

Politics and Society

Key Thinkers



© PDST 2022

This work is made available under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution Share Alike 3.0 Licence <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/ie/>. You may use and re-use this material (not including images and logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution Share Alike Licence.

Please cite as: PDST, *Politics and Society, Key Thinkers*, Dublin, 2022

Contents

Benedict Anderson	page 4
Kwame Anthony Appiah	page 7
Noam Chomsky	page 10
Thomas Hylland Eriksen	page 14
Andre Gunder Frank	page 17
Paulo Freire	page 20
Thomas Hobbes	page 23
Samuel Huntington	page 25
John Locke	page 27
Kathleen Lynch	page 31
Karl Marx	page 33
Fr. Sean McDonagh	page 36
Robert Nozick	page 40
Martha Nussbaum	page 43
Edward W. Said	page 46
Vandana Shiva	page 48
Sylvia Walby	page 52

Benedict ANDERSON

(1936 - 2015)



Benedict Anderson was a political scholar and historian whose most well-known work, *Imagined Communities* (1983), significantly influenced thinking about the concept of nationalism. His academic career was mostly spent at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York.

Anderson's own background might help to explain his curiosity about nationality. He was born in China in 1926 to an Irish father and an English mother; was educated at Eton College and Cambridge University in England; lived in California from 1941 to 1945 before moving to Ireland; and then pursued a lengthy academic career in the US, where he lived for many years. In later life he divided his time between living in South East Asia and the USA. He said 'though I was educated in England from the age of 11, it was difficult to imagine myself English' - in fact, he took Irish citizenship and carried an Irish passport.

His research and analysis of Indonesian culture and society made him a dominant figure in western thinking about the region. This background led him to jokingly describe himself in a 1994 interview as *'a kind of Eurasian... a person with mixed blood or mixed descent...'* Yet he also admitted that *'this always makes one uneasy, one always wants to feel one hundred per cent at home and for a long time I didn't feel at home anywhere and now I've decided I can feel at home in five places.'*

Anderson's deep interest in and affection for South East Asia (he referred to it as *'inverted orientalism'*) strongly influenced him; while living in Indonesia, he was strongly sympathetic towards the anti-imperialist struggles of nationalists.

Towards a definition of nationalism

The full title of Anderson's book was *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*. He sets out three paradoxes about nationalism that he suggests have troubled those who seek to define the concept. These paradoxes can be summed up as follows: that nationalism is

1. considered by historians to be a relatively modern phenomenon- yet many people think of their nation as ancient and eternal
2. viewed as universal, with every person having a nationality- yet each nation is seen as utterly distinctive and different from others
3. so powerful a political force that people will die and kill for their nation- yet it is philosophically vague and difficult to define.

Reflecting on these paradoxes eventually led Anderson to offer a definition of nationalism as follows: ***'an imagined political community- and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign...'***

It is helpful to examine this definition by looking more closely at each of these italicised terms.

Nation as *imagined*

By "imagined," Anderson did not mean that nations are not real. Anderson argued that the nation is *'imagined'* because *'the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them,*

yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion. Anderson has claimed that he thought carefully about his use of the word 'imagined' and distinguishes between the word 'imagined' and 'imaginary'. While the latter term suggests fabrication or fantasy, the former word implies creativity. Anderson claims that *'all communities larger than primordial villages of face-to-face contact (and perhaps even these) are imagined.'* He suggests that people of the same nation have a sort of 'abstract solidarity' with people they have never met and even with people who are dead or have yet to be born. The "deep comradeship" that characterises a nation is socially constructed, he wrote, but also heartfelt and genuine. He believed that nationalism was strongly associated with death, and that feeling oneself to belong to a nation gave a sense of immortality or of being part of something bigger than life itself.

Nation as community

Anderson suggested that *'regardless of the actual inequity and exploitation that may occur, the nation is always conceived as a deep horizontal comradeship.'* In other words, while there may be inequalities and divisions within nations, people share a sense of comradeship or belonging that is somehow more powerful and overcomes other tensions. This sense of a strong common bond is described as that *'fraternity that makes it possible over the past two centuries for so many millions of people to not so much to kill as to willingly die for such limited imaginings.'* Anderson spoke about the significance of the Vietnam War Memorial in Washington DC, where thousands of names of dead soldiers are inscribed on black marble, and the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Virginia, as examples of how a person can feel a strong bond of kinship and emotional attachment with dead people who sacrifice their lives for the nation even though they are completely unknown to that person.

Nation as limited

Anderson wrote that the nation *'is imagined as limited because even the largest of them, encompassing perhaps a billion living human beings, has finite, if elastic, boundaries, beyond which lie other nations.'* Anderson suggested that not even the most extreme nationalists dream of a day when all human beings in the world will be part of their nation in a way that it was possible in certain eras for Christians to dream of an entirely Christian planet. Therefore, the physical limitations of the nation are recognised.

Nation as sovereign

He also argued that the nation *'is imagined as sovereign because the concept was born in the age of Enlightenment and Revolution.'* Here, Anderson is referring to the specific historical context of the late eighteenth/ early nineteenth centuries, when the privileged status of monarchy and aristocracy was challenged and the idea of different religions and sovereign nations co-existing was accepted.

Nationalism in the former European colonies

Anderson's historical analysis of the emergence of nationalism focused on former European colonies in the Americas. Challenging the assumption that nations had always existed, he looked at how descendants of European settlers in these colonies became more self-aware of their identity as distinct even from their parents or grandparents: European by blood but not by birth, and not viewed as European by their colonisers either. He argued that interaction between the descendants of European settlers and native people led to the development of nationalist ideology which spread west from there.



'In an age when it is so common for progressive, cosmopolitan intellectuals (particularly in Europe?) to insist on the near-pathological character of nationalism, its roots in fear and hatred of the Other, and its affinities with racism, it is useful to remind ourselves that nations inspire love, and often profoundly self-sacrificing love. The cultural products of nationalism—poetry, prose fiction, music, plastic arts - show this love very clearly in thousands of different forms and styles.'

BENEDICT ANDERSON

The role of the media

Another important development in the emergence of the nation was the impact of printing technology. He spoke of the emergence of newspapers as a capitalist business, where the people of the nation engaged every day in reading common news content in a shared language. The fact that each person who reads the news could imagine millions of others doing the same thing at the same time has shaped people's sense of identity and bonded them together. While Anderson writes about the role of the media (print and television) in creating shared experiences and so reinforcing the idea of a shared national identity, he also points to other ways that nations construct a shared identity and build imagined communities - for example, through sport, culture and the arts.

His curiosity about nationalism is captured in the following observation:

'In an age when it is so common for progressive, cosmopolitan intellectuals (particularly in Europe?) to insist on the near-pathological character of nationalism, its roots in fear and hatred of the Other, and its affinities with racism, it is useful to remind ourselves that nations inspire love, and often profoundly self-sacrificing love. The cultural products of nationalism—poetry, prose fiction, music, plastic arts - show this love very clearly in thousands of different forms and styles.'

Material Consulted

Anderson, Benedict, *Imagined Communities*, 1983.

Calhoun, Craig. 'Nation and imagination: how Benedict Anderson revolutionised political theory'.

Accessed at: <http://www.abc.net.au/religion/articles/2017/05/09/4665722.htm>

Heer, Jeet. 'Benedict Anderson: Man without a country'. 2015.

Accessed at <https://newrepublic.com/article/125706/benedict-anderson-man-without-country>

The New York Times. Obituary. Accessed at:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/15/world/asia/benedict-anderson-scholar-who-saw-nations-as-imagined-dies-at-79.html>

Interview with Benedict Anderson: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cNJUL-Ewp-A>

Summary of Imagined Communities: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hNXZHF0NI60>

Kwame Anthony APPIAH

(1954 -)



In response to a question about his philosophy, Kwame Appiah observed: 'My philosophy is that everything is much more complicated than you first thought '...we need guides to make our way through it but none of the pictures we have is completely right...we are ever striving to make better pictures'. This search for 'better pictures' about the human condition has made Appiah one of the most influential thinkers of our time.

Kwame Anthony Appiah was born in London in 1954 to a Ghanaian father and an English mother. Their marriage in 1953 made headlines in the international press as one of the first high profile 'inter-racial' marriages in England (his father was a prominent Ghanaian politician and his mother, a novelist and writer, was the daughter of a former

UK Chancellor of the Exchequer.) Raised in Ghana, he earned a PhD in philosophy from Cambridge University in 1982 before commencing a distinguished teaching career at some of America's most prestigious universities: Yale, Cornell, Duke, Harvard and Princeton, where he taught philosophy, African Studies and African-American Studies. He is currently Professor of Philosophy and Law at New York University. He is well-known for his writings about political philosophy, ethics, morality, language, culture and identity. He is also a novelist.

Cosmopolitanism

Appiah is especially noted for his thinking about cosmopolitanism. His family background helps to explain this interest. He grew up in the region of Asante in Ghana, which was once part of a British colony and subsequently became a multi-ethnic republic. He has written that his father was proud of his double ancestry as both Ghanaian and British and he has recalled that after his father's death, he and his sisters found a note from him, in which he had written, *'Remember that you are citizens of the world'* and encouraged his children to make sure that, wherever they chose to live, they left that place *'better than you found it'*. His father also wrote, *'Deep inside of me is a great love for mankind and an abiding desire to see mankind, under God, fulfil its highest destiny.'* His father was influenced by pan-Africanism, which became prominent in the 1960s as African countries tried to promote the values of African civilisations in the context of historic struggles against racism, slavery, and colonialism. (Interestingly, he was also influenced by his experience of Irish teachers in Ghana).

His father's views had a strong influence on Appiah's own thinking. He said in an interview that his father's openness to the world was *'rooted in his strong and confident sense that he knew where he came from and he was happy that that was where he did come from.'* Appiah said that his father believed in *'a cosmopolitan patriotism'*, which celebrates diversity and recognises that while people may love their homeland and the place in which they grew up, they may also share a broader concern for humankind beyond the borders of nation or state. Cultural differences between humans are not to be feared but rather desired- the cosmopolitan values the variety of human forms of social and cultural life both within and between different countries, once human rights and the dignity of all persons is respected.

Appiah's thinking about the idea of 'world citizenship' leads him back to the 4th century thinker Diogenes, who is credited with first using the term *kosmopolitês* ('citizen of the world'), from which the word 'cosmopolitanism' derives. Appiah identifies three features of Diogenes's thinking about cosmopolitanism:

- The notion of global citizenship does not mean that all people should be subject to a single global government or ruler
- We should care for all human beings, not just those who are part of our own community or who are nearest to us
- By having conversations with others, we can borrow good ideas from them, not just pass on what we think are good ideas ourselves

Appiah suggests that globalisation has made these ideas more relevant than ever to the modern world because advances in communications, transport and technology mean that we now have knowledge about the lives of other people all over the world and we have the power to affect them, whether for good or ill. He links these ideas to the philosophy of the 'good life' and suggests that shared conversations between people lead to people being more able to 'agree how to disagree'.

Appiah argues that cosmopolitanism is double-stranded- it recognises the universality that connects all human beings, but equally, it recognises and celebrates the difference between people who come from different places in the world and whose identity is shaped by where they come from. He does not see this as contradictory. He says that diversity and difference should be a cause for celebration. He says that it is important for people to recognise the fallibility or imperfection of all human forms of knowledge- as mentioned earlier, all we can do is try to make better and clearer pictures of the human condition. He argues that cosmopolitans should be open to hearing from and about others as well as speaking about their own values. In explaining his thinking about the cosmopolitan and identity, Appiah says that it begins with respect for people's roots. He has often quoted the writer Gertrude Stein, who was born in America but lived in Paris- she once observed, *'What good are roots if you can't take them with you?'*

Identity

Appiah argues that our thinking about identity is often confused and unclear and suggests that this is often because almost every identity grows out of conflict and contradiction. He points to national borders that are drawn after conflict and bloodshed and that can equally seem to fade or change in history. He suggests that while most people live comfortably with multiple identities, there are times when they are pulled in different directions, leading to tensions



'My philosophy is that everything is much more complicated than you first thought... we need guides to make our way through it but none of the pictures we have is completely right... we are ever striving to make better pictures.'

KWAME ANTHONY APPIAH

and confusion. His work in this area echoes Benedict Anderson's theory on 'imagined communities'. It also relates to developments in thinking about gender identity. Appiah has stated: *'We live in a world where the language of identity pervades both our public and our private lives. We are Muslim and Christian, so we have religious identities. We are English and Scottish, so we have national identities. We are men and women, and so we have gender identities. And we are black and white, so we have racial identities. There is much contention about the boundaries of all of these identities. Not everyone accepts that you have to be a man or a woman; or that you can't be both an Englishman and a Scot. You can claim to be of no religion or gender or race or nation. Perhaps, in each case, someone will believe you. And that is one reason why the way we often talk about these identities can be misleading.'*

Race

Appiah's interest in identity and freedom has also influenced his writings about race. In an important book called *Color Conscious: The Political Morality of Race* (1996), he argued that the very idea of defining one's identity by biological race was problematic and he was critical by what he saw as an overemphasis in society on the importance of race as a component of a person's individual identity.

Appiah's criticism of the concept of racial identity is centred on his belief in the autonomy of the individual person. He has argued that the only race is the human race and that the concept of racial identity is rooted in 19th century attitudes. He argues that belief in the fiction of race allows racist thinking and the restriction of individual autonomy by acts of oppression or discrimination. He questions why people define themselves by factors over which they have no control, like skin colour or gender. Appiah has stated, *"It is crucial to remember that we are not simply black or white or yellow or brown or gay or straight or bisexual, Jewish, Christian, Moslem, Buddhists, or Confucian but that we are also brothers and sisters; parents and children; liberals, conservatives, and leftists."*

Language

Appiah's doctoral thesis was based on the relationship between language and thought and he has a strong interest in the power of language. He has said that the job of the philosopher is not to tell people what they should think, but instead to give them the vocabulary to think more clearly about philosophical concepts. For example, rather than tell people that 'racism is wrong', he believes that philosophy should try to empower people to ask themselves the question, 'why is racism wrong?' Appiah is a strong defender of free expression, including in terms of literature and the imagination. He sees this as central to the cosmopolitan mindset. This also relates to his political philosophy and commitment to what he has called the 'powerful value of liberalism'.

Material Consulted

Appiah, Kwame. 'Cosmopolitan Patriots' in *Critical Enquiry* 23 (Spring 1997). The University of Chicago. Retrieved from <http://appiah.net/wp-content/uploads/2010/10/Cosmopolitan-Patriots.-Critical-Inquiry-23.3.-1997.pdf>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sQqNRfglVro> Useful interview where Appiah talks about his family background and how it influenced his thinking on cosmopolitanism.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles/2sM4D6LTTVIFZhbMpmfYmx6/kwame-anthony-appiah>

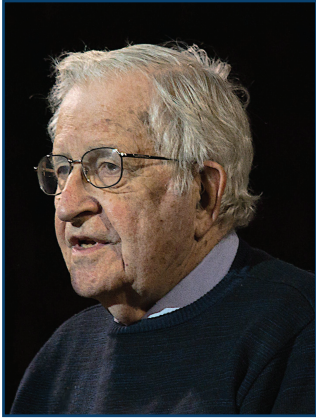
Overview of Appiah's interest in the themes of Colour, Country, Creed and Culture, each of which was the subject of a separate lecture he gave as part of the BBC Reith Lecture series in 2016. These lectures can also be accessed by following the links on the above page.

<https://twitter.com/kanthonyappiah?lang=en> Appiah's Twitter account, which he updates regularly.

<http://appiah.net/> Appiah's own website, which includes links to many articles in newspapers and journals.

Noam CHOMSKY

(1928 -)



Noam Chomsky first came to prominence as an academic in 1950s America due to his pioneering work in the field of linguistics (the scientific study and analysis of language). His work had a major influence on the field of linguistics, cognitive psychology and philosophy of mind and language. His main academic career has been as professor in Massachusetts Institute of Technology over many years. Over successive decades, he has become widely known as a vocal American public intellectual, social critic, political polemicist, and commentator on national and international affairs. He has been a strong critic of aspects of US foreign policy and of neo-liberal influences on global capitalism.

