Dawkins abolished the CTEC (including representation of academics) and instead forced universities to negotiate funding levels directly with Department of Employment Education and Training (DEET) officers in Canberra. The legitimacy of funding therefore had to fit into the research plan of the Hawke government.\textsuperscript{111} Consequently,

\begin{quote}
For the first time in the history of Australian higher education, the Commonwealth Government has moved beyond control of the macro-planning of the system – which has always been accepted as legitimate – to intrusive influence (i.e. control) over the micro-policy of the institutions – which has hitherto been considered as illegitimate interference in institutional autonomy…
\end{quote}

Certainly, given that the federal Government now provides 95 per cent or more of the funds for universities and colleges it has every right to require efficiency, effectiveness and accountability from its institutions – but not through misguided centralised interference in their academic and research planning and programming. It seems ironic that as eastern

\begin{flushright}
\end{flushright}
bloc countries seek to escape the inefficiencies of centralised decision making and as the Hawke government advocates ‘deregulation’, it is seeking to totally regulate higher education.\textsuperscript{112}

Even with their greater financial control over universities, governments since the Hawke era have sought to pass on the costs of an education to tertiary students. In the process the skill benefits that private enterprises obtain from an increasingly vocational system have been overlooked. Policies like HECS were justified by claiming that graduates obtain an unfair economic advantage at the expense of other taxpayers (despite a greater likelihood they will end up paying higher taxes later in life). Alongside the introduction of this user-pays system, overseas student entry procedures were streamlined as early as the 1980s. By the early 1990s, overseas-subsidised places were replaced entirely by up-front fee places.\textsuperscript{113}

International studies have revealed that there is a correlation between income inequality and poor educational performance.\textsuperscript{114} Federal government contributions declined dramatically after the election of the Howard government. In 1996, 3.6 per cent of Australia’s gross domestic product (GDP) was spent on tertiary education and this declined to 2.42 per cent in 2001–02.\textsuperscript{115} In the first year of the Howard government it was announced that 1.8 billion dollars would be cut in the first three years.\textsuperscript{116} By 2002, it was

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{112} Ibid. pp. 264–5.
\item \textsuperscript{115} SEWRSBC. Universities in Crisis: A Report into the Capacity of Public Universities to Meet Australia’s Higher Educational Needs, 2001, p. 34.
\item \textsuperscript{116} Messina, Alex. ‘Protests Fail to Stop Drop in Uni Funding,’ The Age 21/08/96, p. 5.
\end{itemize}
announced that Australian students were already the second highest payers for their tertiary education.\textsuperscript{117}

This decline in government funding has had a distinct impact on Australian universities. Overseas universities, such as in America and England, are assisted financially by philanthropists.\textsuperscript{118} This is not the case in Australia, meaning:

The Committee infers from the AVCC [Australian Vice-Chancellors Committee] paper Our Universities: Our Future, which claims of record expenditure levels in higher education, and arguments that Australian universities have never before had such levels of funding available, take no account of the greatly reduced level of flexibility that now exists as to how this funding can be used. The funding mix has been altered to the extent that a higher proportion of the total funds are tied to specific purposes, while the level of discretionary funds has been cut. As the report states in regard to tied funds, they are tied in small bundles from research agencies; tied to ‘special projects’ usually in the form of small grants; tied by a requirement to match government funds; tied by contracts with government or industry to particular projects; or tied to a significant extent to international student support. In the meantime the diminished operating grant provides little scope for experimentation or even, as will be detailed in other sections of the report, to provide adequate support for undergraduate teaching.\textsuperscript{119}

\textsuperscript{117} Ketchell, Misha. ‘University Degree to Cost More,’ \textit{The Age}, 26/07/02, p. 3.


\textsuperscript{119} Ibid. p. 130.
In 2002, in a review paper titled *Higher Education at the Crossroads*, former Education, Science and Training Minister Brendan Nelson argued that to tackle the universities’ financial problems, they needed to develop an ‘organisational flexibility’ to adapt to changing demands of students and the wider economy. On the question of class sizes he suggested that classes with growing demand should be prioritised over those deemed ‘inefficient’. Therefore, in freeing up academic resources, less popular courses could be amalgamated into a single course for each state, encouraging students to take subjects at other universities.  

Already in effect, academic diversity that encourages critical thinking has been undermined within Australian universities. For instance, during the 1990s some progress was made in getting Women’s Studies into the curricula. Despite healthy attendance in this subject at some universities, Women’s Studies was replaced by Gender Studies, hence no longer making the concerns of women’s rights the key point of inquiry. More recently, there has been a series of cutbacks to departments – especially in the Humanities – with academic staff being given the options of ‘voluntary redundancies’ or facing the sack.  

The problems confronting universities are not confined to the issue of funding. The dual pressures of corporatisation and managerialism have weakened academic standards undermining the legitimacy of the institution itself. Before Dawkins linked funding to university student numbers academic staff had

---

122 Bridie, Smith. ‘Melbourne University Senior Academics Facing Job Losses,’ *The Age*, 17/09/08, p. 11.
more of a say. Academics determined entry standards course content and assessment. They were represented by faculty Deans elected to negotiate on their behalf. Yielding to the pressures to ‘process’ students, universities dispensed with faculty democracy. Deans were replaced by Cost Centre Managers, representing the interests of management. Subject discipline experts were also marginalised in favour of Educationalists. Their agenda emphasised the importance of attracting students and keeping them engaged supposedly by making the education process ‘fun’. In response to declining student quality entry prerequisites for courses were removed. Moreover due to an overemphasis to answering the demands of student feedback surveys, difficult course content had to be removed.

On top of declining standards academic staff were required to create Personal Performance Plans in an ironic attempt to increase efficiency. Despite an increase in administrative staff, academics became swamped with administrative work. This has diverted scarce resources from academic research, effectively neutering the institutions’ ability to provide intellectual leadership for the community.123

The picture is not much better in secondary education. Some of Australia’s richest high schools receive over fifty million in Federal government funding annually.124 As Craig McGregor observes in ‘Class in Australia’, such subsidies ensure that upper class children will be able to take all of the influential power roles in society. Moreover, for the lower classes aspiring to

---
escape their class position, education is considered as providing the means to achieve this – thus the popularity of private schools. However, most working class children end up in the state school system and are then funnelled into working class jobs. Most leave school as soon as they can. Those who do complete their schooling are much less likely to end up completing a tertiary education.125

Recent Australian governments have assisted in concentrating media ownership narrowing the diversity of political opinions within the public arena. During the 1950s Australia had a more mixed system of media ownership. Then, in the 1960s, most television production was contracted out, with the exception of local news and current affairs.126

The Keating government passed the Broadcasting Services Act 1992, which changed regulations to consider the influence particular media services had.127 However, within this legislation, the Australian Broadcasting Authority no longer had to make its findings public as it was argued that this would interfere with business confidentiality.128

The Howard government made further amendments to media ownership laws to allow monopoly media outlets to own television stations and papers simultaneously. Yet, the option of adding another free-to-air station as means of compensation was rejected.129 In practice this meant providing the

125 Ibid. p. 49.
128 Ibid. p. 228.
129 Keating, Paul. ‘Packer and Murdoch will win from Howard’s Media changes,’ The Age, 29/9/05, p. 15.
opportunity for Packer’s Publishing and Broadcasting Limited to take over Fairfax papers such as the *Sydney Morning Herald* and *The Age*; Murdoch’s News Limited to purchase a television station, and Fairfax to explore ownership of other forms of media.\(^\text{130}\)

Already Murdoch owns 70 per cent of Australia’s readership. If Murdoch’s Fox channel in the US is any indication, a television station owned by Murdoch in Australia would allow for more media bias, favouring the wealthy and powerful.\(^\text{131}\) In October 2006, the Broadcasting Services Amendment (Media Ownership) Bill passed parliament, coming into effect in February 2007.\(^\text{132}\)

As well as closing off channels that can enhance people’s understandings of the world, Australian governments have sought to roll back the various rights of citizens. Neo-liberalism advocates increasing the role of the market while reducing the role of the state. Yet as more aspects of life are commodified,\(^\text{133}\) it becomes more difficult for individuals to exercise their civil and political rights. There have been increasing instances of privatisation, under the impression that managerial techniques within private enterprise will operate

\(^\text{130}\) Ibid. See also Lowenstein, Anthony. ‘Australia Media’, *ZMag*, 12/5/05. www.zcommunications.org/australian-media-by anthony-lowenstein.


\(^\text{132}\) Coorey, Phillip. ‘Parliament Passes Media Laws’ in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, 18/10/06, www.smh.com.au/articles/2006/10/18/1160850965764.html. There has been a recent shake-up in Australian print at the time of writing. Murdoch is proposing to split News Corps quarantining his less profitable newspapers from his television stations and film studios. Meanwhile, Gina Rinehart has become a major shareholder in Fairfax Media and is seeking editorial control. See McDuling, John. ‘Murdoch Eyes $5.8 bn Print Spinoff’ in the *Australian Financial Review*, 27/6/12, pp. 1, 10. And Dodson, Louise; Massola, James. ‘Swan Attacks Rinehart on Fairfax Move,’ *Australian Financial Review*, 20/6/12, pp. 1, 12.

similarly to public enterprise. Since 1987, the practice of handing over public assets for competitive tendering to private industry has become a common government practice.\footnote{Roland, Pat. ‘Redefinition of the Public Sector. Serving Citizens or Customers?’ in \textit{Keeping It Together: State and Civil Society in Australia}, (eds) Adam Farrar and Jane Inglis, Pluto Press, Leichhardt NSW, 1996, pp. 98–100.} Usually it is transnationals who prevail in the process. Considering that the fine details of these contracts are kept from public speculation due to commercial confidentiality, the ramifications upon accountability are serious.\footnote{Ibid. pp. 101–2.}

In recognising the valuable services delivered by non-government organisations (NGOs), governments have reduced their own responsibilities in meeting community needs.\footnote{Bell, Margaret. ‘Civil Society and the Third Sector,’ in \textit{Keeping it Together: State and Civil Society in Australia}, (eds) Adam Farrar and Jane Inglis, Pluto Press, Leichhardt NSW, 1996, p. 45.} Moreover, NGOs relying on government funding have found themselves in a delicate situation when they have wished to comment on government policy relating to their field of work. According to Anne Summers, women’s organisations have had to sign contracts promising not to make public comments on government policy (unless they have permission from the government or the Office of the Status of Women).\footnote{Summers, Anne. \textit{End of Equality: Babies Women’s Choices in 21st Century Australia}, p. 129.} Whilst the Howard government was spending $100 million on its 2001 election campaign, it cut funding provided to NGOs.\footnote{Stockwell, Stephen. ‘Spinning the Fabric of Reality,’ in \textit{Addicted to Celebrity}, (ed) Julianne Schultz, Griffith Review, no. 5, 2004, pp. 135–6.} Such cuts, as George Lakoff notes, force citizens to spend their scarce time and money on keeping
social programmes afloat, which governments interested in promoting democracy should be obliged to support.\textsuperscript{139}

Cuts to the public sector create workforce reductions without a reduction in workload. This means that those workers (in addition to those working within NGOs) are severely overworked and hence restricted in how much they can politically participate within the community.\textsuperscript{140} Accordingly, Australian workers have been recognised as working harder and longer than any other developed nation, with the exception of South Korea.\textsuperscript{141}

Instances of overwork and economic insecurity that can undermine the participatory potential of citizens extend throughout the Australian workforce today. According to the Australian Centre for Industrial Relations Research and Training ‘…job insecurity has lost its traditional linkage with business cycles and has become an almost permanent feature of the economic landscape.’\textsuperscript{142} This is due to a number of factors: one element being the increasing introduction of casual and contract labour. Between 1984 and 1997, 60 per cent of all jobs created were casual.\textsuperscript{143}

Shortages in essential community services, such as childcare, have also disadvantaged many people seeking opportunities to participate within the


\textsuperscript{140} Australian Centre for Industrial Relations Research and Training [ACIRRT]. \textit{Australia at Work: Just Managing?} Prentice Hall, Sydney, 1999, p. 108.


\textsuperscript{142} ACIRRT. \textit{Australia at Work: Just Managing?}, 1999, p. 127.

\textsuperscript{143} Ibid. pp. 141–2.
community. Between 1996 and 2000 approximately $850 million was cut from public childcare.\textsuperscript{144}

Meanwhile, ministerial accountability towards the public has gradually diminished. Although advisory councils are set up to consult upon policy, according to Michael Hogan, these councils, as well as community and consumer groups are under-resourced, unrepresented and hence unaccountable to the public.\textsuperscript{145} Sharon Beder’s \textit{Global Spin: The Corporate Assault on Environmentalism} observes how such panels are established to create a false impression of public consultation. This tactic originated in US chemical companies and later spread to waste management and oil companies. These panels are dependant on businesses for technical information, expertise and financing. All too often academics receive research funding from corporations that have a stake in the issue concerned.\textsuperscript{146} Government accounting methods have been changed to accrual accounting, making financial information more difficult for the public to comprehend.\textsuperscript{147} The excuse of national security, as well as that of the military chain of command, was extensively used by the Howard government in restricting its government’s transparency.\textsuperscript{148} And because of an increasing need to contain political dissent, the state apparatus


\textsuperscript{147} Davidson, Kenneth. ‘It’s Politicians not Terrorists Who Are a Clear and Present Danger,’ \textit{The Age}, 20/10/05, p. 17.

must grow broadening the separation between the government and its citizens.

Sharon Beder notes a phenomenon called ‘the revolving door syndrome’ where corporate senior executives enter into the top layers of government bureaucracy. In such instances they have been able to retain their corporate shareholdings. Likewise, politicians and senior bureaucrats have been known to end up working for corporations, think tanks, and lobbying firms. 

Currently, the average individual cannot afford legal representation, which should be an essential civil right. Due to this basic problem, in 1973 Attorney-General Lionel Murphy introduced the first government-funded legal aid scheme. By 1995 there were over 140 community legal aid centres across Australia. However in 1996, the Howard government cut $120 million from the legal aid budget. Due to scarcities in legal aid, many accused are denied a fair trial as a consequence of being denied legal representation. This applies to civil as well as criminal cases. So, for instance, it can unfairly affect the outcomes of matters such as custody battles, disadvantaging vulnerable members of the community.

Corporations have used this inequity in legal representation as a political weapon, targeting individual activists, environmental organisations and even representatives of parliament. SLAPP’s (Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation) were first recommended to the Australian business community

---


in a paper titled ‘Legal Rights of Industry Against Conservationists’ at the Third Annual Pollution Law Conference, demonstrating this tactic’s effectiveness in deterring dissent.\textsuperscript{153} Technical grounds such as defamation, conspiracy, nuisance and invasion of privacy can be used to sue. Cases can take years to settle and can cost tens of thousands of dollars in legal fees, regardless of the outcome.\textsuperscript{154} Hence: ‘The cost to a developer is part of the cost of doing business, but a court case could well bankrupt an individual or environmental group.’\textsuperscript{155} SLAPP’s essentially: ‘...are an attempt to “privatize” public debate – a unilateral effort by one side to transform a public, political dispute into a private, legal adjudication, shifting both forum and issue to the disadvantage of the other side.’\textsuperscript{156}

Australian foreign policy has had a tendency to dismiss the democratic rights of other countries who wish to maintain their national sovereignty. A disturbing instance of this was the Howard government’s declaration that it would be prepared to take pre-emptive action against terrorism within the region of the South Pacific.\textsuperscript{157}

In September 2004 the Australian embassy in Jakarta was attacked. This provided cover for the government to re-establish closer ties to Indonesia, and in particular, possibly to the Indonesian military’s anti-terrorism unit

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{153} In Beder, Sharon. \textit{Global Spin: The Corporate Assault on Environmentalism}, 2000, p. 63.
\item \textsuperscript{154} Ibid. p. 64.
\item \textsuperscript{155} Ibid. p. 65.
\item \textsuperscript{156} Ibid. p. 66.
\item \textsuperscript{157} Broinowski, Alison, \textit{Howard’s War}, Scribe Publications, Melbourne, 2003, p. 19.
\end{itemize}
Kopassus. This unit was involved in the 1999 massacres in East Timor, soon after East Timor won a referendum on national independence.\textsuperscript{158}

 Democracy has been further curtailed as a result of the dehumanising of minority groups. Following the emergence of Pauline Hanson’s One Nation Party in 1997, the Liberal government incorporated a number of its ethnocentric policies and attitudes towards ethnic minorities. This was most explicitly expressed during the 2001 Tampa boat crisis.\textsuperscript{159} Since the 2001 attack on the World Trade Center and particularly the 2002 Bali Bombings, there have been increasing instances in Australia of Muslims and people who happen to look Arabic being physically and verbally assaulted. This is partially due to politicians and the media associating terrorism with people with a Middle Eastern background.\textsuperscript{160} This culminated with the Cronulla riots in December 2005.\textsuperscript{161}

 Australia’s Indigenous community – the most disadvantaged group within Australia – has continued to have its essential needs neglected. According to Australians for Native Title and Reconciliation (ANTAR) the life expectancy of Indigenous people remains 20 years below the rest of the population, infant mortality is three times higher, and in 1996 alone $470 million dollars was cut from Indigenous Affairs.\textsuperscript{162} The Howard government spent more money on

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{158} McDonald, Matt, ‘Perspectives on Australian Foreign Policy, 2004,’ \textit{Australian Journal of International Affairs,} vol. 59, no. 2, June 2005, pp. 153–68.
\textsuperscript{160} ‘Hate Wave Hits Muslim Women,’ \textit{Herald Sun}, 21/10/05, p. 14.
\textsuperscript{161} See Kennedy, Les, and Murphy, Damien. ‘Racist Furore as Mobs Riot,’ \textit{The Age} 12/12/05, p. 1, and Aly, Waleed. ‘We See Birth of Bigotry,’ \textit{The Herald Sun} 14/12/05, p. 20.
\end{flushright}
the administration of Indigenous Affairs than is spent on programs assisting Indigenous people.\textsuperscript{163}

The Howard government moreover took a more managerialist line which infringed on Indigenous self-determination. The following comment was made in response to the decision to audit the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Committee (ATSIC):

\begin{quote}
The contradiction lies in establishing how a policy of close scrutiny over ATSIC’s affairs can coexist with the policy of self-determination, which implies freedom to make one’s own decisions – and one’s own mistakes. The scrutiny requirement is in fact, a denial of the possibility of meaningful self-determination.\textsuperscript{164}
\end{quote}

In 2004 ATSIC was abolished, with funding and programs returned to mainstream government departments. The advisory body that replaced ATSIC significantly reduced Indigenous involvement.\textsuperscript{165}

Despite these policies, the Howard government in particular was successful in being re-elected on three occasions. One possible explanation for this was the common misconception that it managed the Australian economy well. Thus, to turn over leadership to the ALP could put an end to the nation’s prosperity. China’s appetite for raw materials as it industrialised had stimulated the economy. In 2007, export growth hit 12 per cent,\textsuperscript{166} allowing companies such

\begin{itemize}
\item Schubert, Misha, ‘Aboriginal Aid Swamped by Red Tape,’ \textit{The Age}, 16/12/05, p. 6.
\end{itemize}
as BHP Billiton to rein in record profits.\textsuperscript{167} Alongside the mining boom, the Australian economy had ballooned with record levels of private debt. Credit card holder debt reached 38 per cent of available credit in 2007, with average credit card balance increasing by 8.1 per cent over the previous year.\textsuperscript{168}

This so-called prosperity has come at a great price for Australian workers. Accordingly, another main cause behind Australia’s economic growth has been due to a rise of labour productivity. Yet this increase is a result of changes in technology, mass sackings, ‘restructuring’ of the workplace, outsourcing to find cheaper labour and a dramatic rise in ‘casualisation’. In classical Marxist terms, Australian workers are being forced to work harder and longer in less secure employment enabling companies to extract more surplus labour:

During the second period of the labour process, that in which his labour is no longer necessary labour, the worker does indeed expend labour-power, he does work, but his labour is no longer necessary labour, and he creates no value for himself. He creates surplus-value which, for the capitalist, has all the charms of something created out of nothing. This part of the working day I call surplus labour-time, and to the labour expended during that time I give the name of surplus labour. It is just as important for a correct understanding of surplus-value to conceive it as merely a congealed quantity of surplus labour-time, as nothing but objectified surplus labour, as it is for a proper comprehension of value in general to conceive it as merely a congealed quantity of so many

\textsuperscript{167} Fitzgerald, Barry. ‘17.8bn: BHP Goes from Boom to Best,’ \textit{The Age}, 19/08/08, p. 1.
\textsuperscript{168} Rollins, Adrian. ‘Credit and Debt Levels at Record 38pc,’ \textit{Australian Financial Review}, 20/04/07, p. 4.
hours of labour, as nothing but objectified labour. What distinguishes the various economic formations of society – the distinction between for example a society based on slave-labour and a society based on wage-labour – is the form in which this surplus labour is in each case extorted from the immediate producer, the worker.\textsuperscript{169}

For economic growth to continue, wages and conditions must fall further behind the output of enterprises. With the emergence of the global financial crisis in September 2008, Australian capitalism reached its zenith of profitability. To abate diminishing growth, Australians can only look forward to further cuts in government spending, leading to an exacerbation of already existing inequalities.

Even within a prosperous period an essential need – housing – was denied to many Australians. The first nationwide study since 1989, conducted by the National Youth Commission in 2008, discovered that the number of homeless teenagers had doubled to 22,000. When including young adults between 18 and 25, this figure increases to 36,000.\textsuperscript{170} Approximately 90,000 children experience homelessness in any given year with a majority being of primary school age or younger.\textsuperscript{171} According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, in 2006 overall homelessness in fact worsened during economic expansion. Accordingly in 2001, there were 99,900 homeless and by 2006 this had increased to 105,000.\textsuperscript{172} There are a number of reasons why prosperity failed


\textsuperscript{172} Cooke, Dewi. ‘Affordability Crisis Leaves Families out in the Cold.’ \textit{The Age}, 05/09/08, p. 10.
to deliver respite to this problem. The most pressing is that housing affordability between 1986 and 2006 decreased by 140 per cent,\textsuperscript{173} which has been met by inadequate rental assistance, and a 30 per cent cut in public housing under the Howard government.\textsuperscript{174} In Melbourne during 2008, vacancy rates dropped to record lows, allowing for sharp rent rises in some of the more affordable suburbs.\textsuperscript{175} Even where the issue of housing is solved, other problems come to the fore needing resolution. Not surprisingly, wherever the issue of housing is resolved, demand for other welfare services increase, such as the provision of vouchers, counselling, respite care and drug and alcohol rehabilitation.\textsuperscript{176}

Evidence suggests that the abovementioned changes to the Australian labour market were made possible due to a declining participation and membership of trade unions. This was caused by the growing influence of an orientation towards trade union politics. According to Meg Smith and Peter Ewer, this entails delegating the decisions of political questions to the ALP and confining union struggles to narrow industrial relations matters such as wages and conditions.\textsuperscript{177} Such an approach can lead onto ‘corporatism’, where big business initiates the co-option of the working class through corrupt trade


\textsuperscript{174} Ibid. p. 13. See also ‘Affordability Crisis Leaves Families out in the Cold’ \textit{The Age}, 05/09/08, p. 10.

\textsuperscript{175} Houston, Cameron. ‘Rooming Tenants Crisis Flares’ \textit{The Age}, 23/08/08, p. 6.

\textsuperscript{176} Hanover. \textit{Hanover Family Longitudinal Outcomes Study}, May 2003.

union leadership. There has also been a tendency to focus narrowly on improving the conditions of full-time workers at the cost of part-time, temporary, and casual workers, who are increasing in numbers. Australian women in the paid workforce are particularly disadvantaged by this approach. Due to being more likely to have to shoulder the majority of parenting responsibilities, they are often the casuals who will lose out. The principle of reserving relatively high status ‘breadwinning’ jobs for Anglo-Saxon men mean that the interests of migrants are also made subordinate.

Speculation about the corruption of trade union officials is often linked to the ties they have with the ALP. Big pro-market political parties can often effectively use their influence within unions to ensure that workers are disciplined and pacified. Moreover, they can co-opt elements of the working class through their involvement in industrial relations reform.

In 1983, the ALP promised to address stagflation. In consultation with the Australian Council of Trade Unions and the Business Council of Australia, it instituted the accord agreement. All parties agreed to place a cap upon wages. In return the framework of collective bargaining was extended beyond its traditional realm to cover a ‘social wage’, including superannuation and


182 Davidson, Kenneth. ‘Why the ALP Is Under Serious Threat,’ The Age, 16/02/06, p. 19.

welfare schemes. Because it was believed by many trade unions, (especially the Australian Manufacturers Workers Union), that the social wage could be advanced to cover the demand for industrial democracy, they happily participated in the accord process.

In freezing wages and collaborating with the ALP government, the trade union movement became drastically less experienced in waging industrial struggles. This cleared the way for a series of attacks on workers. The Hawke government shifted the accord agreement away from federal awards by introducing the option for unions to bargain at an enterprise level in the _Industrial Relations Act 1988_. The weakening of trade unions was furthered by the _Workplace Relations Act 1996_. Under these laws workers were prohibited pay while on strike and unions were restricted access to worksites. Moreover, it introduced individual bargaining under Australian Workplace Agreements (AWAs). The significance of award wages and conditions were then reduced to a ‘safety net’ of twenty allowable matters.

---


185 Ruskin, Nick. ‘Union Policy on Industrial Democracy,’ in _Democracy and Control in the Workplace_, 1986, p. 188.


188 ACIRRT. _Australia at Work Just Managing?,_ 1999, p. 7.

In a raft of industrial relations attacks initially called ‘Workchoices’ the Australian Industrial Relations Commission was replaced with a ‘Fair Pay Commission’. Unlike the AIRC it fails to allow workers representation and further reduces the scope of awards.\(^{190}\) Besides exempting small businesses from unfair dismissal regulations, the new laws allow the workplace minister the authority to force workers undertaking industrial action back to work. This forfeits workers’ right to withhold their labour.\(^{191}\)

In 2007, the Howard government lost the federal election (and John Howard lost his seat in parliament) as a result of public opinion rejecting these reforms. But despite the ALP’s win, in government, it has decided to retain many aspects of these reforms. This includes restrictions on strike actions, and the removal of unfair dismissal for workplaces of 15 employees or fewer.\(^{192}\) In effect, the ALP’s current political position is more anti-worker than when John Howard won office in 1996.

In 2005 radical new powers were granted to the Australian Building and Construction Commission (ABCC) task force investigating allegations of illegal industrial activity within this sector. Under the new powers, construction workers faced six months jail if they withhold information about any industrial activity. Moreover, these workers were denied the right to silence, unlike other alleged criminals charged with serious offences. This

\(^{190}\) O’Malley, Nick. ‘Wage -Setting Body Rulings are Binding’ *Sydney Morning Herald* 10/10/05

\(^{191}\) Packham, Ben; Havey, Michael. ‘Young Workers May Lose Rights’ *Herald Sun* 11/10/05

\(^{192}\) Forsyth, Anthony; Howe, John. ‘Workchoices-lite: The Gillard Brew for Industrial Relations,’ *The Age* 19/09/08, p. 17.
policy was retained by the ALP (until February 2012) despite its unpopularity within the labour movement.\textsuperscript{193}

These series of attacks have been further compounded by a decline in permanent full-time employment, upon which the trade union movement has traditionally depended. Of the 40 to 50 per cent of Australian jobs that used to be manual, the figure is now less than 20 per cent.\textsuperscript{194} According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, part-time employment doubled from 15 per cent of the entire labour market in 1978 to 30 per cent in 2010.\textsuperscript{195} This drastic increase has called into question whether unutilised labour should be equated with unemployment statistics. The measure of underemployment – being the total number of part-timers wanting more work plus the number of full-timers who worked part-time hours in the week surveyed – reveals much about the workforce that would otherwise be concealed from public scrutiny.\textsuperscript{196} Since 1978 underemployment has almost doubled whilst unemployment has declined. Since 2000 statistics on underemployment overtook unemployment.\textsuperscript{197} Rather than resolving the problem of unemployment, the problem has merely been shifted to a growing instance of precarious

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item[193] Scott, Steven. ‘Review Slams ABCC,’ \textit{Australian Financial Review} 10/10/08, p. 10. See also Skulley, Mark. ‘Rudd Choices Draw Union Ire,’ \textit{Australian Financial Review}, 31/07/08, p. 6. The Victorian government has set up a new watchdog called the Construction Code Compliance Unit. Replacing the ABCC is the federal Fair Work Building and Construction agency. See Dunckley, Mathew. ‘State Watchdog Lays Down Law to Builders’ in the \textit{Australian Financial Review}, 4/7/12, pp. 1, 8.
\item[197] Australian Bureau of Statistics. 4102.0 \textit{Australian Social Trends: Underemployment}, June 2010.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
employment. This creates a new strata of workers with less entitlements and employment security than ever before.

Australian workplaces remain undemocratic, even where the bargaining power of workers is stronger since matters concerning the organisation of work are often excluded from negotiations.\textsuperscript{198} Hence ‘wage-slavery’ well and truly exists even within more affluent nations like Australia. As Tony Topham and Ken Coates argue ‘…slavery is not synonymous with poverty, but expresses a relationship between people, in which one will is subordinated to another.’\textsuperscript{199} As democracy in the workplace has been eliminated, workers are finding it increasingly difficult to spare the time and the money required to become participants in the political process. As such citizenship has become an exclusive privilege.

**Alienation in Australian Politics**

The various incidents outlined above demonstrate how conditions for inclusive participation have been consciously attacked. Consequently, this has had a negative influence upon the political attitudes of Australian citizens.

With the decline of manufacturing and the introduction of economic restructuring during the 1980s and 1990s, a rise of aspirational middle-class workers with looming mortgages has meant the loosening of traditional ties to the ALP.\textsuperscript{200} This in turn has led to a change in the ALP’s political orientation, which is becoming almost identical to the Liberal Party. This reflects C.W.


Mills’ observation that major political parties tend to share the same political ethos.\textsuperscript{201} Even where there have been opportunities for the ALP to differentiate itself, these chances have usually been squandered. For instance, during the 2004 federal election campaign the ALP failed to warn the public about the industrial relations policies that the Liberal government planned to implement once re-elected. This could have provided an effective counter to the government’s scare campaign about rising interest rates under an ALP government.\textsuperscript{202} As a consequence, the ALP’s primary vote dropped to 37.64 per cent, its lowest since 1906.\textsuperscript{203}

Due to this lack of choice between the major parties the vote for minority parties has increased in both houses of parliament.\textsuperscript{204} Since the introduction of proportional representation in the senate in the 1940s support for the major parties has slipped 2.8 per cent every decade.\textsuperscript{205} The Australian Democrats had significant success with the slogan ‘keep the bastards honest’ tapping into a distrust of the major parties.\textsuperscript{206} More recently the Australian Greens have benefited. In the 2001 election their primary vote was 4.96 per cent. This increased to 7.19 per cent in 2004\textsuperscript{207} and to 11.5 per cent in 2010.\textsuperscript{208}

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{201} In Theophanous, Andrew. \textit{Australian Democracy in Crisis: A Radical Approach To Australian Politics}, 1980, p. 19.
  \item \textsuperscript{202} Scott, Andrew. ‘Prospects for Labour,’ \textit{Australian Quarterly Review}, 2004, p. 9.
  \item \textsuperscript{203} Ibid. p. 7.
  \item \textsuperscript{206} Mckay, Hugh. \textit{Reinventing Australia: The Mind and Mood of Australia in the 90s}, Angus and Robertson, Sydney, 1993, p.174.
  \item \textsuperscript{207} Scott, Andrew. ‘Prospects for Labour,’ \textit{Australian Quarterly Review}, 2004, p. 7.
  \item \textsuperscript{208} Nadar, Carol. ‘Brown Declares “Green Slide” with Senate Balance of Power,’ \textit{The Age}, 22/08/10, p. 2.
\end{itemize}
Surveys of the Australian electorate throughout the last three decades reveal a steady decline of trust in politicians. When politicians were rated for their honesty and ethical standards between 1976 and 1981 19 per cent rated them high or very high. Between 1982 and 1987 this dropped to 16 per cent. Between 1982 and 1987 this fell again to 12 per cent and then to 11 per cent between 1994 and 2000.209 Another series of surveys asked if government gave everybody a ‘fair go’ or whether they paid more attention to big interests. In 1969, 71 per cent answered that government favoured big interests. This increased to 78 per cent in 1979 and declined to 63 per cent in 1987. In the 1993 sample respondents were given the extra option to say ‘it depends’. Naturally only 35 per cent believed government ran for big interests regardless. Surveys of this question have ever since provided this new response option.210 Failing to take into account this extra option has led to misleading conclusions. Rather than being in decline it is claimed that trust in government has followed a cyclical pattern reflecting the political fortunes of the major parties.211 However Michael Pusey’s Middle Australia Project confirms this decline in trust with approximately two-thirds of respondents in 1996 claiming government runs for big interests.212

Alongside this scepticism with politicians there has been some indication that Australians are disengaged from the political process. Although there are some positive signs in the range of surveys conducted by Ian McAllister, the

---

210 Ibid. p.17.
211 McAllister, Ian. The Australian Voter: 50 Years of Change, University of NSW Press, Sydney, 2011, pp.73, 76.
most revealing is the incredibly low level of knowledge recorded about how Australia’s political system works. Surveys conducted in 1993 through to 2010 show that a majority of Australians could only answer 1 out of 6 questions correctly with an average remaining steady at around 2.3 out of 6. Despite an increase of accessibility to tertiary education, greater volumes of mass media and a proliferation in political organizations over the period analysed, no improvement in political knowledge was recorded.213

According to Carl Boggs, such mistrust in political representatives has created an attitude of ‘anti-politics’, its main features being:

i) A public withdrawal from political problems which is manifested in inward therapeutic preoccupations, pursuit of individual or spiritual gain.

ii) A decline in organised political actions associated with an increase of spontaneity within political movements.

iii) A retreat from national and international issues in favour of localism, blind faith in technological solutions and the development of fatalistic schemas such as deconstructionist postmodernism.214

In addition, there has been a notable decline in participatory groups necessary for strengthening civil institutions.215 Such a decline in political activity further undermines democracy. As Phillip Gomes remarks, ‘Australians, like many in the Western world, have grown lazy in their wealth to worry much

213 McAllister, pp56, 86-7.
about democracy… We forget that participatory democratic society, due to blood, sweat, tears and passion of those before us, should constantly re-invent itself to circumstances.’

Negative political attitudes have been reinforced amongst younger generations who have grown up through the rise of anti-politics. Journalist James Norman states that a significant proportion of young Australians are becoming increasingly indifferent to human suffering and have become distracted by the shallow game of consumerism. As Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett note in *The Spirit Level: Why More Equal Societies Almost Always Do Better*, societies such as Australia that generate large inequalities, suffer from greater distrust in one another. They also suffer greater sexism, more instances of bullying, higher incarceration rates and their governments spend less on foreign aid and welfare provisions.

According to sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, the behaviour of individuals engaged in a variety of social activities is determined by what he calls their ‘habitus’. A habitus is a set of dispositions of individuals affecting their expectations, goals, attitudes and strategic orientations within day-to-day practices.

Hence:

> It is because subjects do not, strictly speaking, know what they are doing that what they do has more meaning than what they know. The

---


217 Norman, James, ‘Howard’s Young People Are Shallow and Disengaged,’ *The Age*, 23/02/06, p. 15.


habitus is the universalizing mediation which causes an individual agent’s practices, without either explicit reason or signifying intent, to be none the less ‘sensible’ and ‘reasonable’. That part of practices which remains obscure in the eyes of their own producers is the aspect by which they are objectively adjusted to other practices and to the structures of which the principle of their production is itself the product. One of the fundamental effects of the orchestration of habitus is the production of a commonsense world endowed within the objectively secured by consensus on the meaning (sens) of practices and the world, in other words the harmonization of agent’s experiences and the continuous reinforcement that each of them receives from the expression, individual or collective (in festivals, for example), improvised or programmed (commonplace, sayings), of similar or identical experiences. The homogeneity of habitus is what – within the limits of the group of agents possessing the schemes (of production and interpretation) implied in their production – causes practices and works to be immediately intelligible and foreseeable, and hence taken for granted.\textsuperscript{220}

In particular, Bourdieu’s conception of class habitus – a system of dispositions common to members of that class – suggests that individuals will share more similar experiences with one another than they share with members outside of that class.\textsuperscript{221}

\textsuperscript{220} Ibid. pp. 79–80.

\textsuperscript{221} Ibid. pp. 85–6.
This theoretical view was used in a Newcastle survey in three different high schools in 2002. The study revealed that attitudes towards politics tended to be more optimistic and informed among those attending private or catholic schools than those attending state schools as they receive more political education than their peers.\textsuperscript{222} On the other hand, those experiencing social disadvantages were more likely to be disaffected:

The existence and possible growth of a large group of young people who feel excluded and switched off from politics may feed into political tactics that appeal to a ‘victim’ mentality. These tactics were evident in Hansonism and in the subsequent response of the Howard government to issues such as immigration, refugees and the ‘war on terror’. Recent social and economic changes have led young people to feel uncertain about their future and disempowered across a number of fields. If certain sectors of young people express a habitus increasingly marginalised from the political process, the apparent success of wedge politics and scapegoating will continue. It seems ironic that young people are themselves being positioned as a personification of this threat. There are real implications here for the notion of democracy, as it seems that only the more privileged members of society in the future will feel that they are catered for in the political process, leaving many excluded. This is not exactly new, but it does demonstrate one of the fundamental problems of neo-liberal governmentality. It increases perceptions of inequality and risk. Accordingly, future citizens who are negatively affected by current policies feel they are not represented, or

do not have a chance or opportunity of changing anything even if they were.  

