The London School of Economics and Political Science

Searching For a World Polity

The World After International Anarchy Question

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Declaration:

I certify that the thesis I have presented for examination for the MPhil/PhD degree of the London School of Economics and Political Science is solely my own work other than where I have clearly indicated that it is the work of others (in which case the extent of any work carried out jointly by me and any other person is clearly identified).

I declare that my thesis consists of 95,929 words.

Abstract:

Why is there no post-Westphalian world polity today, despite the globalism of recent decades? Is the construction of a world polity an impossible utopia? If it is possible, under what conditions, by what processes, and in what necessary social form? Available visions of a world polity form a debate and world polity formation theories offer limited explanations. In response, this study argues the emergence of a world polity is possible, but is an unlikely and fragile outcome in a late modern context. Two contributions are made to support this argument. First, a new world polity formation theory is developed that explains how systems of polities become single polities. A second contribution advances an account of the historically specific trans-civilizational and planetary social form a world polity must necessarily attain if it were to be practically constructed in a late modern context.

Keywords: World Polity, World Order, Modernity, Globalization, Cosmopolitanism.

Prefatory Acknowledgements:

The idea for this thesis came to mind when visiting Trinity College and the Munk School of Global Affairs at the University of Toronto, whilst writing up my Master's thesis for my programme at Aberystwyth University. I had long felt the intuition that the international system (international society, if you like) is a broken and inadequate political system. The idea I had in response was unoriginal. The idea was about realizing a world polity, one united beyond hegemony and anarchy, one realizing a system designed to meet the needs and interests of all the groups and peoples of humankind, not just its great and powerful nations. What does that mean? Why has it not already happened? To what extent would it make the world a better place? I was confused about the answers. I was also confused about the intellectual resources needed to get to an answer, although I knew what texts were relevant when I saw them and I had a sense of the literatures that were pertinent: World History, International Law, Sociology, theoretical Anthropology, Political Philosophy, International Political Economy, and International Relations. I was confused about how they fit together and why they were relevant.

The writings of R.J. Vincent were pointing in the correct direction, I felt, starting in his early essay, 'Western Conceptions of a Universal Moral Order', and more clearly in his work on human rights, especially his posthumously published essay, 'Modernity and Universal Human Rights'. The connection between modernity and the issues of the world beyond the states system, I believe, helps us understand the nature of the problem as well as the paths out of it. If Vincent had continued to develop this theme, I believe my PhD thesis would be superfluous, its questions being already answered. Vincent's PhD supervisor, Hedley Bull, was pushing in a different direction, defending the society of states, although conceding the need for a new cosmopolitan political culture more accommodating of non-Western cultures. If Bull had also not passed away early, there would have likely been an important discussion, perhaps a debate, between him and Vincent on the idea and possibility of a world society in a modern and increasingly post-Western world. When looking into the topic, I found Barry Buzan had attempted to clear up this substantial "gap", but I also found that his contribution, *From International to World Society?* was more of a first step, putting the topic back on the agenda, but not entirely pointing the way, at least not pointing in the direction I felt the topic needs to be taken, or in the direction which Vincent would likely have taken it.

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DETAILED CONTENTS

'Discussion of a global polity is very speculative. Whether it will become a reality, with each one of us its citizens, is something that we may know only when we have achieved it. If that happens, then the era of international relations will be described in the history books as having intervened between the decline of empires and the formation of the planetary *polis*.'

-R.J. Vincent,

'Modernity and Universal Human Rights', in Anthony G. McGrew and Paul G. Lewis (eds.)

Global Politics: Globalization and the Nation State (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992) p. 289.

Introduction.

Beyond Babel? World Disorder, World Polity

0.1 Ancient Questions, Modern World

This thesis searches for the image of a realizable world polity. What social form must a world polity necessarily attain if it were to emerge in practice? What are its conditions and contributing processes? This search comes from the intuition that the organization of humankind into many independent polities is detrimental to humankind, perhaps even that it is wrong, morally speaking. Cosmopolitans, ancient and modern, have not felt "at home in the world", as "citizens of the world", without first feeling that the world is in disarray, that the world of separate loyalties and governments is not the world humankind needs or deserves. Zeno of Citium did not envision his world *Republic* with a universal law before he had the sense that many laws were misleading many lives. Nor did Confucius imagine his universal order, or Dante his world monarchy, or Kant and Marx their universalist futures, until they first felt the wars and injustices around them were wrought by the divisions of humankind, be it in the warring states period of ancient China, the instabilities of Medieval Italy, or the warring and imperial nation-states of modern Europe. Today, this sense of cosmopolitan estrangement from the world is not an uncommon feeling, the more engrossed the ills of human division have become in an age of planetary scales.

In recent years, cosmopolitans were, for a time, somewhat hopeful that a more united world was attainable. Many saw globalization as the impetus of a post-Westphalian world, where the "global village" was busy constructing the "global anthill" of the world polity.[1] In 2006, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan insisted before the UN General Assembly that 'human beings throughout the world form a single society,' as he used the globalist vision to underwrite his

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[1] J.G. Ruggie *Constructing the World Polity: Essays on International Institutionalisation* (London: Routledge, 1998); David Held and Anthony McGrew, 'The End of the Old Order? Globalization and the Prospects of World Order', *Review of International Studies,* 24:5 (1998), pp. 219-245; Martin Shaw, 'Global Society and Global Responsibility: The Theoretical, Historical and Political Limits of 'International Society' in Rick Fawn and Jeremy Larkins (eds.), *International Society After the Cold War: Anarchy and Order Reconsidered* (London: MacMillan, 1996), pp.47-62.

peace and development agenda.[2] As late as 2013, Managing Director of the IMF Christine Lagarde asserted to the World Economic Forum that, 'this generation is a global generation and an open generation. Open to the world, and to the idea of a common global community.'[3] Yet, today, this vision is proving chimerical.[4] The genuine steps made towards a world polity have been a halfway effort at best.[5] They are proving largely inconsequential for the persistent power political ills of a world ordered into multiple but disproportionate and ultimately rival states. The modern world order of multiple nation-states has constructed a world where the great powers mutually undermine one another's security and stability, whilst practicing imperialistic policies towards the small powers. Expansions of international law have had raised no effective restraints on the great powers. In this divided world order, the UN Global Goals for Sustainable Development and deepening ecological crisis have roused minimal and uncoordinated action by the international community. War spreads and arms sales soar. Neo-imperial wars and inequities persist. Geopolitical power balancing carries on and vast thermonuclear arsenals have been refit with updated systems. Amidst this world order malaise, the disillusioned idealist Richard Falk has been brought to ask, 'Does the human species wish to survive?'[6] So alienated have cosmopolitans become today.

In this study, I advance the argument that a world polity beyond hegemony and anarchy is not impossible, but that it is highly unlikely, and that it must necessarily attain a trans-civilizational and ecological character to be realizable in the context of a late modern age. The Kantian vision of a pacific federation of republics and the Marxist-Leninist vision of universal revolution are equally unrealizable in so far as they do not incorporate a trans-civilizational and ecological character. They could not be realized in practice, in any durable and practical way, under any circumstances, if they did not come to embrace these features. Even if, in an alternative history, the revolutions of 1848 triumphed and took-up the idea of a world republic, or even if the Leninist export of revolution had accomplished a universal revolution, these

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[2] Kofi Annan, 'Address to the General Assembly', New York (19 Sept., 2006); Kofi Annan *We the Peoples: A UN for the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Paradigm, 2014).
[3] Christine Lagarde, 'A New Global Economy for a New Generation', (International Monetary Fund, 2013), https://www.imf.org/external/np/speeches/2013/012313.htm.
[4] Jennifer Welsh *The Return of History: Conflict, Migration, and Geopolitics in the Twenty-First Century* (Toronto: Anansi Press, 2016).
[5] Chris Brown *International Society, Global Polity: An Introduction to International Political Theory* (London: Sage, 2015), p. 1-11.
[6] Richard Falk *Power Shift: On the New Global Order* (London: Zed, 2016), p. 253.

hypothetically successful world revolutions would have still struggled to achieve a world polity if they failed to imagine and realize it in a trans-civilizational form, and, eventually, with an ecological dimension as well. If a world polity were to be practically realized, in a durable and sustainable sense, it would necessarily attain a trans-civilizational and ecological character, however it was imagined, and however much material and economic power it wielded. The world polity is unlikely not simply because thermonuclear deterrents and modern guerrilla warfare have virtually ruled out world conquest, or because revolution is virtually always met by counter-revolution. A world polity is unlikely chiefly because we moderns struggle to imagine the meaningful and practical bases of a world unity in a modern age. In this context, all humankind demands their own freedoms and equalities, to pursue their own modern and culturally diverse ways of life, independently, regardless of their interdependence. Even if a world empire brought the world under a final leviathan, it would suffer multiple simultaneous rebellions and likely career into world civil war and collapse if it did not embrace a trans-civilizational and ecological vision. The conditions of a world polity are not only the establishment of the hierarchical political apparatus of a united world order, but also their legitimation through a new trans-civilizational and ecological cosmopolitan culture and collective identity.

This need for a new trans-civilizational and ecological form of legitimation and collective identity is largely due to the modern political disposition of humankind, which, in modern times, has formed a global international system of multiple national polities.[7] In modern times, trying to construct a world polity is like building a pyramid out of billiard balls or marbles. Everything wants to roll away. The cosmologically central and unshakeable empires of antiquity and the middle ages, the Egyptian and Babylonian, Roman and Byzantine, Persian and Chinese, the Holy Roman Empire and the Caliphates, these universalist empires that cohered and ordered the polities of humankind for most of recorded history have lost their cosmological sources of legitimacy in a modern age and their practicality is sapped in an age of modern revolutions, where everyone demands independent rights and freedoms. Modern secular liberal cosmopolitans, who never persuasively claim a monopoly on the word cosmopolitan, are no less de-legitimated and limited in the context of multiple universalisms and modern post-colonial

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[7] Tim Dunne and Christian Reus-Smit *The Globalization of International Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

polities that have been galvanized towards nationalism and independence. The dissolution of the modern European empires was inevitable in the upheavals of modern demands for rights and freedoms.[8] Building a world polity out of the modern world encounters the forces of what Ralf Dahrendorf once called, "globoskepticism", the forces in world affairs that issue from the modern moral purposes of freedom and independence that the modern nation-state has been built to achieve.[9] It is not human nature, but the deep historical structure of the modern states system, its underlying modern ambitions, that prevent a world polity. As Raymond Aron suggested about a world state,

> A world state is not in contradiction with the biological or social nature of man, as it has been revealed across the centuries. If Rome was able to spread out to the British Isles and to Byzantium at time when legions traveled by foot, modern techniques for movement on land, on sea, and in air make a planetary empire materially possible. What excludes such an empire and for the foreseeable future of the next decades are the historic actors.[10]

The world polity is unlikely in a large measure because its meaningful and feasible image is difficult to imagine in a modern context, where everyone demands and defends modern freedoms and independence, imagining themselves as distinct and discreet societies and nations.

Yet, a difficult and unlikely outcome does not quite amount to an impossible outcome. The answer follows Marx's insight that human beings, 'make their own history, but they do not make it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly encountered, given and transmitted from the past.'[11] The question is how can all the polities of the world be brought together, into a larger world polity, under the conditions of modernity? Because of the global demand for modern freedoms, the global demand

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[8] Christian Reus-Smit *Individual Rights and the Making of the International System* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

[9] Quoted in, Luis Cabrera, 'Global Government and the Sources of Globoscepticism', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies,* 43:2 (2015), pp. 471-491; Christian Reus-Smit *The Moral Purpose of the State: Culture, Social Identity, and Institutional Rationality in International Relations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999).

[10] Raymond Aron, 'The Anarchical Order of Power', *Daedalus,* 95:2 (1966), p. 484.

[11] Karl Marx, 'The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte', in *Karl Marx and Frederick Engels: Selected Works in Two Volumes* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Press, 1950), Vol. I, p. 225.

to be modernly civilized in multiple cultural forms, a world polity must necessarily attain a trans-civilizational character that can cohere the multiple modern ways of life that these freedoms are demanded for. But, a world polity must also attain an ecological character if it is to be practically realizable in a sustainable sense. If the world polity were not realized with a trans-civilizational character, it would not get off the ground, because it would face too many detractors who would find it unacceptable to their modern self-conceptions and ambitions as distinctly modern civilizations, with distinct, meaningful, and embodied cultural forms of being modernly civilized in the plurality of modern civilizations. But, if the world polity were not also realized with an ecological component on a planetary level, then it would become overwhelmed by the practical consequences of uncontrolled climate change.

Why must a world polity be "civilizational"? In a modern context, civilization, in its modern usage as the idea of the mastery of technological power and "civilized" practices and worldviews, is imagined as the achievement of modernity. As such, it became the source of legitimacy in the modern discourse of world order, as the language for the modern standards and hallmarks of human excellence and exemplariness.[12] While late modern civilization is global, it is also plural, not universal.[13] The concept of civilization historically used to legitimize European empire in the modern era, has been appropriated by post-colonial peoples, in their 'systematic defense of the non-European civilizations.'[14] Samuel P. Huntington's thesis of an impending "clash of civilizations" has been much critiqued, but it contained the insight that in a modern world, everyone wants 'to modernize but not to Westernize.'[15] Because "civilization" was the historical criterion of legitimacy in the modern discourse of world order, and so became a systematically appropriated concept by post-colonial peoples, legitimate standing as a world power is connected in contemporary late modern times not only to global democratic, human rights, and market standards of modernity, but also to civilizational distinctiveness and integrity, distinct ways of being modernly "civilized", Japanese, Chinese, Indian, Russian, Iranian, and so on.[16] In late modern times, for there to be a world polity to support a unified world order, a

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[12] Gerrit W. Gong *The Standards of Civilization in International Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984).
[13] Peter J. Katzenstein *Civilizations in World Politics: Plural and Pluralist Perspectives* (London: Routledge, 2009).
[14] Aimé Cesairé *Discourse on Colonialism* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2000), p. 7.
[15] Samuel P. Huntington, 'The Clash of Civilizations?', *Foreign Affairs,* 72:3 (1993), p. 41.
[16] David P. Fidler, 'The Return of the Standard of Civilization', *Chicago Journal of International Law,* 2:1 (2001), pp. 137-157; Dimitrios Stroikos, 'Introduction: Rethinking the Standard(s) of Civilization(s) in International Relations', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies,* 42:3 (2014), pp. 546-556; Fred Dallmayr, M. Akif

"higher" trans-civilizational narrative is needed to legitimize it as a shared project for all humankind and all its civilizations.

A trans-civilizational eco-planetary polity is a complicated vision and its realization in practice is not out of the realm of possibility, although it is highly unlikely. This argument forms my two contributions in this thesis: first, the development of a new world polity formation theory that explains how systems of polities become single polities, and second, the clarification of why a world polity does not exist today, the conditions for its realization, and that it must attain a trans-civilizational but planetary form to be practically realized in a modern context. The vision of a trans-civilizational but ecological world polity is not so singular and simple a vision as one might wish. But that is what it must be, if it were to be realized in a modern context, in any practical sense. Not only are universalisms and singular definitions of civilization treated with suspicion today, there are also multiple universalisms and multiple cosmologies, all mixing and colliding in a globalizing social environment where everyone is demanding their own modern freedoms in innumerable cultural forms.[17] In a late modern and post-colonial age vast numbers of peoples and cultures have been mobilized and marshaled to defend their independence and distinct identities against universal ideas and hierarchies.[18] Yet, humankind is nonetheless entangled in a globalizing modernity and still faces the practical collective challenges of interdependence in a global context, be it nuclear, biological, and cyber arms control, globalized terrorism, planetary ecological crisis, or sustainable and equitable development in a fragile global economy. In a late modern era, where everyone demands their identity based freedoms and independence, but is nonetheless interrelated in global systems, how can this contradiction be addressed? There is an old passage from Clifford Geertz that still expresses a good deal of the troubles facing our late modern world. He said the 'primary question',

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Kayapinar, and Ismail Yaylaci (eds.) *Civilizations and World Order: Geopolitics and Cultural Difference* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2014).

[17] William E. Connolly, 'Speed, Concentric Cultures, and Cosmopolitanism', *Political Theory,* 28:5 (2000), pp. 596-618.

[18] Franz Fanon *The Wretched of the Earth* (London: Penguin, 2001); Charles Taylor, 'Religious Mobilizations' in *Dilemmas and Connections: Selected Essays* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011), pp. 146-164; Isaiah Berlin, 'The Bent Twig: A Note on Nationalism', *Foreign Affairs,* 51:1 (1972), pp. 11-30; Hedley Bull, 'The Revolt Against the West', in Hedley Bull and Adam Watson (eds.), *The Expansion of International Society* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), pp. 217-228; Rahul Rao *Third World Protest: Between Home and the World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

now that nobody is leaving anybody else alone and isn't ever again going to, is not whether everything is going to come seamlessly together or whether, contrariwise, we are all going to persist sequestered in our separate prejudices. *It is whether human beings are going to continue to be able … to imagine principled lives they can practically lead*.[19]

Imagining the trans-civilizational eco-planetary polity is a vision of a more practically livable world, one that imagines a better modernity than our troubled late modern times. On the world polity, I am an "idealist", in so far as I believe a world polity is possible and can represent a potentially better world. But, I am also a pessimist about the possibility of a world polity in a modern setting, where it is difficult to imagine a world polity that has meaningful and practical congruence with modern beliefs and ideals. There is more appetite for division and disaster than unity and stability in the modern world. Yet, that does not mean the image of a possible world polity should not be clarified. The slim likelihood of a world polity makes clarifying its possible image more important. After all, it is the difficulty of imagining a meaningful and workable world polity in a modern age that is one of the reasons why it eludes humankind.

0.2 Paradoxes

How are we to understand these questions I am raising? To begin to come to grips with these questions about a realizable world polity, we need to appreciate how the idea is steeped in paradox today. How can the ancient idea of a universal community, a *cosmopolis*, that predates the modern world, be its future? Why are visions of a world polity championed by imperialists and revolutionaries alike? Why is the positively utopian and emancipatory idea of human unity so suspicious and politically dubious? If the idea means to embrace all humankind, why does it need all humankind to embrace it? The paradoxes surrounding this idea of a world polity suggest there is something amiss in theory, as well as in practice. For instance, Richard Falk argues humankind needs to reimagine its 'horizons of desire' from those of the nation-state to those all

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[19] Clifford Geertz, 'Local Knowledge: Fact and Law in Comparative Perspective' in *Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretive Anthropology* (New York: Basic Booksp, 1983), p. 234, emphasis added.

humankind.[20] But, this begs the question, what are such horizons and how can they be practically realized? Rival traditions of thought offer distinct world polity visions. Yet, be they Kantian or Marxist, techno-scientific, anarchistic, or ecological, the vision of a united humankind oscillates in our contemporary discourse between utopia, dystopia, and retrotopia, future and past, real or invented, always as an anachronism to the present, always succumbing to paradox. Either the vision exists in future, and in an unobtainable way, or, if attainable, in a nightmarish way. Or, it occupies the past, but always in an irretrievable way, like the unity of Christendom, disrupted in the Reformation, beyond the realm of possibility in a modern secularized world.

To understand these paradoxes surrounding the question of the world polity, I am suggesting that we need to appreciate the importance of modernity, how it has shaped visions of a world polity and effectively drowned them in paradox, forcing them into realms of utopia, dystopia, and retrotopia. I am emphasizing modernity, because it is this that is the immediate explanation for why the world polity does not exist, despite the not so long ago predictions to the contrary. By modernity, I mean the cultural transformation of worldviews and practices, transformations of basic beliefs, ideals and principal ordering practices, coupled with the use of new technologies according to those new beliefs, ideals, and practices, together creating cultural contrasts between medieval and modern worlds, in Europe, China, Japan, India, and so on.[21] As such, to place an emphasis on modernity, this study makes instrumental use of the rise of modern social imaginaries approaches, particularly Charles Taylor's *Modern Social Imaginaries* and *A Secular Age*, as well as the social theory underlying them, that I find quite helpful. To understand the world polity questions I am raising in this study is to grasp how they arise against the "background" of modernity and modern social imaginaries. I am using "social imaginary" in its social-scientific sense in this study, not as a fashionable trifling term. Following the sociological usage of social imaginary by Taylor, I use the concept to mean the shared and common but deep-seated taken-for-granted "background" conceptions of what a social world involves, the most basic pictures and expectations people have about what sorts of things make up social institutions, what it means to have a "society", "nation", "law", "order", "justice", etc.[22] Amongst these modern pictures, is the modern international imaginary, the basic picture of

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[20] Falk *Power Shift*, p. 101.
[21] Charles Taylor, 'Two Theories of Modernity', in Dilip Parameshwar Gaonkar (ed.) *Alternative Modernities* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001), pp. 172-196.
[22] Charles Taylor *Modern Social Imaginaries* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004).

political life as composed of multiple nations and nation-states potentially collaborating in an "international society".[23] The modern international imaginary is in significant respects a secular phenomenon, separating sovereignty from religion and the transcendent, connecting it to the immanent order of the people. These shifts are traceable to the ideas of Grotius and events of the Peace of Westphalia. Grotius and Westphalia are not the seminal or singular births of international modernity, but early expressions, local precursors we might say, cultural weather veins pointing to the global realization of modernity in the revolutions and upheavals of the 19th Century.[24] The modern secular age is not universal or uniform but it has been ascendant, shaping both the powers of the liberal West and communist East. This cultural shift displaced the idea of a universal divinely mandated order, forcing it into the past, whilst also enabling variety of secular cosmopolitan visions, of the sort that were imagined to emerge in the future.[25] Modern secular visions of a world polity, Kantian inspired, Marxist-Leninist, or otherwise, are imagined as being realized in future profane time, humanly created, as modern forms of social order. In this context, the modernity of the world polity questions I am raising should not be mystified in paradox, but instead appreciated as both enabled and constrained by modern worldviews.

For instance, a significant aspect of modernity is a modern conception of what a political community is, what counts as one. The primacy of the nation and nation-state as the prevailing image of the political community in the modern imagination makes the idea of a world polity difficult to imagine in a meaningful and practical way. Why, for instance, is the world polity imagined as potentially being built "above" the nations, rather than the nations being built "on top" of it? The image of humankind as many national polities is naturalized in the modern imagination. Jens Bartelson's *Visions of World Community* has made the important insight that the modern conception of the bounded national community came out of the historical rubble of the medieval and ancient conception of the boundless universal community. He has shown how the national community could not be conceived without the prior conception of the universal

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[23] A.C. McKeil, 'The Modern 'International' Imaginary: Enriching the Picture and Sketching Horizons', *Social Imaginaries,* forthcoming, 2018.

[24] Barry Buzan and George Lawson *The Global Transformation: History, Modernity and the Making of International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015); David Armitage *Foundations of Modern International Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

[25] Craig Calhoun 'Cosmopolitanism in the Modern Social Imaginary', *Deadalus,* 137:3 (2008), pp. 105-114; R.J. Vincent, 'Western Conceptions of a Universal Moral Order' *British Journal of International Studies,* 4 (1978), pp. 20-46; R.J. Vincent, 'Modernity and Universal Human Rights', in A. McGrew and P. Lewis (eds.) *Global Politics: Globalization and the Nation State* (Cambridge: Polity, 1993), pp. 293-311.

community.[26] The aim of Bartelson's genealogy of the world community is to denaturalize the national community, to make the world community imaginable again, to get beyond thinking of the world polity as needing to be bounded and built "above" the "bases" of nations and nation-states that are imagined as real, even primordial. The importance of his work is how it shows that the diachronic emergence of a world polity today would be built out of what preceded it, out of the context of modernity. It would not be a return to the retrotopia of a divinely ordained universal order, nor would it be a triumph of modern cosmopolitanism, liberal or Marxist, or otherwise. It would be something historically new and different from these, but cobbled out of them and the materials of late modern worldviews nonetheless. Bartelson's work shows how visions of a world community always fit into the cosmologies and worldview of their age, ancient, medieval, or early modern. The visionaries of a world community always strive to attain coherence with basic beliefs and ascendant ideals, with prevailing understandings of the cosmos and humankind. On this basis, Bartelson argues the image of a coherent and realizable world community in our contemporary context might best be conceived against an ecological background, the planetary habitat of humankind.

This is a helpful suggestion, indicating a potential avenue for thought, but Bartelson has not explored this ecological vision himself; he only gestures towards it in the final passages of his conclusion.[27] Somewhat more importantly, Bartelson's analysis does not fully recognize the extent to which the realization of world polity today is challenged by modern outlooks. He does not adequately concede how challenging modern outlooks are to universal visions of human order, because he does not acknowledge the extent to which modern self-conceptions matter to people, giving their lives meaning and shaping their aspirations and affinities.[28] We might imagine a world polity along Bartelson's ecological lines, but how many would want to make use of it if it conflicted with their intimately felt ambitions and sentiments? In this respect, Bartelson does not fully acknowledge the question of practical conditions. Not everything that is imaginable is practically possible. Bartelson has shown the problem of modernity for imagining the world polity and the insight of its pre-modern preconditions, but his gestures towards the way forward remain incomplete and face challenges.

[26] Jens Bartelson *Visions of World Community* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).
[27] Bartelson *Visions of World Community,* p. 181-182.
[28] Craig Calhoun *Nations Matter: Culture, History, and the Cosmopolitan Dream* (London: Routledge, 2007).

R.B.J. Walker has more fully acknowledged the challenge of modernity for cosmopolitan visions, and yet while he has made helpful suggestions, he has not explored the question of a realizable world polity itself. Walker's helpful suggestion is that the realization of one world polity must also be the realization of many worlds. He does not mean many worlds in the sense of many nations, but that the world contains many cultural-civilizational worldviews, and so one world must be many worlds.[29] This is helpful because it is empirically valid. There are multiple civilizational cultures, variety of indigenous cultures too, and multiple cultural forms of modernity. No universal order has ever been a monolith in practice; the universal orders of ancient Rome, Egypt, and China, amongst others, contained many worlds, although they cohered them into a larger dominion. Due to its planetary size and cultural diversity, a world polity would inherently contain more worldviews and cultural horizons than any other. As the possible number of relations increases in a globalizing world, so grows the possible combinations (and thereby the diversity) of identities, cultural practices, and worldviews.[30] Walker also suggests the search for a world polity is folly, because it will only reproduce modern problems on new larger scales.[31] The reproduction of modern problems by a modern world polity is not a necessarily inaccurate point, but to suggest it is not worth searching for because of its imperfections, modern or otherwise, belies the practical problems that follow from a system of multiple polities, modern or otherwise. Difficulties with war and insecurity are the most ancient, and are amplified in a modern thermonuclear context.[32] Maintaining the thermonuclear balance of terror secures the interests of the US and Russia, terrorizing all humankind by effect. A host of further problems, of moral corruption and social estrangement to foreign nations and human beings, and the warping of science around military application, for instance, are serious problems attributable to the political organization of humankind into multiple polities. There is a seriousness about these problems that Walker belies in his mystification of their modern form. Modernity has multiple potential forms, not all equally problematic. Just because world order problems have a modern form does not mean a response of a *different* modern form cannot have positive benefits. I concede that Walker raises the challenge of dystopia in the search for a world polity, but the

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[29] R.B.J. Walker *One World, Many Worlds: Struggles for a Just World Peace* (London: Zed, 1987).
[30] Ulf Hannerz *Cultural Complexity: Studies in the Social Organization of Meaning* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991).
[31] R.B.J. Walker *After the Globe, Before the World* (London: Routledge, 2010).
[32] Daniel Deudney *Bounding Power: Republican Security Theory From the Polis to the Global Village* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006).

normative evaluation of the image of a world polity cannot be made until its image is first explored and clarified.

The concept of a world polity attracts several rival visions in the contemporary discourse of world order and the question represents an ongoing debate.[33] Kantian inspired visions are advanced by moral and political philosophers. Marx inspired visions are advanced by Critical and emancipatory theorists alongside post-colonial visions. The idea of a global civil society takes inspiration from several sources, including sociological and neo-liberal sources. Ecological and space ship earth visions contain distinct ideas too, with new ecological outlooks, often problematizing but also being incorporated by rival visions. All of these visions, however, and their debate in general, have been shaped by the condition of modernity.

0.3 Visions, Universal to Global

Before I set-out how I plan to address this debate, let me clarify its background a little further, with a brief conceptual history. The question of what it means for humankind to form a world polity is, in a fundamental way, a search for human unity. This search is dependent on the vision of a divided humankind, so, is, in this sense, quite ancient, reaching to the Tower of Babel narratives that explain human division and all the human troubles and limitations that follow from it.[34] A letter, purportedly from Aristotle to Alexander, conveys the ancient dream of a world polity,

> Happy is he who sees the resplendence of that day when men will agree to constitute one rule and one kingdom. They will cease from wars and strife, and devote themselves to that which promotes their welfare and the welfare of their cities and countries.[35]

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[33] See, Appendix I: 'Predominant Visions in the Contemporary World Polity Debate'.

[34] Martin Wight, 'The Disunity of Mankind', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies,* 44:1 (2015), p. 129-130; Ian Hall, 'Unity in Christ? Martin Wight on the Disunity of Mankind', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies,* 44:1 (2015), pp. 134-136; Jacinta O'Hagan, 'Martin Wight and the Problem of Difference', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies,* 44:1 (2015), pp. 137-140; Chris Brown, 'On the Disunity of Mankind', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies,* 44:1 (2015), pp. 141-143; Yongjin Zhang, 'Early Cultural Orientations and Ancient International Thought', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies,* 44:1 (2015), pp. 144-146.

[35] S.M. Stern *Aristotle on the World-State* (Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1968), p. 7.

Aristotle seems to mean a world empire, not a single community of humankind *per se*, but he does envision the practical fruits of a united world, one beyond the problem of war and liberated from preparations for it. During periods of the Roman Empire and for periods in Chinese history, this vision was felt to be a practical achievement, when entire regions, virtually the known world, were brought into universal orders. Medieval Europe, by contrast, achieved a quasi-unity, with the unity and belonging of Christendom across a complicated political disunity, with the Holy Roman Empire and Papacy amidst multiple authorities and powers falling into countless wars.[36] Dante made the case for a return to a maximal unity in his *De Monarchia,* to overcome the ills of division and to realize the full potential of humankind.[37] Today, the search for human unity holds out the promise of a world able to overcome not only the threat of thermonuclear war, but also vast inequalities, climate change, and various other injustices and problems of global scope.

Yet, like so many things, this search needs to be understood in respect to its profound transformations in a modern context. Early modern legal theorists, Vitoria and Grotius accepted the principle of human unity, *universalis civitas humani generis,* but not the principles of political unity. In modern times, Kant rightly argued this unity in legal philosophical principle is "cold comfort" for those made vulnerable by the political disunity of humankind.[38] The idea that the society of states issues from and is beholden to an underlying *civitas maxima* is a legal fiction, not the reality of an actual world polity.[39] A united world polity proper is still sought by great thinkers in modern times. Over the past several decades, the modern search for a world polity has been given its most consistent and eloquent expression by the international lawyer Richard Falk. His argument, that I noted above, has been that to address global problems, the moral and political horizons of a world society need to be represented in world order institutions.[40] Falk follows in a long line of modern thinkers who envision a better world order, with various degrees of unity. That is, he gives expression to the modern form of the search for a world polity. Because world order is, basically, the modern post-Grotian idea that the political

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[36] Peter H. Wilson *The Holy Roman Empire: A Thousand Years of Europe's History* (London: Penguin, 2016).

[37] Dante Alighieri *Monarchy* Prue Shaw trans. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), Book I.

[38] Immanuel Kant, 'Perpetual Peace', Ted Humphrey trans. (Cambridge: Indianapolis, 1983); Ian Clark *The Vulnerable in International Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

[39] Bull *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics* 3rd Edition (New York: Palgrave, 2002 [1977]), p. 269.

[40] Richard Falk and Saul Mendlovitz *Strategy of World Order, Vol.I* (New York: World Law Fund, 1966); Richard Falk *This Endangered Planet: Prospects and Proposals for Human Survival* (New York: Random House, 1971); Richard Falk *The End of World Order* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1983); Richard Falk *(Re)Imagining Humane Global Governance* (London: Routledge, 2014).

affairs of humankind can be collaboratively organized or arranged so to make the world a better place, it has long been debated how well-ordered humankind is as a system of states.[41] The classic world peace proposals of L'Abbe de St. Pierre, Kant, Bentham, and so on, all sought to be realistically achievable. In the breadth of the modern political imagination, the strongest image of a better world is a world polity, the idea that humankind is or can become, in some way some how, "one", and so able to achieve a better world through greater collaboration.

Yet, today, states collaborate less than we moderns would hope and international organization has struggled to address longstanding international problems. Reflection on the potential for the environmental or thermonuclear decimation of the earth, immense inequities, injustices, and moral corruptions eventually turns thought to the contemplation of an alternative and better world order.[42] Falk, working with his colleagues in the World Order Models Project (WOMP), sought to clarify the image and pathways towards a realizable and better world order. Starting with the problem that the anarchical state-centric world order was not working, WOMP was a sustained attempt to consider humankind, on a global scale, as a single unit, requiring a world order to match. For Saul Mendlovitz, 'To think, feel, and act as a global citizen is the essence of world order inquiry.'[43] By considering humankind as a single unit, as a matter of principle, WOMP begged the question of the sociological and moral bases of that unity, whilst raising the question of achieving a unity. WOMP, nevertheless, was perhaps the most significant world order study in the 20th Century, spanning across several decades and involving a trans-national body of eminent academics, Mendlovitz, Ranji Kathari, Johan Galtung, Ali Mazrui, Yoshikazu Sakamoto, amongst many others. The trans-national membership of WOMP matched this methodological perspective and political aspiration of humankind as a single unit. It provided an added credibility to WOMP's ability to speak to and address the global problems of humankind, as an emerging global community. Perhaps the most significant exploration WOMP

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[41] Taylor *Modern Social Imaginaries,* p. 1-22; Andrew Hurrell *On Global Order: Power, Values, and the Constitution of International Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 1-3; Bull *The Anarchical Society,* chp. 1; Even Carl Schmitt's contrarian definition of order, as the appropriation of space, involves the modern sense of an arrangement and organization for an improved world, because his definition departs from the pre-modern idea that everything is already divinely ordered and it also implies an appropriation for someone's betterment, even if not everyone's betterment. Carl Schmitt *The Nomos of the Earth* (New York: Telos, 2003), p. 67, 71.

[42] Richard Falk, 'Shall We Revive the World Order Models Project (WOMP)? Exploring Horizons of Desire in the Early Twenty-First Century' in Falk *(Re)Imagining Humane Global Governance* (London: Routledge, 2014), pp. 183-192.

[43] Saul Mendlovitz, 'A Perspective on the Cutting Edge of World Order Inquiry: The Past, Present and Future of WOMP', *International Interactions,* 8:1 (1981), p. 159.

conducted was into core global values, values around which the unity of humankind might be based: peace, economic wellbeing, social justice, ecological stability, and species identity, sometimes referred to as participation.[44] WOMP also advanced several institutional-structural models of a more united world order, including Falk's early visions, designed to institutionally realize the values of humankind as a single unit. WOMP, to an extent, begged the question of the unity of humankind, although it raised the important question of what humankind might strive to achieve as a single unit.

Still, it is crucial to highlight how this whole approach to the world polity as an achievable collaborative order comes out of the contexts in which modernity arose. In the Western context of modernity, for instance, the disunity of Christendom and rise of nationalist and secular outlooks on time and space displaced the once ascendant vision of a world community, the universal world with no outside.[45] Today, the vision of a world community is still sometimes thought of in counter-reformation terms, as a retrieval of an ethical universalism,[46] but this vision has become "unrealistic" in a modern secular age. The vision is often characterized today by what we might call the modern theory of a world society, the modern notion of what a political society is, as a shared culture, morality, and political structure, but applied to the space of the globe and population of humankind as a whole. However, this particularly nominalist way the world polity is imagined in a modern Western context, as a potentially global, but not universal, unity, is a cultural continuation of cultural shifts begun in the late Middle Ages, which makes its modern conception contingent on Medieval cultural preconditions.[47] The secular conception of the world polity, as a modern society on a world scale, makes its existence unrealistic to the modern imagination, not only practically but politically, because the modern notion of collaboration for shared ideals and goals is empirically difficult to achieve on a worldwide scale. Yet, this vision of the world polity as an unrealistic future world society is a cultural production, a working through, as it were, of cultural shifts reaching to the Middle Ages. This conceptual legacy in the modern discourse of world order, its

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[44] Richard Falk and Saul Mendlovitz *Strategy of World Order, 4 Volumes* (New York: World Law Fund, 1966).

[45] Charles Taylor *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007).

[46] Michael Donelan, 'A Community of Mankind', in James Mayall (ed.) *The Community of States: A Study in International Political Theory* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1982) pp. 140-157; Michael Donelan *Elements of International Political Theory* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1990).

[47] Bartelson *Visions of World Community*; William Bain (ed.) *The Medieval Foundations of International Relations* (London: Routledge, 2017); Michael Allen Gillespie *The Theological Origins of Modernity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008); Taylor *A Secular Age.*

modern resolutions of what is universal and what is particular, has befuddled thinking concerning a world polity, constraining its image to modern notions of a community and society on a worldwide scale.[48] Unity, uniformity, and universality are not the same things. Nor are diversity and division. Nor is inside and outside the same distinction as closed and open, together and apart, or same and different. It is against the conceptual legacies of such reality blurring and imagination confining binary homologies that contemporary theorists of a world polity have struggled to overcome.