He entered the University of Pennsylvania in 1945 aged just 16 years and soon came under the influence of the linguist Zellig S. Harris, who held similar political convictions to his own. Chomsky pursued an academic career in the study of linguistics. Some aspects of Chomsky's thinking about linguistics give us insights into his political thinking, although he has said that there is only an abstract connection between his theories of language and politics. However, his study of language and mind suggest that the capacity for creativity is an important part of human nature. This concern for creativity is also evident in his thinking about politics and he has stressed the need for human beings to be able to exercise freedom and creativity.

Background and influences

Chomsky was born into a middle-class Jewish family in Philadelphia in December 1928. He attended an experimental elementary school that placed an emphasis on self-directed learning, where pupils were encouraged to follow their curiosity and interests and pursue subjects about which they were passionate. From an early age he demonstrated an interest in politics, writing at the age of ten in a school newsletter about the rise of fascism in the Spanish Civil War.

His early intellectual work shaped his beliefs that all people are capable of thinking about and understanding political and economic issues and making their own decisions about what they think. Similarly, he maintains that all people experience fulfilment and satisfaction from being able to act and associate with others freely and creatively.

Therefore, he has warned that different forms of authority, such as political, economic, or religious, are illegitimate unless there is a strong rational argument that can justify them. Chomsky's warnings about the dangers of authoritarianism are evident here. Chomsky has claimed that the best form of political organisation or system is where all people can co-operate and engage with others and participate freely in all decisions that affect them. His political views have been described as **libertarian socialism**.

Political perspectives: critique of American domestic politics and foreign policy

Chomsky has had a lifelong interest in politics, as shown from his early schooldays. However, his first public intervention came in 1964, when he strongly criticised US involvement in the Vietnam War. The war was controversial and divided

public opinion in America. He referred to the conflict as the US 'invasion' of Vietnam and characterised US foreign policy as imperialist and aggressive. He has argued that the Vietnam War was one of many examples of the United States using its military power to assert its authority over parts of the developing world to protect its own selfish economic interests. One of Chomsky's first political essays was called *The Responsibility of Intellectuals* (1967), where presented a damning viewpoint about how ordinary people were being manipulated in their beliefs about the war in Vietnam. He set out various examples where intellectuals in positions of power failed to tell the truth or deliberately lied to the public to conceal the aims and consequences of American involvement in the Vietnam conflict.

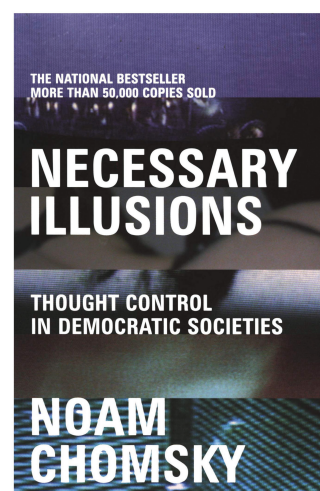
In a similar way, Chomsky has been a staunch critic of the domestic American political landscape, which he claims is dominated by major corporations and wealthy people associated with them. He argues that these powerful elitist interests are concerned only with safeguarding and building on their own privileged economic and political status. He maintains that politics is driven by institutional elites focused only on their own self-interest. These perspectives have shaped his reputation as a strident critic of the destructive effects of excessive capitalism.

Criticism of mass media and claims of propaganda

It is not just wealthy and powerful economic and political elites that Chomsky criticises for protecting unfair and unequal capitalist structures and systems. Acknowledging that ordinary people cannot be forced to tolerate and support such systems in a democracy like the United States, Chomsky has accused a class of intellectuals, mainly comprised of journalists and academics, of engaging in a form of propaganda by aligning with those in power. He has argued that the mass media in America, which is the main way people access the news and learn about how they are governed, has directed ordinary people to believe that their interests are best served by a system that places huge economic and political power in the hands of a tiny minority of privileged and elite people. He notes that many of the most powerful forms of media are themselves owned and controlled by the same corporate interests who benefit from preserving the existing capitalist system.

Chomsky collaborated with the economist Edward Herman in two significant pieces of research: *The Political Economy of Human Rights* (1979) and *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media* (1988). Chomsky and Herman scientifically analysed how journalists reported in the mainstream, corporate-owned media based on historical and contemporary themes that media addressed. Their findings provided compelling evidence of how reporting was deliberately contrived to direct people towards assumptions that helped to justify the influence of corporations in U.S. domestic politics and in foreign policy.

In *The Political Economy of Human Rights*, Chomsky and Herman detailed how reporting on the Indonesian invasion of East Timor and the killing of East Timorese people was much more benign and uncritical than the coverage given to the communist Khmer Rouge regime in Cambodia and their actions against the Cambodian people. These two historical events both occurred in the same part of the world at broadly the same time, in the mid-to-late 1970s. The ill treatment of innocent people by both regimes was on a similar scale, with the same proportion of the populations of East Timor and Cambodia subject to murder and torture. However, Chomsky claimed that the fact that the US supported the Indonesian regime, while the Khmer Rouge was associated with communism during the Cold War period, affected the impartiality of media reporting of both situations. Chomsky claimed that reporters and other intellectuals who did not confront the failure of objective journalism were essentially 'commissars' for the US government and not fulfilling the duty of journalists to hold power to account. In another piece of writing called *Necessary Illusions* (1988), he claimed that 'the media serve the interests of state and corporate power, which are closely interlinked, framing their reporting and analysis in a manner supportive of established privilege and limiting debate and discussion accordingly'.

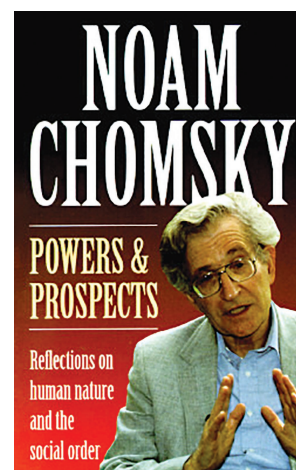


Writings

Chomsky has been a prolific writer and polemicist. In *Powers and Prospects* (1996), he reflected on what he considered to be his obligation as an intellectual, in contrast with those he suggests collude with the dominant political system, to provide ordinary citizens with the information to allow them to come to their own conclusions and make their own decisions about important political and economic issues: *'The responsibility of the writer as a moral agent is to try to bring the truth about matters of human significance to an audience that can do something about them.'* This moral aspect is central to his thinking.

He has written over 100 books, apart from articles, essays, reviews, and other pieces of writing. Browsing through the titles of his books affords us a useful insight into some of the themes that have concerned him over many years, such as the following selection:

- *The Precipice: Neoliberalism, the Pandemic and Urgent Need for Radical Change* (2021)
- *Consequences of Capitalism: Manufacturing Discontent and Resistance* (2021)
- *Climate Crisis and the Global Green New Deal: The Political Economy of Saving the Planet* (2020)
- *Global Discontents: Conversations on the Rising Threats to Democracy* (2017)
- *Optimism over Despair: On Capitalism, Empire, and Social Change* (2017)
- *Requiem for the American Dream: The Ten Principles of Concentration of Wealth and Power* (2017)
- *Terrorizing the Neighborhood: American Foreign Policy in the post-Cold War Era* (1991)
- *The Prosperous Few and the Restless Many* (1993)
- *Profit over People: Neoliberalism and Global Order* (1999)
- *Hegemony or Survival: America's Quest for Global Dominance* (2003)
- *Perilous Power: The Middle East and US Foreign Policy: Dialogues on Terror, Democracy, War, and Justice* (2006)



Criticism of Chomsky

Critics of Chomsky's views on journalists and media have rubbished his claims that such figures are actively conspiring with the government to undermine democracy and uphold the power of minority elites. In response, Chomsky has argued that such figures are behaving as one might expect given the power structure of the media and institutions for which they work. In other words, to have successful careers, such individuals will avoid confronting or questioning the interests of the corporations they work for or the interests of the elite minority who exercise power and control in society. This backs up Chomsky's criticism of intellectuals who do not fulfil what he sees as their basic moral duty: to tell the truth about issues that affect people so that people might be motivated to do something about them, such as seek a change in how they are governed and how society is organised. Other critics have pointed to what they see as Chomsky's excessive and relentless criticisms of American political structures and foreign policy interventions, and his refusal to see any merit in American interventions abroad. Some criticism of Chomsky also characterises him as an anarchist.

Chomsky's ongoing contribution to public debate

Chomsky's remarkably extensive and varied contribution to debate about contemporary political and economic issues continues to the present day. His recent pronouncements and interventions have dealt with such themes as US withdrawal from Afghanistan, the Coronavirus pandemic, the politics surrounding the vaccination issue, the climate crisis, the Biden presidency, the legacy of Donald Trump, including his impact on the Republican Party and on democratic values in the US, Putin's regime in Russia, Middle Eastern politics and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, US



'The responsibility of the writer as a moral agent is to try to bring the truth about matters of human significance to an audience that can do something about them'
NOAM CHOMSKY

relations with China, Julian Assange, the protests following the killing of George Floyd and the Capitol Hill riots after Trump's election defeat, to name just some topics. Running through much of his contemporary commentary is criticism of the forces of neo-liberal capitalism and of the fundamentals of US foreign policy, which have animated his political views for several decades.

Material Consulted and Further Research:

There is a comprehensive biography of Chomsky on the Encyclopaedia Britannica website at <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Noam-Chomsky> on which this biographical note drew extensively.

The piece includes a useful overview of Chomsky's academic career and achievements in and contributions to the fields of linguistics, cognitive psychology and the philosophy of the brain and mind.

There is an official Chomsky website at <https://chomsky.info/>. The various sections offer a comprehensive overview of his work and thinking. Student can access extensive bibliographies and listings of Chomsky's books, articles, interviews, and video and audio clips, as well as links to same. In the updates section, students can access a useful overview of Chomsky's ongoing contribution to contemporary and topical issues.

Chomsky can also be accessed on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/people/Noam-Chomsky/100044625420344/>. Chomsky does not use Twitter.

For an objective account of Chomsky, the New Yorker article 'The Devil's Accountant' by Larissa MacFarquhar (March 23, 2003) is worth reading and can be accessed at:

<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2003/03/31/the-devils-accountant>

The *Prospect* magazine article 'For and against Chomsky: Is the world's top public intellectual a brilliant expositor of linguistics and the US's duplicitous foreign policy? Or a reflexive anti-American, cavalier with his sources?' by Robin Blackburn and Oliver Kamm (November 20, 2005) weighs up arguments in favour of and critical of Chomsky and can be accessed at: <https://www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/magazine/forandagainstchomsky>

Searches on www.youtube.com will yield numerous video clips of Chomsky speaking and debating.

An interesting recent clip is of Chomsky addressing an online audience through the forum of the International Institute for European Affairs (IIEA) on 6 October 2021. The clip can be accessed at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aRxoqVWRUA>

The accompanying blurb states:

'According to Professor Chomsky, we live in a unique historical moment, confronted by an array of severe challenges, some so severe that "failure to address them soon will effectively terminate organised human society, with mass destruction of other species as well". The two most prominent are climate change and nuclear war. Moreover, the current pandemic has killed more Americans than the flu pandemic of a century ago and has not yet run its course. It is also well understood that failure to vaccinate globally is not only a moral scandal but also facilitates mutations that may escape control. Other crises also loom such as the emergence of new pandemics, antibiotic-resistant bacteria, and land degradation.

In his address to the IIEA, Professor Chomsky argues that despite the severe crises that humans face at this historically unprecedented moment, feasible solutions are at hand. He considers whether humans have the moral and intellectual capacity to choose a course towards a much better world and how we might provide the answers.'

Thomas HYLLAND ERIKSEN

(1962 -)



Thomas Hylland Eriksen is a Norwegian anthropologist. Born in 1962, he has written extensively about such themes as identity, ethnicity, nationalism, cosmopolitanism, globalisation, climate change, migration and human rights. He is currently Professor of Anthropology at the University of Oslo and is well-known in Norway as a public intellectual and commentator.

On his website (www.hyllanderiksen.net), Eriksen states: 'my work is motivated by a triple concern: to understand the present world, to understand what it means to be human, and to help bring about social and environmental change.'

Overheating

Eriksen's most recent work is centred on the concept of overheating. (See his blog for an introduction to this book) He suggests that the world is overheated. Change has been happening 'too fast, unequal and uneven.' *Overheating: An Anthropology of Accelerated Change* is based on the assumption that the fast changes characterising the present age have important, sometimes dramatic and unintended consequences. Each of the five chapters focuses on one key area – energy, cities, mobility, waste, information – and shows how changes may occur, which were neither foreseen nor desired at the outset. He argues that the accelerated and intense pace of globalisation has led to three main problems. These problems relate to:

1. cultural identity
2. the economy
3. the physical environment

People across the world are finding it more difficult to define who they are in traditional ways, leading to a conflict in their sense of identity. They are struggling to sustain themselves economically in ways that they are used to. Thirdly, they are dealing with changes in the physical environment that are making traditional practices and lifestyles unsustainable.

Eriksen is interested in how people deal with the impact of rapid globalisation at local level. He argues that large-scale global changes lead to instability and uncertainty at local level, which cause people to experience feelings of alienation and powerlessness. He believes that the overheating effect of rapid global change leads to a feeling of crisis in localities which struggle to maintain their institutions and practices.

To quote Eriksen directly,

"It is an interconnected world, but not a smoothly and seamlessly integrated one. Rights, duties, opportunities and constraints continue to be unevenly distributed, and the world itself is fundamentally volatile and contradiction-ridden. The most



fundamental contradiction, perhaps, consists in the chronic tension between the universalising forces of global modernity and the autonomy of the local community or society.” (Eriksen, Overheating, 2016, p. 7)

Globalisation and cultural identity

Eriksen points to the rapid pace of population growth in a comparatively short time as an example of how dramatically the world has changed. Between 1800 and 1920, the world’s population rose from 1 billion to two billion people; in the century since then it has grown to 7 billion people. In parallel with this surge in population growth, Eriksen suggests that *‘the steady acceleration of communication and transportation of the last two centuries has facilitated contact and made isolation difficult, and is weaving the growing global population ever closer together, without erasing cultural differences, local identities and power disparities.’* Therefore, a consequence of both the rapid growth of population and the transformation of communications technology over such a short time period is that groups who are bound by a sense of common identity can feel alienated and threatened, and are likely to emphasise their distinctive identity more assertively.

It is interesting to see how Eriksen’s response to the UK vote in 2016 to withdraw from the EU offers us further evidence of his thinking. Rather than dismiss the vote as evidence of small-minded nationalism, xenophobia or bigotry, Eriksen has commented on the different shades of the anti-EU vote in Britain, which includes leftists, those opposed to the marketisation of Europe and those who are alienated from the EU model. He also situates the vote in the context of the increased distance between the power holders and those they are supposed to be representing and people’s sense of powerlessness. Eriksen sees the opportunity in Brexit to find a way of responding to what he calls *‘crises of legitimacy’* experienced by political and economic elites in the western world.

Chronic tensions: economic development and human sustainability

Eriksen also demonstrates how contradictions are at the heart of economic development. A consequence of 21st century capitalism is that policy makers and political leaders are driven to making trade-offs between, on the one hand, responsible environmental policies and, on the other hand, profit-driven economic policies. Therefore, while there exists a broad consensus at policy-making level that climate change is a reality and that the consumption by humans



‘The most general piece of advice if the goal is to avoid global disaster and cool down the humanly induced runaway processes currently threatening planetary health, consists in scaling down (and slowing down).’

THOMAS HYLLAND ERIKSEN

of fossil fuels is a major factor in causing this change, yet economic practices that contribute to this change continue to be advocated. Paradoxically, practices such as fossil fuel consumption, overfishing, air pollution in cities and the depletion of phosphorous continue, with the resultant ecological damage threatening the very existence of those who seek to sustain economic growth and profit-making.

