

Hutchings goes further than Linklater, however, by also problematizing the individual 'self' of liberalism. Her intention is to examine the status of all normative claims to self-determination, whether the 'self' is understood as the individual, nation, or state. But insofar as her critique is aimed at placing the 'self' in question as a self-contained entity, Hutchings' analysis complements and extends the philosophical critique of particularism undertaken by Linklater.

Richard Shapcott (2000b, 2001) also continues this critique by inquiring into the way different conceptions of the 'self' shape relations to 'others' in international relations. Shapcott's main concern is with the possibility of achieving justice in a culturally diverse world. Although the main influences on his argument are Tzvetan Todorov and Hans-Georg Gadamer rather than Habermas, Shapcott's critique of the self is consistent with Linklater's and Hutchings'. He rejects both liberal and communitarian conceptions of the self for foreclosing genuine communication and justice in the relationship between self and other. Liberal conceptions of the self, he says, involve a 'significant moment of assimilation' because they are incapable of properly recognizing difference (2000b: 216). Communitarians, on the other hand, tend to take the limits of political community as given and, as a consequence, refuse to grant outsiders or non-citizens an equal voice in moral conversations. In other words, 'liberals underestimate the moral significance of national differences, while communitarians overestimate them. Both, in short, fail to do justice to difference' (Shapcott 2001: Chapter 1).

The common project of Hutchings, Linklater and Shapcott here is to question the boundedness of identity. A less dogmatic attitude towards national boundaries is called for by these critical international theorists, as national boundaries are recognized as 'neither morally decisive nor morally insignificant' (Linklater 1998: 61). They are perhaps unavoidable in some form. The point, however, is to ensure that national boundaries do not obstruct principles of openness, recognition and justice in relations with the 'other' (Linklater 1998: Chapter 2; Hutchings 1999: 138; Shapcott 2000a: 111).

Critical international theory has highlighted the dangers of unchecked particularism which can too readily deprive 'outsiders' of certain rights. This philosophical critique of particularism has led critical international theory to criticize the sovereign state as one of the foremost modern forms of social exclusion and therefore as a considerable barrier to universal justice and emancipation. In the following section we outline critical international theory's sociological account of how the modern state came to structure political community.

The sociological dimension: states, social forces and changing world orders

Rejecting realist claims that the condition of anarchy and the self-regarding actions of states are either natural or immutable, critical international theory has always been a form of small-‘c’ constructivism. One of its essential tasks is therefore to account for the social and historical production of both the agents and structures taken for granted by traditional theories.

Against the positivism and empiricism of various forms of realism, critical international theory adopts a more hermeneutic approach, which conceives of social structures as having an intersubjective existence. ‘Structures are socially constructed’ – that is, says Cox (1992a: 138), ‘they become a part of the objective world by virtue of their existence in the intersubjectivity of relevant groups of people’. Allowing for the active role of human minds in the constitution of the social world does not lead to a denial of material reality, it simply gives it a different ontological status. Although structures, as intersubjective products, do not have a physical existence like tables or chairs, they nevertheless have real, concrete effects (1992b: 133). Structures produce concrete effects because humans act *as if* they were real (Cox 1986: 242). It is this view of ontology which underlies Cox’s and critical international theory’s attempts to comprehend the present order.

In contrast to individualist ontologies which conceive of states as atomistic, rational and possessive, and as if their identities existed prior to or independently of social interaction (Reus-Smit 1996: 100), critical international theory is more interested in explaining how both individual actors and social structures emerge in, and are conditioned by, history. For example, against the Westphalian dogma that the state is a state is a state (Cox 1981: 127), critical international theory views the modern state as a distinctive form of political community, bringing with it particular functions, roles, and responsibilities that are socially and historically determined. Whereas the state is taken for granted by realism, critical international theory seeks to provide a social theory of the state.

Crucial to critical international theory’s argument is that we must account for the development of the modern state as the dominant form of political community in modernity. What is therefore required is an account of how states construct their moral and legal duties and how these reflect certain assumptions about the structure and logic of international relations. Using the work of Michael Mann and Anthony Giddens in particular, Linklater (1998: Chapters 4–5) undertakes what he calls an historical sociology of ‘bounded communities’.