This modern cultural form of world polity visions is not the entirety of the conceptual baggage, however. In league with these conceptual challenges is the baggage of the concept's imperial uses. It is important to recognize how visions of a world polity, so often used as the justifying ambition of expansionist empires, have developed an imperialist reputation and connotation. A world empire and a world polity are not the same things, but visions of a world polity, in various forms, have often served empires. This tendency poses a challenge for the concept's relevance in an anti-imperial age. The strongest image of a better world is also the most morally dubious and the most politically suspect. For example, while Diogenes coined the idea of a citizen of the world, a *cosmopolite,* and Zeno's *Republic* developed the Stoic political theory of the world city, the *cosmopolis*, the vision was not institutionalized until the Stoicism of the Roman Empire imposed it on the Mediterranean world.[49] Western conceptions of a world society or world community, I am suggesting, have the conceptual baggage of a Western version of a more general tendency of suzerain legitimating discourses. Suzerain powers in world history, ancient and modern, have relied on ideas of a universal "supra-polity" to legitimate their rule and civilizing missions. The Cyrus cylinder records the oldest extant text expressing this kind of idea, "I am Cyrus, king of the universe, the great king, the powerful king, king of Babylon, king of Sumer and Akkad, king of the four quarters of the world, …"[50] Underwriting the universal order of Cyrus the Great's Achaemenid Empire was the claim that the Achaemenid kings were the agents of truth and order in the cosmos, as their deity Ahuramazda willed it.[51] In

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[48] Walker *After the Globe, Before the World,* p. 1.
[49] Daniel S. Richter *Cosmopolis: Imagining Community in Late Classical Athens and the Early Roman Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); Derek Heater *World Citizenship and World Government: Cosmopolitan Ideas in the History of Western Political Thought* (London: Palgrave, 1996).
[50] The Cyrus Cylinder, translated by Irving Finkel, The British Museum: http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/highlights/articles/c/cyrus_cylinder_-_translation.aspx.
[51] Matt Waters *Ancient Persia: A Concise History of the Achaemenid Empire: 550-330 BCE* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), ch. 8.

this world imaginary, those who opposed them, like the Greeks, were seen as liars and manifestations of chaos. The Mongol Empire claimed suzerainty over "everything under the blue sky", and the idea of *Tianxia* underwrote Chinese imperial order.[52] The ideas of the *ummah* and *caliph* came to be associated with the Ottoman Empire. The Mughal Empire developed the concept of *sulh i kul,* "peace for all, or universal reconciliation".[53] The Incan Empire had the idea of the "children of the sun". Such ideas were used to constitute the universal dominion of what Arnold Toynbee called 'would-be world states' and 'would-be world religions'.[54] These examples are distinct ideas with distinct cosmologies from different contexts promoting differing moral purposes, but they share a similar connection between universalist ideas and universalist empires. This use of universal ideas by imperial powers makes the application of world polity vision to world order problematic in a modern anti-imperial age.

The search for a world polity struggles to be meaningful in anti-imperial times, and struggles to be imagined as existing in modern horizons. With the rise of modern secular and national horizons, visions of an existing world polity declined in the discourse of world order. So humankind was divided into supposedly primordial nations and the question of a realistic historical vision of human unity emerged. The idea gradually sunk into the past, but it also, importantly, found a new presence in the future, as a critical counter-concept in the discourse of world order, used to urge a future unification of humankind. Classic modern critics of international society include, most prominently, Kant and Marx. Both envisioned the rise of some form of cosmopolitan world order.[55] Since a society of states was conceived, its cosmopolitan critics have championed various conceptions of a world society. Thomas Paine's *Rights of Man* and the revolutionary cosmopolitans of the modern Atlantic world developed modern conceptions of universal rights and liberty, spreading new revolutionary cosmopolitan

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[52] William A. Callahan, 'Chinese Visions of World Order: Post-hegemonic or a New Hegemony?', *International Studies Review,* 10 (2008), pp. 749-761.
[53] Andrew Phillips, 'Civilizing Missions and the Rise of International Hierarchies in Early Modern Asia', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies,* 42:3 (2014), p. 707.
[54] Arnold Toynbee *Change and Habit: The Challenge of Our Time* (Oxford: Oxford University Press [1966] 1992), p. 116, 161.
[55] Anacharsis Cloots's critique of the system of states is less famous but worth noting. He promoted a cosmopolitan world state based on the indivisible sovereignty of humankind. See, Alexander Bevilacqua, 'Conceiving the Republic of Mankind: The Political Thought of Anacharsis Cloots', *History of European Ideas,* 38:4 (2012), pp. 550-569.

visions for an increasingly global context.[56] In the modern discourse of world order, the vision of a future world society became the co-constitutive counter-concept to the present international. Like day and night, the intellectual comprehension of one depends on the other; they are co-constitutive. However, the presence or dominance of one in this discourse is dependent on the absence or suppression of the other; they are also counter-concepts. As Martin Wight classically put it, 'by proclaiming a world society … It rejects the idea of a society of states.'[57] The two are not absolutely irreconcilable, just as day and night have their mixed senses of dawn and twilight. Yet, they are in conflict, since they offer rival accounts of who is involved and what is at stake in world order, be it the shared values of humankind as a whole or those of its nations.[58]

Modern interest in the idea of a world polity seems to follow the fortunes of international order. The deeper international order sinks into crisis and the higher it ascends into stability and prosperity, the more popular the idea seems to become. It wanders in the extremes of modern international politics. The specter of communist cosmopolitanism almost always gains support in times of crisis.[59] Shortly after the Second World War, when the idea of an international order lost much of its credibility, visions of a world polity and world government enjoyed increased interest and discussion.[60] The rise of the Cold War seems to have stymied its popularity amongst statespersons, but the prospect of nuclear winter supported new space ship earth visions, and also brought many realist political thinkers to imagine one world community with no need for nuclear weapons.[61] Cosmopolitan visions also arose in the context of decolonization as well, in the search for alternative orders.[62] The modern heyday of the idea was the triumphalist progressive

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[56] Janet Polasky *Revolutions Without Borders: The Call to Liberty in the Atlantic World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015).

[57] Martin Wight *International Theory: The Three Traditions* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1991)*,* p. 45.

[58] Andrew Linklater, 'Men and Citizens in International Relations', *Review of International Studies,* 7 (1981), pp. 23-37.

[59] Jacques Derrida *Specters of Marx: The State of Debt, the Work of Mourning and the New International* translated by Peggy Kamuf (London: Routledge, 1994).

[60] See, for example, the proceedings of a world community symposium whose attendance notably included Hans Morgenthau, Margaret Mead, Kenneth Boulding, Harold Laswell, Talcott Parsons, and Karl Polanyi. Quincy Wright (ed.) *The World Community* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948); Ralph Barton Perry *One World in the Making* (New York: Current Books, 1945).

[61] Quincy Wright maintained an interest in it and was joined by Richard Falk. See their contributions in, B. Landheer, J.H.M.M. Loenen, and Fred. L. Polak (eds.) *World Society: How is an Effective and Desirable World Order Possible? A Symposium* (The Hague: Matinus Nijhoff, 1971); Barbara Ward *Space Ship Earth* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1966); for the classical realist one worlders, see William E. Scheuerman *The Realist Case for Global Reform* (London: Polity, 2011).

[62] Gary Wilder *Freedom Time: Negritude, Decolonization, and the Future of the World* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015); Julian Go, 'Fanon's Postcolonial Cosmopolitanism', *European Journal of Social Theory,* 16:2 (2013), pp. 208-225.

post-Cold War moment that came to a head around the turn of the last millennium. Martin Albrow declared the dawn of a "global age"[63] and thinkers like Martin Shaw and David Held saw the empirical emergence of a "global society".[64] Anne-Marie Slaughter suggested the globalizing world order, 'must somehow be accountable to the global community as a whole, comprising both states and individuals whose collective interests stem from a common humanity.'[65] Today, the concept of a world polity has increasingly come to be thought of as an aspect of globalization, as a sociological world society, conceived as a diffusing set of norms.[66] As Brett Bowden suggests, the contemporary conception is 'more *uniform* than *universal*.'[67] The idea has transformed from Utopia, a perfect harmony of humankind, into a global historical condition.[68] Marshall McLuhan's popular concept of a global village involves this conceptual shift. Its Oxford English Dictionary definition conveys the contemporary conception as, 'the world considered as a single community brought together by high technology and international communications.'[69] Another recently popular expression is global civil society, which connotes transnational social bonds, rather than moral obligations as such.[70]

There is some intuitive plausibility to the notion of a world polity as the emerging imaginary of a global social colossus. Some suggest, in an era of globalization, a shared global space has created a global social imaginary, where the modern market, public sphere, and governance of the people, are taking on global dimensions.[71] In the vein of George Herbert Mead or Erving Goffman, the cognizance of this global society arises in situations where we sense the

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[63] Martin Albrow *The Global Age: State and Society Beyond Modernity* (London: Polity Press, 1996).

[64] Martin Shaw, 'Global Society and Global Responsibility: The Theoretical, Historical and Political Limits of 'International Society', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies,* 21:3 (1992), pp. 421-434; David Held and Anthony McGrew, 'The End of the Old Order? Globalization and the Prospects of World Order', *Review of International Studies,* 24:5 (1998), pp. 219-245.

[65] Anne-Marie Slaughter *A New World Order* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), p. 218.

[66] For theory of an emerging world culture, see, Ulf Hannerz, 'Afterthoughts: World Watching', *Social Anthropology,* 18:4 (2010), pp. 448-453; Hannerz, 'Macro-Scenarios: Anthropology and the Debate Over Contemporary and Future Worlds', *Social Anthropology,* 11:2 (2003), pp. 169-187.

[67] Brett Bowden *The Empire of Civilization: The Evolution of an Imperial Idea* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), p. 5, italics in original.

[68] Isaiah Berlin, 'The Decline of Utopian Ideas in the West', in Henry Hardy (ed.), *The Crooked Timber of Humanity* (New York: Vintage Books, 1992), pp. 20-50.

[69] OED Online, 'Global Village', (Oxford University Press, 2014), http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/79019?redirectedFrom=global+village.

[70] Mary Kaldor, 'The Idea of Global Civil Society', *International Affairs,* 79:3 (2003), pp. 583-593.

[71] Patrick Hayden, 'Globalization, Reflexive Utopianism, and the Cosmopolitan Social Imaginary', in Patrick Hayden and Chamsy el-Ojeili (eds.) *Globalization and Utopia: Critical Essays* (London: Palgrave, 2009), pp. 51-67.

world generally approves or disapproves of our conduct.[72] In the example of a demonstration, riot, or revolt, with media exposure the feeling that "the world is watching" may arise, and this feeling is accompanied by a sense of global approval or disapproval of one's actions as a participant in the event. In the vein of C. Wright Mills, the sense of a world society emanates from the global interrelatedness of our contemporary histories and biographies.[73] A global imagination arises quickly when we reflect on our consumption of products manufactured in a global economy. It is not hard to see how common political and economic troubles and concerns confer a worldwide significance to events in disparate metropolises and obscure locales. A post-colonial humankind, engrossed in capitalist exchange, conversing through a global media, and mixing through global migrations has some awareness of forming a not altogether unproblematic global society, with global socio-economic hierarchies across the contours of a global division of labour and emerging practices of global governance.

This may be correct, but despite the widespread recognition that globalization has fostered a global consciousness of a global social system, as well as the contours of a global polity in incipiently post-Westphalian international law, these changes have not been accompanied by a sense of global social unity or belonging. The realization of the world polity is a halfway effort at best, lacking shared moral purposes and a "weness" feeling.[74] A variety of sociological inspired "world society" theories of John Burton, John Meyers, and Niklas Luhmann, amongst others confuse the existence of a worldwide social system with the self-consciousness of a world society. A worldwide system of international and transnational relations is qualitatively distinct from a world society as a modern collaborative effort with a shared sense of common ideals, goals, and solidarity.[75] Other Hume and Weber inspired constructivist and "English School" theorists have emphasized the importance of a shared cosmopolitan culture connected to a collective identity in the realization of a world polity, but they have struggled to articulate the contents of that cosmopolitan culture and collective

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[72] George Herbert Mead *Mind, Self, and Society: From the Standpoint of a Social Behaviorist* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1934); Erving Goffman *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh Social Sciences Research Centre, 1959).

[73] C. Wright Mills *The Sociological Imagination* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959).

[74] Chris Brown *International Society, Global Polity,* introduction and Part II; Jens Bartelson, 'Is There a Global Society?', *International Political Sociology,* 3:1 (2009), pp. 112-115; Chris Brown, 'International Political Theory and the Idea of World Community' in Ken Booth and Steve Smith (eds.), *International Relations Theory Today* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995), pp. 90-109.

[75] A.C. McKeil, 'Global Societies are Social Things: A Conceptual Reassessment', *Global Society,* 31:4 (2017), pp. 551-566.

identity.[76] Sensing the importance of reconceiving the world polity, to give it an additional sense of solidarity, critical theorists push the concept towards emancipatory horizons that aim to 'invent humanity', but they have struggled to clearly conceive or articulate what it would be.[77] Here, the search comes again to its core puzzle: What does it mean for humankind to form a world polity? How can it be imagined? Can it be practically achieved? Under what conditions, through what contributing processes, and in what necessary social form?

0.4 Roadmap

Is a world polity practically realizable? In an era of persistent world disorder, the present study hopes to clarify this important part of what humankind might strive to be. As such, this study scrutinizes the family of conceptions that, in dissimilar but relatable ways, all provide explanations of humankind being or becoming "one", be it as a global community, world society, space ship earth, the human family, or *civitas maxima*. I use the language of a world polity as a catch-all for this family of concepts only because it is the most general, intentionally fuzzy, offering the highest level of abstraction but still retaining a basic meaning. By polity, I just mean a human political unit or entity, in the most general sense, be it a nation-state, empire, clan, or, indeed, a "world" polity.[78]

This study proceeds in three parts. In Part I, *Preparations,* I organize my theoretical toolbox and prepare my angle of approach for analyzing the world polity question. I develop a theory of world polity formation that clarifies the causes, conditions, and processes of world polity formation, so to come to grips with the question of a world polity's possibility, which I take to be basic for proceeding further. If a world polity is impossible, why seek it? This theory development requires a fairly heavy dosage of theoretical discussion, because I have found available theories to suffer from a number of limitations. Following this groundwork, I develop a discursive pragmatist approach to conceptual analysis, which helps me establish criteria to systematically explore and evaluate the rival visions in the world polity debate. In Part II,

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[76] A.C. McKeil, 'A Silhouette of Utopia: English School and Constructivist Conceptions of a World Society', *International Politics,* forthcoming, No. 1 (2018).

[77] Ken Booth *Theory of World Security* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); Ken Booth, 'Security and Emancipation', *Review of International Studies,* 17 (1991), pp. 313-326.

[78] Yale H. Ferguson and Richard W. Mansbach *A World of Polities: Essays in Global Politics* (London: Routledge, 2008), p. 60-61.

Conceptual Investigations, I analyze the most prominent and predominant conceptions of a world polity in the discourse of world order: Kantian inspired conceptions of a universal moral code, the Kant-Marx critical-emancipatory variety of conceptions, the more recent "anti-foundationalist" and sociological global civil society conceptions, and, lastly, the variety of ecological-planetary and space ship earth conceptions. In my analysis, I order these currents of world polity thought according to the Socratic method of starting the investigation with the most commonly acknowledged conception, then moving towards the increasingly enlarged, innovative, and complex conceptions.[79] This order establishes the supports of basic distinctions before the novel and complex ideas are taken on, but also makes for a better story, arcing up, intellectually. In Part III, *Implications,* I integrate this analysis and advance the trans-civilizational but ecological vision of a world polity, reflexively applying my criteria to it, and assessing its implications for my core questions stated above. My conclusion retraces the steps made in Parts I, II, and III, considers their contributions, and assesses their findings for world order in theory and practice.

A few words on the scope of this study are needed. First, due to the significance of the concept of a world polity for contemporary world order problems and questions, and with the benefit of the above conceptual history, particularly Jens Bartelson's genealogy of the concept of "world community", from the ancients to Kant, I restrict the scope of this study to predominant conceptions in the contemporary discourse of world order, which, Bartelson's genealogy did not explore. Bartelson's *Visions of World Community* is a diachronic analysis of Western conceptions, from the ancients to Kant. By contrast, my study is a synchronic analysis of contemporary conceptions. I will draw in the ancients and early moderns where relevant and helpful, but focus my analysis on the leading conceptions present in the contemporary discourse of world order because these are still in need of systematic study, and it is these that are the most relevant to contemporary world order problems, being devised in response to them. I also hope to "provincialize" the studied predominant conceptions, along the way, so to enlarge our awareness of the ways a world polity has been and can be imagined, because a realizable vision of a world polity, acceptable to all humankind, must not suffer from Euro-centricity.[80] I also wanted, in my

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[79] R.G. Collingwood *An Essay on Philosophical Method* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1933).
[80] Dipesh Chakrabarty *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000); John M. Hobson *The Eurocentric Conception of World Politics: Western International Theory, 1760-2010* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

early planning, to go into "the field", to sites of world polity discourse and practice *in* practice, to the life-worlds of cosmopolitan cities, crossings, and events. But, because textual sources reflect and are also deliberately clearer than the concept's use in practice, and moreover, because I face human, time, and word length limitations, I restrict the scope of this study to the prominent textual sources of contemporary world polity visions in the discourse of world order.

Part I

Preparations

Chapter One.

World Polity Formation Theory

1.1 Introduction

Visions of a world polity have principally been the province of either moral philosophy or the philosophy of history. Either a world polity is envisioned as a timeless moral and divine order, be it Zeno's *cosmopolis* or Confucius's ever wider and ever finer tiers of authority and obligations, or it is envisioned as the culmination of history, chiliastic or secular, be it Zoroaster's belief in a final triumph of universal truth, or Marx's vague vision of a worldwide communist future. Has the world polity always existed, morally, or is it yet to be, historically? Contemporary theory of a world polity cleaves in a similar way. Its literature is either the terrain of the moral and legal philosophy of cosmopolitan rights and duties, or it is the subject of the social sciences applied to profane history, a history often theorized to lead through globalization to a united world. I want to suggest that of the two questions, the moral and the temporal, the latter takes intellectual priority, for practical reasons. Regardless of what universal morals may or may not exist, independently or otherwise, they have little practical effect if they cannot be realized in practice. The primary question, then, is if and how a system of multiple independent polities can come to realize a world polity. By contrast, Dante's questions in his *De Monarchia* were normative: whether a universal monarchy is necessary for human wellbeing, whether its rule can be rightfully claimed, and from what source does its authority legitimately derive.[81] These questions matter, morally, and they can have an effect on the beliefs and actions of people, but because they are inconsequential if their answers are unrealizable in practice, regardless of how many people are moved by them, the primary questions that I take up in this chapter are about the possibility of a world polity's realization in practice: Can the system of states form a unified world polity beyond hegemony and anarchy? What are the conditions and processes of such an outcome? Can, how, and why do international systems unify into single polities?

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[81] Dante Alighieri *Monarchy* Prue Shaw trans. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 4.

Dante assumed the answer to these questions was 'empire', with the Roman Empire's imperialism being his inspiration.[82] Yet, the possibility, conditions, and contributing processes of world polity formation are debated today.[83] A number of insights have been developed in the theoretical debate but this debate has been conducted with reference to the contemporary system of states and available theories encounter difficulties and struggle with contradictory evidence when viewed at a general level across world historical cases of international systems.[84] This chapter suggests that explaining world polity formation, at this more general level, means raising the level of abstraction of the puzzle, to the question of world polity formation as an instance of systemic unification. This is to say that there has never been a polity of all the world, but if a world polity were to form out of the contemporary system of states, it would be an instance of systemic unification, for which there is some evidence of in past international systems, particularly the unification of ancient Egypt and the Roman Empire.

The aims of this chapter are to assess the limitations of available theories and to advance the outlines of an alternative theory of systemic unification that can be applied across cases. As such, this chapter does not address the questions of the practical need or normative desirability of a unified world polity, but seeks to clarify the theoretical world polity formation debate, by raising the debate's level of abstraction from the contemporary system to consider international systems in general. The argument is ordered in five parts. First, a conceptual framework is established. Second, the limitations of available theories are identified. Third, the outlines of an alternative theory of systemic unification is advanced, which draws eclectically from available

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[82] Dante *Monarchy,* p. 4, 33.

[83] Olaf Corry, *Constructing a Global Polity: Theory, Discourse and Governance* (London: Palgrave, 2013); Friedrich Kratochwil, 'Global Governance and the Emergence of 'World Society', in *The Puzzles of Politics* (London: Routledge, 2011), pp. 262-280; Iver B. Neumann and Ole Jacob Sending, *Governing the Global Polity: Practice, Mentality, Rationality* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2010); Louis Cabrera, 'World Government: Renewed Debate, Persistent Challenges', *European Journal of International Relations,* 16:3 (2010), pp. 511-530; Jens Bartelson, *Visions of World Community* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Michael N. Barnett and Kathryn Sikkink, 'From International Relations to Global Society', in Reus-Smit and Snidal (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of International Relations* (Oxford: Oxford Univeristy Press, 2008), pp. 62-83; Daniel Deudney *Bounding Power: Republican Security Theory from the Polis to Global Village.* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007); Barry Buzan, *From International to World Society? English School Theory and the Structure of Globalization* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); Alexander Wendt, 'Why a World State is Inevitable', *European Journal of International Relations,* 9:4 (2003), pp. 491-542; J.G. Ruggie, *Constructing the World Polity: Essays on International Institutionalization* (London: Routledge, 1998); Kenneth N. Waltz, 'Reflections on *The Theory of International Politics:* A Response to My Critics' in R.O. Keohane (ed.) *Neorealism and its Critics.* New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), pp. 322-346.

[84] Barry Buzan and Richard Little *International Systems in World History: Remaking the Study of International Relations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

theories and contemporary sociological theory. Fourth, this theory is supported by two illustrative cases of historical international systems evincing a unifying process: the unification of ancient Egypt and the Roman Empire. Lastly, the implications of this alternative theory are analyzed for the question of world polity formation in the contemporary system. The possibility of systemic unification in the contemporary system is found to be highly unlikely due to the diffusion of power through nuclear deterrence and the nationalist and anti-hierarchical political culture of a late modern context.

1.2 Conceptual Framework

A core concept is an international system, defined as a number of polities in *regular* relations, meaning relations of constant frequency.[85] Regular relations, as a rule, dissipate and become *irregular* at a distance. Units are considered to form a "secondary system", and not an international system proper, when their interactions are irregular or absent to the extent that units do not constitute security threats to one another.[86] By "systemic unification", I mean the process by which an international system unifies into a single polity, which a "world polity" would be an instance of. I am adopting the language of a "polity" because it offers the highest level of abstraction amongst the various available expressions. For instance, I use the language of a world "polity", rather than a world "state", because polity is less likely to be confused with the modern Weberian nation-state, even though the concept of "state" has been defined with reasonable abstraction in the literature.[87] By polity, I mean a human political unit or entity, be it a nation-state, clan, empire, or, indeed, a "world" polity. Following Ferguson and Mansbach, polities, analytically speaking, are marked by the features of an ability to mobilize resources, internal hierarchies, and a "weness" feeling, meaning a collective identity with a sense of belonging and solidarity.[88] Because collective identities are nested, meaning that multiple collective identities

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[85] Buzan and Little, *International Systems in World History,* chp. 1.

[86] Buzan and Little, *International Systems in World History,* p. 90-110; Martin Wight *Systems of States* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1977), chp. 1.

[87] See, Charles R. Butcher and Ryan D. Griffiths, 'Between Eurocentrism and Babel: A Framework for the Analysis of States, State Systems, and International Orders', *International Studies Quarterly*, 61 (2017), pp. 328-336.

[88] Yale H. Ferguson, and Richard W. Mansbach, *A World of Polities: Essays on Global Politics* London: Routledge, 2008), p. 60-61. As such, by world polity I do not mean World Polity Theory, which defines the world polity as the institutional and organizational network of the modern world system and world culture: John W. Meyer, John Boli, George M. Thomas, Francisco O. Ramirez, 'World Society and the Nation-State', *American Journal of Sociology,* 103:1 (1997), pp. 144-181.

are overlapping and not mutually exclusive,[89] the collective identity of a system-wide polity is, analytically speaking, the most expansive, nesting all others into its "supra-polity" collective identity. The expression "world polity" enables me to get to the more general question of if, how, and why systems of polities, e.g. the modern system of states, become a single polity, which I take to be the maximal unity of a system. The concept of a world polity, as I conceive it here, represents the maximal unity of an international system.

By *unity*, I mean the legitimated joining of units into degrees of political solidarity, from the disunity of purely anarchical systems, to the quasi-unity of a legitimated hegemonic hierarchy, and the maximal unity of the formation of a single unitary polity out of a system of polities.[90] By *unification*, I do not mean the concentration of power in the system.[91] I mean the legitimation of hierarchy via the constitution of political unity. Hierarchical systems lacking legitimation are, in principle, suppressed anarchies. As such, analytically speaking, a unified world polity is distinct from a world empire, although a world empire might unify into a world polity through a unifying process. To allow for variability across cases, I define hierarchy broadly, as 'any system through which actors are organized into vertical relations of super –and subordination'.[92] In a spectrum of unity *amongst* polities, ranging from hierarchy legitimated by the unity of self-interested exchange,[93] and hierarchy legitimated by the unity of articulated common goals and purposes,[94] the unification of a *single* world polity, is analytically speaking the most united. Conceptually, a world polity is an instance of the formation of a single polity out of a system of polities, and so entails, analytically speaking, the establishment of legitimated hierarchical authorities, an ability to mobilize resources, and the development of solidarities.

1.3 The Limitations of Available Theories

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[89] Charles Tilly, 'International Communities, Secure or Otherwise', in Emanuel Adler and Michael Barnett (eds.), *Security Communities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 397-412.

[90] By solidarity, I mean, commitment to mutual support. In connection to this, a sense of belonging is "thick" or "thin" according to the degree of solidarity.

[91] Stuart J. Kauffman, Stuart, 'The Fragmentation and Consolidation of International Systems', *International Organization,* 51:2 (1997), pp. 173-208.

[92] Ayse Zarakol (ed.) *Hierarchies in World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), p. 1.

[93] David A. Lake, *Hierarchy in International Relations* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011).

[94] Ian Clark, 'Towards an English School Theory of Hegemony', *European Journal of International Relations,* 15:2 (2009), pp. 203-228; Ian Clark, *The Hierarchy of States: Reform and Resistance in the International Order* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

How has world polity formation been theorized? In this section, I aim to demonstrate how available world polity formation theories suffer from presentism, and can benefit from theorizing the question at a higher level of abstraction from a world historical perspective. As such, I focus my discussion on the critical assessment of available world polity formation theories here, and address the question of what is offered by additional literatures in section 4.

IR's early literature contains several underdeveloped discussions. Arnold Toynbee, for instance, argued the modern international system would either destroy itself in nuclear war, or it would form a world state.[95] He speculated that the emergence of a 'world society' requires the conciliation of the world religions, although he made little use of social theory.[96] E.H. Carr's *Nationalism and After* developed a socialist inspired proposal for state-planned systemic integration.[97] This proposal is comparable to functionalism.[98] Both, however, focused on the theory of the integration of governments, overlooking the cultural and social components of the legitimation of integration. Several classical realists and early English School thinkers rightly emphasized the importance of collective identity formation for the solidarities of a post-national world society and world state.[99] The formation of a single polity out of a system necessarily entails these features. Yet, classical realist and early English School thinkers were concerned with the presentist question of unifying the modern international system, rather than the general question of systemic unification. Furthermore, the dated Weberian and Humean social theory of these thinkers limits their contributions to the world polity puzzle. For instance, their conceptions of the world culture and common values of a world society and world state consistently and often explicitly suffer from methodological nationalism, which mars their insights into the importance of collective identity and solidarities in systemic unification. Classical realist and early English School theory require supplement from contemporary sociological theory of collective identity formation processes, cultural complexity, and social construction.[100] The contemporary literature

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[95] Arnold J. Toynbee *Change and Habit: The Challenge of Our Time* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992 [1966]), p. 195.

[96] Arnold J. Toynbee *A Study of History: Abridgement of Volumes VII-X* (London: Oxford University Press, 1957), p. 90.

[97] E.H. Carr, *Nationalism and After* (London: MacMillan, 1945)

[98] E.B. Haas, *Beyond the Nation State: Functionalism and International Organization* Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1964); David. Mitrany, *A Working Peace System: An Argument for the Functional Development of International Organization* (London: Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1943).

[99] William E. Scheuerman, *The Realist Case for Global Reform* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2011); Hedley Bull, *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics* (London: Palgrave, 2002 [1977]), p. 269-70, 290.

[100] For the early English School see, Buzan, *From International to World Society?,* chp. 1, 2, 3.

of a hypothetical world state is more sophisticated and has observed the imperial domination of historical international systems, but the majority of the contemporary world state literature is devoted to the uniquely modern problem of nuclear weapons and the federal or centralized constitution a world state would require for stability in a modern context.[101]

Kenneth Waltz's structural neorealist theory suggests that a world polity is impossible because his theory takes power balancing to be an endless and a-historical process of international systems. This theory holds that any systemic consolidation and attempted unification of the system by a single power will eventually produce counter-balancing powers.[102] In a telling passage, Waltz argued that,

> As hierarchical systems, governments nationally or globally are disrupted by the defection of major parts. In a society of states with little coherence, attempts at world government would founder on the inability of an emerging central authority to mobilize the resources needed to create and maintain the unity of the system by regulating and managing the parts. The prospect of a world government would be an invitation to prepare for world civil war.[103]

Waltz makes the important contribution of systemic analysis, but his theory is limited by its assertion of a regular balancing pattern, which has been contradicted by empirical evidence from world historical cases.[104] Where Waltz is theoretically mistaken is in the assumption that international systems behave in recurrent patterns. As Charles Tilly put it, explaining social change and process is more like explaining a flood than a tide.[105] International systems, that is, experience events and processes that have consistent conditions, but irregular occurrences. In at least one passage, Waltz, however, also leaves the theoretical door open to the possibility of unification. 'States, like people,' he claimed, 'are insecure in proportion to the extent of their

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[101] Cabrera, 'World Government: Renewed Debate, Persistent Challenges'; Deudney *Bounding Power*; Campbell Craig *Glimmer of a New Leviathan: Total War in the Realism of Niebuhr, Morgenthau, and Watlz* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003).
[102] Kenneth N. Waltz, 'Structural Realism After the Cold War', *International Security,* 25:1 (2000), pp. 5-41; John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: Norton & Co., 2001), p. 40-42.
[103] Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics.* Addison-Wesley: Reading M.A., 1979), p. 111-112.
[104] Kaufman, et. al. (eds.). *The Balance of Power in World History*; William C. Wohlforth, Richard Little, Stuart J. Kaufman, David Kang, Charles A. Jones, Victoria Tin-Bor Hui, Arthur Ericstein, Daniel Deudney, and William L. Brenner 'Testing the Balance-of-Power Theory in World History', *European Journal of International Relations.* 13:2 (2007), pp. 155-185.
[105] Charles Tilly, 'To Explain Political Processes', *The American Journal of Sociology,* 100:6 (1995), pp. 1594-1610.

freedom. If freedom is wanted, insecurity must be accepted'.[106] The caveat, *if* freedom is wanted, allows for situations where unity is wanted more than freedom. The question is: Can, how, and why would such situations of desired unity arise?

In this respect, regime theory might be mistakenly interpreted as suggestive of how a world polity could emerge from a complex of international regimes.[107] The difficulty, however, is the limited transformative potential of regimes. As Keohane explained,

> International regimes should not be interpreted as elements of a new international order "beyond the nation-state." They should be comprehended chiefly as arrangements motivated by self-interest: as components of systems in which sovereignty remains a constitutive principle.[108]

The idea of cross-stitching the international system with a complex of regime complexes, like the solidifying stitches of a baseball skin, does not follow from regime theory because such a unifying regime complex is not within the converging interests of states. Because state interests remain prime, regime are not feasible for all international issue areas, and established regimes are subject to changes of state interests.[109] Why, for instance, has regime construction not produced such a world polity today? Why neither is there evidence of such a unifying regime complex in past international systems? As such, regime theory is better fit to explain *cooperation* under conditions of anarchy and hegemony, rather than the *unification* of systems beyond anarchy and hegemony.

J.G. Ruggie's constructivism theorized that Durkheimian dynamic densities (increased interaction capacity) can lead to the organic solidarities of functional differentiation.[110] Yet, additional sociological theory of discourse and practice is needed to explain the leap from organic solidarities of functional interdependence *amongst* polities in an anarchical system to the unification of a *single* polity beyond interdependent anarchy and hegemony. In this respect,

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[106] Waltz *Theory of International Politics,* p. 112.

[107] Robert O. Keohane, 'After Hegemony Cooperation is Still Possible', *The International Spectator,* 50:4 (2015), pp. 92-94.

[108] Robert O. Keohane, *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), p. 63.

[109] John J. Mearsheimer, 'The False Promise of International Institutions.' *International Security* 19:3 (1994/95), pp. 5-49.

[110] J.G. Ruggie, 'Continuity and Transformation in the World Polity: Towards a Neorealist Synthesis', *World Politics,* 35:2 (1983), pp. 261-285; Ryan D. Griffiths, 'The Waltzian Ordering Principle and International Change: A Two-Dimensional Model', *European Journal of International Relations*, (2017), pp. 1-23.

Alexander Wendt's constructivism is important for the puzzle of world polity formation in its emphasis on diachronic changes of systemic international cultures and collective identities.[111] His constructivist theory holds that the 'logic of anarchy' generates struggles for recognition of subjectivities, which can produce progressive cultures of anarchy, and eventually a Weberian world state with a corresponding shared collective identity.[112] Connected to this is his argument that with the emergence of nuclear weapons in an anarchic system, 'the struggle for recognition among states undermines their self-sufficiency and makes a world state inevitable. Via the struggle for recognition, in short, the systemic logic of anarchy leads to its own demise.'[113] For Wendt, because nuclear proliferation makes struggles for recognition intolerable, states will be forced to recognize all others, including non-state actors, producing a world society, followed by a world state.[114] The mechanism of unification, for Wendt, is the socialization of recognitions.[115]

Wendt's theory is limited by an over-emphasis on systemic logics, at the expense of the domestic and agentic sources of change.[116] A further difficulty Wendt's theory encounters, is that it is purely hypothetical, since there are no world historical cases of systemic unification along the progressive path of socialization Wendt proposes.[117] A related difficulty is Wendt's presentist emphasis on recognition struggles as a driving mechanism of socialization.[118] Firstly, Wendt's conception of recognition is a thoroughly modern phenomenon, only applicable to the modern system of states. Wendt conceives recognition as the social validation of one's individual or collective identity by an other, most clearly, where he says, 'recognition is about being respected for what makes a person special or unique.'[119] This search for recognition of the self could not exist until there was the modern belief in the special and unique authentic self.[120] Secondly, it is unpersuasive to say that recognition struggles can lead to systemic unities, because they have

[111] Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Alexander Wendt, 'Anarchy is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics', *International Organization* 46:2 (1992), pp. 391-425.
[112] Wendt, 'Why a World State is Inevitable', p. 505-528.
[113] Wendt, 'Why a World State is Inevitable', p. 494.
[114] Wendt, 'Why a World State is Inevitable', p. 517.
[115] Wendt, 'Why a World State is Inevitable', p. 512.
[116] Ted Hopf, 'Constructivism All the Way Down', *International Politics* 37 (2000), pp. 369-377; V.P. Shannon, 'Wendt's Violation of the Constructivist Project: Agency and Why a World State is *Not* Inevitable' *European Journal of International Relations* 11:4 (2005), pp. 581-600.
[117] Hidemi Suganami, 'On Wendt's Philosophy: A Critique', *Review of International Studies,* 28 (2002), pp. 23-37.
[118] Wendt, 'Why a World State is Inevitable', p. 507.
[119] Wendt, 'Why a World State is Inevitable', p. 511.
[120] Charles Taylor, 'The Politics of Recognition', in Amy Gutman (ed.). *Multiculturalism.* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), pp. 25-74.

contributed to a process of systemic dis-unification in the emergence of the modern international system. As individuals and peoples demanded recognition and rights from empires and nation-states, they established independent states when demands became frustrated.[121] Lastly, Wendt's theory reifies his state units of analysis, by suggesting the units themselves socialize, rather than the individual participants with collective identities made via discursive action and relational practices.[122]

With inspiration from Wendt's constructivism, Barry Buzan has also theorized the social construction of a 'world society' involving cosmopolitan identities and shared values connected to a transformed structure where state and non-state actors 'are in play together', with no clear hierarchy amongst them, only agreements on functional differentiation.[123] Buzan argues the 'world society' outcome represents the working through of specifically modern liberal logics on the structure of the system.[124] He theorizes that as the rights of more and more units are mutually recognized in the system, so its structure will transform towards a world society. Theoretically, it suffers from the presentist focus on the modern and liberal aspects of the contemporary international system. This presentism also results in conceptual difficulties. Buzan's concept of a world society structure as multiple units "in play together", without hierarchical authorities, is closer to an image of an expansion of state-centric anarchy to include non-state actors, rather than their unification into a larger systemic polity. In a related theoretical vein, Michael Barnett and Kathryn Sikkink theorize a "global society" as the emergence of authorities above the states system, produced by the diffusion of restraining rules and norms of appropriate behavior across state and non-state actors. They explain,

> Our notion of a global society parallels the arguments of the English School and its notion of world society, particularly the identification of an increasingly dense fabric of international law, norms, and rules that promote forms of association and solidarity, the growing role of an increasingly dense network of state and non-state actors that are involved in the production and revision of multilayered governance structures, and the movement toward forms of dialogue that are designed to help identify shared values of 'humankind'.[125]

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[121] Christian Reus-Smit, *Individual Rights and the Making of the International System.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).
[122] Iver B. Neumann, 'Self and Other in International Relations', *European Journal of International Relations,* 2:2 (1996), pp. 139-174.
[123] Buzan *From International to World Society?*, p. 202-3.
[124] Buzan *From International to World Society?*, p. 260-61.
[125] Barnett and Sikkink, 'From International Relations to Global Society', p. 63.