‘Caused by agricultural expansion, climate change and pollution, the loss of biodiversity is an excellent, if frightening, example of ‘overheating’: It is an unintended consequence of the planet having been filled slowly to the brim by human activities and projects. It is not caused by one single factor possible to contain or control, but by the confluence of several mutually reinforcing processes – population growth, land clearing and monocultures, global neoliberalism and fossil fuel use, to mention a few major factors!’ (Eriksen’s blog, 13/8/2016)

Cultural Complexity in the New Norway (CULCOM)

Between 2004 and 2010, Eriksen was involved in a major research project that focused on key themes in his thinking. The project, entitled *‘Cultural Complexity in the New Norway’* (CULCOM), investigated social and cultural dynamics in Norway through exploring how groups and individuals defined themselves and how they were defined from the

outside, looking at such contexts as immigration, education and labour markets. Like 'Overheating', the project was interested in how tensions and opposing forces affected people's identity. It considered how processes of social integration happen simultaneously with those of fragmentation and differentiation; and happen at different levels, (ranging from the family to the nation-state); and in different arenas, (schools, workplaces, law, cultural life). The project explores how these complex factors affect ideas around identity in contemporary Norway at a time of increased social and cultural complexity. This project provides evidence of Eriksen's key themes: how identity is shaped, tensions between integration and fragmentation; the complex interplay of social, political, cultural, and religious factors in shaping modern society; and the diverse ways in which global trends are perceived, understood and responded to in different settings. This theme is neatly summarised in a quote from the CULCOM website: *'Being a Turk in Norway is significantly different from being a Turk in Germany.'*

Clashing scales-thinking about the EU

Eriksen suggests that the crises of globalisation have also led to what he calls *'a series of clashing scales'*. He explains this idea with some examples:

'If you are in a powerful position, you can change thousands of people's lives far away with a stroke of a pen; but if you spent time with them first, that is likely to influence your decision. The tangibly lived life at the small scale, in other words, clashes with large-scale decisions, and you come to realise that what is good for Sweden is not necessarily good for the residents of the village of Dalby.'

This tension between the perspective of those in power who control large scale projects and decisions and those living with the impact of these decisions is well articulated here:

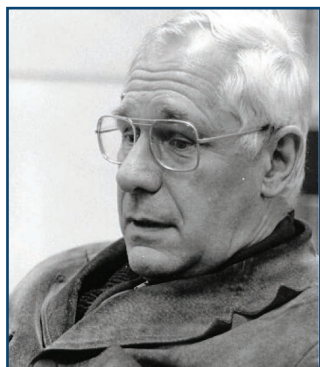
'Your average body temperature may be just fine if your feet are in a freezer while your head is in a hot stove, but you're dead nonetheless. And in order to get to the truth about people's lives, the bird's eye perspective is useful, but inadequate.'
(Eriksen's blog, 13/8/2016)

This tension, he suggests, is a growing feature of the EU model. Eriksen argues that, since the introduction of the single currency, there has been a disregard for the need to take care of small-scale concerns at local, regional or state levels. He claims that there is a clashing scales gap in the EU between the Commission and the community, leading to people feeling disenfranchised. He says that clashes of scale are a feature of global neo-liberalism, where there is a loss of subsidiarity - in other words, where people at local level feel that they have no democratic power.

Eriksen advises that the European Union needs to be more respectful of multiple identities and recognise the needs of citizens to feel that they have power over their destinies. He cites the words of the anthropologist Anthony Wallace in relation to culture when suggesting that the desired model of governance of the EU should not be *'the replication of uniformity but the organisation of diversity'*.

Andre GUNDER FRANK

(1929 - 2005)



Andre Gunder Frank was a left-wing economist and political activist who wrote widely in the fields of economics, social and political history, development studies and international relations. A German national, he is best known today for his work on what he called '*the development of under-development*' or '*dependency theory*'. He also commented critically on what he called the '*world system*' of the 1970s and 1980s that maintained inequality in the world.

Frank's main argument was that in our interconnected, globalised world, some countries are winners, whilst others are losers. According to dependency theory, the people of less-developed countries are not to blame for the failure of their societies to develop. Instead, he

suggested that Western nations deliberately failed to develop these countries. He argued that historically, '*core*' nations such as the USA and UK, who made up the elite '*metropolis*', exploited '*peripheral*' nations by keeping them as satellites in a state of dependency and under-development. Developed nations become wealthy by exploiting the poorest nations and using them as a source of cheap raw materials and labour. He claimed that this exploitative relationship was evident throughout the course of history (e.g. in the practice of slavery and in Western colonisation of other parts of the world) and was maintained into the twentieth century through Western countries' domination of international trade, the emergence of large multinational companies and the reliance of less-developed countries on Western aid.

In an article entitled '*The Development of Underdevelopment*' which set out his main thinking, Frank declared: *Underdevelopment is not due to the survival of archaic institutions and the existence of capital shortage in regions that have remained isolated from the stream of world history. On the contrary, underdevelopment was and still is generated by the very same historical process which also generated economic development: the development of capitalism itself.*

Historical perspective

Frank's ideas about underdevelopment originated in his study of history, which he regarded as essential to understanding development issues. He criticised modernisation theorists (such as Walt Rostow) who argue that development happens as countries move from being traditional to modern economies and as they take on the values and practices of the developed countries. He argued that such theories of development failed to take account of how the capitalist system was *a cause* of underdevelopment, not a solution. He claimed that there was an assumption that underdeveloped countries were simply 'behind' the developed world and needed to catch up. He said that this view, where underdeveloped countries were assumed to be at a stage of history that developed countries had passed through long ago, was ignorant. He claimed that this simplistic view failed to take account of the impact on underdeveloped countries of their relations with developed countries who colonised them throughout history.

Furthermore, Frank challenged the assumption that the underdevelopment of a country was due to its own economic, political, social, and cultural structures and that the only way to develop such a country was to '*diffuse*' (i.e. distribute and spread) capital, structures, systems, even values, from a developed, capitalist hub or '*metropole*' to replace those that existed in the underdeveloped country. He argued instead for the exact opposite approach: that the only way for

such underdeveloped countries to experience economic development was to become independent of what he called *'the politics of diffusion'* and to challenge the idea that the developed centres of capitalism would somehow come to the rescue by 'diffusing' their capitalist features to the underdeveloped world.

Frank also rejected the *'dual society'* theory which related to countries where inequality of income or differences in culture were evident. According to this theory one part of society was viewed as relatively progressive, modern and developed (i.e. urban cities or metropolises) while the other part was more isolated, rural or primitive. The part that was developed was seen to have benefitted from the influence of capitalism, while the other part still needed to have the benefits of capitalism diffused to it. Frank warned that if policy-makers acted upon this theory, which assumed that capitalism was a positive force for good, they would only strengthen the conditions of underdevelopment.

The development of underdevelopment: *satellites* and *metropolises*

Frank based his ideas on a close study of the effects of capitalism in history. For example, in looking at inequality and underdevelopment in Latin America in the 1960s, Frank examined the privileged position of cities in that region that first emerged during the 16th century conquest by Spain and Portugal. The city might seem to be an example of the success of capitalism in the underdeveloped world. But Frank claimed that the city's function at this time was to economically dominate the indigenous population who lived in surrounding rural communities. He said that the city was the *'metropole'* that dominated the *'satellites'* around it. In the same way, these metropolises were themselves satellites to the domination of the European colonising country. Frank said that over the course of history, this chain of exploitation in the form of a *'metropolis-satellite'* relationship has been maintained, so that resources continue to be taken from satellites and fed back to the dominant metropolis. He said that his study of the history of countries like Chile and Brazil backed up this theory, where the chain of *'satellite underdevelopment'* was evident in these countries' relationship with Europe, and within their own domestic economies, where the *'satellite metropolis'* relationship existed at various levels so that the most remote area of Latin America were part of a chain that existed to benefit capitalist Western countries.

Historical perspective

Frank's study of history led him to make three major claims:

1. While the major industrialised nations are not satellites to any other power, cities and countries in the under developed world were limited by their satellite status and were under the domination of the developed world economies.
2. Satellites experienced their greatest economic development at times in history when their ties to the metropolis were weakest. Frank pointed out that industrial development was strongest in countries like Chile, Argentina, Brazil and Mexico during the two World Wars and the Great Depression that occurred between the wars, when ties to the West were at their weakest.



'Underdevelopment is not due to the survival of archaic institutions and the existence of capital shortage in regions that have remained isolated from the stream of world history. On the contrary, underdevelopment was and still is generated by the very same historical process which also generated economic development: the development of capitalism itself.'

ANDRE GUNDER FRANK



- Those regions that were seen as most under-developed and economically backward in the twentieth century had the closest ties to the developed world in the past. He gives the examples of regions that were once major exporters of primary products for the world metropolis (e.g. the West Indies which exported sugar, parts of Latin America which mined and exported silver) but were subsequently abandoned when business fell off.

Criticism of dependency theory

Critics of the dependency theory argue that this dependency is exaggerated. They also say that the theory focuses too much on economic factors and does not take into consideration the country's political, social, cultural and environmental factors that might be contributing to underdevelopment. Critics also argue that dependency theory is very pessimistic and unrealistic. Critics say that the suggestion that a developing country can disconnect from capitalism and go its own way is impossible in our globalised economy. However, Frank's ideas and the huge volume of writing that he completed continue to be debated.

Related thinkers

Karl Marx

Walt Rostow

Useful weblinks:

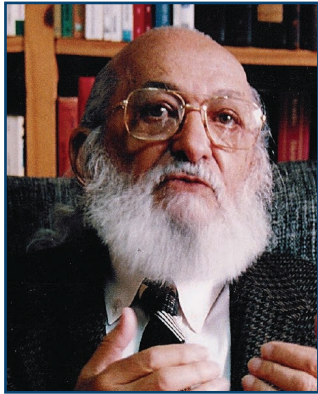
Andre Gunder Frank: 'The Development of Underdevelopment' (published in Monthly Review Sept 1966), retrieved from http://www.colorado.edu/geography/class_homepages/geog_3682_f08/Articles/FrankDevofUnderdev.pdf

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JN6LIMY2ApQ>: a description of dependency theory.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WfcNcoP957M>: a perspective on the structure of the contemporary world system.

Paulo FREIRE

(1921 - 1997)



Paulo Freire was born in Recife, Brazil and raised in a middle class family. He grew up through the great Depression and outward symbols, such as his father always wearing a tie and having a German-made piano in their home, pointed to the family's middle-class heritage but stood in contrast to their actual conditions of poverty. Reflecting on their situation, Freire noted, 'We shared the hunger, but not the class.' After completing secondary school and with gradual improvement in his family's financial situation, he was able to enter university and became a teacher. Through his early years, working with impoverished youth, Freire became convinced that traditional pedagogy was oppressive and dehumanising. Thus, he worked to develop a pedagogy that could liberate through '*conscientization*'.

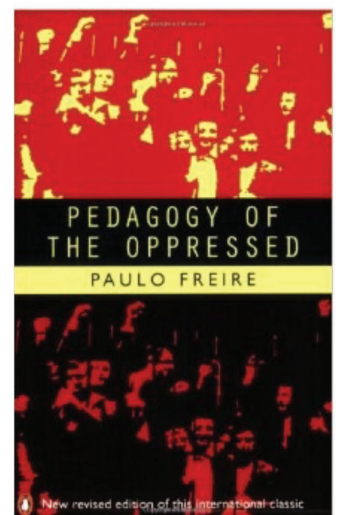
In the 1960s he led a massive popular education movement in Brazil to deal with massive illiteracy. By 1963-4 his methods had spread and there were courses for co-ordinators in all Brazilian states with the aim of reaching 2 million illiterates. Freire was imprisoned following the 1964 coup d'état as the new regime considered his teaching to be subversive. On his release he went into exile and was unable to return to Brazil until 1979.

Critical Pedagogy

He argues that through traditional education students were being '*dehumanized*', and in order to reassert their own humanity, a different educational model was needed.

In his critique of traditional pedagogy Paulo Freire talks about the '*banking concept of education*'. He points out that too often, students are asked to memorize and repeat ideas, phrases and formulas without understanding the meaning behind them. This process '*turns [students] into 'containers' to be 'filled' by the teacher*'. As a result, students are treated as objects, as receptacles to receive, file, and store deposits. Put simply, they become containers for what the teacher has deposits in their '*banks*'. '*The more students work at storing the deposits entrusted to them, the less they develop the critical consciousness which would result from their intervention in the world as transformers of that world*'.

Freire believed that knowledge and culture is always changing. He calls this **historicity**, the quality of being historical beings. As humans we are always caught up in the process of becoming. Reality too is historical and therefore always becoming. This means that reality isn't something static to be understood but it is dynamic and what's true today may not be tomorrow. If knowing is a permanent process then he asks who can claim to know? Education must be a democratic and dialogical process because the act of knowing their world is a mark of all free human beings. So in sharp contrast, then, to the banking concept he developed the idea of '*problem-posing education*'.



Like Marx, he saw society as characterized by a struggle between those with power and those who are powerless, the oppressor and the oppressed. *'Washing one's hands of the conflict between the powerful and the powerless means to side with the powerful, not to be neutral.'*



Problem posing education begins with the idea that learners need to recognise their oppression.

He says *'The oppressed, having internalized the image of the oppressor and adopted his guidelines, are fearful of freedom'*. This is why education for critical consciousness or **conscientization** is needed. Conscientization is *'the most critical approach to reality, stripping it down so as to get to know the myths that deceive and perpetuate the dominating structure'*.

Freire wanted learners to be able to *'read the word'* - to end illiteracy, and also to *'read the world'* - the ability to analyse social and political situations that influenced and especially limited people's life chances. For Freire, like Marx, questioning and understanding the world was not enough; education should lead to action as well. Education therefore is a **'praxis'**. It must be a combination of action with *'serious reflection'*. This reflection or *'reflective participation'* takes place in dialogue with others who are in the same position. Freire was critical of action alone, which he calls *'activism'*. Whereas the banking method directly or indirectly reinforces a fatalistic perception of the situation, the problem-posing method presents the situation as a problem and affirms men and women as being in the process of *becoming* who can transform themselves and their world.

Education as the Practice of Freedom

Freire's method of conscientization centres around learners coming together in **culture circles** consisting of somewhere between 12 and 25 students and teacher, all involved in dialogue and learning with and from each other. They do not rely upon others, even teachers, to explain their oppressed circumstances. *'Through dialogue, the teacher-of-the-students and the students-of-the-teacher cease to exist and a new term emerges: teacher-student with students-teachers.'* The reciprocity of roles means that students teach teachers as teachers teach students. Dialogue encourages everyone to teach and everyone to learn together. The oppressed thereby use their own experiences and language to explain and surmount their oppression.



'The greatest humanistic and historical task of the oppressed is to liberate themselves and their oppressors as well.'

PAULO FREIRE

Because Freire worked with illiterate adult peasants, he insisted that the circles use the ways of speaking and the shared understandings of the peasants themselves. In the circles the learners identify their own problems and concerns and seek answers to them in the group dialogue. Freire used *'codifications'* to allow them talk about day-to-day circumstances. Codifications may be photographs, drawings, poems, even a single word. For example, a photograph of workers in a sugar cane field permits workers to talk about the realities of their work and working conditions without identifying them as the actual workers in the photograph. This permits the dialogue to steer toward understanding the participants' specific circumstances but from a more abstract position. Teachers and learners worked together to understand the problems identified by the peasants, a process that Freire calls *'decoding'*, and to propose actions to be taken to rectify or overturn those problems. The circles therefore have four basic elements: 1) problem posing, 2) critical dialogue, 3) solution posing, and 4) plan of action.

Power

Influenced by Marx, Freire believed that the prevalent ideas of a society are always the ideas of those groups who hold power. He says that sometimes teachers operate on the belief that they teach in a vacuum and that they can close the classroom door on outside influences. Instead, he argues that teachers must recognise the political role of education and how education reproduces the dominant interests and ideologies. *'As educators we are also politicians. When we confront this we are forced to confront the subject of power.'*

Freire argues that those in power expect education to reproduce the dominant interests and ideologies, but there is another task which education can accomplish. This is the task of human liberation. This pedagogy to end oppression, Freire writes, *'must be forged with, not for, the oppressed'*, irrespective of whether they are children or adults.

For Freire, education must be centred upon developing critically conscious, *'humanized'* learners who act to liberate themselves, and the world, from injustice.

In Summary

- He was critical of traditional modes of learning which he referred to as *'banking'* education
- Instead, he wished to develop education for critical consciousness leading to social transformation.
- He believed a problem-posing pedagogy based on the learner's present interests and experiences
- The aim of education is humanization and liberation
- This was to be attained through dialogue, critical inquiry and praxis
- For Freire, education is never neutral. All education is political – either educating to support and maintain the status quo or helping to critique and change reality. Problem-posing education does not and cannot serve the interests of the oppressor.
- His most famous work, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* has influenced education all over the world
- Freire worked primarily with illiterate adult peasants in South America, but his work has applications as well to schools and school-aged children. It is to be a pedagogy for all.