R.W. Connell similarly observed that children from higher status backgrounds are more likely to be exposed to academic streams of thought or types of schooling during their high school years than those from lower status backgrounds. Additionally, education tends to be highly valued in higher-status households. These factors assist in creating class divisions of children’s self-conceptions; “Brains” are understood as a fixed quality of the person: you either have them, or you don’t. If you have the brains, you can do well in exams. ‘Failure forces them to doubt their own powers: repeated failure convinces them they don’t have the brains. And failure is the common experience of lower-status children.’ Not only does schooling influence children’s self-conceptions, but also their conceptions about the wider world. Typically, hierarchies of power and the norms that reinforce them are adopted by students.

A number of other objective conditions assist in generating such cynical and apathetic attitudes towards politics. Globalisation has undermined the sovereignty of nation-states. Moreover, post-Fordism – the shift from manufacturing to the services sector within the economic centres of the

223 Ibid. p. 110.
225 Ibid. p. 170.
226 Ibid. p. 163.
227 Ibid. p. 166.
228 Ibid. p. 180.
229 Boggs, Carl. The End of Politics: Corporate Power and the Decline of the Public Sphere, 2000, pp. 75–6.
globe \(^{230}\) – has steered political inquiry within academia (especially amongst deconstructionist postmodernists) away from an analysis of class forces. In the process, the proverbial baby is thrown out with the bathwater, as Boris Frankel argues:

The problem is that ‘post-Fordism’ is still capitalist, even though it is based on flexible specialization. And there has never been, and never will be a capitalist society without classes – even though businesses, products and occupations change. So why has class analysis been dispensed with, and why is it that postmodernists say little or nothing about labour processes, capital accumulating strategies in the private and public sectors and class conflict? We now suffer from the tyranny of ‘cultural determinism’. Whereas many of the Old Left were narrow economic determinists who ignored the vital issues of cultural values and differences, most postmodernists are economic illiterates.\(^{231}\)

Added to this, is growing urbanisation caused by a concentration of production within urban areas.\(^{232}\) Combined with electronic media such as television in displacing social groupings,\(^{233}\) this process undermines the capacity of people to politically organise:

With Australian cities expanding their suburbs to absurd distances, the more limited historical urban structures which produced both a militant labour movement and a liberal intelligentsia are being weakened and

\(^{230}\) Boggs, Carl. *The End of Politics: Corporate Power and the Decline of the Public Sphere*, 2000, p. 78.


\(^{233}\) Boggs, Carl. *End of Politics: Corporate Power and the Decline of the Public Sphere*, 2000, p. 85.
dispersed along endless commuter roads and isolated homes with the latest electronic leisure equipment.\textsuperscript{234}

According to the ‘privatisation thesis’, an increasing number of working class people withdraw from public life and develop a consumerist orientation with middle class aspirations. This can potentially lead them to side with interests that are hostile to their real needs.\textsuperscript{235} As Bertram Gross explains, ‘the overwhelming response of working people is to withdraw their energy and hopes from the work world and invest them in the other only sphere provided by contemporary capitalism – \textit{private life}.’\textsuperscript{236} For instance Hugh McKay observed throughout the 1990s Australians increasingly began to install home entertainment systems. This meant that more of people’s leisure time could be undertaken in the private home rather than in public places or other social settings.\textsuperscript{237}

This accelerated separation of private life from public life, first emerging in the Roman Empire, reflects what Marx observed as the state being publicly viewed as an alien power exercised over and above the people.\textsuperscript{238} Accordingly people delegate their political responsibilities of legislating, administering and judging to the state so that ‘people do not recognize the concrete products of their political activity as their own.’\textsuperscript{239} As summarised by Wolfe:

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{237} McKay, Hugh. \textit{Reinventing Australia}, 1993, p.223.
\end{flushleft}
If, following the Greeks, one conceives of politics as the common quest of equals for the just and happy society, then in late capitalism politics of this sort is replaced by a form of alienated politics, in which parties and interest groups become responsible for absorbing the common power that people possess and for using this power to rule over the people from whom it came in the first place. Like a worker who sees the product of his labor transformed into a commodity alienated from himself, the late capitalist citizen finds that the source of his alienation lies in his own productive activity, in this case the production of community rather than commodities. Expropriation is no longer unique to the economy.\textsuperscript{240}

In overlooking social, economic and psychological conditions required in fostering democratic discourse, many advocates of liberal democracy assume that formal mechanisms such as elections are enough to protect people from autocratic regimes. Yet, recent Australian governments have eroded civil institutions and attacked political, economic and social rights of citizens. It is clear therefore that formal safeguards alone cannot ensure for democratic inclusiveness as envisioned by earlier democratic theorists.

Discouragement from political participation has produced a political environment where subjects increasingly mistrust their representatives. In response to their political alienation they withdraw from political activity to engage in the private sphere. Such negative attitudes are usually complemented by a lack of political understanding, especially among the most disadvantaged groups in the community.

\textsuperscript{240} Wolfe, Alan. \textit{The Limits of Legitimacy}, 1977, p. 312
In reclaiming democracy to transcend the current state of affairs, it will be necessary to identify what forces and circumstances have encouraged and/or produced such lax political attitudes. The next chapter will look at these and other questions.
Chapter 2

The Political Offensive of the New Right

To explain why and how liberal democracy within Australia deteriorated to the extent just described, it is necessary to identify the political forces behind the shift in policy that has led to the current crisis.

Shortly after Australian federation two key political streams existed; the protectionists and the free-traders. With the introduction of ideas directly and indirectly from T.H. Green’s political philosophy, protectionism managed to gather greater political support than the free-traders. Green’s social liberalism adopted Hegel’s belief that the state serves as an ethical agency. The role of government was therefore to impartially mediate and seek political reforms that would apparently transcend class conflicts and deliver solutions serving the common good. Protectionist measures were adopted promoting the cultivation of the national economy. Social liberalism was also responsible for introducing arbitration and conciliation to diffuse industrial disputes and advocated for women’s suffrage.

Long after its decline in the 1920s, social liberalism continued to direct policy removing various inequalities produced by the capitalist market. As it continued to influence Australian politics into the 1960s, a number of political and social movements emerged, placing increasing demands on governments. In response to this political radicalisation, both in Australia as well as in the US and the UK, various right-wing conservatives and libertarians began to organise. With the birth of the New Right a major campaign was launched to win back control over public opinion as well as to dominate the agenda of political policy. Through this process it will be explained how common
ground was established between these political currents informed by a social Darwinist understanding of social relations.

Despite flaws in the thinking of this neo-liberal and neo-conservative alliance, the New Right has been extremely successful in fulfilling its objectives. To explain why, various measures that have assisted it will be identified. Apart from the functions of public relations firms and think tanks, other factors such as the increasing influence of electronic media and its cognitive effects will be briefly examined. In doing so, it will be argued that the New Right has not only come to control what political issues need to be addressed but also how the wider public thinks them through.

**Social Liberalism in Australia**

According to Gregory Melleuish, in the early stages of Australian federalism, there was a lack of unity amongst the free-traders. This resulted in classical liberalism in its apparent ‘genuine’ sense being marginalised. Instead:

Fusion between the Deakinites and the free traders was the key defining moment for the subsequent history of Liberalism in twentieth century Australia. Deakin had been losing support since 1905 as his party increasingly competed for votes with the Labor Party. Reid’s advocacy of ‘anti-socialism’ was the foundation for Fusion and yet the Liberal Party thereby created was defined intellectually largely by Deakin’s statism. For the next 60 years classical liberalism was not really central to Australian Liberalism; Australian Liberalism in these years was mainly a combination of Deakinite statism, popularism and

---

conservatism. Such individualism as it supported was to be expressed within a regulated framework. Menzies expressed this mixture well: his Forgotten People was a democratic manifesto appealing to the ideas and inclinations of the middle class, and he created for himself a conservative paternalist persona that could be projected by the Liberal Party rather than relying only on ideas and philosophy. When all else failed it could fall back on its anti-socialist credentials.\(^2\)

Australian liberalism, manifested through laborism and Deakinite liberalism, was rather more strongly influenced by ideas emerging from Britain through theorists such as T.H. Green, L.T. Hobhouse and J.A. Hobson. T. H. Green being influenced by Hegel’s notion of an ideal state, believed democratic reformism could enable the state to transcend merely serving the interests of a particular class. Human freedom accordingly could be realised through identifying one’s contribution towards the struggle to realise the common good.\(^3\)

Alfred Deakin was converted by Charles Pearson in the 1870s to social liberalism. Pearson argued for patriotism, through which the collective interests of individuals could be used to unite individual projects into collective societal ones. He believed that in becoming small farmers, it would help positively develop the citizenry into trustworthy, hard-working individuals. In having a stake in the country, they would pay attention to

\(^2\) Ibid. pp. 35–6.
political matters. Moreover, Pearson argued for equal access to education for women as it was believed educated women would ‘soften burly men’.4

Deakin personally believed that for Australia to be capable of determining its future without external interference it needed to create a healthy economy. The state’s role, therefore, was to provide regulations, investment and social and economic infrastructure to ensure such growth. However, he argued that regulation should be considered before setting up tariff barriers, as it could be used to allow local industries to compete with foreign enterprises.5

While Sir Henry Jones from the University of Glasgow conveyed such ideas to Australia, most advocates of social liberalism put their theoretical perspectives into political action within Australia’s public institutions. For instance, Reverend Charles Strong who, when he came out to Australia, was appointed minister of Scots’ Church Melbourne in 1875. He later founded the Australian Church in 1885. His ideas were supported by Francis Anderson who assisted his church and later became a lecturer in Philosophy at the University of Sydney.6

Another follower, Henry Bournes Higgins placed emphasis upon human interdependence, in arguing that individual self-realisation is assisted rather than hindered by the broader society, in particular, the state. Higgins was another who believed that Australia’s progress could be assisted by creating social institutions to diffuse conflicts between classes.7 For instance, arbitration, influenced by New Zealand’s arbitration system, was first

5 Ibid. p. 176.
7 Ibid. pp. 52–8.
introduced in NSW in 1901, and later became the model for Commonwealth legislation. Deakin was appointed attorney-general to oversee the 1903 Conciliation and Arbitration Bill. In 1906, Higgins became a judge of the High Court and later the Commonwealth Court of Conciliation and Arbitration, passing the Harvester judgment guaranteeing a ‘living wage’ for Australian (male) employees.8

Apart from the promise of a ‘fair wage’ determined through arbitration, other key policies implemented in Australia throughout the first 60 years of the twentieth century, aimed to protect the interests of the national economy. This included trade protection, currency controls and immigration restrictions.9 In addition, a state-owned Commonwealth Bank was established to facilitate the development of the national economy, further assisting trade protectionism and the welfare state.10 According to Marian Sawer, social liberalism rejected racial and gender hierarchies. Accordingly, ideas for the White Australian policy came from external political origins.11

Due to the ravages of the First World War and the push for conscription in Australia and New Zealand, doubts emerged about the Hegelian notion of the liberal state embodying reason. By the 1920s, class conflict politics had come to replace social liberalism. Yet key principles were revived after the great

depression through Keynesian economics and William Beveridge’s notion of welfare state planning.\textsuperscript{12}

Social liberalism made some modest advances in reforms enabling more democratic participation. However, perhaps it would not have been as generous if it were not for the objectively favourable conditions that enhanced the bargaining power of the Australian working class. Such conditions included a severe shortage of labour throughout the nineteenth and part of the twentieth centuries, and the abundance of land and natural wealth expropriated from Australia’s Indigenous peoples. This provided conditions for Australia’s capitalist class to grant economic concessions to workers in return for their passive obedience.\textsuperscript{13}

According to historian Frank Farrell, most political organisations including those of the ‘left’ supported the exclusionist White Australia policy. This ensured greater demand than supply in the labour market, granting greater bargaining power for wages and conditions.\textsuperscript{14} Although social liberalism never consciously advocated for racial inequalities, it attempted to civilise rather than to replace capitalism. This meant the higher living standards of Australian workers had to come at the expense of those it excluded.

Arbitration and conciliation reduces workers’ demands to wages and conditions, consenting to the reduction of work to being an expendable

\begin{footnotes}
\item[12] Ibid. p. 89.
\end{footnotes}
However, women were also definitely disadvantaged by this policy. Wages laid down by the Harvester Judgment only accounted for a family of five. This failed to account for research into the extent of family expenses or the extent of women’s responsibilities. As it was fixed that women’s labour was worth only fifty per cent of mens, women could not earn enough to independently support a family.  

Despite such criticisms it should be noted that ‘Although the liberal progressives were certainly committed to the maintenance of a harmonious capitalist order, they were not for the most part themselves owners or controllers of the means of production and their relations with the capitalist class proper were often quite strained.’ Also, by acknowledging the existence of trade unions legally through registration, weaker trade unions were assisted and the trade union movement as an entirety was better positioned against capital.  

Reforms won within Australia allowed for more radical politics to establish an audience. There was a rise in living standards due to an economic boom following the Second World War. A number of political movements emerged demanding more than liberal democracy was willing to provide; socially meaningful employment, education that cultivates human imagination, and

---

increasing demands from women’s liberation and ethnic minority movements.\textsuperscript{19} In addition, successful national liberation struggles in Vietnam, Algeria and Nicaragua were challenging imperialist foreign policy. Also the ‘cultural revolution’ movements of the 1960s and 1970s challenged the domination of bureaucratic political organisations through development of grassroots-based political actions.\textsuperscript{20} The vigour of the anti-Vietnam War movement following the Tet Offensive in 1968 pressured the Gorton government into cutting off troop deployments. This was followed by a planned withdrawal from the latter part of 1969 until 1972 under successive governments. This was crucial in emboldening the Australian public.\textsuperscript{21}

The Emergence of the New Right

There were concerns about the radicalising potential of these and similar political upsurges. This led figures aligned to the business community to begin setting up academic institutions inside and outside of universities promoting pro-market and socially conservative forms of thought.\textsuperscript{22} Fredrick von Hayek in particular offered a critique of socialism and a defence of economic liberalism. He provided links between the Austrian School of Economics and the London School of Economics and also went on to influence others in the Mount Pelerin Society and the Institute of Economic Affairs.\textsuperscript{23} The rapid proliferation of conservative think tanks within America during the 1970s was

\textsuperscript{19} Gross, Bertram. \textit{Friendly Fascism}, South End Press, Boston, 1983, p. 99


successfully transferred to Britain and Australia. Anthony Fisher, for instance, who worked in the IEA, set up what was to become the Manhattan Institute for Policy Research in the US. He was also involved in developing the Centre for Independent Studies in Australia and most importantly created the Atlas Economic Research Foundation. When this merged with the Institute of Humane Studies, it became the headquarters controlling the establishment of think tanks and research institutes around the world. Atlas helped develop over 78 institutes and had ties to another 88 bodies in 55 different countries.

Australian corporate firms, according to Sharon Beder ‘...substantially increased their level of resources and commitment to monitoring and influencing the political environment'; ensured their senior executives were effective political operatives in their dealings with politicians and bureaucrats; hired consulting firms to help with government submissions; and established government relations units within their companies with direct access to the Chief Executive Officer.'

After the election of the Labor government in 1972 there was a call for setting up a national propaganda organisation, which was established in 1975 and called Enterprise Australia (EA). In targeting high school leavers EA used surveys to determine their attitudes towards free enterprise. With the approval of each state department of education in Australia, EA then distributed

---


materials to high schools to ‘correct negative conceptions’.\textsuperscript{28} During that same year the Liberal Party gained government. Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser argued that the state had over allocated its role in public affairs and rejected Keynesian economic theory. In 1982 all vestiges of social liberalism were dropped from the Liberal Party’s platform.\textsuperscript{29}

Yet even before the Liberal Party reclaimed power, key aspects of social liberalism were being eroded away. After joining the O.E.C.D. (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) in 1971, Australia followed its recommendations. This included reducing trade barriers, such as tariffs, and persuading the labour movement to negotiate directly with government and big business.\textsuperscript{30} Instead of nationalising industries it was preferred that the private sector be controlled by the government appointing directors and through buying shares. Moreover, Australian firms were encouraged to go transnational in co-operation with foreign companies.\textsuperscript{31} Apart from policies exposing the national economy to global market demands, the principle of egalitarianism was also beginning to be questioned. Some went as far as accusing it of levelling hardworking, gifted individuals to similar treatment that the inferior underclass received from the state.\textsuperscript{32} Meanwhile, politicians recruited from the working class were replaced with administrators with high levels of professional skills to represent the growing interests of a growing

\textsuperscript{30} Cately, Robert; McFarlane, Bruce. \textit{From Tweedle Dum to Tweedle Dee: The New Labor Government in Australia}, Australia and New Zealand Book Company, Sydney, 1974, pp. 16–19.
\textsuperscript{31} Ibid. pp. 5, 70.
\textsuperscript{32} Gross, Bertram. \textit{Friendly Fascism}, p. 201.
middle class.\textsuperscript{33} And since Gough Whitlam’s dismissal in 1975 there has been a strong tendency within the ALP to attempt to win the support of big business and in particular the corporatocracy.\textsuperscript{34}

‘Corporatocracy’ was coined by economist Jeffrey Sachs in his analysis of American politics. The term has been used to express the overrepresentation of corporate and wealthy interests in political life. Since the 1980s in the US the powers of federal government have exclusively served large corporations enabling them to further their own interests.\textsuperscript{35} With the sharp increase of funds spent on election campaigns, focus on financial support has become an ongoing central priority. However, campaign contributions to the major parties come from the same source. As both parties try to satisfy the desires of corporations, their politics has had to shift significantly to the right of the true values of American citizens.\textsuperscript{36} For instance, numerous policies of president Obama are virtually identical to those of former president Bush junior.\textsuperscript{37} The corporatocracy’s economic power is transferred into political power through campaign contributions, corporate lobbying and the revolving door of jobs between government and industry. In turn this political power is converted back into economic power through tax cuts, deregulation and privatisation.\textsuperscript{38} On the surface this analysis of government being reduced into an instrument

\begin{thebibliography}{10}

\bibitem{33} Cately, Robert; McFarlane, Bruce. \textit{Tweedle Dum to Tweedle Dee: The New Labor Government in Australia}, 1974, pp. 9–10


\bibitem{35} Sachs, Jeffrey. \textit{The Price of Civilisation: Reawakening American Virtue and Prosperity}, 2011, pp.48, 115. It should be noted that as with previous ruling elites, the interests of corporatocracy vary according to which sectors of the economy they have a stake in.

\bibitem{36} Ibid. pp.109, 114.

\bibitem{37} Ibid. p.113.

\bibitem{38} Ibid, pp.63, 116-7.
\end{thebibliography}
of powerful corporations may not seem new. However, as will be further explained in chapter five, control of governments by corporations has reached new levels. Corporatocracy is not merely another synonym for the ruling capitalist class. With the rise of globalisation there have been winners and losers. Besides workers, certain sectors of capital have also lost out. As such, corporatocracy will be associated with the emergence of an international capitalist class. This new entity has won the favour of nation-states to the detriment of local and national fractions of capital.

The New Right within Australia and elsewhere consisted of a combination of the political ideologies of neo-liberalism and neo-conservatism. Despite obvious contradictions between these two streams of thought Cately and McFarlane note ‘…contradiction may be strength rather than a weakness, enabling the New Right to switch the grounds of its legitimations at will.’

The neo-liberal (libertarian) wing of the New Right projects the individual consumer as being the key agent within society. As such, the market serving private need is of most importance. Consumer protection under law, as well as healthy competition between providers, presumably ensures that the diverse needs of pluralism can be realised through the consumption of private goods.

This view derives from the early development of classical liberalism and has been developed by proponents such as Robert Nozick. It assumes the Lockean notion that since the universe contains self-sufficient individuals, the role of government is to uphold the institution of private property. The state’s role is to be kept to a minimum as it is deemed to interfere with the free choice of the

---


individual. Market contracts promoting private choice on the other hand should be granted a maximum role in social relations.\textsuperscript{42}

Frederick von Hayek explicated that social institutions such as language have been successful because they are unplanned and therefore more flexible. Relations between individuals and wider society are too complex to set up a priori rules. A free-market economy is therefore preferable to models subordinate to economic planning.\textsuperscript{43} Von Hayek complained that more and more parties were infected with what he called ‘collectivism’ meaning ‘the deliberate organization of the labor of society for a definite social goal.’\textsuperscript{44} The problem of collectivism was that through the pursuit of social goals, individuals were reduced into a means for that end.\textsuperscript{45} Such an instrumental approach towards social change moreover distorted the very meaning of truth: ‘… it becomes something to be laid down by authority, something which has to be believed in the interest of the unity of the organized effort, and which may have to be altered as exigencies of this organized effort to require it.’\textsuperscript{46} And, as he concludes, an underestimation of the complexities of economic planning inevitably lead to despotism: ‘There need be little difficulty in planning the economic life of a family, comparatively little in a small

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Ibid. pp. 24–5.
\item Fredrick, Von Hayek. The Road to Serfdom, 1944, p. 95.
\item Ibid. p. 167.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
community. But as the scale increases, the amount of agreement on the order of ends decreases and the necessity to rely on force and compulsion grows.\textsuperscript{47}

Neo-liberalism led to policies such as deregulation and increasing privatisation as it is assumed to lead to greater accountability through private ‘self-regulation’.\textsuperscript{48} To attract investment, taxes were lowered, requiring public spending by government and wages to be reduced.\textsuperscript{49} Lower wages could in turn be justified as a measure to reduce unemployment. Milton Friedman claimed that unemployment is caused by inflation, thereby needing to be addressed first.\textsuperscript{50}

According to academic Ruth Levitas, who has traced the ideas of the New Right, neo-liberalism can be summed up by three principles:

i) Accountability – for those who can pay.

ii) Efficiency – aiming to meet market demands rather than needs.

iii) Freedom – absence of regulation of the market.\textsuperscript{51}

This extreme form of laissez-faire capitalism can be justified by considering the pursuit of self-interest as a moral virtue.\textsuperscript{52} Social benefit and security under neo-liberalism is measured through market performance rather than through cultural institutions. The general good is thereby equated with

\textsuperscript{47}Ibid. pp. 227–8.


\textsuperscript{49}Ibid. p. 90.


\textsuperscript{52}In Green, David. The New Right, 1987, pp. 51–2.
economic growth. Specific interest groups apart from the business community are viewed as being obstructive to this main aim.\textsuperscript{53} In regard to foreign relations, the metaphor that every nation is like a person, is used. Hence less industrialised countries are viewed as being the children of (and therefore subordinate to) more industrialised ‘adult’ nations.\textsuperscript{54}

According to Robert Nozick, this libertarianism does not seek ‘coercive’ measures for assisting the poor, instead leaving a minimalist state to encourage the pursuit of multiple utopias.\textsuperscript{55} However, this libertarian principle is removed from policy areas around national security and the family.\textsuperscript{56}

Moreover, neo-liberalism draws upon public choice theory originating in the late 1940s and early 1950s\textsuperscript{57} as well as social choice theory to delegitimise policies calling on more state involvement. Both theories, in different ways, argue that self-interested behaviour reduces the efficiency of the state in providing services to the public. Social choice theorists argue state provisions fall short of public needs by inadequately deriving these social needs from individual preferences. Public choice theorists on the other hand argue that because the motive of bureaucrats is to expand budgetary expense to increase votes, and voters seek to minimise their own personal cost while maximising


benefits, the state ends up oversupplying public goods.\textsuperscript{58} Neo-liberals use this as a reason why more public services need to be privatised and deregulated.\textsuperscript{59} Yet this false dichotomy between the discipline of the market and other institutions overlooks the similarities between their internal rules and practices. Firms (being institutions themselves) need to constrain self-interested personnel for the collective purpose of profit-making, thereby making it no longer different from other institutions.\textsuperscript{60} Seeking to delegate decision-making to the economic market and institute deteriorating workplace conditions, neo-liberalism also produces a decline in the quality of community services and parenting. This in turn may cause a reduction in labour productivity: ‘Market growth thus raises some of the costs of implanting and maintaining the moral standards on which market-efficiency depends.’\textsuperscript{61}

The premise of ‘homo economicus’ assumes that there is only one motive for all instances of political behaviour regardless of context.\textsuperscript{62} Yet the way people vote, for instance, is motivated by considerations other than material gain.\textsuperscript{63} Various emergent movements indicate a variety of motivations at play. Deep ecologists argue that animals and ecosystems are valuable in their own right, regardless of how they may serve human needs. The women’s liberation movement managed to persuade men to give up some of their exclusive

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{60} Stretton, Hugh; Orchard, Lionel. \textit{Public Goods, Public Enterprise, Public Choice: Theoretical Foundations of the Contemporary Attack on Government}, pp. 7–11.
\item \textsuperscript{61} Ibid. pp. 174–5.
\item \textsuperscript{62} Ibid. p. 127.
\item \textsuperscript{63} Ibid. p. 131. Hegel’s ‘struggle for recognition’ is another motivation often overlooked. See Chapter 4.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
privileges granting women the right to vote, equal pay and career opportunities in the professions.\textsuperscript{64}

The neo-conservative wing of the New Right, on the other hand, runs on values that are rather different and conflict to some degree with neo-liberalism. Conservatism emerged in response to the French Revolution and the effects of social changes resulting from growing industrialisation. The conservative movement valued the preservation of traditions, superstitions and customs, as opposed to embracing social changes based on human reason. As such, it was (and remains) hostile to the Enlightenment project.\textsuperscript{65} Inherited social and economic structures are conceived as more important than the welfare of any individual or group. Thus democracy was considered expendable, as otherwise it could lead to people questioning the social order.\textsuperscript{66} Conservatives have a preference for hierarchical, inequitable social relations. Its social values as opposed to economic values can therefore be incorporated by neo-liberalism. Hence, there is the potential for an alliance between both.\textsuperscript{67} Ironically books such as \textit{The Road to Serfdom} came to influence British conservatives rather than the liberals. Therefore, the term ‘Thatcherism’ emerged to describe the combination of neo-liberalism and conservative values.\textsuperscript{68} Moreover, conservatives can see how social inequalities and a hierarchical structure can be maintained through embracing neo-liberal policies within economic affairs. Meanwhile the family is viewed by neo-

\textsuperscript{64} Ibid. pp. 235–7, 245, 247
\textsuperscript{67} Ibid. pp. 94–5.
conservatives as the prime institution in which an allegiance to conservative values can be developed. Neo-liberals have taken advantage of this by externalising the costs involved in social-economic reproduction to the family unit. Additionally, as a hierarchy exists within the family, for neo-conservatives wider society too must naturally be hierarchical. As Levitas observes: ‘The necessarily hierarchical structure of the family derives from the natural dependence of the child, and is then extrapolated to legitimise the hierarchical structure of society. The family envisaged here is not merely hierarchical but patriarchal.’

Neo-conservatives have argued post-war generations have been spoiled due to a lack of conservative values and in viewing instant gratification as an inherent right rather than a reward for hard work. With the rise of social and political movements during the 1960s, public expectations encroached on both the political and the economic needs of the social order. There have been instances where neo-liberalism managed to capitalise on these concerns by incorporating them. For instance Margaret Thatcher stated that the free market is designed ‘…not to emancipate the entrepreneur but to chastise the feckless, an instrument not of liberation but of discipline.’

Between both neo-liberal and neo-conservative wings of the New Right lies an important commonality. Both provide justifications for various inequalities that were being increasingly criticised by the broader public. The assistance of

---

70 Ibid. p. 75.
scientific arguments from sociobiology has provided a veil of objectivity for these political forces in justifying their world views:

The growth of biological determinist thought and argument in the early 1970s was precisely a response to the militant demands that increasingly could not be met. It was an attempt to deflect the force of their pressure by denying their legitimacy. The demand by blacks for equal economic reward and social status, it is claimed, is illegitimate because blacks are biologically less capable of dealing with the high abstractions that bring high rewards. The demand of women for equality is unwarranted because male domination has been built into our genes by generations of evolution. The demand for parents for a restructuring of schools to educate their illiterate children cannot be met because their children have dysfunctional brains. The violence of blacks against the property of landlords and merchants is not the outcome of powerlessness of the propertyless but the consequence of brain lesions. For each militancy, there is an appropriately tailored biological explanation that deprives it of its legitimacy. Biological determinism is a powerful and flexible form of ‘blaming the victim.’ As such, we must expect it to become more prominent and diversified as the possibility of accommodating to demands shrinks.  

Feudal ideology justified social hierarchy, claiming that one acquired traits and abilities through the blood of one’s ancestors. Inequalities under capitalism on the other hand were justified as a natural part everyday life. Using the metaphor of society as a machine, egoistic power struggles were

\footnote{Ibid. pp. 38, 46.}

Whereas René Descartes exempted human consciousness from the mechanical world, Thomas Hobbes was the first to include humans as part of this mechanical order. Hobbes theorised that physical stimuli led to the development of human imagination, memory and understanding. These combined to regulate thought processes: ‘For besides Sense, and Thoughts, and trayne of thoughts, the mind of man has no other motion; though by the help of Speech, and Method, the same Facultyes may be improved to such a height, as to distinguish men from all other living creatures.’\footnote{Ibid. p. 23.} Arguing that the human species is innately selfishly moved by their appetites and aversions, reason could be assessed upon its conduciveness in attaining pleasures and avoiding pains. Thus power is considered in terms of any means that can serve this end.\footnote{Ibid. p. 62.} Henceforth, the pursuit of power becomes the central aim of all individuals. CB Macpherson explains how consequently; ‘…the power of every man opposes the power of every other man. That postulate, along with the physiological postulate that every man seeks to continue his own motion, is enough to produce the search of every man for power over others.’\footnote{Macpherson, C. B. \textit{The Political Theory of Possessive Individualism: Hobbes to Locke}, Oxford University Press, London, 1962, p. 40.} It is not surprising that, following these assumptions, Hobbes was concerned where this struggle against all would lead human civilisation unless its behaviour was severely curtailed by absolutist monarchical rule.
However, it was John Locke rather than Hobbes who was able to take into account the possibility that class divisions could emerge from such power struggles. According to C.B. Macpherson:

His [Hobbes’] model failed to correspond to the possessive market model in that he did not allow for the existence of a politically significant unequal classes. He saw society as so necessarily fragmented by the struggle of each for power over others that all were equal in insecurity. He failed to see that the very same characteristic of a society which makes it an incessant competition of each for power over others, makes it also an unequal class-divided society. The characteristic is the all-pervasive market relationship. Only where all men’s powers are marketable commodities there is necessarily a division of society into unequal classes.\(^77\)

Facilitating this development of the capitalist class, Locke argued that humans could mix their labour with the raw materials of the world. This created ‘property’ that they were then exclusively entitled to:

Through the earth and all inferior creatures be common to all men, yet every man has a ‘property’ in his own ‘person’. This nobody has any right to but himself. The ‘labour’ of his body and the ‘work’ of his hands, we may say, are properly his. Whatevsoever, then, he removes out of the state that nature hath provided and left in it, he hath mixed his labour with it, and joined to it something that is his own, and thereby makes it his property. It being by him removed from the common state Nature placed in it, it hath by this labour something annexed to it that

\(^77\) Ibid. p. 93.
excludes the common right of other men. For this ‘labour’ being the unquestionable property of the labourer, no man but he can have a right to what it is once joined to…

However, he also specifies that ‘…at least where there is enough, and as good left in common to others.’

Yet by allowing surplus goods to be exchanged for money, Locke provided opportunity for limitless accumulation of wealth. This notion of private property was adopted at a time where most property was attained for small-scale agricultural production. ‘After the Industrial Revolution, however, Locke’s arguments were applied in tact to the new corporate concentrations of enormous wealth.’

The success or failure in protecting private property under Locke’s political philosophy becomes the central criterion in assessing the legitimacy of government. Since slaves, women, and members of the working class do not own property they were not considered as having an entitlement to political representation.

The combination, of the Hobbesian account of selfish human nature and Locke’s emphasis on right to limitless private property led to a celebration of what Macpherson describes as ‘possessive individualism’. This draws on the following political assumptions:

i) Man can only be human if he is free from the will of other people.

---

ii) Freedom requires being free from the dependence of others (except for relations one enters voluntarily).

iii) The individual is the owner of all their traits and abilities and owes nothing to society for them.  

This Hobbesian account of mechanical humans has been further developed through applying Darwin’s theory of evolution to social behaviour. The concept of evolution allowed mechanical materialism to be explained in secular terms, for a deity was no longer required to set the universe in motion.  

As such, religious notions of historical progress were replaced by an evolutionary conception of progress known as social Darwinism. According to this doctrine, competition for survival weeded out the ‘weak’ and ‘unfit’ to make way for other species more capable of adapting to their environment. On a social scale, economic competition under capitalism advances the human species by eliminating the weak, lazy and incompetent and forcing human ingenuity to develop advances in the traits and abilities of individuals that comprise society. 

Despite a division between neo-liberals and neo-conservatives within the New Right, Arran Gare argues in Nihilism Inc. that social Darwinism is nevertheless a common ‘world orientation’. As such it becomes embodied unconsciously through everyday practices as a result of constant exposure through everyday language, institutional norms and interpersonal relationships. It becomes a part of their ‘habitus’. So despite its

---

84 Ibid. p. 148.
obscurity within political discourse, much of the contradictory judgments made by the New Right are informed by social Darwinist assumptions.

Further developments in science have allowed this orientation to claim that individual behaviour is determined by genetic make-up, and societies by the individual competition they contain. However, as Rose and Kamin argue, such views derive from a reductionist approach: ‘In formal language, reductionism is the claim that the compositional units of a whole are ontologically prior to the whole that the units comprise. That is, the units and their properties exist before the whole, and there is a chain of causation that runs from the units to the whole.’

If individuals are to be seen as existing prior to society, it is argued by the New Right that individual rights exist independently from social and historical context (however, the rights of future generations may be in question). Social inequalities could then be dismissed as an outcome of natural difference. As causal relations between both genetics and environment of individual organisms, is overlooked, political aspects of social relations can also be ignored by attempting to reduce human behaviour to scientific laws.

Therefore policies aiming for egalitarianism are conceived as undermining individual rights and being coercive.

---


It was Isaiah Berlin who distinguished negative from positive freedom. Positive freedom means freedom to act and self-develop. Negative freedom – freedom from coercion – the only form of freedom believed to exist by the New Right, separates the development and self-determination of individuals from their communities. Other people, groups and even whole communities are considered obstructions to personal gratification, an end to which all activities are directed towards. No doubt informed by the assumptions of possessive individualism, this obsession with negative freedom has continued to misguide common understandings of the political objectives of liberalism. One clear limitation of negative freedom is that it fails to consider the inter-connectiveness of human activity. Marian Sawer argues it is societies, not individuals who provide the social and legal arrangements, investment in infrastructure and skills and the necessary labour – without which wealth could not be produced. Furthermore:

…as Robert Goodin has pointed out, the boundary of the ‘self’ contained within the concept of self-reliance’ is drawn outside the family concealing, on the one hand, the dependence of women (and the vulnerable family members for whom they care) on a male breadwinner and, on the other hand, the reliance of the male breadwinner on the caring work performed by female family members. The terms ‘self-reliance’ and ‘independence’ conceal relations of dependency and interdependency within the family. The conflation of the individual and

---


the family serves as a vanishing trick whereby women and their non-market work disappear behind supposedly self-reliant market men.\textsuperscript{92}

Depicting power relations as being solely between the state and individuals is also problematic. The dependence of workers upon employers in attaining their means of subsistence is commonly overlooked. As J.A. Hobson and L.T. Hobhouse have noted, employment negotiations are far from a level playing field.\textsuperscript{93}

\textbf{The New Right’s Influence on Policy}

Through what is known as advocacy, many of the ideals of the New Right have been successfully converted into policy as well as profoundly influencing public political discourse. According to Michael Hogan: ‘Advocacy is what we do when we pursue our interests in the public domain, whether as citizens, as consumers or providers, as workers or employers. To use a hackneyed phrase advocacy is the lifeblood of democracy.’\textsuperscript{94} However, not all advocacy groups have the same level of influence. As John Frow asked:

How has it been possible for a discipline as intellectually shoddy as neoclassical economics, all of the key categories of which (the market, equilibrium, the individual) have long since been subjected to through philosophical critique, and the effects of which in practice, here and abroad, have been devastating – how has it been possible for such a discipline to gain such sway over the most powerful institutions of


economic decision-making in Australia, and indeed over the central policy areas of a Labor Party that should have been opposed to everything neo-liberal theory represented?\textsuperscript{95}

Frow theorises that the validity of ideas is not as influential as the role of institutions and political struggles in disseminating them throughout the public.\textsuperscript{96} There are all sorts of other factors that may have tipped the balance of advocacy in favour of the New Right.

Bertram Gross notes that intellectuals advocating for big business are usually wealthy and have access to private loans enabling them to set up foundations, research centres and institutes.\textsuperscript{97} Political parties that serve these ends according to Ralph Miliband have a tremendous advantage over parties advocating for working class interests. The former can attain election money from firms and can therefore afford to employ full-timers, whereas the latter have members on a low income, who have less spare time and therefore have fewer facilities, contacts and influence.\textsuperscript{98} In having greater networks with the business community than, say, trade union leaders, these influential parties are more likely to prioritise the interests of big business over other small interest groups.\textsuperscript{99}

While neo-classical economics has become predominant within universities since the Second World War,\textsuperscript{100} relations between academics and the working

\textsuperscript{95} Frow, John. ‘Rationalization of the Public Sphere,’ \textit{Meanjin}, vol. 51, no. 3, 1992, p. 505.
\textsuperscript{96} Ibid. p. 505.
\textsuperscript{99} Ibid. p. 69.
\textsuperscript{100} Frow, John. ‘Rationalization of the Public Sphere,’ \textit{Meanjin}, vol. 51, no. 3, 1992, p. 507.
classes have evaporated. This has left proponents of neo-liberalism virtually unchallenged.\textsuperscript{101} The voice of the New Right had moreover been magnified by print and television being highly concentrated (80 per cent in 1987) in the hands of big businessmen, such as Rupert Murdoch and the late Kerry Packer.\textsuperscript{102} Due to their political power Australian governments prioritised, shoring up their support between as well as during election campaigns.