Linklater’s *Beyond Realism and Marxism* (1990b) had already begun to analyse the interplay of different logics or rationalization processes in

the making of modern world politics. But in *Transformation of Political Community* (1998), he carries this analysis further by providing a more detailed account of these processes and by linking them more closely to systems of inclusion and exclusion in the development of the modern state. His argument is that the boundaries of political community are shaped by the interplay of four rationalization processes: state-building, geopolitical rivalry, capitalist industrialization and moral-practical learning (Linklater 1998: 147–57). Five monopoly powers are acquired by the modern state through these rationalization processes. These powers, which are claimed by the sovereign state as indivisible, inalienable and exclusive rights, are: the right to monopolize the legitimate means of violence over the claimed territory, the exclusive right to tax within this territorial jurisdiction, the right to demand undivided political allegiance, the sole authority to adjudicate disputes between citizens and the sole subject of rights and representation in international law (1998: 28–9).

The combining of these monopoly powers initiated what Linklater refers to as the ‘totalizing project’ of the modern, Westphalian state. The upshot was to produce a conception of politics governed by the assumption that the boundaries of sovereignty, territory, nationality and citizenship must be co-terminous (1998: 29, 44). The modern state concentrated these social, economic, legal and political functions around a single, sovereign site of governance that became the primary subject of international relations by gradually removing alternatives. Of crucial concern to Linklater is how this totalizing project of the modern state modifies the social bond and consequently changes the boundaries of moral and political community. Though the state has been a central theme in the study of international relations there has been little attempt to account for the changing ways that states determine principles which, by binding citizens into a community, separate them from the rest of the world.

Linklater’s focus on the changing nature of social bonds has much in common with Cox’s (1999) focus on the changing relationship between state and civil society. The key to rethinking International Relations, according to Cox, lies in examining the relationship between state and civil society, and thereby recognizing that the state takes different forms, not only in different historical periods, but also within the same period.

Lest it be thought that critical international theory is simply interested in producing a theory of the state alone, it should be remembered that the state is but one force which shapes the present world order. Cox (1981: 137–8) argues that a comprehensive understanding of the present order and its structural characteristics must account for the interaction between social forces, states and world orders. Within Cox’s approach the state plays an ‘intermediate though autonomous role’ between, on

the one hand, social forces shaped by production, and on the other, a world order which embodies a particular configuration of power determined by the states-system and the world economy (1981: 141).

There are two fundamental and intertwined presuppositions upon which Cox founds his theory of the state. The first reflects the Marxist–Gramscian axiom that ‘World orders ... are grounded in social relations’ (Cox 1983: 173). This means that observable changes in military and geo-political balances can be traced to fundamental changes in the relationship between capital and labour. The second presupposition stems from Vico’s argument that institutions such as the state are historical products. The state cannot be abstracted from history as if its essence could be defined or understood as *prior to* history (Cox 1981: 133). The end result is that the definition of the state is enlarged to encompass ‘the underpinnings of the political structure in civil society’ (Cox 1983: 164). The influence of the church, press, education system, culture and so on, has to be incorporated into an analysis of the state, as these ‘institutions’ help to produce the attitudes, dispositions and behaviours consistent with, and conducive to, the state’s arrangement of power relations in society. Thus the state, which comprises the machinery of government, plus civil society, constitute and reflect the ‘hegemonic social order’ (1983).

This hegemonic social order must also be understood as a dominant configuration of ‘material power, ideology and institutions’ that shapes and bears forms of world order (Cox 1981: 141). The key issue for Cox therefore is how to account for the transition from one world order to another. He devotes much of his attention to explaining ‘how structural transformations have come about in the past’ (Cox 1986: 244). For example, he has analysed in some detail the structural transformation that took place in the late nineteenth century from a period characterized by craft manufacture, the liberal state and *pax britannica*, to a period characterized by mass production, the emerging welfare–nationalist state and imperial rivalry (Cox 1987). In much of his recent writing, Cox has been preoccupied with the restructuring of world order brought about by globalization. In brief Cox, and his colleague Stephen Gill, have offered extensive examinations of how the growing global organization of production and finance is transforming Westphalian conceptions of society and polity. At the heart of this current transformation is what Cox calls the ‘internationalization of the state’, whereby the state becomes little more than an instrument for restructuring national economies so that they are more responsive to the demands and disciplines of the capitalist global economy. This has allowed the power of capital to grow – ‘relative to labour and in the way it reconstitutes certain ideas, interests, and forms of state’ – and given rise to a neo-liberal

'business civilization' (Gill 1996: 210, see also Cox 1993, 1994; Gill 1995).