'As groups begin to see themselves and their society from their own perspective and become aware of their potentialities, hopelessness is replaced by hope. Society now reveals itself as something unfinished, it is not a given but a challenge. This new critical optimism leads to a strong sense of social responsibility and of engagement in the task of transforming society.'

PAULO FREIRE

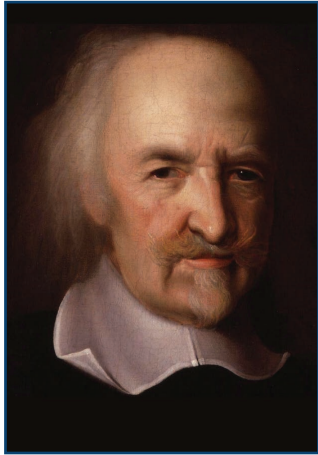
Material Consulted

Freire, P. (1970) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. London: Penguin.

Freire, P. (1973) *Education for Critical Consciousness*. Seabury Press.

Thomas HOBBS

(1588 - 1679)



Thomas Hobbes, born 5th April 1588, is probably the most famous English political philosopher. His ideas and writings cannot be separated from the times he lived in - a time of civil war, violence and disorder.

His view of the Human Person and the State of Nature

For Hobbes the question is - how can human beings live peacefully together? He argues that if peace and security are to reign then a powerful state with strong powers over individuals is needed. This conclusion derives from his view of the human condition as he saw it. He argues that by nature, people are fundamentally driven by self-interest and will increase their happiness by satisfying their own needs, even to the expense of others. Left to our own devices people are not naturally cooperative. Often we desire the same scarce

resources - food, property, wealth - and because they are in short supply competition and conflict ensue. Life is one of continual fear and danger and for Hobbes *'the life of man [is] solitary, poore, nasty, brutish and short.'*

The Social Contract

So what's the solution? While Hobbes argues the human person is driven by fear, Hobbes also sees the person has a rational being. As rational beings, humans have two principal choices in life - they can either live without government (the state of nature) or with a strong government.

Each person enters into a 'contract' and agrees to hand over freedom and control in return for protection from a powerful state. However, in order to be effective, Hobbes argues that the state must be able to command obedience from every citizen and may even need to do this by striking fear into anyone who might be tempted to step out of line. The reason rational agents would surrender their freedom to a powerful state, was that life in the state of nature is one of savagery and chaos and giving up our freedom is the cost we pay for peace and security. For Hobbes, a social contract bestowing indivisible authority to a sovereign power was a necessary evil to avoid the cruel fate that awaited humans if left to their own devices. Unlike earlier thinkers who had argued for the divine right of kings to rule, Hobbes truly saw the relationship between the ruled and the ruler as contractual.



Hobbes's contractual view of the state also had an impact upon the duties of the state. Only so long as the state could protect their subjects were they bound by the social contract. However, Hobbes did not encourage popular revolutions, nor did he favour democratic rule. The main aim of government was stability and peace, not individual freedom.

For Hobbes, anyone arguing for individual freedoms and rights had not grasped that the basic security that civilised life took for granted would only endure as long as strong, centralised rule existed.



*'And the life of man [is] solitary,
poore, nasty, brutish and short.'*
THOMAS HOBBES



*'During the time men live
without a common power
to keep them all in awe, they
[men] are in that condition
called war; and such a war,
as is of every man, against
every man.'*
THOMAS HOBBES

Leviathan

In his most famous work, *Leviathan*, Hobbes portrays humans as rational agents who seek to maximise power and act according to self-interest. Leviathan is the name of a monster in the biblical book of Job. For Hobbes the state is the great Leviathan. The state is thus a powerful and terrifying construct, but is necessary nonetheless for the sake of the protection of its citizens. The book was written during the English Civil War (1642-1651), and argues against challenges to royal authority.

Other Thinkers....

The logic behind Hobbes's version of the social contract was questioned by many thinkers. **John Locke** believed that authoritarian rule is just as dangerous as civil disorder. Locke argued that citizens had rights – including the right to civil disobedience and the right to rebel against an unjust government.

Others challenged Hobbes's pessimistic portrayal of humans as hungry for power and strife. **Jean-Jacques Rousseau** rejected the view of the human person as innately wicked and he saw the state of nature in a more romantic light, as a life of innocence and simplicity. Therefore, one should not try to escape from the state of nature, rather it should be re-created as best as possible. Rousseau also placed great importance on protecting the freedom of the individual without sacrificing the common good and develops the theory of the social contract which aims to balance the two.

In the 20th century, **John Rawls' A Theory of Justice** considered what made a stable society. He reintroduced 'contractualism' not to justify political authority but to argue for economic justice. He maintained that all rational individuals would want to live in a society where there was social justice and where their individual liberties were respected. Those in power should frame government policies under a 'veil of ignorance'. This means making decisions on the basis that he or she could be any person, not on the basis of a position of privilege.

Other thinkers, such as **Robert Nozick's** views on the role of the state, can also be compared and contrasted to Hobbes.

While most scholars today would consider Hobbes's view of the human condition to be pessimistic, he maintains a significant influence on political thought. The anarchical condition that Hobbes described in the state of nature is taken to be true for the international system today by many thinkers.

Samuel HUNTINGTON

(1927 - 2008)



'People define themselves in terms of ancestry, religion, language, history, values, customs, and institutions. They identify with cultural groups: tribes, ethnic groups, religious communities, nations, and, at the broadest level, civilizations. People use politics not just to advance their interests but also to define their identity. We know who we are only when we know who we are not and often only when we know whom we are against.'

SAMUEL HUNTINGTON

Samuel Phillips Huntington was an American political scientist, government adviser and academic. He was born into a white, Anglo-Saxon protestant, middle-class family in Queen's, New York City. He was a very able student and went to Yale University aged 16, graduating in two and a half years (instead of the usual four). He earned a master's degree at the University of Chicago and a doctorate from Harvard, where he taught for many years.

During the 1970s, Huntington was an advisor to governments, both at home and abroad. During the 1980s, he became an adviser to the South African regime, which used his ideas on political reform to reform apartheid and suppress growing resistance. He assured South Africa's rulers that increasing the repressive power of the state (which at that time included police violence, detention without trial, and torture) can be necessary to effect reform. The reform process, he told his South African audience, often requires "duplicity, deceit, faulty assumptions and purposeful blindness." He thus gave his imprimatur to his hosts' project of "reforming" apartheid rather than eliminating it. His views and support for the war in Vietnam also attracted controversy and protests. As a consultant to the US State Department, he advocated pushing the rural population of South Vietnam into the cities, via a strategy of carpet-bombing and defoliating the rural lands and jungles, as a means of isolating the communist supported Viet Cong army.

Clash of Civilizations

Huntington is best known for his 1996 book *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* where he elaborated on the ideas he had published in an earlier article entitled 'The Clash of Civilizations?' His main thesis was that in a post-cold war world future wars would be fought not between countries, but between cultures. He argued that that, whilst in the Cold War, conflict occurred between the capitalist West and the communist East, it now was most likely to occur between the world's major civilizations. He identifies seven civilizations, and a possible eighth: (i) Western, (ii) Latin American, (iii) Islamic, (iv) Sinic (Chinese), (v) Hindu, (vi) Orthodox, (vii) Japanese, and (viii) African.

He predicted that future conflicts would arise between cultures and civilizations rather than States. *'Faith and family, blood and belief, are what people identify with and what they will fight and die for. And that*

is why the clash of civilizations is replacing the Cold War as the central phenomenon of global politics,' he wrote.

He argues that the West has presented pro-Western policies as positive for the entire world and that the very idea of a universal culture is a Western idea. The West must abandon the imposition of its ideal of democratic universalism saying *'In the emerging world of ethnic conflict and civilizations clash, Western belief in the universality of Western culture suffers three problems: it is false; it is immoral; and it is dangerous.'*

Huntington observed that the spread of American pop culture did not mean the spread of Western attitudes or values. *'Somewhere in the Middle East, a half-dozen young men could well be dressed in jeans, drinking Coke, listening to rap, and between their bows to Mecca, putting together a bomb to blow up an American airliner.'*

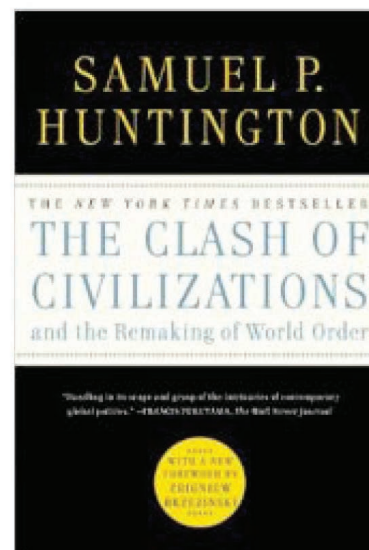
'It is my hypothesis that the fundamental source of conflict in this new world will not be primarily ideological or primarily economic. The great divisions among humankind and the dominating source of conflict will be cultural. Nation-states will remain the most powerful actors in world affairs, but the principal conflicts of global politics will occur between nations and groups of different civilizations. The clash of civilizations will dominate global politics. The fault lines between civilizations will be the battle lines of the future.'

He suggests that the most serious fault line is the one separating the West from the Muslim world. The policy prescription he suggests to counter this perceived threat is to increase the power of the West to forestall any loss of the West's pre-eminence.

Huntington has been criticized for promoting Islamophobia and perpetuating an 'us versus them' mentality. In addition, he has been critiqued for neglecting to discuss the root causes of conflict and war in the modern world that often lie in economic and political structures. Although many scholars rejected Huntington's analysis as simplistic and even dangerous, others found it persuasive, especially after the attacks of September 11th 2001 and the more recent rise of Islamic extremism.

Material consulted

- The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order, 1996.
- The Clash of Civilizations? 1993 can be found [here](#).
- Samuel Huntington being interviewed about his ideas.
- For a critique of Huntington's ideas watch Edward Said's lecture 'The myth of the Clash of Civilizations'.

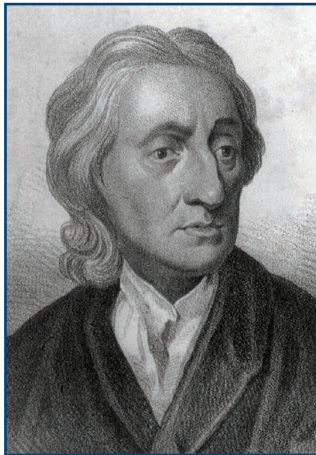


'The philosophical assumptions, underlying values, social relations, customs, and overall outlooks on life differ significantly among civilizations. The revitalization of religion throughout much of the world is reinforcing these cultural differences. Cultures can change, and the nature of their impact on politics and economics can vary from one period to another. Yet the major differences in political and economic development among civilizations are clearly rooted in their different cultures. East Asian economic success has its source in East Asian culture, as do the difficulties East Asian societies have had in achieving stable democratic political systems. Islamic culture explains in large part the failure of democracy to emerge in much of the Muslim world.'

SAMUEL HUNTINGTON

John LOCKE

(1632 - 1704)



Like Hobbes, John Locke is most certainly a product of his time. When studying his political philosophy, it's important to bear in mind the circumstances of his life. He was greatly influenced by Lord Shaftesbury, a prominent constitutional and liberal politician, whom he first worked for as a physician. When constitutionalism found itself challenged by arguments for the absolute power of monarchy in the late 17th century, Locke became more actively involved in politics.

Lord Shaftesbury, along with other leading constitutionalists, believed that Catholics (supported by their peers abroad) would attempt to take the throne of England following the childless King's death. To them, it was becoming increasingly apparent that the King had a power to raise taxes at his whim, thus interfering with their

property. Locke believed that if a Catholic took the throne of England, then all the achievements of the English Civil War - placing limitation on the absolute power of the monarch - would be in vain. The threat was particularly potent as theorists like Sir Robert Filmer were setting about building a manifesto that justified absolutism. This, and the idea of an England once again under the absolute power of monarch, terrified Locke.

Locke was actively working on his seminal work *Two Treatises of Government* when he was suspected of involvement in a plot to assassinate King Charles II. Fearing for his life, he fled to the Netherlands. He did not return to England until The Glorious Revolution of 1688.

In short, when you read the work of Locke, be cognisant of a man in exile, in fear, and in terror of the absolute power of a monarch.

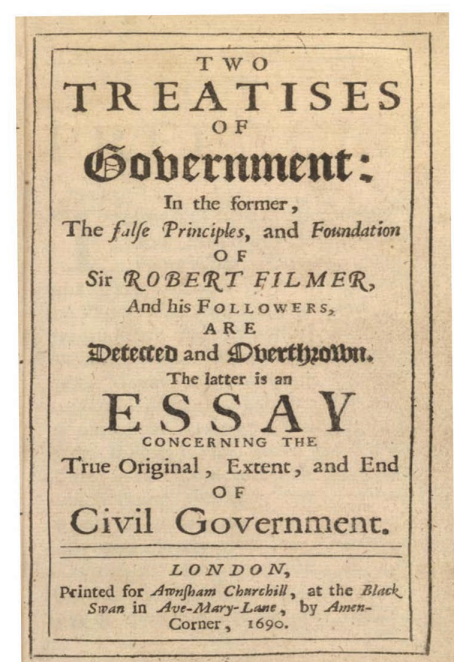
His View of the Human Person and the State of Nature

Locke's perception of the State of Nature and the human condition is not as bleak as that of Hobbes. For Locke, the human person is not a selfish individualist who will do anything to survive and prosper, but is a person bound by a **moral code** to do what is right, and natural.

Locke does concede to the idea of a state of nature, but for him, it isn't a problem to be overcome (Hobbes' view), but is created by God, and so should be embraced and made to function.

Locke's state of nature it is one of **perfect equality, perfect liberty**, and ruled by the **Law of Nature**.

The first of Locke's three tenets regarding the state of nature is **perfect equality**. Here, he attests that no one individual has the right to



subordinate another, thus we are all truly equal. His second tenet is **perfect freedom**. Locke calls this the freedom to live through the laws of nature, thus only what was morally acceptable. Finally, his third tenet of the state of nature is called the **Law of Nature**.

Law of Nature

Hobbes believed that people will naturally seek peace in the state of nature, even by means of war. Locke, however, believes that the state of nature is created by God, and that no one has the right to harm another. Doing so, he argued, would amount to an affront to God.

Other than a duty to preserve mankind, Locke believed that it was a **law of nature not to harm another individual**. He also believed that a person had a **duty to help others, so long as they did not harm themselves in the process**, for doing so would be to damage God's creation.

However, Locke also believed that because we are **all equal in the state of nature**, then no one person can assume control over the others. Thus, if power is going to exist, then it needs to be a power that belongs to everyone.

In summary, Locke believed the state of nature was created by God, and that, accordingly, humans have an obligation to make it work. This differed greatly from Hobbes' belief that we must appoint a sovereign in order to attain peace. The next major difference is that Hobbes thought people should hand over their power to one individual in return for peace and prosperity. Challenging this, Locke felt that because God created all humans equally in the state of nature, then power must be divided equally.

Legitimate Commonwealth/Power

Locke believed that it was only when people renounced their rights under the law of nature, and banded together accordingly, that a true civil society manifested. He argued that when people do not have a public arbiter - a legislative - to appeal against the possible injustices of an absolute sovereign, then there exists an injustice. For him, the legislative, that someone or something that can hold the sovereign accountable for its actions, is a practical and moral necessity.

For political authority to manifest in Locke's interpretation, then it must go through two stages: Collective consent; and



'The liberty of man in society is to be under no other legislative power but that established by consent in the commonwealth, nor under the dominion of any will, or restraint of any law, but what the legislative shall enact, according to the trust put in it.'

JOHN LOCKE

that a government is established **through trust**, not right. The body making the decision to form the government, the society, have the right to do so. In Locke's philosophy, the government is bereft of a right to power, serving only on its received trust of the society. Locke also espouses the imperative of **continuous consent**. If a person wishes to participate in a society, then consent of birth is not enough, they must continuously consent to being a subject of the commonwealth. If the government does not have the continuous support of the people, then it is illegitimate.