Room for public political discussion has continued to contract, increasing the influence of media on political discourse controlled by the corporatocracy:

As societies become larger and more complex, as traditional communications networks found at church, in the trade unions and through the community start to breakdown in the face of national and global institutions, then the techniques of public relations are more important not only in marshalling to vote to win elections but also in managing all communications between government, corporations, interest groups and the public.\textsuperscript{103}

Referring to the former director of the Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA) Ralph Harris, Alex Carey identifies the division of labour between public relations firms and think tanks. Accordingly, the aim is to target not only the broader public but also the business community. Using the analogy of war, Harris likened this approach to aerial bombardment (winning over the business sector and shoring up their support) before sending in the ground

\begin{flushright}
\end{flushright}
troops (winning over public opinion). Alex Carey describes this political role of think tanks in more detail:

‘Treetops’ propaganda is not directed at the person on the street. It is directed at influencing a select group of influential people: policy-makers in parliament and the civil service, newspaper editors and reporters, economics commentators on TV and radio. Its immediate purpose is to set the terms of debate, to determine the kinds of questions that will dominate public discussion – in a word to set the political agenda in ways that are favourable to corporate interests.

The most important Australian think tank representing the interests of larger corporations, the Australian Business roundtable (later becoming the Business Council), was established in 1980. Comprising 29 chief executive officers from large Australian companies, the aim of this body was to develop as much common understanding and agreement as possible on what sort of political policies should be supported by the business sector. A number of other think tanks emerged shortly afterwards. Such entities include the Centre for Independent Studies (CIS), the Australian Institute of Public Policy (AIPP), the HR Nicholls Society, the Centre for Policy Studies, and the National Institute of Labour Studies. All of the above promote the free market in a broad array of policy matters. In 1987, six to eight million was spent on these think tanks while another two to three million dollars was spent on public

105 Ibid. p. 90.
relations firms.\textsuperscript{107} There is also the Institute of Public Affairs which is another pro-market think tank that was established earlier in 1943.\textsuperscript{108}

Yet not all think tanks that exist derive from simply one set of ideas. There are also think tanks more to the centre and left of the political spectrum. Most influential among these is the Australian Institute which advocates for some degree of government intervention and regulation into the market economy. Moreover, it has no formal political or commercial ties.\textsuperscript{109} Likewise the Women’s Equity Think Tank has elevated the principle of equity in economic matters, arguing that it is a core precondition for advancing the cause of women’s liberation.\textsuperscript{110} More loosely aligned to the ALP is the Australian Fabian Society. The ALP, Liberals and the National Party all have their own think tanks.\textsuperscript{111}

Apart from influencing electoral politics such resources are prioritised for what Dr Feulner, head of the American Heritage Foundation, calls policy politics, that is, politics shaping the political agenda \textit{between} elections.\textsuperscript{112}

Another strong influence upon policy within Australia is the Productivity Commission. This was established in 1998 out of a merger between the Industry Commission (as it was formerly known), the Bureau of Industry Economics, and the Economic Planning Advisory Council. This new body provides governments with advice concerning ‘obstacles’ to productivity as

\textsuperscript{107} Ibid. p. 102.
\textsuperscript{108} Institute of Public Affairs Australia. \textit{About IPA: Institute of Public Affairs}, \url{http://www.ipa.org.au/about}
\textsuperscript{109} The Australian Institute. \textit{About TAI/The Australian Institute}, \url{http://www.tai.org.au/node/1}
\textsuperscript{110} WETTank Admin. \textit{Women’s Equity Think Tank WETTank}, 2011, \url{http://www.wettank.net.au/}
\textsuperscript{111} Source Watch. \textit{Think Tanks Australia}, \url{http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/Think_Tanks/Australia}
well as micro-economic reform. One issue that has been of concern with the new commission is that it could lead to an overcentralisation of information and advice.\textsuperscript{113} Being such a large advisory body, which covers a broad array of political issues, this commission shares in the obsession with economic growth at all costs.

In Australia, various political campaigns waged by the New Right copied American models that stigmatised welfare, trade unions and the public sector.\textsuperscript{114} Gill Seidel has pointed out that the New Right has systematically engaged in the Gramscian political strategy of a ‘war of position’. This is through reconstructing a new political language, paternalistic in character. With this the New Right intends to roll back previous concessions belatedly granted under social democracy.\textsuperscript{115} Public opinion can be influenced using such new discourse to create values, behaviours and ways of thinking to exclude vulnerable sections of the community.\textsuperscript{116} According to Damien Cahill, moreover, this political movement from the New Right consists of what Gramsci describes as ‘organic intellectuals’. It is this vital element that has provided intellectual leadership for the Australian ruling class.\textsuperscript{117}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{113} ‘From Industry Assistance to Productivity: 30 years of “The Commission”,’
\textsuperscript{116} Ibid. p. 130.
\textsuperscript{117} Cahill, Damien ‘Contesting Hegemony: The Radical Neo-liberal Movement and the Ruling Class in Australia,’ in \textit{Ruling Australia: The Power, Privilege and Politics of the New Ruling Class}, 2004, p. 89. However, it is not just Australian capitalists who benefit. Increasingly, it is the emerging international capitalist class (the corporatocracy) who have triumphed over the national bourgeoisie.
\end{flushright}
Cognitive scientists since the 1970s have hypothesised the existence of 'frames' within human consciousness. Within every text an attempt is made by its author to control or frame its interpretation. This is necessary since the recipient is abstracted by the original circumstances of production.\textsuperscript{118} Anthropologist Gregory Bateson argued that language was possible because humans could distinguish different signals. With language, humans could then communicate at different levels of abstraction. Due to this, there emerged what he called 'metacommunicative messages'. These messages do not inform one of what another is saying but rather what they are meaning. This grants the communicator the ability to produce psychological frames.\textsuperscript{119}

George Lakoff explains that the New Right, through its new language, has activated frames of thinking, suiting its political agenda: ‘Frames are mental structures that shape the way we see the world. As a result, they shape the goals we seek, the plans we make, the way we act, and what counts as a good or bad outcome of our actions. In politics our frames shape our social policies and the institutions we form to carry out policies. To change frames is to change all of this. Reframing is social change.’\textsuperscript{120}

An important factor of framing is the medium in which communication mostly takes place. The evolution of media from speech, print to electronic forms has had an impact in shaping how messages are conveyed. According to Michael Hobart and Zachary Schiffman, throughout history humans have passed through classical, modern, and contemporary ‘information ages’ where

\begin{footnotes}
\item[118] MacLachlan, Gale; Reid, Ian, \textit{Framing and Interpretation}, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 1994, p. 2.
\item[119] Ibid. p. 41.
\item[120] Lakoff, George. \textit{Don’t Think of an Elephant}, 2004, p. xv.
\end{footnotes}
changes in media have led to powerful changes in language and discourse. In particular they point to the growing reliance upon making abstractions. As they explain, abstraction comes from the Latin verb *abstrahere*, meaning to pull, drag, or draw away from. Hence, taking into consideration the tendency for reification within an abstraction process, something is dragged out and set apart from immediate experience becoming a fixed reflection.\(^{121}\) Consequently, ‘On another plane, ages places our three cultural moments in a sequence of ever-growing abstraction. Each form of information is separated out from the flux of the world, from the immediacy of experience. And when viewed sequentially, the three ages describe a propensity to draw farther and farther away from the world.’\(^{122}\) ‘As information has aged, our ways of connecting to the world have become increasingly attenuated and distant. Words refer to things; formulas to map relations; digital strings encode processes. From referring to mapping and encoding, our ways of informing our experience have become further and further removed from the immediacy of that experience.’\(^{123}\)

Walter Ong demonstrates in *Orality and Literacy* how past forms of media have altered human consciousness. Within oral cultures communication has less ability to stabilise itself temporally. Being less abstract, oral folk tended to think more in terms of practical situations.\(^{124}\) With the introduction of the alphabet, the spoken word was transferred into a world of visual space.\(^{125}\) This


\(^{122}\) Ibid. p. 6.

\(^{123}\) Ibid. p. 266.


\(^{125}\) Ibid. p. 91.
enabled humans to transcend situational thinking, radically expanding their horizons of inquiry into the world.126

This abstraction is taken further by television broadcasts. Jean Baudrillard argues that television produces a ‘hyper reality’, a reality that imitates and replaces the real simply by placing together simulated images that have no referents (what Jean Baudrillard calls simulacra). ‘Simulations are different from fictions or lies in that the former not only present an absence as a presence, the imaginary as the real, they also undermine any contrast to the real, absorbing the real within themselves.’127

By focusing exclusively on television images however, Baudrillard overlooks the role of content, narratives and ideologies from which television audiences can derive meaning.128 But as Douglas Kellner demonstrates, the ideological resources from television programs mostly lack the intellectual depth required to orient humans in meaningful ways. Instead of emphasising the importance of moral, political and existential choices, television, along with other forms of mass culture, typically offer superficial ideologies of wealth, appearance, and power.129 The pace of televisions’ flow furthermore means that existing ideologies are constantly being replaced by new ones. Therefore, identities adopted from television are prone to instability. Such conditions produce ‘postmodern identities’. Rather than the modernist commitment to particular

126 Ibid. p. 96.
129 Ibid. p. 259.
social roles and relationships aiding the broader community, focus is shifted toward a play of superficial symbolisms through a frenzy of consumerism.

In using abstractions that conflate reality and fantasy, television potentially undermines the capacity of viewers to make rational choices. Neil Postman has, for instance, argued that as television commercials free product quality from scrutiny, politicians have also been freed from the context of their profession. Rather than campaigning about which candidate would be best suited for election, political discourses become centred around images and personalities constructed around the candidates.

By separating messages from their social-historical context, television ensures its discourses remain fragmented and in fierce competition with one another, burying any meaningful orientation for action. Discourses have radically contracted within this medium making it difficult to convey anything that requires patient explanation. The television sound bite from its earlier days has for instance been dramatically reduced. The news media moreover; ‘…are poor at dealing with slow-moving changes and “indeterminate or fluid situations”.’ The news ‘…is characteristically about events rather than processes, and effects rather than causes.’

---

130 Ibid. p. 257.
133 According to Sharon Beder, the length of a sound bite in the US is less than ten seconds and news story reports have decreased to a little more than a minute. See Global Spin: The Corporate Assault on Environmentalism, 2000, p. 208.
134 Ibid. p. 208.
With the ascendancy of television’s place within political discourse, Lakoff points to the phenomenon of ‘hypercognition’ that the New Right have managed to use with great success. This is where political frames can be invoked simply through the use of specific wordings or phrases such as ‘tax relief’. Political opponents of the New Right on the other hand need to talk at more length to their audience to explain their political positions.\footnote{Lakoff, George. \textit{Don’t Think of an Elephant}, Scribe Publications, Melbourne, 2004, p. 24.} For a number of years the New Right prepared the ground, enabling them to use this strategy to great effect: ‘It has long been right wing strategy to repeat over and over phrases that evoke their frames and define issues their way. Such repetition makes their language normal, everyday language and their frames normal, everyday ways to think about issues.’\footnote{Ibid. p. 50.} 

The New Right moreover can invoke their world view with what Lakoff describes as a ten-word philosophy. Words such as ‘strong defence’ and ‘smaller government’ arouse in people’s minds a particular orientation towards how humans are to organise their social relationships.\footnote{Ibid. p. 93.} In addition to framing political issues to promote a particular world view, the New Right have advanced their neo-conservative and neo-liberal policies rather cleverly. Lakoff classes these policy initiatives as strategic initiatives and slippery slope initiatives. Strategic initiatives are designed to either grant institutions greater powers or at least exempt them from regulation and scrutiny. Slippery slope initiatives, on the other hand, attempt to introduce a new frame on a particular
issue. When slippery slope initiatives are adopted they imply the need for a new approach to an issue requiring further political reforms in the future.\textsuperscript{138}

In reaction to social and economic concessions granted by Australian social liberalism as well as the emergence of political movements; libertarian and conservative forces put aside their differences to attack and roll back gains for democratic participation. From the 1980s, the Australian New Right came to significantly influence political policy in Australia. However, the most disturbing aspect of their success has been in the way so many radical reforms (which have redistributed power, concentrating it further) have been accepted or at least adapted to be considered by the broader public as somewhat natural.

Through the use of organisations such as public relations firms and think tanks, the New Right managed to capture political policy. But even more importantly they have radically reframed public opinion from notions of a common good towards the social Darwinist promotion of individual competition. Considering this, it is now necessary to explain how this mobilisation has assisted in establishing what Antonio Gramsci calls ‘cultural hegemony’. In turn why the New Right have been so hostile towards social, political, economic and cultural conditions required for genuine democratic decision-making will be answered.

\textsuperscript{138} Ibid. pp. 30, 32.
Chapter 3

The Imposition of Consent and Its Perversion of Democracy

Having explicated the success of the New Right’s political offensive in capturing the political agenda within Australia, it is now necessary to identify how this has systematically undermined democracy. To do so, however, will require an approach that relates contemporary political affairs to the past, in a manner that takes into account human agency. The ‘orthodox’ Marxist thesis, that every economically dominant class also rules ideologically, will be shown to be the case. However, it will be necessary to make elaborations upon its occurrence based on a micro-sociological approach about how various social agents operate within this process.

Such an approach begins primarily by utilising Antonio Gramsci’s notion of cultural ‘hegemony’.¹ Drawing upon Gramsci’s predecessors, it will be revealed how he applied this concept and understood the role of state and civil institutions within this process. Yet to reveal more precisely how cultural hegemony is developed, instituted and reinforced it will be the theoretical ideas of Pierre Bourdieu and his notions of capital, fields and habitus that will be drawn upon.

Through the manipulation of ‘fields’ by both large corporations and nation-states, and in creating a paternal political ‘habitus’, it can be demonstrated how democratic decision-making becomes unrealisable. Consequently, it will be argued that ‘democracy’, as is commonly understood, has been reconstructed into a rhetorical instrument of social and political control. As such it functions to indoctrinate the public so that they consent to having their general interests subordinated to the interests of the corporatocracy.

Yet the New Right’s success in warping the concept of democracy has inadvertently introduced a contradiction. The general public’s political expectations for even a mere semblance of democratic decision-making to be exercised conflicts with the imperatives of capital accumulation that require the undermining of vital civil, social and political rights. It will therefore be suggested that despite the success of the corporatocracy in subordinating society to its particular imperative, there are vulnerabilities within this seemingly ironclad rule. And if these weaknesses are antagonised effectively, this could lead to a ‘legitimation crisis’ of the existing order.

**What Is Cultural Hegemony?**

First of all it is necessary to dispel arguments that the exercise of state power under capitalism is fair and balanced and does not favour any particular interest group. If this were the case, then political policy would become an incoherent, ‘zigzagging’ between different interest groups. Moreover, a plurality of institutions within civil society supports similar values and practices. Pluralist conceptions of the state also fail to consider that the

---


3 Ibid. p. 172
nation-state is only one site of power. Control over economic investment, production, commerce, finance and working conditions all reside in private hands.\textsuperscript{4} Indeed, Marx observed that nation-states are dependent upon commercial credit (as tax revenue is collected annually); therefore the state is reduced to an instrument of the interest group that controls this credit, namely the bourgeoisie.\textsuperscript{5}

However, the dynamics of class are complex and therefore need to be broken down into finer components. The ruling capitalist class that exists \textit{in Australia} includes traders, entrepreneurs, employers, their families and social circles.\textsuperscript{6} However, under a post-industrial society, a significant amount of both local and transnational corporations’ power is delegated to executives, managers, sub-professionals, senior white-collar workers and shop-floor superintendents.\textsuperscript{7} These people ‘often work to carry out the will of the owners and pass their orders down the chain of command.’\textsuperscript{8} Therefore, it should be noted that:

Corporate managers, despite attempts to constitute management as a ‘profession’, are in no sense a social group distinct from the owners of capital. Managers are that part of the ruling class who appropriate property-based incomes in the form of ‘packages’ and extremely high


\textsuperscript{8} Ibid. p. 43.
salaries more than in the form of dividends. At the very top level of management, this appropriation reverts to the old property form, as a large percentage of top executive ‘compensation’ now consists of shares and share options, or – as illustrated by One.Tel – outright gifts of part of the capital, called ‘bonuses’.  

Australian governments have in turn garnered support from finance capital in a push for deregulation; mining and agribusiness to crush strong trade unions; and from small businesses opposed to state arbitration. Yet the interests of capital are far from being homogenous. Alongside the traditional divisions between industrial, finance and commercial capital, there is also a division between national and transnational capital within each of these sectors. Despite this inter-rivalry there is a common interest in maintaining a capitalist economy and being prepared to defend this overall interest against the class enemy. Up until the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, state power was exercised to represent this overall interest while also being an arbitrator for resolving disputes between individual competing capitalists. In providing national economies with an overall path of economic development, the state is expected to act at times as the collective capitalist, ironing out inconsistencies in private investment by intervening in the economy.

---


14 Ibid. p. 62.
As was referred to in the previous chapter, Locke’s triumphant version of liberalism argued for excluding those who did not own private property from exercising any political rights, such as the right to vote. In the early days of capitalist development, beginning in Europe, this remained the case. This clearly demonstrates how the state represented exclusively the (common overall) interests of the capitalist class. However, as the proletariat grew in size and strength (described in Chapter 1), the political franchise had to accommodate new interests that often conflicted rather than cohered with those of capitalist growth. With the emergence of ‘liberal democracy’ (as commonly understood), a new challenge presented itself. How could bourgeois interests continue to dominate political policy with the support of a public that could at any point become opposed to this agenda?

According to David Hume superior physical force resides on the side of the governed. Governments’ ultimate defence in preserving their power therefore consists in controlling the political mentality of the people over whom they rule. Direct coercion, of course, plays a vital role and can be used especially when opponents are divided, isolated and weakened. However, excessive coercion can become a fetter upon capitalist productivity and innovation. This is why elites are also interested in using ideas to politically control those they dominate. As summed up by Marx:

For each new class which puts itself in the place of one ruling before it, is compelled, merely in order to carry through its aim, to represent its interest as the common interest of all members of society, that is,

---

expressed in an ideal form: it has to give its ideas the form of universality, and represent them as the only rational, universally valid ones.\footnote{17}

This objective encapsulates well what Antonio Gramsci meant by the objective of cultural hegemony. However the use of the concept ‘hegemony’ has meant different things at different times. Perry Anderson, who explored the evolution of this concept, traces its origins to the writings of Plekhanov. Through the influence of Axelrod it was used as a slogan of the Russian social democratic labour (rsdl) movement beginning in the 1890s leading up to the 1917 October revolution. According to Axelrod; ‘By virtue of the historical position of our proletariat, Russian Social-Democracy can acquire hegemony (gegemoniya) in the struggle against absolutism.’\footnote{18} In this sense the rsdl movement was using the term to evaluate the strength and united political interests of the working class. Lenin used the term similarly when he described the role of the party paper as an instrument to assist the working class to attain hegemony.\footnote{19} It was only well after the Russian Revolution that hegemony came to mean something different. It was at the fourth congress of the Comintern in 1922 that the term was first used to describe the rule of the bourgeoisie over the working class. Gramsci, according to Anderson, most likely acquired the concept then.\footnote{20}

\begin{flushright}
\footnote{17} Marx and Engels. \textit{The German Ideology}, 1977, pp. 65–6. \\
\footnote{19} Ibid. p. 16. \\
\footnote{20} Ibid. p. 18.
\end{flushright}
According to Joseph Fermia, cultural hegemony is ‘the predominance obtained by consent rather than force of one class or group over other classes.’

Anderson describes how (under capitalism) the process of developing cultural hegemony requires the exploited classes to believe in the deception that they too exercise self-rule:

The novelty of this consent is that it takes the fundamental form of a belief by the masses that they exercise an ultimate self-determination within the existing social order. It is thus not acceptance of the superiority of an acknowledged ruling class (feudal ideology), but credence in the democratic equality of all citizens in the government of the nation – in other words, disbelief in the existence of any ruling class.

For such deception to work it was necessary that the ruling class not only exercised state power, but also played a dominant cultural role in the various institutions of civil society. As Gramsci explains: ‘The state does have and request consent, but it also “educates” this consent, by means of the political and syndical associations; these, however, are private organisms, left to the private initiative of the ruling class.’

Whereas ruling classes of the past could close themselves off, the incumbent bourgeoisie who are trying to expand technically and ideologically, require the collaboration of other classes. In this

---


sense, ‘education’ of consent entails drawing in those who would otherwise more likely identify themselves amongst the opposition.\(^{24}\)

For example Roland Duchin, who headed a public relations firm, Mongoven, Biscoe and Duchin, identifies four types of political advocates. There are the radicals who will not compromise; opportunists motivated by power, money and employment; idealists who are altruistic and credible with a sense of justice; and the realists who are willing to make compromises and work within the current system. Accordingly, ‘Duchin’s formula is therefore to isolate the radicals, turn the idealists into realists, co-opt the realists to support industry solutions and the opportunists will go along with the final agreement.’\(^{25}\)

Fermia notes that, in this sense, consent means a psychological state that involves accepting existing social relations. Yet there are various forms that it may take. One can consent to something out of fear of reprisals or because one has not realised the full implications of such acceptance. However, it is when one has an attachment to the beliefs and values of a given social order that consent is attained in a way that is conducive to cultural hegemony.\(^ {26}\) In the process, the subject’s sense of history, their understanding of public issues as well as their comprehension of existing power relations are ‘mystified’ to the extent that injustices appear justifiable to themselves. This is assisted through encouraging a general attitude of fatalism and/or passivity towards political activity.\(^ {27}\) In this way, consent operates through depriving those who are

\(^{24}\) Ibid. p. 280.


politically subjugated of the conceptual tools that they would otherwise use to act upon their discontent. They become entrapped within the dominant worldview. Gramsci describes the confines of this cultural assimilation:

Undoubtedly the fact of hegemony presupposes that account be taken of the interests and the tendencies of groups over which hegemony is to be exercised, and that a certain compromise equilibrium should be formed – in other words, that the leading group should make sacrifices of an economic-corporate kind. But there is no doubt that such sacrifices and such a compromise cannot touch the essential; for though hegemony is ethical-political, it must also be economic, must necessarily be based on the decisive function exercised by the leading group in the decisive nucleus of economic activity.

Due to the political complexities of this compromise, it is necessary that capitalists are flexible about which political party they support at any particular point. This will change according to which party serves their interests best given the political conditions being faced. For instance, in regard to the following situation in Australia:

On Gramsci’s view, parties such as the ALP actually serve the interests of the dominant class, even though this may not be apparent. For, though they may have real differences with their conservative opponents about particular policies, they do not challenge the basis of class relationships (capitalist enterprise), nor do they attempt to create

---


30 Ibid. p. 155.
in the working class a consciousness which will enable that class to become a force for real social change.\textsuperscript{31}

One particular role of the ALP has been to integrate dissident groups and direct their struggles into over-centralised bargaining within the confines of capitalism.\textsuperscript{32} However, it is important to note that parties such as the ALP are not politically homogenous. As such there are many individual members and supporters who are committed to the common good. It would therefore be problematic to disengage completely from such organisations. This point is also relevant concerning trade unions, non government organisations, religious groups and charities.

Nevertheless Gramsci observed how an over-centralisation of accounting and administrative tasks leads to a creation of a ‘caste’ of union officials and journalists with a psychological make-up that is distinct from the working class.\textsuperscript{33} These elements will seek ways to take advantage of any lack of grassroots political activity. This leads to an increase in defeats of the working class which disorients and demoralises them.\textsuperscript{34} A favoured instrument used for this co-option is the perspective of ‘economism’. Through this political movements are reduced to specific personal interests that fail to relate to the overall struggle for political and social change.\textsuperscript{35}


\textsuperscript{32} Cately, Robert; McFarlane, Bruce. \textit{From Tweedledum to Tweedledee: The New Labor Government in Australia}, Australia and New Zealand Book Company, Sydney, 1974, p. 44.


\textsuperscript{34} Ibid. p. 69.

Lenin noted the need for the working class to *consciously* develop political leadership to organise and protect movements from the problems associated with ‘spontaneity’. Economism left to its own devices, combined with corrupt political leadership, would at most achieve reforms suiting the short-term interests of workers. To link up various struggles with an overall movement for socialism a ‘vanguard party’ of professional revolutionary Marxists was required.\(^{36}\)

In the lead up to and during the Russian Revolution there were different views on how the proletariat could combat the ideas of the ruling class. Whereas Lenin advocated a party of professional revolutionaries immune (apparently) to the co-opting tendencies of the labour aristocracy. Yet his key political rival in the Bolsheviks, Alexzandar Bogdanov, argued that the proletariat must begin to culturally produce its own world view.\(^{37}\) Gramsci, like Bogdanov, believed that the working class as a whole could, and should, develop intellectualism within its own ranks despite the cultural dominance of the bourgeoisie.\(^{38}\) In his *Prison Notebooks* he contemplates what types of political organisations and institutions were required to meet this goal. He uses the term ‘the modern prince’ to characterise the nuclei of a collective political will, which he took to be the political party.\(^{39}\) According to Livio Maitan, Gramsci keenly accepted the Leninist model of the political party, conceiving

---

\(^{36}\) Ibid. pp. 68–9  
\(^{38}\) Ibid. p. 37.  
it as being consistent with his conceptions of the capitalist state and socialist strategy. Moreover:

…Gramsci’s notion of hegemony does not ignore the decisive importance of the ownership of the means of production nor the necessity of the qualitatively revolutionary breakthrough of the seizure of power. His conceptions have nothing in common with the interpretations of those who, hiding behind the prestige of ‘references’ to Gramsci, want to introduce gradualist, reformist ideas, giving a universal character to bourgeois democracy.

However, to resist co-option Gramsci believed that an alternative hegemony needed to be embodied in everyday social practices rather than being exclusively instilled within a top layer of political leaders. A party loyally fighting for socialism was therefore in itself not enough. Gramsci therefore made the following important distinction in political strategy. Whereas a ‘war of movement’ entails launching a frontal offense upon an opponent in the quest for state power, a ‘war of position’ is a more prolonged, drawn-out offensive targeting the agencies of civil society that promotes the cultural world view of the political system. Emancipation could only be successful if both political strategies were adopted. Given this, a ‘vanguard party’ of the type described by Lenin is suited to the war of movement. However to wage a war of position, the party needs to play the role of a co-coordinator and

41 Ibid. p. 25.
catalyst to the working class. A political party of the type envisioned by Gramsci would establish auxiliary bodies such as educational groups, workers’ councils, a printing press, and so on that could link the party to those social groups with similar political goals.44

Both Gramsci and Bogdanov involved themselves in organisations dedicated to cultural-education work.45 According to Zenovia Sochor, a key distinction between Bogdanov’s and Gramsci’s political approach to that of Lenin’s was that the former were more conscious of the need to aid workers’ self-emancipation rather than having the party acting on their behalf.46 For Lenin, the education and training of the proletariat only became a central focus after the capture of state power and only once he understood workers to be culturally underdeveloped for the requirements of building socialism.47

Confining political struggle to a war of movement, Leninism uncritically adapted some of the science, technology and cultural assumptions of the bourgeoisie to their own ways of living. For instance, under Lenin’s leadership, Alex Gastev established the Central Institute of Labor to promote ‘Taylorism’ within the workplace.48 Taylorism was embraced by capitalists as they believed it scientifically enhanced work efficiency and therefore maximised productive output. Despite Gramsci referring to workers as being

46 Ibid. p. 63.
reduced to ‘trained gorillas’ by this practice, socialists believed that it could be adapted to increase wealth. Through the establishment of a state of abundance, all economic conflicts could be resolved. This preoccupation with economic output replaced concerns about promoting and overcoming of the alienation of labour.

It is important to keep in mind that when Gramsci was writing he was living under the harsh conditions of prison, where everything he wrote was scrutinised by political censors. Therefore, much of his terminology had to disguise his political intentions, making some of his ideas ambiguous.

According to Perry Anderson, Gramsci’s conception of the relation between state and civil society oscillates between three different positions:

i) The state apparatus is in balance with civil society.

ii) The state is only an ‘outer surface’ of civil society.

iii) The state completely undermines the autonomy of civil society.

Depending on how much the ruling class must rely upon state repression as opposed to propaganda at any point in time may help to explain the reason for these conflicting points of view. Whether coercion or consent is taken as the more frequently applied mode of social control may further assist in understanding this interrelation.

---


51 Ibid. p. 12.

While working class organisations must educate, train and mobilise those external as well as those internal to socialist parties, the ruling class must, on the other hand, depoliticise the populace. This is to ensure that political demands do not lead to the exposure of the explosive contradictions within the system. However, people must have beliefs if they are to be capable of accepting the existing social order. That is why a low level of politicisation is still needed.53 Instead of policing public opinion too stringently, freedom of expression for the most part can be tolerated so long as the political competition one-sidedly favours those who have already established their domination.54 Furthermore, an absence of state censorship of opinion formation, such as in the media, assists in concealing this concentration of power.55 According to Sharon Beder: ‘The aim is not to eliminate debate or prevent controversy, because controversy reinforces the perception of a healthy democracy. What is important is the power to limit the subject, scope and boundaries of the controversy.’56

**Bourdieu as an Answer to the Limitations of Marxism**

Marx noted that ‘The class which has the means of material production at its disposal, has control at the same time over the means of mental production’,57 going on to conclude that the cultural beliefs of any given society are imposed by a specific ruling class. However, it is not just this class that actively seeks

---


55 Ibid. p. 197.


57 Marx, Karl; Engels, Frederick. *The German Ideology*, 1977, p. 64.
(through cultural production) to consolidate the prevailing socio-economic system:

In late capitalist society, those who act to sustain the exploitation of workers and the alienation of people from their real needs are not merely the capitalists, but also managers, politicians, bureaucrats, academics, etc. These people, while they may have independent sources and forms of power, nevertheless exercise that power in the interests of capital.58

Such complexities indicate that there are a number of problems in the Marxist base superstructure model. Perhaps most importantly, it fails to thoroughly account for all sorts of counter-hegemonic practices within a given society. For if this is ruled out as being impossible, or is otherwise overlooked, how can social and political change occur? The degree to which individual social agents can affect a course of political events, for instance, seems quite elusive. Ralph Milliband attempts to overcome this problem by making the distinction between transgenerational history – looking at transformations over centuries – and generative history – covering the time span of a few generations. He argues that transgenerational history suffuses generational history, explaining that the impact of specific events, which are considerable in the short term, have little effect in the longer term.59 However, this assumes that a co-relation exists between the historical significance of an action and its time frame. There may be other factors to consider when ascertaining the significance that a particular choice may have.

58 Theophanous, Andrew. Australian Democracy in Crisis: A Radical Approach to Australian Politics, 1980, p. 79.
Another weakness of historical materialism is that it fails to account for different dynamics of power under post-capitalist regimes. Whereas money generates political power under capitalism, it is subordinate to political power within ‘bureaucratically deformed’ workers’ states.\(^{60}\) In addition, Habermas notes that relations of production were previously shaped by the kinship system and the political system prior to capitalism’s emergence.\(^{61}\)

Louis Dupré articulates the very important point, that although human primary needs are physiological and the means to satisfy them are technical, the activity humans engage in to satisfy them is social. For instance, he cites the following observation by Marx:

> The more deeply we go back into history, the more does the individual and hence also the producing individual, appear as dependent, as belonging to a greater whole in a still quite natural way in the family and the family expanded into the clan; the later in the various forms of communal society arising out of the antithesis and fusions of the clans.\(^{62}\)

It is problematic to separate economics from not only social relations but also from cultural beliefs. People engaged in work unavoidably make cultural assumptions in order to make their tasks intelligible.\(^{63}\)

---


By reducing theoretical reason to a subordinate role within historical development, Dupré argues that reason becomes stripped of its ability to supply legitimacy for social change. Similarly, the notion that human consciousness can master hidden laws of nature, and human history becomes problematic if at the same time it is insisted that humans are bound to historical necessity.

Appeals to dialectics as a way to overcome the rigidity of the base-superstructure model must also be called into question. The term ‘dialectics’ was abstracted from Hegel’s metaphysics to be applied to materialism by both Plekhanov and Engels. ‘Whereas for Hegel and Marx the term ‘dialectical’ had been synonymous with ‘logical’ and ‘rational’, for both Engels and Plekhanov it had acquired the more specialized meaning of the standpoint which considered phenomena in development, motion or interconnection.’

This abstraction makes it difficult to explain, for instance, how productive forces could be the primary cause of events if dialectics has a reciprocal character. Furthermore, as György Lukács observed, if dialectics is to be reduced to immutable laws, then humans cannot escape their predetermined fate. If this is the case, then dialectics becomes incapable of solving the

---


shortcomings of historical materialism mentioned above. And in treating consciousness as a passive reflection of material reality, historical materialism unwittingly reinforces the Cartesian dualism between thought and being, rather than providing the monist materialism it promises.70

The aim of political and social theory should be to change the dominating role of the economic sphere. But to achieve this, an alternative explanation of social-historic activity is required, allowing for an understanding of praxis that does not regard the base of its causation as being purely economic.71 This alternative approach needs to account for the interrelationships between different forms of economic, political, social and cultural power, which factors in the behaviours of agents and their interrelations. Such a theory will need to also accept that these various dynamics of power may change over time.

Pierre Bourdieu has attempted such an alternative approach. In doing so he illustrates the reciprocal relationship between objective structures within a given society and the dispositions of its social actors.72 Regarding cultural production, Bourdieu recognised the need to account for cultural, social, and political conditions besides the economic.73 Therefore, he extended the definition of capital to identify three other species. Besides economic capital there is also:

i) Cultural capital – accumulation of socially recognised skills, achievements, awards, formal qualifications and so on.

70 Ibid. p. 1006.
ii) **Social capital** – accumulation of social connections that can be utilised to provide one with an advantage over others in social positioning, whether it be personal or business networks, career occupation, media contacts and so on.

iii) **Symbolic capital** – the accumulation of social recognition and higher valuing of one’s beliefs, opinions and values.\(^7^4\)

This expansion in the meaning of capital was important for the following reason:

Thus the theory of strictly economic practice is simply a particular case of a general theory of the economics of practice. The only way to escape from the ethnocentric naiveties of economism, without falling into populist exaltation of the generous naivety of earlier forms of society, is to carry out in full what economism does only partially, and to extend economic calculation to *all* the goods, material and symbolic, without distinction, that present themselves as *rare* and worthy of being sought after in a particular social formation – which may be ‘fair words’ or smiles, handshakes or shrugs, compliments or attention, challenges or insults, honour and honours, powers or pleasures, gossip or scientific information, distinction or distinctions.\(^7^5\)

Taking into consideration these various forms of capital it follows that culture is ‘doubly determined’. It is not only shaped by the interests of the ruling class, but also by the particular interests of those individuals engaged in the production of ideas. To capture this dynamic, the logic of cultural production

\(^{74}\) Ibid. p. 74.

is shaped by what Bourdieu calls ‘fields’. Fields are ‘the site of struggles in which what is at stake is the power to impose the dominant definition of the writer and therefore to the population of those entitled to take part in the struggle to define the writer.’ In this sense, human comprehension is not directly targeted at reality. Rather it becomes shaped by the outcome of the competing production of truth claims within various fields. In addition, various factors assist in shaping the logic of fields, such as the degree to which statements become reified, the time and money at the disposal of competing individuals, and the degree to which statements stand out against a background of competing claims. As such, individuals can choose to adopt a particular strategy on how to operate within fields. Subjects will usually either choose to conserve or advance their personal position within a given field by following the existing rules of production. But occasionally they may choose the less secure path of advancing alternative practices that challenge and reshape the logic of the field.

As the degree of reification is important in determining the structure of fields (in that the more a truth claim is taken for granted the less deliberative action will be taken up by participants), preference to certain claims over others affects also the distribution of the various types of capital. The existing logic within fields is therefore the reified outcome of what strategies human agents have chosen to adopt when competing. This account of power grants human

---

practice social agency and temporality. Because there are no predetermined laws as to how various fields interrelate, Bourdieu overcomes the problem of accounting for the economic fields’ less determinate role in relation to pre- and post-capitalist regimes while acknowledging their dominance within capitalist societies.

The further question of interrelations between fields is very complex indeed. For instance, according to Bourdieu the journalistic field is considered to have an increasing influence over other fields of cultural production. This is due to the emergence of the ‘intellectual-journalist’ freeing themselves from the full requirements of academia in reportage while retaining intellectual authority. Meanwhile:

Indeed, in a certain way, the journalistic field is part of the political field on which it has such a powerful impact. Nevertheless, these two fields are both very directly and very tightly in the grips of the market and the referendum. It follows that the power wielded by the journalistic field reinforces the tendencies of political actors to accede to the expectations and the demands of the largest majority.