This theory is problematic partly because no historical systems are evident of unification via a diffusion of restraining rules and norms that did not also involve the domination of the system by a concentration of material power. The mixed empirical evidence of limited human rights norms diffusion and compliance within the contemporary international system also troubles this theory. The US, for instance, often a proponent of human rights rules and norms also resists and opposes their application to it's own actions through hierarchical authorities.[126]

"Thick" constructivists have developed promising but still incomplete theories. The difference, between the thin and thick constructivists on this world polity question, is the qualitative "all-the-way-down" depth of the change in collective identities a world polity entails.[127] Thick constructivist theorists have made important but still incomplete contributions to the theory of systemic unification, by drawing together the role of discourse and practice connected to power in cultural as well as structural dynamics. Friedrich Kratochwil has gestured towards the "thick" social construction of a world polity, but has not developed its theory as such.[128] Similarly, Iver Neumann and Ole Jacob Sending, rightly make the important contribution of emphasizing the role of power in shaping constitutive discourses and practices.[129] They argue the construction of a global polity "above" the contemporary international system is a discursive process following from to the extension of liberal state powers to the global level. However, the extent of this discursive process unclear, raising crucial empirical and theoretical questions. Empirically, how extensive is the discourse across the system? Empirically, to what extent does this discourse constitute a global polity at a global level, for whom? For instance, to what extent does it extend to non-elite populations? Theoretically, to what extent does the discursive process need to extend to constitute a global polity in which all others are nested? And, how much concentration of state power in the system is needed to extend the discursive process to a sufficient degree? Furthermore, Neumann and Sending do not examine whether historical systems have involved similar extensions of state powers through discursive processes. For instance, it is not clear whether this discursive process is unique to a liberal dominated

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[126] Jason Ralph, *Defending the Society of States: Why America Opposes the International Criminal Court and its Vision of World Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

[127] Emmanuel Adler, 'Barry Buzan's Use of Constructivism to Reconstruct the English School: 'Not All the Way Down'. *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 34:1 (2004), pp. 171-182.

[128] Kratochwil, 'Global Governance and the Emergence of World Society', p. 279-280.

[129] Neumann and Sending, *Governing the Global Polity,* p. 18-44.

system with advanced communications, or whether the discursive process is merely enhanced by modern interaction capacities.

Lastly, Olaf Corry has theorized 'global polity' formation as a structural shift beyond hierarchy and anarchy based on the discursive emergence of a 'global governance object'.[130] Corry's theory rightly highlights the involvement of structural change and discursive action, but struggles to explain why this change and action would arise and fails to explain why it would take on the form Corry outlines. From a world historical perspective, Corry's proposed neither hierarchical nor anarchical structure of a global polity is historically unprecedented, because identifiable instances of past systemic unifications have involved hierarchies. Additionally, there is theoretical inconsistency in how Corry presents what he describes as a 'model' of a global polity (whose emergence is theorized in thick constructivist terms of discourse) and the absence from this model of the historically contingent and deep-seated constitutive identities that a thick constructivist theory would entail. Without a theory of these features, it is not clear why the emergence of a global polity from the contemporary international system would take on the neither hierarchical nor entirely anarchical structure that Corry suggests. While the world polity debate has generated several insights, no single theory of world polity formation points the way and the debate in general suffers from a presentist focus on unifying the contemporary international system, rather than international systems in general.

1.4 Towards an Alternative Theory

How can these theoretical limitations be overcome? The theory I want to propose draws support from a world historical perspective and eclectically draws upon contributions from available theories while being supplemented by sociological theory.[131] The aim is to make better explanatory sense of the world polity formation puzzle by theorizing it at a more general level applicable across cases.

Contrary to Neorealist theory, I argue that international systems can form a single unified polity. But, contrary to several constructivist theories, I argue that unification does not arise through a process of recognition socialization or from the diffusion of rules and norms of

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[130] Corry *Constructing a Global Polity,* p. 1-17.
[131] Rudra Sil and Peter J. Katzenstein, *Beyond Paradigms: Analytical Eclecticism in the Study of World Politics* (London: Palgrave, 2010).

appropriate behavior. Instead, the unification of international systems into single polities is theorized to occur from a combination of power concentrations and cultural preconditions. That is, a process of systemic unification emerges in contexts of extreme concentrations of power that create security interests of systemic scope, which, in turn incentivizes a process of systemic-unification via the circulation of collective identity constitutive collective-self-narratives. In other words, systemic unification occurs from a mutually supporting combination of structurally conditioned system-wide security incentives and culturally conditioned discursive action. Like state formation processes, systemic unification occurs in contexts of a military dominance over populations, where subordinated units are unable to effectively balance against a dominating power. However, due to the system-wide scale of systemic domination (the elimination of major internal and external threats), the process of systemic unification involves the qualitatively distinct feature and conditions of "supra-polity" collective identity formation. As such, there is a cultural hurdle for systemic unification, which explains why cases of systemic unification are rare relative to the cases of systemic domination in world history. This is to say that the step from systemic domination to a unification process only occurs under the circumstances of the cultural reception and discursive circulation of a unifying "supra-polity" collective-self-narrative. The discursive use of a collective-self-narrative in contexts lacking power concentrations do not produce a unifying effect, because units lack an incentive to unify in contexts of diffuse power and would counter-act narratives of unity with narratives of independence. The proposed theory is still densely stated, but its main eclectic point is that systemic unification emerges from the combination of structurally conditioned material interests with cultural preconditions. By combining structural and cultural conditions of collective identity formation in this specific way, this proposed theory concurs with Kaufman et. al.'s conclusion that, in contexts of hegemonic powers,

> Peoples that cling to their local identity often suffer a sad fate: they are inclined to balance, but not to trust their neighbors, so balancing tends to fail. They then tend to rebel frequently against their hegemonic master, and so face the hegemon's wrath – but not before weakening the hegemon itself, sometimes significantly.[132]

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[132] Kaufman et. al., *The Balance of Power in World History,* p. 229.

Clinging to local identities is costly, both for ruled and ruling polities. Because of these costs, power concentration incentivizes unification via collective identity construction. The ruled polities benefit from avoiding coercion and gaining benefits from hegemons and the ruling polities have an incentive to reduce rebellions and optimize administrative costs. It is this relational tension between ruling and ruled units that generates the incentive to unification. Systemically dominant empires often pursue a strategy of divide and rule, and dominated units often rebel, but in cases of the cultural reception of a unifying collective-self-narrative, a unifying process emerges from the tension. To optimize their rule, ruling polities project the unifying narrative whilst ruled polities circulate the unifying narrative to avoid coercion and improve their standing in the hierarchical order. To give this theory a bumper sticker statement: Universal unification emerges when universal powers are met by a universally acceptable unifying narrative.

Because the cultural-discursive aspect of the theorized unification process is crucial, but also complex and involves the importation of sociological theory, it is helpful to unpack this component of the theory first. Systemic unification is theorized to be socially constructed, in a process of the cultural reception and discursive circulation of transformative collective-self-narratives. This is a sociological explanation of unification, in that through the discursive use of collective-self-narratives, collective identities refer to relational social networks.[133] Collective-self-narratives are the discursive contents of collective identities. It is helpful to adopt the theory of the collective-self-narrative from contemporary sociological theory to specify constructivist aspects of the proposed theory. It is, for instance, one of the missing components in Ruggie's Durkhiemian account of the diachronic movement from organic solidarities of multiple units to the formation of a single unit via dynamic densities. Interaction alone does not explain unification. The sociological process of circulating narrative use increases with dynamic densities (increasing volumes of interaction between units), intensifying the unification of a system of polities into a single "supra-polity" by intensifying the volume of the narrative's social use. Collective identities have a "narrative structure", as they are composed of stories about the past, present, and future of systems of relations. The process of the relational use of a collective-

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[133] Charles Tilly, 'Ties That Bind … and Bound' in, *Identities, Boundaries, and Social Ties.* Boulder: Paradigm, 2005), pp. 3-12; Margaret R. Somers, 'The Narrative Constitution of Identity: A Relational and Network Approach' *Theory and Society* 23 (1994), pp. 605-649.

self-narrative by both ruled and ruling units is theorized to socially construct a larger shared collective identity that provides legitimating reasons for the unified structure.[134]

The cultural reception of a unifying narrative, in contexts of systemic domination, is a necessary but not a sufficient condition of systemic unification. By reception, I mean the cultural inheritance, development, or adoption of the narrative. The narrative must be first received before it can be used. The narrative use can issue first from dominated populations, wishing to avoid coercion and to establish status with the hierarchical system, or it can issue from the ruling population, wishing to legitimize and optimize their rule. As Griffiths has observed, classical international systems, like the Roman Empire, tended to follow a path from mechanical anarchies, to mechanical hierarchies under empires, that later developed organic hierarchies.[135] The jump from the hierarchies of imperial units *over* an organic system, to the hierarchies of a *single unit out of* an organic system requires an additional discursive narrative.[136] Not all hierarchical powers in world history have received and used such narratives. The majority of suzerain empires were legitimated with doctrines of supremacy without narratives of unity, employing strategies of divide and rule, and manipulation via intermediaries. Narratives of unity are rarely received in political cultures, but their use provides the added benefits of optimizing hierarchical orders, by supplementing them with solidarities, which systems divide and rule are not afforded. In the rare cases where a collective-self-narrative is received and used by dominant powers, the process of discursive projection and performance by ruling and ruled relationally circulates the collective-self-narrative, uniting them into a larger supra-polity. This is to say it involves discursive action from ruling elites to ruled people, *and* discursive action of ruled people to ruling elites, so establishing a discursive circulation of a (relationally contested but shared) collective-self-narrative between them. As such, a condition of the circulation of a narrative is its acceptability by both ruled people and ruling elites. This is why cultural reception is a necessary but also insufficient variable. The narrative must be accepted to be able to be

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[134] David Beetham, *The Legitimation of Power.* London: Palgrave, 1991), p. 64-97.

[135] Griffiths, 'The Waltzian Ordering Principle and International Change', p. 14.

[136] Worth noting here, is how Michael Mann's history of power in his multiple volumes, *The Sources of Social Power,* offers insights into the crucial role of power concentrations for the unification of polities, particularly where he discusses the case of ancient Egypt. Following conquest of the Nile Valley by Upper Egypt, Mann observes how a 'veritable unitary society resulted.': Michael Mann *The Sources of Social Power: Volume I* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), p. 111. However, as a model of power and not a theory of unification, Mann's analysis (particularly in the case of Egyptian unification), emphasizes conquest and domination, often overlooking the role of significant ideas and discourse, even though his "IEMP" model of power includes ideological factors. See, Mann *The Sources of Social Power: Volume I,* p. 108-115.

circulated. By acceptability, I mean its congruence within a cultural context. The narrative must be able to be coherently integrated into cultural discourses, or those cultural discourses need to be sufficiently invalidated to be replaced by a new discourse, for the narrative to be acceptable, and thereby able to be discursively circulated. As such, the cultural conditions of a unifying collective-self-narrative's use are its reception and acceptance, via congruence with basic beliefs, or the collapse, crisis and invalidation of those beliefs. By the congruence of a discursive narrative with a cultural context, I do not mean the syncretic fusion of narratives and underlying beliefs. Cultural fusion might be conducive, but it is not necessary for a narrative to be acceptable, which only implies a minimally shared cultural horizon of basic beliefs, not a maximal cultural consistency. The sources of these received narratives are also variable, being either the discourse of one part of the system, or, in contexts of shared culture across a system of polities, the discourse of a system-wide use. As such, because unification is a relational process, if there is a shift in cultural beliefs within a unified system, the unifying narrative will also need to shift for it to maintain congruence and acceptability.

Let me unpack the security instigation of this process of unification with reference to historical evidence. In extreme cases of systemic domination, where all the units of a system fail to balance, the domination of a system by one unit incentivizes the use of unifying collective-self-narrative, because hierarchical structures require legitimation, but also provide benefits of unity. That is, once systemic domination is established, both ruling and ruled units have incentives towards unification. The more unified the system, the more secure the interests of the rulers and the more optimal their rule. Likewise, the more unified the system, the less likely ruled units will be coerced by ruling units, and the more benefits ruled units will received by improving their status in the established hierarchy. This is evident in ancient international systems. For instance, the ruling Roman elite in the Roman Empire had an interest in diffusing the Stoic narrative of the *communis patria* of the *civitas maxima,* so to legitimate and optimize their rule, but the ruled polities also had an interest in circulating that narrative, not only to avoid violent oppression, but also to improve their status in the hierarchical structure of the empire. The more such narratives discursively circulate, across generational periods, in a relational process between ruling elites and ruled elites and non-elites, the more the system is unified, increasingly legitimating its hierarchical and unitary structure.

Combining these two components of the theory: The discursive circulation of collective identity constitutive collective-self-narratives amongst the units in the system is theorized to follow from security interests and benefits of rule optimization, in circumstances of systemic domination created by extreme concentrations of power. This is supported by evidence from world historical systems, where historical cases suggestive of unification are only found in contexts of systemic domination. These situations of concentrated material power create security interests that incentivize the relational circulation of unifying collective-self-narratives, which intervenes between domination and unification.[137] Fig. 1 illustrates how the emergence of systemic domination creates a system-wide security interest in unification, which instigates the intervening variable of a unifying collective-self-narrative.
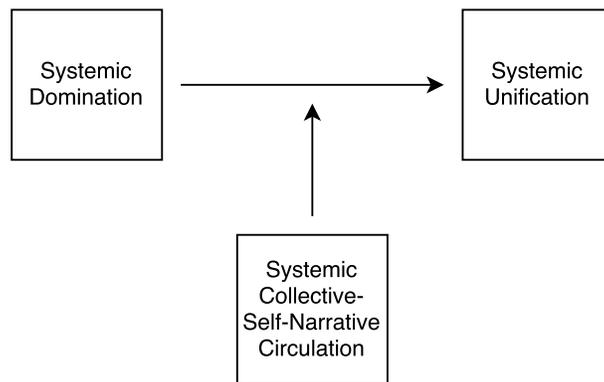
Fig. 1, Intervening variable of a received and circulated narrative.

The intervening variable of narrative circulation is the historical substance or discursive contents of unifications, socially constructing a collective identity across international systems, so legitimating and optimizing hierarchical orders through discursive action.

Contrasting the theorized process of unification with the opposite process of dis-unification that has occurred in the formation of the modern states system can help convey the workings of the proposed theory. As Christian Reus-Smit has argued, the globalization of the modern international system is explained by the decline of imperial powers and the discursive

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[137] I am taking the "all-the-way-down" constructivist position that what is taken to "count" as a material interest is socially constructed and historically variable, but I also take the position that material threats, connected to relative imbalances of material power, are consistently a significant problem across historical contexts of human behavior nonetheless, despite the variability in how material threats "count" as material interests. In this respect, the proposed theory is theoretically eclectic, but it is also internally consistent. For discussion of these issue, see, Wendt *Social Theory of International Politics,* chp.3, 'Ideas all the way down?', pp. 92-135.

reception of modern ideas of individual rights by ruled peoples, which created fatal legitimacy crises for ruling empires.[138] When empires failed to accommodate rights claims, ruled peoples moved for exacting independence from ruling empires, via sovereign nation-state formation. Cases of modern nation-state formation are too easily thought of as micro-cases of unification. From a systems level perspective, these cases of modern state formation are better understood as instances of how a system becomes a plurality of polities, against our inverse question of whether and how a system becomes a single polity. If the modern experience is one of struggles for recognition of independent liberties, the unification process I am advancing is one of struggles for the legitimation and membership in hierarchies. They are categorically opposite processes, working in opposite systemically centripetal and centrifugal directions.

Four points of clarification arise. First, like systemic *domination*, we might expect the introduction of a systemic *threat* to produce a unifying effect on a systemic scale, as a grand alliance would unite to balance against it.[139] Yet, in cases of systemic threats, the use of collective-self-narratives only temporarily unites international systems, and collective balancing often fails to occur at all.[140] For instance, historical evidence that (to an extent) is suggestive of a unifying process, is the narrative use of Greece and Greek as well as the language of *Hellas* and *Hellene*, used in the unification of the Greek city-states system against a common Persian threat. With knowledge of the advancing Persian invasion force, wrote Herodotus,

> All the Greeks who had the best interests of Greece at heart held a meeting … they decided to lay aside all mutual antagonism … The idea was to try to find a way to unite the whole of the Greek world –to get everyone to think and act in concert –on the grounds that all Greeks were equally threatened by the imminent danger.[141]

Discursive action of Greek and Hellene unification legitimated the Delian League, the alliance of Greek city-states, with its Athenian hegemonic leadership, as well as the Hellenic League, further Greek city-states under Spartan hegemonic leadership.[142] The coordinated efforts that Greek city-states eventually made against the invading Persians dissipated after threat removal,

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[138] Reus-Smit *Individual Rights and the Making of the International System.*
[139] Joseph M. Parent, *Uniting States: Voluntary Union in World Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).
[140] Kauman et. al., *The Balance of Power in World History.*
[141] Herodotus, *The Histories* Robin Waterfield (trans.) (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 145 [Book VII].
[142] Richard Little, 'The Greek City-States in the Fifth Century B.C.E.: Persia and the Balance of Power', in Kaufman et. al. (eds.), *The Balance of Power in World History* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2007), pp. 47-70.

gradually giving way to the polarized disunity of the Peloponnesian war.[143] To a degree, following threat removal, the initial systemic threat that legitimated the hierarchy of Athens began to translate into a potential systemic domination by Athens after the Persian threat was removed, which would be a case of an emergent systemic domination, not the introduction of a systemic threat. A second example of ephemeral unity in response to a systemic threat is the 19th Century Concert of Europe, formed out of the grand alliance of European powers against Napoleonic France. This case evinces a narrative of European collective identity, in the "Commonwealth of Europe", under the dominance of the concert powers, but the concert devolved into mutual rivalry and warfare. The ephemerality of unity via systemic threats is explained by how systemic threat removal reorients security interests, creating mutual insecurity and uncertainty whilst removing the incentives to unification that extreme concentrations of power create.[144]

Second, to what extent are unifying narratives merely imperial ideologies? The crucial difference is the unifying character of the narrative combined with its circulation by ruled and ruling alike across generational time-scales. While nearly all empires have projected civilizing missions and imperial principles of suzerainty, only a few rare cases also evince a unifying "supra-polity" narrative circulated amongst ruled and ruling peoples alike on approximately system-wide scales. As a process, unification is a matter of degree, where the depth and breadth of unification increases over time. While identifiable historical cases are imperial in nature, they are also cases of imperially dominated systems undergoing a gradual unifying process.

Third, this raises the question of the role of "othering" in the formation of a single polity out of a system of polities. Othering, it is widely agreed, plays a significant role in collective identity formation, but its importance should not obscure the relations of units "within" a unified supra-polity as well.[145] As I detail below, all historical cases evincing a unifying process on a systemic-scale involved "othered" out-groups, "uncivilized" or "barbarian" peoples, but these cases also involved the mutual recognitions of a shared collective identity amongst units "within" the unifying system. A world polity would be the first systemic unification to not later connect to a further regional "secondary" system, and so the location of the "other" in its case

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[143] Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War* Martin Hammond (trans.) (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 4 [1.3].

[144] S.M. Walt, *The Origins of Alliances* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987).

[145] Iver B. Neumann *Uses of the Other: 'The East' in European Identity Formation* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999).

would be on the inside, barring evidence of an "other" extraterrestrial civilization, be it established on Mars or of alien origin. Furthermore, the form or quality of othering should not be conceived as consistently exclusionary or implacable across cases.[146]

Lastly, to what extent are pre-modern and modern international systems comparable in respect to theorizing a unifying process? The differences between ancient and modern contexts are primarily the scale of the system via industrialized interaction capacities, the types of units from empires to nation-states, and the cultural context of modernity.[147] As such, a modern mode of power changes the means and discursive contents of a potential systemic domination and collective-self-narrative. It does not transform the conditions of systemic domination and collective-self-narrative circulation.

With these clarifications in mind, let me summarize the proposed theory of systemic unification: security interests concerning all the units in an international system, arising in cases of systemic domination, create system-wide incentives for the discursive use of unifying collective-self-narratives, which, if culturally received and discursively circulated, unify systems of polities into a single polity via the construction of a hierarchy legitimating "supra-polity" collective identity. In short, unification is theorized to emerge from a mutually supporting combination of structurally conditioned security incentives and culturally conditioned discursive action.

1.5 World Historical Cases

Does world history contain cases of systemic unification? How have the dynamics of unification unfolded in these cases? There are no cases of system-wide *unity* in world history, only cases that contain evidence suggestive of a *unifying process* on approximately system-wide scales. When considering world historical cases, it is helpful to recall Hedley Bull's suggestion that, 'there has never been a government of the world, but there has often been a government supreme over much of what for those subjected to it was the known world'.[148] These past systems, like imperial Rome for instance, were not "world polities", but they do evince a process of

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[146] Neumann *Uses of the Other*, p. 35-7.
[147] Barry Buzan and George Lawson, *The Global Transformation: History, Modernity, and the Making of International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).
[148] Bull *The Anarchical Society,* 2002 [1977], p. 244.

unification on system-wide scales, which can be abstracted in support of the theory advanced above.

Cases selected here are cases evincing a *unifying process*, not a maximal *unity*, as there are no cases of a maximally unified system in world history. Historical cases evince a range of degrees of unification. The vital evidence of a process of systemic unification in world historical cases is not the laws and offices of a single system-wide political apparatus. Nor is it the artifacts and practices of a single system-wide culture. Although these things are suggestive, they are not conclusive or sufficient. The vital evidence of a unifying process is the circulated use of a collective-self-narrative legitimating hierarchical orders across a system of polities. It is the a relational tension between systemically dominant units and dominated units combined with evidence of a unifying narrative relationally circulated amongst ruling and ruled units that evinces a unifying process. The presence of a narrative is not sufficient, because its relational circulation, that is, its use by ruling elites and everyday ruled people alike, is the key evidence of a unification process. The shared use of a common narrative amongst elites and everyday peoples, across multiple polities, is evidence of a shared "weness" feeling, the sense of belonging and solidarity constructing the shared collective identity that distinguishes an empire imperially dominating a system of polities, from the unification of a system into a single polity. Furthermore, stability is a correlate of legitimacy, but stability is not vital evidence of legitimated unification. Instability is suggestive of illegitimacy, and selected cases that evince unification correspond with long periods of relative stability, but stability has several contributing factors beyond legitimacy, including economics, demographics, ecology, technology, and good government.[149] Again, the vital evidence of systemic unification is the circulated use of a collective-self-narrative by elites and everyday people alike. Historical instances of systemic unification differ in specific social form and historical substance, depending on the principles of the historically specific collective-self-narrative received, discursively projected, and performed in the system.

In world history, evidence of a systemic unifying process is rare. This paucity of instances of systemic unification is consistent with the difficulty of meeting both the conditions of extreme concentrations of power and the cultural reception and circulation of unifying

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[149] Andrew Phillips, *War, Religion and Empire: The Transformation of International Orders* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

narratives. The majority of system-wide empires do not correspond to evidence of unifying processes. Cases containing systemic domination but lacking unification are explained by the cultural preconditions of unification, the need for the reception, use, and acceptance of unifying narratives. Not every empire receives a unifying narrative to use and not every used narrative is acceptable in the cultural contexts of ruled polities. Across international systems in world history, two cases provide substantial evince of a unifying process on approximately systemic scales, the unification of upper and lower Egypt and the Roman Empire. Neither of these cases unified the entirety of their systems, but they contain substantial evidence of a unifying process on approximately system-wide scales. The case of the European Union has been an important case for constructivist theorists of a post-Westphalian polity.[150] This case evinces the use of a collective-self-narrative of European collective identity, but while this case evinces a regional unification, it also evinces the unification of the region apart from the rest of the global system. The EU is a sub-systemic unification, a potential state formation, with no evident world polity aspirations. In the context of the increased interaction capacity of the contemporary worldwide system, the EU case would need to connect to more expansive narratives of world unity for it to be qualify as a involving systemic unification process.

Discussion of each illustrative case is highly stylized, to focus on the vital evidence of a unifying process, in the limited space available. Exploring illustrative cases in world history clarifies and provides supportive evidence of the proposed theory. The cases of the unification of Upper and Lower ancient Egypt and the Roman Empire are selected because they provide substantive evidence of a unifying process and can be covered in the limited space available.

Ancient Egypt

The ancient Nile Valley and surrounding territories, prior to its unification, formed an international system in its own right, with evidence of regular trade, diplomatic relations, and warfare, but limited relations beyond it.[151] The relations of units within the ancient Nile Valley and nearby territories were regular, while relations beyond the ancient Nile Valley before the rise of imperial Egypt, were irregular, dissipated at a distance, and were reinforced by the structural

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[150] J.G. Ruggie, 'Territoriality and Beyond: Problematizing Modernity in International Relations', *International Organization* 47:1 (1993), pp. 139-174.
[151] Buzan and Little *International Systems in World History*, p. 195, 220, 229.

modifiers of natural barriers of water and deserts, isolating the Nile Valley system from foreign powers.[152] The precise events leading to the domination of Egypt by Upper Egypt are not entirely settled from the archeological record. Yet, the war of Upper Egypt against the Lower Egyptian polities appears to be a decisive event, establishing a ruling polity over the entire Nile Valley system, roughly in 3100 B.C.E.[153] With irregular and structurally modified relations with polities beyond the Nile Valley, the system became dominated by a single power. During its Early Dynastic Period, Old Kingdom, and Middle Kingdom, the extreme concentration of power in the system under Pharaonic rule saw the emergence of a virtually unitary polity. The condition of systemic domination persisted for 1450 years during these periods, starting roughly with rise of the Early Dynastic Period in 3100 and ending with the Hyksos invasion of Egypt in 1650 B.C.E.. Only two relatively brief periods of civil war and disunity occurred in this 1450 years. The first and second intermediate periods, marked the brief transitions between the Early Dynastic Period, the Old Kingdom, and the Middle Kingom, the first intermediate period being roughly 100 years, and the second being roughly 50 years.

In relative isolation and dominated by a succession of single ruling powers for 1450 years, the Egyptian system underwent a marked degree of unification, virtually unparalleled in world history, both in its depth and longevity.[154] However, across its vast history, Egypt became increasingly connected to regional powers by diplomacy, trade, and war. The end of the relative discreetness of the Egyptian system can be roughly set around the Hyksos invasion of Egypt 1650-1523 B.C.E., after which Egypt engaged in imperial relations beyond the Nile Valley during the Eighteenth to Twentieth Dynasties, and increasingly became incorporated into the regional Amarna system, with major engagements with the Hittite Empire over control of the buffer territory of Canaan and Syria. Prior to Egypt's incorporation into the regional system of multiple Empires, Pharaonic Egypt existed in relative isolation for a relatively significant period of 1450 years. When incorporated into a larger international system, the case of Egypt shifted, from the unification of a unit *out of* a system, to state formation *in* a system. As such, the

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[152] Mann *The Sources of Social Power: Volume I,* p. 111, 113-114.

[153] Mann *The Sources of Social Power: Volume I,* p. 110; I.E.S. Edwards, 'The Early Dynastic Period in Egypt', in I.E.S. Edwards, C.J. Gadd, N.G.L. Hammond (eds.) *The Cambridge Ancient History,* 3rd Edition, Volume 1, Part 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 1-70; Stevenson W. Smith, 'The Old Kingdom in Egypt and the Beginning of the First Intermediate Period', in I.E.S. Edwards, C.J. Gadd, N.G.L. Hammond (eds.) *The Cambridge Ancient History,* 3rd Edition, Volume 1, Part 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 145-207.

[154] Mann *The Sources of Social Power: Volume I,* p. 111.

Egyptian case of systemic domination under consideration here only occurs between 3100-1650 B.C.E..

During this period, a unifying process is most evident in the Old and Middle Kingdoms, 2686-1650 B.C.E. Evidence of a unifying process is found in the narrative of *Maat,* which pervaded the political culture and daily life of Pharaonic Egypt. There is evidence suggesting the Nile Valley system had a common culture before its political unification,[155] from which the unifying discursive narrative, to legitimate and optimize Pharaonic rule, was received. Materially dominating the system, the ruling Upper Egyptian polity became incentivized to secure and optimize its rule. The Pharaonic hierarchy gradually came to project the Pharaonic unifying religion based on the concept of *Maat,* which the record suggests predated, but was modified to legitimate, Pharaonic rule. This narrative, circulated through daily rituals and ceremonies in temples established across the system, constituted both ruling and ruled Egyptians as upholders of *Maat* in the cosmos. The formative period of this narrative and its institutionalization is considered to be the Old Kingdom, 2686-2125 B.C.E, which suggests the Early Dynastic Period relied more heavily on legitimating principles of divine suzerainty, rather than principles of unity. *Maat* was the belief system of a divine order of the world and cosmos, the numinous and connected nature of all things, connected to belief in and ambition of immortality in the afterlife. The extent of these beliefs across the system before the rise of the Pharaohs is unclear, but the unifying process in the case of ancient Egypt reached a high degree of diffusion through the circulation of these beliefs. Gradually they came to be 'embedded in Phaoronic society and affected life for all Egyptians, from the poorest to the divine king himself'.[156] This belief in *Maat* constituted a Pharaonic civilizing mission, but also, through the process of projection and performance in daily rituals became deeply and pervasively held by ancient Egyptians in general, common and elite, constituting the moral purpose and unifying collective-self-narrative of the Egyptian imperial order.

The suzerainty of the Pharaoh's was predominantly legitimated in Egyptian history through claiming familial connection to the god *Ra*, but the principle of Egyptian unity was deeply connected to *Maat.* The established Pharaonic suzerainty in the Early Dynastic Period created an incentive for Pharaohs to unify and optimize their dominated system. Yet, the ruled

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[155] Mann *The Sources of Social Power: Volume I,* p. 108.
[156] K. Szpakowska, 'Religion in Society: Pharaonic', in A.B. Lloyd (ed.) *A Companion to Ancient Egypt* (Sussex: Wiley, 2010), p. 507.

peoples also had incentives, to avoid coercive oppression by the ruling powers and to improve their status and deriving benefits from the hierarchical order. With these incentives, the Pharaohs developed and discussively projected the narrative of *Maat,* establishing themselves as the proper maintainers of *Maat*, the *menekh,* which they performed in daily ritual offerings to *Maat,* in person and by designated proxy priests in temples across the kingdom.[157] The ruled peoples, in this narrative, were understood to be contributors to *Maat.* Together, ruled and ruling shared the collective-self-narrative of the maintainers and contributors to *Maat,* the people upholding *Maat.* The performance of daily rituals by ruled and ruling people circulated the discursive narrative, on a daily basis across generations. This discursive circulation, amongst ruling to ruled constituted the collective identity of the Egyptian polity, uniting a former system of polities into a single polity. Belief in *Maat* came to inform public and private law as the subjects and rulers of ancient Egypt came, across generations, to performatively conceive themselves as belonging to this maintenance of *Maat*, as contributors to *Maat,* by observing *Maat* and circulating its narrative in their participation in ritual offerings to *Maat.*[158]

Within Egypt, arising in the Old Kingdom, the growing institutionalization of the daily discursive use and ritual practice of the narrative of *Maat*, across the system for generations, evinces a unifying process on a scale that was, for a time, of a systemic-scale. The circulation of the collective-self-narrative of maintainers and contributors to *Maat* contributed to the constitution of the collective identity of the Egyptian polity, contributing to the social construction of a single polity, out of a system of independent polities.

The Roman Empire

The rise of the Roman Empire brought one polity to dominate the entirety of the Mediterranean system for nearly 700 years. Roman hegemonic dominance in the Mediterranean system emerges after Rome's defeat of its Carthaginian rival in the Third Punic War, 149-146 B.C.E., which coincided with dominance of Greece by Rome, though a mix of invitation and imposition,

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[157] A.B. Lloyd, *Ancient Egypt: State and Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), p. 65-96.
[158] E. Teeter, *The Presentation of Maat: Ritual and Legitimacy in Ancient Egypt* (Chicago: The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 1997).

including the military defeat of the Macedonian Empire.[159] Full Roman dominance of the entire Mediterranean system was established roughly by the time of the battle of Actium, 31 B.C.E., with the incorporation of Egypt into the Empire. Asia Minor and Gaul had already been brought under Roman domination by that time. Roman dominance of the Mediterranean system was maintained until roughly 476 C.E., with the collapse of the Western Roman Empire.

An interesting aspect of the Roman case is its connection and contrast to the Hellenic system, which illustrates the mutually supporting factors of structural and cultural conditions of unification. Zeno's Stoic cosmopolitan philosophy was present and became widely diffused across the Hellenistic system. However, Greek Stoicism was a personal ethic, not the public doctrine that the Romans later made it.[160] The Stoic narrative was not used by the Hellenistic monarchies and the Macedonian kingdoms practically had and in principle recognized no superior amongst them. Hellenistic monarchies widely practiced legitimation based on the right of "spear won" conquest and the military authority and excellence of the Macedonian kings. Antigonus attempted to claim the suzerainty of the system claimed by Alexander the Great, but his forces were defeated in a grand alliance of Macedonian rivals that dissolved the system's tradition of suzerainty and established the Hellenistic order of multiple monarchical empires.[161] Across the Hellenistic system of rival Macedonian kingdoms, the narrative of the *cosmopolis* diffused as a personal ethical philosophy, but not a public doctrine of systemic political unity.

However, in its reception by imperial Roman elites, a Stoic narrative was put to political use, in its projection through public temples across the Empire.[162] The hierarchy of the Roman Empire was legitimated by this Romanized Stoic narrative, which conceived all humankind as one polity, the *cosmopolis*.[163] As the Roman elites received this narrative in their exposure to the Hellenistic world, it suited their interests in legitimating and optimizing their imperial dominance, and projected it across the system through networks of public temples. Roman subjects also had the ability to become priests themselves. Temple priests conducted public

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[159] Daniel Deudney, 'A Republic for Expansion': The Roman Constitution and Empire and Balance-of-Power Theory', in Kaufman et. al. (eds.), *The Balance of Power in World History* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2007), p. 158.
[160] The classicist Tarn read Alexander as pursuing a cosmopolitan ambition, taking up Zeno's teachings, but this was an embellishment and is disputed by contemporary scholarship (Richter 2011, 11-14).
[161] Adam Watson, *The Evolution of International Society: A Comparative Historical Analysis* (London: Routledge, 1992), p. 71-72.
[162] Daniel S. Richter, *Cosmopolis: Imagining the Community in Late Classical Athens and the Early Roman Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 5-9.
[163] Katja Maria Voge, *Law, Reason, and the Cosmic City: Political Philosophy in the Early Stoa* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

ceremonies and rituals that Roman subjects were required to participate in. Performance of public ceremonies and rituals, in the ancient Roman worldview, maintained the favour of the gods, and so sustained the Empire. As such, participation in public ceremonies and rituals, through performance of prayers, oaths, and offerings, demonstrated membership in and support for the Empire. Roman Emperors, following Augustus, held the role of chief priest of the Empire. Roman Stoicism predated the imperial constitution of Rome and famous Roman Stoa, Cicero and Cato, were Republicans. Yet, the Stoic narrative of cosmic unity was later connected by Roman elites to concepts of unity and hierarchy: *orbis Romanum,* approximately meaning the Roman command of the world, and the *communis patria,* the paternal community of all humankind. Several generations into the Empire, Emperor Aurelius philosophized that if, 'the universe is a kind of city; in what other common constitution will anyone say that the whole human race shares'?[164] Ovid wrote, 'at once a city (*urbis)* and a world (*orbis)'.*[165] The Stoic narrative of unity was also diffused via symbolic ensigns and discursively circulated through public practices including acclamations, that 'invoked imagined visions of the empire as a unified community'.[166] With degrees and variation across the empire, this narrative, received and projected by the Roman elite, was circulated amongst ruled and ruling people, via regular practices of public religion and acclamations across generational timescales, gradually unifying the Empire into a larger imagined polity. Unification was not universal, but is evident to an extent. A major exception, for instance, is the Roman Jewish War. The recognition and admissibility of images of deified Caesar in Jerusalem, amongst other religious practices, were seen as contributing tensions of the conflict.[167]

The case of the Roman Empire can also be seen as formally institutionalizing the narrative of a single system-wide polity, in the eventual establishment of classes across the empire's provinces and territories. There was a structural unification of the Empire beyond the intermediaries that realized the discursive expression of the world city. By the late Empire, irrespective of one's polity of origin, a family could improve its standing in the six levels of imperial citizenship, generation by generation, as each generation could ascend one level, given

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[164] Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations* Christopher Gill (trans.) (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), P. 21 [Book 4.4].

[165] Quoted in, Edward Keene, *International Political Thought: A Historical Introduction* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005), p. 46.

[166] Clifford Ando, *Imperial Ideology and Provincial Loyalty in the Roman Empire* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), p. 8.

[167] Josephus. *The Jewish War* G.A. Wiliamson (trans.) (New York: Penguin, 1959), p. 151.

certain conditions. Different peoples across the Empire could, to an extent, practically as well as discursively transcend their local loyalties, to imagine and practice a single polity of the world. This narrative legitimated the series of patron client relations between Rome and its ruled polities, giving their bargain based unity a cultural and moral basis, optimizing their rule in reducing incentives of revolt, so easing the governance of provinces, and eventually justifying the expansion of citizenship across the late Empire. The rise of the Empire was partly due to the lack of a grand alliance or balancing power to prevent it.[168] But, the endurance of the Empire is partly attributable to its unifying process that legitimated and optimized its rule and mitigated the development of counter-hegemonic alliances from within the empire, contributing to long periods of stability amidst thinly spread forces vulnerable to multiple simultaneous rebellions across a vast territory.