Drawing upon Karl Polanyi, and in a similar vein to John Ruggie, Cox and Gill see the social purposes of the state being subordinated to the market logics of capitalism, disembedding the economy from society, and producing a complex world order of increasing tension between principles of territoriality and interdependence (Cox 1993: 260–3; Gill 1996). Some of the consequences of this economic globalization are, as Cox (1999) and Gill (1996) note, the polarization of rich and poor, increasing social anomie, a stunted civil society and, as a result, the rise of exclusionary populism (extreme right, xenophobic and racist groups).

The point of reflecting on changing world orders, as Cox (1999: 4) notes, is to 'serve as a guide to action designed to change the world so as to improve the lot of humanity in social equity'. After all, as both Cox (1989) and Maclean (1981) argue, an understanding of change should be a central feature of any theory of international relations. So it is with the express purpose of analysing the potential for structural transformations in world order that critical international theory identifies and examines 'emancipatory counter-hegemonic' forces. Counter-hegemonic forces could be states, such as a coalition of 'Third World' states which struggles to undo the dominance of 'core' countries, or the 'counter-hegemonic alliance of forces on the world scale', such as trade unions, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and new social movements, which grow from the 'bottom-up' in civil society (Cox 1999; Maiguaschca 2003; Eschle and Maiguaschca 2005).

The point of critical international theory's various sociological analyses is to illuminate how already existing social struggles might lead to decisive transformations in the normative bases of global political life. This has prompted Linklater (2002a) to undertake what he calls a 'sociology of states-systems'. More specifically, Linklater wishes to compare states-systems across time on the basis of how they deal with harm. What kinds of harm are generated in particular states-systems, and to what extent are rules and norms against harm built into these states-systems? Linklater's initial research suggests that the modern states-system may be unique in its development of 'cosmopolitan harm conventions' that have the effect of eroding the domestic jurisdiction of states and promoting moral duties (Linklater 2001).

However, the civilizing gains made by the modern states-system may be under threat by developments since September 11. Though there are different responses to the terrorist attacks perpetrated by al-Qaeda, Linklater is concerned that the dominant rhetoric of a civilizational war against evil would unleash 'de-civilizing' potentials. The US-led 'war on terrorism', by privileging military means, putting more innocent lives at

risk and suspending the rule of international law, raised the question of 'whether the vision of a world in which fewer human beings are burdened with preventable suffering has been dealt a blow from which it will not easily recover' (Linklater 2002b: 304). As he succinctly expresses the problem: 'Compassion seems set to lose out in the struggle to deal with threats to security' (2002b: 309). Implicit in Linklater, and explicit in the writings of others, is the argument that the greatest threat to world order may not be the terrorists who perpetrated such inexcusable harm, but the reaction by the United States. By placing itself outside the rules, norms and institutions of international society in its prosecution of the war on terrorism, the United States is not only diminishing the prospects of a peaceful and just world order, but undermining the very principles on which it was founded (Habermas 2003; Dunne 2003; Devetak 2005).

The praxeological dimension: cosmopolitanism and discourse ethics

One of the main intentions behind a sociology of the state is to assess the possibility of undoing the monopoly powers and totalizing project and moving towards more open, inclusive forms of community. This reflects critical international theory's belief that while totalizing projects have been tremendously successful, they have not been complete in colonizing modern political life. They have not been able to 'erode the sense of moral anxiety when duties to fellow-citizens clash with duties to the rest of humankind' (Linklater 1998: 150–1). In this section, I outline critical international theory's attempt to rethink the meaning of community in the light of this residual moral anxiety and an accumulating 'moral capital' which deepens and extends cosmopolitan citizenship. This involves not simply identifying the forces working to dismantle practices of social exclusion, but also identifying those working to replace the system of sovereign states with cosmopolitan structures of global governance.