Ultimately, for Locke, legitimate power is *'Power plus right'*. Because an individual's power is limited by their own natural rights, then so too must the power of the government. **Locke's legitimate government can not be arbitrary, it must be formed of general laws and not individual will, it can not appropriate the property of its citizens; and that it can not delegate powers to a proxy.**

Property Rights

Property is a central tenet of Locke's political philosophy. A modern reader would be forgiven for immediately connoting goods and

possessions with the term, but Locke's property is much more metaphysical. He argues that property is born out of the divine, and ultimately comes to mean one's own person, not goods and possessions. It's important to note that in the seventeenth century, the word property was more associated with philosophy than possessions.

When a person gathers and consumes material, they do so as it is their right. Thus, when we '*mix our labour*' with the products of nature, we establish **justified ownership** of the material. It is inexorably mixed with our person, so, in turn, it is fundamentally right to do so under the laws of nature. Just like governance, however, the **right to property is limited**. Locke argues that one's own appropriation of property can only be just as **long as it does not deprive others** who hold equal rights to property.

Civil Disobedience and Resistance

As noted above, legitimate governance was an ethical imperative for Locke. His '*political power*' was at odds with a number of other theorists at the time, most of whom, like himself, were rigorously and fervently engaged in a PR war not unlike the pamphlet battles preceding the Civil War. In order to counter '*paternal power*' the theory of Filmer, Locke set about justifying resistance and disobedience to unjust power.

He considered illegitimate power as follows: unlimited, despotic, autocratic power (i.e. the monarchy before the Civil War). He argued that any body claiming unlimited power denies the right and responsibility of power, and reneges upon the trust of the society. Thus, it was not just reasonable, but a philosophical imperative, to forcibly remove the body of unlimited power: '*liable to be destroyed by the injur'd person and the rest of mankind*'.

This didn't just apply to the '*domestic*' citizens of the autocrat's rule, but also to conquered peoples under their control. Here, he also underlined concepts of the **right to revolt** and a **just war**.

Revolution

Although he argued for the right to dissent, Locke once again enters the field of limitations. For him, limitations must be set to the practice of revolution. They are outlined as:

- A King is often sacred. So, whilst one may attack his officers, one may not physically attack the King.
- One must always seek legal recourse before succumbing to armed resistance.
- No one act of illegality or arbitrary power may justify revolution. It must manifest from a 'long Train of Actings' - a proven track record of injustice.

Revolution then is justified under three criteria:

- When the government's action are not legal, and no legal recourse is available to the aggrieved
- When the government's action are not in harmony with the general will/general good
- When the government no longer enjoys the consent of the people

In Summary

- Locke's writings cannot be separated from his own personal context
- He believed people were bound by a moral code to do what was right



'Whenever the legislators endeavour to take away or destroy the property of the people, or to reduce them to slavery under arbitrary power they put themselves into a state of war with the people, who are thereupon absolved from any further obedience, and are left to the common refuge, which God hath provided for all men against force and violence: resistance.'

JOHN LOCKE

- Power and rights were ultimately divine, so people had a duty to make them work in the most moral manner
- Power is 'Power plus Right' and must come from the people
- He argued an inalienable right to property, limited only by the rights of others
- Locke believes in a right to revolt when power is abused by the government
- Revolution is limited by the pursuit of legal recourse.

Material Consulted

Hampsher-Monk, Iain. (2012) *A History of Modern Political Thought: Major Thinkers from Hobbes to Marx*. Victoria Blackwell Publishing.

Wolff, Jonathan. (1996) *An Introduction to Political Philosophy*. New York. Oxford University Press.

Kathleen LYNCH

(1951 -)



Kathleen Lynch was born to a farming family in Co Clare. She started her career as a social worker and what she witnessed while working as a social worker sparked her passion for social justice.

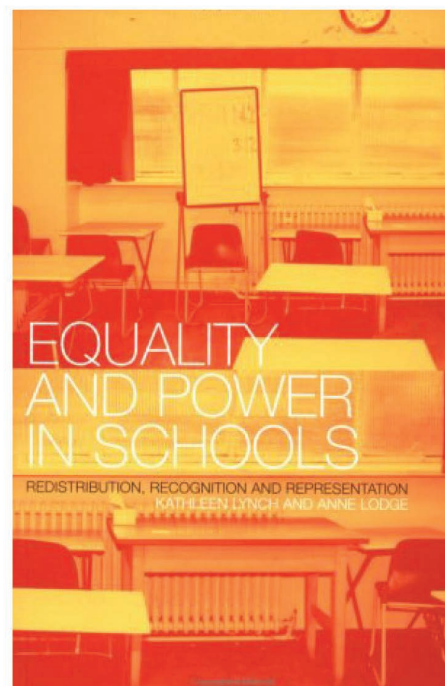
She focused her early studies on education and, along with Dr Anne Lodge of NUI Maynooth, produced *Equality and Power in Schools* (2002), a major work on the subject of education access and attainment. Based on two years of classroom observation in 12 Irish schools, Lynch and Lodge painstakingly examined the dynamics that create and perpetuate inequality in Irish education, from school choice to streaming to sexual orientation. In *Diversity at School* (2004) Lynch and Lodge again examined the subject of education inequality, this time under the nine grounds covered by equality legislation - gender, marital status, family status, age, disability, sexual orientation, race, religion and membership of the Traveller community.

In more recent years she has published and lectured widely on affective (care-related) equality. In *Affective Equality: Love Care and Injustice* (2009) Lynch explains why the issue of care is such an important equality issue. She argues that care is a relational activity focused on nurturing people as humans, and of course, environmentally it is about nurturing the natural world. Care involves repairing, maintaining and enhancing human life within families, communities and within and beyond nation states. Caring involves emotional work, being attentive, available, committed, etc. but it is also a very material activity involving physical work (e.g. lifting, feeding, cleaning, showing affection), and mental work (listening, planning, learning etc.) We need to promote relational justice and gender justice, Lynch argues, if we are to recognise the importance of affective equality.

Inequality and Human Rights

She points out that while economic, political and cultural inequalities are all publicly recognised (and many seek re-distribution of wealth, income and resources, as well as parity of political representation/participation and respect and recognition of differences to address each of these respectively), very little attention is given to care-related inequalities, not only in the doing of care work (which is highly gendered, and also classed and raced, in both paid and unpaid forms) but in terms of securing equal access to love and care in our lives, at both individual and collective levels.

While she has committed her life to highlighting issues of human rights she believes that 'a human rights framework operating alone is highly individualistic – it assumes people have the capacity to claim their rights... but many do not. Those who are least powerful to assert their rights can be ignored or treated unjustly (e.g. carers, children, intellectually disabled people)'. Therefore she suggests that a rights-based approach to justice needs to be aligned with an ethics of care.



Lynch's Four Major Themes

- 1) Economic Inequalities
 - where she examines income, wealth and related inequalities especially inequalities between social classes, but also between women and men, disabled and non- disabled people (and their impact on health, education, housing, wellbeing.)
- 2) Power Inequalities
 - where she examines inequalities in the exercise of power and highlights in particular the power exercised by the media. What power do the media social institution act to perpetuate inequality or can it promote a more equal society?
- 3) Cultural and Status Inequalities
 - Status-related injustices can occur for many reasons be it age, race, Traveller status, disability, sexuality, family status, belief/religion and gender.
- 4) Affective Inequalities
 - This is not random or individual as it might appear. Instead, it operates under patterned and systemic criteria. When states do little else other than condemning male to female violence, they effectively perpetuate it via non-interference.

A selection of her articles can be accessed on the following website:

http://irc-equality.ie/?page_id=10

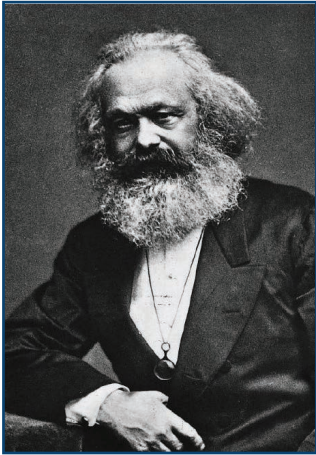


*'Those who are least powerful
to assert their rights can
be ignored or treated
justly.'*

KATHLEEN LYNCH

Karl MARX

(1818 - 1883)



Karl Marx was a German philosopher, economist and political theorist. He has had a huge influence on modern social and political theory and practice. Revolutions have been carried out in his name and states have been purported to be governed according to his principles. His work presents a philosophical theory on the nature of social and historical development, but also a theory about how society can be changed. He wrote, *'The philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways. The point, however, is to change it.'*

Capitalist Society

Central to Marx's writings is a critique of western capitalist society. Marx lived in an age that was increasingly rationalist, an age where religion was losing its appeal. It was also a time of great physical and

technical achievement. He was enthusiastic about the achievements of humankind. The capitalist age, he wrote *'has accomplished wonders...it draws all nations into civilisation...it has created enormous cities...It witnessed the subjection of nature's forces to man, the development of new machinery, the application of chemistry to industry and agriculture, steam-navigation, railways, electric telegraphs, the clearing of whole continents for cultivation, canalisation of rivers...'*

While Marx saw the achievements of the age, he also saw the high price that was paid. He believed that capitalist society had left intact *'no other bond between man and man but naked self-interest...callous cash payment... It has dissolved personal dignity into exchange value...torn off the veil of feeling and affection from family relationships and reduced them to purely financial connections.'* For him it was not only an age of great achievement but one also of great suffering and inequality.

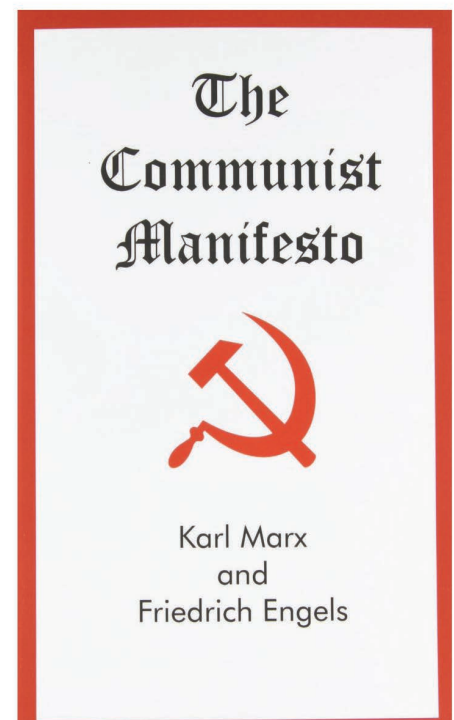
Marx sought to understand how the corruption at the heart of capitalist society had established itself over time but also how this situation could be changed.

His message is primarily contained in two of his main texts, *Das Capital* and *The Communist Manifesto*. In both he provides a philosophy of history that outlines why capitalism is doomed to failure and socialism is destined to replace it.

To understand how Marx envisaged this revolution coming about, his theory of social development through history needs to be examined.

Dialectical Materialism: Historical and Social Development

Marx believed that he had uncovered laws of historical and social development. His analysis of the past, a method he called dialectical



materialism, was grounded in an economic interpretation of history. To Marx's mind, all the events of history are determined by economic conditions.

Society is governed by inexorable laws. *'Man must eat to live.'* The survival of humankind depends on its success to produce what it wants from nature. Production is therefore the most important of all human activities. Material circumstances are fundamental to all forms of life. Since humans cannot survive without basic essential needs like food, water and shelter, how these needs are produced shapes all others aspects of life. Production is, therefore, the most important of all human activities.

Society is a result of the attempt to secure the necessities of life. Men in association produce more than men in isolation. Social bonds are formed in order to facilitate the production and distribution of these necessities. The economic base, or modes of production, is the real foundation of society.

In Marx's view, our position within the productive forces shapes our point of view. Our daily work forms our minds. Social conditions determines consciousness. Human beings help shape the world and in turn are shaped by the world. *'It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but, on the contrary, their social existence determines their consciousness.'*

Historical Change

For Marx, the history of all societies is the history of class conflict and struggle. The class that controls the forces of production dominates the rest. This perpetuates conflict and tension. History has been a long struggle between the oppressed and the oppressor, the exploited and the exploiter. This is an inexorable law of history.

Every society in history which falls short of perfection, that failed to adequately meet the needs of all members of society, carried within itself the seeds of its own destruction. The driving force of historical and societal change was a process of interaction between competing forces. This interaction results in a higher stage of development. Thus, progress in society results from conflict.

Class Conflict

Capitalist society is divided into two main groups, *'two great classes facing one another: the bourgeoisie and proletariat.'* The bourgeoisie live off the ownership of productive processes. The proletariat are the propertyless classes. They live by selling their labour. Essentially, the proletariat can be seen as *'wage slaves.'*

The proletariat has been systematically exploited by the capitalist class. Economic exploitation is an essential feature of the capitalist mode of production. Capitalism's quest for profits is satisfied through the extraction of surplus value from workers. Essentially, this means paying workers less than the value of the fruits of their labour. Surplus value is produced by the consumption of labour power.

The initiative, skill and intelligence of workers bring them no reward as they are turned solely to the advantage of the capitalists. For Marx, it is degrading to treat labour as a commodity.



'The history of all hitherto existing societies is the history of class struggles. Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild-master and journeyman – in a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another, carried out an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time ended either in revolutionary re-constitution of society at large or in the common ruin of the contending classes.'

KARL MARX

His critique of capitalism included the notion of alienation. Capitalism has alienated or separated workers from the process of production, the objects they produce, from their true natures, and from an ability to develop their skills and talents. Capitalism denies humans the experience of free productive labour. Humans do not work to produce what they need. They work to produce commodities to be sold for profit. Work is not a social process. Work is not a fulfilling or creative experience. Labour is a commodity, to be bought. Humans are alienated from themselves and each other.

Thus for Marx, capitalism is inherently unstable and contains the seeds of its own destruction. In Marx's view, capitalism is destined to be overthrown by a proletarian revolution and a communist state will replace it over time. As economic power is concentrated in fewer and fewer hands and the impoverishment of the majority of people continues, a workers' revolution would be inevitable.

Simply put, Marx's message is a revolutionary call to action to the working classes of society. *'The workers have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win. Workers of the world, unite.'*

The state is an executive, repressive mechanism by which this dominant class perpetuate their power. The role of the executive or governments of the modern state is to manage and support the affairs of the bourgeoisie. Therefore, all states are an instrument of oppression that serves the interests of the dominant economic class. The state machine has to be overthrown in order to defeat capitalism.

Communist Society

Marx envisaged the classless, communist society as a society that does not meet the needs of capitalism, but one that meets the needs of humans. Humanity can realise its full potential. Society is organised and goods are distributed on the principle *'from each according to his ability, to each according to his need'*.

With the abolishment of the class system, the reason for the existence of the state disappears. There will no longer be a state. This instrument of class oppression will have come to an end as there will be no more classes to oppress.

His Influence

Marx political philosophy was wide-ranging but possibly his greatest influence is his analysis of the nature of capitalism and power of economics in all relationships. While most economists before Marx, (like Adam Smith) had assumed that capitalism was inevitable, along with the inequalities that go with it, Marx believed that capitalism was unnatural, unjust and doomed to self-destruct. Marx also pointed out the power of ideology in maintaining power. He argued that the ideas of the ruling class always become the ruling ideas. So we accept the need for stringent laws, strong government and capitalist economies, because we are encouraged to think of these institutions as benefitting all, rather than just a few. Marx suggested that most of us suffer from 'false consciousness' and accept 'majority' values, beliefs and attitudes that are not really our own.

Fr. Sean McDONAGH

(1935 -)



Father Seán McDonagh is a Roman Catholic missionary priest who has devoted much of his ministry to ecological activism. His experiences as a missionary strongly influenced his thinking about the impact of ecological and environmental issues on the plight of the poor and the relationship between faith, social justice and ecology. McDonagh began writing and campaigning about the need for Catholic theology to emphasise the importance of ecological awareness and to see the wellbeing of people and the planet as interconnected. Much of his significance rests in his efforts to bring ecological awareness into religious thinking and his critique of the impact of unbridled capitalism on indigenous communities.