While various fields may overlap and some may have an influence over others, there is no overall a priori law of development as to how they interrelate and may change over time. According to Bourdieu, only empirical investigation can reveal the overall dynamics of fields. According to him:

---

81 Ibid. p. 87.
84 Ibid. p. 76.
We may think of a field as a space within which an effect of field is exercised, so that what happens to any object that traverses this space cannot be explained solely by the intrinsic properties of the object in question. The limits of the field are situated at the point where the effects of the field cease.85

Through establishing where fields are situated within the field of power, the position of social agents and various institutions within the fields as well as what Bourdieu calls the ‘habitus’ of agents within the field86 (outlined in Chapter 1), a more sophisticated assessment can be made of how effectively hegemonic struggles are waged.

Such interactions create a comprehensive picture of the reflexive relationship between the individual and their social world.87 The greater the degree in which institutions and other objective structures influence practices, the less conscious effort is required for their reproduction.88 Individual strategies on the other hand are largely determined by one’s position within the fields, the capital one owns and one’s perceptions about the fields they are involved in.89 Within more informal situations strategies to challenge can be influential, whereas within those that are ritualised, strategies will have less of an influence.90

88 Ibid. p. 189.
Yet Bourdieu observes that the state apparatus can be particularly influential upon all of these developments:

I could argue, to simplify greatly, that there has occurred, since the construction of the dynastic state and, later, of the bureaucratic state, a long-term process of concentration of different species of power, or capital, leading, in a first stage, to private monopolization – by the king – of a public authority at once external and superior to all private authorities (lords, bourgeoisie, etc.). The concentration of these different species of capital – economic (thanks to taxation), military, cultural, juridical and, more generally, symbolic – goes hand in hand with the rise and consolidation of the various corresponding fields. The result of this process is the emergence of a specific capital, properly *statist capital*, born of their cumulation, *which allows the state to wield power over the different fields and over various forms of capital that circulate in them*. This kind of meta-capital capable of exercising a power over other species of power, and particularly over their rate of exchange (and thereby over the balance of power between their respective holders), defines the specific power of the state.91

In extreme cases states may well attempt to close off the dangers of social change through instituting a ‘pathological state of fields’92 whereby the values and beliefs of the status quo are effectively isolated from competition of rival world views. This is never completely successful even within dictatorial regimes. However it is clear that, as outlined especially in Chapter 1,

---

92 Ibid. p. 102.
Australian governments have used policy to severely contain the capacity of alternative perspectives from generating a basis of support within the various fields. This is abundantly clear in reforms relating to the education, media ownership, and the funding of non-government organisations which affect the academic fields, the journalistic field and the cultural and political fields respectively. Distribution of capital is moreover increasingly concentrated due to declining working conditions, academic standards, and deteriorating community services, all of which impact on the effectiveness of the average citizen’s ability to participate. Privatisation of public services also means that other forms of capital become subservient to economic capital as bottom line profitability becomes the key assessment criteria of success.

Even within the scientific field, commonly regarded as ‘objective’, the state has interfered. According to a report on *Four Corners* in 2006, Dr Barrie Pittock and Graeme Pearman, who worked for the CSIRO between 1976 and 2005, claimed to have had their scientific findings censored by management. This is because government personnel had threatened to reduce government funding. Both of these scientists were researching sensitive issues relating to the environment.93 According to Dr Guy Pearse, former Liberal speechwriter for Senator Hill while he was environment minister, it has been commercial interests rather than scientific rigour that have had an overwhelming influence on the environment policy of the Liberal party. Industry associations from the Australian Industry Greenhouse Network, including sectors from coal, electricity, aluminium, petroleum, minerals and cement, have all had access to

confidential cabinet documents on environmental policy – a clear breach of the Public Services Act 1999.\textsuperscript{94}

Such examples illustrate particularly what is going on in the most important field in relation to the issue of democracy – the political field. As Carl Boggs comments:

\ldots even in the event of the corporate hegemony becoming fragile – that is, even once its contradictions begin to explode – any future revival of politics at the level of mass politics will face tremendous obstacles. The deep, collective sense of empowerment that must catalyze such a political revival runs up against not only the awesome might of global capital but, closer to home, the devastating effects of a hollowed-out public sphere and civic culture.\textsuperscript{95}

This hollowing-out of the public sphere and civic culture had been assisted by the emerging dominance of postmodernism within Australian academia. Postmodernist attitudes have permeated through to the broader population through various mediums of mass culture (discussed further in Chapter 5). On the other hand, logical positivism, a paradigm which currently dominates the scientific field, has conflated truth with method, subordinating philosophy to a \textquoteleft common sense\textquoteright view of reality that goes unquestioned.\textsuperscript{96} According to Max Horkheimer:

The positivists would discriminate against any kind of thought that does not conform perfectly to the postulate of organized science. They

\textsuperscript{94} Ibid.


transfer the principle of the closed shop to the world of ideas. The general monopolistic trend goes so far as to engulf the theoretical concept of truth.\textsuperscript{97}

Knowledge of reality is considered to be an accumulation of self-evident ‘facts’. Consequently:

Modern science, as positivists understand it, refers essentially to statements about facts, and therefore presupposes the reification of life in general and of perception in particular. It looks upon the world as a world of facts and things, and it fails to connect the transformation of the world into facts and things with the social process. The very concept of ‘fact’ is a product – a product of social alienation; in it, the abstract object of exchange is conceived as a model for all objects of experience in the given category. The task of critical reflection is not merely to understand the various facts in their historical development – and even this has immeasurably wider implications than positivist scholasticism has ever dreamed of – but also to see through the notion of fact itself; in its development and therefore in its relativity. The so-called facts ascertained by quantitative methods, which positivists are inclined to regard as the only scientific ones, are often surface phenomena that obscure rather than disclose the underlying reality. A concept cannot be accepted as the measure of truth if the ideal of truth that it serves in itself presupposes social processes that thinking cannot accept as ultimates. The mechanical cleavage between origin and thing is one of the blind spots of dogmatic thinking, and to remedy it is one of the most

\textsuperscript{97} Ibid. p. 49.
important tasks of a philosophy that does not mistake the congealed form of reality for a law of truth.\textsuperscript{98}

The New Right has undermined the autonomy of the fields and subsumed social, cultural and symbolic capital under economic capital. In addition it has managed to forge a political habitus which encourages competitive individualism rather than collective solidarity, especially within the political field. According to Damien Cahill, the Howard government employed a two-nations rather than a one-nation strategy in maintaining cultural hegemony. Whereas a one-nation strategy utilises inclusive concepts of community aiming for collective purposes, a two-nation strategy seeks exclusive concepts for generating divisiveness within communities. This latter strategy was preferred according to Cahill, due to the unpopularity of neo-liberalism which therefore had to appeal to conservative values to become more palatable.\textsuperscript{99}

Relying heavily upon negative stereotypes to dehumanise vulnerable sections of the community, the New Right has promoted wedge politics. This is used to distract the population from how real inequalities, especially those upon class lines, are generated.

In Chapter 1, certain manifestations of this were demonstrated. Another example of how deeply engrained certain negative stereotypes have become are the attitudes towards indigenous Australians. Although attitudes have improved since the 1990s due to growing publicity about the issue, a significant section still believe indigenous Australians receive preferential

\textsuperscript{98} Ibid. p. 56.

treatment. When asked how much governments should be assisting indigenous Australians in 1990 about six in ten respondents believed it had already gone too far. Only 14 per cent believed they required more assistance and 22 per cent believed the amount of assistance was about right. In surveys from 2004 and 2007 the proportion claiming that governments had gone too far decreased to 44 per cent and then 31 per cent. This pattern was repeated when the surveys asked for opinions about the transfer of land rights.\textsuperscript{100} Qualitative data from 2000 moreover revealed that some respondents held the ethnocentric belief that Indigenous people needed to ‘fit in’ with the mainstream way of living. This clearly fails to recognise indigenous dispossession and the need to take collective responsibility for it.\textsuperscript{101}

Such views display a complete lack of understanding of how the origins of Indigenous disadvantage are influenced by their socio-historical context rather than some presumed innate inferiority. The genocidal practices of removing Aboriginal children from their biological parents, prevalent between 1905 and the late 1960s for instance, meant that: ‘The ability for Aboriginal people to transmit their culture from one generation to the next was destroyed.’\textsuperscript{102}

Under the Western Australia \textit{Aborigines Act 1905} and in subsequent legislation the Chief Protector, and later the Commissioner of Aboriginal affairs, became the legal guardian of any children of Aboriginal descent deemed ‘illegitimate’. Power was granted to remove children to reserves,

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Aboriginal Legal Service of Western Australia (Inc.). \textit{Telling Our Story: A Report by the Aboriginal Legal Service of Western Australia (Inc.) on the Removal of Aboriginal Children from their Families in Western Australia}, 1995, p. 53.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
missions or hospitals without judicial process or avenue of appeal. Underlying this practice ‘was an attempt to destroy the racial group in whole or in part and to that end, children of that racial group were forcibly transferred to another group.’

With an increasing reliance on missions, emphasis was placed on a religious education. Meanwhile, other institutions emphasised manual labour, to the exclusion of an education about Aboriginal cultural heritage. It was forbidden for children to speak their Aboriginal languages and they were deprived of information about other Aboriginal traditions and practices.

**Consequences for Democracy**

The above patterns described about Australian politics demonstrate that the term ‘democracy’ has been *redefined* to exclude fundamental principles such as maximising public participation in decision-making. It is argued that humans are too selfish to organise themselves in such a manner and that a more ‘realistic’ understanding is required.

‘Democracy’ has been reduced to Joseph Schumpeter’s conception becoming merely a mechanism for choosing between two or more elite politicians to govern. Direct participation in political affairs is instead delegated to political representatives. C.B. Macpherson sums up this relation: ‘Democracy is simply a market mechanism: the voters are the consumers; the politicians are the entrepreneurs.’ In this sense ‘democracy’ is stripped of its ability to

---

103 Ibid. pp. 13, 15, 175.
104 Ibid. pp. 49, 50.
politicise and inspire people in their everyday lives. This flows from more common conceptions of ‘liberal democracy’ discussed in Chapter 1. As Macpherson again comments:

In this founding model of democracy for a modern industrial society, then, there is no enthusiasm for democracy, no idea that it could be a morally transformative force; it is nothing but a logical requirement for the governance of inherently self-interested conflicting individuals who are assumed to be infinite desirers of their own private benefits. Its advocacy is based on the assumption that man is an infinite consumer, that his overriding motivation is to maximize the flow of satisfactions, or utilities, to himself from society, and that a national society is simply a collection of such individuals. Responsible government, even to the extent of responsibility to a democratic electorate, was needed for the protection of individuals and the promotion of the Gross National Product, and nothing more.107

Contrary to this cynical approach to politics Benjamin Barber observed that there is a strong interdependence between democracy and education of the populace. Moreover through building democracy in a more genuine sense, community ties are strengthened.108 Unfortunately, as was shown in Chapter 1, community ties have instead been weakened, indicative of the attacks upon democracy.

This is not all that surprising considering the attitudes of the pioneers and major figures of public relations such as Ivy Lee, Edward Bernays, Harold

---

107 Ibid. p. 43.

Lasswell and Walter Lipman toward public participation in politics. For instance, in Lasswell’s *Propaganda Techniques in World War 1* it is argued that the majority of a political community must be persuaded by its leaders while being dictated to at the same time.\(^{109}\) With the decline of old icons such as the Crown and the church, public relations were considered by Lasswell to be the key method by which this political objective could be achieved.\(^{110}\) Since many people’s judgements are based upon ignorance and superstition, they could still be controlled within a representative liberal democracy.\(^{111}\) According to Bernays it does not matter that the means of political persuasion is concentrated in the hands of a few: he argues that this is natural in a free society. ‘*Democracy* therefore becomes defined as the freedom to indoctrinate and organise the consent of the masses.’\(^{112}\) Lippmann claims that the majority of the public are not interested in becoming direct contributors to political debate but rather prefer to delegate political power to a group of elites who then act on their behalf. In a democracy, therefore, citizens are to be reduced to passive spectators rather than active participants in decision-making.\(^{113}\)

It could be concluded, therefore, that in maintaining cultural hegemony, ‘democracy’ becomes redefined so that its meaning is inverted. *Instead of facilitating people’s self-emancipation it becomes a facilitator of social control.* Authentic political participation has to be consciously and


\(^{110}\) Ibid. pp. 19, 27.

\(^{111}\) Ibid. p. 81.


\(^{113}\) Ibid. pp. 367–8.
systematically undermined. This is then concealed by a ‘self-validating’, perverted conception of democracy. This is a clear instance of what Herbert Marcuse calls the ‘functionalisation of language’ where words are deprived of their means for alternative interpretation:

Here, the functionalization of language expresses an abridgement of meaning which has a political connotation. The names of things are not only ‘indicative of their manner of functioning,’ but their (actual) manner of functioning also defines and ‘closes’ the meaning of the thing, excluding other manners of functioning. The noun governs the sentence in an authoritarian and totalitarian fashion, and the sentence becomes a declaration to be accepted – it repels demonstration, qualification, negation of its codified and declared meaning.\(^\text{114}\)

This current manipulation of meanings is very well demonstrated in George Orwell’s *Nineteen Eighty Four* where the language used by the state would sometimes invert the meaning of words, suiting government propaganda purposes. As Lakoff notes, this tactic is often used when politicians reach a point of weakness as they cannot say what they really mean.\(^\text{115}\)

Unfortunately for public relations experts, democracy can potentially generate expectations for more rather than less political participation:

…while such groups may not take the democratic ideal seriously, this is not true of the majority of the people. If anything, the demands coming from the people are for more democracy, more participation and consultation. Indeed, it is because the people take the idea of democracy


seriously, that the Western state has been able to entrench itself as legitimate. This legitimacy of course relies on inculcating the view that the democratic ideal is indeed manifested, at least to a considerable degree, in modern representative states, such as Australia.116

It must therefore be noted that there remains another contradiction within capitalism. Namely: ‘A market society generates class differentiation in effective rights and rationality, yet requires for its justification a postulate of equal natural rights and rationality.’117 This brings into question the very moral legitimacy of liberal-democratic states. Macpherson explains:

With the democratic franchise, there was no longer that assurance of cohesion, among all those with a political voice, which had been provided by class interest during the time when only one class had had the franchise. It may be argued that the continued existence of liberal-democratic states in possessive market societies, since that time, has been due to the ability of a possessing class to keep effective political power in its hands in spite of universal suffrage. But while this may suffice to keep a liberal state going, it savours too much of deception to be an adequate basis for a moral justification of liberal democracy.118

This degeneration of liberal democracy could possibly be justified in the same sense that political terrorism is often justified – on the basis of ‘might is right’. Rousseau, however, challenges the equation of authority with force when he asks the following: ‘Force is a physical power, and I fail to see what moral

effect it can have. To yield to force is an act of necessity, not of will – at most, an act of prudence. In what sense can it be a duty? As such: ‘...the despot is master only so long as he remains the strongest; as soon as he can be expelled, he has no right to complain of violence.’

Jürgen Habermas’s *Legitimacy Crisis* identifies a number of tripwires within the capitalist system as a result of the rising expectation that it perpetuates within the economic, political and social-cultural spheres. Besides dangers inherent within the economic system of failing to make accessible sufficient material goods, there is the further danger of a ‘rationality crisis’. This occurs when the state administration fails to produce decisions that logically cohere with both the democratic demands of labour and the accumulative objectives of capital. Furthermore, there is potential for a ‘cultural crisis’ where cultural norms and values shaping the expectations of the population can no longer be reconciled with policy objectives. This can ultimately lead to a ‘legitimation crisis’ where the state can no longer maintain the motivational basis for citizens to remain loyal to its existing form of rule.

Habermas’s predictions have so far not come to fruition. In his later works, a couple of explanations are offered. First he notes that the public sphere (where citizens behave as a public body to generate public opinion) has become ‘refeudalised’ – that is, it is now dominated by large organisations doing deals with the state that exclude public participation. In addition, the public

---

120 Ibid. p. 103.
sphere’s capacity to critically examine issues has been undermined. Second, in close relation to this, Habermas notes that it is also a prerogative of the existing order to prevent alternative holistic interpretations from maturing:

…the desired equivalent for no longer available ideologies might simply consist in the fact that the everyday knowledge appearing in totalized forms remains diffuse, or at least never attains that level of articulation at which alone knowledge can be accepted as valid according to the standards of cultural modernity. Everyday consciousness is robbed of its power to synthesize; it becomes fragmented.\textsuperscript{124}

Consequently, people rely on outdated traditional resources to grant life some coherent meaning or, in revoking such resources, their sense of reality becomes splintered. For Habermas then, there is an even worse obstacle that that of dealing with ‘false consciousness’ – that people suffer a fragmented consciousness.\textsuperscript{125}

According to Thomas McCarthy, another problem for Habermas’s prediction is that in failing to account for an alternative agency of change (like, for instance, the proletariat) he has to completely rely upon the contradictions within capitalism.\textsuperscript{126}

Despite all of this, the inherent problems of a legitimacy crisis have not been eradicated; only the broader apprehension of them postponed. In particular, the concept of ‘democracy’ is still required to justify capitalism. Therefore:

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{125} Ibid. p. 355.
\item \textsuperscript{126} McCarthy, Thomas. The Critical Theory of Jürgen Habermas, 1984, p. 386.
\end{itemize}
'The problem of legitimacy thus becomes more serious if people are persuaded that democracy means more participation by the people in decision-making and more responsiveness by the state to people’s needs.'

In this chapter it has been necessary to provide an explanation which goes beyond the confines of ‘orthodox’ Marxism to explain how ideas are socially contested. This required Pierre Bourdieu’s conceptions of capital, fields and habitus being used to illustrate what Gramsci’s notion of ‘cultural hegemony’ entails.

Policy has ensured the subsumption of various fields under the economic, the concentration and centralisation of capital into the hands of the economically wealthy, and the simultaneous encouragement of political passivity and authoritarianism. Consequently democracy has been stripped of its true essence to become an ideological instrument in establishing consent. Yet this in itself presents a problem for the corporatocracy. Through raising the democratic expectations of the people it becomes more difficult for political ‘leaders’ to secure higher rates of profit for the business community. The greater people’s democratic desires become, the more they will conflict with and point to the need for social change. However what would a turn towards genuine democracy entail? And why would it be more rationally justifiable to organise society according to its principles rather than the current system?

Chapter 4

Democracy Reframed as a Master Discourse

In establishing and maintaining the consent of the Australian public, conditions required for democratic decision-making have had to be consciously and systematically attacked. As this is the case, liberal democracy’s degeneration has undermined any basis for legitimacy. However, on what grounds can any alternative social order legitimately replace the existing corporatocracy? Besides the obvious concern that such a system may become even more oppressive, from what standpoint is anyone fit to judge what is virtuous or vicious in any particular action, let alone within an entire political community? If there is no moral obligation to adhere to the current order, must it not also follow that those who have the most power are under no obligation to yield it to the ‘weak’, the ‘losers’ in life’s power struggles? And what obligations do the oppressed have to act in solidarity with others instead of their immediate self-interest?

This brings one to the question: Is life, and particularly politics, nothing but a struggle for power? Hegel will be shown to argue that material interests aside, humans are also motivated by recognition/esteem from their interaction partners. This will be shown to challenge the above ideological foundation of the New Right. Since an interdependence of human activity is required by such needs, it will also be necessary to highlight the significance of narratives for human activity and therefore ethical and political decision-making. With the aim of negating the charge of ‘emotivism’ by revealing a clear alternative, it will be argued that the concept of democracy could be reframed and utilised as a polyphonic narrative. This would re-orient people towards the more
meaningful project of overcoming the self-estrangement of their creative powers, and becoming semi-autonomous agents of history. Democracy, in this more traditional sense of the meaning, will be proposed as ‘the good life’. Demonstrating a more desirable way of organising social relations than present day decadent ‘liberal democracy’, as an alternative grand narrative this could direct political discourse. In connecting immediate political struggles otherwise thought of as being irreconcilable, this could manipulate the contradictions that exist in the current order to win citizens back vital reforms they had lost. This would create better conditions for the struggle for further democratic advances.

Market fundamentalism combined with a blind faith in technological ‘solutions’ dealing with environmental problems such as climate destabilisation and the global water crisis have failed. It will be argued that when fleshed out, democracy, proposed as a counter-hegemonic world view, implies inclusive decision-making within the economy as well as the body politic. Yet there are dangers inherent in both the constitution of a centrally planned economy as well as in ‘market socialism’. It will be argued that it will be necessary to take economic reform towards socialist planning in a patient, tentative manner with some assistance at least in the foreseeable future from the market. Moreover the struggle for democracy will need to be cautious of the reification of economic life. However, one of the most important assurances in successfully making the transition towards democratic self-governance will be in instilling a new political culture that facilitates inclusiveness, cooperation, self-development and broadens the recognition of other identities. It will therefore be suggested that Bourdieu’s concepts of
[various forms of] capital, fields and habitus could assist in evaluating the success of such political change.

**Legitimacy of Social Change**

The charge of ‘emotivism’ claims all moral judgments are simply manifestations of subjective preferences, feelings and attitudes.\(^1\) Since every chain within logic is finite, all claims to truth and morality must originate from a premise that has not been rationally scrutinised.\(^2\) As such, the legitimacy of moral decision-making cannot depend entirely upon the persuasiveness of logic. Other factors, such as biological make-up,\(^3\) manifested in passions and desires, may have more of an influence over such a process. As David Hume contends:

> Here is a matter of fact: but ‘tis the object of feeling, not of reason. It lies in yourself, not in the object. So that when you pronounce any action or character to be vicious, you mean nothing, but that from the constitution of your nature you have a feeling or sentiment of blame from the contemplation of it. Vice and virtue, therefore, may be compar’d to sounds, colours, heat and cold, which, according to modern philosophy, are not qualities in objects, but perceptions in the mind…’\(^4\)

However if this claim holds true, it follows that what is to be considered ‘good’ or ‘bad’ becomes just a matter of opinion. Deprived of a rational

---


2 Ibid. p. 20.


foundation upon which human behaviour can be contrasted and ranked, human morality is stripped of any claims to objectivity. If this is the case, why should the strong and powerful (especially within the economy) contain their conduct for the welfare of the vulnerable and weak? Friedrich Nietzsche rejects this plea as a postulate of a ‘slave morality’ where social mores act as a shield for the weak against the actions of the strong:

There is nothing very odd about lambs disliking birds of prey, but this is no reason for holding it against large birds of prey that they carry off lambs. And when lambs whisper among themselves, ‘These birds of prey are evil, and does this not give us a right to say that whatever is the opposite of a bird of prey must be good?’ there is nothing intrinsically wrong with such an argument – though the birds of prey will look somewhat quizzically and say, ‘We have nothing against these good lambs; in fact, we love them; nothing tastes better than a tender lamb.’ – To expect that strength will not manifest itself as strength, as the desire to overcome, to appropriate, to have enemies, obstacles, and triumphs, is every bit as absurd as to expect that weakness will manifest itself as strength.5

One may surmise that those who have managed to capture positions of political and economic power have become the ‘winners’ in life’s struggle over material goods. Indeed it does not matter whether or not others have been duped into accepting the existing order that functions in opposition to their wellbeing, as this is just evidence of their inferiority. The views of those in political opposition are those of a slave morality, which serve only to advance

the particular interests of ‘the meek’ who have lost out in past struggles. Might
and might alone is right.

Yet emotivism places an overemphasis on the individual downplaying
dependencies upon others. Within the natural sciences, such as biology,
organic wholes are always dependent upon their constituent parts. If one part
within a whole breaks down – for example, if a pupil of a human eye fails to
dilate – then the whole human eye fails to function.6 The health of societies
may also depend on the conduct of its constituents. As was observed in
criticisms of neo-liberalism in Chapter 2, the self-development of individuals
is dependent on a number of provisions that broader society contributes to.
Given these interdependencies, perhaps there are objective grounds for
justifying ethical behaviour.

Alasdair MacIntyre notes that emotivism has come to dominate contemporary
moral discourse. This is due to the denial of a clear purpose in history and
consequently the lack of a stable identity for moral agents to refer their
behaviour towards.7 With the failure to provide ethics that address this
problem, the prevalent view (as espoused by socio-biologists among others) is
that humans and nature are gene machines that must inevitably reduce each
other to instruments to be used.8

This notion is reinforced by economics, often defining human relations in
terms of a competition over material goods.9 However, Axel Honneth’s The


Struggle for Recognition: The Moral Grammar of Social Conflicts attempts to demonstrate that just as important to human relations is care and mutual esteem in the facilitation of human self-identity and an understanding of one’s contribution towards the rest of the social world:

Unlike all utilitarian models of explanation, it suggests the view that motives for social resistance and rebellion are formed in the context of moral experiences stemming from the violation of deeply rooted expectations regarding recognition. These expectations are internally linked to conditions for the formation of personal identity in that they indicate the social patterns of recognition that allow subjects to know themselves to be both autonomous and individuated beings within their socio-cultural environment. If these normative expectations are disappointed by society, this generates precisely the type of moral experience expressed in cases where subjects feel disrespected. Hurt feelings of this sort can, however, become the motivational basis for collective resistance only if subjects are able to articulate them within an inter-subjective framework of interpretation that they can show to be typical of an entire group. In this sense, the emergence of social movements hinges on the existence of a shared semantics that enables personal experiences of disappointment to be interpreted as something affecting not just the individual himself or herself but also a circle of many other subjects. As Mead saw, the need for such semantics is met by the moral doctrine or ideas that are able normatively to enrich our notions of social community. Along with the prospect of broadening recognition relations, these languages open up an interpretive perspective for identifying the social causes of individual injuries. Thus,
as soon as ideas of this sort have gained influence within a society, they
generate a subcultural horizon of interpretation within which
experiences of disrespect that, previously, had been fragmented and had
been coped with privately can then become the moral motives for a
collective ‘struggle for recognition.’

An important motivator in the activities of all individuals working towards
collective goals is that of ‘self-realisation’. This occurs when one develops
traits and abilities that are of unique value for other interaction partners.

Social orders that obstruct or deny such a possibility for self-realisation
therefore undermine the capacity for subjects to obtain a sense of meaning out
of their existence. Therefore humans are entitled to challenge the legitimacy
of existing relations and create alternative social orders more conducive to
relations of mutual recognition.

Following Hegel, Marx observed how through exclusive ownership and
control of the means of production, relations of recognition within the labour
process are transformed into relations of domination. However, Honneth
contends that Marx does not seem to explicitly expand the demand for
recognition to other social spheres (though as mentioned in the first chapter,
Marx’s notion of labour covers all spheres of human activity). In addition,
Marx’s critique of the political economy emphasises arguably more of the
utilitarian dynamics of exploitation, namely the extraction of surplus labour.
This is to the detriment of the more profound moral grounds of alienation. As
such, ‘class struggle’ is often misunderstood by Marx’s followers as a conflict

\[\text{10 Ibid. pp. 163–4.}\]
\[\text{11 Ibid. p. 87.}\]
for material domination, rather than for the expansion of mutual recognition throughout humanity.\textsuperscript{12}

This deeper understanding of political conflicts could be integrated into the development of an alternative political philosophy challenging current unchallenged assumptions of Social Darwinism implicit amongst the New Right. Aristotle’s question is a crucial underpinning – namely: ‘what do we take to be the end of politics – what is the supreme good attainable in our actions?’\textsuperscript{13} For Aristotle, ‘the good life’ meaning ‘living happily and nobly’ is the chief objective for a legitimate political order to facilitate.\textsuperscript{14} Self-realisation through relations of social recognition can be understood as an important component in living this good life. However, to be, as well as to have, one’s actions esteemed or disapproved, requires a common understanding of the purpose (\textit{telos}) of history.\textsuperscript{15}

Currently historical ‘progress’ is commonly equated with maximising the rate of human energy consumption. This is a very limited way of living a meaningful existence.\textsuperscript{16} An alternative teleology must therefore be presented rather than proposing an abstract formula of moral constraints alien to the real motivations of social actors:

\begin{quote}
In place of an ethics which focuses on providing abstract algorithms for judging the rightness or wrongness of actions, an ethics built on narratology would focus on the quality of the stories people are
\end{quote}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{12} Ibid. pp. 146–151.
\textsuperscript{15} MacIntyre. Alasdair. \textit{After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory}, 1984, p. 35.
\end{flushright}
presently living out and on what alternatives there might be. That is, it would focus on what is a good life and how we live it, and consider what motivates people to strive for a good life or to undermine it.\textsuperscript{17}

Practice requires that humans order their experiences, and narratives are of crucial importance in achieving this.\textsuperscript{18} The use of narratives transcends specific cultures and historical epochs.\textsuperscript{19} It is through narratives that social institutions emerge to participate in its unfolding and develop social roles and traditions for social actors to follow.\textsuperscript{20} Narratives describe our world and our temporal relation to it. As such, it plays an important role in constituting the identity of individuals.

However, grand narratives within Western civilisation tend to be exclusive in that history is understood as having an end point validating one true perspective to the detriment of other stories. To address this Arran Gare argues that what is needed is a ‘polyphonic’ narrative which leaves history open ended and gives a place for a variety of contending perspectives.\textsuperscript{21} In regard to politics, this type of narrative would strive to satisfy the criteria outlined by Bernard P. Davenhauer in his chapter ‘Ricoeur and Political Identity’.\textsuperscript{22} Such a narrative would allow for room for improvement,

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{17} Gare, Arran. ‘Narratives and the Ethics and Politics of Environmentalism: The Transformative Power of Stories’ in \textit{Theory and Science}, vol. 2, 2001, \url{http://theoryandscience.icap.org/content/vol002.001/04gare.html}
\item \textsuperscript{18} Ricoeur, Paul. ‘Imagination in Discourse and in Action,’ in \textit{Rethinking Imagination: Culture and Creativity}, 1994, p. 125.
\item \textsuperscript{20} Ibid.
\item \textsuperscript{21} Ibid.
\end{itemize}
acknowledging possibilities of its degeneration and providing recognition for a diversity of identities. This would mean embracing a multiplicity of political perspectives that find themselves opposed to the agenda of the New Right. Each could potentially, in different ways, shed light on how democracy has been undermined and how to respond. A polyphonic narrative may be able to help address the following concern: ‘A political program which successfully combats any form of oppression has to face up to the real difficulty of a loss of identity on the part of those who have been victims of that oppression.’\textsuperscript{23} Helping people to recover a sense of themselves and their place in the world, such a narrative provides conditions for developing meaning from our human existence.

**Rationality and the Merits of Democracy**

For democracy to be authentic, it must recognise a diversity of identities and demand an inclusivity of perspectives within all decision-making processes. This is of particular importance when it comes to developing human understanding. According to Takis Fotopoulos, dialectics, unlike other epistemological approaches, queries what beings could potentially become in addition to what they currently are. However, Fotopoulos is concerned that even dialectical approaches tend to construct unchallenged a priori concepts as a point of departure.\textsuperscript{24} Alternatively a democratic approach that considers all knowledge to be partial rather than complete which is then tested out in


practice, revised in the future and so forth, rules out such a closed system of ideas.\textsuperscript{25}

Considering this, the theory of hermeneutics may provide some further assistance, as one of its more useful aspects is its demand for ‘openness’ from the observer/interpreter. To be authentically ‘open’, one does not claim to speak for others but rather to become willing to learn from that other’s perspective.\textsuperscript{26} Hans-Georg Gadamer, one of the leading hermeneutic theorists, argued that prejudice is employed with every act of interpretation. As different fore-conceptions of reality run into conflict (the text under inquiry becomes unintelligible) the interpreter begins to doubt its initial interpretation and attempts to remedy the incompletion. New fore-conceptions replace old and so on.\textsuperscript{27} In what is commonly known as ‘the hermeneutic circle of understanding’, one interprets parts in terms of their wholes, and wholes in terms of their parts. Within the process the incompletion of parts and wholes drives the observer onward in a never-ending quest for deeper insight into the world.\textsuperscript{28} However, reality is only ever partially revealed and in addition it is also partially concealed.\textsuperscript{29} Therefore, hermeneutics demands from the observer an awareness of how their social-cultural situation and conceptual apparatus influence their perspective.\textsuperscript{30}

\textsuperscript{25} Ibid. pp. 344, 347.
\textsuperscript{30} McCarthy, Thomas. The Critical Theory of Jürgen Habermas, 1984, p. 179.
In addition to these insights made by hermeneutic theory, Jürgan Habermas called for a critique of existing ideologies. For him, Gadamer had ignored the potential of critical reflection, thereby allowing for existing prejudices to remain unchallenged. Habermas instead argued that critical reflection has some force in breaking down traditions.\(^{31}\) However, Habermas was confronted by his awareness that there are no absolute foundations to truth, meaning the social/historical embodiment of the interpreter needs to be taken into consideration. Habermas went on to make the case that rationality is not a priori transcendental but instead located within communicative exchanges. He demonstrated this by showing that all speech acts make validity claims requiring rational justification about the truth, rightness, and personal sincerity of the statement.\(^{32}\) The most appropriate methodology to enhance humanity’s understanding of existence therefore is to establish a rationally motivated consensus under certain (inclusive/democratic) conditions of dialogue. These conditions, known as the Ideal Speech Situation, demand the following deliberation process:

i) All relevant voices get a hearing.

ii) The most persuasive arguments are examined.

iii) Only the force of the most rational argument may determine the final judgement.\(^{33}\)

In this way Habermas’s communicative rationality attempts to demonstrate how existing prejudices can be challenged without falling into the trap of

\(^{31}\) Ibid. pp. 181–2.


\(^{33}\) Ibid. p. 22.
making absolute claims to truth. In attempting to provide an alternative to instrumental reason, and in shedding light upon the importance of democracy within this process, Habermas attempted to replenish critical theory after the founding Frankfurt School theorists. Critics have argued that Habermas’s Ideal Speech Situation implies there is only one correct way to arrange communications. However, as Paul Healy points out, Habermas clings to the values of inclusiveness and the importance of being coercion-free. Therefore, his Ideal Speech Situation can be defended by showing that it is a ‘dialogical’ concept.

Criticisms of dialectics tends to overlook how its meaning has changed over time. Originally it was conceived as a philosophical method for uncovering the essential nature of reality. Especially in the case of dialectical materialism, however, dialectics was attributed to a dynamic of reality itself. According to Plato, however: ‘Dialectic, in fact, is the only activity whose method is to challenge its own assumptions so that it may rest firmly on first principles.’ As Gadamer illustrates, dialectics is a practice of question and answer, where in having questions one admits one’s incomplete knowledge. In being aware of dangers of suppressing questions, dialectics understood in this traditional sense could assist rather than hinder the expansion of democratic practices within human inquiry.

---

Given its importance not only to politics but also to epistemology; ‘…democracy [should be understood as] not just a structure institutionalizing the equal sharing of power, but, also, as a process of self institution, in the context of which politics constitutes an expression of both collective and individual autonomy.’\textsuperscript{39} Understood in this manner, it promotes an alternative to what Max Horkheimer calls ‘subjective reason’, which is determined by what is considered most advantageous to the subject of inquiry.\textsuperscript{40} Democracy would rather be committed to truth for its own sake. This would hopefully translate into the active promotion of intellectual freedom rather than its curtailment.

Despite its benefits to human inquiry, the desirability of democracy has nevertheless been criticised. Plato and Isocrates complained that since democracy grants the same rights to everyone, unequals would be treated equally, destroying any motivation towards virtue.\textsuperscript{41} Plato was suspicious of inclusive decision-making, considering it to the analogy of a ship of amateur sailors quarrelling over leadership. Being ‘stargazers’ rather than true ‘navigators,’ decisions reached would be inferior to that of a robust, experienced, and decisive captain.\textsuperscript{42} As mentioned in Chapter 1, Hegel considered the demands of direct democracy to be excessively burdensome and inflexible in relation to a variety of other circumstances.\textsuperscript{43}


\textsuperscript{40} Horkheimer, Max. \textit{Eclipse of Reason}, Continuum, London, 2004, p. 36.


While recognising the overwhelming demands a democracy would require from its citizens, theorists Theodore Becker and Richard Couto make the following point; ‘…it is not easy to be a good citizen in a democracy. In fact, it is a heavy burden, but it is shed only at the risk of becoming an oppressed subject in a tyrannical dictatorship or an acquiescent actor in inequitable oligarchies.’\textsuperscript{44} Even a wise benevolent despot’s rule would be inadequate as there is still no concern to develop the capabilities of the public.\textsuperscript{45}

Complimentary to this, John Keane observes that democratic decision-making ensures the choices that are made are done so with significantly more care and consideration than other political systems.\textsuperscript{46} More prudently, democracy is a powerful political weapon against corruption as unaccountable power is contained as much as possible.\textsuperscript{47} Moreover, ‘Things could be put this way: the democratic ideal thinks in terms of government of the humble, by the humble, for the humble, everywhere, anytime.’ By encouraging people to be more mindful of their limitations, they are less likely to be blinded by delusions of certainty and grandeur that all too often justifies concentrations of power.\textsuperscript{48}

Richard Brown makes the following observation of how disempowered people have become from contributing towards public opinion:

Thus, the privileging of expert technique denudes public life of reasoned ethical considerations and turns moral-political concerns into policy options, business decisions, and cost-benefit ratios, on the one

\textsuperscript{44} Becker, Theodore; Couto, Richard. \textit{Teaching Democracy by Being Democratic}, (eds) Praeger, Westport, 1996, p. 3.


\textsuperscript{47} Ibid. p. 867.

