had an essence by performative enactment of various domestic and foreign policies, or what might more simply be called 'statecraft', with the emphasis on 'craft'. Traditionally, 'statecraft' refers to the various policies and practices undertaken by states to pursue their objectives in the international arena. The assumption underlying this definition is that the state is already a fully formed, or bounded, entity before it negotiates its way in this arena. The revised notion of statecraft advanced by postmodernism stresses the ongoing political practices which found and maintain the state, having the effect of keeping the state in perpetual motion.

As Richard Ashley (1987: 410) stressed in his path-breaking article, subjects have no existence prior to political practice. Sovereign states emerge on the plane of historical and political practices. This suggests it is better to understand the state as performatively constituted, having no identity apart from the ceaseless enactment of the ensemble of foreign and domestic policies, security and defence strategies, protocols of treaty making and representational practices at the United Nations, among other things. The state's 'being' is thus an effect of performativity. By 'performativity' we must understand the continued iteration of a norm or set of norms, not simply a singular act, which produces the very thing it names. As Weber (1998: 90) explains, 'the identity of the state is performatively constituted by the very expressions that are said to be its result'.

It is in this sense that David Campbell (1998a: ix–x), in his account of the war in Bosnia, focuses on what he calls 'metaBosnia', by which he means 'the array of practices through which Bosnia … comes to be'. To help come to terms with the ceaseless production of Bosnia as a state or subject Campbell recommends that we recognize that we are never dealing with a given, *a priori* state of Bosnia, but with metaBosnia–that is, the performative constitution of 'Bosnia' through a range of enframing and differentiating practices. 'Bosnia', like any other state, is always under a process of construction.

To summarize then, the sovereign state, as Weber (1998: 78) says, is the 'ontological effect of practices which are performatively enacted'. As she explains, 'sovereign nation-states are not pre-given subjects but subjects in process' (1998), where the phrase 'subjects in process' should also be understood to mean 'subjects on trial' (as the French '*en procès*' implies). This leads to an interpretation of the state (as subject) as always in the process of being constituted, but never quite achieving that final moment of completion (Edkins and Pin-Fat 1999: 1). The state thus should not be understood as if it were a prior presence, but instead should be seen as the simulated presence produced by the processes of statecraft. It is never fully complete but is in a constant process of

'becoming-state'. Though 'never fully realised, [the state] is in a continual process of concretization' (Doty 1999: 593). The upshot is that, for postmodernism, there is statecraft, but there is no completed state (Devetak 1995a).

Lest it be thought that that postmodern theories of international relations mark a return to realist state-centrism, some clarification will be needed to explain its concern with the sovereign state. Postmodernism does not seek to explain world politics by focusing on the state alone, nor does it take the state as given. Instead, as Ashley's double reading of the anarchy problematique testifies, it seeks to explain the conditions which make possible such an explanation and the costs consequent on such an approach. What is lost by taking a state-centric perspective? And most importantly, to what aspects of world politics does state-centrism remain blind?

Beyond the paradigm of sovereignty: rethinking the political

One of the central implications of postmodernism is that the paradigm of sovereignty has impoverished our political imagination and restricted our comprehension of the dynamics of world politics. In this section, we review postmodern attempts to develop a new conceptual language to represent world politics beyond the terms of state-centrism in order to rethink the concept of the political.

Campbell (1996: 19) asks the question: 'can we represent world politics in a manner less indebted to the sovereignty problematic?' The challenge is to create a conceptual language that can better convey the novel processes and actors in modern (or postmodern) world politics. Campbell (1996: 20) recommends 'thinking in terms of a *political prosaics* that understands the *transversal* nature' of world politics. To conceptualize world politics in terms of 'political prosaics' is to draw attention to the multitude of flows and interactions produced by globalization that cut across nation-state boundaries. It is to focus on the many political, economic and cultural activities that produce a 'deterritorialization' of modern political life; activities that destabilize the paradigm of sovereignty.

The argument here draws heavily upon the philosophical work of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari (1977, 1987). They have developed a novel conceptual language which has been deployed by postmodern theorists of international relations to make sense of the operation and impact of various non-state actors, flows and movements on the political institution of state sovereignty. The central terms here are

reterritorialization and deterritorialization (see Patton 2000; Reid 2003). The former is associated with the totalizing logic of the paradigm of sovereignty, or 'State-form' as Deleuze and Guattari say, whose function is defined by processes of capture and boundary-marking. The latter, deterritorialization, is associated with the highly mobile logic of nomadism whose function is defined by its ability to transgress boundaries and avoid capture by the State-form. The one finds expression in the desire for identity, order and unity, the other in the desire for difference, flows and lines of flight.