The unifying process was not absolute, as the Roman Jewish War illustrates, but neither was it final. A further significant aspect of the Roman case is the rise of Christianity and eventual transition of the Empire's public religion from Stoic paganism to Christianity. The spread of Christian beliefs across the Empire limited the acceptability of Stoic rituals amongst ruled populations. Increasing numbers of Christians, including imperial soldiers, refused to sacrifice for the deified Emperors and gods in public rituals. The beliefs of soldiers was particularly significant, because they played a key role in supporting rival would-be Emperors aiming to concentrate power in the system. The tension between Christian beliefs and public religion eventually resulted in a transition, through the combination Christian beliefs and Roman power in the military victories of Constantine. By 324 C.E., Constantine had militarily defeated all his rivals and again brought the domination of the system under a single Emperor. In power, Constantine legalized Christianity and enthusiastically supported it with the spread of Churches across the Empire. Christianity became the official public religion of the Empire in the 4th Century C.E.. Although pagan worship declined, it persisted across the Empire for several centuries, whist Christianity continued to spread. The transition of public unifying narratives from Stoicism to Christianity in the Roman world illustrates the relational bottom-up and top-down tension between ruling and ruled in the unifying process. Unification requires unifying narratives, but a narrative acceptable to both ruling and ruled is required for it to be circulated.

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[168] Deudney, 'A Republic for Expansion', p. 171.

The conquest of the Western Roman Empire by Germanic tribes in 476 C.E. effectively terminated a Roman unifying process on a systemic scale, even though Christianity continued to spread across the system, despite the collapse of the Western Roman Empire. The conquering Germanic tribes were themselves Christians, although there were multiple sects of Christianity. A unified polity of all Christendom remained an ambition and ideal but was never a reality. The Roman Empire persisted in the East (retroactively described by historians as the Byzantine Empire), centered on the capital city of Constantinople. Lacking sufficient military power, the domination of the entirety of the system by the Eastern Roman Empire was not re-established, despite several attempts. The history of the Eastern Roman Empire is one of a hegemonic imperial power, which eventually declined and collapsed. Much of Northern Africa and the Italian peninsula were re-conquered under Emperor Justinian I, in the 550s C.E., but these territories were eventually lost again. The Eastern Roman Empire, although enduring for nearly a thousand years, faced significant rival powers North, East, and West of it, and was eventually conquered by rising Ottoman power in 1453 C.E. Despite the continued spread of a potentially unifying narrative of Christendom, a unifying process had subsided from the system lacking a dominant power.

The Egyptian and Roman cases evince a process of unification of multiple polities through the theorized process on approximately system-wide scales in their respective international systems. In both cases, a power established material dominance over an international system, whist receiving, modifying, and projecting a unifying narrative that was circulated amongst ruling and ruled people across the system over generational time-scales. These cases evince the interests of hierarchical powers in sustaining and optimizing their rule as well as the interest of ruled peoples in avoiding violent oppression and improving their status in unified hierarchical structures. Both these cases also provide degrees of evidence of the sociological circulation of collective-self-narratives that provided normative reasons for unity, so creating legitimated hierarchies, rather than merely materially dominant hierarchies. In each case, a collective-self-narrative was received by an imperial power, projected by that power, to different degrees accepted, and circulated back by ruled populations across multiple generations, evincing the process of a system unifying into a single vast polity with a collective identity, legitimated hierarchy, and ability to mobilize resources. In the Roman case, the dominating power ruled a larger international system, with a higher degree of cultural diversity, which made

the articulation of an acceptable unifying difficult across the entire system. At a theoretical level, Kaufman et. al. are correct in their assessment that the success of would-be suzerain powers depends on a combination of factors, including good administrative governance and prevailing principles of unit identity.[169] The proposed theory supported by the above illustrative cases makes the additional claim that cases of extreme imbalances also create systemic security interests and benefits of unification that incentivize the circulation of collective-self-narratives amongst ruled and ruling peoples, forming a shared collective identity of all the units in the system.

From a world historical perspective, we can see that the conditions of systemic unification are becoming increasingly difficult to meet. The increasing interaction capacities of units (with the wheel, sail, camel and horse, in ancient times, and industrial transportation and communication in modern times) have made systems ever wider, drawing multiple systems together. The ancient Egyptian system of the Nile valley, for instance, later became connected to the secondary Amarna system.[170] The Roman system came to form a system with the Germanic polities as well as Persia. This steady enlargement of international systems across world history increases the number of units in systems and thereby decreases the likelihood of systemic concentrations of power that instigate systemic unification. Furthermore, the historical expansion of systemic scales via increasing interaction capacities of units involves increasing cultural contexts in the system, which decreases the likelihood of a narrative being congruent and acceptable across units. In the rare circumstances where power concentrations combined with the cultural reception of a unifying narrative, the system eventually expanded, reframing the cultural context and relative distributions of power. Increasing interaction capacity partly explains why cases evincing systemic unification diminish in frequency across history and are only found in pre-modern contexts.

1.6 Implications for the Contemporary System

How does the proposed theory clarify the question of a possible world polity formation in the contemporary international system? The proposed theory, supported by illustrative cases,

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[169] Kaufman et. al. (eds.) *The Balance of Power in World History,* p. 229.

[170] Raymond Cohen and Raymond Westbrook, *Amarna Diplomacy: The Beginnings of International Relations* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000).

suggests a world polity is highly unlikely in the near future, due to the diffusing of power in the system and the difficulty of articulating a unifying narrative in a late modern nationalist political culture. The proposed theory also clarifies the changes in the concentration of power and articulation of unifying narratives needed for the unlikely, but nonetheless possible, unification of the contemporary international system.

First, the proposed theory highlights how the structural and cultural ingredients of systemic unification are absent from the contemporary international system. For instance, power is insufficiently concentrated to initiate a unifying process. The unipolarity of US hegemony, after the Cold War, while pronounced, is still insufficiently dominant in the system to initiate a unifying process and lacks a unifying narrative acceptable in a late modern context. The US, is balanced against by the nuclear deterrents and security capabilities of a resurgent Russia and rising China. [171] Furthermore, the cultural conditions of unification are unmet in the contemporary system. The potential contents of a unifying collective-self-narrative for all humankind are limited by the nationalist and anti-imperial discursive context of late modern political culture.[172] Yet, while the proliferation of nuclear deterrence has significantly diminished the prospects for the domination of the system by a single power, Deudney and Wendt are nonetheless right to suggest that nuclear proliferation has generated unique systemic security threats.[173] The arsenals of the super powers threaten every unit in the system, which creates an incentive to unify. As Deudney argues, 'The main impetus to create a world government comes not from a desire to embody consensual principles of mutual restraint, but rather from the brute facts of rising interdependence in anarchy and the acute insecurity it produces'.[174] Ecological crisis is potentially approaching this level of systemic security threat as well. Yet, in both the case of nuclear weapons and ecological crisis, this has produced a reliance on regime complexes, of mutually assured destruction in the case of nuclear weapons, and a more incipient and diffuse regime complex in response to ecological crisis. The deterrence regime, in particular, has

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[171] Daniel Deudney, 'Unipolarity and Nuclear Weapons', in G. Ikenberry et. al. (eds.), *International Relations Theory and the Consequences of Unipolarity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp. 282-316.
[172] Bartelson, *Visions of World Community,* p. 1; Rodney Bruce Hall, *National Collective Identity: Social Constructs and International Systems* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999).
[173] Deudney, *Bounding Power*; Wendt, 'Why a World State is Inevitable', p. 508.
[174] Deudney, *Bounding Power,* p. 264.

reoriented the security threat posed by nuclear weapons, making strategic deterrence the guarantee of systemic security, rather than insecurity.[175]

Second, the advanced theory clarifies the structural and cultural changes necessary for systemic unification. Structural and cultural changes are equally necessary to enable the systemic unification of world polity formation in the contemporary context. The development of a new disruptive technology, invalidating nuclear weapons, may redistribute material power in sufficient degrees to enable systemic domination. A technology with the capability to disarm or destroy an entire nuclear arsenal's first and second strike capacities would be such a technology potentially enabling an extreme unipolar domination of the system. However, it seems equally if not more plausible that the development of new weapons technologies will only compound systemic insecurity, by arraigning additional systems of deterrence. The contemporary use of international regimes to manage weapons of mass destruction is persistent, although it is unsatisfactory to some intellectuals and statespersons.[176] If there were a limited nuclear exchange, however, the perception of the systemic security threat would likely be revised and instigate alternative policy. As Deudney suggests, 'More likely … is the scenario of "after the deluge, the covenant"'.[177] Such an event might invalidate prevailing beliefs that underpin the deep structure of the international system. New policies might involve the revision of the contemporary regime towards disarmament, in a concert of great powers, or the ascension of a world government or federation with a centralized security system, or perhaps in a world union of some sorts, with a radically reformed and expanded United Nations governance and security system. If large-scale calamities were produced by climate change, perhaps the inhabitability of parts and major centers of multiple great powers, then geo-engineering systems of planetary climate control may be opted for, potentially involving a unifying effect. The extent of that potential unification is unclear, however, because an international regime complex would likely suffice for the management of planetary climate control systems.[178] In any case, if a global crisis initiated the establishment of a world state or world union, or if a hypothetical global revolution captured multiple great powers, of if a world empire emerged, thus concentrating power and

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[175] Daniel Deudney, 'The Great Decent: Global Governance in Historical and Theoretical Perspective', in Amitav Acharya (ed.) *Why Govern? Rethinking Demand and Progress in Global Governance.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), pp. 31-54.
[176] Craig, *Glimmer of a New Leviatha,* p. 172-3.
[177] Deudney, *Bounding Power,* p. 264.
[178] Robert O. Keohane and David G. Victor, 'The Regime Complex for Climate Change. *Perspectives on Politics* 9:1 (2011), pp. 7-23.

dominating the system, a world polity formation process would still require the cultural reception of a collective-self-narrative acceptable to the majority of humankind. Lacking such a narrative, a world revolutionary power would be a case of systemic domination without systemic unification.

The prevailing anti-hierarchical and nationalist political culture of late modernity constitutes a significant challenge to the formulation of a unifying collective-self-narrative to legitimate the hierarchies of a world polity. Yet, just as the ancient Egyptian and Roman cases involved the modification of received narratives, perhaps available cultural resources could be similarly modified. To reformulate Ruggie's popularized phrase, the question is: what narrative could hang the world polity together?[179] Daniel Deudney, amongst others, has suggested a 'terra-politan' narrative, where the planet is conceived as the common homeland and habitat for a new collective identity of humankind.[180] This narrative is still vague however, and encounters rival cosmopolitan narratives of unity in the contemporary political discourse of world order. The emergence of a unifying process is only possible if both these conditions are met: the concentration of power threatening all units in the system and the cultural reception of a unifying narrative acceptable to the majority of units in the system. Due to the diffusion of power via nuclear deterrents as well as the nationalist and anti-hierarchical political culture of the contemporary international system, the combination of an overwhelming concentration of power and a unifying narrative acceptable to the majority of humankind is highly unlikely, if not entirely impossible, in the foreseeable future.

1.7 Conclusion

I have argued the world polity debate has been too presentist in its focus on the contemporary system of states and can benefit from an exploration of world historical cases of international systems with the more abstract and general question of how international systems unify into single polities. Available world polity formation theories encounter difficulties and struggle with contradictory evidence when viewed across world historical cases of international systems. In

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[179] Ruggie, *Constructing the World Polity,* p. 1.
[180] Daniel Deudney, 'Global Village Sovereignty: Intergenerational Sovereign Publics, Federal-Republican Earth Constitutions, and Planetary Identities', in Karen T. Litfin (ed.) *The Greening of Sovereignty in World Politics.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1998), pp. 299-325; Bartelson, *Visions of World Community,* p. 181-2.

response, I have suggested the emergence of a world polity would be an instance of "systemic unification" and advanced the outlines of a theory that eclectically combines insights from available theories, so emphasizing a combination of structural and cultural conditions of unification. The unification of international systems into single polities is theorized to occur in contexts of systemic concentrations of power, via the relational tensions produced in contexts of systemic domination, that create security interests of systemic scope, which, in turn incentivize a collective identity formation process via the discursive circulation of collective-self-narratives. I supported this proposed theory in two illustrative cases. I argued further that this proposed theory indicates that the conditions of systemic unification have become increasingly unlikely to occur across world history, due to the increasing interaction capacity of units that has expanded international systems, eventually to the worldwide scale of the modern international system, creating new relative distributions of power and diversifying cultural contexts. Lastly, I suggested this theory contributes to the explanation of why there is no world polity today, by identifying its absent structural and cultural conditions.

The ancient idea of "one" unified world is still debated amongst intellectuals today, both in terms of its possibility and normative desirability. In this chapter, I have not sought to address the normative or pragmatic desirability of world unity. I have sought to clarify the theoretical debate about the possibility, conditions, and contributing processes of world polity formation beyond anarchy and hegemony in international relations. By bringing in a world historical perspective to the world polity debate, this chapter has clarified how a world polity would be an instance of "systemic unification", which, in the contemporary system, is highly unlikely due to the diffusion of power through nuclear deterrents and the nationalist and anti-hierarchical political culture of a late modern context.

Chapter Two.

The World Polity Debate: Establishing Criteria

2.1 Introduction

Every vision of a world polity is idiosyncratic to some proponent, some class or nation, great thinker or leader, be it bourgeois or socialist cosmopolitans, Marcus Aurelius's Stoicism or Mencius's Confucianism. Yet, all such visions are also idiosyncratic to their age and epoch, special to the background worldviews that define all the ideas of the age, those most primary age-defining worldviews that mold both the ascendant ideas and their rivals into the form of the age. In the previous chapter, I argued that the realization of a world polity is not ruled out of possibility today, theoretically speaking, although it is highly unlikely, and that its emergence has an important discursive and conceptual component, centered on the use of collective-self-conceptions in the constitution of collective identities. The question that came out of that argument is whether there is a collective-self-conception that can constitute a world polity today. This question of a unifying narrative is all the more crucial because any potential concentration of power in the system would also require the reception of a unifying narrative for a unifying process to emerge. Trans-civilizational and ecological narratives were taken as likely candidates, although there are contenders besides these, forming a debate about the proper conception of a realizable world polity.[181]

Yet, before I wade into the world polity debate, I need to first propose some criteria that I can use to evaluate competing conceptions. I also need to suggest criteria of a general kind, criteria applicable to the conception of any practice or collection of practices, be it democracy, capitalism, secularism, diplomacy, the state, war, world order, the society of states, or a world polity. If I instead advanced criteria specific to the conception of a world polity, rather than practices in general, it would overly predetermine the question, damaging the ideal of a systematic and even handed evaluation, so undermining its ability to persuade participants in the world polity debate, regardless of their predispositions. If, for example, I were to claim a world

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[181] See, Appendix I: 'Predominant Visions in the Contemporary World Polity Debate'.

polity must meet a tailor-made criteria like universal comity or hospitality, rather than a general criteria like practicality, I would predetermine the features of the concept, making the process of evaluation unduly biased to a certain conception. As such, I advance three general criteria that I argue can be used to evaluate the conception of any practice, or collection of practices, including a world polity.

To give a sense of my position upfront, the criteria I advance are: comprehensibility, coherence, and practicality. These criteria are needed for a conception to be acceptable to participants, but also realizable by participants in practice. I explain and defend these proposed criteria below, but let me clarify three points presently. First, it is helpful to explain upfront how the process of applying these criteria in my conceptual analysis involves eliminating conceptions that fail to meet criteria, but also how it narrows the debate down to those few conceptions that most successfully meet the criteria. No conception of a practice is perfectly coherent, for example, or perfectly practicable under any circumstances. Instead, there are nearly always a small number of conceptions that, to an extent, are comprehensible, more or less coherent, and practical, etc.. This is why ultimately there are rival conceptions and no single true answer. The point of evaluating rivals via the application of criteria is to narrow down the debate to which conceptions are successful, and ultimately, which is most successful in meeting my criteria. Yet, second, as a conceptual investigation this process of applying criteria, properly conducted, is not like screening job applications against criteria. It is not a test-like examination. It is more like conceptual design, where available conceptual models are sifted for conceptual features that combine into a new more successful conception. In this respect, I am framing my proposed criteria in a "discursive pragmatist" approach to conceptual analysis, with inspiration from Friedrich Kratochwil's oeuvre.[182] Third, I ground this approach and my proposed criteria in the claim that concepts, and self-conceptions in particular, are all contingent on worldviews or images, viz. more fundamental conceptions of what "selves" are and conceptions of the cosmos more generally.[183] Because worldviews are multiple and historical, I am not interested in 'Truth'

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[182] Friedrich Kratochwil, 'Of False Promises and Good Bets: A Plea for A Pragmatic Approach to Theory Building', *Journal of International Relations and Development,* 10:1 (2007), pp. 1-15; Jorg Friedrichs and Friedrich Kratochwil, 'On Acting and Knowing: How Pragmatism Can Advance International Relations Research and Methodolgy', *International Organization,* 63 (2009), pp. 701-731.

[183] This position is inspired by a large body of work, including R.G. Collingwood's historical conception of human beings and Charles Taylor's *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991). This kind of point has also been developed in Kenneth E. Boulding's classic *The Image: Knowledge in Life and Society* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1956). Similar points have been made in

criteria. Concepts have no single immutable meaning. I am interested in tenable and useful concepts, ones justifiable by argument and practically applicable to practice.

I make my case in three steps. First, I ground the argument in the suggestion that concepts, and self-conceptions in particular, derive from historically contingent worldviews. With this background premise, I assess the need and possibility of establishing criteria with which to critically assess rival conceptions of practices in general. Second, I develop discursive pragmatism as an approach to conceptual analysis. Third, I propose three criteria and defend them against alternatives. This last step takes up the majority of my discussion.

2.2 The Sources of Concepts and Need for Criteria

By a "conception" of a world polity, I mean a position on what features the concept contains and how they combine. In other words, the conceptual aspect of the world polity debate, or any conceptual debate about practices in general, concerns what features this concept combines and what their relations are.[184] A practice like democracy, for instance, has several conceptual features, including the concatenation of positions, via votes perhaps, and deliberations, with the aim of collective decisions. Different conceptions of democracy will emphasize different features, and take contrasting positions on how and why they combine to form the concept. This is the kind of conceptual debate at the heart of the world polity debate about what collective-self-conception of all humankind could discursively and practically constitute a world polity of all humankind. World polity thinkers generally assert the concept contains the feature of all humankind, as well as some kind of political unity of all humankind, but liberal cosmopolitan thinkers, for example, also attribute a certain universal morality to the concept, whilst historicist cosmopolitans emphasize the feature of a new cosmopolitan world culture, and others emphasize a shared planetary habitat. These different positions, in this way, involve disagreement on how and why the features of all humankind and a political unity of all humankind combine.

How can these complicated conceptual debates be evaluated and made sense of? I want to suggest establishing criteria is helpful. Without reference to common criteria, differing positions

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the classic literature of International Relations in Kenneth N. Waltz's *Man, the State and War: A Theoretical Analysis* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1954) and C.A.W. Manning's *The Nature of International Society* (London: Bell and Sons, 1962).

[184] Felix Berenskoetter (ed.) *Concepts in World Politics* (London: Sage, 2016), p. 1-20.

on what a world polity means would be incommensurable, talking past one another. The debate would be futile, intractable. The contemporary world polity debate has no established criteria. Criteria are needed to establish grounds for critically comparing conceptions as better and worse. Establishing criteria is itself not a straightforward question, however, because the general question of how to analyze concepts is debated in philosophy and the social sciences. Argument about better and worse conceptions, argument about the meaning of concepts, is a significant part of Philosophy, but is often referred to as conceptual analysis in the sciences.[185] An aspect of conceptual analysis is conceptual history, such as conceptual archeology and genealogy, developed by Quentin Skinner, Reinhart Koselleck, and Michel Foucault, for example.[186] But, in this study, I am more interested in what can be done with the concept of a world polity than what has been done with it. This is not to say that conceptual histories are not beneficial. Conceptual histories divulge the sources of conceptual debates and enlarge our awareness of the various ways in which concepts can be used, by supplying a stock of historical examples. Jens Bartelson's conceptual history of 'world community', for instance, has demonstrated how historical world pictures have shaped the history of the concept, from the ancients and medievals to the moderns.[187] Different conceptions have their sources in historical worldviews that entail different moral purposes, self-conceptions, and cosmologies more generally. Isaiah Berlin once made this point in clearer prose in an early essay,

> Men's beliefs in the sphere of conduct are part of their conception of themselves and others as human beings; and this conception in its turn, whether conscious or not, is intrinsic to their picture of the world… This model or paradigm determines the content as well as the form of beliefs and behavior.[188]

Historically, concepts are made sense of in different ways, for different ends relating to different embodied practices that respond to different historical problems, in different ways depending on the historical context of worldviews. We can also see how while concepts change, their meanings grow, as more and more historical conceptions pile up. Exploring conceptual histories gives a

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[185] Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari *What is Philosophy?* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994).
[186] Mark Bevir *The Logic of the History of Ideas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).
[187] Jens Bartelson *Visions of World Community* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).
[188] Isaiah Berlin, 'Does Political Theory Still Exist?' in *Concepts and Categories: Philosophical Essays* Henry Hardy (ed.), (London: Pimlico, 1978), p. 154.

sense of diachronicity that a purely analytical treatment would miss and can benefit from, but the point of a conceptual history is to illuminate the background of the contemporary debate.

Here, one might sense a problem, however. How can common conceptual criteria be applied to conceptions that derive from divergent traditions of thought, that articulate different strands in a concept's history? On what Archimedian vantage can overarching criteria reside? I am not suggesting there is such a place above or beyond all discourses, but I would draw attention to how the predominant positions and their respective cosmologies in the contemporary world polity debate are all modern. The conceptions forming the contemporary debate that I am scrutinizing in this thesis are shaped by various traditions, but they are all, in one way or another, variety of modern traditions, all working within the common discourse of world order.[189] This common modern frame and common discursive context of world order provides the common background on which to establish the criteria needed for critically evaluating competing conceptions.

As such, the discussion here advances a general or methodological understanding of social scientific conceptual analysis as itself being a practice.[190] The point of the conceptual analysis of social concepts, as a practice, is the improvement of practices. Conceptual analysis of social concepts helps improve practice by clarifying the features of a practice, the logic by which they fit together, and evaluating which forms of a given practice are more and which less successful in meeting the aims and ambitions of that practice. The practice under scrutiny, in my case, is the aspired practice of a world polity (as vague as that concept and practice presently is), itself fitting into the modern discourse and practice of world order. This means the point of a conceptual analysis of a world polity, is to improve its practice, by clarifying its meaning.

2.3 Discursive Pragmatism

I need to unpack this further, to specify what it means as an approach. The specific method or approach to conceptual analysis I want to use most closely follows Friedrich Kratochwil's oeuvre that combines Wittgenstein's linguistic contextualism with a pragmatist approach to

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[189] I strike a middle ground on the debate whether modernity is multiple or singular, emphasizing the view of an "entangled modernity", of interrelated in inseparable modern outlooks and backgrounds in a larger modernity. See, Gurminder K. Bhambra *Rethinking Modernity: Postcolonialism and the Sociological Imagination* (London: Palgrave, 2007); Dilip P. Gaonkar *Alternative Modernities* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999).
[190] Charles Taylor *Social Theory as Practice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983).

knowledge.[191] To give this approach a name, call it discursive pragmatism. Kratochwil explains, his 'pragmatist approach consists of two elements: the recognition of knowledge generation as a social and discursive activity, and the orientation of research toward the generation of useful knowledge.'[192] In other words, the two principles I am adopting from Kratochwil are: (i) there are limits to what a concept can mean, because concepts have meaning only within historically contingent discursive contexts, and (ii), the meaning of concepts is always associated with the promotion of a 'use', good, point, or purpose. In this way, I am interested in what a world polity can mean, by illuminating both the limits and the point or purpose of a concept's meaning in a modern context.

Let me explain further. Kratochwil suggests the point of conceptual analysis as discursive pragmatism is to clarify how to "go on". By clarifying the meaning of social concepts, the practices that they are partly constitutive of can be more clearly and pragmatically performed. This implies I am not persuaded by or interested in positivist approaches to conceptual analysis because, in their ambition to measure and generalize, they negate what makes concepts historically specific and meaningful.[193] Nor am I interested or persuaded by approaches of analytical philosophy that neglect the historical contingency of concepts.[194] Neither are my criteria designed for deductive arguments, working from first principles, because concepts, as historically contingent, have no singular and immutable meanings. Nor is what I am adopting to be confused with the methods of dialectics, Arendtian pearl-fishing, or Derrida's freeplay.[195] What I am suggesting is to be undertaken is not a fusion of ideas, their eclectic assemblage, or

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[191] Friedrich Kratochwil *Rules, Norms, and Decisions: On the Conditions of Practical and Legal Reasoning in International Relations and Domestic Affairs* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Friedrich Kratochwil, 'Of False Promises and Good Bets: A Plea for A Pragmatic Approach to Theory Building', *Journal of International Relations and Development,* 10:1 (2007), pp. 1-15; Jorg Friedrichs and Friedrich Kratochwil, 'On Acting and Knowing: How Pragmatism Can Advance International Relations Research and Methodology', *International Organization,* 63 (2009), pp. 701-731.

[192] Kratochwil, 'On Acting and Knowing', p. 701.

[193] Gary Goertz *Social Science Concepts: A User's Guide* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006); David Collier and Gerring John (eds.) *Concepts and Method in Social Science: The Tradition of Giovanni Sartori* (London: Routledge, 2009).

[194] Ernest Gellner *Words and Things: A Critical Account of Linguistic Philosophy and a Study of Ideology* (Boston: Beacon Hill, 1959); Richard Rorty (ed.), *The Linguistic Turn: Essays in Philosophical Method* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967).

[195] See, Theodor W. Adorno *Negative Dialectics* translated by E.B. Ashton (London: Routledge, 1973); Hannah Arendt, 'Introduction' in Walter Benjamin *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections* (New York: Schocken Books, [1968] 2008), pp. 1-58; Jacques Derrida, "Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences," in Joseph Natoli and Linda Hutcheon (eds.), *A Postmodern Reader* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1993), pp. 223-242.

free form usage. My proposed approach sets limits to what can be conceptually combined and used. It aims to clarity a concept's meaning by establishing both the point and limits of its use within an historically specific discursive context, which, in this case, is the modern discourse of world order. At this point, it is worth stating explicitly that I am not primarily and only secondarily aiming at attaining an ideal type of a world polity, since that is secondary to the principal inquiry of clarifying the concept's meaning. We need a concept of something before it can be ideal-typified. Ideal typification, developed by Max Weber, is a popular approach to concept formation in the social sciences. It abstracts an idealized conception of a social phenomenon, such as the state or capitalism.[196] An idealized abstract conception of a social phenomenon is not the same thing as a conception of the phenomenon itself, whose conceptual analysis (that determines its features and their relations), is prior to its ideal typification.

A general point I am making is that conceptual analysis cannot crown a single conception as true. There is no true conception to crown. There are only a number of conceptions whose defensibility is historically contingent but whose priority in practice has political implications. To use W.B. Gallie's expression, many concepts are 'essentially contested' and will remain hotly contested so long as the practices that make them significant endure.[197] However, to say that debate will endure is not the same as saying the debate cannot progress at all. The clarification of competing positions, their sources, meaning and the grounds where they converge and diverge, is one minimal form of progress, the clarification of the debate's structure. To establish criteria so to clarify which positions are indefensible, to refine defensible ones, and to clarify the implications of their application to practice, is another form of progress, an evaluative assessment of the debate. Clarifying which conceptions of a world polity provide defensible answers, the reasons for favouring one over another, and the implications of doing so, constitutes progress in this debate, whose general clarification forms a contribution to the study of world order, by clarifying the meaning of one of its major world order proposals, the formation of a world polity. This is the kind of contribution that can be made though a conceptual analysis with discursive pragmatism.

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[196] Thomas Burger *Max Weber's Theory of Concept Formation: History, Laws, and Ideal Types* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1987). For a discussion of ideal types in International Relations, see, Patrick Thadeus Jackson *The Conduct of Inquiry in International Relations: Philosophy of Science and it Implications for the Study of World Politics* (London: Routledge, 2010), ch. 4.

[197] See, William E. Connolly *The Terms of Political Discourse* 3rd Edition (Princeton: Princeton University Press, [1974] 1993); W.B. Gallie, 'Essentially Contested Concepts', *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 56 (1955-1956), pp. 167-198.

2.4 Three Criteria

From a discursive pragmatist approach to conceptual analysis, the specific criteria I propose for appraising and critically comparing social conceptions are three: comprehensibility, coherence, and practicality. I unpack and defend these criteria in turn. The presentation of each criterion opens with a discussion of its definition, then moves into their defense against alternative criteria.

Comprehensibility

By comprehensible, I mean that the concept contains a feature that accounts for how and why a concept combines its features and excludes others. Intelligible or meaningful could also be used to express what I am getting at here. I use comprehensibility because it conveys what it means to grasp a concept, to comprehend what it is and is not about. The meaning of comprehend, as *com,* meaning "together" plus, *prehendere,* to "grasp", conveys what I mean as a criteria here, the need to be able to grasp or understand how the features of the concept fit together and which features do and do not belong to the concept. Crucially, I want to argue that a comprehensible concept necessarily involves a feature that when identified provides an account of the concept's point or purpose. What it means to comprehend a concept means not only to grasp what it is and is not about, by grasping what the point of using the concept is.

The features of social concepts are contingent on the point of their use. Their point determines the logic of their conceptual combination.[198] If a concept has no point to its use, it is virtually meaningless, because it is unclear what features it does and does not contain, since there is no explanation as to why it includes some features and not others. Overused concepts, buzzwords, often become conceptually muddied and confused because they are used for so many different purposes. It becomes unclear what features they do and do not contain. To turn to the example of chess, what I am arguing is that its features, being the rules and pieces (such as its rule that checkmating one's opponent equals winning the game), are contingent on the point of

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[198] Connolly *The Terms of Political Discourse,* ch. 1.

playing the game, being the intellectual activity of strategic thinking. [199] Without an understanding of the point of playing the game, one would be unable to say for what reasons a game lacking kings and the strategic objective of checkmate would or would not count as a game of chess. The claim here is that concepts are incomprehensible without a point or purpose.

This implies two positions on the nature of concepts. It implies the point of the use of social concepts is deeply connected to the point of the practice to which they refer because people cannot perform a practice well (by fulfilling its point), without grasping its concept. Second, these normative aspects of the concept are to be counted amongst the concept's conceptual features and not as conceptual connotations, because the normative point of the concept is vital to a comprehensible account of a concept.[200] Turning to the concept of a world polity, I have been arguing that the point of its use is to legitimate an alternative united world order, one befitting a world polity, but there is a debate about what this precisely means because, there are rival conceptions of what goods or ends the concept can and should advance. I am not suggesting some or all of these conceptions are problematic because they fail to grasp some single and a-temporal point to the use of the concept under question. By proposing a criterion of comprehensibility, I am suggesting some of the conceptions fail to contain a defensible point, or perhaps any point at all. Some might embrace a point that is self-defeating or impossible to attain in practice. Others falter in theory, when the point they embrace is shown to be internally incoherent and self-contradictory. Others can be shown to have feet of clay when their empirical assumptions are invalid.

The chief alternative criterion to comprehensibility is conceptual completeness, a conception that combines the sum total of its conceptual features, a conception lacking no conceptual features. I do not adopt this criterion because the pursuit of completeness cannot come to fully grasp the meaning of a concept, since the analysis of completeness can seem to go on *ad infinitum*, as each analyzed feature produces more sub-features in turn. Eventually it exhausts itself in *aporia*, where the meaning of the concept is enlarged but remains elusive. A

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[199] For this example, see, Mervyn Frost *Ethics in International Relations: A Constitutive Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 95. For a further helpful discussion of inquiry into the point of social practices in international relations see, Martin Hollis, 'The Last Post?', in Steve Smith, Ken Booth, and Marysia Zalewski (eds.), *International Theory: Positivism and Beyond* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 301-308.
[200] Connolly *The Terms of Political Discourse,* p. 22-35. Felix E. Oppenheim held the opposed and mistaken position that normative features can be considered connotations whose application to the concept was a matter of opinion. See, Oppenheim *Political Concepts: A Reconstruction* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1981).

second alternative to comprehensibility is value-independence, which might be construed as the objectivity needed for defensible concepts. A criterion of value-independence misses the point of a conceptual analysis, however, which is the clarification of a concept's features and how they relate. Value-independent conceptions fall short of this aim, because they are inherently meaningless, lacking a normative point to their use. The exclusion of conceptual features that invite normative evaluations, like the attribution of order to society, or class conflict, impoverishes the concept, because the point of a given social concept's use always involves a normative aspect.

A few clarifications need to be made. If competing conceptions are getting at different points, are they conceptions of the same thing at all? Is the debate terminological, not conceptual? Would it not be easier to dissolve the debate by assigning competing conceptions distinct names? This line of thinking forgets that these conceptions conflict when applied to the practice that they conceive. Competing conceptions entail divergent versions of a practice, promoting distinct and often conflicting goods, with the different conceptions of the point or purpose of that practice. Although the visions of a reformed world order that contemporary world polity thinkers convey share some common features, a great deal hangs on whether its point is conceived as the fulfillment of moral obligations, common values, common interests, social justice, and so on. In this regard, a conceptual analysis that clarifies the implications of promoting one vision over another informs our understanding of what is at stake in the discourse and practice of world order and what role the idea of a world polity can defensibly play therein.[201]

Coherence

By coherence, I mean internal and external consistency of the features that combine to form a concept. Internal consistency means the non-contradiction of the features that a concept combines. External consistency means non-contradiction between a conception and other concepts in its discursive context. For the concept of a world polity, its external consistency chiefly concerns the concepts that form the discourse of world order, such as the state,

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[201] I am indebted to Stefano Guzzini's insight that concepts have roles to perform, in *Power, Realism and Constructivism* (London: Routledge, 2013), Part I.

international society, and global governance. I adopt the criterion of coherence for two reasons. First, the meanings of concepts are not insular, but also depend on how they are distinguished from other concepts.[202] Seeking external coherence helps clarify the meaning of concepts. Second, if a concept is incoherent this often indicates that the concept conflates different things. A conception of a world polity that combines the features of say, global social harmony with global social conflict, is internally incoherent, since this entails two different contradictory things. To give an example of external inconsistency, say, a feature of a world polity is said to be the political unity of humankind. This would necessarily mean it must somehow be reconciled with the concept of the society of states, because this concept implies a plurality of political units. These concepts are often reconciled in different ways, either the society of states is said to exist and a world polity does not, the reverse, the two exist in a mutually supporting relation, or the two are said to exist side by side. Even though these are two concepts, their coherence is interrelated. A tenable conception of a world polity needs to have consistency amongst its internal features and between it and its relevant concepts in the discourse of world order. As such, coherence cannot be applied trans-historically, because coherence is a moving target across historically shifting webs of belief. It depends on the shifting web of discursive meanings that form the context of a given concept. As Richard Rorty has argued, the traditional philosophical ambition of discerning the 'true' trans-historical meaning of concepts is futile because concepts are historically contingent human creations, as amenable and prone to change as any other.[203] The point is that because our concepts are contingent on our wider webs of beliefs and discourse, they must be coherent, not only internally, but also within their historical discursive context.

Contained within the criterion of coherence, is the requirement of valid empirical assumptions, by which I mean that a concept's empirical assumptions are widely held to be factually correct. By factually correct, I mean propositions that are widely held to be accurate. Because of this need for assumptions to be consistent with empirical facts, this criterion is a kind of coherence. That is, if the empirical assumptions of a concept's features are invalid, then so is the attribution of those features. However, while I am adopting the criterion of coherence, with valid empirical assumptions as a sub-category, but I am not adopting empirical verification. By

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[202] Kratochwil, 'Of False Promises and Good Bets', p. 4.
[203] Richard Rorty *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979); Donald Davidson, 'On the Very Idea of a Conceptual Scheme', *Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association*, 47 (1974), p. 5–20; Chris Brown, 'Turtles All the Way Down': Anti-Foundationalism, Critical Theory and International Relations', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies,* 23:2 (1994), pp. 213-236.

empirical verification, is meant the correspondence between concepts and confirming empirical facts. I do not pursue an empirical verification of the concept of a world polity because that would miss the point that the evidence that its verification would assess depends on what it means. Correspondence between fact and concept does not confirm the concept's validity. It only confirms that it is not invalid. The question of meaning is primary.

This discussion raises the alternative criteria of conceptual precision that I do not adopt. Conceptual precision is advocated by positivist approaches to conceptual analysis. Giovani Sartori, for example, treats concepts instrumentally as dependent or independent 'variables' or 'data containers' whose definition aims at their general application across cases and their measurable operationalization and coding.[204] The more precise the concept, the more amenable data is to coding and measuring. With this aim, positivist conceptual analyses attempt to strip concepts of their historical baggage and normative point to produce 'neutral' or minimal definitions. This is a very unhelpful approach to evaluating the application of concepts to practice, however.[205] A crucial distinction to make is between a concept and a word. Words have definitions and specific senses, depending on their contextual use, but concepts have debated meanings and the character of being essentially contested, to use Gallie's classic expression.[206] Concepts potentially encompass all the aspects of their context, because it is debated as to what features they do and do not combine. Conceptual debates are about the meaning of concepts because there is no agreed definition like a word, since the meaning of concepts has significant implications for practice. By treating concepts as variables or data containers, positivist

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[204] Giovanni Sartori, 'Guidelines for Concept Analysis', in Giovani Sartori (ed.), *Social Science Concepts: A Systematic Analysis* (London: Sage, 1984), pp. 15-88.

[205] The Sartori positivist approach is also problematic for its own ambition of measurement. The minimal definitions it attempts to fashion are caught in a dilemma of being too abstract to be measurable or too specific to be generally applicable. This dilemma usually results in a compromised definition that resides not too far up or down the ladder of abstraction. This dilemma is a major limitation of positivist approaches to conceptual analysis because it makes a neutral or minimal definition, devoid of historical connotations, only possible at the highest levels of abstraction, which makes it so vacuous as to be unfit for coding and measuring. See, Mark Bevir and Asaf Kedar, 'Concept Formation in Political Science: An Anti-Naturalist Critique of Qualitative Methodology', *Perspectives on Politics* 6:3 (2008), pp. 503-517; This point has also been fruitfully made in the literature of International Relations by Stefano Guzinni, 'The Concept of Power: A Constructivist Analysis', in Guzinni *Power, Realism and Constructivism* (London: Routledge, 2013) p. 221-222. For the ladder of abstraction, see, James N. Rosenau and Mary Durfee *Thinking Theory Thoroughly: Coherent Approaches to an Incoherent World* 2nd Edition (Boulder: Westview Press, 2000), p. 1-6.