Linklater's three volumes, *Men and Citizens* (1990a), *Beyond Realism and Marxism* (1990b) and *The Transformation of Political Community* (1998), form the most sustained and extensive interrogation of political community in International Relations. In (1998), Linklater elaborates his argument in terms of a 'triple transformation' affecting political community. The three transformational tendencies Linklater identifies are: a progressive recognition that moral, political and legal principles ought to be universalized, an insistence that material inequality ought to be reduced and greater demands for deeper respect for cultural, ethnic and gender differences. The triple transformation identifies processes that open the possibility of dismantling the nexus between sovereignty,

territory, citizenship and nationalism and moving towards more cosmopolitan forms of governance. In this respect, the praxeological dimension closes the circle with the normative dimension by furthering the critique of the modern state's particularism. However, we should note a slight revision of this critique. Modern states are not just too particularistic for Linklater's liking, they are also too universalistic (Linklater 1998: 27). He here finesses his earlier critique of particularism by acknowledging the feminist and postmodern arguments that universalism runs the risk of ignoring or repressing certain marginalized or vulnerable groups unless it respects legitimate differences. Nonetheless, it remains consistent with the Enlightenment critique of the system of sovereign states, and the project to universalize the sphere in which human beings treat each other as free and equal.

If critical international theory's overall objective is to promote the reconfiguration of political community, not just by expanding political community beyond the frontiers of the sovereign state, but also by deepening it within those frontiers, then it must offer a more complex, multi-tiered structure of governance. Ultimately, it depends on reconstituting the state within alternative frameworks of political action that reduce the impact of social exclusion and enlarge democratic participation.

The key to realizing this vision is to sever the link between sovereignty and political association which is integral to the Westphalian system (Devetak 1995a: 43). A post-exclusionary form of political community would according to Linklater be post-sovereign or post-Westphalian. It would abandon the idea that power, authority, territory and loyalty must be focused around a single community or monopolized by a single site of governance. The state can no longer mediate effectively or exclusively among the many loyalties, identities and interests that exist in a globalizing world (see Devetak 2003; Waller and Linklater 2003). Fairer and more complex mediations can be developed, argues Linklater (1998: 60, 74), only by transcending the 'destructive fusion' achieved by the modern state and promoting wider communities of dialogue. The overall effect would thus be to 'de-centre' the state in the context of a more cosmopolitan form of political organization.

This requires states to establish and locate themselves in overlapping forms of international society. Linklater (1998: 166–7) lists three forms. First, a pluralist society of states in which the principles of coexistence work 'to preserve respect for the freedom and equality of independent political communities'. Second, a 'solidarist' society of states that have agreed to substantive moral purposes. Third, a post-Westphalian framework where states relinquish some of their sovereign powers so as to institutionalize shared political and moral norms. These alternative frameworks of international society would widen the boundaries of

political community by increasing the impact which duties to 'outsiders' have on decision making processes and contribute to what Linklater (1998) and Shapcott (2001) call 'dialogical cosmopolitanism'.

Linklater and Shapcott make the case for what they refer to as 'thin cosmopolitanism'. A 'thin cosmopolitanism' would need to promote universal claims yet do justice to difference (Shapcott 2000b, 2001). Within such a setup, loyalties to the sovereign state or any other political association cannot be absolute (Linklater 1998: 56; Devetak 2003). In recognizing the diversity of social bonds and moral ties, a 'thin cosmopolitan' ethos seeks to multiply the types and levels of political community. It should be noted, however, that this does not mean that duties to humanity override all others. There is no fixed 'moral hierarchy' within a 'thin cosmopolitan' framework (Linklater 1998: 161–8, 193–8). It is important to note here that this version of a 'thin cosmopolitanism' places the ideals of dialogue and consent at the centre of its project.

Another version of cosmopolitanism has been advanced, individually and collectively, by David Held and Daniele Archibugi (Archibugi and Held 1995; Archibugi 2002, 2004a). Their work stems from an appreciation of the dangers and opportunities globalization poses to democracy. It seeks to globalize democracy even as it democratizes globalization (Archibugi 2004a: 438). The thrust of *cosmopolitan* democracy is captured by the question Archibugi asks (2002: 28): 'why must the principles and rules of democracy stop at the borders of a political community?' As he explains, it is not simply a matter of 'replicating, *sic et simpliciter*, the model we are acquainted with across a broader sphere' (2002: 29). It is a matter of strengthening the rule of law and citizens' participation in political life through differentiated forms of democratic engagement. Archibugi (2004b) has gone so far as to outline cosmopolitan principles governing humanitarian intervention. This controversial proposal stems from post-Cold War developments and a growing willingness on the part of international society to suspend sovereignty when extreme, large-scale cases of human suffering occur. Though difficult practical questions remain about 'who is authorized to decide when a humanitarian intervention is needed', Archibugi (2004b) strongly rejects the idea that states can unilaterally intervene under the humanitarian cause (see also Devetak 2002).