The 'political prosaics' advocated by Campbell and others utilize this Deleuzian language to shed light on the new political dynamics and demands created by refugees, immigrants, and new social movements as they encounter and outflank the State-form. These 'transversal' groups and movements not only transgress national boundaries, they call into question the territorial organization of modern political life. As Roland Bleiker (2000: 2) notes, they 'question the spatial logic through which these boundaries have come to constitute and frame the conduct of international relations'. In his study of popular dissent in international relations, Bleiker argues that globalization is subjecting social life to changing political dynamics. In an age of mass media and telecommunications, images of local acts of resistance can be flashed across the world in an instant, turning them into events of global significance. Globalization, Bleixer suggests, has transformed the nature of dissent, making possible global and transversal practices of popular dissent (2000: 31). No longer taking place in a purely local context, acts of resistance 'have taken on increasingly transversal dimensions. They ooze into often unrecognised, but nevertheless significant grey zones between domestic and international spheres', blurring the boundaries between inside and outside, local and global (2000: 185). By outflanking sovereign controls and crossing state boundaries, the actions of transversal dissident groups can be read as 'hidden transcripts' that occur 'off-stage', as it were, behind and alongside the 'public transcript' of the sovereign state. The 'hidden transcripts' of transversal movements are therefore deterritorializing in their function, escaping the spatial codes and practices of the dominant actors and making possible a critique of the sovereign state's modes of reterritorialization and exclusion (2000: Chapter 7).

This is also the case with refugees and migrants. They hold a different relationship to space than citizens. Being nomadic rather than sedentary, they are defined by movement across and between political spaces. They problematize and defy the 'territorial imperative' of the sovereign state (Soguk and Whitehall 1999: 682). Indeed, their wandering movement dislocates the ontopological norm which seeks to fix people's identities within the spatial boundaries of the nation-state (1999: 697).

As a consequence they disrupt our state-centric conceptualizations, problematizing received understandings of the character and location of the political.

Similar arguments are advanced by Peter Nyers and Mick Dillon regarding the figure of the refugee. As Nyers (1999) argues, the figure of the refugee, as one who cannot claim to be a member of a 'proper' political community, acts as a 'limit-concept', occupying the ambiguous zone between citizen and human. Dillon (1999) argues that the refugee/stranger remains outside conventional modes of political subjectivity which are tied to the sovereign state. The very existence of the refugee/stranger calls into question the settled, sovereign life of the political community by disclosing the estrangement that is shared by both citizens and refugees. As Soguk and Whitehall (1999: 675) point out, refugees and migrants, by moving across state boundaries and avoiding capture, have the effect of rupturing traditional constitutive narratives of international relations.

Sovereignty and the ethics of exclusion

Postmodernism's ethical critique of state sovereignty needs to be understood in relation to the deconstructive critique of totalization and the deterritorializing effect of transversal struggles. Deconstruction has already been explained as a strategy of interpretation and criticism that targets theoretical concepts and social institutions which attempt totalization or total stability. It is important to note that the postmodern critique of state sovereignty focuses on *sovereignty*.

The sovereign state may well be the dominant mode of subjectivity in international relations today, but it is questionable whether its claim to be the primary and exclusive political subject is justified. The most thoroughgoing account of state sovereignty's ethico-political costs is offered by Rob Walker in *Inside/Outside* (1993). Walker sets out there the context in which state sovereignty has been mobilized as an analytical category with which to understand international relations, and as the primary expression of moral and political community. Walker's critique suggests that state sovereignty is best understood as a constitutive political practice which emerged historically to resolve three ontological contradictions. The relationship between time and space was resolved by containing time within domesticated territorial space. The relationship between universal and particular was resolved through the system of sovereign states which gave expression to the plurality and particularity of states on the one hand, and the universality of one system on the other. This resolution also allowed for the pursuit of universal values to be pursued within particular states. Finally, the relationship between self

and other is also resolved in terms of 'insiders' and 'outsiders', friends
and enemies (Walker 1995a: 320–1, 1995b: 28). In deconstructive fashion,
Walker's (1993: 23) concern is to 'destabilise [these] seemingly opposed
categories by showing how they are at once mutually constitutive and
yet always in the process of dissolving into each other'. The overall effect
of Walker's inquiry into state sovereignty, consistent with the 'political
prosaics' outlined above, is to question whether it is any longer a useful
descriptive category and an effective response to the problems that
confront humanity in modern political life.