[206] The distinction between a word and a concept is made by Reinhart Koselleck, in, 'Begriffsgeschichte and Social History', in *Futures Past: On the Semantics of Historical Time* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004), p. 85; W.B. Gallie, 'Essentially Contested Concepts', *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 56 (1955-1956), pp. 167-198.

approaches to conceptual analysis are unable to study why and how the social practices, that these concepts are constitutive of, are themselves significant and problematic. They cannot study the political significance of concepts.[207] The primary aims of this thesis are not to measure whether and to what degree and extent a world polity exists, either as an *explanandum* or as an *explananda* of something else. The aims are to clarify the meaning of the concept, to discern and evaluate what world order proposals it is potentially constitutive of.

The reason for the degree of debate surrounding the meaning of concepts is not fuzzy thinking. It is not the inability to clearly understand the different conceptions by participants in the debate, or the inability to understand the essential "real" meaning of the concept. It is the social and political stakes that the use of the concept involves, stakes that only become clearer the more the rival conceptions are articulated. When concepts change in popular discourse, there is generally a corresponding change in practice. Such are the practical stakes of discursive debates. Likewise, when social and political practices change, there is generally a change in their conception and surrounding discourse.[208] In the case of social and political concepts, the reason there is such a relation between concepts and practices is because practices cannot be performed without their relevant concept. Without the concept of democracy, for example, could people vote and make collective decisions on a regular basis? This is not to say that the concept is the same thing as the practice, but the comprehension of the concept is necessary for the performance of the practice.[209] As I argued in the introduction, what is at stake in the world polity debate is the practice of world order, whether and if how and by what means humankind can be ordered as a single worldwide polity.

Here, an objection arises from an anthropological approach to conceptual analysis. The charge is that without participatory observation of world order practice, how am I to know how the concept is conceived? By only engaging the texts and discourse of the world polity debate, so the charge goes, I am blind to the concept's use in practice and so cannot ascertain its full meaning. The anthropological criterion here can be called conceptual accuracy, that is, how accurately it conveys the concept's meaning to participants in practice. The intervention overstates the importance of practice in this case however. The textual debate both draws on and

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[207] Guzinni, 'The Concept of Power', p. 221-222.

[208] See, Quentin Skinner, 'Language and Political Change', in Terence Ball, James Farr and Russell L. Hanson (eds.), *Political Innovation and Conceptual Change* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 6-23.

[209] Morten Skumsrud Andersen and Iver B. Neumann, 'Practices as Models: A Methodology with an Illustration Concerning Wampum Diplomacy', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 40:3 (2012), pp. 457-481.

informs its use in practice because discourse encompasses practice and is not divorced from it. Furthermore, this charge of inaccuracy to use in practice forgets that the real action of the world polity debate is at the level of discourse, because the concept of an international system predominates the practice of world order today. If this connection between discourse and practice holds, a benefit of engaging the textual debate is that it articulates the concept's meaning in a deliberately clearer and systematic manner.

Practicality

The third and last criterion I propose, for a conception to be considered tenable and useful, is practicality. By practicality, I mean that the point of a concept's use is attainable in practice. Impracticality can arise in two ways. Either the features of the concept defeat its point or the point cannot be achieved in practice under any circumstances.

For an example of the first form of conceptual impracticality, we can return again to chess. If its point is the intellectual stimulation of strategic thinking, then chess cannot contain such features as arm wrestling or dice, because strength and luck are not conducive to strategic thinking. If chess were to somehow incorporate these features, they would diminish if not extirpate strategic thinking from the gameplay and so would diminish and even defeat the point of playing the game. This is the way in which the features of a concept contradict one another to such a degree that it undermines the practice that the concept furnishes.

To clarify the second way conceptions can be impractical, let me bring in Plato's *Republic*. Plato's penchant for concepts as ideal forms might suggest a disinterest with their practicality, but even Plato was concerned with practicality. In his account of Socrates's conception of a just city, set out in Book IV, the point of the city is justice, taken to mean everyone performing the role they are fit to do and not another's. A state with "the money-making, auxiliary, and guardian classes doing what's appropriate, each minding its own business in a city –would be justice and would make the city just."[210] In Book V, however, Socrates is assailed by Polemarchus, Adiemantus, and Glaucon with the doubt that such a city is possible in practice. Socrates is taken aback, momentarily, by the trouble this doubt raises, because, he says,

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[210] Plato *The Republic* 2nd Edition, Allan Bloom (trans.), (London: Basic Books, 1991), p. 113, Book IV, 434c.

For, it could be doubted that the things said are possible; and, even if, in the best possible conditions, they could come into being, that they would be what is best will also be doubted. So that is why there's a certain hesitation about getting involved in it [the doubts about practicality], for fear that the argument might seem to be a prayer, my dear comrade.[211]

If his interpretation of the point of the city as justice were found to be impractical, Socrates was aware, then its validity would be doubtful, since it might seem to be a utopian dream, impossible under any circumstances. Even Plato, a philosopher of ideal forms and conceptual abstraction, acknowledged the importance of practicality in his dialogue.

I draw this criterion of practicality from Kratochwil's pragmatist writings and the much earlier contributions of Charles Taylor to the idea of theory as a practice. Taylor, amongst others, argues the conceptual work of social theories involves interpreting the point of social concepts and the practices they animate, such as democracy, law, and so on. For this reason, as Taylor and others argue, social theories are not verified via correspondence between theory and practice.[212] Rather, they are validated by contributing to the achievement of a practice's point in practice. In his words,

> our social theories can be validated, because they can be tested in practice. … What makes a theory right is that it brings practice out in the clear; that its adoption makes possible what is in some sense a more effective practice.[213]

Valid social concepts, ones that are tenable and useful, articulate the point of a practice that is achievable in practice. I am suggesting a conception is impractical if the point of its use is impossible to attain in practice, or if some of its additional features defeat the concept's point in practice. The alternative criterion to practicality is truth, in a non-pragmatist sense. But, as I have argued above, there is no 'True' conception to discern, because our concepts are historically contingent. Conceptual analysis cannot crown a concept as sovereignly true, since there is none

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[211] Plato *The Republic,* p. 128, Book V, 450c-d.
[212] Richard Rorty *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature,* Ch. VIII; Connolly *The Terms of Political Discourse,* Ch. 1; Charles Taylor, 'Social Theory as Practice' in *Philosophy and the Human Sciences: Philosophical Papers 2* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), p. 101.
[213] Charles Taylor, 'Social Theory as Practice', p. 104.

to crown, only a number of potential meanings to a concept in a discourse, amongst which some are more and some are less comprehensible, coherent, and practical.

2.5 Conclusions

In this chapter, I suggested that a concept is needed before it can be ideal-typified and that criteria are needed in order to critically evaluate the competing conceptions that make up the world polity debate. Ideal-types are made by intensifying the features of a concept, abstracting what the extreme instantiation of the concept would be, then asking, retroactively, how such the given concept (be it the state, capitalism, or some such thing) became historically conceivable and what its preconditions were, e.g. the protestant ethic as a precondition of capitalism. In the case of the world polity, I have argued because the world polity's practical realization is located in the future, ideal type analysis does not quite help answer my questions, does not quite work for this study. The world polity is a proactive, not a retroactive question. A concept is first needed before its ideal type can be defined and analyzed. As such, I developed a distinct approach in this chapter. This approach works towards a clarified conception that in its abstraction and generality resembles an "ideal type", but the approach moves towards the conception with a different method, making ideal-typification a secondary not primary approach. With the suggestion that our conceptions are contingent on our historically contingent world image I have developed Kratochwil's approach of discursive pragmatism and defended three criteria whose conditions of satisfaction are historically contingent. Because the meaning of concepts is limited by their discursive context, and because the meaning of concepts is tied to the point of their use, I have critiqued the alternative criteria of precision, accuracy, empirical verification, completeness, and value-independence, all of which fail to recognize the significance of context and purpose for the meaning of concepts, social concepts and collective-self-conceptions in particular. In support, I have suggested conceptual analysis cannot declare a True meaning to the concept of a world polity, because there is none to declare, and that debate will persist so long as the practice and discourse of world order remains significant. However, I have argued that progress can be made by distinguishing and clarifying conceptions, refuting indefensible conceptions, and evaluating their implications for practice.

Here ends my preparations, where I established a general theory of world polity formation and developed a method of conceptual analysis to analyze competing conceptions that articulate rival ways that the collective-self-narrative of a world polity can hang together. What I am looking for in this study are visions of how a world polity can be conceived within the limits of its discursive horizons, its conceptual boundaries, if you will, how far they can be stretched, bent, reimagined, so to speak. Part of the analysis of each current of world polity thinking involves the comparison of its sub-currents and specific expressions made by different thinkers. This is important because, to avoid straw men, a condition of the application of my criteria involves the micro-analysis of establishing the clearest and most charitable expression of each position in the debate. In this respect, every text has limitations, but the point is to explore their conceptual potentials, to draw out their most profitable expressions and extensions to the vision of a world polity, so to sift all these currents of thought for the features of the most successful conception of a world polity in the contemporary context. It is also important to clarify upfront that the criteria are not applied formulaically or mechanistically like a checklist. The task is not an audit. It is a conceptual investigation about uncovering and identifying a new conceptual vision that stands up against established criteria, which involves sifting the range of conceptions and conceptual features that work and work together, expanding on the ideas on offer, extending them as best they might be, even though their principal thinkers have not explicitly done so themselves. All the criteria matter in the analysis, even though practicality matters most, most often, but the criteria are not applied formulaically. It is not a mechanistic rote activity. This is because, in the analysis, I develop charitable readings of different conceptual positions, and attempt to fix up and clarify conceptions in their defense, as I search for the conception that most successfully meets the stated criteria. It is not a mechanistic process, where available conceptions are screened and eliminated or advanced, but rather a critical conceptual investigation, drawing out what works and makes sense, from what does not, then seeing how these things match up and to what extent they support and hold up a larger vision, like architectural design, thinking the question of a world polity through, with a conceptual investigation, focusing on the most tenable and useful conception of a world polity above all, by dissecting, comparatively testing, cannibalizing, and reformulating the available conceptions towards a new more tenable and useful conception. Each chapter, gathering a current of thought, forms an inductive case, producing a general concept from critically investigating particular conceptions. What features of

the concept can be combined, which not, which aims or uses of the concept are defensible, which not? In this way, the question that we identified in Chapter 1, the question of what collective-self-conception can hang the world polity together, this question has been specified in this chapter; its meaning has been defined, with the establishment of three criteria for a tenable and useful answer.

As noted in the introductory chapter, I have selected four currents of world polity thought to address, each prominent in the literature and discourse: the moralist often Kantian inspired cosmopolitan tradition of devising universal moral codes, the critical emancipatory tradition that seeks maximally emancipated conditions, the more recent anti-foundationalist and sociological global civil society literature, and, fourth, ecological and space ship earth conceptions forming a planetary polity current of thought. These currents of contemporary world polity thought form the most prominent positions in the world polity debate. There are many tributaries and unconnected channels beyond these currents, that I strive to recognize and acknowledge along the way, but, together, the four broad currents selected form the widest and deepest waterways in contemporary world polity thought. Taking these four channels together amounts to a first but significant step towards a further wider investigation. It is a significant step, as comprehensive as possible within the time and space limitations, and, moreover, the search is for the conceptual features that any conception must necessarily attain for a world polity to be realizable in practice. In this way, even though there may be conceptions held in remote contexts and unknown texts, say an indigenous tale unknown to myself, or an unknown philosopher's treatise, or indeed Zeno's lost *Republic,* the method of analysis I am using does not require the evaluation of every conception, but suffices with a wide range of conceptions from the contemporary context that stimulate the conceptual search for the necessary conceptual features that any thinker working within this modern context must necessarily reach according to established criteria. In the following chapters, I evaluate the major positions in the contemporary world polity debate, starting with the most prominent and developed moral universalist conceptions, working towards the increasingly novel and complex conceptions. I tie these investigations together in a chapter on implications.

Part II

Conceptual Investigations: From Cosmopolis to Planetary Polity

Chapter Three.

The Community of Humankind

3.1 Introduction

A community of all humankind has always existed, moral thinkers have argued.[214] They are not wrong. Because there are things that harm and help every human being, because they are human beings there are universal human goods and bads. From this exists that universal community, felt more intuitively than rationally, more innately than intellectually, by everyone, because they are human. But, because it is so intrinsically human, because it is felt in such a taken-for-granted way, it is only witnessed or recognized in exceptional circumstances, where we feel something is profoundly wrong or profoundly right. When, for example, Rohingya and Bangladeshi migrants were abandoned to the sea by every state in the region, and standers-by fishermen were moved to help, one later explained,

> I was very surprised with what I saw on the boat … It was crammed with people ... I was speechless and breaking down into tears when watching them screaming, waving hands and cloth … I could not have let them die, because they are also human beings, just like me. I am grateful to be able to save hundreds of lives.[215]

This is how the community of humankind becomes visible. It is important to remember the response to the holocaust as one of these moments as well, when the community of humankind was recognized in the West.[216]

I know most of you are unpersuaded, so strong is the intellectual preeminence of moral relativism and skepticism in contemporary culture, and there is good reason for this, but my

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[214] Michael Donelan, 'A Community of Mankind', in James Mayall (ed.) *The Community of States: A Study in International Political Theory* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1982), pp. 140-157.

[215] 'The Indonesian Villagers Saving Migrants', *BBC*, 20, May, 2015: http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-32807799.

[216] Isaiah Berlin, 'European Unity and Its Vicissitudes', in Henry Hardy (ed.) *The Crooked Timber of Humanity* (New York: Vintage Books, 1990), pp. 175-206.

point in this chapter is that even if this moral community of humankind exists, saying what should be made of it is another question. Even if a universal human law was universally recognized to exist, agreement on its meaning would not follow, since nothing is clear in the law. Diverging interpretations and conflicting uses follow even from the law; the most painstakingly clarified and refined use of language. It is not always clear what to make of laws, even laws rooted in our very human nature, or those given by prophets, or those gifted by the most coherent reasoning of the most enlightened and eloquent philosophers.[217] The existence of universally hazardous and universally needed things does not tell us how to order humankind. That is the myth of moralism, the false promise of universal moral codes. The question of how to be, of the good order, matters, indeed, but not only because different ends conflict in practice, within single lives, whole societies, amongst civilizations, and within the community of all humankind. The question matters because the ends for which we live make all the difference for which goods and ills we make use of in ordering our lives, individual and collective. To come to grips with how the community of humankind is to be best ordered together, I want to argue that a larger story about who we are and who we want to be is needed, and to find that kind of collective-self-narrative, I argue further, a new kind of narrative is needed, a narrative of narratives. The content of that meta-narrative remains elusive, but in this chapter I want to begin to clarify how it might be articulated.

I first explore the cosmopolitan schemes for global democracy, but find they fail to offer practical collective narratives. This leads, second, to an exploration of minimalist cosmopolitan universalisms and the idea of human dignity as a source of human belonging and as a foundational world order principle. I find dignity appealing as ideal, but not up to the job, because of the conflict that arises when unavoidable attempts to define dignities are made, when it is applied to practice. Third, I consider the more promising cosmopolitan visions that emphasize the values of coexistence and dialogue, which leads to an exploration of a meta-collective-self-narrative for humankind. I conclude by pointing the way towards the horizons of critical emancipatory theory as a potential aid in the search for such a world polity narrative.

3.2 Cosmopolitan Democracy and Citizenship

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[217] For these distinctions, see, Michael Donelan *Elements of International Political Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990).

Right off, it is important to recognize in what bad shape universal cosmopolitanism is today. The idea that everyone has rights is not entirely controversial today, but which rights matter most is debated in the context of a post-colonial and globalizing world, where the immense plurality of vigorously defended human cultures is an unavoidable fact of life.[218] Whose cosmopolitanism are we to favour?[219] Cosmopolitan politics today is not the perseverance of the cosmopolitan universals over the particulars, of the one over the many; it is a battlefield of shifting alliances amongst different competing cosmopolitanisms.[220] Whether universal moral obligations exist or not, there exists a politics and philosophical debate today about which universal rights and duties matter most and why.[221]

In this context, many cosmopolitans have attempted to clarify and prioritize only the most basic and undeniable human properties, the essential features of being human that ground or constitute the lives and communities of human beings. Yet, we also need to appreciate how self-defeating and problematic the agenda of deriving the rules of a cosmopolitan order from basic human needs and essential features might be, how self-contradictory the ambition of a cosmopolitan moral code is. The cosmopolitan nature of the community of humankind, the source of its visibility, is a gut feeling, an undeniable bodily reaction that compels action, even and especially in disregard of rules and obstacles. Cosmopolitanism involves a disregarding of *doxa*, because it evokes something gut-wrenchingly felt to be universal. Legislating these cosmopolitan acts, making a bureaucratic ministry of cosmopolitan affairs, takes much of wind out of the whole thing. If these laws were passed, and their bureaucratic administration was established, they would be subject to the same disregard by cosmopolitan acts. This is what Derrida was getting at in the contradiction between hospitality as a cosmopolitan act and hospitality as a cosmopolitan law.[222] The community of humankind is in us, not in rules.[223] It is

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[218] Stephen Hopgood *The End Times of Human Rights* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2013); Charles Beitz *The Idea of Human Rights* (Oxford University Press, 2009); Michael Ignatieff *The Rights Revolution* (Toronto: Anansi, 2007).

[219] Bruno Latour, 'Whose Cosmos, Which Cosmopolitics?', *Common Knowledge,* 10:3 (2004), pp. 450-462.

[220] William E. Connolly, 'Speed, Concentric Cultures, and Cosmopolitanism', *Political Theory,* 28:5 (2000), pp. 596-618.

[221] Chris Brown *International Society, Global Polity: An Introduction to International Political Theory* (London: SAGE, 2015), p. 58-70.

[222] Jacques Derrida *On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness* translated by Mark Dooley and Michael Hughes (London: Routledge, 2001 [1997]). See, also, Margaret C. Jacob, 'The Cosmopolitan as a Lived Category', *Daedalus,* 137:3 (2008), pp. 18-25.

in human beings so intimately, in such a taken-for-granted way, innately, because it derives from our human nature, from being human, not a set of rules or moral *calculemus*. Cosmopolitan rules and the cosmopolitan community of humankind are not the same things. When cosmopolitan norms becomes the enforceable norm, they potentially become subject to the same guttural objections that this or that rule does not apply or is invalid on moral grounds. Moreover, and perhaps more damaging to the case for cosmopolitan codes, is the inability of codes of conduct to adjudicate conflicts and dilemmas, the inability of rules to themselves produce judgments, because of the need for more than the rules to produce a judgment where rules conflict. We also need to appreciate how the codification of universal cosmopolitan rules do not in themselves tell us the rules of their proper enforcement.[224]

Despite these challenges, some unabashedly liberal cosmopolitans like David Held, Daniele Archibugi, and Luis Cabrera press for a cosmopolitan world order, as a matter of principle, as the demand of a just world order.[225] They make use of the doctrines of human rights and cosmopolitan obligation and advance democratic world government proposals.[226] They push forward towards a cosmopolitan world order, despite the empirical absence of a consensus on the proper goals and aspirations of humankind as a whole, because they suggest, implicitly, that it is better to resolve disagreements as technical problems along the way.[227] To grasp the visions of these thinkers, imagine a modern liberal democracy on a world scale, a World Union with more hierarchical authority and unity than the United Nations and experiments in regional unity

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[223] Renee Jeffery *Reason and Emotion in International Ethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014); Amartya Sen *The Idea of Justice* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009).

[224] Charles Taylor, 'The Perils of Moralism', *Dilemmas and Connections: Selected Essays* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011), pp. 347-366.

[225] For a general discussion of liberal cosmopolitanism, see, Richard Beardsworth *Cosmopolitanism and International Relations Theory* (Cambridge: Polity, 2011); David Held and Pietro Maffettone (eds.) *Global Political Theory* (Cambridge: Polity, 2016).

[226] Daniele Archibugi and David Held, eds., *Cosmopolitan Democracy: An Agenda for a New World Order* (Cambridge: Polity, 1995); David Held *Democracy and the Global Order: From the Modern State to Cosmopolitan Governance* (Cambridge: Polity, 1995); David Held *Cosmopolitanism: Ideals and Realities* (Cambridge: Polity, 2010); David Held *Global Covenant: The Social Democratic Alternative to the Washington Consensus* (Cambridge: Polity, 2004); Daniele Archibugi *The Global Commonwealth of Citizens: Towards Cosmopolitan Democracy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008).

[227] Mathias Koenig-Archibugi, 'Is Global Democracy Possible?', *European Journal of International Relations,* 17:3 (2011), pp. 519-542; Robert A. Dahl, 'Can International Organizations be Democratic? A Skeptics View', in Ian Shapiro and Casiano Hacker-Cordon eds., *Democracy's Edges* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 19-36; Daniele Archibugi, 'Cosmopolitan Democracy and its Critics: A Review', *European Journal of International Relations,* 10:3 (2004), pp. 437-473; Daniele Archibugi and David Held, 'Cosmopolitan Democracy: Paths and Agents', *Ethics & International Affairs,* 25:4 (2011), pp. 433-461; Luis Cabrera *The Practice of Global Citizenship* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

practiced today. Their visions entail the full range of modern democratic institutions and practices, a world parliament, an expanded International Criminal Court and International Court of Justice, a system of wealth redistribution, perhaps a permanent peace keeping force, and a world *demos* with world citizenship.[228]

Yet, still, the basis of this world *demos* is a problematic weak spot in this vision. We might say that the old problem of defining the *demos* can be overstepped if all humankind is taken to be the ultimate *demos,* as Anacharsis Cloots argued.[229] But, the existence of conflict and moral discord amongst the members of that demographically universal *demos* is still a practical problem.[230] Establishing a global democracy and constituting a cohesive world polity are not the same things. A *demos* involves the collective agency and collective identity of a democratic people that upholds a common democratic government.[231] We can recall Tocqueville,

> Bring two men together in society, give to these two men the same interests and in part the same opinions; if their character, their enlightenment and their civilization differ, there is a great chance that they will not get along. The same remark is applicable to a society of nations.[232]

If all humankind were to hoist up the kind of global democracy and global government and citizenship that Held, Archibugi, and Cabrera call for, it would not practically workout, no matter how carefully devised, if social cohesion is not also developed to overcome inevitable conflicts, to foster the willful acceptance of the democratic majority, to generate the civic mindedness of burden-sharing to help fellow citizen strangers. A collective-self-conception constituting a collective identity is needed to accept a global tax scheme for instance, to accept the sharing of burdens, to legitimate the government of a global democracy.

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[228] Held *Cosmopolitanism;* Held *Global Covenant*; Archibugi *The Global Commonwealth of Citizens;* Luis Cabrera *Political Theory of Global Justice: A Cosmopolitan Case for the World State* (London: Routledge, 2004).

[229] Alexander Bevilacqua, 'Conceiving the Republic of Mankind: The Political Thought of Anacharsis Cloots', *History of European Ideas,* 38:4 (2012), pp. 550-569.

[230] Laura Valentini, 'No Global Demos, No Global Democracy? A Systemization and Critique', *Perspectives on Politics,* 12:4 (2014), pp. 789-807.

[231] Mathias Koenig-Archibugi, 'Can There be a Global Demos? An Agency-Based Approach', *Philosophy and Public Affairs,* 38:1 (2010), pp. 76-110.

[232] Alexis de Tocqueville *Democracy in America,* James T. Schleifer trans. (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2010), p. 603.

On this score, Held has in places found support in the vision of a global civil society, extending solidarities across global scales. Yet, the vision of a global civil society is more of an ambition than a reality today. I consider the global civil society vision in more detail in chapter 5, but the point here is that a support of such a sociological basis is needed for a global democracy. Not only is there an empirical lack of consensus on the appropriate goals of a global government today, but there is also a lack of the in-it-together feeling of belonging needed to shoulder it. By belonging, I mean a sense of "fitting in", a feeling that one is properly a part of the polity, national or cosmopolitan, and, ideally, the mutual feeling of being understood in everyday life because of how one "fits in" by sharing common horizons of understanding and some basic practices.[233] This sense of togetherness, fitting together as a "we", has innumerable forms, but it is vital to have for polities to legitimate hierarchies, by connecting collective ideals and ambitions to embodied narratives of belonging, giving authorities a justified purpose and role. It is this sense of belonging connected to collective ideals that also legitimates the burden-sharing of costs and sacrifices that any polity requires to function and which any government must legislate to govern effectively. Taxes, the disruptions of major building projects, war contributions, etc., all require legitimation. There exists no real sense of cosmopolitan belonging or togetherness that a world government would practically need to govern. This is perhaps especially the case of democratic governments.[234] Today, only privileged elites at times find a sense of cosmopolitan togetherness, and even then it is aspirational and inchoate, lacking a genuine taken-for-grantedness, being a young and unclear sensibility that elites want to expand and realize, but struggle to articulate in a way that is meaningful and practically realizable for humankind on a global scale.

The narrative of cosmopolitan rights and obligations, for instance, is practically problematic in a world with multiple interpretations. Forming a world *demos* needs a different larger narrative than one based on the universality of democratic legitimacy. For progressive advocates of global democracy, pointing out the need for a moral consensus and greater sense of togetherness might seem like stick-in-the-mud stubbornness, but it is not a desire for a perfect unity getting in the way of better world. Common goals and a sense of togetherness are

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[233] Alfred Schutz, 'The Stranger: An Essay in Social Psychology', *American Journal of Sociology,* 49:6 (1944), pp. 499-507; Michael Ignatieff *Blood and Belonging: Journeys Into the New Nationalism* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1993), p. 10.

[234] Mark E. Warren (ed.), *Democracy and Trust* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Mark E. Warren *Democracy and Association* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000).

necessary requirements for the stability and practical possibility of the cosmopolitan democratic world order proposals on offer here. Without a practical sense of belonging, how could a global democracy function?

Held and Archibugi might suggest that these questions about human rights, citizen duties, and distributive justice ought to be settled through global democratic processes. Perhaps the practice of democracy can itself produce the searched for sense of belonging, over time, across generations. For the sake of argument, let us say that, in time, the inculcation of a world community feeling and practice of world citizenship could arise, say, perhaps in two generations time. But, then, what kind of society would or could arise? What would come to be conceived? Because there are multiple and often-times conflicting cosmopolitanisms, because they are not mutually supporting, we need to think clearly about the principles, values, goals, and the collective-self-conceptions defining the common good that a cosmopolitan government would both promote and require.[235] These questions need to be answered more clearly to legitimate a democratic world government, and agreement on them, to some extent, is vital for its practical realization.

3.3 Human Goods, Dignity, and Belonging

A different cosmopolitan route to imagining a world polity is about getting down to the basic human goods and moral principles that humankind ought to fulfill because they are meant to connect all humankind into a web of obligations, obligations that can be thought to issue from a "global community of human beings."[236] This route is philosophical, using logical premises to identify basic human goods and needs, so to reveal a moral world of obligations encompassing humankind and legitimating a unity of humankind. This variety of visions is lucidly stated, with philosophical precision, often producing towering achievements of reasoning. There is a potential in this literature, to extend visions of distributive justice to establish the basis of a unifying world polity conception. Yet, as a route, it struggles against the practical disagreements

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[235] Gerard Delanty, 'Not All Is Lost in Translation: World Varieties of Cosmopolitanism', *Cultural Sociology,* 8:4 (2014), pp. 374-391; Latour, 'Whose Cosmos, Which Cosmopolitics?'; Connolly, 'Speed, Concentric Cultures, and Cosmopolitanism'.
[236] Gillian Brock *Global Justice: A Cosmopolitan Account* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 8.

and genuine conflicts of ideals and interests that would threaten to cripple a world polity. It has yet to articulate a narrative, that is, that all would be able to accept and practically achieve.

We can examine conceptions of a moral world community developed by Charles Beitz and Thomas Pogge, for instance, who applied John Rawl's *Theory of Justice* to the question of global distributive justice. These visions are carefully conceived. They argue that because humankind is in a global condition increasingly like a single polity, where its members have equal worth, humankind is bound by the obligations of distributive justice that would apply to people living in a single polity. That is, because humankind is increasingly in the condition of a single cooperative scheme, moral principles of cooperative schemes thus apply to all humankind. Beitz claimed, 'the international realm is coming more and more to resemble domestic society in many of the features usually thought relevant to the justification of (domestic) political principles.'[237] And Pogge suggested, 'A global institutional scheme is imposed by all of us on each of us.'[238] Brian Barry advanced an equivalent outlook, but relied less on Rawlsian thought experiment, because he took unity to be a basic starting point not needing undue justification.[239] The kind of conception of a moral world community at play in this literature is also somewhat evident if not so clearly conceived in the charity and development world, in movements like Oxfam, Band Aid, and the Global Citizen Project, for instance. Even though this outlook does not usually advocate a politically united world polity, it is helpful for illuminating unrecognized principles and obligations surrounding humankind in a global context, for providing reasons for the equitable global distributions of a world polity. Its universal moral principles can be seen to have some potential extension to the world polity question.

Yet, they struggle against genuine conflicts of ideals and interests, and their focus on distributive justice raises difficulties for resolving conflicts between competing goods and moral dilemmas. Without a more thoroughgoing sense of belonging than the empirical fact of global economic interdependence, how are questions beyond distributive justice to be reconciled, how can security issues or political and religious doctrines be handled and be balanced against issues of just distributions, for instance? Even in a hypothetical world of abundance and equitable wealth distribution, the values and goals animating alternative ways of life would still divide

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[237] Charles Beitz *Political Theory and International Relations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999 [1979]), p. 8.
[238] Thomas Pogge *Realizing Rawls* (Ithaca: Columbia University Press, 1989), p. 276.
[239] Brian Barry *The Liberal Theory of Justice* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973).

humankind in practice. The existence of a global capitalist system might imply certain moral obligations, but these are not really enough to unify humankind into a single polity, it only creates a condition suggesting the need for and benefits of unity, the interpretation of which will have multiple answers. Nearly all humankind is engaged in a single global capitalist system and this creates some ground for ethical consideration in its practice, but beyond the condition of economic unity, more agreement on common goals and a larger collective-self-narrative is required for a practically realizable world polity.[240]

Beyond the distributive justice specific visions, we can examine Simon Caney's more wide-ranging application of liberal cosmopolitan principles to world order questions. His *Justice Beyond Borders: A Global Political Theory* is an impressive study, outlining a political theory based on universal moral principles. His position argues from first principles, chiefly that if it is accepted that there are universal morals, the question is which universal morals are there, to which he provides the answer of a, 'liberal brand of cosmopolitanism'.[241] Beyond schemes of global distributive justice, Caney also argues his approach legitimates supra-polity cosmopolitan political institutions. The difficulty here, however, is that even though we might accept the premise that there are universal morals, it is unpersuasive to say that modern liberal cosmopolitanism (however minimally defined) is the definition of those universal morals. First, it is culturally specific, even though it claims to be universal, which at least challenges its coherence as universal. There are multiple cosmopolitanisms in practice, liberal cosmopolitanism being one amongst many. Second, the universalization of one culture is impossible to achieve in practice. Even if it articulates a valid and universal moral system in theory, it is impractical to extend it to a vision of world unity in a modern and global context where multiple universalisms collide and where populations have been mobilized to defend their independent national and cultural ways of life.

We can also examine the arguments of Martha Nussbaum and Amartya Sen, who have championed an alternative approach, that struggles when extended to a world polity vision. They attempt to legitimate the provision of people with what people need to fully exercise their capabilities and meet their full potential in life. This might be thought of as a way to unite

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[240] Richard Rorty, 'Who Are We? Moral Universalism and Economic Triage', *Diogenes,* 173:44/1 (1996), pp. 5-15.
[241] Simon Caney *Justice Beyond Borders: A Global Political Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 265.

humankind, in a narrative about our shared human capabilities and potentials. Nussbaum lists ten human capabilities and comes to the conclusion that,

> The situation of people (whoever they are, at any given time) whose quality of life is especially low, as measured by the capabilities list, should therefore be a persistent focus of attention for the world community as a whole: not just for institutions but for all individuals who are not themselves unusually burdened.[242]

So the argument goes that, "if human beings have such entitlements, then we are all under a collective obligation to provide the people of the world with what they need."[243] Because all human beings share certain capabilities, we might think of humankind as one world community responsible for the necessities that human capabilities require. Yet, this argument does not help us navigate the conflicts between rival ways of life, rival and conflicting uses of human capabilities, individual and collective. What of the conflict amongst different kinds of political regimes, for instance, secular and non-secular, democratic and authoritarian? Different ways of life, individual and collective, have different conflicting needs in practice. I do not mean to exaggerate the conflict that exists in practice, but in the context of a 'shrinking' and 'mixing' world we cannot coherently or practically ignore the existence of conflicts, and important ones, across humankind. Some greater agreement or consensus on common goals is needed for starters, which might be gathered into a collective identity.

      Peter Singer, particularly in his book *One World*, offers an alternative, utilitarian, basis for the obligations of a cosmopolitan world community. In an increasingly interdependent world, he claims, 'we are beginning to live in a global community.'[244] For Singer, the greatest happiness is a globally interdependent affair. The utility calculation, for Singer, is global, not local. The main conceptual problem here, however, is that the existence of utility interdependence does not tell us what goods ought to be prioritized. The utilitarian principle of the greatest happiness for the greatest number must be rejected as the underlying point of the idea of a world polity, because there is no consensus on the meaning of happiness, and so no means to calculate it. To

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[242] Martha Nussbaum *Frontiers of Justice: Disability, Nationality, Species Membership* (Cambridge: Belknap, Harvard University Press, 2006), p. 320.
[243] Nussbaum *Frontiers of Justice,* p. 279-280.
[244] Peter Singer *One World: The Ethics of Globalization* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), p. 196.

reject it, we do not need to rely on Rawls's liberal criticism that utilitarianism treats whole societies as individuals, at the expense of the individual.[245] Utilitarianism, broadly conceived, contains the insight that goods conflict. Some kind of moral reasoning is needed; choices of utility are necessary. But the idea of happiness is debated and does not get out of the problem, moreover, because the different goods that are conducive to different conceptions of happiness are also incommensurable and incomparable in practice.[246] A world polity might be the polity of the greatest number but its happiness is incalculable because there are no overarching scales to weigh conflicting goods with.

If the idea of happiness is too debated, we can turn to the idea of human dignity that is increasingly thought of as a basic human good around which the world should be ordered, and around which a common narrative of humankind could be crafted.[247] It is thought that anything more definite than this general ideal of dignity would force people to be themselves, according to someone else's definition.[248] Its minimalist character is part of its appeal as an attempt at identifying a generally held ideal, but its best specific definition is unavoidable and contentious nevertheless. The international lawyer Onuma Yasuaki argues the broader idea of material and spiritual wellbeing is more appropriate for understanding basic human goods, than the concept of dignity, which he finds to be too limited a notion.[249] We could go on expanding this notion of generally applicable ideals, to include more notions of wellbeing, including ecological and social notions of wellbeing, perhaps. But, the precise definition, no matter how defined, does not really help us imagine a realizable world polity because it is the pursuit of conflicting specific goals and ways of life that divides humankind in practice. Even if we might find a way to express goals in the most general of terms, this is not the same thing as shared goals or shared reasons for those goals. It is what dignity (or spiritual and material wellbeing) is demanded for that divides humankind. It is the pursuit of many conflicting kinds of dignities and indignities and brings human beings into conflict. It is not a plausible assumption that every dignity is compatible with

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[245] John Rawls *A Theory of Justice* (London: Belknap, Harvard University Press, 1971), p. 27.
[246] For a discussion of the conflict amongst goods, see, John Gray *Isaiah Berlin* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996).
[247] Jack Donnelly *Universal Human Rights In Theory and Practice* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989); Charles Beitz, 'Human Dignity in the Theory of Human Rights: Nothing But a Phrase?', *Philosophy & Public Affairs,* 41:3 (2013), pp. 259-290.
[248] Jacques Derrida, 'On Cosmopolitanism' Garrett Wallace Brown and David Held (eds.), *The Cosmopolitanism Reader* (Cambridge: Polity, 2010), pp. 413-422.
[249] Onuma Yasuaki *A Transnational Perspective on International Law* (Boston: Brill, 2010).

every other. A means to bring them towards compatibility in practice is needed, because specific definitions of dignity are unavoidable, revealing distinct goals, which inevitably conflict in practice. Dignity cannot practically form the basis of a collective-self-narrative, largely because it aims to be a general notion but requires more specifically shared ideals and practice that can cohere a sense of collective identity and belonging to reconcile conflicting senses of dignity and material and spiritual wellbeing.

Elsewhere in the literature on global justice, Mathias Risse's idea that humankind holds a "common ownership of the earth" could potentially contribute to a world polity vision, although Risse's use of it is limited and misguided.[250] Risse argues this idea provides a basis for reasoning about the legitimacy of different uses of finite planetary space and resources. Because these are finite things, their use can be considered in terms of justice, Risse argues. Yet, this is somewhat misguided. Justifying different uses of space and resources struggles to resolve questions of just burden-sharing and conflicts of uses between parties with equitable distributions. Again, a larger narrative of belonging is needed to work out questions of the reasons for sharing the burdens and working through the inevitable conflicts involved in constructing a world polity. This idea of the common ownership of the earth could potentially contribute to the narrative of a world polity and its collective-self-conception, if extended and deepened, beyond a legalist moral principle, to an understanding of a deliberate and embodied principle of the collective ownership of the earth constituting a common collective identity. Yet, Risse makes no connection between his idea of a common ownership and a common identity. He makes the peculiar argument that we cannot imagine a world without multiple nations, because the ideals of a world polity cannot be clearly appreciated today, and that their consequences cannot be known until applied to practice.[251] This argument suffers from exaggeration on both its points. First, the ideals of a world polity are difficult to imagine, indeed, but not impossible. Their horizons can be discerned, their basic principles, sources, crucial notions, can be clarified in theory today, because they must be fashioned out of the materials of today, by reformulation, interrogation, reimagination. Second, it is fair to say that the actual consequences of a world polity are impossible to know, but it is an exaggeration to say that the potential practicality of world polity visions cannot be reasonably evaluated given knowledge of the empirical present, by considering the distance and obstacles

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[250] Mathias Risse *On Global Justice* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), p. 2.
[251] Risse, 'Imagine There's No Countries: A Reply to John Lennon' *On Global Justice,* ch. 16.

between the potential reality and actual present. For instance, other thinkers have attempted to work out a world polity vision from an environmental perspective that could connect to Risse's position, by introducing a notion of 'world environmental citizenship'.[252] I consider the potential of such planetary and ecological questions in Chapter 6.