Born in Nenagh, Co Tipperary, he was ordained to the priesthood in 1969 as a member of the Columban Fathers and initially worked as a missionary in Mindanao in the Philippines for four years. He subsequently travelled to Washington DC where he studied linguistics and anthropology before returning to the Philippines to teach at Mindanao State University. In the summer of 1978, he spent time with the T'boli mountain people near Lake Sibu and witnessed both the enormous diversity of species and the impact of the destruction of the rain forests on the indigenous people and their livelihoods.

At the invitation of the local bishop, McDonagh set up a mission in the region and while working on improving the wellbeing of people through tackling such problems as infant mortality and providing clean water and sewage facilities, he became increasingly aware of the absence of any moral critique on behalf of the Roman Catholic Church, or indeed any other Christian denomination, in relation to the degradation of the natural world and its impact on people and communities.

Challenging Catholic Church teaching about ecology

During the 1970s and 1980s, at the time when McDonagh began to articulate the need to link Catholic teaching more clearly with ecology, such thinking was not prominent in the Church, where the physical earth was not considered to be as important as the afterlife. McDonagh began to study ecology and became influenced by Thomas Berry, a priest and philosopher who had written critically about the place of the environment in Catholic theology and who had argued that the Church had been excessively influenced by Enlightenment thinking. This perspective viewed the earth as something to be dominated and exploited for the benefit of human beings and to the detriment of other living organisms. McDonagh has stated:

'During 1984 I did two days [teaching] on ecology and the response from pastors was that ecology is a middle-class preoccupation and we need to help the poor; but I told them of how the poor were the ones who suffered from environmental degradation...I have been disappointed with the attitude of the church, focussed on the human to the exclusion of everything, but justice and ecology go together...'

In a succession of eight books, beginning with *Care for the Earth* (1980), McDonagh has challenged the Vatican's long neglect of environmental conscience. McDonagh criticised the Church thinking that places humanity at the pinnacle of creation and sets humanity apart from the rest of creation. He argued that the Catholic Church needed to speak out about the destruction of God's creation.

Tensions with Catholic Church teaching on sustainable population

McDonagh has spoken about how his views in relation to sustainable population led to tension in his relationships with Church figures. In *The Greening of the Church* (1990), McDonagh claimed that there was an urgent need to revisit the debate on human population levels, from which he said many people were too inclined to shy away. He pointed to the expectation that the earth's population would reach 9 billion people by the year 2050, with most living in the developing world and depending for life on already stressed and fragile ecosystems.

He has questioned how population levels can be sustained in a post-carbon world where fossil fuels are a finite resource. This stance led him to criticise Pope Paul VI's 1968 encyclical *Humane Vitae* which forbade Catholics to use artificial birth control methods.

In advocating the need to address population levels, he stressed that falling population levels alone would not solve the earth's problems - a reduction in consumption is needed too. Also he points out '*the most effective way of reducing population levels is to educate women*'. McDonagh has stated that sustainable development will be '*a pipe-dream*' unless we abandon the belief shared by '*most of our economic, political, religious and cultural systems*' that '*all global space- on land, on sea and in the air - primarily belongs to humans*'.

New thinking: Pope Francis and Laudato Si

McDonagh observes that climate change is most devastating in its impact on the world's poor, drawing attention to the plight of 50 million people in eastern and southern Africa in need of food aid in 2016 and noting for instance, that one effect of increased acidification of the oceans is on species of crustaceans and molluscs which comprise a vital source of food for the poorest people. Another huge concern in his work is the danger of extinction; he notes the work of Chris Thomas of the University of Leeds who predicts that one million species will be made extinct over the next 50 years due to the impact of climate change.

In this context, McDonagh has praised Pope Francis's encyclical *Laudato Si* as hugely significant and has referred to it as the finest document to come out of Rome in 500 years, addressing in a radical way such themes as the environment, '*the cry of the poor*', social justice, politics, economics, the '*chemicalisation of the planet*', climate change, biodiversity, water, the oceans, waste and extractive industry. He has pointed in particular to how the document is addressed not just to people of faith but to all people. He has spoken of the need for all people to work towards sustainability regardless of belief or background. In particular, McDonagh has been encouraged by Pope Francis's declaration that abuse of the natural world constitutes sinfulness, arguing that this represents a profound change in religious thinking over hundreds of years where the natural world was traditionally seen to be essentially at the service of humankind and where the Church encouraged people to think more of the next world than their mortal lives on earth.

His frustration with the Church's stance over previous decades on these issues is revealed in this excerpt from an interview:

'There are groups in the church who see biodiversity as selling out. For example when I try to protect species we get the response, human life is the issue not habitat protection; they don't get that you can't protect human life without protecting planetary habitats, climate change is teaching us that if nothing else. They think we need eighty five thousand hectares of rainforest for agriculture to feed people, they don't get that the land will wash away without the trees...I think these issues are back on the table...'

In the same interview, McDonagh has spoken of how his early writings on the environment were met with silence from the Church in Rome, including *To Care for the Earth* (1984) and *What is Happening to our Beautiful Land?* (1988) and suggests that this may have been because such ideas were seen as too radical. McDonagh claims that *Laudato Si* means that there has been 'a huge revolution in ideas' in the Roman Catholic Church which has moved from seeing the earth as the dominion of human beings to a view where environmental destruction is seen as 'sinful' and where the intrinsic value of other species is celebrated. Elsewhere, McDonagh has described Pope Francis as *"the first pope to get right the magnitude of the ecological crisis that's affecting our planet"*.



'The most effective way of reducing population levels is to educate women.'

Fr SEAN McDONAGH

Furthermore, McDonagh has said that Pope Francis makes it clear that the poor will suffer most as a result of climate change:

'That's what he does – (highlights) the cry of the poor and the cry of the Earth, and they're connected...The people of Bangladesh will suffer, not the Americans or the Europeans who actually put most of the carbon into the atmosphere... (The Pope says) the cry of the poor and the cry of the Earth are one call, they're one challenge, they're one crisis...We need to have economic and political policies that actually address that, take seriously what's happening to the poor and what's happening to the Earth.'

His critique of Monsanto and the patenting of seeds

McDonagh's activism has led him to campaign on a broader range of issues relating to sustainable development that has often put him at odds with his own church. For instance, he is aware of the connection between the loss of biodiversity in habitats across the world and the ambitions of multinational agri-business and pharmaceutical corporations such as Monsanto who wish to tie farmers in the developing world to investing in GM crops and to exploit the resources of such countries through trade agreements. In this regard, McDonagh's activism is very much connected with that of Vandana Shiva, who has campaigned vigorously about the effect of GM technology and bio-piracy on the biodiversity of India and the lives and livelihoods of farmers and their communities. In 2004, McDonagh challenged a Vatican-sponsored conference on genetically-modified food called *'Feeding the World: The Moral Imperative of Biotechnology'* as he saw it as being too biased in favour of the use of GM food and the Monsanto corporation perspective, and not sufficiently open to dialogue. In challenging the assumptions underpinning the theme of the conference, McDonagh revealed that before leaving Iraq to hand power over to a new government in 2004 after the overthrow of Saddam Hussein's regime, the US administration left behind a large number of executive orders, one of which reversed an old Iraqi law forbidding the private ownership of biological resources and allowing for the patenting of plant varieties.

Conclusion

Drawing attention in this way to the threat of multinational corporations controlling the supply of food and the lives of farmers is a further example of how Father Seán McDonagh has spent a lifetime advocating for the poor and underprivileged of the world. In addition to his warnings about the impact of climate change, the loss of biodiversity, unsustainable population growth and the threat of extinction, he has opposed aggressive capitalist practices relating to lending and trading in the developing world, the patenting of seeds, and the impact on sustainability of advertising, consumerism, and the planned obsolescence of material goods. Yet perhaps his main significance is in leading a moral drive for ecological awareness where people appreciate the interconnectedness and interdependence of all forms of life on the planet, and influencing people worldwide to live environmentally-responsible lives.

Material Consulted

Video clip of Father Seán McDonagh addressing 'Meeting the Challenge of Climate Justice: From Evidence to Action' conference at NUI Maynooth, June 23, 2015 at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9xqkziwgLmU>

Video clip of Father Seán McDonagh addressing Magill Summer School 2016 at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zpSlnnfWmq4>

Interview with Father Sean McDonagh by the Green Foundation of Ireland accessed at <https://www.greenfoundationireland.ie/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/5-Sean-McDonagh.pdf>

'Is Sustainable Development Possible in our Contemporary World?'
(unpublished article by Fr Seán McDonagh, 2017)

'Columban Father finds the devil in the detail'. Article published in The Irish Times 15 January 2005. Accessed at: <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/columban-father-finds-the-devil-in-the-detail-1.406654>

Bugden, Peter. 'Father Seán McDonagh, a missionary for creation' in *The Catholic Leader*, 18 November 2016. Accessed at: <http://catholicleader.com.au/analysis/fr-sean-mcdonagh-a-missionary-for-creation>

Roewe, Brian. 'Eco-theologian Fr. Sean McDonagh: Don't let this 'Laudato Si' moment pass' in The National Catholic Reporter. 9 March 2016. Accessed at: <https://www.ncronline.org/print/blogs/eco-catholic/eco-theologian-fr-sean-mcdonagh-don-t-let-laudato-si-moment-pass>

Curriculum Vitae of Fr Seán McDonagh. Accessed at: http://www.mercyworld.org/_uploads/projects/119-a30eaef1/user-assets/files/CV/CV_MIRP_S_McDonagh.pdf

Further Links

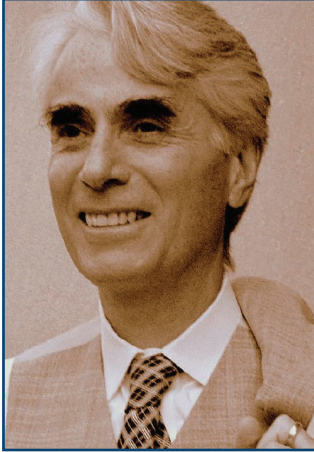
Fr Seán McDonagh's activism is similar to that of Vandana Shiva. Both campaign, for instance against the patterning of seeds because it leads to impoverishment of poor communities.

For more information on Shiva, visit https://www.ncca.ie/en/Curriculum_and_Assessment/Post-Primary_Education/Senior_Cycle/Politics_and_Society/Big-Thinker-Vandana-Shiva.pdf and follow the links.

See also <https://www.theguardian.com/sustainable-business/vandana-shiva-corporate-monopoly-seeds>

Robert NOZICK

(1938 - 2002)



Nozick is widely regarded as one of the most influential political philosophers of the twentieth century.

First and foremost, Nozick was a **libertarian** – a proponent of the belief that the less a government intervened in the lives of its citizens, the better. Second, he fervently **opposed welfare state policies**, believing them to be on par with theft. Finally, Nozick took a **rights based approach** to political philosophy and he evoked (and cited) John Locke as a significant influence.

John Rawls and Justice

The academic antagonism that existed between his work and that of his fellow Harvard professor, **John Rawls**, is central to understanding his argument.

Nozick's most notable work *Anarchy, State, and Utopia* (1974) emerged to directly challenge the assertions made by his colleague John Rawls in *A Theory of Justice* (1971).

In the above, Rawls outlined his belief that justice is founded upon two principles. He advocated the importance of **fairness** in distributing amenities and opportunities. He put forward the idea of social and natural lotteries. The **social lottery**, he believed, was the lottery of birth: the circumstances one is born into varies greatly across the world. Thus, some people benefit from social privilege while others suffer disadvantage. This, he believes is unfair and must be addressed. The **natural lottery**, Rawls argues, is quite similar, and concerns issues such as physicality and intelligence, favourable aspects in the human condition which are, again, randomly allocated to people at birth.

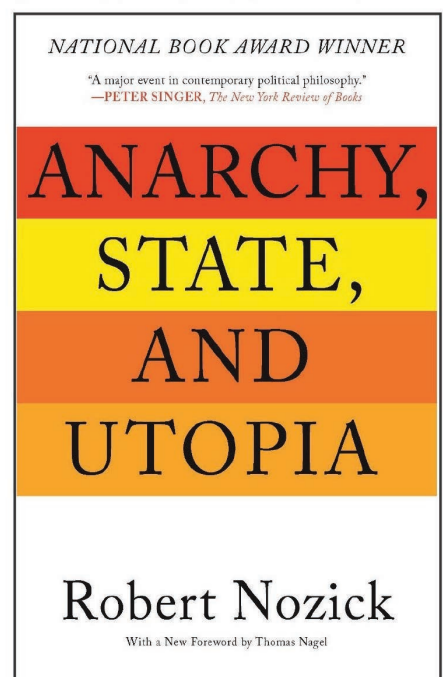
Rawls sought to overcome these injustices through the two principles of justice:

The First Principle of Justice

'Each person is to have an equal right to the most extensive basic liberty compatible with a similar liberty for others.'

The Second Principle of Justice

- 1) Social and economic inequalities are to be addressed in a manner that benefits the least well off.
- 2) Society should provide fair and equal opportunity for all and social and economic inequalities are to be arranged so that they are of greatest benefit to the least advantaged. Here, Rawls introduces the **difference principle**: a belief that inequality is only permitted when it addresses and favours the needs of the least well off. So he argued for the redistribution of wealth where it benefitted the least well off.



Nozick and the minimal state

Like Locke, Nozick asserts that the individual has certain inalienable rights, namely liberty, life, justice, and property. However, as these cannot be protected by anarchy or a state of nature, Nozick acknowledged the need for a state but he was very keen to curtail its role.

Starting from Locke's state of nature, Nozick argues that it is inevitable for individuals to try to improve their lot, and when this occurs, they invariably arrive at the point of a **minimal state**. He calls this the **'invisible hand' principle**. This minimal state, Nozick argues has legitimate grounds for providing only the most basic of amenities: namely **law and order**, and their ancillaries of police, army, judiciary, etc. These are necessary for the protection of an individual's life, well-being, and property.

In the minimal state, these are the only services for which an individual can be taxed, as they are a necessity to maintain order. Nozick did not believe it was legitimate to demand taxes for other purposes. Furthermore the state should not concern itself with redistributing wealth or interfere with the individual's right to own property/wealth. Within this state, the individual is free to practice free exchange of goods and services without the interference of the state so long as these properties have been justifiably and legitimately attained.

Thus, for Nozick, the minimal state is the only justification of a state.

Nozick and the rights of the individual

Imperative to Nozick's interpretation of the right of the individual is property. Rights based reasoning was central to his arguments with regard to the individual. It is argued that his reasoning comes from an individualist rights tradition, and this is quite clear when considering Nozick's hostility toward taxation, wealth distribution, and the welfare state. Wealth belongs to individuals in Nozick's view. If the state taxes earnings in order to redistribute them, this is really in engaging in a kind of *'forced labour'*, because individuals are forced to spend some of their time working to pay the government.



'Our main conclusions about the state are that a minimal state, limited, to the narrow functions of protection against force, theft, fraud, enforcement of contracts, and so on, is justified, but any more extensive state will violate persons' rights not to be forced to do certain things, and is unjustified; and that the minimal state is inspiring as well as right.'

ROBERT NOZICK

Opposing Rawls' two principles of justice (most emphatically the latter), Nozick argues that talk about *'distributive justice'* is inherently misleading, because it seems to imply that there is some central authority who distributes to individuals shares of wealth and income that pre-exist the distribution, as if they had appeared like *'manna from heaven'*.

He roundly criticises anything relating to Marxism or wealth redistribution and regards such practices as a *'lack of understanding'* of economics.

Utopia

Nozick argues that a minimal state constitutes a kind of *utopia*. For, among all models of political order, it alone makes possible the attempt to realize every person's and group's vision of the good society. If some individuals or groups want to live according to socialist or egalitarian principles, they are free to do so as far as Nozick is concerned; indeed, they may even establish a community, of whatever size, within the boundaries of the minimal state, and require that everyone who comes to live within it must agree to have a portion of his wealth redistributed. All they are forbidden from doing is *forcing people* to join or contribute to the establishment of such a community who do not want to do so.

The minimal state thus provides an overarching system within which any number of social, moral, and religious utopian visions may be realized. It thereby provides a way for people even of radically opposed points of view - socialists and capitalists, liberals and conservatives, atheists and religious believers, whether Jews, Christians, Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus - to develop different ways of living in communities, while living side by side in peace.