The analysis offered by Walker suggests that it is becoming increasingly
difficult to organize modern political life in terms of sovereign states
and sovereign boundaries. He argues that there are 'spatiotemporal
processes that are radically at odds with the resolution expressed by the
principle of state sovereignty' (1993: 155). For both material and nor-
mative reasons, Walker refuses to accept state sovereignty as the only, or
best, possible means of organizing modern political life. Modern politi-
cal life need not be caught between mutually exclusive and exhaustive
oppositions such as inside and outside. Identity need not be exclusion-
ary, difference need not be interpreted as antithetical to identity (1993:
123), and the trade-off between men and citizens built into the modern
state need not always privilege claims of citizens above claims of humanity
(Walker 2000: 231–2).

To rethink questions of political identity and community without
succumbing to binary oppositions is to contemplate a political life beyond
the paradigm of sovereign states. It is to take seriously the possibility
that new forms of political identity and community can emerge which
are not predicated on absolute exclusion and spatial distinctions between
here and there, self and other (Walker 1995a: 307).

Connolly delivers a postmodern critique which brings the question of
democracy to bear directly on sovereignty. His argument is that the
notion of state sovereignty is incompatible with democracy, especially in
a globalized late modernity. The point of his critique is to challenge the
sovereign state's 'monopoly over the allegiances, identifications and
energies of its members' (Connolly 1991: 479). The multiple modes of
belonging and interdependence, and the multiplication of global risks
that exist in late modernity, complicate the neat simplicity of binary divi-
sions between inside and outside. His point is that obligations and duties
constantly overrun the boundaries of sovereign states. Sovereignty,
Connolly says, 'poses too stringent a limitation to identifications and
loyalties extending beyond it', and so it is necessary to promote an ethos
of democracy which exceeds territorialization by cutting across the state
at all levels (1991: 480). He calls this a 'disaggregation of democracy',
or what might better be called a 'deterritorialization of democracy'.

'What is needed politically', he says, 'is a series of cross-national, nonstatist movements organized across state lines, mobilized around specific issues of global significance, pressing states from inside and outside simultaneously to reconfigure established convictions, priorities, and policies' (Connolly 1995: 23).

A similar argument is advanced by Campbell. According to Campbell (1998a: 208), the norm of ontopology produces a 'moral cartography' that territorializes democracy and responsibility, confining it to the limits of the sovereign state. But Campbell, like Connolly, is interested in fostering an ethos of democratic pluralization that would promote tolerance and multiculturalism within and across state boundaries. By promoting an active affirmation of alterity it would resist the sovereign state's logics of territorialization and capture.

Postmodern ethics

Postmodernism asks, what might ethics come to mean outside a paradigm of sovereign subjectivity? There are two strands of ethics which develop out of postmodernism's reflections on international relations. One strand challenges the ontological description on which traditional ethical arguments are grounded. It advances a notion of ethics which is not predicated on a rigid, fixed boundary between inside and outside. The other strand focuses on the relation between ontological grounds and ethical arguments. It questions whether ontology must precede ethics.

The first strand is put forward most fully by Ashley and Walker (1990) and Connolly (1995). Fundamental to their writing is a critique of the faith invested in boundaries. Again, the main target of postmodernism here is the sovereign state's defence of rigid boundaries. Territorial boundaries, which are thought to mark the limits of political identity or community, are taken by postmodernism to be historically contingent and highly ambiguous products (Ashley and Walker 1990). As such, they hold no transcendental status. As a challenge to the ethical delimitations imposed by state sovereignty, postmodern ethics, or the 'diplomatic ethos', as Ashley and Walker call it, is not confined by any spatial or territorial limits. It seeks to 'enable the rigorous practice of this ethics in the widest possible compass' (1990: 395). No demarcatory boundaries should obstruct the universalization of this ethic which flows across boundaries (both imagined and territorial):

> Where such an ethics is rigorously practised, no voice can effectively claim to stand heroically upon some exclusionary ground, offering this ground as a source of a necessary truth that human beings must violently project in the name of a citizenry, people, nation, class, gender, race,

golden age, or historical cause of any sort. Where this ethics is rigorously practised, no totalitarian order could ever be. (1990: 395)

In breaking with the ethics of sovereign exclusion, postmodernism offers an understanding of ethics which is detached from territorial limitations. The diplomatic ethos is a 'deterritorialized' ethics which unfolds by transgressing sovereign limits. This transgressive ethics complements the deterritorialized notion of democracy advanced by Connolly. Underlying both ideas is a critique of state sovereignty as a basis for conducting, organizing and limiting political life.