3.4 A Cosmopolitan Narrative of Narratives?

A global agreement on some common ends is important, but not enough, since the pocession of common aspirations is not always the same thing as forming a unity, as is familiar to every athlete and soldier seeking victory against their opponents. The unity of a world polity involves a sense of belonging and collective identity as well as common goals. An alternative strand of cosmopolitan thought emphasizes the values of coexistence, toleration, and dialogue as the bases of a practical world polity. While some of their suggestions are helpful as means to managing conflict in practice they do not in themselves offer a consensus on goals, nor do they provide a narrative of unity, only a vision of a shared ambition of unity.

Kwame Anthony Appiah's *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers,* for instance, defends an ethic of toleration based on a vague image of minimalist obligations shared by humankind as a whole. Appiah's position suggests the existence of both many culturally specific but valid truths as well as a set of minimal universal values enmeshed in local truths.[253] Perhaps unconsciously, he evokes a vision similar to the ancient Greek ecumenical image of the plurality of religions as the only superficially distinct expressions of a single cosmos. His vision is the image of a world community held together between two bookends, the rejection of intolerant universalisms at one end, and, at the other end, an embrace (albeit in culturally diverse forms) of basic universal values. Appiah's emphasis on tolerance runs into typical hard cases of conflict like gay marriage, female circumcision, and abortion. However, Appiah reminds us that a cosmopolitan world is not necessarily consistently cosmopolitan, as he says, 'you can't have any respect for human diversity and expect everyone to become cosmopolitan.'[254] He also readily admits, 'There is a sense in which cosmopolitanism is the name not of the solution but of

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[252] Patrick Hayden, 'The Environment, Global Justice and World Environmental Justice', in Garrett Wallace Brown and David Held (eds.) *The Cosmopolitanism Reader* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2010), pp. 351-372.
[253] Kwame Anthony Appiah *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers* (New York: Norton & Norton, 2006)*,* ch. 1, 2, 3, 4, 9, 10.
[254] Appiah *Cosmopolitanism,* p. xx.

the challenge'.[255] If the cosmopolitan attitude is there, then the working out of conflict is easier. Yet, his vision stumbles over hard cases because, as John Gray has pointed, accepting the existence of 'universal human values … is not the same as having a universal morality.'[256] A morality, as a specific moral system, would clarify which universal values matter, when, where, etc.. Without the existence of such a common morality, Appiah's vision is more of a cosmopolitan attitude than a cosmopolitan vision.[257] It is difficult to derive a coherent or comprehensible concept of a world polity from his thought. There is no narrative of unity, only a cosmopolitan mood and attitude with little practical substance.

More helpful are the Kantian inspired visions that Jeremy Waldron and Garrett Wallace Brown have developed. They both argue that because humankind is culturally diverse but also perpetually brushing elbows in a bounded global space, there practically needs to be universally recognized cosmopolitan rights to make coexistence possible.[258] Both Waldron and Brown suggest the recognition of rights requires a civil responsibility of engaging in dialogue with rival norms and values that underpin the use of rights.[259] Brown takes the position that through practices of engagement, dialogue, and reason, a world polity with new 'higher' and ever more all-embracing forms of coexistence is possible.[260] The idea is that conflicts between different rights claims and uses can be alleviated through dialogue and engagement. What is interesting here is that a commitment to dialogue, on this account, is conceived as a part of a world polity, which suggests a world polity is more than a passively pluralist constitutional order for coexistence, but a lived way of life, defined and constituted by the value of coexistence itself. The vision involves deliberate effort and commitment towards the realization of coexistence in every day life, as a way of life for a diverse world, where practices and habitus of coexistence are the norm of everyday politics in the world polity. We can imagine a world with practices of inter-cultural and inter-communal civil society engagement through councils, panels, projects, and similar activities aiming at varieties of multicultural experiments in coexistence.

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[255] Appiah, *Cosmopolitanism,* p. xv.
[256] John Gray, 'Easier Said Than Done', *The Nation,* January 11 (2006).
[257] Appiah, *Cosmopolitanism,* ch. 10; Appiah, 'Global Citizenship', *Fordham Law Review,* 75:5 (2007), pp. 2375-2391.
[258] Jeremy Waldron, 'What is Cosmopolitan?', *Journal of Political Philosophy,* 8:2 (2000), p. 230; Garrett Wallace Brown *Grounding Cosmopolitanism: From Kant to the Idea of a Cosmopolitan Constitution* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009).
[259] Waldron, 'What is Cosmopolitan?', p. 239-243; Brown *Grounding Cosmopolitanism,* p. 123-144.
[260] Brown *Grounding Cosmopolitanism,* p. 141-142.

One problem here is that dialogue must aim for a shared mode of coexistence, which inevitably will exclude some ways of life that do not fit into that scheme of coexistence, it is questionable how ethically and normatively neutral a political order can ever be.[261] A second problem, that is more of a challenge than a fatal flaw, is that, to achieve the purpose of coexistence, practices of dialogue need to be feasibly able to produce "higher" planes of social coexistence, more embracing and accommodating values and practices. The critical issue is that engagement, dialogue, and reason are not guaranteed to produce pronouncements on conflicts of value, or rival conceptions of the good, and conflicting ways of life, because these things are not only conflicting, but also incommensurable, there is no scale to weigh them with, or ruler to measure them against, no way to measure the force of better arguments, particularly in a global multi-cultural context.[262] Dialogue can hope to produce shared "higher" values, but it is not guaranteed to do so, and the means of dialogue should not itself be confused with the shared values. If we recognize this limitation, then the vision of a thin pluralist global constitution, underwriting a world busy in inter-cultural dialogue and experiments of coexistence is not quite the needed picture. It is a picture of a world perhaps on its way to a world polity, but not one that is quite there yet, nor is it one that is guaranteed to get there. Again, I do not wish to exaggerate the existence of conflict amongst humankind today. Engagement and dialogue are worthwhile.[263] No human polity can persist without some use of dialogue. The point is only that engagement and dialogue are not the same things as a world polity and that they are not guaranteed to produce one.

They are helpful suggestions for realizing a world polity, however, as means for working towards one. Practices of dialogue can potentially produce what Charles Taylor has described as transformative Gadamerian 'fusions of horizons', enabling new "higher" values and ways of life, offering not a synthesis, but something new, unimagined, unforeseen, and in a certain sense, emancipating dialogical participants from the dilemmas and conflicts that brought them into loggerheads before they engage in dialogue.[264] Through this process, participants might find the

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[261] Michael J. Sandel *Liberalism and the Limits of Justice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982); Michael J. Sandel, 'Morality and the Liberal Ideal', *New Republic,* 190:19 (1984), pp. 15; Will Kymlicka *Liberalism, Community and Culture* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989).

[262] Charles Taylor, 'The Plurality of Goods', in R. Dworkin, M. Lilla and R.B. Silvers (eds.) *The Legacy of Isaiah Berlin* (New York: New York Review of Books, 2001), pp. 113-120.

[263] Edward W. Said, 'The Clash of Ignorance', *The Nation,* Oct. (2001).

[264] Charles Taylor, 'Understanding the Other: A Gadamerian View on Conceptual Schemes' in *Dilemmas and Connections: Selected Essays* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011), pp. 24-38; Taylor, 'The Plurality

terms of a larger loyalty, a new "higher" unity.[265] We need to be a little careful about the meaning of a fusion of horizons. It is not a synthesis of worldviews, but the rallying of various cultural outlooks around some common "higher" goals. We also need to recognize the difficulty that the scale of a world polity poses for dialogue. Practically, how can all humankind engage in dialogue? Perhaps this is becoming less and less an obstacle with the growth of communications. Yet, a further important aspect of this supposed process of dialogue that we need to recognize is its trans-cultural dimension, where it involves articulating a vast number of non-Western cosmopolitanisms, working for a fusion of horizons and searching for "higher" trans-cultural values.[266] It is a challenging task, with no guaranteed results, but it is at least a helpful suggestion.

Yet, I wish to argue that for such a consensus around a "higher" value to form the basis for a larger unity and not some new grounds for conflict, it also needs to connect to a larger collective-self-narrative that articulates a new mode of belonging. A common value can produce conflict in its own right, because that value will eventually realize multiple and potentially conflicting interpretations. All the more bitter disagreement might become. A narrative about being a united world polity is needed as well as shared ideals. This larger narrative of belonging, perhaps marshaled from a Gadamerian fusion of horizons, is necessary for a practically realizable world polity, one that goes beyond the recognition of basic needs, or even a consensus on admirable goals, but one that is practically realizable because it is united, having a sense of togetherness and belonging, a self-image of a united humankind that provides reasons to overcome what conflicts might emerge. If extended towards a shared value or collection of values, connected to a shared sense of belonging, then the practice of dialogue and engagement that some cosmopolitan thinkers have promoted is a helpful, if not guaranteed, step towards realizing a world polity vision.

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of Goods'; Taylor, 'Conditions of an Unforced Consensus on Human Rights' in *Dilemmas and Connections,* pp. 105-123.

[265] Richard Rorty, 'Justice as a Larger Loyalty', *Ethical Perspectives,* 4:2 (1997), pp. 139-151.

[266] Martin Munro and Robbie Shilliam, 'Alternative Sources of Cosmopolitanism: Nationalism, Universalism and Créolité in Francophone Caribbean Thought', in Robbie Shilliam (ed.), *International Relations and Non-Western Thought: Imperialism, Colonialism and Investigations of Global Modernity* (London: Routledge, 2011), p. 162; Rahul Rao *Third World Protest: Between Home and the World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); Julian Go, 'Fanon's Postcolonial Cosmopolitanism', *European Journal of Social Theory,* 16:2 (2013), pp. 208-225; Daniel Hiebert, 'Cosmopolitanism at the Local Level: The Development of Transnational Neighbourhoods', in Steven Vertovec and Robin Cohen (eds.), *Conceiving Cosmopolitanism: Theory, Context, and Practice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 209, 212.

Much of the problem is that the search for a world polity is still preoccupied by what William James would call monistic thinking.[267] As I suggested in Chapter 1, it is too easy to think that since the idea of a world polity is meant to embrace all humankind and requires all humankind to embrace it, then there must be one answer, or a small range of answers, that all humankind can accept as one. There must be some answer, some vision, that can effectively hold up the big tent and bring humankind all in. Because the vision involves one unity, it is too easy to think that humankind needs one vision, one creed, one answer, to pull it off. To begin to wrestle out of the search for *the* needed vision, it is helpful to remember that no polities are monoliths in practice; they always contain multiple rival interpretations, competing and interrelated webs of collective-self-narratives. If a world polity were inclusive of all humankind, with all its histories, cultures, and local contexts, we can expect it to involve and generate more interpretations than any other. A realistic and relevant collective-self-narrative of a world polity cannot be found by searching for a single story, since a world polity would in practice invariably contain many flows of world polity narratives. Recognizing this suggests the search for the horizons of a world polity is potentially more fruitfully conceived as a collaborative bricolage inter-narrative effort, a kind of many splendid story or stories. A narrative of narratives, a civilization of civilizations, is perhaps our best way of getting at it.[268] Again, as I suggested in Chapter 1, I do not mean a revival of the ancient Greek ecumenical worldview, where religious differences are seen as superficially different expressions of a single cosmos. I mean something more diverse, more complicated. The search for one answer only leads to new and greater grounds for conflict and it makes possible the ugly and self-defeating thought of eradicating the rival answers that stand in the way of the universal acceptance of an answer.

3.5 Conclusions

In this chapter, I have conceded that even if moral universals do exist amongst humankind, there is no image of world unity and order that can be derived from a universal moral code, because

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[267] William James *A Pluralistic Universe* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1909).
[268] Peter J. Katzenstein *Civilizations in World Politics: Plural and Pluralist Perspectives* (London: Routledge, 2009); Dimitrios Stroikos, 'Introduction: Rethinking the Standard(s) of Civilization(s) in International Relations', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies,* 42:3 (2014), pp. 546-556; Fred Dallmayr, M. Akif Kayapinar, and Ismail Yaylaci (eds.) *Civilizations and World Order: Geopolitics and Cultural Difference* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2014).

this code will always be met with competing interpretations, especially in a modern age, and it will also be met with hostility and resistance in a post-colonial context. I engaged the cosmopolitan global democrats, and found they needed a further narrative, one with sociological bases in a collective identity, if their vision is to meet the criteria of practicality. Then I considered the political philosophy of global distributive justice and dignity, but found this too needs support from a larger narrative. I argued that basing a world polity on universal basic needs, capabilities, or utility, is impractical, if unsupported by a further collective-self-narrative about shared ambitions that can legitimate the hierarchies and acceptance of burden-sharing that world unity involves, due to the conflicts arising from disagreements on the ambitions and ideals that goods are needed and utilized for in practice. Beyond this, I considered the Kantian inspired dialogical approaches, but found they are only a process towards a world polity, and not the sought for image of a world polity, and that this process is without guarantee of practical success. Finally, I returned to the point that the collective-self-narrative of a world polity need not be singular in content, and likely would take the form of a narrative of narratives.

In the next chapter, I want to turn to the critical emancipatory tradition that contains an image of an emancipatory world polity, not only because it is a prominent and highly developed literature, but also because its emancipatory character gives it an expansive and inclusive sense that one might think could fit the search for a larger narrative of unity that, in this chapter, I have concluded is needed to practically realize a world polity.

Chapter Four.

Emancipatory Horizons

4.1 Introduction

Philosophically, the search for a world polity issues from the fundamental question Jacques Derrida put best, what it means to 'live together well'.[269] Human beings, cultures, generations, civilizations, epochs and ages contain innumerable answers to this question, applied to immense varieties of particular life-worlds. Yet, answers always beg the question of a wider and further togetherness; every answer extends the question, from self to other, neighbors to foreigner, etc., logically, and in a globalized age, practically, towards the furthest and widest propinquity, all humankind. Starting roughly with Kant, the modern tradition of critical theory tells us the widest circle should have as much and as many effective freedoms and liberties as any other, but that it should not restrict the others, as they should contain the same degree of freedom and equality. Living together well as being free and equal, if grasped as an answer, is pulled by its own logic to its maximal application, to all humankind and all its social sub-sets. If valid here, amongst us, then there too, everywhere, for everyone, the critical thinking goes. Realizing this conclusion, means, as critical theory tells us, emancipating mind and practice from unjust hierarchies and social categories, from unjust legal, economic, and political discriminations of race, gender, class, creed, etc, so lifting humankind socially and materially towards the realization of a proper human community, one that properly realizes what it means for all to live together well.

Marx's communistic future is archetypal for this current of thought: worldwide emancipation from the *weltmarkt.* In a modern age where everyone demands their rights and liberties, the critical vision of freedom and equality for all is undeniable. Yet, I want to argue an emancipatory narrative of universal freedom and equality does not amount to living together as a world polity, because issues of practicality and coherence arise in the absence of a universal sense of belonging together and being-in-it-together. If I might put the point in overly simplistic terms, universal solidarity around universal emancipation, as universal liberation, is not the same

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[269] Elisabeth Weber (ed.) *Living Together: Jacques Derrida's Communities of Violence and Peace* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013).

thing as a universal solidarity of a single polity. Marxism, as an historical movement, was a force for liberation in world affairs, creating solidarities amongst a universal proletariat, but also amongst communist nations, colonized peoples and suppressed minorities, women, and races. These solidarities for liberation from oppression and exploitation did not automatically translate into solidarity amongst liberated communist peoples, when communist regimes found their interests at odds with one another, for instance, even if they mutually aspired to a maximally liberated world order. An additional unifying collective narrative is needed to bring liberated freedoms and equalities together and negotiate the conflicts arising from their multiple uses. The more promising if not guaranteed path in the search for a world polity is through getting a better sense for the shared ambitions and ideals of the historical present, rather than the neutral organizing principles of an emancipated time.

Contemporary critical theory is a vast terrain. In it, three strands of world polity conceptions stand out. The most well known is Habermas's conception, which is also the most elaborate and clearly expressed, even if his critical credentials are sometimes questioned. I appraise the work of Nancy Fraser on this count. Beyond them, I find conceptions inspired by Heidegger are also increasingly popular and increasingly of a critical character, and so make an exploration of it, even though it is not usually lumped in with critical theory. Lastly, there is Agamben's early work, *The Coming Community,* which is a unique critical vision, later expanded upon by Micheal Hardt and Antonio Negri. Agamben's vision is the conceptually cleverest but also the most demonstrative of my criticisms. I address each of these strands of critical thought in turn and conclude by reassessing the positive take-away this exploration provides and by pointing the way towards sociologically empiricist alternatives.

4.2 A Universal Discourse Community?

Jurgen Habermas's towering movement provides a thought-through and prominent position in this realm of critical world polity thinking. It also evinces the main lines of criticism I wish to raise, even if it is corrected and supported with qualifications. Habermas's vision of a realized "world society", as he refers to it, is superficially similar to Held and Archibugi's vision of a

global democracy.[270] It entails virtually all the same institutions and human rights commitments through a world union of sorts with global citizenship. The key difference is Habermas's emphasis on the emancipatory interests of a universal discourse community.[271] He conceives a world society as pluralist because its norms, produced by a universal discourse community, are supposed to be universally valid, ethically neutral. It is, in Habermas's terms, based on generally valid moral norms rather than certain ethical values.[272] Life in Habermas's aspired world society would not be too unlike that in today's liberal democracies, but it would involve far more rule following deliberations and a general shift in attitude towards moral learning through discourse, chiefly in the context of a global public sphere, taken to be a self-conscious practice of moral deliberation by the global public at large.[273] All the institutions and structures would be hardly changed, but all social and political life would undergo a huge shift in moral attitudes. It involves a collective-self-narrative of humankind united around a commitment to universal moral progress, through the deliberations of a universal discourse community.

It is an uplifting vision of unity, but suffers some practical limitations and some of its assumptions are debatable. For instance, the aspirational character of this vision, of deliberations aspiring towards unity, creates a potential practical difficulty, because its discourse mechanism shuttles the contents of a world polity into the future, which, in turn enables the deliberating part of humankind to be with the times ahead, if they grasp the right moral answers today, which also casts the rest as behind. The point of a discourse is to genuinely search together for an answer, without presuming who might be right or who knows better, but as a discourse it creates a circle of those already engaged and benefiting from discourse, and those yet to partake. There is a potential problem in this temporal division, reaching back to Kant's distinction between immature and mature, the problem of deciding what and thereby who is with the future and who then is stuck in the past, hence Habermas's huge system of thought devoted to the conditions of a discourse community, to enable a proper decision, through a proper discourse. A second practical

[270] Jurgen Habermas, 'A Political Constitution for the Pluralist World Society?', *Anales de la Catedra Francisco Suarez,* 39 (2005), pp. 121-132; Andrew Linklater, 'Cosmopolitan Citizenship', *Citizenship Studies,* 2:1 (1998), pp. 23-41.

[271] Jurgen Habermas *Knowledge and Human Interests* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1971 [1968]); Jurgen Habermas *Toward a Rational Society: Student Protest, Science, Politics* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1970 [1968].

[272] Jurgen Habermas *Moral Consciousness and Communicative Action* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1990 [1983]), p. 49.

[273] Jurgen Habermas *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge: Polity, 1989 [1962]); Craig Calhoun (ed.), *Habermas and the Public Sphere* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992).

challenge arises from the presence of power in the practice of society and moral discourse, since, in practice, discourse is shaped by power. In Foucault's classic words, 'A society without power relations can only be an abstraction.'[274] Is the aspired genuine unity of a universal discourse community inherently impractical, in a world inherently shaped by power? Some classes or state powers can be imagined as taking advantage and corrupting the project, shaping it towards their benefits, or particular version of morality. Against this, Habermas has found some defensible ground, in his famous suggestion that 'in the process of enlightenment there can only be participants.'[275] This is to say that, for Habermas, the problem of power is neutralized if moral learning is properly pursued by all. It is an uplifting vision, although it is untested in practice, at least on a global scale. The vision also raises an important point, because it suggests a common view of participants as participants; it conveys a sense of belonging, together, as participants in a shared universal project. Thus, a condition of its realization is the general if not universal and uniform acceptance of participation in the project by the majority of humankind, the additional unifying narrative of a collective pursuit of the universal discourse community. Yet, the appeal of this narrative, connected to the ambition of "enlightenment" for all humankind, is somewhat doubtful in a late modern context, where "enlightenment" values are increasingly seen as not only those of an earlier modernity, but also, to some extent, those of an earlier European modernity.

Still, let's say this estimate is wrong and that humankind is up for the enlightenment project of a universal discourse community. There are some further practical barriers and needed correctives, particularly economic and distributive issues, as Nancy Fraser has argued, for instance.[276] In principle, these economic obstacles can be corrected for. Beyond that issue, a further issue of practicality centers on the participatory and discursive theory of moral learning. It is questionable whether universally neutral moral norms are possible to achieve. If ultimately there are no universal moral norms, an alternative theory of moral learning might be introduced. Contrary to Habermas, it could be suggested that moral learning can be understood to involve increasing concord of moral specificity, rather than morally neutral norms. An alternative theory of moral learning suggests it involves more and more clarity and agreement about what

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[274] Michel Foucault, 'The Subject and Power', *Critical Inquiry,* 8:4 (1982), p. 791.

[275] Jurgen Habermas *Theory and Practice* (Boston: Beacon, 1973 [1971]), p. 40.

[276] Nancy Fraser *The Scales of Justice: Reimagining Political Space in a Globalizing World* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010); Nancy Fraser et. al. *Transnationalizing the Public Sphere* (Cambridge: Polity, 2014).

participants take specific values to mean, rather than Habermas's value-neutrality criteria of moral norms. The definition of moral learning is ultimately debatable, although the possibility of universally neutral norms is questionable. The alternative position is that there are no morally neutral norms to be found at the end of that critical discourse, only clearer and "higher" but ultimately specific and never neutral norms. Collective moral learning, on this alternative account, is not about learning what is a morally neutral norm for the whole, but, I want to suggest, the clearer grasp of a "higher" shared moral norm. This is why Habermas's demand for universalizable moral norms is logically circular, since that demand presupposes a moral position.[277] This is also why Habermas's project of emancipation paradoxically endorses the liberal democratic societies we already know, albeit with adjustments. From an alternative perspective, moral learning is not a rational exercise, or exercise in rationality, but rather, one of clarifying the moral values participants hold and constitute their self-conceptions and political societies with.[278] From this view, there are no neutral moral stances, norms, or principles awaiting a universal discourse community, regardless of whether its practical conditions are satisfied. This is why even liberal societies struggle to be morally neutral in practice.[279] From the alternative view I am introducing, all that can be hoped to be achieved is a transvaluation of values, an *Umwertung,* a transformative reconciliation of conflicting values, perhaps through a Gadamerian 'fusion of horizons', one producing new "higher" moralities, but not more neutral moral stances.[280]

Andrew Linklater has expanded upon the Habermasian image of a post-Westphalian world society, with global level institutions and citizenship, but he has also been steadily extending it towards arguments based on a distinct civilizational level of collective moral

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[277] James Gordon Finlayson *Habermas: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 89.

[278] Charles Taylor, 'Rationality', in *Philosophy and the Human Sciences: Philosophical Papers 2* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp. 134-151.

[279] Michael Sandel *Liberalism and the Limits of Justice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982); Charles Taylor, 'Can Liberalism be Communitarian?', *Critical Review,* 8:2 (1994), pp. 257-262.John Gray *Enlightenment's Wake: Politics and Culture at the Close of the Modern Age* (London: Routledge, 1995); John Gray *Post-Liberalism: Studies in Political Thought* (London: Routledge, 1996); John Gray *Two Faces of Liberalism* (New York: The New Press, 2000); Charles Taylor, 'Plurality of Goods', in R. Dworkin, M. Lilla and R.B. Silvers (eds.) *The Legacy of Isaiah Berlin* (New York: New York Review of Books, 2001), pp. 113-120; Charles Taylor, 'Cross-Purposes: The Liberal Communitarian Debate', in *Philosophical Arguments* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), p. 181-203.

[280] Charles Taylor, 'Replies', in James Tully and Daniel M. Weinstock (eds.) *Philosophy in an Age of Pluralism: The Philosophy of Charles Taylor in Question* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 213-257; William M. Curtis, 'Liberals and Pluralists: Charles Taylor vs. John Gray', *Contemporary Political Theory,* 6:1 (2007), pp. 86-107.

learning, which in his later work, incorporates Norbert Elias's theory of the civilizing process.[281] In his *The Transformation of Political Community,* Linklater placed an emphasis on transculturally recognized human harms as a foundation for a post-Westphalian cosmopolitan order.[282] Drawing on Norbert Elias's sociology, Linklater's more recent work has explored the growth of cosmopolitan harm conventions as a civilizing process.[283] This is a subtle and potentially significant departure from Habermas's project because it emphasizes a narrowing in on definitions of harm and civility, not more neutral definitions of morality. Stress on civilizational analysis introduces a subtle shift from the search for neutrality towards the search for moral specificity around a global ethic of harm and care. It introduces an alternative historical and sociological path, one potentially leading to the bases of a world polity, one set in a process of taking on an increasingly realized historical form of civility, becoming more and more internalized across the generations as a more and more admirable quality, making more and more restrained practice, being esteemed more and more in a global civilizing process. This process does not necessarily lead to a world polity, only potentially, because it first and foremost leads to more "civilized" international relations, albeit in a globalizing context. A global civilizing process is not the same as a global unifying process, but there is a potential overlap, in the long-term perspective of the interconnected insecurities of a global context that incentivize a civilizing process of restraint as well as a unifying process of collective identity formation.[284] Linklater suggests,

> Global narratives that offer long-term perspectives on the development of human societies can play a vital role in addressing the disjuncture between traditional patterns of emotional identification with "survival units" and levels of global integration that require new levels of international cooperation to address the multiple challenges facing humanity.[285]

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[281] Andrew Linklater *Critical Theory and World Politics: Citizenship, Sovereignty and Humanity* (London: Routledge, 2007); Richard Devetak, Sebastian Kaempf and Martin Weber, 'Converstations in International Relations: Interview with Andrew Linklater', *International Relations,* 27:4 (2013), pp. 481-505; Andrew Linklater, 'The Global Civilizing Role of Cosmopolitanism', in Gerard Delanty (ed.) *The Routledge Handbook of Cosmopolitanism Studies,* (London: Routledge, 2012), pp. 60-71.

[282] Andrew Linklater *The Transformation of Political Community: Ethical Foundations of the Post-Westphalisn Era* (Cambridge: Polity, 1998), ch. 2, 3, 4, 6.

[283] Andrew Linklater *The Problem of Harm in World Politics: Theoretical Investigations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011); Andrew Linklater *Violence and Civilization in the Western-States-Systems* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017); Norbert Elias *The Civilizing Process* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000).

[284] Andrew Linklater, 'Global Civilizing Processes and the Ambiguities of Human Interconnectedness', *European Journal of International Relations,* 16:2 (2010), p. 165-166.

[285] Linklater *Violence and Civilization in the Western-States Systems,* p. 467.

In the study of global civilizing processes, there is a discernable subtle shift towards finding the sociological bases of an increasingly civil international society, potentially working towards the global narratives and vision of a trans-civilizational world polity built on those bases.

Looking back, I raised Fraser's thought above as a corrective to Habermas. It is worthwhile, for several reasons, to consider her thought specifically, as a potentially distinct critical vision of a world polity. For Fraser, redistribution is not a mere democratic prerequisite, but is an increasingly complex political question of rival political possibilities. This insight, foregrounds the contradiction between the global economy and the Westphalian political order, and premises a distinct critical-emancipatory vision of a post-Westphalian world polity. Fraser argues the contradiction between economic globalization, and a Westphalian framework, where state actors build up a system of global governance to manage global challenges, creates a 'democratic deficiency' and a 'deficit of political efficacy', because global governance structures are two or three levels removed from democratic representation, and lack administrative and legislative capacity for effective government.[286] In response, Fraser proposes a vision of a world polity that is democratic, like Habermas's, but emphasizes distributive justice, to make participation in that political scheme equitable and effective. She envisions a global institutional structure of democratic governance that engages in dialogic relations with a transnational civil society that is underpinned by a principle of 'parity of participation' meaning that, 'justice requires social arrangements that permit all to participate as peers in social life.'[287] Fraser has argued that this democratic world polity is needed today because the context of justice is post-Westphalian in a global era, where social life is transnational, and where the justice of one state cannot be easily disentangled from all the others.[288] The point of this world polity vision is emancipatory justice, in a global context.[289] Like Habermas, Fraser considers her scheme to be a neutral meta-framework of justice, deferring moral choices to the democratic process creating formal 'binding decisions', so requiring all humankind to 'participate in social life as peers,' but she offers the corrective of the distributive conditions of its practical realization.[290] The vision also offers the mechanism of 'binding decisions', which, as binding results of the democratic

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[286] Fraser *The Scales of Justice,* p.156.

[287] Fraser *Scales of Justice*, p. 60-65.

[288] Fraser *Scales of Justice,* p. 12-76.

[289] Nancy Fraser, 'Reframing Justice in a Globalizing World', *New Left Review,* 36 (2005), pp. 69-88.

[290] Fraser *Scales of Justice,* p. 69.

process are not morally neutral, but decisive, favouring, or reconciling, different specific moral positions.

Fraser's vision nearly overcomes the two critiques I leveled against Habermas's vision, economic inequities connected to the question of power and a debatable understanding of moral learning. The economic position of participant parity is well-taken, and even the vision of democratic governance is not entirely objectionable, if it could be based in a novel constitutional arrangement. These details are technical questions that could conceivably be overcome in practice. The still unclear question is why the binding decisions of a global democracy should be considered as binding, what the reasons are beyond technical needs for decisions. To revisit the critiques I made against the cosmopolitan democrats, Archibugi and Held, the question is what the "weness" feeling is of Fraser's envisioned world polity. What does it means to consider all humankind as "peers" in the social life of a world polity? Peers in being equally free and held with equal worth, perhaps, holding the same status as free and equal, in the world polity. The point of this narrative would be the achievement of a more effective and thoroughgoing freedom and equality for all, which is a reasonably acceptable narrative in a modern context, and the mechanism of binding decisions is helpful for practically reconciling conflicting uses of freedoms. Yet, what are the reasons participants would have for legitimating that process of binding decisions? Why would they wish to be involved in that process and submit to democratic decisions? Is the narrative of being free and equal meaningful enough to legitimate a world polity with binding decisions? Does it express a genuine notion of togetherness and belonging, or is it too superficial, too general? Detractors will say that their freedoms if not equality are more effectively attained in a system of independent states, which is what the process of decolonization and the globalization of international society was meant to achieve. Fraser's thought provides important correctives to Habermas, but its potential to articulate a world polity vision is limited, much like the theorists of distributive justice in Chapter 3, who took the fact of a global collaborative scheme as the reason for just distributions, but struggled to clarify the crucial question of belonging, the prior reasons for being-in-it-together, in a world polity. What we gain from Fraser's vision is a greater appreciation for the image of a practically just world polity, but we need to search further and expand on the contents of the constitutive-collective-self-narrative and sense of belonging for a world polity.

4.3 Being-in-the-World-Community

In this respect, a detour from critical thought, worth taking here, is into the writings of those who have stretched and extended Hiedeggerian themes towards all-inclusive ethical outlooks in contemporary world politics. This channel of thought does not easily or readily fit into the emancipatory project, but is a detour worth taking here, due to its line of reasoning that similarly searches for a neutrally all-inclusive ethical outlook. It is worth exploring, as such, partly for its novelty and originality, but also because, in spite of its unique features, it evinces similar limitations to the current of critical thought in general.

First, Lousiza Odysseos, with subtlety and originality, has defended the critical use of a Heideggerian ethics of openness as an alternative means to coexistence beyond insiders and outsiders in world politics.[291] While this is a fascinating and strongly defended ethics, it is not necessarily a basis for a world polity, since being open is not the same as being together, or in-it-together. It is questionable how this ethical outlook could practically underpin a world polity, because, as I argued above, goods and ends conflict, ideals collide with others, including even openness. If everyone adopted an ethic of openness, there is still a further needed narrative about being-in-it-together, about why being-in-it-together in a world polity would be a shared aspiration, because it would require the management of conflict and burden sharing choices, that might more easily be avoided. Being open provides an ethic of getting along as it were, but not an ethic of getting together, so to speak.

A second thinker, Alphonso Lingis also develops Heideggerian themes towards cosmopolitan questions. His vision, in *The Community of Those Who Have Nothing in Common,* arises in debate with Michel Serres, who conceived communities as an establishment of language through the bracketing-out of background noise, the reduction of static and fuzz by definitions and rules, the rational elimination of the elements of incomprehension.[292] This linguistic project is rational-universalist, seeking to undo babel, to construct the rational *cosmopolis*, a universal language of and for all things.[293] Lingis points out how this project assumes we want to or can say the same things and want to communicate in this bracketing-out way. He suggests the 'other'

[291] Louiza Odysseos *The Subjects of Coexistence: Otherness in International Relations* (London: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), p. 170.
[292] Michel Serres, 'Platonic Dialogue,' trans. Marilyn Sides in *Hermes,* ed. Josué V. Harari & David F. Bell (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983), pp. 65-70.
[293] Stephen Toulmin *Cosmopolis: The Hidden Agenda of Modernity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990).

(the Aztec cannibal, the last nomads, the hermits of humanity), represent, in their hostile reclusiveness, unincorporateable alien communities, the 'other community', the fuzz of humanity, its noise, a human static lost to and pushed out by the project of a universal language.[294] This pushing out is problematic and needs to be overcome, Lingis argues, not least because others are valued for their affirmation of one's own reality. This is to say that the being of outsiders shores up or fleshes out the being of civilization, phenomenologically. That is, the witness of their otherness brings one's own reality into view.[295] Without this encounter, one still exists, but the being of one's reality is backgrounded, unnoticeable. In this critique, Lingis finds a paradox between the outsider nature of the other and the sense that their deaths matter, the feeling of culpability in the death of obscure people, unknowable, distant, "Cambodians, and Somalians" for instance; "the social outcasts".[296] He asks, how is there "a growing conviction … that the dying of people with whom we have nothing in common … concerns us?"[297] There is, in some way, a sort of strange community feeling for them. How can this be? Reaching across that irreducible alterity Lingis sees a communal burden between fellow mortals, "the community in death."[298] For Lingis, there is only one community of all humankind, the imperative to console the dying, the universal due of not being alone in death, be they friend or stranger, citizen or foreigner. For Lingis, cosmopolitan questions are not primarily about laws of hospitality or distributive justice, but about different Hiedeggerian themes of understanding the modern cosmopolitan self through encountering the other, and having consolation and compassion for dying strangers, because of a shared being-towards-death, together form a world community with distant strangers and those strangers valued only for their otherness. The point of this vision is to identify and defend the human blind spots in the ambition of a world unity. Its point is to defend the existence and worth of the vulnerable people pushed out of the world by the world polity, so to make room for them in a more inclusive scheme.

Lingis makes an important point about the value in "others", not as a caricatured other, in Edward Said's sense of an Orientalized other, but as the actual others of global modernity, the last uncontacted tribes, the recluse peoples, in the world, but other-than modern. When we

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[294] Alphonso Lingis *The Community of Those Who Have Nothing in Common* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994).
[295] Ibid., p. 1-107.
[296] Ibid., p. 1.
[297] Ibid., p. 1.
[298] Ibid., p. 157.

witness these peoples, from helicopter cameras, it reminds us of the historical specificity of our global modern selves, and the possibility and reality of distinct historical selves. There is something important to the point that if there were a world polity, it would have others, on the inside, and that the epistemology of the world polity is at least partly connected to its others.[299] In this sense, the uncontacted tribes and reclusive peoples, in worlds all their own, are a part of the imagined world polity, important to it, and their continued seclusion would be worth defending, as others apart from the world polity on its inside. The seclusion of such peoples would be worth preserving, for the self-awareness that such "others" would yield for a world polity wherein everyone would in principle be together.

There is also something to what Lingis says about our community in death, but it is less persuasive. The vanishing of distant persons, any person really, affects us because it could be us. We share something important in the awareness of our mortality. Heidegger was right about this. So was Montaigne.[300] Yet, the consolation and compassion due to dying *strangers* is only compelling in times of direct social relation, face to face as it were. We are in an indirect relation with those beyond the immediate grasp of our senses.[301] The dying of far way *friends and loved ones* summons us to be beside them in direct relations. The dying of strangers does not in the same way, because we do not know them, they do not share with us a background social psychology built up from having lived together in direct relations. Strangers do not know one another's lives. It is only in the hypothetical situation of being in the direct presence of a dying stranger that we feel compelled to console them. My point here is that it is not entirely coherent to attempt to delay or prevent the death of any and all dying distant strangers we do not know or understand for the sake of their otherness. Contrary to Lingis, I would suggest we increasingly care about the deaths of distant others today because of modern values and self-conceptions that in a modernized world provide reasons why distant others do not have to die in an untoward way.[302] There is a general sense amongst modern peoples that modern technology and

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[299] Lingis's point about the importance and value of others is helpful in overcoming the Schmittianesque view of the other as wholly constitutive of the self, which connects to an unduly antagonistic notion of self and other relations, as implacable enemies. That view has pragmatic issues with violence, making our others our victims of our definitions of them, sliding too easily into knowing the self via Said style caricaturing of others, getting too far away from real others, people who are merely otherwise, anthropologically.