\textsuperscript{48} Ibid. p. 855.
hand, or unreasoned personal opinion, on the other. As a consequence, the notion of ‘public’ comes to refer to the publicizing of expert opinions or the aggregate of individual sentiments, rather than to the public’s an informed citizenry collectively forming reasoned political judgements.\textsuperscript{49}

This state of affairs has been enhanced rather than diminished as a result of deconstructive postmodernism’s assault on the humanities and complicity in upholding the ‘hard’ sciences. As neo-classical economics has been left as the dominant epic meta-narrative by default,\textsuperscript{50} democracy may provide an alternative orientation for effective action.\textsuperscript{51}

\textbf{Reframing the Political Agenda}

Within discourse democracy reframed could play an important role in building an alternative cultural hegemony. As with narratives, discursive formations assist in understanding ourselves and the broader world.\textsuperscript{52} Michel Foucault, for instance, explained the close relationship discourse has with power:

\begin{quote}
We must make allowance for the complex and unstable process whereby discourse can be both an instrument and effect of power, but also a hindrance, a stumbling block, a point of resistance and a starting point for an opposing strategy. Discourse transmits and produces
\end{quote}


\textsuperscript{50} This has been argued in Gare, Arran. \textit{Postmodernism and the Environmental Crisis}, Routledge, London, 1995, pp. 23, 25.

\textsuperscript{51} Ibid. p. 33.

power; it reinforces it, but also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart it. 53

Critical discourse analysis theory (CDAT) may help to clarify how agents could re-shape discourse to promote democratic change. CDAT was conceived to bridge the academic divide between linguistics and the social sciences such as sociology. It calls for both a micro-analysis of texts and a macro-analysis of social practices. 54 CDAT demonstrates how this could be done by showing that there is reciprocal causation between social action, institutions and the social formation. For instance, institutions simultaneously facilitate and constrain social action by providing a frame for action while requiring the agent to work within that frame. 55 More importantly, the actions of agents can in turn reshape institutions and potentially challenge the broader social system.

For the practice of discourse to be conducted in an orderly manner participants are required to activate their own background knowledge. This includes knowledge about language codes, principles and norms of language use, knowledge about the situation at hand, and knowledge about the wider world. This background knowledge however contains ideologies that have been dissociated from particular interests. Considered as being ‘natural’, these ideologies become unquestioned assumptions of the agent. 56 It is in this way that ideologies are most effectively transmitted through discourse.


In what is termed the technologisation of discourse, these ideological discursive formations are used to shape the strategies and objectives of institutions. This colonisation of institutions is often carried out by experts and consultants who carry with them an ‘aura of truth’.\textsuperscript{57} This is aided by dominant discourses that can at times control the agendas of other discourses.\textsuperscript{58} A very clear example of this process is how the discourse of neo-classical economics subordinates all other institutions to the objectives of economic growth. Being such an extreme example, it is not simply a dominant discourse, but a master discourse, underpinning the logic of all social relations.

It is clear that a new master discourse is required. However democracy as a new master discourse must lead a process of decolonisation. Democracy would demand the importance of institutional autonomy as well as the need to make available a more diverse range of discourses for public deliberation. In revitalising the public sphere interaction would be jointly managed.\textsuperscript{59} Questions over how social events are defined, what it is possible to say and do, what identities, social relations and forms of authority can be used, and whether it is possible to draw conclusions and make decisions, would all be open to ongoing negotiation rather than being imposed.\textsuperscript{60}

The creation of a new political discourse around the concept of democracy in the immediate term could counter the New Right’s framing of how the public understands political issues. This will entail the development of alternative

\textsuperscript{57} Ibid, pp.126,138-9.
\textsuperscript{58} Ibid, pp.138-9.
\textsuperscript{59} Ibid, pp.394-398.
\textsuperscript{60} Ibid, p.424.
framing devices that persuade the public of an alternative world view challenging the philosophical assumptions of the New Right. As George Lakoff argues: ‘What you want to do is to get them to use your model for politics – to activate your worldview and moral system in their political decisions. You do that by talking to people using frames based on your worldview.’

Initially there will be a need to engage in ‘frame breaking’ – that is, breaking the rules of an existing frame drawing attention away from the author’s preferred reading of the text. Democracy serves this by exposing, in particular, the political contradiction faced by Australian governments of having to facilitate capital accumulation resulting in a concentration in economic power, and the demand to being regarded as being inclusive. It will be important to establish new frames that point to this incompatibility alongside the failures in dealing with long-term issues facing humanity.

One of the most important areas for democratic reform is education. Democratic discourse could help reframe the debate around education challenging the presumption that education is a mere instrument to serve the economy. For democracy to flourish, it is clear that everyone will need an education to generate an understanding of their world and their place within it. Thus, education at all levels should be made free and accessible as possible for everyone. Moreover, an education must not only challenge one’s

---

understanding of the social world but also one’s own self-conception of what is required to be a citizen.63

Given the destructive contradictions of capitalism, democracy could perhaps even be used to refine socialist ideas. This would need to be undertaken in a manner that overcomes a common tendency towards neo-platonic, instrumental thinking towards nature and other humans.64 The ‘class interests’ of the proletariat – on the contrary to being ignored – could in particular be advanced in raising democratic demands: ‘Twentieth-century writers often seemed mystified by the fact that Marx and Engels spent much time advocating universal suffrage as the first step in the development of socialism, but in the context of the time it made perfect sense. Equality in the political arena could not easily have been granted when the economic arena demanded the rigidity of class lines.’65

Given its importance to epistemology democracy extends well beyond the field of politics. For instance, within the economic field it implies that the means of production and distribution must be collectively and democratically owned and controlled. All economic decisions would need to be made inclusively, therefore extending decision-making into workplaces and households.66 In requiring maximum participation within all the different fields, democracy points logically towards socialism, just as individualism and appropriation leads logically to capitalism. Hence: ‘Not all socialist societies


64 Gare, Arran. Postmodernism and the Environmental Crisis, 1995, p. 100.


are democratic, but any genuinely democratic society would have to be socialist.\(^6^7\)

To satisfy Habermas’s Ideal Speech Situation, it could be argued that economic coercion can only be eliminated through socialist policy reforms. Hence William Sheuerman and John Sitton argue that Habermas is too soft on capitalist democracies. Sheuerman points to how capitalist inequalities undermine the deliberation process and argues that Habermas suggests little to address this. For Sitton there is no reconciliation between capitalism and democracy. First, alienation of labour being inherent within capitalism is essentially undemocratic. Moreover, the profitability objective would always undermine reforms required for building democracy. To develop an autonomous public sphere would therefore require revolution.\(^6^8\)

Class divisions emerge through unequal social-economic relations of production and then they are reinforced through individual competition.\(^6^9\) Therefore, it is important to appreciate that those concepts and terms derived from a political economy are not merely abstract beliefs, but become reified through the natural process of applying those beliefs in practice.\(^7^0\) Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe’s analysis in *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* do not acknowledge this. Class struggle is only another instance of democratic struggle. Moreover, the classic conception of revolution involving the central role of the proletariat ‘…implied the *foundational* character of the


revolutionary act, the institution of a point of concentration of power from which society could be “rationally” reorganized. This is the perspective which is incompatible with the plurality and the opening which a radical democracy requires.71 Class is yet another identity group whose cause is of no greater importance than any other particular struggle around identity.72 Peter Osborne, however, notes that:

It is the structural centrality of waged labour to the reproduction of capital, for example, which gives it its centrality to the struggle of socialism (human emancipation on the basis of the collective determination of the pattern of economic life), not some a priori moral privilege. The struggle for socialism, for the abolition of all opposition, transcends particular interests; not in the direction of an abstract humanism, but in the concrete unity of oppressed groups.73

However, it should be noted that successful democratic change should not depend entirely upon the mobilising capacity of the working class. There have been many changing conditions to global capitalism that have arguably made the ability to politically mobilise the working class more difficult. (This is explored in Chapter 5.) Moreover, the importance of rectifying class divisions does not mean it should be done at the expense of other oppressed groups. On the contrary, ‘class struggle’ implies that it will frequently need to deal with political issues that address other political needs according to gender,

72 Ibid. p. 178.
ethnicity, nationality and so forth. Moreover, democracy understood as an ongoing process of expanding human relations of recognition, is compatible with the eventual aim of Marxism. That is, to abolish class divisions (rather than perpetuating them) and addressing the remaining prejudices that will continue to exist.

**Decision-making for the Long Term**

Humans are an integral part of nature. As such, humans not only interact with one another but they also interact with other ecological processes. For democracy to become more inclusive, it will need to expand into new spheres of decision-making previously considered beyond scrutiny, such as the workplace and households. How humans have related to the eco-systems they inhabit also needs to be called into question. On this issue neo-liberal policy has clearly failed. Of all the environmental problems, however, the global scarcity of fresh water probably illustrates most potently the stance that continues to be adopted towards the environment. As early as 1990, the daily minimum requirement of 50 litres a day per person was not being met for 1.1 billion people from 55 nations. Despite pledges to reduce the number of humans deprived of safe drinking water, by 2015 there still remain over 55 countries with domestic water use below this level, 35 of them from Africa. According to United Nations projections, by 2025 two-thirds of human

---


populations will reside in countries economically disadvantaged because of current water usage and management practices. In the twentieth century, water usage increased at double the rate of population.\textsuperscript{78} This has resulted in 10 million deaths each year from cholera and dysentery, with 250 million additional cases reported annually.\textsuperscript{79} Moreover, a number of disputes over water flows have created hostilities between and within nations.\textsuperscript{80} According to journalist Jefferey Rothfeder, historically, human societies have had a tendency to obsess about complete control over water flows, which is intimately tied to the question of economic power. However, attempting to control this uncontrollable resource explains much about prevalent attitudes:

Water is the only natural element that provides a reflection of ourselves; long before mirrors, it alone showed us what we looked like. It is doing that metaphorically now as well. The world’s water crisis is forcing us to face our limitations and the limitations of nature. It’s making us look at ourselves to see if we have the capacity to figure out how to share what nature has provided to sustain us, or if we can only fight over it.\textsuperscript{81}

In Rothfeder’s opinion, wealthier nations should have to pay market prices. With part of that money subsidies could be provided for water delivery construction projects in poorer nations.\textsuperscript{82} However, as important as it is to place a value upon such a vital resource so that it is used more carefully, the market would be imposing an \textit{exchange value} rather than a \textit{use value}. This


\textsuperscript{80} Ibid. p. 10.

\textsuperscript{81} Ibid. p. 13.

\textsuperscript{82} Ibid. p. 95.
means that water only becomes valuable once it is extracted from its natural environment for purchase.

Australia, according to neo-classical economic theory, is a wealthy nation. However, ecologically speaking there are some problems with this perspective. Australia as a continent has the least amount of freshwater in the world. Yet 60 per cent of land mass and 80 per cent of water consumption is directed towards agriculture which only provides for 3 per cent of the country’s gross domestic product. The overall number of water licences granted annually under this system of agriculture have tended to exceed the total available amount of replenished freshwater.

In recent years, Australian federal and state governments have been seeking solutions to the continent’s supply shortages. However, the tendency has been to seek technical solutions to the exclusion of political and economic questions about our attitudes towards this resource. Water recycling, desalination plants and the use of groundwater aquifers have all typically been considered. But as John Archer has pointed out, there are a number of aspects of these proposals which in some cases, could exacerbate other environmental problems such as greenhouse gas emissions in the cases of water recycling and desalination.

This illustrates what James O’Connor describes as being the second contradiction of capitalism, namely that the more that the natural environment

---

84 Ibid. p. 409.
(including humans) is exploited within the production process, the higher the production costs will rise.\footnote{86}{James O’Connor. ‘Is Sustainable Capitalism Possible?’ in \textit{Is Capitalism Sustainable? Political Economy and the Politics of Ecology}, (ed) Martin O’Connor, Guilford Press, New York, 1994, p. 162.}

Put simply, the second contradiction states that when individual capitals attempt to defend or restore profits by cutting or externalizing costs, the unintended effect is to reduce the ‘productivity’ of the conditions of production, and hence to raise average costs.\footnote{87}{Ibid. p. 165.}

For instance, once more rich and accessible mining deposits are exhausted, an increasing amount of energy is required (because of greater distances in transportation) to continue mining operations. In the longer term, operations will involve more remote, less rich and therefore less profitable deposits.\footnote{88}{Deléage, Jean-Paul. ‘Eco-Marxist Critique of Political Economy,’ in \textit{Is Capitalism Sustainable: Political Economy and the Politics of Ecology}, 1994, p. 41.}

Though this could potentially be a problem for any economic system, capitalism in particular exacerbates this problem due to its demands for growing productive output. According to Herman Daly and John Cobb, the method in which capitalist economic prosperity is measured tends to abstract away from considerations of human communities and the biosphere where all economic activity is located:

Land was abstracted from the totality of the natural world and treated as an exchangeable commodity. Work time or labor was abstracted out of life and treated as a commodity to be valued and exchanged according to supply and demand. Capital was abstracted out of the social inheritance, no longer to be treated as a collective patrimony or
heirloom, but as an exchangeable source of unearned income to individuals.\textsuperscript{89}

Due to these abstractions, many costs associated with economic activity (called ‘externalities’) do not get taken into account by individual firms but are instead imposed upon a third party. Such externalities include the cost of travelling to work, policing, national defence and sanitation.\textsuperscript{90} Thus, the longer-term economic impact of environmental problems only becomes considered as an afterthought. One of the key findings of the 2006 Stern Report into the environment was that unrestricted climate change could economically cost the global economy 5 per cent of overall annual GDP.\textsuperscript{91} In another study undertaken by the Global Footprint Network, the world economy first entered into ecological debt in 1987. In that year the total amount of sustainable resources that could be extracted within a year was reached by 19 December. In 1995 this point was reached by 21 November and 11 October in 2005.\textsuperscript{92} As of 1995, the International Panel on Climate Change involving 2,500 climate scientists came to a consensus that the threat of global warming is real.\textsuperscript{93}

Capitalism’s logic is not prepared to adjust to ecological limitations inherent within productive activity. Rather, it seeks to manipulate natural developments


\textsuperscript{90} Ibid. pp. 50–53, 71, 77.

\textsuperscript{91} Hilary Osborne. ‘Stern Report: The Key Facts,’ \textit{Guardian Unlimited}, 30/10/06, http://environment.guardian.co.uk.


to maximise capital accumulation. Examples include the creation of genetically modified food in order to reduce crop losses and maximise yield and plantation forestry, which, in the long run, undermines biodiversity.\(^9^4\)

Taking into consideration the exploitative dynamics within international trade, many environmental costs are imposed upon less prosperous nations or regions. According to Stephen Bunker, the global economy consists of both producer economies and extractive economies. The latter extracts and exports its raw materials to the former at cheap prices and imports their more expensive value-added goods. In order to keep up with their demands for these value-added goods extractive economies have to increasingly draw more from their environment. Within this process it is therefore not only workers who are exploited, but also whole geographical regions. Due to the trap of indebtedness, extractive economies end up depleting their own renewable and non-renewable resources that underpin their economy.\(^9^5\)

Regardless of whether even an ‘ethical state’ could intervene into the economy to provide more sensible environmental regulations, future governments may eventually repeal such reforms for the sake of remaining economically competitive. This is because the capitalist mode of production demands infinite expansion and nothing can obstruct this aim:

There is little or no profit in maintenance; capitalistic sustainability depends on profits. A positive overall rate of profit means growth of total profit (‘gross domestic profit,’ as measured in capitalist national income accounts). Profit is the means of expansion, for example, of new


\(^9^5\) Bunker, Stephen. Underdeveloping the Amazon, University of Chicago Press, 1988, pp. 23–4, 25, 28–9, 34, 45, 47.
investments and technologies. Profit also functions as an incentive to expand. Profit and growth are thus means and ends of one another, content and context, as it were, and the average money manager does not really see or care about the difference between them. While there are many variations of economic growth theory, all presuppose that capitalism cannot stand still, that the system must expand or contract, that is, that it is both crisis-ridden and crisis-dependent, and, in the last analysis, that it must ‘accumulate or die,’ in Marx’s words.96

In ecological terms Australia has always been an impoverished continent. Its soil is old, so it has very low concentrations of nutrients. Most land receives low rainfall or is desert. In response, Australian agriculture has been heavily dependent upon irrigation. Moreover, land is often sold or leased at a price exceeding the likely agricultural returns. Despite a shift from agriculture being Australia’s major export to mining since the latter half of the twentieth century, according to Jarred Diamond, Australia is nevertheless doing more than depleting non-renewable minerals. It is also ‘mining’ renewable resources – that is, extracting them at a rate that exceeds their ecological capacity to regenerate.97

Since future generations are likely to become impoverished rather than enriched under global capitalism, the belief in ‘possessive individualism’ supplied to legitimise this system runs into a significant problem:

In sum, the ecological critique points out that because of the temporal dimension in material life, the economy involves allocations of waste

and diminished resources to future generations, and moreover, such allocations arise without any transactions with these future generations, who will be impacted by them. Therefore the economy cannot be explained on the basis of individual choice and preferences. Methodological individualism encounters the insuperable ontological difficulty of coping with future generations.98 Accordingly, for sustainable development to be introduced ‘…someone or something’s interest must be inhibited, trampled, imposed upon.’99 Another problem for possessive individualism is that it fails to consider capitalism being highly dependent upon the mutualism of communities, namely the countless hours of volunteer and domestic labour necessary for social reproduction (in particular the regeneration of the labour market). Instead of providing support back to communities, the extension of markets into all spheres of human relationships tends to undermine the values that hold them together.100

**Outstanding Issues Confronting Democracy**

Considering such inadequacies in dealing with the looming ecological crisis due to the relentless demands for unlimited economic growth, a more genuine conception of democracy (elaborated in Chapter 1 and further above) would enable people to deal with such long-term problems facing humanity. However, no political order can safeguard against the dangers of corruption,

---

100 Daley, Herman; Cobb, John. *For the Common Good: Redirecting the Economy Toward Community, the Environment, and a Sustainable Future*, 1994, p. 50.
as can be testified by a number of regimes that degenerated in authoritarian
directions. There remain a number of outstanding questions that such social
transformation is bound to confront.

Perhaps the most pressing concern would be how to reconcile measures of
self-defence against hostilities without undermining democratic inclusiveness
within decision-making. It would be naïve to expect that the corporatocracy’s
power and wealth would be relinquished peacefully. History is full of
examples of bloody retaliation. The American Central Intelligence Agency’s
(CIA) history has been heavily involved in organising invasions, assisting
coups as well as other forms of political terrorism against nations refusing to
subordinate themselves to the interests of the ‘free-market’. Retaliations
against revolutions, in particular, purposefully attempt to push foreign
governments in an authoritarian direction to thereby undermine their
legitimacy.

The example of Nicaragua following the free and fair elections of 1984, saw a
CIA destabilisation campaign backing paramilitary forces. The contra-forces
regularly targeted civilian infrastructure, committed economic sabotage and
murdered tens of thousands of civilians. Meanwhile, the US imposed an
embargo upon Nicaragua which is estimated to have cost the economy three
billion dollars. In addition, damage waged by the contras is estimated to have
cost a further 12 billion dollars. The CIA resorted to planting mines in three
of Nicaragua’s harbours, resulting in one fisherman being killed and a number

---


of others being wounded.\textsuperscript{104} Strategically, this brutalisation aimed to divert the scarce economic resources the Sandinistas had into military spending rather than popular welfare programs and also force the government to restrict civil liberties so that they could be portrayed negatively.\textsuperscript{105} In the lead up to 1990 elections, the US, through bodies such as the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), channelled millions of dollars supporting the opposition’s election campaign. This gave the opposition a significant financial and therefore an electoral advantage over the government.\textsuperscript{106}

A democratic social order would need to constrain such destabilisation activities. However, on what basis can this be done? The notion of a ‘dictatorship of the proletariat’, through excessive substitution of the ‘vanguard’ for the class, and validating any behaviour that appears beneficial to the revolution, leads to authoritarian rule.\textsuperscript{107} Robert Michels who looked at oligarchic tendencies within governments, political parties as well as other political organisations, found that one common feature they have is the psychological state amongst their political leaderships of ‘bonapartism’. Historically, Napoleon I introduced the notion of the popular representative and later Napoleon III used this concept to claim that he represented the common will of the people. This then meant that any political opposition


\textsuperscript{105} Ibid. p. 315.


could be portrayed as the direct enemy of the people.\textsuperscript{108} This attitude towards political disagreements becomes problematic indeed. Therefore, it is not surprising that the dictatorship of the proletariat argued for by Marx can quickly become a dictatorship of oligarchs.\textsuperscript{109} Moreover, dictatorship in the service of democracy deserves scrutiny:

Now it is manifest that the concept of dictatorship is the direct antithesis of the concept democracy. The attempt to make dictatorship serve the ends of democracy is tantamount to the endeavor to utilize war as the most effective means for the defense of peace, or to employ alcohol in the struggle against alcoholism. It is extremely probable that a social group which had secured control of the instrument of collective power would do all that was possible to retain that control.\textsuperscript{110}

The Bolshevik model of dictatorship, for instance, entailed replacing local and professional soviets by the summer of 1918 with a communist emissary headed by a commissar. In addition to government by a council of commissars, the dictatorship utilised the force of a standing army as well as political policing headed by the Cheka (secret police). All of this occurred well before the rise to power of Joseph Stalin.\textsuperscript{111}

Two stipulations therefore need to be emphasised when considering the self-defence of a democracy. One is that although the proletariat is an important historical agent needed for the transcendence of capitalist relations, one must


\textsuperscript{109} Ibid. p. 228.

\textsuperscript{110} Ibid. 228–9.

remember the long-term goal of the abolishment of class divisions altogether.\textsuperscript{112} Another is the consideration of what Gramsci describes as ‘a revolutionary historical block’. This means that alongside the proletariat, there is the necessity for political allegiances to be made with other interest groups within society. As mentioned in Chapter 1, the socialist project, whilst stressing the importance of the proletariat as a historical agent for change, ultimately must be understood as an orientation seeking an unending expansion of justice\textsuperscript{113} both social and ecological.

The term ‘dictatorship against the bourgeoisie’, less often used by Lenin,\textsuperscript{114} perhaps would have been a better description of the practices of state rule needed to repel acts of political violence. However, for the purposes of a democracy being used as a grand narrative, the term ‘dictatorship’ is clearly excessive. Given democracy’s association with the common good, clearer grounds for legitimate self-defence could perhaps be found in Kant’s \textit{Political Writings}. ‘Freedom’ to inhibit the common good (which for Kant is expressed conceptually in law like Hegel) is not as important as upholding rule striving for the interests of all. State coercion may therefore be legitimate in cases where it is abundantly clear that such collective freedoms are under attack.\textsuperscript{115}

But it is the stimulus for more expansive democracy that must ultimately


\textsuperscript{113} The term justice here being defined as ‘…the appropriate recognition and acknowledgement, in action, thought and feeling, of the nature and thereby the meaning and significance of all beings.’ Cited in Gare, Arran. \textit{Nihilism Inc: Environmental Destruction and the Metaphysics of Sustainability}, Eco-Logical Press, Como NSW, 1996, p. 382.

\textsuperscript{114} Lenin, V. I. \textit{Against Revisionism} [Containing extracts from Lenin’s 45 volumes of collected works], Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1976, pp. 377, 475.

inspire citizens to develop the political conviction necessary to keep corruption at bay:

Of course, at some stage, the ruling elites and their supporters (who will surely object to the idea of their privileges being gradually eroded) after they have exhausted subtler means of control (mass media, economic violence, etc.), may be tempted to use physical violence to protect their privileges, as they have always done in the past. But, by then, an alternative social paradigm will have become hegemonic and the break in the socialization process – the precondition for a change in the instituted society – will have occurred. The legitimacy of today’s ‘democracy’ will have been lost. At that stage, the majority of people will be prepared to counter state violence in order to defend the new political and economic structures. Once citizens have tasted a real democracy, no amount of physical or economic violence will be enough to ‘persuade’ them to return to pseudo-democratic forms of organization.¹¹⁶

In adhering to democratic principles, socialism could be advanced once it has a majority of the population’s support. This is in line with Karl Kautsky’s contentious ‘strategy of attrition’.

This struggle must be waged in such a way as to ‘constantly strengthen the proletariat and weaken its enemies, without allowing the decisive battle to be provoked so long as we are the weakest’. Such a strategy did not eliminate the possibility of ‘battles’, but it did assume that social democracy would only willingly enter upon such a conflict where it was likely to succeed. Indeed,

Kautsky maintained that the ‘only’ difference between the ‘strategy of annihilation’ and the ‘strategy of attrition’ was that the latter does not aim at the decisive battle directly, but prepares it long in advance. As such it is only inclined to engage such a battle when it considers the enemy to have been sufficiently weakened.117

For Kautsky the following conditions were required for revolution:
i) A majority is opposed to the existing regime.

ii) A party which opposes it exists.

iii) This party has majority support.

iv) There is a decline in the political determination of the ruling regime – especially in the army and government bureaucracy.

Such a political approach will need to acknowledge that ‘revolution’ is a long-term process that will need to be taken experimentally, adapting to practice. New modes of social integration will need to be developed and democratic decision-making will need to be expanded gradually.118 Moreover, it should be remembered that the quest for power should not blind one to the ultimate goal of democracy: ‘Such a party must expose itself to the process of democratization, accepting all the possible consequences: in other words the risk of harming and even losing its capacity for bureaucratic action.’119

Another challenge for democracy is what sort of identities and institutions would be most likely to benefit and partake in its development? For instance, could democracy be expressed more adequately through nationalism rather

119 Ibid. p. 74.
than a cosmopolitan approach? There are of course many objections towards nationalism. The issue often left unresolved is how national communities would interact if citizens were to identify more strongly with their own nationalities. Given the complexity of global political interrelations, perhaps some examples of how to approach such phenomena can be assisted by the study of ecology.

There are two common approaches in studying the interactions of ecosystems:

i) *A population–community approach* – looking at interacting populations of biota (living organisms). A biota (non-living parts of ecosystems such as soil) is treated separately as the context in which biotic interaction occurs. Consequently it is difficult to decipher between ecosystem properties and species properties due to the complex interactions between biota and a biota.

ii) *A process-functional approach* – This considers living organisms and their physical environment as a single integral system. However, as the focus of this approach is about flows of energy and materials within a system, it tends to overlook features of biological organisation.

To transcend the limitations of these two approaches *a hierarchical concept of ecosystems* reduces all ecological processes to biotic dynamics. To achieve this, it emphasises that within the biosphere there are hierarchical levels of organisation that are interconnected from the cell, to the organism, to the species, to ecosystems.\(^{120}\)

As with natural phenomena; human social relations from individuals to families, local municipalities, provinces through to nations and the general

species can be understood as an extension of these hierarchical levels of activity. Democratic governance therefore should be concerned with the common good of the totality of these relations. Communities, as distinct from other social forms that have impersonal relations (through contractual and legal relationships), contain personal relations sharing a common culture. To overcome the conflicting needs of local and global politics, nationalism, according to Herman Daly and John Cobb, would need to consider the needs of local communities whilst recognising itself as a member of a global community of nations. Moreover, communities at every level must be left with the capacity to defend their own particular welfare. An inter-continental democratic federation (otherwise recognised as a community of communities) would attempt to express the interests of all communities necessary for social cohesion in political struggle rather than a particular national community. However, as Immanuel Kant, for instance, stipulated in his idea regarding an international community:

…this association must not embody a sovereign power as in a civil constitution, but only a partnership or confederation. It must therefore be an alliance which can be terminated at any time, so that it has to be renewed periodically. This right is derived in subsidium from another crystal right, that of preventing oneself from lapsing into a state of actual war with one’s partners in the confederation (foedus Amphictyonum).  

121 Daly, Herman, Cobb, John, For the Common Good: Redirecting the Economy Toward Community, Environment and a Sustainable Future, 1994, pp. 169–183.  

122 Kant, Immanuel, Political Writings, 1991, p. 165.
Additionally local interests should not be overlooked within decision-making at broader social levels. Hence, political representation would need to have a pyramidal character with direct democracy at the immediate neighbourhood or workplace levels along with delegate representation at higher levels from wards or townships, through to regional and national bodies. To keep delegates in check they should be subject to re-elections or re-call at anytime by the people being represented.¹²³

However, due to the complexities of this democratic federation it would be problematic to crudely equate its expression as Rousseau’s general will. For this reason Herder’s re-emphasis upon culture is relevant. As Barnard argues:

But if Rousseau thus launched upon the world the conviction that people, in gaining consciousness of themselves as a people, could raise themselves up into a self-governing entity by an act of concerted will, Herder may be said to have both detracted from and enlarged upon this belief, by putting less weight on a collective will and proportionately greater weight on an affinitive culture.¹²⁴

According to Herder the world consists of a variety of sociocultural entities and when these diverge it can give rise to growing alienation and fragmentation.¹²⁵ So instead of conceiving of one undivided loyalty to the state, Herder instead conceives of a set of plural loyalties bonded together by the creation of allegiances, ‘…a complex of organisms than a single

¹²⁵ Ibid. pp. 135, 144.
organism’. Complimentary to this (as was mentioned in Chapter 1) Diderot acknowledged a plurality of general wills where every community must align its interests with the common good of a greater whole. So instead of one epic universal will, there would be a multiplicity of community associations expressing their own democratic wills with the intention of acting in cooperation with one another to attain favourable outcomes for every community. As Proudhon would describe it, we would have federations – defined by the Latin word foedus meaning pact, treaty, alliance. Yet such federations would not be established simply to reflect the demands of production as mutualism implies. Rather, federations would also be established for a number of other reasons. With the assistance of socialist cooperation in economic affairs, cultural differences do not have to be forcibly resolved but can coexist and in time develop mutual understandings leading potentially to a higher synthesises of human understanding. Gadamer describes this process as a ‘fusion of horizons’ of different past and present perspectives. As such differences amongst citizens are not irreconcilable. Rather, common ground can potentially provide a point of departure to build upon.

Within such a democratic federalism there will be the need to finally challenge the common Hobbesian presumption that the state is a negative institution that

126 Ibid. p. 174.
128 Ibid. p. 62.
130 Healy, Paul. Rationality, Hermeneutics and Dialogue: Toward a Viable Postfoundationistlist Account of Rationality, 2005, p. 82.
acts exclusively as an instrument of coercion to prevent a war of all against all. As Christopher Pierson contends in *Marxist Theory and Democratic Politics*, political institutions and practices need to be acknowledged as capacities rather than essences.\textsuperscript{131} Pierson points to an alternative to the common Marxist understanding of the state (as a coercive instrument acting in the interests of a particular class). As he contends:

i) The state does not function in the exclusive interests of one particular class.

ii) The state is not a fixed entity but an arena of struggle.

iii) Account needs to be given for historical and international context.

iv) State power cannot be seized. Instead it requires internal transformations through gradual democratic reform.

v) Finally the state cannot wither away. It is always subject to contestation.\textsuperscript{132}

Pierson continues by arguing for a positive conception of civil society rather than its abolition. To do this, civil society must allow for a plurality of goals, ideologies and ways of living. As such, politics is not brought to an end through the utopia of material abundance since conflict is not reducible to economics. The state has the further positive function of being the guarantor of civil and political rights.\textsuperscript{133} In defining both state and civil society, the public sphere will need to become an important mediator to keep both politically accountable.

Another important dilemma for the project of democracy is what role, if any, the market should play in the establishment of an ecologically sustainable


\textsuperscript{132} Ibid. pp. 150–1.

\textsuperscript{133} Ibid. p. 151.
democratic economy? Or is it possible that a planned socialist economy could be *completely* self-administered democratically? In reply to criticisms, Ernst Mandel argues that attempting to match the complexities of production capacity with the complexities of consumer demand through a plan is not impossible, given that component inputs within production processes are made to order. Moreover, under socialism people would have free, accessible education, greater access to telecommunications and work a significantly shorter week. All of this would significantly improve conditions for participatory initiative within such economic as well as political decision-making. A planned economy could be introduced gradually; ‘…as “scarcity” is increasingly confined to less essential goods and services, it will be quite possible to reduce the role of money in the economy as a whole; as non-priced goods and services become more numerous than goods and services bought.’

However, as Alec Nove asks: ‘Who or what institution, except at the centre, can consider the needs of the whole society?’ A planned economy demands that decision-making becomes centralised. A widening gap is generated between these highest decision-making structures and individual workers as the central plan leaves little to be decided upon at the enterprise level. Nove therefore proposes a synthesis of ‘vertical links’ (political hierarchy) and ‘horizontal links’ (the market) within a ‘market-socialist’ economy.

---

135 Ibid. p. 119.
regulate this balancing act Nove makes the following stipulations within his model:

i) There is an absence of large-scale private ownership of the means of production. Nove proposes a threshold according to scale where private property is then shared amongst cooperatives.

ii) Compulsive conscious planning by central management within sectors of the economy producing serious externalities or are for logistical reasons necessarily requiring centralised decision-making.

iii) Small-scale enterprises be favoured over large-scale to reduce the gap between management and workers.

iv) State intervention for incomes policies, taxes, prevention of monopolies and cartels, regulation of the ground rules and placing limits upon market activity (especially in the realm of essential needs).139

But how has market-socialism faired in practice? According to Fotopoulos, from 1979 onwards within the People’s Republic of China, private and foreign enterprises, which had fewer costs (as they could evade paying welfare benefits), gained the ascendancy over local-scale owned enterprises.140 István Mészáros cites other examples within the former Soviet Union where market-socialism eventually contributed to the restoration of capitalism.141 Furthermore he questions Nove’s equation of horizontal links to the market:

139 Ibid. p. 246.


For the actually existing and feasible market is very far from being an ideal coordinating framework of ‘horizontal links’. It is hierarchical through and through, favoring in its material power relations the strong against the weak, notwithstanding all fantasy about the ‘equality of all types of property’, from the local cobbler and the smallest peasant household economy to the giant transnational corporation. Indeed, vertical hierarchy is the true defining dimension of the capital system in all its historically known and feasible – capitalist or postcapitalist – varieties, without which it could not impose its necessary structural domination over labour.142

Requesting this permanent subordination of labour, economic democracy in decision-making is overtaken by commodity fetishism. Moreover, ‘Isn’t it precisely the nature of the market that neither producing nor consumer units know each other’s decisions in advance, i.e.; a priori? But doesn’t the axles-producing units of a car factory know in advance exactly how many axels the factory needs for the number of cars it plans to produce?’143 The market is not a neutral mechanism but a ‘command system’, a ‘…social relation in the service of the extraction of surplus labour’.144 According to Boris Frankel another problem is that market competition contradicts the very principles of socialism.145 Inequalities between economic regions and in ownership of private property may grow more pronounced and there is also the danger of becoming dependent upon capitalist enterprise as in the case of the former

142 Ibid. p. 826
Yugoslavia’s experiment. Moreover, the assumption that the state can serve as an *impartial umpire* capable of correcting power imbalances created by the market also needs to be called into question. As was made clear in Marx’s critique of Hegel’s political philosophy (in Chapter 1), state personnel often enter their positions upon the basis of privilege as well as merit.

Refuting the assumption by Nove that an economic plan is incapable of considering qualitative as well as quantitative measures of economic wealth, Mészáros attempts to demonstrate how qualitative factors can become included in decision-making. When Karl Marx derived the concept of the labour theory of value he did so in a manner that was simultaneously trying to demonstrate the relativity of ‘objective’ exchange. Mészáros identifies within Marx’s later economic writings an alternative notion of exchange where the value of an article of production can be measured in terms of quality. To do this, ‘necessary labor time’ is to be measured *in subordination to social needs*. In other words, decisions about how much labour to devote to an article need to be considered in relation to its social importance. As Marx explains: ‘The labour of the individual is posited from the outset as social labour. Thus, whatever the particular material form of the product he creates or helps to create, what he has bought with his labour is not a specific and particular product, but rather a *special share of the communal production*.’

---


than products of labour, commodification can be restricted instead of being perpetuated by economic plans that reify the labour theory of value.

Mészáros identifies an unfortunate theoretical closure; namely that institutional change has evolved up until the advent of capitalism, but for the rest of human history it cannot be taken further. However, contrary to any assurances that this transition towards socialism can be conducted democratically, strong centralisation tendencies inherent within economic planning would nevertheless remain. Understandably, Fotopoulos proposes a compromise. Alongside economic planning he proposes a voucher system enabling autonomy in consumer choice without the difficulties real markets create. However, if this option fails, Alec Nove’s model of market socialism, despite its dangers, should at least be considered as a more realistic target in the immediate future. Because we are dealing with a global capitalist economy, democracy can only extend unevenly within and between national economies. Consequently, to engage in international trade some room will need to be granted for market exchange. Furthermore, any advances towards socialist planning will need to consider how willing people are to participate in decision-making. Nevertheless, it will be necessary to be cautious of reification of the political economy if a restoration of capitalism is to be guarded against. According to Lukács, reification occurs because the ‘thing in itself’ assumes that reality is fixed. As he contends ‘…things should be shown

---


Humans therefore need to constantly reveal how reified forms are developed from ongoing interaction.\textsuperscript{153}

Understandably, some critics would point out that gradual reform often ends up capitulating to both the capitalist economy as well as representative democracy.\textsuperscript{154} Powerful elites will retaliate to obstruct democratic reform and all too often hierarchical relations between society, economy and state are preserved.\textsuperscript{155} There are two divergent political traditions that critics such as Fotopoulous identify: autonomy, where people are recognised as creators of their own institutions; and heteronomy, where a majority are excluded from questioning their own laws, beliefs and customs.\textsuperscript{156} However, far from being mutually exclusive, these political traditions can serve one another. For instance, heteronomy served the project for autonomy in the eighteenth century when philosophy and art were freed from religious censorship.\textsuperscript{157} History will need to be conceived as an open-ended social dialogue.\textsuperscript{158}

Domination takes hold when social dialogue is restricted, allowing for a complete self-enclosure of belief. No matter how inclusive and equitable any social order may seem, there will always be an encounter with otherness. Yet it is this otherness that allows for emancipation from reified forms of thought.