In Summary

- Nozick's work arose as a challenge to the work of John Rawls
- Rawls believed it was just to redistribute wealth in the interests of those who were the least well off. He justified this under his 'two principles of justice'
- Nozick disagreed and believed that only a minimal state was justified
- The role of the minimal state was to protect the natural rights of the individual (including property)
- Nozick was critical of taxation, wealth redistribution and welfare as he believed these impinged on the rights of the individual

Material Consulted

Heywood, A. (2007) *Political Ideologies: An Introduction*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Wolff, J. (1991) *Robert Nozick: Property, Justice, and the Minimal State*. Oxford: OUP.

Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy <http://www.iep.utm.edu/nozick>

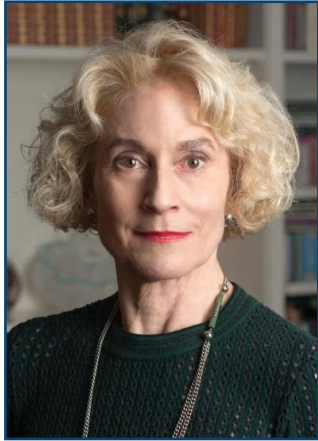


'Utopia is a framework for utopias, a place where people are at liberty to join together voluntarily to pursue and attempt to realize their own vision of the good life in the ideal community but where no one can impose his own utopian vision upon others.'

ROBERT NOZICK

Martha NUSSBAUM

(1947 -)



Martha Nussbaum is an American philosopher and a Professor of Law and Ethics at the University of Chicago, where she is jointly appointed in the law school and the philosophy department. She has a particular interest in ancient Greek and Roman philosophy, political philosophy, existentialism, feminism, and ethics, including animal rights.

Human Rights and Human Capabilities

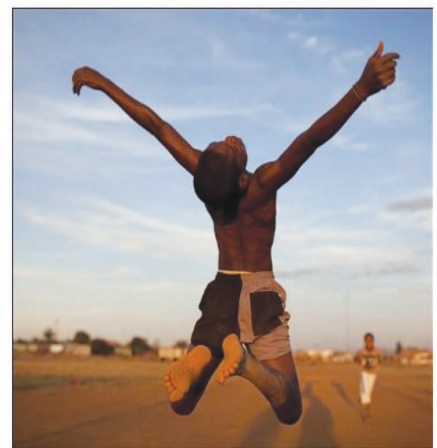
Martha Nussbaum points out that when governments and international agencies talk about people's basic political and economic entitlements, they regularly use the language of rights. Although she acknowledges that *'the language of rights has a moral resonance that makes it hard to avoid in contemporary political discourse'* she believes that a rights based approaches doesn't go far enough. She is also critical of models of measuring development and

quality of life which rely on Gross Domestic Product (GDP) figures. According to Nussbaum *'this crude measure can give high marks to countries that contain alarming inequalities, countries with a large proportion of people not enjoying the fruits of economic growth.'*

Along with Amartya Sen, she puts forward a different approach known as the Human Development or Capabilities Approach. This emphasises the need to look beyond what an individual possesses, and instead to look at what they can *achieve* with these possessions – the *capabilities* of an individual arising out of what they possess. *'It begins with a very simple question: What are people actually able to do and to be? What real opportunities are available to them? This question, though simple, is also very complex, since the quality of a human life involves multiple elements.'* She argues that *'the Capabilities Approach is the counter-theory we need in an era of urgent human problems and of unjustifiable human inequalities.'*

But even before this new measurement can be enacted, thus facilitating rights, Nussbaum first challenges contemporary liberalism, something she believes greatly impedes the facilitation of basic constitutional rights. She is critical of contemporary neoliberal economic policy, arguing that its dominance leads to a grave negation, even eradication, of basic human rights. Nussbaum criticises its emphasis on negative liberty (and its insistence that interference from the state should be kept to a minimum - Nozick, Neoconservatism, Libertarianism, etc.), and instead argues for *'positive'* liberty. Inspired by theorists such as J.S Mill, this emphasises the freedom to make the world a better place for the disadvantaged. She calls this *'the only sort of liberalism worth defending.'*

So, armed with a liberalism much more sympathetic to altruism and welfare, she proposes the idea of the 'social minimum', an equal starting point deserved by all, which *'should be respected and implemented by the governments of all nations'*. This is based on the human capabilities approach.



Creating Capabilities

THE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT APPROACH

MARTHA C. NUSSBAUM

This approach, Nussbaum argues, can transcend state limitations, and can accommodate all citizens, including the disabled, women and vulnerable groups. In addition she suggest *'this approach provides a fine basis for a theory of justice and entitlement for both non-human animals and humans.'*

On the other side of capabilities is functioning. *'A functioning is an active realisation of one or more capabilities.'* Capabilities are important because they may lead to functionings (or the realization of capabilities) but she points out that human freedom and choice must be honoured. She believes that *'capabilities not functionings are the appropriate political goals, because room is thereby left for the exercise of human freedom'*. So for example, governments should provide health care but cannot force people to take up healthy life-styles.

Nussbaum argues that the following list of central capabilities, which must be afforded to citizens if rights are to be attained.

- 1) Life: Being able to live a full, healthy, life
- 2) Health: Being able to enjoy health, shelter, and nourishment
- 3) Bodily integrity: Being able to move freely without suffering any form of assault, and being able to choose one's own partner
- 4) Senses, imagination, thought: Being able to attain fully formed senses pertaining to the human condition: arts, sciences, education, etc. Personal choice in music, literature, religion. Full freedom of religious expression and freedom of expression
- 5) Emotions: Being able to fully engage human emotions
- 6) Practical reasoning: Being afforded full, measured and logical, decisions
- 7) Affiliation: Being able to affiliate with whomever the individual desires, from friend to political ideology/party
- 8) Other species: Being able to live with concern for other species
- 9) Play: Being able to engage in human joviality, laughter, play, etc.
- 10) Control over one's environment: Being able to exercise personal agency with regard to marriage and politics.

Education

It is her hope that education can *'cultivate humanity'* and develop *'world citizens'*. She suggests that three capacities are essential for the cultivation of humanity in today's world. Firstly, *'is the capacity for critical examination of oneself and one's traditions... this means not accepting any belief as authoritative simply because it has been handed down by tradition or become familiar through habit'*. Secondly, is the ability *'to see oneself as a citizen of not just one region or group but also, and above all, as human beings being bound to all other human beings by ties of recognition and concern'*. We must recognise our common needs and aims in a world that is inescapably international. The third ability that students should attain is the narrative imagination. *'This means the ability to think what it might be like to think what it might be like in the shoes of someone different than oneself'*.

Nussbaum approaches education, from a liberal perspective. Influenced by Socrates, she believes that liberal education she argues should be Socratic - committed to creating critical and independent minds.

'In order to foster a democracy that is reflective and deliberative, rather than simply a market place of competing interest groups, a democracy that genuinely takes thought for the common good, we must produce citizens who have the Socratic capacity to reason about their beliefs. It is not good for democracy when people vote on the basis of sentiments they have absorbed from talk-radio and have never questioned. The failure to think critically produces a democracy in which people talk to each other but never have a genuine dialogue. In such an atmosphere bad arguments pass for good arguments and prejudice can all too easily masquerade as reason.'

Feminism

In *Sex and Social Justice* Nussbaum links her passion for social justice with a feminist critique of society. She points out that *'Many women all over the world find themselves treated unequally with respect to employment, bodily safety and integrity, basic nutrition and health care, education, and political voice. In many cases these hardships are caused by their being women, and in many cases laws and institutions construct or perpetuate these inequalities.'*

She develops a concept of feminism that is characterized by five features – internationalist, humanist, liberal, concerned with the social shaping of preference and desire and finally, concerned with sympathetic understanding.



'Many women all over the world find themselves treated unequally with respect to employment, bodily safety and integrity, basic nutrition and health care, education, and political voice. In many cases these hardships are caused by their being women, and in many cases laws and institutions construct or perpetuate these inequalities.'

MARTHA NUSSBAUM

Summary

- Nussbaum promotes the 'capabilities' approach to measuring human wellbeing
- Nussbaum sets out a vision for Liberal Education that will lead to critical and active citizens working for the common good.
- She develops a feminist theory that combines the personal and the public sphere and brings together elements of national and global justice.

Other related thinkers

Kathleen Lynch, Amartya Sen, Paulo Freire, Robert Nozick

Material Consulted

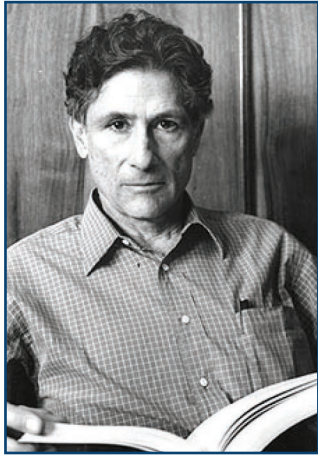
Molyneux, M. and Razavi, S. (2003) 'Gender Justice, Development and Rights', *Democracy, Governance and Human Rights Programme Paper 10*: United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, pp. 6-10.

Nussbaum, M *Creating Capabilities* (2011) Cambridge: Harvard University Press
Nussbaum, M (1997) *Cultivating Humanity: A Classical Defence in Reform of Liberal Education*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
Nussbaum, M (1999). *Sex and Social Justice*. Oxford: OUP

Brighouse, H. and Robeyns, I. (2010) 'Social primary goods and capabilities as metrics of justice' In: H. Brighouse and I. Robeyns, (eds.) 2010. *Measuring Justice: Primary Goods and Capabilities*. New York: Cambridge University Press, pp. 1-10.

Edward W. SAID

(1935 - 2003)



Edward Said, was born in Jerusalem into a wealthy Palestinian family and later moved to New York where he was educated and became a university lecturer and political activist. Although he never taught any courses about the Middle East, he wrote numerous books and articles in support of Palestinian rights and the creation of an independent Palestinian state. He was highly critical of US and Israeli policy in the region, and this led him into controversy and criticism.

Orientalism

Said's most influential book, *Orientalism* was published in 1978 and the key idea of the book was that Western knowledge about the East is not based upon facts or reality but on certain preconceived ideas

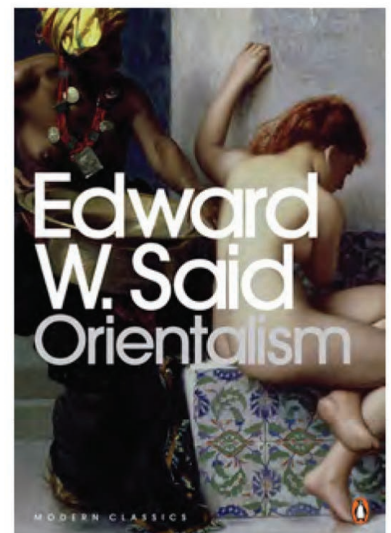
and stereotypes. He argues that the West's (Occident) view of the East (Orient) came from a belief in cultural superiority and Western imperialism. By projecting people of the Orient and especially the Arab world as volatile, irrational, backward, vicious, tyrannical and threatening, the West has created a false and dangerous stereotype of 'otherness' and this has facilitated and justified western imperialism. Viewing the Orient in demeaning stereotypes has allowed people in the West to convince themselves that they are superior and therefore entitled to dominate and to "civilise" the "other".

Although written in 1978, *Orientalism* is as relevant and controversial today as it was when first published. It challenges readers to question the stereotypes that relegate people who are different from to the role of 'others'. It also begs the question, whether human rights are universal or another example of western imposition and cultural imperialism.

On cultural identity

In his later work, Said also challenges readers to question narrow concepts or definitions of identity, arguing that a person's identity is multifaceted and is always evolving. In *Culture and Imperialism* he writes:

"No one today is purely one thing. Labels like Indian, or woman, or Muslim, or American are not more than starting-points, which if followed into actual experience for only a moment are quickly left behind. Imperialism consolidated the mixture of cultures and identities on a global scale. But its worst and most paradoxical gift was to allow people to believe that they were only, mainly, exclusively, white, or Black, or Western, or Oriental. Yet just as human beings make their own history, they also make their cultures and ethnic identities. No one can deny the persisting continuities of long traditions, sustained habitations, national languages, and cultural geographies, but there seems no reason except fear and prejudice to keep insisting on their separation and distinctiveness, as if that was all human life was about. Survival in fact is about the connections between things. It is more rewarding - and more difficult - to think concretely and sympathetically, contrapuntally, about others than only about "us." But this also means not trying to rule others, not trying to classify them or put them in hierarchies, above all, not constantly reiterating how "our" culture or country is number one (or not number one, for that matter)."



Edward Said's criticism of Samuel Huntington

Samuel Huntington's thesis, as set out in *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (1996), identifies seven or eight major civilisations and argued that the West is the most important. Huntington predicted that in a post-Cold War world 'the principal conflicts of global politics will occur between nations and groups of different civilizations. The clash of civilizations will dominate global politics'.

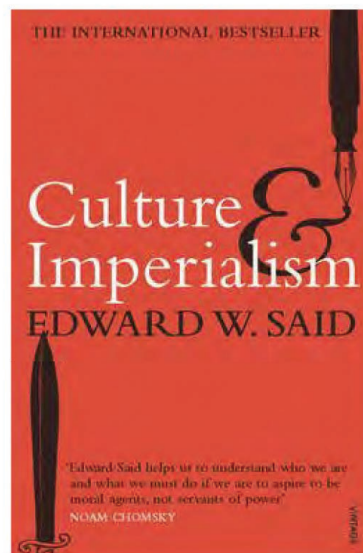
Edward Said was one of Huntington's most scathing critics. He wrote "Rather than the manufactured clash of civilizations, we need to concentrate on the slow working together of cultures that overlap, borrow from each other, and live together in far more interesting ways than any abridged or inauthentic mode of understanding can allow." (Orientalism)

He saw the clash of civilisations thesis as not only crude and simplistic but dangerous. He referred to Huntington's book as 'a crudely articulated manual in the art of maintaining a wartime status in the minds of Americans and others.' Moreover, he said that what Huntington 'described as 'Islam' belongs to the discourse of Orientalism, a construction fabricated to whip up feelings of hostility and antipathy against a part of the world that happens to be of strategic importance.' In other words, it fits into a stereotyped notion of the world that is used to justify foreign policy and military expenditure.

Material Consulted

Said, E. 1978, *Orientalism*.

Said, E. 1993, *Culture and Imperialism*.



'Arabs, for example, are thought of as camel-riding, terroristic, hook-nosed, venal lechers whose undeserved wealth is an affront to real civilization. Always there lurks the assumption that although the Western consumer belongs to a numerical minority, he is entitled either to own or to expend (or both) the majority of the world resources. Why? Because he, unlike the Oriental, is a true human being.'
EDWARD W. SAID

Vandana SHIVA

(1952 -)



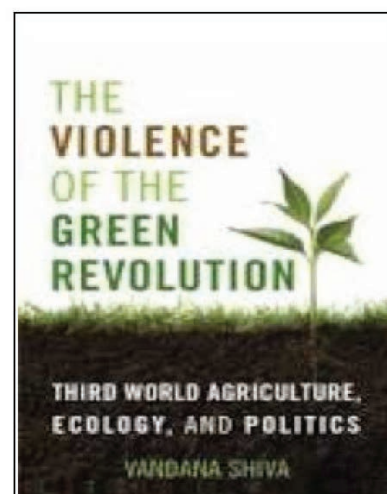
Vandana Shiva is a prominent environmentalist, social activist, author, and critic of globalisation who was born at the foothills of the Himalayas in India. Her father was a forestry official and her mother a farmer. Shiva has spoken of how her mother inspired her through her feminism and her academic ability, earning a university education at a time when few women did so. But she also admired her mother's devotion to farming and the nurturing of the earth. These early maternal influences shaped both her feminism, and environmentalism.