[300] Michel de Montaigne, 'That to Philosophize is to Learn to Die', in Donald M. Frame (trans.) *Michel de Montaigne: The Complete Works* (New York: Alferd A. Knopf, 2003), pp. 67-82.

[301] Alfred Schutz *The Phenomenology of the Social World* (London: Heinemann, 1972).

[302] See, Charles Taylor *The Sources of the Self: The Making of Modern Identity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1989).

infrastructure can and ought to be used to protect people from plague and famine, natural disasters, war and ethnic cleansing, whether those people are distant or not, and regardless of their "otherness". Global ethical questions about distant strangers have arisen because it is a globalized world, because there is a global situation where there has been built the technological capacity to systematically avoid arbitrary death on a global scale.[303] Although a shared mortality does play a part in the late modern ethics of distant strangers, it is the emergence of a global consciousness and infrastructure in a modern context that gives Lingis's paradox of saving distant strangers its global reality.

A curious neo-Heideggerian approach is found in Peter Sloterdyjk's sphereology series that could potentially be extended to a world polity vision. In his history of being and space, Sloterdijk argues, with the spatial metaphor of "spheres", that with the Copernican revolution the 'One Orb has imploded', the conceptual possibility of the single-encased perfect cosmological sphere is popped. If the Babylonians viewed the cosmos as a clam shell for instance, there was a "roof", but the absence of a ceiling, in the modern worldview, is an important change for being in space, Sloterdyk argues. He goes on to suggest that modern capitalism seeks to insulate humankind by creating a world interior, a new shelter, a global urban space, a global mall, a global crystal palace, with wifi.[304] This world interior is not worldwide, he points out. The developed capitalized interior constitutes a world outside of the developing and underdeveloped world. The way forward, he suggests, is to bring society into a state of foam, a mass of shifting microspheres in and across marcrospheres, global and local.[305] Make the space global, he suggests, but go beyond the idea of making all an inside. Make it, somehow, a world of jumbled foam-oceans of spheres, capitalist, political, cultural, global-geographic, etc. This is a vision of a world polity achieved by reimagining the spatial dimensions of inside and outside. Sloterdijk admits his ideas exaggerate the conditions of modernity and capitalism and that they over abstract space as shapes, but the point of his foam-world image is to help conceive (however

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[303] Kimberly Hutchings *Global Ethics: An Introduction* (Cambridge: Polity, 2010); Chris Brown *International Society, Global Polity: An Introduction to International Political Theory* (London: SAGE, 2015), part II.
[304] Peter Sloterdijk *Bubbles: Spheres Volume I, Microspherology* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2011); Sloterdijk *Globes: Spheres Volume II, Macrospherology* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2014); Sloterdijk *Foams: Spheres Volumes III, Plural Spherology* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2016); Peter Sloterdijk *In the World Interior of Capital: For a Philosophical Theory of Capital* (Cambridge: Polity, 2013); Jean-Pierre Couture, 'Sphere Effects: A History of Peter Sloterdijk's Political Architectures', *World Political Science Review,* 7:1 (2011), pp. 1-17; Peter Sloterdijk, 'Geometry in the Colossal: The Project of Metaphysical Globalization', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space,* 27 (2009), pp. 29-40.
[305] Sloterdijk *Foams.*

ridiculously abstract and metaphorical), a society beyond the inside/outside problem, what Heidegger was attempting to achieve, but did not quite grasp with his ethics of openness. Sloterdijk's vision is to maximize this image of the foam world in practice, to make permeable all rigid spheres and make-up a kind of world polity of foam play, a world order with no inside/outside. The vision conveys the kind of useful entropy and spontaneous orders of some sort of 'open plan' global Google headquarters, the ideal world of the creative designer and entrepreneur, one in which individuals are free to join up and split off spheres as they may wish on a global scale.

There are historiographical issues in the spatial narrative that I want to criticize because they relate to the coherence and practicality of this foam-world concept. The main issue is the impoverished portrayal of human beings as cave denizens, creatures wanting interiority, as if spheres of spatial security are all we have ever sought from our orders and cosmologies. Cosmology is not this simple. The phenomenology of space is not all-important. The human understanding of the cosmos has shaped our conceptions of political order not so much by situating their security and insecurity but by providing models of order, be it Pythagoras's idea that the cosmos is ordered mathematically, or the medieval image of the great chain of being, or modern heliocentricity.[306] These images of order gave expression to the order people admired and wanted to achieve in social and political life. These models hung together with self-conceptions and conceptions of the good. Why were the Mesopotamian metropolises designed to physically reflect the order of the cosmos? Why did the Byzantine emperors order their court to mirror the order in heaven? How could there be a Sun King of France? It is the visions of order that are mirrored in these cases. Sloterdijk's narrative of space also forgets time, that is, the importance of creation myths and the question of when we are. For the ancient Greeks, the earth was made from chaos and could be made orderly. The medieval world was pre-fabricated, pre-ordered, and set on a limited history. For the late-moderns, the universe was cracked-open from a big bang in which we have been created, and in which we can create, but like surfers our creations ride within the time/space forces of the bang's cosmic wave. Sloterdijk is correct that the post-Copernican, post-Mercator, and post-earth-horizon lunar visualization of the globular earth, adrift in the universe, has disrupted the place of the divine, and brought us back to earth, as it were. But, this back-to-earth turn is not the whole story or end of the story, because there are

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[306] Toulmin *Cosmopolis*.

contents to the questions of who and when we are that matter equally for what we admire and aspire to

If where we are is not the whole story, and if who we are matters equally if not more, then Sloterdijk's foam world seems to be missing the most important parts of a concept of a world polity even though it is an interesting approach. To coherently suggest 7 billion plus bubbles can or do form a polity, a larger story is needed about their self-conceptions that can shape the moral and historical character of their conception of order, their institutions, and practices. Without a bigger story, a more comprehensive narrative, about who we are and want to be, about what we admire and despise, the foam-world cannot be put into practice because there is no sense of what the point of its inclusivity is. Besides the ability of people to be unencumbered by inside/outside boundaries, it is not clear why they would wish universal inclusivity.

4.4 The Whatever Community

The most ingenious critical thinker to offer a world community vision has been Giorgio Agamben. His later political theory has mainly analyzed state powers, but in his early book *The Coming Community,* he offers the clever if unduly complex concept of the 'whatever community'. I want to explore this concept, if it can be done without exploring the entirety of Agamben's thought, because with it Agamben seems to have made a forthright effort to overcome those modern biases that confine the world polity to the realms of utopia, dystopia, and retrotopia.

Rather than searching a common set of universal rules or conventions, Agambens's concept is based on "indifference", not in the sense of disinterestedness or apathy, but in the sense of an absence of both difference or sameness, differentia or category, without distinctions between its members or an attribution of a common class.[307] With affinity to Jean-Luc Nancy's idea that every being is being-with, and sharing his and Alain Badiou's search for a society without a specific subjectivity,[308] Agamben's idea of a whatever community is conceptually

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[307] William Watkin, 'The Coming Community: An Essay on Indifferent Singularities', in *Agamben and Indifference: A Critical Overview* (London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014), pp. 65-86.
[308] Jean Luc Nancy *Being Singular Plural* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000); Jean Luc Nancy, 'The Confronted Community', *Post-Colonial Studies,* 6:1 (2003), pp. 23-36; Alain Badiou *Logics of Worlds: Being and*

clever because it overcomes the inside/outside emancipation problematique of critical political theory by making everyone a limbo-outsider/insider (in the sense of being on the threshold or in purgatory – neither in nor out). The whatever community, according to Agamben, is a "whatever singularity" that has no inside nor outside, no terms of exclusion, since its members share no common properties, essence, or identity.[309] This offers a new way of imagining belonging.

He explains its historical emergence with quasi-Marxist analysis. Written in the 1990's, but still with some plausibility, he claimed that the triumph of capitalism and 'a single planetary petty bourgeoisie' has replaced/erased or 'dissolved' class difference and rendered individuals fungible by making them indistinct and indifferent products of advertising, labour roles, and body commodification.[310] For Agamben, the whatever singularity exists via the geo-capitalist situation, wherein its whatever community is at once imminent and latent. He suggests the existence of the whatever community across the globe is a world only slightly changed, superficially the same, but containing a politics of conflict between the state and the whatever community, which, I would suggest, is Agamben's radically revised conception of the proletariat. Because the whatever community has no insiders or outsiders, the whatever community can have no representatives, which brings it into conflict with the state.[311] 'Everything will be as it is now, just a little different' because it would be marked by the constant consciousness of the presence of the whatever community's potentiality. Because it is a whatever community, it is latent or dormant, able to be and not-be at any time.[312] Agamben gives the example of Tiananmen Square as an event approaching the presence of the whatever community, an event of spontaneous solidarities and global actions against the state that cannot represent the unrepresentable whatever community.[313]

The point of this concept's use, for Agamben, at least in his early thought, is to support resistance to state representation and to be used to critique exclusions and exploitations based on attributions of social difference. The empirical validity of capitalism's indifferentiation of humankind's subjectivity is questionable, with a host of examples, cultural and political, and ultimately rests on debatable assumptions about the subjectivity of capitalist life. It is hard to

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Event, 2 (London: Continuum, 2009); Sergei Prozorov, 'Generic Universalism in World Politics: Beyond International Anarchy and the World State', *International Theory,* 1:2 (2009), pp. 215-247.
[309] Giorgio Agamben *The Coming Community* (Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press, 1993), p. 9, 63.
[310] Agamben *The Coming Community,* p. 63.
[311] Ibid., p. 24.
[312] Ibid., p. 34.
[313] Ibid., 85.

think of real-life examples of indifferent persons. The conceptually more problematic issues are the coherence and practicality of Agamben's account of what makes the whatever community communal. His thought is fox-like and gymnastic, but the search for neutrality and inclusivity, in this case through a neutralization of the problem of difference and sameness, is self-defeating.

How is the whatever community communal? Distinguishing communal from the societal, Agamben claims, 'Whatever singularities cannot form a *societas* because they do not possess any identity to vindicate nor any bond of belonging for which to seek recognition.'[314] From its etymology in Roman private law, the societal indicates a consented project, an agreed contract, a club membership brought into existence by avowals. Societal membership has speech act conditions. The communal indicates a consent-regardless indebtednesses of each owing one another each's own due, speech act regardless. As Roberto Esposito's *Communitas* suggests, the etymology of community entails its conceptual indication of an indebtedness to others,[315] a feeling of moral obligation, or unconditional loyalty, what Collingwood called "the *suum cuique*" of the community; its members owe each other each other's due.[316] This is how Maurice Blanchot was able to find the paradox of making an avowal to one's community, since communities are, as he suggested, unavowable things.[317] This is why the theorists of cosmopolitan moral obligations, Pogge, Nussbaum, and Singer, for example, use the language of a world community rather than a world society. It conveys their point that humankind has obligations to one another, that each of us are owed a certain due.

The role of ethics and love in Agamben's thought encapsulates the communal indebtedness conceived within his whatever community but it also reveals its impractical idealism and internal contradictions. Ethically, he suggests that because, 'the being most proper to humankind is being one's own possibility or potentiality, then [because] being potential- is in a certain sense lacking … humans have and feel a debt', each are due their being-potentiality.[318] There is a debt, he says, to become being-potentiality, to attain a kind of 'becoming-being', as it were.[319] In combination with this, according to Agamben, whatever singularities are 'the

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[314] Ibid., 85.
[315] Roberto Esposito *Communitas: The Origin and Destiny of Community* (Standford: Stanford University Press, 2010).
[316] R.G. Collingwood *The New Leviathan: Or Man, Society, Civilization and Barbarism* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1947), p. 138.
[317] Maurice Blanchot *The Unavowable Community* (New York: Stanton Hill, 1988).
[318] Agamben *The Coming Community,* p. 42.
[319] Willian E. Connolly *Pluralism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005).

Lovable', meaning unconditional and total love, 'loved … *with all of its predicates*, its being such as it is.'[320] Thus, the whatever community is lovable, but, as it is a community of humankind and human beings are rightly being-potentialities, what is loved is the being-potentiality of all human beings. For all its clever suspensions of identity politics, this being-potentiality love is, at bottom, the uber-idealist nub of Agamben's whatever community. Loving everyone for their potential to become is not an emerging condition of humankind, as Agamben suggested, nor is it likely to be. Humankind is rather moved more by love for specific kinds of things and ambitions, modern ones above all others today.

Two specific criticisms can be made, but have to meet Agamben at his abstract level. First, the claim that each owes a debt to humankind to be being-potentiality requires more reasoned defense. It could just as easily be claimed that people are obliged to be something, to fulfill their potentiality in a certain way. Second, a major tension here is the contradiction between what is loved, with all its predicates, and the debt to be being-potential, devoid of predicates. Where is conflict in Agamben's community? If what is loved conflicts with one's own life potential, it either must become indifferent, or one must modify one's own life to be indifferent; the difference must be suspended somehow. But can this really work out? Does it not reduce to a world of indifferent paralysis, loving every potentiality and so no actuality at all? Contrary to Agamben's ideal of indifference, for a community and communal ethics to exist (be it via some sense of indebtnesses, loyalties, or love) they require (and indeed are constituted by) certain unifying intentionalities between its members, certain backgrounded consciousnesses of collectively regarded we-ness or us-ness consciousness.[321] The being of this unifying intentionality fills in the contents of the being-with, it is the being-with-whom that Agemben seeks to do without that is necessary for a community to exist. This is also why the concepts of community and society are historically and culturally specific ways of conceiving such unifying intentionalities.[322] Communities and societies, that exist, are the emergence of more than mere *being-with*, they are certain social stuffs, socially defined social things. Not only is Agamben's concept unduly idealistic, its premises do not hold up under scrutiny.

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[320] Agamben *The Coming Community,* p. 2.
[321] Charles Taylor, 'Ethics and Ontology', *The Journal of Philosophy,* 100:6 (2003), pp. 305-320.
[322] Patricia Owens, 'Introduction: Historicizing the Social in International Thought', *Review of International Studies,* 41:4 (2015), pp. 652-653.

We can perhaps get a clearer grasp of these issues and tensions by turning to Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri's work. Their concept of commonwealth draws much of its inspiration from Agamben's whatever community and illustrates the same flaws. They build the concept of the 'commonwealth' on their concepts of the 'common', the 'multitude', and 'Empire'. With some similarities to Wallerstein's center-periphery world system,[323] 'Empire' is their conception of the US centric capitalist world order embedded in a web of global governance structures.[324] For Hardt and Negri, this global system constitutes the proletarian-esque multitude, a crowd-like image of humankind, a stochastic assembly, constituted by the common context or situation of Empire, not by some uniformity or common identity trait.[325] Hardt and Negri conceive the as yet unrecognized and unclaimed property of the multitude as the common, taken to be all things held in common, including both the resources of the earth as well as those of human culture and society like shared languages and practices.[326] As such, the commonwealth is the appropriation of the common by the multitude, which they conceive as a revolutionary and properly democratic transformation of Empire.

With inspiration from Agamben's whatever community, the concept of the commonwealth makes some original twists, but struggles with similar difficulties. For Hardt and Negri, the establishment of the commonwealth would form a communist-like world community, a more properly democratic one beyond the failed experiments of the 20th century. Yet, what this means is both unclear and cringingly optimistic, where, for example, they describe it as the 'institution of happiness [and] joy [through] love and laughter.'[327] The generality of these ends and means makes understanding what kind of world a commonwealth looks like or for whom incomprehensible. It could be applied to any number of happy imaginings. Envisioning a world of common abundance, Hardt and Negri have no conception of conflicts between values, no apparent awareness of the moral dilemmas between different happinesses and joys that every life, society, and civilization must necessarily struggle with to exist. They offer no sense of what a world community might specifically aspire to be, only that it should be happy and full of love, and should appropriate the 'common' for all humankind.

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[323] Immaneul Wallerstein *World-Systems Analysis: An Introduction* (Duke: Duke University Press, 2004).

[324] Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri *Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000).

[325] Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire* (New York: Penguin, 2004).

[326] Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri *Commonwealth* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009)*,* p. 171.

[327] Hardt and Negri *Commonwealth*, p. 382-383.

4.5 Conclusions

In this chapter, I have argued that the attempt to find a world polity vision in neutral ethics is problematic because it always runs into cases of conflict, where the inclusive benefits of neutrality run up against conflicts of values and ideals. I found the Habermasian ambition of clarifying more and more neutral, impartial, or accommodating norms to be vulnerable to this criticism. I also found it to be helpfully qualified by Fraser's vision of practically minded insight into the economic and structural requisites of a practically effective world polity. I found the Heideggerian inspired visions to offer interesting ideas that illuminating some of the historical aspects of a world polity in a modern context that can potentially be expanded, prarticularly notions of shifts in time and space. But, I also found these Heideggerian visions struggle to articulate a sense of belonging, offering notions of openness, a common-being-toward death, and a shared notion of cosmological space and time, but struggling to articulate a practical notion of being-in-it-together. A world polity cannot be practically found in a Heideggerian "openness" ethic, or the shared being-towards-mortality of others, or even the shared space of others. These being-in-the-world and being-amongst-others-in-the-world feelings lack a larger unifying belonging-together-in-the-world narrative that would be needed to legitimate and practically realize a world polity in practice. Lastly, I found that capitalism has produced a global system and a global situation, but that it does not make humankind an indifferent throng imagined as a "whatever community" by Agamben and the "multitude" by Hardt and Negri. I found these visions to suffer from incoherence, because humankind in a modern capitalist world system is not indifferent, but rather that it is busy living billions of meaningful modern lives, different lives with variety of goals, ideals, and identities that often conflict. The visions of the whatever community and multitude also struggle to provide a practical vision because they rely too heavily on idealistic notions of love and solidarity that bely the existence of conflict and practical need for a meaningful narrative.

All this leads to the question that if the collective-self-narrative of a world polity must be something sociologically specific and if it cannot be morally neutral or utterly indifferent, then what are the range of historically and sociologically specific narratives that it could possibly take? In the following chapter, I turn to historical conceptions of a global civil society often

conceived in liberal cosmopolitan terms, but also in historically specific sociological terms. This idea of a global civil society was, not too long ago, fairly prominent in the discourse of world order. Starting with an exploration of this current of thought, I also push the search in the next chapter into the territory of what historical conceptions are rising in the place of declining and problematic visions of a global civil society.

Chapter Five.

Towards a Trans-Civilizational World Polity

5.1 Introduction

In a late modern era, the citizen to whom a single set of laws cannot apply is the citizen of the world. In a context where capital 'C' definitions of civilization are overturned, in an age of multiple and oftentimes rival cosmopolitanisms, the ancient connection long ago made by Zeno, between a universal cosmos and the universal law of a world city, no longer holds water.[328] Whose cosmos? What law? In this chapter, I want to suggest that the self-consciously historical and "anti-foundationalist" liberal cosmopolitan successor to modern liberal universalism is dying in practice and is increasingly difficult to defend in theory.[329] Beyond it, I make an expedition into what I characterize as a trans-civilizational vision, one that is anti-foundationalist and cosmopolitan, but not exclusively liberal, representing the push towards a new cosmopolitan imaginary. I point towards a variety of thought that can be seen to share a common post-Western and trans-civilizational cosmopolitics.

My aim in this chapter is to suggest the decline of the liberal notion of a "global civil society", and pushing past it, to draw out the emerging trans-civilizational conception of a world polity and subject it to conceptual scrutiny. My argument is that this new conception has points of strength, but also significant weaknesses, particularly the tenuous patchwork character of its historical narrative that makes it vulnerable to detractors, as well as its dependence on an as yet underdeveloped global political economy model. In this argument, I first briefly review the rise of anti-foundationalist liberal cosmopolitanism of the global civil society vision. I make the case for its decline in practice and review its critics in theory. Second, as a corrective to analyses that conflate multi-polarity with civilizational clashes of multiple modernities, I explain why the rise of a multipolar balance of power means neither a "realist" disorder, nor a mere loosening of the liberal world order, but the growth of a post-Western world order, in the continuing realization of

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[328] William E. Connolly, 'Speed, Concentric Circles, and Cosmopolitanism' *Political Theory,* 28:5 (2000), pp. 596-618; Bruno Latour, 'Whose Cosmo, Which Cosmopolitics?', *Common Knowledge,* 10:3 (2004), pp. 450-462; Charles Taylor *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007).
[329] Richard Rorty *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

modernity. Third, I unpack the meaning of an emerging post-Western cosmopolitanism as a position on world order, and fourth, I draw out and analyze the trans-civilizational world polity conception it offers. My conclusion points towards the problem of climate change and changing ecological conceptions of society in nature that ultimately might wash this vision away before it ever takes root.

5.2 The Decline of Liberal Cosmopolitanism

The high tide of liberal cosmopolitanism in world politics is hard to place, but it has undoubtedly broken. What was it? In one strain, it was conceived in universalist terms, expressed in the search for universal moral codes, like those studied in Chapter 3. In a different strain, it was conceived in historically and culturally specific terms, as a liberal Western culture thought to be of cosmopolitan relevance and import. This movement from universal codes, to the sentiments and sympathies of historically and culturally specific liberal values, particularly in the writings of Richard Rorty, was a helpful and important step in the right direction, in the search for a world polity. It raised the possibility of a shared collective-self-narrative that could express and help generate the sentiments and common sympathies needed for a world polity, regardless of what universal laws may exist.[330] Its limits, however, in its ability to convince all humankind of the virtues of liberalism has to be questioned. Whether or not they are better virtues, it is a liberal fantasy to believe all humankind would become liberal, not only because the world has so many cultures, but also because its societies have been galvanized to defend their distinct cultures and identities in a post-colonial context. An historically and culturally specific narrative of a larger loyalty and belonging is needed to legitimize and ground a world polity in practice, but a narrative larger than Western liberal-democratic horizons is needed too.

A recent strain of liberal cosmopolitanism was conceived by many as an emerging "global civil society", an altruistic transnational network of solidarities, expressed in cosmopolitan law and norms, advocated for and shared by NGO's, individuals and social

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[330] Richard Rorty, 'Justice as a Larger Loyalty', *Ethical Perspectives,* 4:2 (1997), pp. 139-151; Richard Rorty *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

movements, various groups, and philanthropic corporations.[331] Proclaimed by UN Secretary General Kofi Annan and intellectuals at the London School of Economics, this global civil society was called on to cajole the international community towards a more free, equal, and pacific world.[332] Building upon an historical experience of modern liberalism, with civil society and a public sphere as an achievement of modern history, this movement shed the universal foundations of liberalism, but maintained much of its contents, seeking historical and sociological foundations for the idea of global civil society.[333]

Though popular for a time, this movement had its critics and is, today, increasingly difficult to defend in theory and dying practice. In practice, its effectiveness was undermined by the failures and upheavals of the global war on terror. Its promise of a more prosperous world has also been sapped by the great recession and evident failures of neoliberal economic globalization, to which it was closely aligned. Global civil society, as a moving force in a new globalized world order, failed to deliver on its promise of peace and prosperity. In theory, the concept of a global civil society was criticized for lacking a world government to direct its energies towards and to be cohered by. The criticism is that there has to be something to be a public of or towards for the idea to be coherent, there has to be some political framework to constitute a world public.[334] The modern idea of a civil society is about a public and public sphere discussing and advocating certain actions of a shared government and taking action where the government fell short of responsibilities and expectations. This idea does not make sense in a global context lacking a common government. The idea of a global civil society, in this respect, is aspirational, but ultimately problematic when taken from the domestic realm and applied to an international context. More damaging was the criticism that a precondition for a cosmopolitan global civil society is the liberal imaginary of altruistic solidarities amongst atomist individuals.[335] It is a certain Western, liberal, and bourgeois way of seeing the social world, not

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[331] Mary Kaldor, 'The Idea of Global Civil Society', *International Affairs,* 79:3 (2003), pp. 583-593; John Keane *Global Civil Society?* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Seyla Benhabib *Another Cosmopolitanism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

[332] Kofi Annan, 'Address to the General Assembly', *United Nations*, (New York, 19 Sept., 2006), p. 4.

[333] Lilie Chouliaraki *The Ironic Spectator: Solidarity in the Age of Post-Humanism* (Cambridge: Polity, 2013).

[334] Brett Bowden, 'Civil Society, the State, and the Limits to Global Civil Society', *Global Society,* 20:2 (2006), pp. 155-178.

[335] Craig Calhoun, 'Belonging in the Cosmopolitan Imaginary', *Ethnicities,* 3:4 (2003), pp. 531-553; Chris Brown, 'Cosmopolitanism, World Citizenship and Global Civil Society', *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy,* 3:1 (2000), pp. 7-26; Jens Bartelson, 'Making Sense of Global Civil Society', *European Journal of International Relations,* 12:3 (2006), pp. 371-395; Hans-Martin Jaeger, 'Global Civil Society and the

easily or unproblematically applicable to non-Western contexts. To an extent, there is something of a transnational civil society network emerging around global governance structures, but its civil society does not really exist beyond the bourgeois world of mostly Western elites.[336] The cosmopolitan solidarity that global civil society advocates aspire to requires a larger more encompassing, cosmopolitan narrative than the predominantly liberal-Western vision of collaborating cosmopolitan individuals on a global scale. If a world government were established, hypothetically speaking, the practice of a global civil society would need to accommodate alternative forms of belonging and public discourse, beyond the fairly Western-centric conception presently entertained in the global civil society idea.

Mervyn Frost has argued that the bedrock of the global civil society movement is the promotion of human rights, because they constitute human beings as rights bearing civilians, constituting the ability to engage in civil activities.[337] Yet, as we saw in chapter 3, there is more difficulty in agreeing on which rights really matter in a global than local context. To overcome this challenge, some have suggested a pragmatic solution, making human rights matter for pragmatic ends, practical achievements and actually desired goals and values.[338] This suggestion salvages the utility of human rights discourse, pointing the way for their local and issue specific use. But, on a global scale, it hardly escapes the question of which goods human rights are good for and for whom. It is correct so say that this is important for establishing an overlapping consensus on human rights, by clarifying which rights are practically desired and which make a practical difference. Yet, that is still an ambition and not a practical achievement. There is still no consensus on which rights matter, when, where, and why. The public discourse and activities of an imagined global civil society might help work towards an overlapping consensus, but it itself cannot be based on human rights, in so far as there is no agreement on which take priority, and to what ends.

Political Depoliticization of Global Governance', *International Political Sociology,* 1 (2007), pp. 257-277; Kenneth Anderson and David Rieff, 'Global Civil Society: A Sceptical View' in Mary Kaldor, Helmut Anheier, and Marlies Glasius (eds.) *Global Civil Society 2004-2005* (London: Sage, 2004), pp. 28-36; David Chandler *Constructing Global Civil Society: Morality and Power in International Relations* (London: Palgrave, 2004).
[336] Chris Brown *International Society, Global Polity: An Introduction to International Political Theory* (London: SAGE, 2015), part II.
[337] Mervyn Frost *Constituting Human Rights: Global Civil Society and the Society of Democratic States* (London: Routledge, 2002).
[338] Joe Hoover *Reconstructing Human Rights: A Pragmatic and Pluralist Inquiry in Global Ethics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

These critiques of global civil society discourse have arisen alongside the anti-globalization movement embracing the global poor and working class, socialist intellectuals, the green movement, and global south. The anti-globalization camp, picking up added momentum from the 2008 financial crisis, has appropriated the idea of a global civil society, giving it a critical twist of resistance "from below".[339] This movement embraces several movements, a grand alliance of resistance to economic globalization. It has a semblance as a resistance movement and it rallies larger masses of people than elitist forms of globalism, but, as a movement, it is still searching for its vision of a better world. It is, primarily, a resistance movement, rather than a revolutionary movement with a practical vision. Rather than a single idea emerging from this movement, it contains several, critical emancipatory ideas and ecological planetary ideas most prominently. Those ideas I consider on their own terms. However, their common rival, the liberal discourse of a global civil society, is increasingly difficult to defend in theory and dying in practice.

5.3 Civilizations are What Humankind Makes of Them . . .

What comes next? In this section, I want to devote some time to discussing what does not follow from the decline of liberal cosmopolitan globalism. This lay some of the foundations for my later argument. The first mistaken idea is the thought that the wake of liberal cosmopolitanism means an end to cosmopolitanism. That is a nauseatingly liberal-centric notion. This notion is sometimes thought to be given support by the contemporary context of an emerging multipolar world order, where a relative decline of the liberal West reveals new world order questions. Yet, the relative decline of Western powers also raises new opportunities, about world order trajectories and possibilities. It is too easy to think the concurrent decline of liberal cosmopolitanism and the decline of Western liberal powers means the return of a realist world order with a clash of civilizational states. The reality is more complicated, with multiple cosmopolitanisms and civilizations, at times colliding and conflicting, but also mixing and co-constituting. To clear the way for an exploration of this complex post-liberal and post-Western world order that contains a new trans-civilizational cosmopolitanism, I want to first briefly

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[339] Karen M. Buckley *Global Civil Society and Transversal Hegemony: The Globalization-Contestation Nexus* (London: Routledge, 2013).

suggest that conflict in contemporary world affairs is less endemic than realists claim but also more pronounced than liberals have admitted.

The well-known Huntington Fukuyama debate exaggerates world affairs in a post-Cold War context, but it contains some insights nonetheless. In broad strokes, Francis Fukuyama argued capitalist liberal democracy, in its modern Western secularized form, was the "end of history", but, in the rise of ethnic conflict, religious fundamentalism, and geo-political rivalries in world affairs, it evidently was not.[340] Fukuyama was right to suggest the conflict over modernity between Western ideologies was largely terminated with the dissolution of Soviet power. Soviet modernity had become defunct and invalidated, in Russia and abroad.[341] Communism is no longer a major force in world affairs and no alternative socio-political economic system has emerged as a rival vision of modernity on the global and revolutionary scale that communism once held. The post-Cold War conflict that has emerged, first took on ethnic dimensions, in the ethnic cleansing episodes in the 1990's, but on a geo-political level, tensions have also increasingly taken on cultural-civilizational dimensions, between Western and non-Western modernities, as Huntington had suggested it would.[342] This return of history, some think, gives Huntington's infamous clash of civilizations thesis the winning hand of empirical verification. Huntington argued that, in the absence of Cold War rivalry, "civilizations" would form the most significant foci of solidarities and fault lines of conflict in world affairs.[343] This image of a civilizational clash, as has often been argued, is incoherent, because civilizations are not rigid freestanding blocks of culture. Civilizations are, rather, internally diverse, interrelated, and co-constitutive flows of meanings, narratives, and practices.[344] As such, the meaning discursively attributed to one civilization, shapes the others, and vice versa. Their contents are interrelated, discursively, in their narrative construction. Because the civilizations are co-constitutive narratives performed in practice, their clash is only a result of their relational co-constitution, not a result of fundamental hostilities between them. The idea of a clash of

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[340] Francis Fukuyama *The End of History and the Last Man* (London: Penguin, 1992); Jennifer M. Welsh *The Return of History: Conflict, Migration, and Geopolitics in the Twenty-First Century* (Toronto: Anansi, 2016).
[341] George Bush, Mikhail Gorbachev, Margaret Thatcher, Francois Mitterand, Brian Mulroney, and Fidel Castro, 'What Did We End the Cold War For?', *New Perspectives Quarterly,* 1:13 (1996), pp. 18-28.
[342] Fred Dallmayr, M. Akif Kayapinar, and Ismail Yaylaci (eds.) *Civilizations and World Order: Geopolitics and Cultural Difference* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2014).
[343] Samuel P. Huntington *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (London: Free Press, 2002).
[344] Peter J. Katzenstein (ed.) *Civilizations in World Politics* (London: Routledge, 2009); Dimitrios Stroikos, 'Introduction: Rethinking the Standard(s) of Civilisation(s) in International Relations', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies,* 42:3 (2014), pp. 546-556.

civilizations could be thought of as, at bottom, a clash of the values emphasized by the cultural systems of civilizations. Yet, again, the values that different civilizations emphasize depends on shifting webs of narrative and practice, interpretations of beliefs and events. Civilizations are not colliding fundamentalisms because there is nothing fundamental about them. For example, the events of Sept. 11, 2001, that gave wind to Huntington's thesis, as its empirical verification, was also met by the 'Alliance of Civilizations' and earlier 'Dialogue of Civilizations' movements, that have worked to constitute an alternative narrative of the relations between Islam and the West.[345] The response and interpretation of events depends on the narratives constructed around them. The relations of civilizations are socially constructed. There is more tension and conflict than the Fukuyama thesis predicted, because liberal-democratic Western civilization is not the only form of civilized modernity, but conflict is also not as impending and unavoidable as Huntington's thesis suggested.

It is the importance of "civilization" as a form of soft power in the modern discourse of world order that gives Huntington's thesis its insight, but it is also the simplicity of his understanding of civilizational conflict that muddies the insight. Whenever conflict or rivalry emerges in the context of multiple civilizational attributes and symbols, the clash of civilizations thesis appears to be verified. Beyond the war on terror, the rise of civilizational great power states has given Huntington's thesis a further source of support combined with familiar understandings of great power rivalry. China, India, Iran, Japan, amongst others, including, according to Vladimir Putin, Russia as well, all involve the embodied notions and discourses of a 'civilizational-state.'[346] The increasing use of civilizational narratives by great powers today marshals their soft power in a modern context. Civilization is a powerful idea in the modern discourse of world order, because civilization was once equated, in the practice of international law and in the lectures of Guizot, for instance, with the West and Western modernity, both racially and culturally.[347] The concept of civilization, so conflated with Europe and the West, as such, was discursively used to legitimate the world order supremacy of Western powers and

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[345] Michalis S. Michael and Fabio Petito *Civilizational Dialogue and World Order: The Other Politics of Cultures, Religions, and Civilizations in International Relations* (London: Palgrave, 2009).

[346] Vladimir Putin, 'Address to the Federal Assembly', the Kremlin, Moscow, December 12, 2012: http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/17118. Christopher Coker *The Civilizational State and the Unmaking of World Order,* forthcoming.

[347] Gerrit W. Gong *The Standards of Civilization in International Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984); Francois M. Guizot *General History of Civilization in Europe, from the Fall of the Roman Empire to the French Revolution* Vol. I (New York: Appleton, 1846).

constituted the civilizing mission of Western modernity, as the self-styled height of humanity's modern progress. As such, the appropriation of the concept of civilization by rising non-Western powers legitimates their search for great power status in world affairs, as rival and equally modern civilizations.[348] Yet, it is the conflict between the great powers that is primary, not their civilizational soft power discourses.[349] The relative decline of the U.S. and rise of China, for instance, is not the fault line of an impending civilizational great power clash. It is a power transition between a rising and declining hegemons that could result in a clash. G.J. Ikenberry and others have rightly argued the degree of conflict in this context of an increasingly multipolar balance of power should not be exaggerated.[350] The rising powers are pushing for fairer position in international organizations, and the continued, if reformed, importance of those organizations, and the globalization agenda in general. These great powers are not trapped in the implacable conflict of colliding civilizational values, they are seeking position and leverage to advance their conflicting power interests.

The relative decline of the Western powers does mean a decline in Western led and enforced world order values and principles, primarily liberal world order values and principles. John Mearsheimer, a hardnosed kind of realist, argues a great power struggle is inevitable, not because of civilizational discourses, but because to rise, other powers, in relation, must decline, which powers rarely if ever willingly do.[351] The inevitability of a clash is too strong a position, because there is a difference between power balancing, which goes on and on, and power struggles, which are started by actors and end, with victorious and vanquished actors. Mearsheimer is too "structural-systemic" in his thinking, overlooking the role of agents and circumstance, history, in the origins of great power conflicts.[352] Although the majority of hegemonic transitions in the past five hundred years have resulted in military conflict, there is no

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[348] Yongjin Zhang, 'The Standard of "Civilization" Redux: Towards the Expansion of International Society 3.0?', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies,* 42:3 (2014), pp. 674-696.

[349] Kissinger makes this mistaken conflation. See, Henry A. Kissinger *World Order: Reflections on the Character of Nations* (New York: Penguin, 2015); Richard Falk, 'Henry Kissinger: Hero of Our Time', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies,* 44:1 (2015), pp. 155-165; Andrew Hurrell, 'Kissinger and World Order', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies,* 44:1 (2015), pp. 165-172.

[350] G.J. Ikenberry *Liberal Leviathan: The Origins, Crisis, and Transformation of the American World Order* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011); Tim Dunne and Trine Flockhart (eds.) *Liberal World Orders* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); Oliver Stuenkel *Post-Western World: How Emerging Powers are Remaking Global Order* (Cambridge: Polity, 2016).

[351] John J. Mearsheimer, 'China's Unpeaceful Rise', *Current History,* 105:690 (2006), pp. 160-162.

[352] Michael Cox, 'Power Shifts, Economic Change and the Decline of the West?', *International Relations,* 26:4 (2012), pp. 369-388.

definite reason why ongoing power balancing and rebalancing must lead to open power struggle.[353] There is an awareness of a historical trend of conflicts and a mood of fear amidst a condition of uncertainty, but there are no implacable or inevitable conflicts amongst the great powers, be they conflicts of modern values or economics or security or territorial claims. Although there are obvious tensions in world affairs between the great powers, that could spark power struggles, it is more accurate to say that rising powers are reform minded, rather than outright revisionist. China pursues a policy of a "peaceful rise" and seeks a fairer and mutually secure international order, although there are tensions produced by some specific policies used towards these ends. Rising powers are not liberal powers, and so there is a potential for conflict, but neither are they illiberal, in the sense that they are not fundamentally opposed to liberal values per se, they merely do not wish to be liberal themselves. As Ikenberry points out, rising powers want first and foremost a fair seat at the table in international organizations, like the UN Security Council, World Bank, and so on. There is no inevitable clash of civilizational great powers, only a decline of the preeminence of Western led liberal values, with the relative decline of Western power, coinciding with the criticism of liberal Western ideas in theory.