In this final section I outline briefly how the emphasis on dialogue is utilized in critical international theory. Linklater resorts to Habermas' notion of discourse ethics as a model for his dialogical approach. Discourse ethics is essentially a deliberative, consent oriented approach to resolving political issues within a moral framework. As elaborated by Habermas (1984: 99), discourse ethics builds upon the need for communicating subjects to account for their beliefs and actions in terms

which are intelligible to others and which they can then accept or contest. It is committed to the Kantian principle that political decisions or norms must be generalizable and consistent with the normative demands of public scrutiny if they are to attain legitimacy. At such moments when an international principle, social norm, or institution loses legitimacy, or when consensus breaks down, then discourse ethics enters the fray as a means of consensually deciding upon new principles or institutional arrangements. According to discourse ethics newly arrived at political principles, norms, or institutional arrangements can be said to be valid only if they can meet with the approval of all those who would be affected by them (Habermas 1993: 151).

There are three features worthy of note for our purposes. Firstly, discourse ethics is *inclusionary*. It is oriented to the establishment and maintenance of the conditions necessary for open and non-exclusionary dialogue. No individual or group which will be affected by the principle, norm, or institution under deliberation should be excluded from participation in dialogue. Secondly, discourse ethics is *democratic*. It builds on a model of the public sphere which is bound to democratic deliberation and consent, where participants employ an 'argumentative rationality' for the purpose of 'reaching a mutual understanding based on a reasoned consensus, challenging the validity claims involved in any communication' (Risse 2000: 1–2). Combining the inclusionary and democratic impulses, discourse ethics provides a method that can test which principles, norms, or institutional arrangements would be 'equally good for all' (Habermas 1993: 151). Thirdly, discourse ethics is a form of *moral-practical reasoning*. As such, it is not simply guided by utilitarian calculations or expediency, nor is it guided by an imposed concept of the 'good life'; rather, it is guided by *procedural fairness*. It is more concerned with the method of justifying moral principles than with the substantive content of those principles.

It is possible to identify three general implications of discourse ethics for the reconstruction of world politics which can only be briefly outlined here. Firstly, by virtue of its consent oriented, deliberative approach, discourse ethics offers procedural guidance for democratic decision making processes. In light of social and material changes brought about by the globalization of production and finance, the movement of peoples, the rise of indigenous peoples and sub-national groups, environmental degradation and so on, the 'viability and accountability of national decision-making entities' is being brought into question (Held 1993: 26). Held (1993: 26–7) highlights the democratically deficient nature of the sovereign state when he asks: 'Whose consent is necessary and whose participation is justified in decisions concerning, for instance, AIDS, or acid rain, or the use of non-renewable resources?

What is the relevant constituency: national, regional or international? Under globalizing conditions it is apt that discourse ethics raises questions not only about 'who' is to be involved in decision making processes, but also 'how' and 'where' these decisions are to be made. The key here is 'to develop institutional arrangements that concretise the dialogic ideal' at all levels of social and political life (Linklater 1999). This directs attention to an emerging global or international public sphere where 'social movements, non-state actors and "global citizens" join with states and international organizations in a dialogue over the exercise of power and authority across the globe' (Devetak and Higgott 1999: 491). As Marc Lynch (1999, 2000) has shown, this network of overlapping, transnational publics not only seeks to influence the foreign policy of individual states, it seeks to change international relations by modifying the structural context of strategic interaction. The existence of a global public sphere ensures that, as Risse (2000: 21) points out, 'actors have to regularly and routinely explain and justify their behaviour'. More than that, according to Risse (2004), arguing and communicative action enable global governance institutions to attain greater legitimacy by providing 'voice opportunities to various stakeholders' and improved 'problem-solving capacity' through deliberation.