The other ethical strand is advanced by Campbell. He follows Derrida and Levinas by questioning traditional approaches which deduce ethics from ontology, specifically an ontology or metaphysics of presence (Campbell 1998a: 171–92; and see Levinas 1969: Section 1A). It does not begin with an empirical account of the world as a necessary prelude to ethical consideration. Rather, it gives primacy to ethics as, in a sense, 'first philosophy'. The key thinker in this ethical approach is Emmanuel Levinas who has been more influenced by Jewish theology than Greek philosophy. Indeed, the differences between these two styles of thought are constantly worked through in Levinas' thought as a difference between a philosophy of alterity and a philosophy of identity or totality.

Levinas overturns the hierarchy between ontology and ethics, giving primacy to ethics as the starting point. Ethics seems to function as a condition which makes possible the world of beings. Levinas offers a redescription of ontology such that it is inextricably tied up with, and indebted to, ethics, and is free of totalizing impulses. His thought is antagonistic to all forms of ontological and political imperialism or totalitarianism (Levinas 1969: 44; Campbell 1998a: 192). In Levinas' schema, subjectivity is constituted through, and as, an ethical relation. The effect of the Levinasian approach is to recast notions of subjectivity and responsibility in light of an ethics of otherness or alterity. 'Ethics redefines subjectivity as … heteronomous responsibility' (Levinas, quoted in Campbell 1994: 463, 1998a: 176).

This gives rise to a notion of ethics which diverges from the Kantian principle of generalizability and symmetry that we find in critical theory. Rather than begin with the Self and then generalize the imperative universally to a community of equals, Levinas begins with the Other. The Other places certain demands on the Self, hence there is an asymmetrical relationship between Self and Other. The end result is to advance a 'different figuration of politics, one in which its purpose is the struggle *for* – or *on behalf of* – alterity, and not a struggle to efface, erase, or eradicate alterity' (Campbell 1994: 477, 1998a: 191). But as Michael Shapiro (1998b: 698–9) has shown, this ethos may not be so different

from a Kantian ethic of hospitality that encourages universal tolerance of difference as a means of diminishing global violence.

The consequence of taking postmodernism's critique of totality and sovereignty seriously is that central political concepts such as community, identity, ethics and democracy are rethought to avoid being persistently reterritorialized by the sovereign state. Indeed, de-linking these concepts from territory and sovereignty underlies the practical task of a postmodern politics or ethics. As Anthony Burke (2004: 353) explains in a forceful critique of Just War theory after September 11, postmodernism's conception of an 'ethical peace' would refuse 'to channel its ethical obligations solely through the state, or rely on it to protect us violently'. It should be noted, however, that postmodernism, as a critique of totalization, opposes concepts of identity and community only to the extent that they are tied dogmatically to notions of territoriality, boundedness and exclusion. The thrust of postmodernism has always been to challenge both epistemological and political claims to totality and sovereignty and thereby open up questions about the location and character of the political.

Conclusion

Postmodernism makes several contributions to the study of international relations. First, through its genealogical method it seeks to expose the intimate connection between claims to knowledge and claims to political power and authority. Secondly, through the textual strategy of deconstruction it seeks to problematize all claims to epistemological and political totalization. This holds especially significant implications for the sovereign state. Most notably, it means that the sovereign state, as the primary mode of subjectivity in international relations, must be examined closely to expose its practices of capture and exclusion. Moreover, a more comprehensive account of contemporary world politics must also include an analysis of those transversal actors and movements that operate outside and across state boundaries. Thirdly, postmodernism seeks to rethink the concept of the political without invoking assumptions of sovereignty and reterritorialization. By challenging the idea that the character and location of the political must be determined by the sovereign state, postmodernism seeks to broaden the political imagination and the range of political possibilities for transforming international relations. These contributions seems more important than ever after the events of September 11.