\textsuperscript{153} Ibid. p. 197.


\textsuperscript{155} Ibid. pp. 451, 456.


\textsuperscript{157} Ibid. p. 348.

by challenging our cultural assumptions.\textsuperscript{159} Difference, therefore, is not something that can be finally overcome, but instead, something to be further understood. Politically, this means there is no eternal social order that will bring an end to politics.\textsuperscript{160} Considering all the vast complexities of the modern world, an emphasis upon social progress towards democracy rather than its perfection in some ideal end state is a more helpful and realistic aim.\textsuperscript{161}

Finally Bourdieu’s concepts of capital, field and habitus have been shown to facilitate a better understanding of what cultural hegemony entails. The application of these concepts to the aims of democracy therefore implies the construction of a radically new habitus for agents engaged in reconstructing the beliefs and practices of existing fields. Instrumental thinking will need to be replaced by an orientation aware of the importance of mutual recognition in the social facilitation of the good life. Policies promoting a more even distribution of capital in all its forms, as well as maintaining the autonomy of the various fields, should assist this process.

In the presence of a growing decadence within ‘liberal democracy’ there has been a need, more than ever before, to reclaim democracy for the common good of humanity. Growing alienation and disorientation has paralysed people politically. Democracy will need to be reframed to confront the current habitus of individuals who consent to the existing social relations of exploitation. As such, democracy serves both as an immediate political strategy within the war of position, and as a political philosophy that contests the charge of emotivism in ethical theory.

\textsuperscript{159} Ibid. p. 51.
\textsuperscript{160} Ibid. p. 52.
In relating the importance of narratives within the process of self-realisation, democracy implies a new type of political narrative. One that considers its goals to be open-ended, subject to review rather than leading towards a certain eternal end. As a polyphonic narrative, however, it will still be necessary to distinguish between perspectives that are constructive or destructive towards democracy’s very own sustainability. Rather than the implication of a complete relativist levelling of ideas, it has been necessary to still recognise that, for instance, political democracy becomes meaningless without economic democracy. Democracy implies the eradication of class divisions. It is essentially a socialist task.

In proposing a gradual containment and roll back of capitalist relations, however, there will be problems to face in how to avoid corruption. This is why democracy rather than socialism as a concept will be more important in constructing a political discourse, aiming to inspire people and assist them in overcoming their self-estrangement. Such political motivations should embolden citizens to be more active in keeping their delegated representatives accountable. In addition, Bourdieu’s concepts of capital, fields and habitus can assist in indicating imbalances of power and their causes. This would assist in creating more constructive, strategic political policy facilitating democratic participation. There will nevertheless remain a myriad of problems (explored in the next chapter). However, this approach hopefully has highlighted how the principles of liberty, equality and fraternity can potentially coexist in human relations and provide philosophical justifications for doing so.
Chapter 5

Emergent Challenges to the Struggle for Democracy

The legitimacy of liberal democracy in Australia has been eroded by successive governments influenced by the ideas of the New Right. Yet despite compelling evidence as to why genuine democracy is the most effective political idea to respond to this crisis, its legitimacy will ultimately depend upon how it can practically respond to the political conditions Australia currently faces. The last three and a half decades have drastically transformed capitalism in ways that have further advantaged the corporatocracy. As well as disempowering nation-states, transnational corporations have divided Australians as never before. In the following chapter it will be proposed that nationalism could be used to remedy these problems. However, a more cautious approach to the project of modernity that realises its many shortcomings will be needed. A more viable opposition will also need to consider what mistakes have been made, contributing to distrust, division, alienation and a retreat from politics.

Globalisation: Tipping the Balance on Class

Globalisation presents a number of difficulties for those who seriously consider the path of democracy. The emergent process of globalisation can be summarised as the ‘expansion of integrated functional activities’ within the
economy, communications, and aspects of socialisation.\textsuperscript{1} According to some there is only one economic system that now encompasses the planet – imperialist capitalism.\textsuperscript{2} This order triumphed at the end of the Cold War. However, there is some dispute over what role globalisation played in apparently bringing this conflict to an end.\textsuperscript{3} Nevertheless, the 1990s meant a ‘borderless’ capitalist economic system had been consolidated.\textsuperscript{4} This new order is distinct from an ‘internationalised’ capitalist system. In the latter nation-states dominate, whereas in the new order they are subordinated to international economic activity.\textsuperscript{5} This shift from an internationalised towards a globalised economy occurred gradually.\textsuperscript{6} Key features of this transformation included:

i) The emergence of transnational corporations.

ii) A greater mobility of capital and commodities.

iii) The greater role of import and export trade.

iv) The greater power of transportation and communication technologies.

v) The greater power of finance capital and the speculation over industrial capital.


\textsuperscript{5} Clark, Ian. \textit{Globalisation and Fragmentation}, 1997, p. 19

\textsuperscript{6} Ibid. p. 20.
vi) Cultural artefacts infiltrating nations’ educational and information institutions.

vii) A greater division of labour and mobility in production.\(^7\)

Instead of standard relations between economic ‘centres’ and ‘peripheries’, with a clear-cut division of labour between producers of cheap raw materials and labour in the latter and producers of finished manufactured goods in the former, there have been significant periods of decentralisation of capital accumulation.\(^8\)

According to David Harvey there has been a transformation of the regimes of regulation and accumulation whereupon a ‘Fordist modernism’ has given way to a ‘flexible postmodernism.’ No longer is the economy identified with fixed capital in industrial production, stable, standardised and homogenous markets, fixed diplomatic relations, identifiable authority figureheads, all assisted by a theoretical grounding in materialism and scientific rationality. Now there is greater flexibility in production techniques, labour and consumer markets, along with a greater role played by fictitious capital, imagery, fiction and fantasy within marketing techniques.\(^9\) Gradually, the spatially concentrated means of production, distribution, and social reproduction have been scattered, bringing an end to what Scott Lash and John Urry describe as organised capitalism.\(^10\) Such change has been assisted by the explosion of scope, speed


and volume of economic capital around the world. However this does not mean that this is an inevitable outcome of the invisible hand at work. Governments, as was shown to be the case in previous chapters, were active in the facilitation of this brave new world.

Powerful interest groups in Australia became anxious about its strategic economic position within this drastically changing global economy. The neo-liberal agenda was introduced by succeeding governments to supposedly resolve this challenge through the assistance of a co-opted labour movement. Some who insist the influence of governments has not been undermined by global capitalism point to their active role (such as in Australia) in rolling out free-market reform. The function of government is to regulate deregulation. According to Susan Strange however, this willingness to disempower one’s own government indicates a ‘self-inflicted retreat from autonomy’. Yet economic activities have to occur in physical space, and thus inevitably operations do fall under the jurisdiction of nation-states. The power of nation-states may still be of significance. However, as to who they now serve

---


13 Ibid. p. 4.


– this may have changed. The assumption that the capitalist class in all instances develops within the confines of nation-states is called into question.17 It has been claimed that national fractions of the capitalist ruling class are losing their coherence and ability to control the state.18 Although national affiliations may still hold, the investments and profits of these firms and cartels are geographically scattered.19 Previously corporations retained a geographical home base for their operations.20 However, “…the notion itself of a headquarters is giving way to the reality that the market never sleeps, that business is done 24 hours every day, and everyday of every year.”21 This fluidity in market causation means that ‘What happens on the other side of the world at this instant can have an impact here not after the markets open, not even the next instant, but this instant right now.’22

The introduction of new technologies can dramatically shift the organisational and power centres of the global economy. For instance, new modes of transport and communications provided condition for the emergence of the international firm from the 1920s onwards.23

18 Ibid. p. 58.
19 Ibid. p. 61.
21 Ibid. p. 247.
22 Ibid. p. 250.
With the introduction of credit and electronic banking, transactions across vast distances can take place in an instant. The resulting flux of economic decision-making has meant that there has been a shift in power away from industrial capital towards financial capital. Wealth generated today is therefore mostly channelled into speculative accumulation and frivolous consumption rather than being usefully invested. According to one study of the 500 largest firms between 1971 and 1991, revenues increased seven-fold without an increase in employment globally.

Once a new phase of capitalism is established, older developments do not instantly disappear. For instance, in the phase of monopoly or ‘late’ capitalism remnants of the competitive or laissez faire phase still existed. Monopoly capitalism became dominant within the advanced economies during the 1960s. Through the 1990s monopoly capitalism gave way to a global capitalism with the following defining features:

i) US and European economic superiority in retreat as it is challenged by Japan and East Asian economies in world export markets.

ii) Price competition develops on a global scale with labour costs becoming a central struggle.

iii) A general decline in living standards amongst the working class.

---


iv) Surplus is raised due to the leverage of capital mobility on a global scale, instead of deriving surplus from a segmented labour force and monopoly pricing.29

In response to this ruthless economic environment, the traditional monopolistic firm is being taken over by the rise of the transnational corporation.30 The criterion for identifying these new entities is whether it has operations or ‘income-generating assets in more than one country’.31 There are a seemingly endless number of ways in which such corporations organise themselves. Strategically, this variation depends upon the ability to control labour, supplies, technology, capital, distribution and consumption.32 Mergers and takeovers have become increasingly common as a consequence of this constant requirement to adapt. For instance, a US survey conducted in 1992 of 530 of the largest firms revealed that three-quarters had ‘downsized’ in the past year and one-quarter had either divested, merged or were taken over.33 Differences vary from size, industry, organisational structure, objectives, geographical presence, internal processes, corporate culture, ownership structure, values, management approach, and mode of conduct.34 As such, ‘Diversity among MNCs [multinational corporations] may even be greater

29 Ibid. p. 23.
32 Ibid. p. 324.
than that among countries, since many MNCs can only survive by continuously seeking to differentiate themselves from their competitors.\textsuperscript{35}

According to William Robinson, a likely consequence of the production process being globalised is that a transnational capitalist class is emerging on the world stage.\textsuperscript{36} This class (the corporatocracy) consists of owners and managers of transnational corporations, capitalists overseeing transnational capital, and bureaucrats of transnational institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank.\textsuperscript{37} For every local business partnership, there have been at least two international ones. To survive, local and national firms more frequently need to consider linking in with other enterprises.\textsuperscript{38} Thus; ‘…transnationalization occurs when national capitals fuse with other internationalizing national capitals in a process of cross-border interpenetration that disembeds them from their nation and locates them in new supranational space opening up under the global economy.’\textsuperscript{39} From the 1970s the interests of transnational and national fractions of capital fought over the control of national governments.\textsuperscript{40} With the triumph of neo-liberalism the former have gained the upper hand. So, despite the continual significance of states in terms of their powers, in many instances governments no longer

\textsuperscript{35} Ibid. p. 322.
\textsuperscript{37} Ibid. p. 75.
\textsuperscript{38} Ibid. pp. 65, 69.
\textsuperscript{39} Ibid. p. 54.
\textsuperscript{40} Ibid. p. 49.
serve the interests of particular nations but rather the international corporatocracy.  

Because transnational corporations control large sections of international trade, it becomes extremely difficult for governments to constrain capital flows between countries. With significantly less political transparency, it is also difficult to interpret and moderate their power. Even if the activities of transnational corporations are made known, their size, financial power, expertise, as well as their provision of employment, infrastructure, and tax revenue made it all too easy for governments to capitulate to their demands. It is giant corporations rather than citizens that have been encouraged to thrive. In turn ‘The global money market, not the democratic electorate, becomes the arbiter of what policies are sound.’ The role of government has been reduced to providing the ‘policy grease’ of global capitalism – neoliberalism.

Takis Fotopoulos observed that increasing international interdependence of the global economy means that governments are under increasing pressure to cut into the public’s ‘social wage’. For instance, Fotopoulos notes that ‘the deregulation of money markets means that any attempt to base growth on government spending and budget deficits is doomed to fail, since it leads to

---

41 Ibid. p. 137.
speculative capital movements and currency instability.\textsuperscript{45} Increasing financial speculation has crept into the economy since the floating of the Australian currency in 1983. As the financial system is now cut off from the production process, speculators can now veto government and the economic powers of local enterprises.\textsuperscript{46}

In the face of such pressures there has been a significant political shift, with social democratic parties now capitulating to the demands of neo-liberalism. The maintenance of decent working conditions, the pursuit of capitalist growth while aiming for full employment is believed to be unrealisable. Besides growth the other two aims are often jettisoned.\textsuperscript{47} This is associated with the following problem: ‘If markets are global, their regulators must also be global. But we have no global government (nor, probably, should we) and only the very weakest of transnational institutions of governance. Corporations, it is said gleefully, have outrun the writ of nation-states.’\textsuperscript{48}

The diminishing autonomy of government is well illustrated in the 2008 global financial crisis, especially in the Euro-zone.\textsuperscript{49} European governments have become divorced from economic and political policy as less

\begin{flushright}
\begin{footnotesize}


\textsuperscript{48} Ibid. p. 153.

\textsuperscript{49} Davidson, Kenneth, ‘The Paradox of Thrift,’ \textit{Dissent,} no. 37, Summer, 2011–2012, p. 4. Elliot, Larry; Traynor, Ian, ‘Europe Braces for Greek Exit,’ \textit{Australian Financial Review,} 16/05/12, p. 49.
\end{footnotesize}
\end{flushright}
representative institutions at the international or continental level of the European Union begin to call the shots.\textsuperscript{50}

So, in a sense, matters have gone from bad to worse concerning the struggle for democracy. This is most evident in the requirement of eliminating oppressive class divisions. The capitalist classes now have even greater control over space, greater mobility and have therefore managed to decentralise.\textsuperscript{51} In sum ‘The main agents of class struggle are a deterritorialized and integrated bourgeoisie versus a territorially tied and fragmented working class.’\textsuperscript{52} The capitalist classes are indeed conscious of this enormous tactical advantage and have worked to ensure the working class remains diffuse and that their political actions continue to be uncoordinated and disorganised.\textsuperscript{53} This age-old divide and rule strategy has also been assisted by a growing division between town and country, which has failed to be addressed in rural policy.\textsuperscript{54} As Scott Lash and John Urry contend: ‘Not only has the size of the working class and especially its “core” declined in disorganized capitalism, but spatial scattering has meant the disruption of communicational and organizational networks, resulting in an important diminution of class resources.’\textsuperscript{55}


\textsuperscript{53} Ibid. p. 64.


\textsuperscript{55} Lash, Scott; Urry, John. \textit{The End of Organised Capitalism}, 1987, p. 11.
This works out well for the capitalist classes. In times of declining rates of capital accumulation, they have been able to enjoy a free hand in search of spatial and temporal resolutions at the expense of workers. Through the process of converting money capital into industrial capital and back again into money capital, the more quickly this conversion can take place the cheaper the costs become hence greater profits. A number of changes in the workplace are employed to accelerate production. This includes sub-contracting, outsourcing, and introducing new technologies, small batch production, a greater turnover in deskilling and re-skilling, improved communication and circulation of commodities. The growth of transnational ventures, the dominance of trans-territorial technological and information networks and deregulation of trade and capital flows complement this growing deregulation of the Australian labour market.

Former agrarian and colonial economies have managed to grow significantly as states side with capitalists over the various sections of the working class. Yet it is not only workers who have been increasingly marginalised and defeated. The national bourgeoisie are also increasingly losing their autonomy, resulting in a decline of economic protectionism. For instance, a

number of countries had to liberalise their financial systems to meet expectations of liquidity and transparency concerning local investment opportunities.\textsuperscript{62}

The economic rise of Japan and South-East Asia in the 1990s signified a decentralisation of US capital accumulation.\textsuperscript{63} Meanwhile over three billion workers from the former Soviet Union, Central and Eastern Europe, China and India were added to the international labour market, dramatically putting downward pressure upon workers’ entitlements.\textsuperscript{64} Contrary to common misconceptions, it is women rather than men who make up the vast majority of this global workforce. Two-thirds of all labour is undertaken by women.\textsuperscript{65} Women, especially in South and South-East Asia have been super-exploited as they are considered by capitalists to be easily intimidated, docile but also having a high degree of productivity. As Maria Mies observed: ‘Thus, the working-class women [and men] in our countries can afford a lifestyle formerly only possible for bourgeois women [and men] because poor rural women in India make these things for a wage below their own subsistence level.’\textsuperscript{66}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{64} Story, Jonathan. ‘The Emerging World Financial Order and Different Forms of Capitalism,’ in \textit{Political Economy and the Changing Global Order}, 2000, p. 131.
\item \textsuperscript{66} Ibid. pp. 117, 134–5.
\end{itemize}
The Proliferation of Difference

To understand the full extent of exploitative relations of today, however, it is important to examine different views of how the global capitalism as a system became established, as well as how Australia and other countries such as China and the US fit in with this process. To begin with, Marx argued that since the main tendency of capitalism is for the owners of the means of production to compete with one another in accumulating surplus value from extorted labour, this ruling class has to expand its operations, overpowering and subjugating an increasing number of humans. In other words, capitalism requires colonial expansion and, in turn, pressure for other economic regions to develop and spread the capitalist mode of production. As Anthony Brewer summarises:

In the classical Marxist account, grossly oversimplified, capitalism emerges first in a few centers and generates capital accumulation and development there, opening up a lead over the rest of the world without necessarily taking anything from it (though capital will always take anything it can get). Capitalism spreads, starting the same process in other areas. Different parts of the world can be regarded, very crudely, as runners in the same race, in which some started before others.67

Following Marx, Lenin and Burkharin68 further developed this understanding of how the world economy became increasingly integrated and subordinated to the bourgeoisie. Lenin observed new developments of the capitalist system and explained how capital is concentrated and centralised into the hands of

68 Ibid. p. 107
fewer and larger capitalists. This meant that *monopolies are an inevitable consequence of free-market competition*. This concentration of economic power was not anticipated by liberals influenced by Locke. The success of a monopoly depends on its strategic positioning within the economy regarding the capacity to control labour, primary materials, transportation, communication, market information and so on.\(^69\)

However, even more critical to the outcome of market competition was the role of banks. Drawing from Hilferding, Lenin pointed out how banks became much more than a location to store and transfer money. As their clientele increased, so did their power. The industrial capitalist had to establish a new alliance with the banks or otherwise perish. As Lenin described:

> When a bank discounts a bill for a firm, opens a current account for it etc., these operations, taken separately, do not in the least diminish its independence, and the banks play no other part than that of a modest middleman. But when such operations are multiplied and become an established practice, when the bank ‘collects’ in its own hands enormous amounts of capital, when the running of a current account for a given firm enables the bank – and this is what happens – to obtain fuller and more detailed information about the economic position of its client, the result is that the industrial capitalist becomes more completely dependent on the bank.\(^70\)

Thus large enterprises decide to work more closely with the banks by giving them shares and appointing bank managers and directors onto their boards.

---


\(^70\) Ibid. p. 53.
The banks return this favour and as a consequence the two become integrated. It is from this process known as interlocking\textsuperscript{71} that bank and industrial capital merges to give rise to finance capital – i.e., money capital that is controlled by the banks and is employed by the industrialist.\textsuperscript{72}

Drawing on the ideas of Hobson, Lenin demonstrated how capitalism spread to parasitically consume its host. Surplus capital is not invested to assist the poor since doing so would mean no financial return. Instead it is exported internationally to enable further accumulation.\textsuperscript{73} According to Lenin:

> In these backward countries profits are usually high, for capital is scarce, the price of land is relatively low, raw materials are cheap. The export of capital is made possible by a number of backward countries having already been drawn into world capitalist intercourse; main railways have either been or are being built in those countries, elementary conditions for industrial development have been created, etc.\textsuperscript{74}

Perhaps the most important criticism of Lenin (as well as the work of other Marxist writers) is Anthony Brewer’s argument that since capital is exported to economically less developed regions of the world, Lenin fails to explain why this does not lead to economic development.\textsuperscript{75} Moreover, he asks whether these regions are becoming capitalist or whether the capitalist laws of motion

\textsuperscript{72} Ibid. pp. 53, 58.
\textsuperscript{74} Lenin, V.I. \textit{Imperialism: The Highest Stage of Capitalism}, 1999, pp. 70–1
\textsuperscript{75} Ibid. p. 112.
act differently in these areas. For Brewer, this issue leads to a crisis of Marxism. In responding, for instance, to Laclau’s idea that there could be coexistence of different modes of production, Brewer argues that these different modes would either have to be seen as coexisting permanently or evolving into the capitalist mode through a very long transition. The problem with the latter explanation is that the Third World is actually underdeveloping with the exception of East and South East Asia. As for a permanent coexistence of different modes of production, Brewer argues that to adopt this perspective one would have to question the idea that societies historically move in linear stages from one mode of production to the next.

Brewer therefore departs from the traditional Marxist explanation of how capitalism originated and then spread to theories that explain capitalism being established as a global system. The most well known theorists of this perspective are Andre Gunder Frank and Immanuel Wallerstein. Wallerstein argues that capitalist development does not thrive in other parts of the world economy because these regions have been subjugated into playing subservient roles. According to him, instead of countries being locked into capitalist domination through the export of capital, the capitalist world system actually originated from the sixteenth century. This earlier time frame is justified because unequal exchange is considered the main feature of this system. Therefore, between 1450 and 1640, the capitalist world economy existed as a European world economy. Although this did not embrace the whole world, it

---

76 Ibid. p. 264.
77 Ibid. pp. 264–5. Historical materialism however has a number of other faults explored in Chapter 3.
78 Ibid. p. 17.
79 Ibid. p. 18
80 Ibid. p. 4.
was still considered by Wallerstein to be a world system because it was still considerably larger than any political unit.  

This world system also expanded outwards, interlinking different production processes of different regions into worldwide ‘commodity chains’. These commodity chains required a global division of labour that eventually became routine, enforcing economic power relations:

As commodity chains have become longer and more complex, and have involved more and more machinery, there has been a constant pressure by the strong against the weak. This pressure has concentrated more and more of the process in the chain that are easiest to keep at a low-income level in other areas – ‘peripheral’ processes in ‘peripheral’ areas.  

This world system consists of core, semi-peripheral and peripheral areas. Core regions of the economy have the support of strong nation-states capable of enforcing the subjugation of semi-peripheries and peripheries. Unequal exchange between theses regions assists in subordinating the peripheries to the cores. This is because the peripheries use less advanced production techniques than core zones that are technologically advancing. From this innovation, commodities from the core zones receive a higher exchange value than commodities from the peripheries. Trade therefore allows the core zones to appropriate a surplus drawn from the peripheries.  

---

As unequal trade on a world scale becomes the defining feature of exploitation, Wallerstein contends that class structures do not emerge locally but globally:

…if we accept the argument that the existence of ‘national economies’ has been more rhetoric than reality, then it follows that classes – classes as such – are classes of the world-economy and not of states. Since, however, class consciousness – *class für sich* – is a political phenomenon, and since the most efficacious political structures are the sovereign states (or the sovereign units whose creation is sought by strong, organized movements/parties), it follows that class consciousness operates largely on a state level, which per se intrudes a constant element of false consciousness into most expressions of class consciousness.85

A possible limitation of Wallerstein’s theory is that according to Albert Bergesen the value of commodities between core, peripheries and semi-peripheries are not inherently unequal. Something historically must have occurred for the peripheries and semi-peripheries to become disadvantaged. Before unequal exchange there was the brute force of colonialism. Later, once the damage was done, colonial rule could be passed on to the local ruling elite with economic privileges to exploit their own people in this system of unequal exchange.86 Despite exposing a gap in Wallerstein’s theory, this observation complements rather than undermines what he was attempting to reveal.

---

For some, however, Wallerstein’s theory presupposes a completely different conception of what capitalism is. Instead of seeing capitalism as a mode of production in the traditional sense, Wallerstein reduces it to being a world market consisting of an unequal exchange of commodities. Capitalism, however, has far more characteristics. Wallerstein fails to consider local relations of production, forces of production and class relations.  

Wallerstein’s theory therefore assumes that capital accumulation is generated from the unequal exchange of commodities rather than from the appropriation of surplus labour. Capital (surplus product created from peasants and handicraftsmen) did originate from colonial plunder. However Ernst Mandel contends that it was only through the predominance of capitalist relations of production (wage labour) that capital could possibly reproduce itself on a scale required to encompass the globe.

The time Wallerstein claims that capitalism was established has also been a point of contention. For if commodity exchange on a world market was all that was required, why not claim that capitalism existed in even earlier times? There is an important difference, therefore, between a capitalist world economy and the creation of the world market.

Wallerstein’s analysis, moreover, presupposes that this world system is a homogenous whole that contains just one pattern of social relations of production. This fails to take into account countries that have attempted a

---

90 Ibid. p. 226.
socialist trajectory of development.\textsuperscript{91} As well as this dynamic, Wallerstein overlooks the internal relations of individual states. This rules out chances of the political balance of forces changing exploitative social-economic relationships.\textsuperscript{92} Emphasis on structural positions of the core-periphery-semi-periphery is therefore too rigid to handle the complexities of global interrelations; namely of how alliances are forged and broken within and between political and economic forces.\textsuperscript{93} According to James Anderson:

Specific compulsions and generalized competition do not simply act upon states; rather, they interact with internal social forces and sometimes transform them. In some respects it is important to stress that the division between external and internal forces is an artificial one, since economic interests and those of particular classes often cross national boundaries so that they are themselves formed in the external world. In other words, it is strictly misleading to have an analysis which sees internal forces being moulded by separate external compulsions.\textsuperscript{94}

Alternatively, Ernst Mandel demonstrates how economic stagnation occurs by making a distinction between primitive and regular capital accumulation. The former, where initial capital is produced, does not necessarily transform into the latter where an increasing amount of surplus labour is extracted. Instead, the two co-exist on the world market. Because of this coexistence, oppressive


\textsuperscript{93} Ibid. p. 222.

\textsuperscript{94} Ibid. p. 215.
nations can curtail the ability of the petit bourgeoisie of weak nations to accumulate enough capital to establish a capitalist mode of production.95

In elaborating upon Burkharin’s explanation of a world economy consisting of different relations of production and relations of exchange Mandel argues: ‘The capitalist world economy is an articulated system of capitalist, semi-capitalist, and pre-capitalist relations of production, linked to each other by capitalist relations of exchange and dominated by the capitalist world market.’96

Within the less developed regions, domestic markets are small and wages are much lower because of high unemployment (assisted, for instance, by peasants being expropriated). As a consequence, it is more profitable to use less productive technologies, which mean that labour is less productive.97 However, Mandel goes beyond the argument that the key cause of underdevelopment derives from lower levels of productivity. For instance, he observes that:

The answer lies in the relations of production and social structure of the colonial and semi-colonial countries, which ensured that the major share of the social surplus product was not used for productive purposes. In other words, there was accumulation of capital, but it consisted of (1) foreign capital (2) money capital (in general unproductively invested) rather than industrial capital.98

96 Ibid. p. 48.
97 Ibid. p. 369.
Moreover, Mandel explains that foreign capitalists create ‘joint ventures’ consisting of indigenous, foreign and public capital where a dependency on foreign capital can be used as leverage. The greater the role that foreign capital plays within these entities, the fewer resources remain for the indigenous bourgeoisie to accumulate industrial capital.99

Although Mandel’s explanation reveals certain aspects of how imperialism has operated to maintain such uneven economic development, even his analysis does not quite capture the full dynamics of this oppression. For imperialism is more than just an exercise in exploiting unequal rates of productivity. According to Daron Acemoglu and James Robinson in *Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity and Poverty*, the key factor in economic development depends on how inclusive (for participation) political and economic institutions are as opposed to institutions that are extractive (exploitative).100 In numerous examples they show how small differences of ‘institutional drift’ lead to dramatic divergence in the face of critical historical events such as the Black Death, the growth of the Atlantic trade and, of course, the Industrial Revolution.101 Although powerful in demonstrating how the pursuit of the common good ensures a greater likelihood for economic innovation, it does not elaborate on how economic exploitation between nations has been continued since the decline of European colonialism.102

Moreover, the notion of ‘prosperity’ avoids considering the ecological costs of economic activity.

---

99 Ibid. pp. 54–6.
102 Ibid. p. 273.
As alluded to in the previous chapter, the ideas of Stephen Bunker can assist in capturing the ecological aspect of this exploitation. As he observes, most explanations of how unequal exchange is derived assume that modes of production are primary. However, production is dependant upon another economic activity and that is the process of extracting materials and energy from Earth itself.\(^\text{103}\)

Capital and labour are poor categories when it comes to analysing the ecological value of economic activities. In particular, the labour theory of value presupposes that Earth’s ecosystems are a free gift. In doing so, the value of natural processes are completely ignored, whereas human activity is overvalued.\(^\text{104}\) An analysis of unequal exchange therefore needs to look at more than just productivity differentials. For instance, the impact of extraction on the weakening of extractive regions and the strengthening of productive regions demonstrates that exploitation is not just based on class, as ecosystems are themselves undermined by human economic activity.\(^\text{105}\) Measuring economic activity through matter and energy includes all processes that are useful to humans and accounts for the dynamic interdependencies between humans and nature.\(^\text{106}\) For instance, Bunker makes the following observation:

> The articulation and acceleration of the productive economy, then, does not only depend on nor is it adequately described by a wage-consumption-profit-production treadmill calculated in exchange values. It also requires the concentration and coordination of human and non-

\(^{103}\) Bunker, Stephen. *Underdeveloping the Amazon*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1988, pp. 20–1.

\(^{104}\) Ibid. p. 30.

\(^{105}\) Ibid. pp. 30, 45.

\(^{106}\) Ibid. p. 35.
human energy flows and their embodiment in both complex social organization and durable infrastructure. Thus it achieves at the cost of the extractive economy and extracted environment.\textsuperscript{107} Furthermore, the greater the distance from economic centres, the greater the costs are for labour, subsistence, shelter and infrastructure.\textsuperscript{108} This can help explain the curtailment of economic and political development:

In contrast to the productive articulated economy, the energy and matter taken from extractive regions do not flow through the extractive economy, do not enhance human productivity or social complexity there, do not engender local production-consumption accelerators, and do not remain embodied in physical infrastructure and complex social organization. The disarticulated extractive export economy can neither generate nor sustain the complex and costly organizational structures of the modern state or the institutions and organizations which the modern state presupposes and on which its functioning depends.\textsuperscript{109}

Bunker’s analysis may be of assistance in identifying how women in particular have also been exploited considering that women have commonly been considered a part of passive nature to be dominated by men.\textsuperscript{110} This idea of women was most explicitly espoused by Francis Bacon who equated the torture and interrogation of women during the witch trials with science’s

\textsuperscript{107} Ib\-id. p. 34.
\textsuperscript{108} Ib\-id. p. 26.
\textsuperscript{109} Ib\-id. pp. 28–9.
investigation of and domination over nature.\textsuperscript{111} Interestingly, this reign of persecution contributed significantly towards the development of capitalism. According to canon law, the property of witches could be appropriated by government.\textsuperscript{112} As a consequence, ‘…not only the feudal class (particularly the smaller princes who could not compete with the rising bourgeoisie in the cities, or the bigger lords), but also the propertied classes in the cities were using the confiscation of witches’ property as a means for capital accumulation.’\textsuperscript{113}

The exploitation of women was not only crucial for the establishment of capitalism but also continues to be of crucial importance to the maintenance of the capitalist system. In particular, the misconception that housewives are not workers allows capitalism to devalue any work that they do, whether it be housework, caring for the sick, young and elderly, or even wage work.\textsuperscript{114} Women in less developed regions of the world often have to become the ‘breadwinners’ of the household. This becomes necessary as their men increasingly move to the cities to find employment, leaving their families behind.\textsuperscript{115} As Mies contends, it is no accident that as ‘housewives’, society fails to grant due recognition for their contributions:

…it makes a large part of labour that is exploited and super-exploited for the world market invisible; it justifies low wages; prevents women from organizing; keeps them atomized; gears their attention to a sexist

\textsuperscript{111} In Gare, Arran. Nihilism Inc.: Environmental Destruction and the Metaphysics of Sustainability, Eco-Logical Press, Como NSW, 1996, p. 127.

\textsuperscript{112} Mies, Maria. Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale: Women in the International Division of Labour, 1998, p. 84.

\textsuperscript{113} Ibid. p. 86.

\textsuperscript{114} Ibid. p. 110.

\textsuperscript{115} Ibid. p. 119.
and patriarchal image of women, namely the ‘real’ housewife, supported by a man, which is not only not realizable for the majority of women, but also destructive from a point of view of women’s liberation.\textsuperscript{116}

With this more detailed account of explaining how capitalism has developed globally that considers feminist and ecological as well as economic issues, it is now important to explain how Australia and other key players fit into this picture. As a colony, Australia in the early years mostly focused on primary agricultural and marine exports to Britain. Manufacturing gradually became more prominent after the gold rush, doubling in GDP from 1900 to 1979. From 1980 until the present, however, manufacturing declined, giving way to the distribution and services sectors.\textsuperscript{117} Australia managed to develop its own ruling capitalist class, as British governors, in particular Governor Lachlan Macquarie, granted land to those considered ‘deserving’. Most notably during the 1880s, Britain faced the problem of finding new ways to invest its capital. So it invested more than 20 million pounds per year in Australian infrastructure, manufacturing, distribution and trade. This process was vital in consolidating the power of Australian capitalists.\textsuperscript{118}

Strategically Australia is in an important region of the global economy as it sits between the Indian and Pacific oceans.\textsuperscript{119} After the First World War Australia had to readjust, as America took the place of Britain as the most

\textsuperscript{116} Ibid. p. 120.
\textsuperscript{118} Ibid. pp. 26, 35, 38.
powerful nation. In 1951, the ANZUS treaty was signed. As a result, Australia could count on the US as a nuclear deterrence in exchange for hosting a number of American military facilities. However, an important question is what will happen if America loses its lead as a superpower.

In the past the size and remoteness of the US meant that it depended less on trade. For instance, in 1950 US exports constituted one-third of global exports and yet it was only 5 per cent of its GNP. Such autonomy from the unpredictability of the global market placed the US in a unique position to take advantage of the prominent ideology of neo-liberalism:

As the most productive economy it was the most likely to benefit from open goods markets, and as the largest source of both supply and demand for capital it was the most likely to exploit open capital markets. Its power was used to persuade or co-opt a majority of nations, compel most of the remainder, and isolate the few dissenters.

However the tables have turned. Due to excessive private borrowing from those who could least afford to repay the banks, the American economy set in motion a global financial crisis that the world has not yet recovered from. Meanwhile China’s economy has gathered strength as it has been considered

---

120 Ibid. p. 18–9.


123 Ibid. p. 342.

by some to be the ‘spearhead of Asia-Pacific’s economic emancipation.’

China’s economic significance is difficult to dismiss: ‘Over one billion people do not have to generate much national product per capita for China to have one of the biggest gross national products in the world.’

China’s economy has until recently grown at over 10 per cent annually, which is four times the rate of First World economies. It is now the highest producer of a whole range of goods. A significant turning point was towards the end of the 1980s when most provinces were permitted to seek foreign direct investment. Now it is the largest recipient. This capital has been channelled into long-term investment projects providing technological innovation, expertise and goods and services that would not otherwise be invested.

At the 1997 Chinese Communist Party (CCP) congress the leadership decisively sided with the perspective of freeing up trade. In particular, China’s state sector was exposed to market competition in an attempt to manage government debt. Since then however, there has been an ongoing struggle within the CCP and various branches of government over whether or not to

---


129 Ohmae, Kenichi. The Next Global Stage: Challenges and Opportunities in Our Borderless World, 2005, p. 75.


131 Ibid. p. 402.
continue down the path of trade liberalisation. With the transition of
political leadership in 2012, it remains to be seen what China will do next.
According to Paul Monk, China is unlikely to challenge US hegemony
although its interests will from time to time conflict with the US. Despite
rapid growth, China’s GDP in 2004 was less than 12 per cent of America’s.
Considering this, China’s intense growth would have to be sustained for a
significantly long time to come to become the next superpower.

A more plausible explanation is offered by William Robinson. Accordingly
*hegemonic power has now evolved into a trans-territorial entity as
transnational capital becomes the dominant fraction of capital*: ‘I maintain by
contrast, that the baton is being passed to an emergent transnational
hegemonic configuration.’ Nation-states if anything have retained a
fundamental role. As the last hegemonic power, the US acts on behalf of the
transnational capitalist class instead of its own national interests.
Considering the manner Australian governments align foreign policy to
strategically advance America’s objectives, it could perhaps be argued that
Australia is also in service of this corporatocracy.

Another aspect of power to consider with the rise of globalisation is the
emergence of a global class of managers. As was anticipated by Dahrendorf

---

132 Ibid. p. 403.
137 Ibid. pp. 77, 137.
138 Ruigrok, Winfried. ‘International Corporate Strategies and Restructuring,’ *in Political Economy and the
(rather than Marx), there could be a division between ownership and control of the means of production. Bogdanov observed how production could generate a new level of organisers who oversee the labour process, creating relations of authority and subordination. Applying this insight to predict the Stalinisation of the Soviet Union, Bogdanov identified this layer of organisers as the ‘bourgeois intelligentsia’ who exercised control over the means of production without necessarily owning them. Most importantly, he emphasised that class divisions could be generated for reasons other than economic. Accordingly:

Those who were directly involved with the technical process (the means of production) were merely the executors. Those who were in positions of authority, the organisers, controlled more than the means of production – they controlled other people. As Bogdanov pointed out, they allocated jobs and commanded the work process in its entirety. Moreover, the higher levels of education associated with the organizers increased their authority and ‘separateness.’ Indeed, argued Bogdanov, the rise of organizers of production led to changes in the relations between these individuals and the group, creating what he termed a ‘psychological distinction’ between them.