Secondly, discourse ethics offers a procedure for regulating violent conflict and arriving at resolutions which are acceptable to all affected parties. The cosmopolitan democratic procedures devised by Archibugi, Held and Linklater as much as Habermas and Kant are all geared towards removing harm from international relations as far as possible. The invasion of Iraq by the United States and United Kingdom in March 2003 led Habermas (2003: 369) to pronounce that 'multilateral will-formation in interstate relations is not simply one option among others'. By giving up its role as guarantor of international rights and violating international law and the United Nations, Habermas (2003: 365) says, 'the normative authority of the United States of America lies in ruins'. Even though the fall of a brutal regime is a great political good, Habermas condemned the war and rejected comparisons with the Kosovo war which, though controversial, he and other critical theorists had supported as a humanitarian intervention. Habermas' reasons for condemning the war are that it failed to satisfy any of the criteria of discourse ethics. Not only did the United States and United Kingdom base their arguments on questionable intelligence, they also contravened established norms of dispute resolution and showed a less than convincing commitment to 'truth-seeking' aimed at mutual understanding and reasoned consensus.

Mark Hoffman and others have argued that the practice of third-party facilitation offers a discourse-ethical approach to conflict resolution.

Third-party facilitation aims at achieving a non-hierarchical, non-coercive resolution of conflict by including both or all affected parties as participants in the dialogue (Hoffman 1992: 265). As Fierke (1998: 136–7) explains, dialogue differs from negotiation. Whereas negotiation belongs to an ‘adversarial model’ constructed around an ‘us’ versus ‘them’ mentality, dialogue can have a transformative effect on identities. The dialogue fostered by third-party facilitation involves the conflicting parties in the reversing of perspectives and encourages them to reason from the other’s point of view. As Hoffman (1993: 206) observes, third-party facilitation seeks ‘to promote a self-generated and self-sustaining resolution to the conflict’. Because the outcome must be acceptable to all concerned it is more likely to promote compliance. In plainly Habermasian language Hoffman (1992: 273) says that ‘third-party facilitation could be characterised as the promotion of consensual decision-making towards the resolution of conflict via a process of undistorted communication’. Deiniol Jones (1999, 2001), though more sceptical of this approach than Hoffman, also endorses third-party mediation in critical-theoretical terms, arguing that it should aim ‘to enhance the strength and quality of the cosmopolitan communicative ethic’.

Thirdly, discourse ethics offers a means of criticizing and justifying the principles by which humanity organizes itself politically. By reflecting on the principles of inclusion and exclusion, discourse ethics can reflect on the normative foundations of political life. From the moral point of view contained within discourse ethics, the sovereign state as a form of community is unjust because the principles of inclusion and exclusion are not the outcome of open dialogue and deliberation where all who stand to be affected by the arrangement have been able to participate in discussion. Against the exclusionary nature of the social bond underlying the sovereign state, discourse ethics has the inclusionary aim ‘to secure the social bond of all with all’ (Habermas 1987: 346). In a sense, it is an attempt to put into practice Kant’s ideal of a community of co-legislators embracing the whole of humanity (Linklater 1998: 84–9). As Linklater (1998: 10) argues, ‘all humans have a *prima facie* equal right to take part in universal communities of discourse which decide the legitimacy of global arrangements’. In sum, discourse ethics promotes a cosmopolitan ideal where the political organization of humanity is decided by a process of unconstrained and unrestricted dialogue.

Conclusion

There can be little doubt that critical international theory has made a major contribution to the study of international relations. One of these

contributions has been to heighten our awareness of the link between knowledge and politics. Critical international theory rejects the idea of the theorist as objective bystander. Instead, the theorist is enmeshed in social and political life, and theories of international relations, like all theories, are informed by prior interests and convictions, whether they are acknowledged or not. A second contribution critical international theory makes is to rethink accounts of the modern state and political community. Traditional theories tend to take the state for granted, but critical international theory analyses the changing ways in which the boundaries of community are formed, maintained and transformed. It not only provides a sociological account, it provides a sustained ethical analysis of the practices of inclusion and exclusion. Critical international theory's aim of achieving an alternative theory and practice of international relations rests on the possibility of overcoming the exclusionary dynamics associated with modern system of sovereign states and establishing a cosmopolitan set of arrangements that will better promote freedom, justice and equality across the globe. It is thus an attempt radically to rethink the normative foundations of global politics.