Shiva's academic background is in science and the philosophy of science. The twin fields of science and philosophy form the basis for understanding Shiva's key ideas, which relate largely to her opposition to aspects of globalisation that she sees as destructive of life and society. At a scientific level, she is a vocal critic of the impact of the 'Green Revolution' and the advent of Genetically-Modified Organisms (GMOs) on indigenous farming practices in India. She has claimed that *'the Industrial Revolution gave a mechanistic idea of the universe... the idea that everything is hard matter, unrelated to each other is still guiding a lot of science... genetic engineering is based on that hard matter, genes in isolation, genes determine everything...'* Her work on quantum theory convinced her that *'real science is the science of interconnectedness, of non-separation, that everything is related... the soil, the plants, the pollinators, the food that's produced... all of it in the whole.'* This notion of interconnectedness is a crucial theme in her work. Her doctoral thesis, which explored ideas of non-locality in quantum theory, stemmed from her belief that science is *'taught in a one-eyed fashion-all about how to unleash things into the environment but not the impact...'*

She decries the impact of globalisation and the advent of genetically modified food on the ecology of the earth. She has stated that *'we need a new paradigm for living on the earth because the old one is clearly not working.'* She accords a spiritual importance to seeds, drawing on the Vedic tradition in Hinduism, claiming that *'everything begins as seed ... the source of life and the source of the renewal of life.'* She has stated further that *'the desire to save seeds comes from an ethical urge to defend life's evolution.'* This conviction has inspired her work on the notion of *'seed freedom'*, which she argues is compromised by the actions of multinational companies who seek to patent seeds and then charge farmers for their use.

Shiva's criticism of the 'Green Revolution'

To understand Shiva's significance, it is necessary to explore the context of the so-called 'Green Revolution', which she so strongly criticises, and its impact on India in the period since the 1960s. The 'Green Revolution' refers to an international effort to tackle world hunger through the introduction of new, high-yielding, disease-



resistant varieties of food grains to developing countries. The American scientist Dr Norman Borlaug is credited as the main figure behind the research that led to the agricultural innovation behind the 'Green Revolution'. Following successful intervention in Mexico, where new technologies combined with the introduction of a new variety of wheat led to that country becoming an exporter of wheat by the 1960s, the Indian government invited Borlaug to undertake similar work on the sub-continent, which was facing huge difficulties in feeding its people because of war and massive population growth. Borlaug and his research team succeeded in developing a new variety of rice grain called IR8. Such was the perceived success that Borlaug was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1970.



'We need a new paradigm for living on the earth because the old one is clearly not working.'

VANDANA SHIVA

However, opponents like Shiva have criticised what they see as the appalling consequences of these scientific developments for farmers. Broadly speaking, she has argued that the Green Revolution, through its use of fertilizers and pesticides, has led to pollution, a loss of indigenous seed diversity and traditional agricultural knowledge, and a dependence of poor farmers on costly chemicals. Shiva has characterised the Green Revolution as maldevelopment, arguing that *'maldevelopment militates against equality in diversity, and superimposes the ideologically constructed category of western technological man as the uniform measure of the worth of classes, cultures and genders'*. The following highlights key aspects of Shiva's opposition to the 'Green Revolution'.

The Green Revolution as 'violent globalisation'

A strident opposition to globalisation is at the heart of Shiva's thinking. She frequently employs metaphors relating to violence to articulate her views. She has claimed that *'globalisation is a violent system, imposed and maintained through use of violence. As trade is elevated above human needs, the insatiable appetite of global markets for resources is met by unleashing new wars over resources'*. In 2001, she said: *'globalisation is giving rise to new slavery, new holocausts, new apartheid. It is a war against nature, women, children and the poor. A war which is transforming every community and home into a war zone. It is a war of monocultures against diversity, of big against small, of war time technologies against nature'*.

Shiva is particularly critical of large western chemical corporations who seek to promote their products in the developing world for profit without regard to the economic and cultural sensitivities of local contexts. For instance, she has claimed that *'technologies of war are becoming the basis of production in peacetime. Agent Orange, which was sprayed on Vietnam, is now being sprayed on our farms as herbicide along with Round Up and other poisons'*. In a 2011 speech, she claimed that *fertiliser should be banned as it was 'a weapon of mass destruction. Its use is like war because it came from war'*.

Seed Freedom

Shiva's opposition to globalisation extends beyond concern about the damaging impact on the earth of the use of chemicals to a concern about the fundamental rights of human beings to grow their own seeds. She argues that the efforts of chemical corporations to move Indian farmers away from centuries old practices of subsistence farming to growing a monoculture was aggressively promoted by the World Trade Organisation and the International Monetary Fund in the 1980s and 1990s, with disastrous consequences for biodiversity and indigenous farming practices.

These consequences relate to the impact of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs). Shiva has claimed that *'until the 1960s, India was successfully pursuing an agricultural development policy based on strengthening the ecological base of agriculture and the self-reliance of peasants'*. But the advent of monoculture as promoted by biochemical corporations, where farmers, tempted by high yields, purchased seed strains that required the application of large amounts of fertilisers and pesticides, led to a shift towards productivity over diversity and created a *'new seed imperialism'*. She has equated the practice of monoculture with *'a monoculture of the mind'* which *'cuts off the impacts on the relationships that make nature work and make human society work'*, referring here to the interconnectedness of things which is such a key theme of her life's work.

Patenting of Seeds

It is no surprise therefore that a further aspect of the Green Revolution that has been widely opposed by Shiva is the patenting of seeds. Shiva has stated that *'the diversity of species, their intrinsic value, their integrity is vital. The right of our farmers to have seed, the most fundamental source of a livelihood in a poor country...we forget the scale of what smallness means...we only see the big...'*

In 1994, the World Trade Organisation's Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) Agreement allowed for the patenting of life forms. Shiva argued that moves to patent seeds meant *'a claim to creation'* where wealthy global corporations sought *'to own and control life'*. She equated the efforts of such companies to a new form of imperialism, invoking memories of the exploitation of the New World by the west in the 15th and 16th centuries, with the WTO as *'the new Vatican'* and the exploitation by the corporations comparable to *'the second coming of Columbus'*. She has stated that the greed of these companies is such that *'they want to own our biodiversity and water. They want to transform the very fabric and basis of life into private property. Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs) on seeds and plants, animals and human genes are aimed at transforming life into the property of corporations. While falsely claiming to have "invented" life forms and living organisms, corporations also claim patents on knowledge pirated for the Third World. The knowledge of our mothers and grandmothers is now being claimed as inventions of western corporations and scientists'*. She has described such actions as *'biopiracy'* and equated patenting with *'biological theft'*. Shiva has founded a movement called Navdanya which is dedicated to safeguarding the integrity of seeds to be free from domination by western biotechnology companies and patenting controls, and which also promotes her wider philosophical and ecological beliefs.

Monsanto, BT Cotton and farmer suicide

The promotion of BT cotton in India by the corporation Monsanto is a case study highlighted by Shiva. This type of cotton has been genetically modified to resist the bollworm and is planted widely in India. Shiva is a strident critic of Monsanto which she says *'is privatising the seed...they control 95% of the cotton in India, 95% of the soil'*. In a searing criticism of Monsanto, she has declared:

'In the world based on interdependence rather than domination, exclusion, extermination, Monsanto would not push a TRIPS agreement that treats the farmers whose seeds Monsanto has patented at "thieves". Monsanto, Syngenta, Ricetec and other Biopirates would recognize that (the breeding of seeds) is based on prior breeding by farmers.'

If Biotech corporations could see that humanity depends on biodiversity, and food security needs pollinators and diverse plant species, they would not deploy genetically engineering BT crops which kill bees and butterflies, they would not create herbicide resistant plants and wipe out plant diversity.'

Even more starkly, she has accused Monsanto of *'genocide'*, describing the region of Maharashtra as India's *'suicide belt'*. She claims that 284,000 farmers have committed suicide as they cannot afford the costs associated with planting the cotton and they are mired in debt. In 2014, she stated that: *'farmers are dying because Monsanto is making profits - by owning life that it never created but it pretends to create. That is why we need to get rid of the GMOs. That is why we need to stop the patenting of life.'*

Ecofeminism and gender justice

In her book *'Earth Democracy'*, Shiva states: *'gender equity requires seeing women in their full humanity- as producers and creators, as custodians of culture, as political decision makers, as spiritual beings'*. This quote reflects Shiva's strong feminist



'Globalisation is a violent system, imposed and maintained through use of violence.'

VANDANA SHIVA

viewpoint. She compares the way women are treated by patriarchal society with how the earth is treated by capitalist society. On the Navdanya website, she claims that the role of women has been dismissed by *'the reductionist mechanistic paradigm of "growth" based on GDP, which measures only what is commodified and traded, not what nourishes us. Economies based on greed and profits have exploited the earth and women. It has created the illusion of limitless growth on a planet with limits'*. She puts forward the idea of ecofeminism, where women's vital role in sustaining the earth and the economy, is recognised, and where all people are equally responsible for tending the well-being of the earth and society.

Material Consulted

Vandana Shiva short videos

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ER5ZZk5atIE> (TedX Talk)

<https://vimeo.com/17376439>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PUEQD7hmdUQ>

www.navdanya.com

Sylvia WALBY

(1953 -)



Among the many strands of feminism there exists a sole common theme - patriarchy. This concept, accepted by many to mean a male dominated and self-perpetuating society, is what is most central to the work of Sylvia Walby. Although Walby's writing is not confined to the parameters of gender studies (other areas of contribution include Political Science, Social Theory, Industrial Sociology, and Globalisation), she is perhaps most recognised for her contribution of a gender conscious analysis of the social world. So much so, that it was Walby who won the first UNESCO chair of Gender Research in 2008.

The Waves of Feminism

Since its emergence in Western thought in the eighteenth century, feminism has, like most social and political ideologies, undergone complex fluctuations, and been re-cast in many different moulds. The most prominent of these have been Liberal Feminism, Socialist and Marxist Feminism, Radical Feminism, Black Feminism, and Postmodern Feminism. Subsequently, as these evolved over time, they can often be seen to fall into the following 'waves':

First Wave Feminism: 19th and early 20th century:

- Concerned with achieving suffrage

Second Wave Feminism: 1960s onwards:

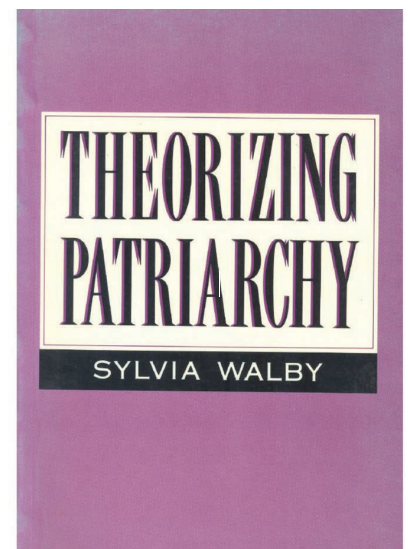
- Concerned with emancipation in all spheres of life
- *'The Personal is Political'*
- Pervasiveness of patriarchy leads to gender domination/discrimination

Third Wave Feminism: 1990s onwards:

- Formed as a response to perceived failure of second wave
- Women cannot be seen as having one common experience.
- Links race and global consciousness with feminist analysis

The Forms of Feminism

Liberal Feminism is most closely associated with **First Wave Feminism**. It focuses on issues of suffrage, and democratically attaining equal opportunity through political and economic participation. Liberal Feminism takes a more optimistic view and argues that all will gain (man as well as women) if society is based on principles of justice and equal competition. It doesn't recognise the vested self-interest of patriarchy in maintaining inequalities.





'Liberated from the home, women now have the whole of society in which to be exploited.'

SYLVIA WALBY



'When patriarchy loosens its grip in one area it only tightens it in other arenas.'

SYLVIA WALBY

Socialist and Marxist Feminism is closely aligned to **Second Wave Feminism**. For them gender issues cannot be separated from economics. Much like how socialists believe that there exists an oppressive owning class of bourgeoisie, Socialist and Marxist feminists apply a gendered analysis to the world and conclude that a system of deliberate 'profit' from oppression exists which is maintained by patriarchy. For them, patriarchy is oppressive in the same way as the bourgeoisie. They believe that capitalism strengthens patriarchy, defining women as consumers, and, in doing so, perpetuates the oppression of the woman as the 'domestic slave'. Adherents to Radical Feminism (Second/Third Waves Feminism) believe that the woman's role in a family, her utilisation as a sexual object, and male violence are all accommodated by patriarchy and an inherently sexist code of social norms. Radical feminists assert that it is the patriarchy – the deliberate and systemic subjugation of women by men – that is the fault of the woman's woes. Thus, they attest that it is only when the patriarchy is overthrown that all can enjoy equal personhood. **Black Feminism** is generally associated with **Third Wave Feminism**. It argues that the above forms of feminism have done little for black and non-white woman, believing instead that they are biased toward white, middle-class, women.

Postmodern Feminists (also Third Wave Feminism), much like followers of Black Feminism, believe that it is fallacious to assert one all-encompassing experience of women across societies and times. They fundamentally reject an over-arching theory of Feminism, arguing instead for the need to recognise context and complexities when considering the female experience in a male dominated world. Women's experience is diverse and this must be reflected in a feminist analysis of the world. Their discipline encompasses diversity, non-binary thinking, and a critical evaluation of the social norms, language, and attitudes which are detrimental to those who are seen as 'other' by the male dominated world.

Walby and Patriarchy

Addressing Socialist and Marxist Feminism (and its detractors), Walby asserts that the relationship between capitalism and patriarchy is not to be examined in a binary, 'black and white' manner, but rather through lateral thinking which serves to facilitate the complexities and nuances of the relationship.

For Walby, even though capitalism does benefit from patriarchy (sexual division of labour), this is not always the case. For example, she draws our attention to women entering the workforce during the First and Second World Wars – here, it is clear that the patriarchy did not benefit, albeit capitalism did. Thus, the relationship is much more complex than originally believed.

The Six Structures of Patriarchy

Walby defines patriarchy as a 'system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress, and exploit women'. Rather than ascribing to the controversial view that there exists one over-arching form of patriarchy, Walby argues that patriarchy operates in a more complex manner through six unique structures:

- 1) Production relations in the household
 - In the home, a woman must work for free under the expectations of her husband

- 2) Paid work
 - In the working world, women suffer from discriminatory pay, unfair treatment, and often find themselves in less demanding roles than their male counterparts.
- 3) The patriarchal state
 - States can be inherently oppressive to women through policies and laws. Society is fundamentally biased toward the man.
- 4) Male violence
 - This is not random or individual as it might appear. Instead, it operates under patterned and systemic criteria. When states do little else other than condemning male to female violence, they effectively perpetuate it via non-interference.
- 5) Patriarchal relations in sexuality
 - Different rules apply to both genders in social norms and expectations regarding sexual behaviour.
- 6) Patriarchal cultural institutions
 - Many facets of society, namely media, religion, and education, produce and perpetuate portrayals of women through a patriarchal viewpoint. These viewpoints then contribute to women's own understanding of femininity.

Private and public patriarchies

Finally, Walby argues that there are two distinctive forms of patriarchy that exist in the social world: private patriarchy and public patriarchy.

Private Patriarchy: This form of patriarchy can be found in the household. It sees one individual patriarch (the dominant male) dominate and oppress the subjugated female. Walby believes this acts as an exclusionary tactic as women are prevented from taking part in public discourse.

Public Patriarchy: As inferred from its name, this patriarchy operates in the public world. Most often associated with the working world, public patriarchy is the existence of oppressive factors that still function. In public life, Walby argues, women are more collectively separated from power, wealth, and influence than men are.



'Women are not passive victims of oppressive structures. They have struggled to change both their immediate circumstances and the wider social structures.'

SYLVIA WALBY

Walby asserts that, in the west, there has been a shift in patriarchies. She believes that where private patriarchy was once far more common than its public counterpart, domination of women through a male-orientated world is now more prevalent in the public realm.

In Summary

- There are many differing forms of feminism
- Most discuss the role of patriarchy in maintaining female inequalities
- Walby has brought all forms of feminism together and offered her unifying analysis
- She believes that the patriarchy operates in six forms: in the home, in the workplace, via state policies, through male violence, sexuality, and in institutions such as religion and the media
- Walby asserts that there are two main forms of patriarchy: private and public. She believes that women have overcome private patriarchy to a great extent but public patriarchy continues to operate.

Material Consulted

Giddens, A. (2009) *Sociology*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Walby, S. (1990) *Theorizing Patriarchy*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Notes



info@pdst.ie | pdst.ie  



An Roinn Oideachais
Department of Education



Dublin West Education Centre
Ionad Oideachais Bhaile Átha Cliath Thiar

The PDST is funded by the Teacher Education Section (TES) of the Department of Education (DE) and is managed by Dublin West Education Centre