A central tenet of orthodox Marxism therefore needs to be challenged – the idea that exploitation derives from the ‘economic base’ and in changing the

140 Ibid. p. 63.
141 Ibid. pp. 64, 68.
142 Ibid. p. 64.
base with socialism, there will no longer be any exploitation. Unfortunately, Bogdanov’s observation was ignored by the Bolsheviks: ‘…he warned that if Gastev’s proposals (supported by Lenin) for the scientific organization of labour along Taylorist lines were implemented, the result would be the emergence of a new ruling class of scientific engineers.’

Within the Soviet Union this new ruling class consisted of party functionaries, plant directors, managers, chairmen of soviet committees and from part of the former bourgeoisie. To avert this danger, Bogdanov suggested an alternative approach to revolutionary theory. In summary:

Bogdanov raised the question of an altogether different possibility – that exploitation and alienation could continue even if the base were transformed. In other words, change in the ownership of the means of production may be insufficient to secure a classless society and socialism. Authority relations could perpetuate classes, together with exploitation, even if property relations were altered. Explanations of certain political phenomena therefore had to be found within the same class of phenomena. Ultimately, the superstructure itself could continue to be a source of exploitation unless specific action were taken to transform it. For this reason, Bogdanov emphasized the notion of the cultural revolution – namely, that direct and concrete efforts were

---

143 Ibid. p. 66.
145 Ibid. p. 88.
necessary to transform the ‘old authoritarianism’ embedded in the superstructure. Only then could socialism be assured.\footnote{Solchor, Zenovia. \textit{Revolution and Culture: The Bogdanov – Lenin Controversy}, 1988, p. 66–7.}

Within the context of Australia, managerialism has grown significantly. Despite the phenomenon of corporate downsizing discussed above, senior managers and executives have been able to extend their corporate privileges.\footnote{Seccombe, Wally. ‘Contradictions of Shareholder Capitalism: Downsizing Jobs, Enlisting Savings, Destabilizing Families,’ in \textit{Socialist Register Volume 35: Global Capitalism versus Democracy}, 1999, p. 84.} For instance, between 1992 and 2002, executive earnings in Australia increased from 22 times the average wage to 74 times.\footnote{Murray, Georgina. \textit{Capitalist Networks and Social Power in Australia and New Zealand}, 2006, p. 66.} To realign different interests between managers and owners of production, stock options packages are granted on top of a salary.\footnote{Seccombe, Wally. ‘Contradictions of Shareholder Capitalism: Downsizing Jobs, Enlisting Savings, Destabilizing Families,’ in \textit{Socialist Register Volume 35: Global Capitalism versus Democracy}, 1999, p. 84.} This consists of share bonuses, share purchase plans and share option entitlements.\footnote{Murray, Georgina. \textit{Capitalist Networks and Social Power in Australia and New Zealand}, 2006, p. 67.} As a result, managers clearly side with the interests of capital rather than labour. However, these positions are highly dependent upon the performance of the company’s shares. If a company’s share price drops significantly, managers, along with workers, can be readily discarded.\footnote{Seccombe, Wally. ‘Contradictions of Shareholder Capitalism: Downsizing Jobs, Enlisting Savings, Destabilizing Families,’ in \textit{Socialist Register Volume 35: Global Capitalism versus Democracy}, 1999, p. 84.} As such, managers have a tendency to consider only the short-term interests of the company.

Within the field of politics from the early 1970s onwards there was a considerable shift to the advantage of full-time ‘apparatchiks’ in big political parties such as the ALP.\footnote{Davidson, Kenneth. ‘The Use and Abuse of Taxes,’ \textit{Dissent}, no. 36, Spring 2011, p. 3.} In addition, the rising salaries and conditions of managers in the private sector changed the cultural values and ambitions of
the professions, the public sector, unions, and various educational and cultural institutions. As such, Max Weber’s observations about the problems of bureaucracy’s developing and imposing its will through abstract, inauthentic rules – in an attempt to maintain its efficiency and surveillance of its cliental – is another hazard to consider besides the immense power of the global market.

Yet this is still not the entire picture considering the establishment of ‘…new methods of power whose operation is not ensured by right but by technique, not by law but by normalization, not by punishment but by control, methods that are employed on all levels and in forms that go beyond the state and its apparatus.’ Increasingly a broader number of people have been drawn into the task of becoming parallel social judges who enforce existing norms and values of society. This includes, for instance, various professionals in fields such as medicine, psychology, education, and law.

Yet in his evaluation of the penal system, Foucault noted how its power did not need to remain concealed but rather was backed by a morality that considered it as being a ‘justified tyranny’. Regardless of the supposed civilising effects of the beginnings of the Enlightenment, this normalised

---


power to punish found new expressions, perhaps not as barbaric as the old public executions, but nevertheless, still most coercive. In particular, a new method of control found expression in the design of the Panopticon prison. This involved a permanent, intersecting observation of inmates so that they never knew when their behaviours were being monitored.\textsuperscript{158} Within this normalising gaze behaviours are fixed, classified and recorded in an attempt to objectify them.\textsuperscript{159} It is an ‘…observation that watches, that spies, that comes closer in order to see better, but moves ever farther away…’\textsuperscript{160} The Panopticon became the model for social control; society would observe and judge itself.

This gaze is particularly assisted by the confession. Originally a religious ritual, this particular discourse is now being practised throughout society in all sorts of local relations between children and parents, students and teachers, patients and psychiatrists, and so on.\textsuperscript{161} Civilisation has therefore developed another socially more fluid form of power that is not derived from the sovereign (or the market) – disciplinary power.\textsuperscript{162} As Foucault describes it: ‘Something had been born, which was no longer repression, but authority.’\textsuperscript{163} Various discourses of discipline create natural rules – norms – rather than deriving power from formal laws.\textsuperscript{164} As such discipline is not set within

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{158} Foucault, Michel. \textit{Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison}, 1995, pp. 201, 217.
\item \textsuperscript{159} Ibid. p. 305.
\item \textsuperscript{161} Foucault, Michel. \textit{The History of Sexuality: The Will To Knowledge Volume 1}, 2008, p. 63
\item \textsuperscript{163} Foucault, Michel. \textit{Madness and Civilization: The History of Insanity in the Age of Reason}, 1988, p. 251.
\end{itemize}
institutions, but rather is dispersed in centres of observation pervading the social body.\textsuperscript{165} ‘It is a normalizing gaze, a surveillance that makes it possible to qualify, to classify and to punish.’\textsuperscript{166} In the case of the asylum, madness is treated as a ‘social crime’ to which patients are subjected to an endless trial.\textsuperscript{167} Such practices illustrate how a reciprocal relationship develops between power and knowledge. Human relations affect how knowledge is produced and beliefs can motivate or de-motivate the execution of power.\textsuperscript{168} The power to ‘cure’ is another fine example of this dynamic at play.\textsuperscript{169}

Given the complexities of power from the global level to the local, democracy faces an immense challenge in re-aligning interest groups that have become increasingly fragmented. On the one hand advocacy cannot be strictly limited to the dynamics of class.\textsuperscript{170} However, on the other, it is important to remember that at a time when class has been removed from academic discourse social relations (and specifically those of class) have been significantly altered.\textsuperscript{171} So to begin with it is important to acknowledge growing divisions within the working class.

The first consideration to note is the widening gap in living standards between workers and the unemployed. Unemployment grew consistently for most of


\textsuperscript{166} Ibid. p. 184.

\textsuperscript{167} Foucault, Michel. \textit{Madness and Civilisation: The History of Insanity in the Age of Reason}, 1988, p. 269.

\textsuperscript{168} Ibid. p. 27. See also Said, Edward. \textit{Orientalism}, Peregrine, Harmondsworth, 1985, p. 36.


the twentieth century.\textsuperscript{172} This problem is tied to the various contradictions of capitalism that have been diverted by expansionism temporarily.\textsuperscript{173} However, even more significant is the gap between full-time permanent employees and casual workers – the working poor. Through the creation of precarious employment and unemployment, a ‘flexible core labour reserve’ is established for the benefit of employers.\textsuperscript{174} It is important to note that discourse around industrial relations often misuses the concept of ‘flexibility’. Often ‘flexibility’ is in reality targeted at the power to hire and fire, replace permanent staff with part-timers with fewer legal entitlements, contract out to firms hiring unorganised labour, increasing overtime, transferring production to less regulated regions, and so on.\textsuperscript{175}

But aside from sectors of workers being even more exploited than others there is also the growing problem of the issues of class, generation and gender becoming intermingled.\textsuperscript{176} Because of growing job insecurity and a lack of public provisions in the welfare state, working people are increasingly investing in the stock market. This however means that they then have an interest in enterprise profitability, which entails companies further exploiting the labour of other workers.\textsuperscript{177} However, to have the conditions in which labour can be sold as a commodity, capitalists have found a way to externalise most of the cost of its reproduction:

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{173} Ibid. pp. 238, 241–2, 251, 889.
\item \textsuperscript{175} Seccombe, Wally. ‘Contradictions of Shareholder Capitalism: Downsizing Jobs, Enlisting Savings, Destabilizing Families,’ In Socialist Register Volume 35: Global Capitalism versus Democracy, 1999, pp. 96–7.
\item \textsuperscript{176} Ibid. p. 103.
\item \textsuperscript{177} Ibid. p. 91–2.
\end{itemize}
Without this infrastructure of non-free, coerced female or colonial labour in the broadest sense, the non-coerced, contractual labour relations of the free proletarians would not be possible. Women and colonial peoples were defined as property, as nature, not as free subjects, who could enter a contract. Both had to be subordinated by force and direct violence.\textsuperscript{178}

Despite this aspect of women’s oppression, the issue of gender equality is all too often seen as just a cultural matter. Or worse, as some crude Marxists would have it, it is reduced to an aspect of the superstructure of capitalism that will be easily eradicated once the economic base has been changed.\textsuperscript{179}

Regardless of class, women are not exempt from oppression. As Mies points out for those who dismiss it as a middle class issue which is an ‘economistic equation of liberation with wealth’– even being middle class does not protect women from violence.\textsuperscript{180}

Furthermore, the way women’s international division of labour is structured (and to a lesser extent men’s) means that isolated advances for one set of women come at the cost of another set. For instance, a decrease in consumption prices may be at the price of worsening wages and conditions. This is precisely why political struggle will have to be international in scope, addressing the needs of all parts of production and consumption processes.\textsuperscript{181}


\textsuperscript{179} Ibid. p. 178.

\textsuperscript{180} Ibid. p. 206.

\textsuperscript{181} Ibid. p. 232.
There is also the issue of ethnocentrism to consider. As Edward Said observes: ‘There are Westerners, and there are Orientals. The former dominate; the latter must be dominated, which usually means having their land occupied, their internal affairs rigidly controlled, their blood and treasure put at the disposal of one or another Western power.’

The concept of multiculturalism has been used to rectify the mistakes of the past in this regard. Emerging out of the various social movements of the late 1960s and early 1970s, multiculturalism has unfortunately been co-opted by politicians to draw attention away from the structural causes of these various forms of discrimination. By obscuring historical relations of power in favour of the perception of a levelled-out multiplicity and difference, social differences can be trivialised. This assists in assuring that human identity remains fragmented and fragile, undermining the basis of a common identity or purpose required for solidarity and collective action.

David McKnight identifies two strains of multiculturalism; a mosaic multiculturalism that emphasises respect for difference but otherwise rejects common values, and a hodgepodge multiculturalism that encourages a mixing of cultures and developing a synthesis. Only mosaic multiculturalism however has had some successes in influencing ethnic communities. Nevertheless, as we shall see, multiculturalism need not necessarily be inconsistent with an inclusive nationalism that recognises the contributions of all cultures.

---

Another form of discrimination that often gets overlooked is the issue of speciesism whereby the interests of one’s own species is elevated above others. Farming practices, in the attempt to function as a business, naturally seek to cut costs and increase production to the detriment of the welfare of animals.\textsuperscript{186} However, animal welfare presents a difficult challenge. Since other animals cannot advocate for themselves, humans have to speak out on their behalf. This barrier to dialogue and therefore in understanding such otherness will not be easy to overcome. However, the concepts of justice and ecological democracy (see previous chapter) will hopefully serve in uprooting the multiple layers of prejudice left largely unexamined so far in regard to this issue.

**Reclaiming Nationalism**

Considering the unrivalled power of transnational corporations as well as difficulties in reconciling various form of oppression, the struggle for democracy will need to reconsider how to reorient people in new inspiring ways. Of course the axis of class will still remain an important consideration. However, socialism has not been a popular notion in Australia. On the other hand, nationalism has had considerable support from the Australian population. A revival of nationalism would be strategic in advancing democracy by encouraging more economic self-reliance (especially when it comes to food security). This would grant less opportunity for exploitation to occur and encourage governments to reclaim sovereignty over their affairs.\textsuperscript{187} However, without question, Australian nationalism has been used divisively.


\textsuperscript{187} Mies, Maria, *Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale: Women in the International Division of Labour*, 1998, pp. 219, 232.
But does this mean that as a political ideology it is inherently dangerous? To answer this charge it will be necessary to understand how it developed as an idea.

For the most part Marxists are decisive on what constitutes nations. According to Joseph Stalin’s *Marxism and the National Question*, nations share three common characteristics. First, a commonly held language is considered crucial as it provides the means for people to communicate their ideas and to construct a common culture. Second, it is also considered necessary to inhabit a common territory enabling people to closely interact across generations. Finally, to fuse various regions of people together, economic trade is considered essential.\(^{188}\) In summary: ‘A nation is a historically evolved, stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up manifested in a common culture.’\(^{189}\)

It may be true that language, territory and economic relations have the ability to generate vital social conditions that assist the formation of national communities. However, it does seem crude to define the existence of all nations according to this checklist. In contrast, Ernest Renan demonstrates that the bond of nationalism does not derive from some universal formula. As he asks:

> Why is Holland a nation, when Hanover, or the Grand Duchy of Parma are not? How is it that France continues to be a nation, when the principle which created it has disappeared? How is it that Switzerland,

---


\(^{189}\) Ibid. p. 197.
which has three languages, two religion, and three or four races is a nation, when Tuscany, which is so homogenous, is not one? Why is Austria a state and not a nation?\(^{190}\)

Renan argues that there are two key requirements for the creation of nationality: a common legacy of memories from the past and present day consent to pursue common goals in the future. In his words:

> To have common glories in the past and to have a common will in the present; to have performed great deeds together, to wish to perform still more – these are essential conditions for being a people... A nation is therefore a large-scale solidarity, constituted by the feeling of the sacrifices that one has made in the past and of those that one is prepared to make in the future.\(^{191}\)

Yet Renan does not provide an explanation as to how such a sense of common will is capable of emerging. It is therefore necessary to look in more depth at what kind of concrete historical events presented the possibilities for the idea of a nation to be generated.

According to Ernest Gellner, nationalism was not authentically popular. Instead it served as a cornerstone of an imposed high culture. Historically it is argued that people who shared social bonds were not always motivated to defend them against external threats.\(^{192}\) Therefore, nations did not pre-exist to be awakened, but rather were an ideological invention used to drive the development of industrialisation. To assist economic innovation, these various

---


\(^{191}\) Ibid. p. 19.

populations had to be subordinated and controlled. This was achieved through fabricating a homogenous culture that was enforced by a new political unit – the state.\textsuperscript{193} James Anderson also associates nationalism with the rise of industrialisation. He argues the Industrial Revolution in Britain created pressure for other nation-states to strengthen their states for economic protection against the infiltration of British capital and also to advance their own national economies to catch up.\textsuperscript{194}

Partha Chatterjee refutes this view of nationalism being no more than an instrument of industrialisation. Those supporting the transition from an agrarian to an industrial economy did not always share a nationalist perspective. Nationalist uprisings against colonialism moreover did not always support such economic development.\textsuperscript{195} Chatterjee identifies Benedict Anderson as another theorist who questions this reductionism. According to his interpretation of Anderson, nationalism was a purely ‘thought out’ process.\textsuperscript{196} Anderson argues that it was the emergence of the print media, among other factors, that gradually led people to decide to unite under the banner of nationalism. In response to Martin Luther’s controversial theses there was an increase in the number of books published in the early- to mid-sixteenth century, over three times the rate of previous production.\textsuperscript{197} With a broader distribution of print languages, different variation of dialects merged

\textsuperscript{193} Ibid. p. 5.
\textsuperscript{196} Ibid. p. 19.
and print was able to stabilise these new languages.\textsuperscript{198} This led to a spread of vernaculars logistically beyond the control of a centralised administration.\textsuperscript{199} In addition, Walter Benjamin explains that with the development of the novel, narratives were no longer presented from a subjective point of view, but rather from the context of a community’s view.\textsuperscript{200} This combined with its imaginative tendencies created the possibilities for nations to be conjectured. According to Timothy Brennan: ‘Nations, then, are imaginary constructs that depend for their existence on an apparatus of cultural fictions in which imaginative literature plays a decisive role. And the rise of European Nationalism coincides especially with one form of literature – the novel.’\textsuperscript{201}

It was around the time of the French Revolution that nationalism began to capture the imagination of people. Thanks to print, people developed the capacity to imagine the political idea of the common good. Abbé Sieyé’s pamphlet ‘Qu’est – ce le Tiers État’ (Nation is the People) used Rousseau’s idea of the general will to argue for French nationalism. From there, this political idea was spread by revolutionary and Napoleonic armies throughout Europe.\textsuperscript{202} Fichte developed further on the idea of nationalism, considering the nation as a collective agency driven by the quest for realising human freedom.\textsuperscript{203}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{198} Ibid. p. 47.
\item \textsuperscript{199} Ibid. p. 44.
\item \textsuperscript{201} Ibid. p. 49.
\item \textsuperscript{202} In McMinn, W.G. Nationalism and Federation in Australia, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1994, p. 5.
\item \textsuperscript{203} In Gasman, Daniel. The Scientific Origins of National Socialism: Social Darwinism in Ernst Haeckel and the German Monist League, Macdonald, London, 1971, p. xix.
\end{itemize}
There are of course also political motives for the promotion of nationalism. For instance, it was an important support for the development of liberal democracy:

A relatively closed and secure national society also became an unspoken basis for most liberal democratic theory. It made the notion of a clear relationship between those governing and those governed – voters and their representatives – conceivable, lending significance to concepts such as ‘participation’ and ‘democratic legitimation’. A democratic process which can empower citizens and ensure popular control over political institutions is, in principle, possible only when social and political membership is clearly defined and only when a democratic government possesses the capacity of a sovereign entity.\(^{204}\)

Nationalism was also essential in aiding coherence in political policy.\(^{205}\) Australian federation was obviously motivated by this concern.

Although Benedict Anderson considered nationalism to be a thought-out process, it is important to recognise that there were socio-historical conditions leading people in this ideological direction. ‘What, in a positive sense, made the new communities imaginable was a half-fortuitous, but explosive, interaction between a system of production and production relations (capitalism), a technology of communication (print), and the fatality of human linguistic diversity.’\(^{206}\) Nationalism therefore became popular amongst people


\(^{205}\) Clark, Ian. Globalization and Fragmentation: International Relations in the Twentieth Century, 1997, p. 188.

and seemed to be a natural cultural development. However, was it just a coincidence that the rise of the new ruling class – the bourgeoisie – happened to gain political strength during the peak of nationalist sentiments?

According to James Anderson, conditions for nationalism were developing notably before the establishment of capitalism. During the sixteenth century absolutist monarchs in France, England and Spain played three roles in providing favourable conditions for nationalism: ‘…the “institutionalization” of civil society, the internal unification of territory, and the drawing of external geographical boundaries.’ These territorial states were developed in response to what was known as the ‘Gunpowder Revolution’, as castles could no longer provide the impenetrability that was required against foreign aggression. As these ruling monarchs wished to establish dominance within the sovereignty of their territory, they needed to draw people closer together, as well as strengthen the economy by centralising the administration of trade. And as these regimes desired to expand their rule, they moreover demanded a stronger military that had the finances necessary to wage war externally.

In summary, what constitutes a nation is a stable community holding a common sense of identity and collective will, deriving from a series of historical events, which assisted in drawing regional communities together and fusing them to make this new social unit imaginable. As such, national cultures are not always forcefully imposed. Since it is not exclusive intellectual property used for manipulating broader public opinion, it is an idea that could be potentially reclaimed.

---

208 Ibid. p. 126.
209 Ibid. p. 126.
However, with increasing control over economic life as well as the cultural means of production, the bourgeoisie, both in Australia as well as elsewhere, have been able to use nationalism to suit their own agenda.\textsuperscript{210} During the late 1990s Australian nationalism found expression in the ethnocentric views of Pauline Hanson and the One Nation party.\textsuperscript{211} Australian nationalism would need to be drastically reframed if it were to mobilise people in a manner that is constructive to democracy. As was discussed in more detail in Chapter 4, this would require the reconciliation of interests between local, regional, national and international communities. As such both the cause of national self-determination and international justice would be pursued. However, it would also mean Australians would have to acknowledge that besides having ‘common glories’ to celebrate, responsibility has to be taken for common mistakes, especially those that have been so soul-destroying for Indigenous Australians. This important process of addressing past (and present) inequalities would be assisted by tying the promotion of a politics of recognition with Australian nationalism. As such national interests would no longer be code for the interests of Australia’s ruling class but rather the democratic will of the people.

To attract those who have up to this point viewed nationalism as reactionary, it must be pointed out that internationalism (as is favoured by many of these people) begins at home. Boris Frankel argues that economic planning on an international scale would likely end up being undemocratic and oppressive.


\textsuperscript{211} McKnight, David. \textit{Beyond Right and Left: New Politics and the Culture Wars}, Allen & Unwin, Crows Nest, 2005, p. 222. As was pointed out in the first chapter, the Howard government incorporated many of the policies and ethnocentric views of One Nation.
Similar problems have plagued attempts at international political organising (such as the Fourth International). This extreme universalism needs to be reconsidered in favour of a multiplicity of national strategies:

It is one thing to hope for a united federation of national socialist states, each co-operating with one another, yet based on national and local self-administered plans. It is quite another thing to aspire to an internationalism which postulates a single world society without socialist state institutions – a ‘self-managed global village’ or alternatively, a ‘world socialist market’ without capitalist multinational corporations.

As to what may grant political struggles a global reach depends both upon awareness, openings for convergence and the ability to communicate.

**Postmodernity and ‘Progress’**

Nationalism implies an ability to achieve or fail in collective projects. Therefore, there is a belief that ‘progress’ can be made. Notions of progress are at the heart of the project of modernity. Yet it is important to emphasise that reason rather than faith is at the service of this progress. As Immanuel Kant argues: ‘The motto of the enlightenment project is therefore: *Sapere aude!* [Dare to be wise!] Have courage to use your *own* understanding!’

However, this inquiry into the world has made a number of assumptions:

---

213 Ibid. p. 256.
i) Belief in a knowable world.

ii) Subject matters have universal properties.

iii) Scientific method (especially empiricism) can uncover these properties.

iv) Progress can be made in a linear manner.

More specifically modernism in the ‘West’ is commonly associated with supposed ‘democracy’ in political solutions, economic growth and social modernisation. In Asia modernity shares similar objectives, however, the individual is reduced to an instrument of the group rather than being regarded as an autonomous agent.

It is commonly claimed postmodernism emerged out of the decline in political movements and the failed uprising in France in 1968. Yet there has always been some overlap between modernity and postmodernity that is worth mentioning. According to Mike Featherstone, the postmodern tendency to transfer art into everyday life can be traced back as far as the Carnival of the Middle Ages. There images and sensations are disconnected and the emotions are encouraged to spill over restraint so that adults are permitted to act like children again. In political theory there have also been instances where postmodern tendencies have been evident. Machiavelli, for instance, is considered as being postmodern even before the advent of modernity. This is due to his emphasis on unstable alliances that constantly shift and his disbelief

---


in a decisive centre of power. Moreover, Machiavelli was more interested in strategies of power, rather than fixing and serving power: ‘Where Hobbes and his successors may be said to have endlessly legislated on what power is. Machiavelli and his successors may be said to have interpreted what power does.’

Rousseau is another political theorist who has influenced postmodernism. In his *Discourse on the Moral Effects of the Arts and Sciences* he boldly stated that the human mind has been corrupted in proportion to improvements in the Arts and Sciences. The more we inquire into the world, the more humanity will suffer. This is, according to Rousseau, why nature tries to conceal its true reality:

> Let men learn for once that nature would have preserved them from science, as a mother snatches a dangerous weapon from the hands of her child. Let them know that all the secrets she hides are so many evils from which she protects them, and that the very difficulty they find in acquiring knowledge is not the least of her bounty towards them. Men are perverse; but they would have been far worse, if they had had the misfortune to be born learned.

Rousseau later ironically draws upon an important modernist principle as to why he deplores this inquiry into the world. For instance:

> The question is no longer whether a man is honest, but whether he is clever. We do not ask whether a book is useful, but whether it is well

---


222 Ibid. p. 13.
written. Rewards are lavished on wit and ingenuity, while virtue is left unhonoured. There are a thousand prizes for fine discourses, and none for good actions... We have physicists, geometricians, chemists, astronomers, poets, musicians, and painters in plenty; but we have no longer a citizen among us; or if there be found a few scattered over our abandoned countryside, they are left to perish there unnoticed and neglected.223

From Rousseau’s point of view of what a genuine democracy entails, the instrumental conquests of the Arts and Sciences may have seemed superficial and self-indulgent. But Rousseau did not give up on the importance of linking human inquiry to the importance of developing the intellectual capacity to overcome alienation and politically determine one’s own future.224

Continuing from Rousseau however, postmodernism has also been challenging the legitimacy of human progress and whether the Arts and Sciences have been legitimate in serving this ‘humanist’ objective. Did the continuation of the Enlightenment project deliver more rational social relations, or are humans going around in circles? As Foucault observes: ‘The ‘Enlightenment’, which discovered the liberties, also invented the disciplines.’ 225

Foucault, among others, associates generalised theories of the Enlightenment to totalitarian political practices. Hence, local rather than more general

223 Ibid. p. 22.

224 Rousseau has discussed how education can serve the political development of citizens in detail in *Emile: Or Treatise on Education*, (tr) William, H. Payne, Prometheus Books, New York, 2003. There are of course some limitations such as his fifth chapter ‘The Education of Women’.

understandings are required for human emancipation.226 Along with favouring the local, contemporary events are favoured over long-term historical perspectives.227 This is because according to postmodern theory all presuppositions have to be challenged. And since grand narratives and all forms of meta-theory must inevitably draw upon them, they should be regarded with suspicion.228 As Jean-François Lyotard notoriously states: ‘I define postmodern as incredulity toward meta-narratives.’229 This presents the following serious problem: ‘Where, after meta-narratives, can legitimacy reside?’230 For postmodernism, the project of modernity has failed. No longer does there seem to be a legitimate basis for universalism.231 Those who have stubbornly clung onto the project of modernity have been accused of being dogmatic, ethnocentric and intellectual imperialists.232 For postmodernity, then, humanity has utterly failed in its ‘humanist’ pursuit of rational social relations. There is no belief in a special historical agent or conviction that the state can be utilised in a rational manner.233 Sadly, the project of modernity has been so disastrous that some acknowledgement of how detrimental human activity has been on natural ecosystems is necessary.

230 Ibid. p. 28.
232 Ibid. p. 196.
233 Ibid. p. 201.
As Herbert Marcuse observed over 40 years ago, the idea of National Parks being described as ‘reservations’ demonstrates that nature has had to be preserved from the activities of the human species. The humanist notion of ‘man’ is all too often defined also at the expense of the non-Western ‘other’ (and of course women). Being considered as no better than the animal it subjugates, a lucky few are invited to become human by impersonating European man.

Yet this criticism of human progress by postmodernity is taken further to disqualify all intelligible theoretical accounts of social systems and historical events:

Structures and causes have been replaced by fragments and contingencies. There is no such thing as a social system (e.g. the capitalist system) with its own systemic unity and ‘laws of motion.’ There are only many different kinds of power, oppression, identity, and ‘discourse.’ Not only do we have to reject the old ‘grand narratives,’ like Enlightenment concepts of progress, we have to give up any idea of intelligible historical progress and causality, and with it evidently, any idea of ‘making history.’

In replacement of meta-narratives, local narratives are championed leaving no common frame of reference but rather an aimless play of a plurality of

---


perspectives. Attention is moreover focused upon perceived surfaces rather than dealing with an underlying reality. As a result postmodernists prefer to pay attention to minorities that remain outside traditional social divisions. Grand narratives have been fragmented into a diversity of ‘language games’. Language games are self-enclosed with their own specific criteria of rationality. Meaning, for instance, is reliant upon the context of what particular language game is being referred to. As such postmodernity prefers values to laws and assumptions to foundations. It opposes the monolithic, homogenous, abstract, general and universal in favour of plurality, the concrete, and specific.

Revealing the dangers of holistic theories Edward Said’s analysis of Orientalism draws upon postmodern theory. Drawing upon Foucault’s critique of the social sciences, Said applied to Orientalism the idea that social science and social control are so closely bound that to engage in one is to engage in the other. Orientalism is a body of knowledge derived from texts

---

238 Ibid. p. 37.
and institutional practices from what is deemed the Orient.\textsuperscript{246} The term came into frequent use within American universities in the early 1970s.\textsuperscript{247} For Said the concept of Orientalism has set parameters upon how to think about the non-Western ‘other’. ‘My contention is that Orientalism is fundamentally a political doctrine willed over the Orient because the Orient was weaker than the West, which elided the Orient’s difference with its weakness.’\textsuperscript{248} A typical tendency has been to emphasise the Oriental as being ‘other’ to Western civilisation rather than being about the actual people living in those regions.\textsuperscript{249}

Despite the problems with such crude modernist projects, postmodernity on the other hand encourages a superficial construction of identity through commodity consumption. Other strategies of identity construction may alternatively involve a more ‘traditionalist’ approach where community projects can create a fixed identity. This is often either directed along ethnic or religious lines.\textsuperscript{250} But due to a lack of historical perspective, most people find it very difficult to feel a sense of purpose or place in the world.\textsuperscript{251} Hence in depriving life of meaning, postmodernism may contribute to feelings of alienation. Yet this fragmentation may not be just due to the texts and

\begin{flushleft}


\textsuperscript{248} Ibid. pp. 43, 204.

\textsuperscript{249} Gare, Arran. ‘Understanding Oriental Cultures,’ \textit{Philosophy East and West}, vol. 45, no. 3, 1995, p. 2.


\end{flushleft}
discourses of postmodernity. Some point to the ways that capitalism itself can disorient people.\textsuperscript{252}

‘Foundationalism’ where concepts or categories become fixed and essential, are said to contain an objectivist bias. However, Rosalind O’Hanlon and David Washbrook contend it is very difficult in everyday practical life to avoid using categories to order reality in order to explain, understand, reveal, and to do.\textsuperscript{253} ‘Indeed, it is only in the light of some conception of a dominant cultural logic or hegemonic system that resistance, emancipation, or difference can be meaningfully identified or measured at all.’\textsuperscript{254} With Said, there is an implicit assumption that humans cannot comprehend other cultures – that all attempts result in exercises of power. According to Arran Gare however, this view if applied consistently would undermine the basis to his critique of Orientalism.\textsuperscript{255}

Ellen Wood summarises the dangers of postmodernism accordingly:

\begin{quote}
The ‘openness’ of postmodernism’s fragmentary knowledges and its emphasis on ‘difference’ are purchased at the price of much more fundamental closures. Postmodernism is, in its negative way, a ruthlessly ‘totalizing’ system, which forecloses a vast range of critical thought and emancipatory politics and its closures are final and decisive. Its epistemological assumptions make it unavailable to criticism, as immune to critique as the most rigid kind of dogma (how
\end{quote}

\begin{footnotes}
\item[254] Ibid. p. 149.
\end{footnotes}
do you criticize a body of ideas that a priori rules out the very practice of ‘rational’ argument?). And they preclude – not just by dogmatically rejecting but also by rendering impossible – a systematic understanding of our historical moment, a wholesale critique of capitalism, and just about any effective political action.

For emancipatory politics to be effective there needs to be commitment to some sort of universal theory:

It is true that the new paradigms recognize the importance of scale, and therefore of locality. But it is also true that these changes are located within disciplines committed to universal theory. These disciplinary commitments to universality inform the theories as surely as the theories help to form the disciplines.

As an idea, universality cannot be given up, because particular rights exist only to the extent that universal rights exist. No struggle against racism or any other kind of collective oppression is possible without some conception of universality.

It is necessary then to appreciate some of the limitations of modernity and to reconsider its objectives with more caution. According to Gare, hermeneutics can to some extent address this need. For instance Gadamer claimed that it is important to regard particular texts (of other cultures) from the prejudices of

---

256 Wood, Ellen. ‘What is the ‘Postmodern’ Agenda?’, in In Defense of History: Marxism and the Postmodern Agenda, 1997, pp. 13–14. However, not all postmodern theorists embrace such relativism. For instance, it has been claimed that Foucault instead advocates provisional judgements be subjected to the test of ongoing social dialogue. See Falzon, Christopher. Foucault and Social Dialogue: Beyond Fragmentation, Routledge, London, 1998.


258 Ahmad, Aijaz. ‘Culture, Nationalism, and the Role of Intellectuals,’ in In Defense of History: Marxism and the Postmodern Agenda, 1997, p. 57.
one’s own tradition. Because humans already draw upon a particular culture and history, it is important to acknowledge that this will affect the way one interprets the world. Thus: ‘We assume that our own ethical knowledge is prejudiced, historically conditioned, and incomplete and that the ethical knowledge of others is at least potentially capable of expanding our ethical understanding.’

Some of the ideas used by postmodernists, such as Foucault’s discursive formations, could be used to deepen hermeneutics. Moreover, Foucault believed in preserving differences of opinion at the end of a dialogue. But this does not necessarily mean that all cultural perspectives should be considered as equally valid:

While intercultural learning thus does not presuppose assessments of equal worth, it clearly does presuppose that we don’t just tolerate other cultures in their difference from our own, but that we see them as actively making a claim on us and as embodying strengths from which we could productively learn.

In this spirit a discourse ethics (derived from communicative reason which is closely related) could attempt to reconcile universal values while respecting particular claims to autonomy.

---

259 Gare, Arran. ‘Understanding Oriental Cultures,’ *Philosophy East and West*, vol. 45, no. 3, 1995, p. 7. See also Chapter 4.


263 Ibid. p. 130.

Despite its theoretical insights, postmodernism has aided those already in power. For instance, the intellectual field’s autonomy from the economic field has been placed under threat.\footnote{Bauman, Zygmunt. ‘Is there a Postmodern Sociology?,’ in The Postmodern Condition: New Perspective on Social Theory, 1994, p. 194.} Political legitimacy has been replaced by seduction and repression in maintaining existing power relations. According to Zygmunt Bauman:

> Emancipation of capital from labour makes possible the emancipation of the state from legitimation; and that may mean in the long run a gradual erosion of democratic institutions and the substance of democratic politics (reproduction of legitimation having been the political democracy major historical function). Unlike the task of reproducing members of society as producers, their reproduction as consumers does not necessarily enlarge the political state and hence does not imply the need to reproduce them as citizens. The ‘systemic’ need for political democracy is thereby eroded, and the political agency of men and women as citizens cannot count for its reproduction of the centripetal effects of the self-legitimizing concerns of the state. The other factors which could sponsor such reproduction look also increasingly doubtful in view of the tendency to shift political conflicts into the non-political and democratically unaccountable sphere of the market, and the drift towards the substitution of ‘needs creation’ for ‘normative regulation’ as the paramount methods of systemic reproduction (except for the part of the society the market is unable or unwilling to assimilate).\footnote{Ibid. p. 202.}
Meanwhile, little acknowledgement goes to those who are critical of the universal claims of Western modernisation, such as feminists and Marxists.\textsuperscript{267} It is often forgotten that Marx was aiming for rational relations between humanity and nature rather than for domination over nature. Moreover, the goal of social life was supposed to be the all-round development of human creative potential rather than maximising material production.\textsuperscript{268} It is therefore possible to be critical of Western modernity’s obsession with infinite growth, consumerism, and blind faith in instrumental logic yet still remain committed to other aspects of modernity that advocate some alternative conception of progress.

The Frankfurt School Marxists in particular were very critical of the narrow Western idea of progress and the role reason played in serving this project. According to Herbert Marcuse; ‘The quantification of nature, which led to its explication in terms of mathematical structures, separated reality from all inherent ends and, consequently, separated the true from the good, science from ethics.’\textsuperscript{269} External to scientific inquiry (where observation reduces people and the natural world into predictable instruments)\textsuperscript{270} are the ideas of mere subjective opinion that cannot be taken seriously.\textsuperscript{271}

Having given up autonomy, reason has become an instrument. In the formalistic aspect of subjective reason, stressed by positivism, its unrelatedness to objective content is emphasized; in its instrumental


\textsuperscript{271} Ibid. p. 121.
aspect, stressed by pragmatism, its surrender to heteronomous contents is emphasized. Reason has become completely harnessed to the social process. Its operational value, its role in the domination of men and nature, has been made the sole criterion.²⁷²

This attempt at ‘progress’ through domination over the world has now led humanity along the path of self-enslavement. ‘Social power is today more than ever mediated by power over things. The more intense an individual’s concern with power over things, the more will things dominate him, the more will he lack any genuine individual traits, and the more will his mind be transformed into an automaton of formalized reason.’²⁷³

**Problematic Assumptions of the Political ‘Left’**

One the most formidable difficulties in attempting to revive democracy concerns some of those who claim to be on the ‘left’ of the political spectrum. Despite some sharp criticisms of the existing system, there remain a number of assumptions that some of these people share with those in power about progress, rationality and human nature. The concepts of right and left in politics refer to the seating arrangement of the National Assembly after the French Revolution. Deputies seated on the left believed in further developing the revolution’s goals of liberty, equality and fraternity. Those on the right, who were opposed to this, wanted to preserve existing traditions and power relations.²⁷⁴ Socialism was to be the full realisation of the ambitions of the Left. However, Australia’s socialist movement has been dominated by the central tenets of orthodox Marxism. Armed with ‘revolutionary

²⁷³ Ibid. p. 88.
consciousness’ these people have ambitions to become the leaders in political struggle. But are their ideas as ‘radical’ as they claim to be? And how has the socialist movement consequently fared?

According to Boris Frankel, the political period from 1880 up until the First World War was a golden age for Australia’s working class. But it was afterwards that Australia’s most influential socialist organisation, the Communist Party of Australia (CPA), was established. Its politics aside, this organisation was key in a number of important struggles in advancing and defending conditions for democracy. The CPA had strong links to the trade union movement, was involved in the struggle for equal pay, helped establish women’s committees in unions and also a number of women’s organisations. It was early to take up the cause of Aboriginal rights in its press in the early 1920s. By 1931, the CPA had adopted a political program on these demands. Members also openly contested the ALP’s candidates in the trade union movement. During the 1940s the political struggle had some considerable success. By 1945, the CPA had over 23,000 members. It had the support of 25 to 40 per cent of trade unionists. And it had some electoral

\[\text{\textsuperscript{275}}\text{Frankel, Boris. From the Prophets Deserts Come: The Struggle to Re-shape Australian Political Culture, 1992, p. 30.}\]
\[\text{\textsuperscript{279}}\text{Ibid. p. 148.}\]
success with a member of parliament in Queensland and a number of positions in municipal councils.\textsuperscript{280}

Marxism became most influential in the 1930s and 1940s to later re-emerge in the 1960s and 1970s.\textsuperscript{281} However, it was at this stage that the socialist movement suffered a series of splits that it is yet to recover from. In 1963, there was a Maoist-influenced split in the CPA with the establishment of the Communist Party of Australia (Marxist-Leninist). A second split occurred in the CPA creating the more Trotskyist Socialist Party of Australia (SPA). Then the SPA itself split in 1981. And the CPA split again to create the Socialist Forum in 1984. Membership of the CPA grew from 4,500 in 1963 to 5,300 in 1965. However by 1983 it had shrunk significantly to 1,400 members.\textsuperscript{282} Eight hundred people joined the SPA, but from 1981 to 1983 half of this number either resigned or were expelled. The SPA also had established important networks with various mass movements, especially the trade union movement. After the purge however, they lost important leaders and activists, leaving themselves politically isolated.\textsuperscript{283} Some of the smaller Trotskyist groups had limited capacities within the various movements.\textsuperscript{284}

Before the 1970s there was considerably more face-to-face political interactions at rallies, meetings, and street campaigning. Unfortunately, by the 1990s, this activity had declined steeply. A couple of reasons for this


\textsuperscript{281} Frankel, Boris. \textit{From the Prophets Deserts Come: The Struggle to Reshape Australian Political Culture}, 1992, p. 179.


\textsuperscript{283} Ibid. 277, 281.

\textsuperscript{284} Frankel, Boris. \textit{From the Prophets Deserts Come: the Struggle to Reshape Australian Political Culture}, 1992, p. 38.
degeneration was the demobilising effects of the Accord and a decline in investigations into matters of the political economy due to the abovementioned preoccupations of postmodern theory. During this time left organisations suffered further fragmentation. As of 2005, 36 different organisations existed, both internally and externally left of the ALP.

According to Frankel, Australia has no sizable revolutionary movement, is almost completely barren of any intellectual leadership or significant radical alternative media. Likewise:

Confined to the secondary and peripheral media outlets, political pluralism in Australia is a mere shadow of what it could and should be. Starved of resources, of access to the primary mass media market and hence of political influence and publicity, most groups are systematically denied substantive forms of democratic power.

To a fair degree these organisations depend on the mainstream media in order to reach the public. However, the television format has a strong tendency to abbreviate its audience’s attention span, making it more difficult to convey complex ideas. It is common protocol for this and other simplified forms of news entertainment to completely deny the existence of class and then

---

285 Ibid. pp. 51, 184, 284.
286 *Leftist Parties of the World: Australia*, 24/09/05, www.broadleft.org.au.htm. There have been a number of splits since this recording so the number is probably closer to 40.
288 Ibid. p. 287.
complain later about Australia losing its egalitarianism. ABC radio and television, along with SBS, can at times also capitulate to the all-encompassing neo-liberal paradigm. The former is reliant on Murdoch, former Fairfax commentators, foreign wire service correspondents, editors and cultural critics. Besides the ‘incestuous’ relationship with commercial media, many journalists lack a grasp of history from their educational background, and so they are unable to question public figures or provide in-depth analysis. However there are some differences between the ABC and commercial television that are worth mentioning. Whereas commercial stations are driven by ratings (and therefore profit), the ABC provides programs that at least intend to serve the public interest. Under the ABC charter the station is expected to provide a ‘…service that contributes to a sense of national identity and provides information, entertainment, education and cultural enrichment for the Australian people…’ As such the ABC does hold higher standards as to what passes for news and at least attempts to present a more comprehensive picture of complex political matters. Since the 1990s however the ABC has been attacked for being politically biased. In 1996 the ABC’s budget was slashed and a series of appointments were made to its board in an attempt to ‘moderate’ the political views of its programming. Due to an uncertainty in funding the ABC has been under pressure to commercialise from within. One fine example of this consists with the

291 Ibid. p. 290.
creation of ABC shops selling a number of spin-off products from its programming.  

The mainstream media has a long history of depicting trade unionists, activists and other minority advocates in a negative light. In the 1998 Patrick Stevedores Pty Ltd versus Maritime Union of Australia waterfront dispute, intellectuals from right-wing think tanks were granted opinion copy in mainstream newspapers. Typically, any violence that broke out at the picket line distracted attention away from the actual origins of what caused the struggle in the first place.

It would therefore be an understatement to claim that the political terrain in this country has not been favourable to advocates amongst the Left. However, that could be said of many countries. As David McKnight observes, the left in Australia currently finds itself in a completely defensive position. Despite its views on economic matters, the Australian working class is traditionally socially conservative. The Liberal Party, especially under John Howard, took advantage of this by successfully launching a ‘cultural war’ to win over blue-collar workers.

As important as it is to recognise the objective difficulties faced, it is also important to uncover subjective reasons why those organised elements of the far left have been so unsuccessful. Psychologist Iain McGilchrist contends that within the history of Western civilisation, there have been a number of shifts in brain activity favouring the left hemisphere, with each shift being greater


than the last. This trend can be traced back as far as ancient Greece.\textsuperscript{298} Whereas both hemispheres of the brain ought to balance one another, the left hemisphere has in many instances suppressed the right hemisphere.\textsuperscript{299} The left hemisphere is concerned with utility, reducing everything into either an obstacle or an instrument for the subject.\textsuperscript{300} Experience is consequently interpreted in terms of categories and abstractions.\textsuperscript{301} The right hemisphere on the other hand is less focused upon the present. This frees consciousness for more creative thinking. It enables humans to appreciate the limits of understanding, being an embodied subject, understanding context as opposed to abstractions, developing coherence and meaning, understanding broader social and environmental relations and for developing empathy. Most importantly the right hemisphere is responsible for the capacity to create and understand narratives.\textsuperscript{302}

It is clear that most humans within contemporary western civilisation have lost these skills of the right hemisphere. On the other hand these people have mastered the art of manipulating and exploiting one another. As these latter skills become more highly valued such individuals are more likely than ever before to win social positions of power and authority. Unfortunately ‘progressive’ organisations are not exempt from this process. ‘Leadership’ is all too often snatched up by those who are the worst enemy of the noble


\textsuperscript{300} Ibid. p.429.

\textsuperscript{301} Ibid. p.432.

\textsuperscript{302} Ibid. pp.419, 431.
causes they take up, producing the opposite of what their original intentions once were.\textsuperscript{303}

Traditionally within the left of politics there are many instances where this hard-headed, common sense, ‘realism’ has been favoured. As Marx and especially his followers were often keen on saying, ‘Philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point however, is to change it.’\textsuperscript{304}

Lenin’s mentor Nicholas Gavrilovich Chernyshevsky adopted a Hobbesian view of human nature (shared by intellectuals of the New Right) where they are driven by their appetites and aversions. On this basis he embraced utilitarianism to promote a ‘wise selfishness’ realisable through revolutionary socialism.\textsuperscript{305} From this point of view, ideas are never freely derived. They are always dictated by the interests of whom they serve.\textsuperscript{306} As such the Arts and Sciences have no intrinsic value but for their pragmatic utility within a given social context. Philosophy should be replaced by the natural sciences and in particular, inquiries into metaphysics and ethics should be completely overlooked.\textsuperscript{307}

Continuing with these Hobbesian assumptions, revolutionary theory was to encourage an instrumental approach to political advocacy. Lofty principles such as democracy were expendable. At the infamous London–Brussels Congress (Bolshevik–Menshevik split of the RSDLP) in 1903, the Menshevik

\textsuperscript{303} Ibid. pp.442-3.

\textsuperscript{304} In White, James. \textit{Karl Marx and the Intellectual Origins of Dialectical Materialism}, Macmillan Press Ltd, London, 1996, p. 18. This was, however, first expressed by Ciezkowski.


\textsuperscript{306} Ibid. p. 609.

leader Plekhanov declared that if democracy impeded the options of revolutionaries then it should be discarded.\footnote{Kowlakowski, Leszek. \textit{Main Currents of Marxism}, 2005, p. 636.} In the lead up to the congress Lenin published his most influential work \textit{What Is to Be Done?}, which became the foundation of the Bolsheviks’ program and activity between 1903 and 1917.\footnote{Ulam, Adam. B. \textit{Lenin and the Bolsheviks: The Intellectual and Political History of the Triumph of Communism in Russia}, 1965, pp. 176, 187.} As with Plekhanov, democracy was to be regarded as either an obstacle or instrument of the revolution. In his polemic with Kautsky, he claimed that to believe in either democracy in general or dictatorship in general was a symptom of naïve liberalism as it always contained a class dynamic.\footnote{In Pierson, Christopher, \textit{Marxist Theory and Democratic Politics}, Polity Press, Cambridge, 1986, p. 63.} But a dictatorship of one class over another was to dramatically change in meaning. According to Trotsky ‘…if the dictatorship of the proletariat means anything at all, then it means that the vanguard of the class is armed with the resources of the state in order to repel dangers, including those emanating from the backward layers of the proletariat itself.’\footnote{Trotsky, Leon. \textit{Their Morals and Ours: The Marxist View of Morality}, Resistance Books, Sydney, 2000, p. 46.} The need for a dictatorship of the proletariat in every revolutionary instance went unquestioned despite, as with the example of the Paris Commune, Marx not feeling the need to always advocate one.\footnote{Pierson, Christopher. \textit{Marxist Theory and Democratic Politics}, 1986, p. 23.} More disturbingly, however, from 1918 the will of the Russian working class was equated with the Bolsheviks.\footnote{Kowlakowski, Leszek. \textit{Main Currents of Marxism}, 2005, p. 746.} Lenin even began using the phrase ‘dictatorship of the party’.

Complementing this concentration of Bolshevik power was the popular conception amongst socialists of ‘democratic centralism’. In theory when a party’s Central Committee have the blessings of a majority vote they are entitled to make decisions and give orders that the membership must carry out to the best of their capacities.\textsuperscript{315} This allows the party the ability to counter attacks and quickly change political tactics.\textsuperscript{316} However, since minorities have to agree with majority line in public ‘…party life involves strange moral and intellectual sacrifices.’\textsuperscript{317} In practice, criticism of party leadership is all too often looked down upon as wicked attempts at splitting the organisation. There is an implicit assumption that the leadership knows the needs of its membership better than they do themselves. As such, criticism of a leader can easily be interpreted as an attack on the whole organisation. Not surprisingly, ‘According to Netchajeff, the revolutionary has the right of exploiting, deceiving, robbing, and in case of need utterly ruining, all those who do not agree unconditionally with his methods and his aims, for he need consider them as nothing more than chair à conspiration.’\textsuperscript{318} Aside from granting the leadership extraordinary powers, democratic centralism may also place an organisation’s welfare ahead of the interests of the class struggle.\textsuperscript{319}

Leaving on from where Chernychevsky left off, Trotsky viewed morality not as an end itself but as an instrument serving society and consequently an instrument serving the class struggle. Because it is always socially produced

\textsuperscript{315} Trotsky, Leon. ‘The Degeneration of the Bolshevik Party,’ in \textit{The Basic Writings of Trotsky}, (ed) Irving Howe, Schocken Books, New York, 1976, p. 188.
\textsuperscript{318} Ibid. pp. 137, 139.
\textsuperscript{319} Ibid. p. 236.
rather than an unchanging constant, abstract formulas as to how to behave are nothing more than a deception of the bourgeoisie:

The bourgeoisie, which far surpasses the proletariat in the completeness and irreconcilability of its class consciousness, is vitally interested in imposing its moral philosophy upon the exploited masses. It is exactly for this purpose that the concrete norms of bourgeois catechism are concealed under moral abstractions patronized by religion, philosophy, or by that hybrid which is called ‘common sense’. The appeal to abstract norms is not a disinterested philosophic mistake but a necessary element in the mechanics of class deception.320

However, some moral theories would disadvantage the corporatocracy even more than they would their opposition if they were adhered to by all. The problem is not so much the constraints placed upon citizens but rather the lack of moral accountability of those in power. And it is hardly to be solved by abrogating oneself from moral responsibility.

Trotsky obviously had Immanuel Kant’s categorical imperative in mind. However, as difficult as it would be to strictly adhere to his moral axioms, there would be some potential benefits in considering them as helpful guides to action. According to Kant: ‘So act that you use humanity, whether in your own person or in a person of any other, always at the same time as an end, never merely as a means.’321 This principle assists in the following observation: ‘Bowing and scraping before a human being seems in any case to

be unworthy of a human being.\footnote{322} Perhaps socialism could be argued to be more in accord with this morality than capitalism. However, Hegel’s criticism of Kant’s morality does expose its limitations. The problem of such abstract universalism is that it neglects to account for various social contexts, which can assign various agents with various particular roles that cannot be known in advance.\footnote{323}

Bordering at times on moral nihilism on the other hand, ‘revolutionaries’ were granted a green light to do whatever it took for the seizure and security of state power. Not surprisingly, it is easy to observe:

Utilitarian morality and utilitarian judgements of social and cultural phenomena transform the original basis of socialism into its opposite. All phenomena that arouse moral indignation if they occur in bourgeois society are turned to gold, as if by a Midas touch, if they serve the interests of the new power: the armed invasion of a foreign state is liberation, aggression is defence, tortures represent the people’s noble rage against the exploiters. There is absolutely nothing in the worst excesses of the worst years of Stalinism that cannot be justified on Leninist principles, if only it can be shown that Soviet power was increased thereby. The essential difference between the ‘Lenin era’ and the ‘Stalin era’ is not that under Lenin there was freedom in the party and society and that under Stalin it was crushed, but that it was only in


Stalin’s day that the whole spiritual life of the peoples of the Soviet Union was submerged in a universal flood of mendacity.324

Another dangerous concession that Trotsky was to grant Stalinism was that he deliberately blurred the boundaries between class struggle and revolution. ‘Thus “lying and worse” are an inseparable part of the class struggle even in its most elementary form.’325

However, many followers of Trotsky would argue that he was far from advocating ‘an anything goes’ approach to morality:

‘Just the same’, the moralist continues to insist, ‘does it mean that in the class struggle against capitalists all means are permissible: lying, frame-up, betrayal, murder and so on? Permissible and obligatory are those and only those means, we answer, which unite the revolutionary proletariat, fill their hearts with irreconcilable hostility to oppression, teach them contempt for official morality and its democratic echoers, imbue them with consciousness of their own historic mission, raise their courage and spirit of self-sacrifice in the struggle. Precisely from this it flows that not all means are permissible.’326

Despite this declaration there were a number of instances of desperate opportunism amongst the Bolsheviks. Zinoviev and Kamenev were denounced for opposing the October Insurrection but were later granted high personal positions within the party and the Comintern. Bogdanov’s philosophical views

326 Ibid. p. 37.
were not addressed for years, until he led opposition against the Bolsheviks being represented in the Third Duma.\textsuperscript{327}

Because Lenin believed that no action was ever politically neutral in regard to the revolution, the Russian people required the approval of the state to do anything.\textsuperscript{328} The non-Bolshevik press was shut down, the Mensheviks and SRs (Socialist Revolutionaries) were terrorised and then banned, factions within the Bolsheviks were eliminated, and by 1921 the intellectual autonomy of universities from the party was undermined.\textsuperscript{329} Another instance of this repression was the liquidation of Proletkult in 1921, which was a working class cultural initiative led by Bogdanov. As Zenovia Sochor observed, this became an important precedent, granting the dictatorship absolute control over cultural life.\textsuperscript{330} Intellectual authoritarianism became indispensable since it was argued that the granting of free rein to intellectuals could potentially assist the efforts of counter-revolutionaries.\textsuperscript{331} Moreover, the concept of ‘revisionism’ originating with Bernstein was transformed from a theoretical perspective into a label of slander to be used to brand political opponents as selling out their revolutionary convictions.\textsuperscript{332}

Considering this willingness to undertake whatever acts of dishonesty and coercion seemed necessary for seizing and retaining state power, the

\textsuperscript{327} Kowlakowski, Leszek. \textit{Main Currents of Marxism}, 2005, p. 774.
\textsuperscript{328} Ibid. p. 767.
\textsuperscript{329} Ibid. p. 746.
\textsuperscript{331} Ibid. p. 767.
\textsuperscript{332} Kowlokowski, Leszek. \textit{Main Currents of Marxism}, 2005, p. 433.
Bolsheviks approach to the revolution was no more legitimate than the current political strategies of the New Right. Lenin’s notion of the vanguard party encouraged a paternal political relationship with the proletariat.\footnote{Laclau, Ernesto; Mouffe, Chantal. *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics*, 1985, p. 59.} There was considerable interference both from counter-revolutionaries internally as well as from Western imperialism abroad. However the corruption of the Russian Revolution was also due to the concentration of political and economic power that was justified by orthodox Marxism.

There is no doubt that there have been many good political initiatives from the Left and especially the socialist movement in this country. Often it has been at the forefront in defending those most vulnerable in Australian society as well as internationally. One cannot question the Left’s dedication, courage and empathy. However, due to a political culture that is hostile to intellectual freedom, many have accepted the problematic philosophical assumptions discussed above. History is often written by the victors. Consequently most Marxists have embraced the authoritarian tendencies of Lenin and Trotsky, instead of critically exploring the ideas of other socialists such as Bogdanov, Gramsci and the Frankfurt School – all providing better theoretical means to critique Western civilisation. In repeating the past mistakes of modernity, these ‘radicals’ help to validate the postmodern scepticism of grand narratives of emancipation. Although the harmful acts of Australian leftists may not be of the same scale as those in Russia, they nevertheless undermine the trust and therefore the cooperation of the broader Australian public.

As John Stuart Mill in *On Liberty* recognised, the suppression of political opinion may work for a while. However, when an opinion is more reasonable
or more just than a populist majority it is bound to re-emerge again and again. Thus, minority opinions deserve to be freely expressed, as they can sometimes be more considered than those of a majority. Moreover, better insight can be gained by examining the opinions of opponents as much as one’s own ideals. The following attitude towards political theory might help heal some of the bitter differences that exist at present: ‘No one can be a great thinker who does not recognize that as a thinker it is his first duty to follow his intellect to whatever conclusions it may lead.’

This principle of political-intellectual tolerance may be rejected as sheer liberalism by some on the Left of the traditional political spectrum. However, what is being illustrated is that despite some significant victories, much of the time the Left has found itself at a disadvantage. Cut off from vital intellectual resources to understand their predicament, the same failed strategies and tactics are applied with little imagination in response. Moreover, due to repeated failures in dealing with political differences in opinion, the Left’s scarce resources – as each organisation is out for their own gain – are ineffectually fragmented. Because of a scarcity in trust, working relations at times can be poor. And it is not hard for the wider community to realise this.

The growing power of transnational corporations along with the rise in complexity of social divisions presents democracy with its most formidable challenge. To respond, democracy will need to strategically take up the cause for national self-determination to break down corporate power as well as provide a basis for solidarity. In addition, the struggle for democracy will have to admit to the mistakes of Western modernity, and demonstrate how the

---

project of emancipation can be preserved from repeating the errors of the past. In light of the political failures of some on the Left of Australian politics, it will also be necessary to develop a new political culture that not only defends intellectual freedom but also encourages critical thinking and self-reflection. Hopefully, these considerations will assist those eager to forge trust and co-operation among those most vulnerable, who would otherwise remain isolated.
Chapter 6

Conclusion

Combining the ideas of Antonio Gramsci and Pierre Bourdieu, the central objective of this thesis has been to reveal, as the outcome of the struggle by the New Right for cultural hegemony, how the idea of democracy has been perverted, becoming a tool of social control and domination. To be liberated from the current political paradigm dominating Australian politics, democracy’s more traditional meaning needs to be revived, providing Australians with an alternative political discourse to that of a ‘market society’. ¹

To do so, it was necessary to define democracy itself. This was achieved through looking at how it was conceived initially, first in the Middle East and, later, in more detail, in ancient Athens. Derived from the concept of ‘dēmokratia’², democracy was understood to mean that decision-making was placed in the hands of the people. Despite its many limitations such as the exclusion of women, slaves and metics, for those who were recognised as citizens, democracy’s conditions were in part fulfilled. However, due to the narrow application of these ideals, it was necessary to look beyond this characterisation. The ideas of Rousseau and his notion of the general will were drawn upon. Then Hegel’s conception of the state as a rational expression of

¹ In his latest book *What Money Can’t Buy: The Moral Limits of Markets* (2012) Michael Sandel describes the dangerous trajectory of many liberal democracies [such as Australia] of having a market economy and becoming a *market society* where commodification pervades all social relationships. For a brief summary of this point see his recent interview on *Lateline*. ‘Everything Given a Price’, 13/05/2013, [www.abc.net.au/lateline/content/2013/s3758323.htm?site=katherine](http://www.abc.net.au/lateline/content/2013/s3758323.htm?site=katherine)

such a common good was explored. Stemming from criticisms of Hegel, Marx’s notion of democracy, which emphasised the overcoming of the alienation of labour (hence of all human activity), was upheld. Despite this particular insight it was argued that Marxism as a ‘science’ does not, and should not pretend to have all of the political answers. The dangers of doing so were illustrated throughout the following chapters.

From this overview of what democracy entailed, ‘liberal democracy’ was evaluated. It was demonstrated that a libertarian conception of liberty prevailed over the republican understanding of liberty as sharing in self-government. This more Lockean liberalism and democracy were considered to be separate political tendencies and it was only due to political pressure from a growing working class that they were clasped together. Given this, the ‘liberal democracy’ that prevailed did little to generate the necessary social conditions required for a maximisation of public participation in all decision-making.

To elaborate upon these limitations of liberal democracy, Australian political policy over the last 35 years was examined, covering a myriad range of issues from education to media ownership, industrial relations, women’s and Indigenous rights, foreign affairs and public housing. It was shown that Australian governments have introduced policies that have, in various ways, undermined conditions for citizens to contribute to public affairs. As such, the democratic component of Australia’s liberal democracy has all but been annihilated by successive governments. This impacts negatively upon many of the public’s attitudes towards politics, further eroding democracy. In what could be called an anti-politics era, many Australian citizens have retreated from the public realm to find fulfilment in their private affairs. This retreat
may be understood as a consequence of being politically alienated from public affairs.

Granting that there is a crisis of liberal democracy within Australia, it was then necessary to explicate why this had occurred by looking back on this country’s political history. From just before the time of Australia’s federation the political philosophy of Hegel – elaborated upon by T.H. Green – was germinating amongst some important political figures. Contained within this political philosophy was a conception of an ethical state that strove for rational freedom and complete self-awareness. It was believed that such a state could reconcile class conflict as many of its key policies, such as industrial arbitration, set out to achieve. However despite its good intentions, it was shown that social liberalism failed to address all forms of exploitation that do exist, such as those felt by Australia’s Indigenous population, migrants and women.

Nevertheless, social liberalism provided the ground for Australia’s working class to make greater democratic demands in the areas of education, foreign policy and gender equality. This rise of democratic demands around the time of the anti-Vietnam war movement created an opposition, the impact of which has been gigantic to this day. The New Right, consisting of a mixture of neoliberalism and neo-conservativism – backed by social Darwinist assumptions – converged and began to organise to improve their advocacy skills in civil society. With support from the capitalist classes, the New Right greatly expanded its political influence. By the mid-1980s this hybrid paradigm was beginning to dominate political policy. Yet it was necessary not only to influence the commanding heights of Australian politics but also to take charge of the whole agenda of political discourse from the grassroots up. As
such, public relations firms were created alongside think tanks so that the broader population as well as politicians could be targeted. In the process the New Right successfully imposed their own psychological frames on to how politics is discussed in the news, in parliament, through to the workplace, household and classroom. And to this day, the New Right have further entrenched its values in Australian society.

Through Antonio Gramsci’s theory of cultural hegemony conceived as organising the consent of the people, this process entailed a systematic attack on what remnants of democracy existed in Australia. However, to elaborate upon this theoretical concept it was necessary first of all to expose reductionist limitations of a base superstructure model of historical progress.

To develop a more flexible understanding of historical development that could reveal how the New Right obtained its political dominance, the ideas of Pierre Bourdieu were combined with Gramsci. From this perspective, many of the political policies discussed were shown to have a dramatic effect upon the dynamics of capital, fields and habitus. This disempowered a majority of the Australian population for the benefit of an emerging corporatocracy. Considered as a successfully waged ‘war of position’, it was argued that the semiotic meaning of democracy had been inverted to become an instrument of social control. Liberal democracy was reduced to being a fig leaf offered by the corporatocracy to impose its will on the Australian public. Due to such deception rather than rational persuasion, liberal democracy as it stands can no longer be considered a legitimate way of organising society. It was argued that by reshaping the agenda of political discourse, a more thorough understanding of democracy and what it entailed could become a potential new rallying point
in Australian political affairs. As such, the spectre overhanging the current system is not communism, as Marx claimed, but rather, democracy.³

Despite the illegitimacy of liberal democracy, on what philosophical grounds can any alternative political system be justified? It was imperative to first confront the charge of emotivism. It was argued that beyond subjective interpretations of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ exist conditions conducive to the common good. However to strive for the common good the perception that politics is all about power and control needs to be overhauled. Following Hegel, Axel Honneth’s ideas about the ‘struggle for recognition’ were adopted to argue that the role of politics should be to expand spheres of recognition. Such openness to otherness could reveal and address forms of inequality previously overlooked. For citizens of a democracy, this new political orientation would promote a better understanding of themselves and their relation to broader society. It would assist them in living meaningful lives.

To develop this alternative political orientation it was necessary to point out the role narratives play. As such, democracy could serve as a new narrative to challenge the corporatocracy. However this would not be any ordinary narrative that is closed to a free play of ideas. Instead democracy would be promoted as a ‘polyphonic narrative’. As such it would be inclusive to a multiplicity of political perspectives and subject to constant refinement. Being informed by this narrative democratic discourse could exploit the contradiction of liberal democracy, reshaping the political agenda away from its current preoccupation with capitalist economic growth.

Exploring further justification for the political re-orientation towards democracy, its role towards human understanding was also explored. Drawing upon its superiority to instrumental reason, it was shown that so-called liberal democracies – such as Australia – are incapable of dealing with political issues requiring long-term commitment. For instance, it was illustrated that ecological problems generated by the pursuit of infinite capitalist growth contradict the individual property rights of future generations – both sacred cows of market liberals. Far from capitalism paving the way for material abundance as some Marxists may believe, essential ecological resources such as fresh drinking water are diminishing. Yet capitalism’s demand for unlimited growth overlooks these problems. Politicians advocate technical resolutions, masking the more profound questions of how humans should relate to the ecosystems they inhabit. Moreover, extractive peripheries of the global economy are called upon to externalise the ecological costs of economic activity. In this context, it was argued that democracy needs to be expanded into other spheres besides politics to include economics and the environment.

Nevertheless, there are a number of tricky dilemmas that even authentic democratic change will have to face. Three general issues were addressed:

i) Self-defence.

ii) Institutions.

iii) To what degree should the economy be planned as opposed to preserving a role for markets?

The Marxist notion of a ‘dictatorship of the proletariat’ was critically scrutinised and rejected in favour of Kant’s concept of self-defence of the
common good. However, even this would be insufficient if it were not for the suggestion that the principle of democracy is the greatest assurance in keeping corruption in check. In place of a dictatorship then, a democratic strategy of attrition promoted by Karl Kautsky\(^4\) was shown to be more beneficial for the protection of social change.

Following this, it was argued that due to the hierarchal dimension of communities, decision-making in economics as well as politics required decision-making bodies at every level from local municipalities right up to an international scale. This pyramidal character of representation moreover would allow for a multiplicity of cultures to coexist, attempting to promote mutual understanding.

With regard to the issue of market socialism versus a centralised economic plan, a number of different issues were introduced. On the one hand, an economic plan of large magnitude is exposed to the dangers of an overcentralisation of decision-making. However, on the other hand, there are significant dangers that market socialism could lead to a restoration of capitalism. One possible compromise is Fotopoulos’s suggestion of creating artificial markets. However, its feasibility is uncertain. Considering the limited capacities of citizens, at least initially, Nove’s model of market socialism was defended as being necessary temporarily. The degree to which economic planning encompasses human needs will depend on the development of people’s capacities as self-governors. Moreover, Bourdieu’s ideas could be

\(^4\) Kautsky did not shy away from the notion of a dictatorship of the proletariat. However, for him it had more to do with the class character of government rather than being a method of political rule. As such, democracy and proletarian rule were considered compatible. See Kolakowski, Leszek, *Main Currents of Marxism*, 2008, p.763.
used to monitor and preserve the autonomy of both political and economic fields.

The Australian political situation highlights a more specific series of other difficulties with which democracy will have to contend. The previous powers of nation-states have been usurped due to a growing mobility of transnational corporations. In contrast, the working class has experienced a sharp decline in political influence as a result of being – at the global level – fragmented. To make matters worse, the dynamics of oppression have made it increasingly difficult to establish common ground for actions of solidarity.

To address this growing absence of accountability from transnational corporations as well as social atomisation, it was proposed that nationalism needs to be defended. However, to do so it was necessary to demonstrate that nationalism does not inherently encourage a politics of exclusion to advance the interests of corporatocracy.

The extensive influence of postmodernism upon Australian culture also presented a serious problem. Despite its valuable insights into the myriad prejudices of Western modernity, its rejection of all attempts in developing theoretical cohesion has insulated the corporatocracy from the threat of rival narratives. In response, it was suggested that the project of human emancipation needs to be tempered by humility towards understanding along with an acknowledgement of the prejudices of Western civilisation.

In close relation, it was necessary to demonstrate the problem of how some elements of the Far Left share some of the same philosophical assumptions concerning progress, reason, and human nature as their opponents. Repeating past mistakes, the postmodernist charge that grand narratives of emancipation lead to dogmatism and then political authoritarianism is granted validity. To
deal with this, it was suggested that an alternative political culture promoting intellectual freedom would be an important first step in improving working relations between groups and individuals of different political persuasions. Such a political culture would also encourage critical thinking that questions some of the problematic intellectual foundations of Western modernity.\(^5\)

Instead of attempting to scientifically verify the inevitability of social change (as orthodox Marxists are often keen to do) one important aim has been to provide democracy with a political philosophy – that is, a philosophical justification for why such an order is itself desirable. Democracy was not only strategically beneficial for political advocacy, but also the best means for granting humans *meaningful valuable lives*. The struggle for democracy as John Stuart Mill observed (see Chapters 1 and 4) could therefore be regarded as the best way in which to cultivate our humanity. This more open alternative notion of ‘progress’ has more validity than the existing system that holds humanity’s creative powers in contempt.

However it was also important to suggest how democracy would also deal with a vast range of practical challenges both general and concerning Australia’s political situation. In doing so, hopefully, a new political culture can develop to disarm scepticism about social change and promote democracy in belief, thought and action.

\(^5\) A good overall criticism is provided in Gare, Arran. *Nihilism Inc.: Environmental Destruction and the Metaphysics of Sustainability*, Eco-logical Press, Como NSW, 1996, Chs 1-7, and in relation to Marxism, Chs 8-11.
Bibliography

Aboriginal Legal Service of Western Australia (Inc.). *Telling Our Story: A Report by the Aboriginal Legal Service of Western Australia (Inc.) on the Removal of Aboriginal Children from their Families in Western Australia*, 1995.


Aly, Waleed. ‘We See Birth of Bigotry,’ *Herald Sun* 14/12/05, p. 20.


Bell, Margaret. ‘Civil Society and the Third Sector’ in *Keeping It Together: State and Civil Society in Australia*, (eds) Adam Farrar and Jane Inglis, Pluto Press, Leichhardt NSW, 1996.


Bridie, Smith. ‘Melbourne University Senior Academics Facing Job Losses,’ *The Age*, 17/09/08, p. 11.


Cook, Ian. Liberalism in Australia, Oxford University Press, South Melbourne, 1999

Cooke, Dewi. ‘Affordability Crisis Leaves Families out in the Cold,’ The Age, 05/09/08, p. 10.


Daly, Herman; Cobb, John. For the Common Good: Redirecting the Economy Toward Community, Environment and a Sustainable Future 2nd edn, Beacon Press, Boston, 1994.


Davidson, Kenneth. ‘It’s Politicians Not Terrorists Who Are a Clear and Present Danger,’ The Age, 20/10/05, p. 17.

Davidson, Kenneth. ‘Why the ALP Is Under Serious Threat,’ The Age, 16/02/06, p. 19.

Davidson, Kenneth. ‘The Use and Abuse of Taxes,’ Dissent, no. 36, Spring 2011.


Dodson, Louise; Massola, James. ‘Swan Attacks Rinehart on Fairfax Move,’ Australian Financial Review, 20/6/12, pp. 1, 12.


Elliot, Larry; Traynor, Ian, ‘Europe Braces for Greek Exit,’ Australian Financial Review, 16/05/12, p. 49.


Fitzgerald, Barry. ‘17.8bn: BHP Goes from Boom to Best,’ The Age, 19/08/08, p. 1.


*Four Corners*. ‘The Greenhouse Mafia’ www.abc.net.au/4corners/content/2006/s1568867.htm, Date of retrieval 20/02/06.


Houlihan, Liam. ‘Hate Wave Hits Muslim Women,’ Herald Sun, 21/10/05, p. 14.

Houston, Cameron. ‘Rooming Tenants Crisis Flares,’ The Age, 23/08/08, p. 6.


Kennedy, Les; Murphy, Damien. ‘Racist Furore as Mobs Riot,’ *The Age* 12/12/05, p. 1.

Ketchell, Misha. ‘University Degree to Cost More,’ *The Age*, 26/07/02, p. 3.


Lateline. ‘Everything Given a Price’ *Lateline*, 13/05/2013, www.abc.net.au/lateline/content/2013/s3758323.htm?site=katherine, Date of Retrieval 18/05/13.


Lenin, V. I. *Against Revisionism* [Containing extracts from Lenin’s 45 Volumes of Collected Works], Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1976.


Lowenstein, Anthony. ‘Australia Media’, *ZMag*, 12/5/05, www.zcommunications.org/australian-media-by, Date of Retrieval (estimated) /08/05.


Lynch, Tony. ‘Understanding Democracy,’ *Dissent*, no. 37, summer 2011/2012.


Messina, Alex. ‘Protests Fail to Stop Drop in Uni Funding,’ *The Age* 21/08/96, p. 5.


Mill, John Stuart. *Considerations on Representative Government*, University of Michigan University Library, Michigan, [Reprint from 1862 edition].


Moon, Bruce. ‘The United States and Globalisation,’ in *Political Economy and the Changing Global Order*, 2000.


New World Encyclopedia ‘The General Will’ www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/General_will, Date of retrieval (estimated) 07/12.


Norman, James, ‘Howard’s Young People Are Shallow and Disengaged,’ *The Age*, 23/02/06, p. 15.


Osborne, Hilary. ‘Stern Report: The Key Points’ *Guardian Unlimited*, 30/10/06, http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2006/oct/30/economy.uk, Date of Retrieval 19/11/06.

Packham, Ben, Havey, Michael. ‘Young Workers May Lose Rights’ Herald Sun 11/10/05 www.heraldsun.news.com.au/0,5481,16878561,00.html, Date of Retrieval 25/10/05.


Rollins, Adrian. ‘Credit and Debt Levels at Record 38pc,’ *Australian Financial Review*, 20/04/07, p. 4.


Sample, Ian. ‘World Moves into Ecological Overdraft Today Says Study,’ *the Guardian*, 9/10/06, http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2006/oct/09/science.ethicalliving, Date of Retrieval 01/02/07.


Schubert, Misha. ‘Aboriginal Aid Swamped by Red Tape,’ *The Age*, 16/12/05, p. 6.


Senate Employment, Workplace Relations, Small Business and Education References Committee [SEWRSSBC]. *Universities in Crisis: Report into the


Source Watch. Think Tanks/Australia, http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/Think_Tanks/Australia, Date of Retrieval, 8/03/13.