What does a less Western-centric world order look like? There are a few visions of a revised world order. Ikenberry argues a 'liberal internationalism 3.0' is emerging.[354] This would be a new installment of a liberal world order, the first being set in 1919 at Versailles, the second, 2.0, being set in 1945 and revised and expanded with the Washington Consensus. The picture of liberal internationalism 3.0 is a world order with enlarged and multiplied global institutions, a revised UN, WTO, and IMF system, potentially with greater ability to interfere in domestic policies, but it is also a more inclusive picture, where international institutions are less dominated by the US and less US centric in their policy directives. An alternative vision to Ikenberry's, is Amitav Acharya's vision of an emerging regional world order. He likens it to a 'multiplex cinema', with many simultaneous regional theatres staging local norms and rules.[355] Acharya's picture is not unproblematic, however. While different regional organizations develop and decline at different speeds the chief problem with Acharya's image is that the regions are already integrated globally to such an extent that their further development would practically require an

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[353] Graham Allison *Destined for War: Can America and China Escape Thucydides's Trap?* (London: Scribe, 2017).
[354] G.J. Ikenberry, 'Liberal Internationalism 3.0: America and the Dilemmas of Liberal World Order', *Perspectives on Politics,* 7:1 (2009), pp. 71-87.
[355] Amitav Acharya *The End of American World Order* (Cambridge: Polity, 2014).

overarching ordering framework.[356] Acharya suggests the regionalist order can serve as a 'stepping stone' to a 'universal' order, but he fails to realize how a multiplex theatre requires a pre-established building in which to house the many simultaneous theatres, since otherwise it would not be a multiplex, but multiple separate buildings.[357] Barry Buzan's alternative picture of 'decentered globalism', where globalization continues, but is less US centric, has more affinity to Ikenberry's vision.[358] But, what is being globally decentered in his picture is not articulated sufficiently beyond a notion of global capitalism.[359] The trouble, conceptually, is how Buzan and Ikenberry are both short on details about normative ordering principles. For Buzan, neglecting to fill in the contents of his picture stems from his lack of interest in normative principles. For Ikenberry, this neglect amounts to an oversight in his analysis where he does not admit that while rising powers demand fairer position in international organizations, they also demand fairer recognition of their moral principles and positions. He is mistaken to suggest that, 'It remains a question whether the norms –or ideology of liberal order- are sufficiently coherent and widely-enough embraced to make this post-hegemonic order function.'[360] It is not an open question. Liberalism as it has been conceived during the era of US supremacy, with universal human rights, and secular Western democracy, is increasingly difficult to defend in theory and it is not widely enough embraced in practice to ground the logic of the system without persistent US supremacy. Even its economic face, neoliberal economics, is not without question today, and, is in several ways struggling to maintain itself in theory and practice.

But, again, if this decline of liberalism does not inevitably mean a clash of civilizational great powers, then what does the emerging shifted and 'decentered-globalism' look like? I want to argue that the emerging multipolar world order enables and necessarily involves a new trans-civilizational cosmopolitanism, to give meaning and form to the necessarily globalist aspects of that world. For a world order to be achieved, it will necessarily remain globalist in scope and content, as Buzan, Hurrell, and Ikenberry suggest, because the world is already integrated and

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[356] Andrew Hurrell *On Global Order: Power, Values, and the Constitution of International Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), ch. 10.
[357] Acharya *The End of American World Order,* p. 110.
[358] Barry Buzan, 'A World Without Superpowers: Decentred Globalism', *International Relations,* 25:1 (2011), pp. 3-25.
[359] Buzan's lack of interest in moral purposes and normative concepts makes his image half blind, leaving some of its most important features unexplored. What kind of globalism, what global rules, norms and principles it contains, and which are liberal or not, Buzan does not say.
[360] Ikenberry, 'Liberal Internatioanlism 3.0', p. 82.

interdependent. The question, however, is not so much whether liberal principles will endure, but rather whether liberalism and its contenders can be subsumed into larger trans-civilizational ordering principles. It is too easy, and more than a touch Eurocentric, to think the decline of a liberal world order and neo-liberal cosmopolitanism means the decline of cosmopolitanism generally speaking. Despite its complexity and hurdles in practice, the vision of a trans-civilizational world polity is not impossible, only unlikely and fragile. Yet, why should the rise of contemporary geo-political rivalries and global disorder not be taken as the birth pangs of an alternative post-liberal and trans-civilizational world order? New orders are always born out of the collapse and destruction of old orders.

5.4 The New Cosmopolitanism

What do I mean by trans-civilizational cosmopolitanism? I mean a kind of culturally pluralist cosmopolitanism, one wherein a trans-civilizational collective-self-conception connects to a new sense of belonging with a new cosmopolitan character. By this, I do not mean the cosmopolitanism of UNESCO, which also has a trans-civilizational character. The UNESCO idea of a "cultural heritage" of humankind is conducive and supportive of the idea of a global civilization and trans-civilizational narrative, but it is not exactly what I mean by the collective-self-conception and sense of belonging associated with a new cosmopolitanism. A common cultural heritage is not the same thing as a common sense of belonging. The former is not constitutive of a "society" or polity; it only forms a cultural background in a world of multiple polities.[361] It is a conceptual category mistake to say a world cultural heritage forms a world polity or "society".[362] A shared sense of belonging, connected to a meaningful collective-self-conception, is what I mean by a new cosmopolitanism, one that is constitutive of the collective identity of a realizable world polity. Paul Gilroy has pointed towards South African politics as a site and source of the new cosmopolitanism that I mean, where belonging is grounded in a narrative connected to the rejection of Apartheid and development of a pluralistic

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[361] Matthew Weinert, 'Grounding World Society: Spatiality, Cultural Heritage, and Our World as Shared Geographies', *Review of International Studies,* 43:3 (2017), pp. 409-429.
[362] A.C. McKeil, 'Global Societies are Social Things: A Conceptual Reassessment', *Global Society,* 31:4 (2017), pp. 551-566.

cosmopolitanism beyond race, class, and nation.[363] There is, in this new cosmopolitanism, a co-constitution of civilizations, rather than their clash, a new trans-civilizational cosmopolitanism with a sense of belonging.

An interesting expression of this idea is Achille Mbembe's recent articulation of "Afropolitanism." He describes this outlook as cosmopolitan, but from the perspective of Africa as a part of the world, and not apart from it. Pan-Africanism, by contrast, was a racial solidarity against the white world order. Afropolitanism is about Africa being a part of a cosmopolitan world and the world being incomplete without it.[364] For Mbembe, Afropolitanism is one amongst many cosmopolitanisms, in a 'common world', a 'tout-monde', one world of worlds, a worldcosm, if you will, a cosmopolitan imaginary of all the imaginings and dreams of humankind forming together the world dream of a common world project. Mbembe explains, the 'project of a world in common founded on the principle of "equal shares" and on the principle of the fundamental unity of human beings' is 'a universal project' today.[365] This expresses a narrative of narratives, taking the form of a new trans-civilizational cosmopolitanism, where the shared experience of modernity, the common post-colonial and capitalist world, has come to form a common world, a global civilization containing a plurality of civilizational worlds.

This vision is increasingly expressed in world politics. Another interesting discussion from theory is Giorgio Shani's work on post-secular human security.[366] As Shani demonstrates, liberal cosmopolitanism can be provincialized in a world of cosmopolitanisms, all intermixing and interrelated, spatially, temporally, conceptually, politically.[367] Secular narratives of the human and cosmopolitan belonging are but one outlook in a world of cosmopolitan outlooks. Shani's work is important because it broaches the shores of that larger cosmopolitan collective-self-narrative of humankind, beyond the parochially global secular liberal order, towards a post-liberal, post-secular, post-Western, trans-civilizational cosmopolitan human security. This is an interesting example because it allows for a plurality of principles on a global scale, rather than

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[363] Paul Gilroy, 'A New Cosmopolitanism', *Interventions,* 7:3(2005), pp. 287-292.

[364] Sarah Balakrishnan, 'Pan-African Legacies, Afropolitan Futures: A Conversation with Achille Mbembe', *Transition,* 120 (2016), pp. 28-37; Achille Mbembe *On the Postcolony* (London: University of California Press, 2001).

[365] Achille Mbembe *Critique of Black Reason* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2017), p. 176-177.

[366] Giorgio Shani *Religion, Identity, and Human Security* (London: Routledge, 2014).

[367] Giorgio Shani, 'Toward a Post-Western IR: The *Umma, Khalsa Panth,* and Critical International Relations Theory', *International Studies Review,* 10 (2008), pp. 722-734; Giorgio Shani, 'Human Security At Twenty: A Post-Secular Approach', *Journal of Human Security Studies,* 3:2 (2014), pp. 120-135.

seeking one principle. The writings of L.H.M. Ling and Anna M. Agathangelou provide a similarly pluralistic vision, tailored towards the world order question. They suggest that beyond the neoliberal Westphalian world order there is emerging a 'world of multiple worlds'.[368] They articulate an outlook of 'worldism', where the multiple civilizational worlds of the world are seen as relationally co-constitutive, relationally productive of a mutual, shared, world, conducive to a transcivilizational world order. For instance, Ling argues the Chinese world order vision of *Tianxia* and the liberal Wesphalian world order vision are in a co-constitutive relation, a part of one another, and so, offering the shared world for a shared world order, a larger co-constitutive trans-civilizational collective-self-narrative and emerging world order vision.[369] We might look, for instance, to the slogan of the 2008 Olympics, "One World One Dream", which, coupled with the Chinese state's recent motto of a "China Dream", was deliberately articulated to be inclusive and not exclusive of the older rhetoric and ideal of an "American Dream". This language of national dreams is a national discourse, about national patriotism, but the language of a world dream, as an inclusive multi-civilizational concept, is suggestive of Ling's 'worldism'.[370] Elsewhere, in the context of the turmoil besetting the Middle East, for instance, there are beginnings of discussion about an emerging new pluralistic cosmopolitan imaginary, one in opposition to both the religious fundamentalism of ISIS and the Islamic Brotherhood, as well as their secularist rivals.[371] The world level idea here is for a trans-civilizational world order where its globalist component is a new trans-civilizational cosmopolitanism that is contingent on the decline of liberal universalism and embracing of various non-liberal pluralistic cosmopolitanisms.

In line with these trends in thought is the book *A Transcivilizational Perspective on International Law*, by Onuma Yasuaki. He argues Bentham's old term 'international' is wearing thin and that a trans-civilizational world order is on the horizons of world politics, if not

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[368] Anna M. Agathangelou and L.H.M. Ling *Transforming World Politics: From Empire to Multiple Worlds* (London: Routledge, 2009).

[369] L.H.M. Ling *The Dao of World Politics: Towards a Post-Westphalian, Worldist International Relations* (London: Routledge, *2014*); L.H.M. Ling, 'Journeys Beyond the West: World Orders and a 7th Century Buddhist Monk', *Review of International Studies,* 37 (2010), pp. 225-248.

[370] William A. Callahan, 'Dreaming as a Critical Discourse of National Belonging: China Dream, American Dream and World Dream', *Nations and Nationalism,* 23:2 (2017), pp. 248-270.

[371] Fawaz Gerges *The New Middle East: Protest and Revolution in the Arab World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

immediately of a post-Westphalian form.[372] He suggests, 'international society composed of States will gradually assume more characteristic features of a global society' involving a trans-civilizational perspective on international law.[373] He estimates its realization is practically one hundred years out because the 21st century will involve significant development and state building.[374] Perhaps his estimate is correct, but perhaps the two movements, building a world polity on top and fixing up the weak places and inequities in the society of states, can go together, mutually reinforce. Today, the idea of a "global civilization" is often used in an imprecise way, just to mean the global systems, economic and bureaucratic, of modernity, the globally connected and interdependent modern world. Some, however, see the multiple civilizations of humankind as forming today, in a more meaningful way, a single global civilization of modernity, a civilization of civilizations that enjoys contributions, and could not exist without, each of its constitutive civilizations.[375] This larger civilizational outlook could grow through discursive action and performance in the context of a trans-civilizational world order. Perhaps over two or three generations, this sense of a world civilization, pluralistic and world-spanning would be the historical norm.

5.5 A Post-Western Modernity?

The new trans-civilizational cosmopolitanism constitutes a narrative of narratives, as a civilization of civilizations. I have often times suggested in this thesis that such a meta-narrative is needed to legitimize a world polity. The feature of a narrative of narratives is needed to make the concept acceptable to all parties, who, in a late modern age, are not ready to accept claims to the universal narrative of a universal authority, above the others. In a late modern context, which, importantly, is a post-colonial context, everyone has been mobilized to defend their way of life, their nation, their creed, and civilizations, the primary means to which has been revolutionary

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[372] Onuma Yasuaki *A Transcivilizational Perspective on International Law: Questioning Prevalent Cognitive Frameworks in the Emerging Multi-Polar and Multi-Civilizational World of the Twenty-First Century* (Boston: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2010), p. 356-359.
[373] Onuma *A Transcivilizational Perspective on International Law,* p. 110.
[374] Ibid.*,* p. 41.
[375] Peter J. Katzenstein (ed.) *Civilizations in World Politics: Plural and Pluralist Perspectives* (London: Routledge, 2010); Amartya Kumar Sen, 'Our Global Civilization', *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences,* 2 (2010), pp. 6996-6999.

freedom and independence.[376] An anti-imperial age, a revolutionary age, has mobilized, if you will, huge numbers of peoples and churned countless cultures in countless ways towards the defense of equal claims to equal shares and equal standing in modernity, with distinct identities and particular cultural heritages, via striving for freedoms and independence. Any unifying collective-self-narrative must contend with and accommodate this modern ambition. If the world polity were not realized with a trans-civilizational character, it would not get off the ground, because it would face too many detractors who would find it unacceptable to their modern self-conceptions and ambitions as distinctly modern civilizations, with distinct, meaningful, and embodied cultural forms of being modernly civilized in the plurality of modern civilizations.

The realizable world polity, in a late modern era, must chiefly involve a trans-*civilizational* narrative, rather than a religious, political-ideological, scientific narrative, or some other narrative of the collective identity of humankind, because in modern times, civilization is intricately connected to modernity and world order. In a modern context, civilization in its modern usage as the mastery of technological power and "civilized" practices and worldviews, is imagined as the achievement of modernity, and has become the source of legitimacy in the modern discourse of world order, as the language for the modern standards and hallmarks of human excellence and exemplariness.[377] Late modern civilization is global, but also plural.[378] The concept of civilization once used to legitimize European empire, has been appropriated by post-colonial peoples, in their 'systematic defense of the non-European civilizations.'[379] Huntington's thesis of an impending "clash of civilizations" has been much critiqued, but it contained the insight that in a modern world, everyone wants 'to modernize but not to Westernize.'[380] Because "civilization" was the historical criterion of legitimacy in the modern discourse of world order, and so became a systematically appropriated concept by post-colonial peoples, legitimate standing as a world power is connected in contemporary late modern times

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[376] Fanon *The Wretched of the Earth* (London: Penguin, 2001); Charles Taylor, 'Religious Mobilizations' in *Dilemmas and Connections: Selected Essays* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011), pp. 146-164; Isaiah Berlin, 'The Bent Twig: A Note on Nationalism', *Foreign Affairs,* 51:1 (1972), pp. 11-30; Hedley Bull, 'The Revolt Against the West', in Hedley Bull and Adam Watson (eds.), *The Expansion of International Society* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), pp. 217-228; Rahul Rao *Third World Protest: Between Home and the World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).
[377] Gerrit W. Gong *The Standards of Civilization in International Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984).
[378] Peter J. Katzenstein *Civilizations in World Politics: Plural and Pluralist Perspectives* (London: Routledge, 2009).
[379] Aimé Cesairé *Discourse on Colonialism* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2000), p. 7.
[380] Samuel P. Huntington, 'The Clash of Civilizations?', *Foreign Affairs,* 72:3 (1993), p. 41.

not only to global democratic, human rights, and market standards of modernity, but also to civilizational distinctiveness and integrity, distinct ways of being modernly civilized, Japanese, Chinese, Indian, Russian, Iranian, and so on.[381] If a world polity did not involve civilizational discourse, it would be confronted and challenged and undermined by these established civilizational discourses and practices of legitimacy in late modern times. In late modern times, for there to be a world polity to support a unified world order, a "higher" trans-civilizational narrative is needed to legitimize it as a shared project for all humankind and all its civilizations. By, "higher", I do not mean a universally superior Civilization, because there are no generally recognized superior or inferior civilizations in late modern times. I mean a civilization that enables shared values and ideals across and above those of the plural civilizations of humankind.

This notion of a trans-civilizational narrative is a tenuous and difficult to realize narrative, however, because civilization and what it means to be modern, has been fiercely debated and pluralized, in modern times, mobilizing modern Chinese, Japanese, Indian, Russian, and many other civilizational self-conceptions, to cast off and rebut the colonial pretense of a tri-parted synonym between Western civilization, modernity, and being civilized. There are multiple civilizational collective identities in late modern times, and they all matter, providing sources for shared values and meaningful lives, and they have played an important role in undermining the conceit of Western colonialism as a civilizing mission. If a world polity is to practically appeal to humankind in modern times, practically uniting humankind with a united world order as a shared project of humankind, it must rally and marshal modern civilizational narratives around a larger narrative of a shared global civilization of modernity, through the articulation of a trans-civilizational collective-self-narrative, reimagining what it means to be modern and civilized in trans-civilizational terms, so to enable the imagination of a larger shared set of "higher" ideals about who we aspire to be and admire, fostering a larger sense of belonging to a common modern civilization with a shared world polity project. Belonging in the world polity would mean membership in the trans-civilization of global modernity, sharing in its "higher" understanding of being modern and civilized. Opposing membership and contribution to the world polity project would be seen as uncivilized. Universal narratives, grounding a world

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[381] David P. Fidler, 'The Return of the Standard of Civilization', *Chicago Journal of International Law,* 2:1 (2001), pp. 137-157; Dimitrios Stroikos, 'Introduction: Rethinking the Standard(s) of Civilization(s) in International Relations', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies,* 42:3 (2014), pp. 546-556; Zhang, 'The Standard of "Civilization" Redux: Towards the Expansion of International Society 3.0?', pp. 674-696.

authority, like the narratives of the ancient cosmologically central empires, Egyptian, Babylonian, Persian, Roman, Byzantine, Chinese, etc., are no longer coherent in a modern age and in a global post-colonial era of multiple civilizational modernities, where virtually all humankind rejects the primacy of any idiosyncratic narrative. This is much of the appeal of a trans-civilizational cosmopolitanism, that it makes a "higher" narrative out of multiple narratives of what it means to be mondernly civilized.

But, what about the in-it-together feeling of solidarity that I have also argued is needed? Does this new trans-civilizational cosmopolitanism contain this sense of belonging and solidarity? A sense of being-in-it-together, a sense of solidarity, is also needed for this narrative to have a practical application to practice. Without such a sense of belonging and mutual commitment of support, conflicts become difficult to reconcile and questions of distributive justice become difficult to work out on a practical level. The question needs to be pried open slightly before it can be reasonably answered. It is important to point out again that civilizations are murky things, as it were, with no central inner essence. Civilizations are webs of meaning and varieties of practices, with no essential features, only shifting composite ones, marshaled in discursive action.[382] As such, I want to argue that it is not the civilization itself *per se* that civilizational solidarities are formed around. It is the shared beliefs and ideals that marshaled civilizational discourses enable and sustain that people fashion solidarities around. For instance, it is modern but Western notions of liberty, it has been argued, that have been enabled by the discourse of Western civilization in modern times, which gives the narrative of that civilization its images of shared ambitions and embodied practices of what Westerners admire and despise, in various ways, in general, in the many iterations of the "West" across time and space.[383] The "West" is not a singular or static thing, with a core essential value identity, but rather a complicated realm of discourse and practice that enables the promotion of values, and reimagination of values, to give meaning to practices and actions, by mustering narratives and

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[382] Jacinta O'Hagan, 'Discourses of Civilizational Identity', in Hall, Martin and Patrick Thadeus Jackson (eds.) 2007 *Civilizational Identity: The Production and Reproduction of 'Civilizations' in International Relations* (New York: Palgrave), pp. 15-31; Robert W. Cox, 'Thinking about Civilizations', *Review of International Studies,* 26 (2000), pp. 217-234.

[383] Martin Wight, 'Western Values in International Relations', in Herbert Butterfield and Martin Wight (eds.) *Diplomatic Investigations: Essays in the Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1966), pp. 89-131.

worldviews.[384] This is to say that it is what the civilizations are marshaled to stand for, at least what they are taken to stand for, in a given time and discursive action, that people rally around and invest identities in on civilizational scales. Civilizations, like nations, are imaginary,[385] indeed, but they do matter to people, because of the meaning they enable and the values they harbor with that meaning. Chinese civilization matters, the West matters, Indian, Persian, and the other civilizations matter to peoples lives, enabling the imagination of worlds of ideals and meaning.

In this respect, what are the ideals of a supposed world civilization transcending all the distinct civilizations, what are the "higher" ambitions that it involves, what sorts of things does it enable us to admire and strive for? What would solidarity around this civilization mean? This question is easier to answer if we make it clear that the purpose of a trans-civilizational world polity is a larger belonging that enables humankind to overcome the problems of its division into multiple races and nation states, whilst also not excluding different cultural ways of life or privileging any one civilization. If this is the aim of a trans-civilizational world polity, then, I want to suggest that its ideal, enabled by its narrative of a world civilization of civilizations, is a new post-Western (but nonetheless modern) sense of freedom as a larger belonging, inclusive of all civilizations. This trans-civilizational sense of freedom means the freedom to be a part of the world, irrespective of one's cultural horizons and to pursue the ideals and goods important to those horizons, because the world is imagined as incomplete without those horizons. One of the fundamental lessons of late modern times, most appreciated by cosmopolitan Anthropologists, is that all civilizations and cultures have something to say and contribute to the world and that the world is "larger" for them. The sense of freedom I am getting at goes beyond and is a "higher" value than any one sense of freedom, individual or collective, Western or otherwise. It goes beyond liberal notions of "liberties", for instance. It is the value of a post-Western sense of freedom that would rally a sense of solidarity, of something around which to stand together for as a world polity, to be in-it-together for, as a shared ambition connected to a sense of belonging.

Let me attempt to unpack it further. Some of this discussion below is slightly repetitive, but is meant to state the idea I am advancing in several ways, to get it across as it were, because

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[384] Peter J. Katzenstein (ed.) *Anglo-America and Its Discontents: Civilizational Identities Beyond West and East* (London: Routledge, 2012).
[385] Anthony Kwame Appiah *Mistaken Identities: The 2016 Reith Lectures* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017).

it is a hard idea to comprehend, perhaps especially for those working from a liberal Western outlook. In a modern age, everyone has demanded and defends their rights for the sake of freedoms, albeit various kinds of freedoms, individual and collective, all conceived in culturally distinct forms in multiple forms of modernity. This suggests that what is emerging in the new cosmopolitanism is a new enlarged multi-civilizational multicultural sense of freedom, one that is about being a part of the world, as belonging to the world, rather than having freedom apart from it. It is not a loosening of liberal freedom, but the provincialization of liberal notions of freedom, in a larger multi-civilizational post-liberal and post-Western sense of modern freedom.[386] I mean a sense of being in-it-together so to be free together, by realizing a larger belonging of all humankind in its multi-civilizational dimensions, in a late modern and multi-civilizational era. This is about moving beyond the liberal politics of difference, where being in-it-together was paradoxically restricted to conditions of sameness.[387] The conditions for solidarity, for being in-it-together, in the new cosmopolitan politics of belonging, are about conditions of being *in* the modern world, so being *of* the modern world, and thereby part of the modern world, belonging in it, not apart from it. This notion is not about everyone recognizing everyone else in the world, even though recognitions are an aspect of it (is it even possible for everyone to "recognize" everyone else in the world?). This new cosmopolitan belonging is about making a larger belonging around a multi-civilizational sense of freedom, as strong evaluation, against which other values can be evaluated. It is about making solidarity with the variety of forms of freedom as a shared value, a shared ideal, against which the other values can weighed and measured. It is this sense of a larger belonging of humankind, a shared commitment to a diverse sense of freedom that is held up by the narrative of a world civilization of multiple modern civilizations. It is upon this fixture of this shared value in the narrative that solidarity can fasten. One way to put this is to say that if the world is becoming "decentered" but will remain "globalist", as Buzan has argued, then the "globalist" aspect of "decentred globalism" is potentially more than global capitalism, it is potentially a stage for this post-Western cosmopolitanism.

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[386] It is tempting, for instance, to ask whether this notion of a "larger" or "expanded" sense of freedom fits into Isaiah Berlin's positive vs. negative categories of liberty, but this would defeat the point of a "higher" sense of freedom, falling into a Eurocentric trap, reducing the concept of freedom to Western categories, whose preconditions are Western conceptions of belonging, which would contradict the idea of expanded horizons. Isaiah Berlin, 'Two Concepts of Liberty', in *Four Essays on Liberty* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969), pp. 118-172.
[387] Naeem Inayatullah and David L. Blaney *International Relations and the Problem of Difference* (New York: Routledge, 2004).

The emergence of this new sense of freedom, as a larger trans-civilizational belonging, is not the decline of modern notions of freedom, but their increasingly realized form. Modern liberal concepts of freedom, it has become increasingly apparent, are not the only valid modern conceptions of freedom. This is why what I am driving at can be understood as post-liberal. When I say post-liberal, I mean the decline of a world in which liberal values are taken to be the universal values, be they stated on foundationalist or anti-foundationalist grounds. Not only has the universality of liberal ideals become increasingly invalidated, in an age of civilizational and identity politics, but the power to project liberal ideals upon the world is in decline, prefacing the rise of a world in which non-liberal powers articulate and project non-liberal values in world affairs. Western liberty is becoming a provincial ideal and a new cosmopolitan politics with a "higher" notion of freedom is on the horizon of a post-Western world. In this sense, the new cosmopolitan politics of belonging, with a "higher" or "larger" sense of modern freedom, is the continuing realization of modernity in practice, from a Western-centric dominated discourse and practice, to a post-Western discourse and practice.

It is reasonable to suggest that the West itself is shifting as well in late modern times, that Western liberalism too is shifting in this context, in response to the decline of Western preeminence and in response perhaps to a larger cultural awareness as well. The new post-Western cosmopolitanism parallels a variety of post-liberal trends in Western discourse, political, artistic, social, and religious.[388] I am saying that liberal peoples are finding post-liberal outlooks, but I am not saying everyone was liberal, and is now becoming post-liberal. The suggestion is only that there is an increasingly evident post-liberal discourse in Western contexts. It conveys an image of social life that is more "relational" than "atomist", where the members of the social enterprise are constituted relationally, rather than independently and prior to social life. There is a quasi-rebellion, an intellectual and social rebellion, a cultural rebellion that is, against the old dichotomies of the liberal imaginary. Where everyone in the modern liberal social imaginary is imagined as individuals, albeit in gendered and racialized and national-citizen social categories, the signs of a post-liberal imaginary suggest a more socially complex and convoluted picture, since it is increasingly grasped and recognized that not everyone is or need or ought to

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[388] Bruce Baum *The Post-Liberal Imagination: Political Scenes from the American Cultural Landscape* (London: Palgrace, 2016); John Gray *Post-Liberalism: Studies in Political Thought* (London: Routledge, 1996); Oliver P. Richmond *A Post-Liberal Peace* (London: Routledge, 2011); John Milbank and Adrian Pabst *The Politics of Virtue: Post-Liberalism and the Human Future* (London: Rowan & Littlefield, 2016). Philip Hammond, 'From Post-Marxism to Post-Liberalism', *European Political Science,* 14(2015), pp. 54-56.

be so liberal or individualistic. The picture of who is collaborating in a modern order, and how they are co-constituting, that is, is highly complex, unspecific, in contrast to the specifically atomistic liberal image of social life.[389] This connects to a shift in the meaning of liberty, from the atomist to relational. From this relational outlook springs the vision that people are not becoming more and more alike, because the more they relate and share narratives and practices the more social complexity develops, the more possible combinations of self-conceptions and practices are relationally co-constituted.[390] As noted above, this post-liberal outlook implies that, rather than a clash of civilizations, civilizations are relationally co-constituting one another. Identity politics in a globalizing world and the late modern idea of social construction are, it can be suggested, impacting Western discourses. Yet, their rise in Western discourses, by effect, has contributed to a subtly reimagined "post-liberal" self and politics as produced or constituted by the relations between persons, groups, and peoples, rather than amongst "atomistic" rational individuals. To what extent this rise of post-liberal discourse in the West represents a genuine transformation or a counter-culture is not entirely clear, but it does parallel the mood and attitude of the new post-Western cosmopolitanism, forming its expression in a Western context.

Even if this post-Western trans-civilizational cosmopolitanism is difficult to comprehend (but not impossible), one of its merits is that it is more coherent than its liberal cosmopolitan predecessor. Liberal cosmopolitanism, as has so often been pointed out, is too often Eurocentric, imagining everyone in liberal categories.[391] A post-Western cosmopolitanism does not suffer from this invalid empirical assumption and its emphasis on co-constitution and relational social processes grasp social reality is a more accurate way than an atomist view.

5.6 Towards a Trans-Civilizational World Polity

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[389] Amy Gutman (ed.) *Multiculturalism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994).
[390] Ulf Hannerz, 'Afterthoughts: World Watching', *Social Anthropology,* 18:4 (2010), pp. 448-453; Ulf Hannerz, 'Macro-Scenarios: Anthropology and the Debate Over Contemporary and Future Worlds', *Social Anthropology,* 11:2 (2003), pp. 169-187; Ulf Hannerz, 'Cosmopolitans in World Culture', *Theory, Culture, Society,* 7 (1990), pp. 237-251; Ulf Hannerz *Cultural Complexity: Studies in the Social Organization of Meaning* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991); Ulf Hannerz, 'The World in Creolisation', *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute,* 57:4 (1987), pp. 546-669; Arjun Appadurai *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (London: University of Minnesota Press, 1996).
[391] Craig Calhoun, 'The Class Consciousness of Frequent Travelers: Toward a Critique of Actually Existing Cosmopolitanism', *South Atlantic Quarterly,* 101:4 (2003), pp. 869-897.

Does this post-Western cosmopolitanism connect to a vision of a world polity and to what extent is such a vision practically realizable? A world civilization and a world polity are not the same things, but the idea is that trans-civilizational aspirations might provide a narrative for a world polity that could make sense to future generations. Post-Western cosmopolitanism, I am suggesting, creates the bridge from a trans-civilizational multipolar world order to a trans-civilizational world polity. I use the language of a trans-civilizational world polity carefully. I mean by trans-civilizational a civilization composed of multiple interrelated co-constitutive civilizations producing one that is beyond them all, greater than its parts. In this speculative social imaginary, one would be able to identify with the West or multiple civilizations, but also with a shared trans-civilizational world civilization of global modernity. It is empirically possible, if not a reality today. In a post-colonial, economically, and technologically integrated modern world, flows of civilizational discourse and practice are interrelated in increasingly complex forms, internally and collectively, amounting to a trans-civilization with intra-civilizational diversity.[392] Some meanings, narratives, and practices are attaining a trans-civilizational scope and quality, but there is no monolithic civilization. "Trans-civilizational" is not the fusion of civilizations, or the erasure of nations, but the emergence of supra-civilizational flows of meanings, narratives, and practices above, across, through, and alongside them. In the vision of a trans-civilizational world polity, I use the language of "world" to mean *worldwide* in scope, but also to mean *worldly* in character, specifically the worldly pluralistic character of post-Western cosmopolitanism. The alternative term of global is too spatial in connotation.[393] By worldly, I mean a post-Western sense of plurality, diversity, social immensity, and socio-cultural multiplicity. By the term, polity, I still use it instrumentally, as a careful placeholder, instead of a more precise but more debated term. Presently, I am again borrowing Ferguson and Mansbach's definition of a polity: one containing a weness feeling, internal organization and hierarchy, and an ability to organize resources for political ends.[394] The precise descriptor of a world polity would be essentially debated by its participants; whether it would be a "community" or "society" and in what respects, for instance, would be politically debated. It would be multisided, taking on

[392] Peter J. Katzenstein, 'A World of Plural and Pluralist Civilizations', *Perspectives on Politics,* 77 (2013), pp. 15-19.
[393] Jan Aart Scholte, 'Defining Globalisation', *The World Economy,* 31:11 (2008), pp. 1471-1502; Jean-Luc Nancy *The Creation of the World or Globalization* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2007).
[394] Yale H. Ferguson and Richard W. Mansbach *A World of Polities: Essays in Global Politics* (London: Routledge, 2008), p. 60-61.

different angles of perspective, depending on one's point of view, be it from a Chinese context, or Indian, or multi-glocal bourgeois perspective. I will unpack the institutional order most conducive to this world polity vision in Chapter 7. I wish to hold off presently, until I explore further ecological conceptions in Chapter 6.

To combine all these conceptual features, the vision is of a trans-civilizational worldwide and worldly polity, being a member of which would constitute a new "higher" sense of being modernly civilized and entailing a shared sense of solidarity and belonging around the "larger" sense of modern freedom the world polity would be imagined to stand for as a shared project of humankind in late modern times. It is a trans-civilizational and worldwide flow of plural meanings, narratives, and practices beyond and across multiple civilizations that provides the cultural wherewithal and share ideals of an expanded post-Western sense of belonging and a collective-self-narrative that guides and legitimates alternative world order hierarchies and resource management. A trans-civilizational collective-self-narrative matters and makes this concept strongest where its competitors are weak. It does not suffer from the impractical reliance on universal or neutral ethical codes, nor on an impossible moral and cultural uniformity of humankind. When we explain our actions, when people ask us to explain ourselves, there are different kinds of stories we can tell. Some stories point to circumstance: I or we were misinformed, or, it was raining. We were in danger, or, I happened to forget this or that. Other explanations cite codes of conduct: It was within my rights, or that's what procedure called for, or that action would have been against the law and morally wrong. Another kind points to the self, it makes a literal self-explanation: "That is what I like to do", or "this is who I want to be", or "I am just such and such a kind of person, I can't help it", or "we are such and such a kind of people".[395] Liberal universalism, applied to world order and human rights discourse, was a use of code answers to explain conduct and fathom the purposes of world ordering practices.[396] The decline of universalist cosmopolitanism, the rise of cultural cosmopolitics means the use of these code answers will no longer hold water. Neoliberal cosmopolitanism was the use of old universalist liberal code answers with an added self-narrative answer to support them. The very question of the best code of conduct is dissolved in a post-Western imaginary where the politics

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[395] Charles Tilly, 'Ties That Bind … and Bound', in *Identities, Boundaries, and Social Ties* (Boulder: Paradigm, 2005), pp. 3-12.

[396] Charles Taylor, 'The Perils of Moralism' in *Dilemmas and Connections* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011), pp. 347-366.

of belonging form the primary problematic. A trans-civilizational collective-self-narrative of a new post-Western cosmopolitanism offers a grander kind of self-narrative, enabling self-description answers constituting the weness feeling and legitimating actions towards constituting a world polity. Where competing conceptions of a world polity stumble for lacking a coherent or practicable collective self-narrative, this concept of a trans-civilizational world polity is strongest.

If it is the problem of difference that was the *problematique* of the Westphalian world order, what problematizes this supposed self-discourse and collective-practice of a trans-civilizational world polity is the problematic of belonging, of what it means to belong in the world whilst being a part of it. In a world of mass migrations, increasingly complex biographies, immense diversities, local and global, post-liberal cosmopolitanism underpinning the outlook of a trans-civilizational world polity, is an answer to this question of belonging, of who belongs, of how to belong in a complicated and problematic world. In this outlook, the problem of difference is out and the problem of belonging is in. World order, in this context of an increasingly global but also multipolar world, is less and less a problem of tolerance and civilization, if everyone is civilized.[397] There is no monopoly on civilization, and, if a higher notion of being civilized, as belonging to a trans-civilizational world polity were to arise, tolerance vs. civilization would no longer be the political world order question. It is increasingly a problematique of "fitting-in" the world, of being in the world through a part of it, so to speak. The problem of difference between civilizational moralities and local practices would not be the politics of a trans-civilizational world polity. It would not be inside and outside, either, that is too simple.[398] It would be the politics of belonging, about belonging together, not a part. It is the question of what it means to belong in the world by being in a part of it. It is hard for the liberal imaginary to grasp how this is not the same problem as that between civilization and tolerance, but it is not. An expression of the attitude of new post-Western cosmopolitanism is Taiye Selasi's self-description as a 'multi-local Afropolitan'.[399] This self-identification is not responding to the problem of civilization and toleration. Selasi is not asking what is tolerable in the civilized world or apart from it. She is

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[397] Edward Keene *Beyond the Anarchical Society: Grotius, Colonialism and Order in World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

[398] Ulrich Beck, 'The Cosmopolitan Perspective: Sociology of the Second Age of Modernity', *British Journal of Sociology,* 51:1 (2000), pp. 79-105; Ulrich Beck, 'Toward a New Critical Theory with a Cosmopolitan Intent', *Constellations,* 10:4 (2003), pp. 454-468;

[399] Taiye Selasi, 'Bye-Bye Babar', *The LIP,* March 3, 2005: http://thelip.robertsharp.co.uk/?p=76.

crafting a way to be in and a part of the world. The question of where one comes from is increasingly problematic in a globalized world, as the lives of more and more people are multi-local. In an imagined trans-civilizational world polity, the problem of belonging would be the key world order problem, since, as a world polity, it would, by definition, have no outside. The main political battle lines would be about *how* everyone belongs to the world polity, with a variety of extreme fringe positions arguing humankind belongs apart, or that certain persons do not belong in the world polity.

In practice, this post-Western cosmopolitanism in a trans-civilizational world polity would take on a complicated form, exhibiting the interrelatedness of modern experience, but also its multiplicity. The language of human rights, for instance, would likely persist in use, but its meaning would become enlarged, trans-civilizational, serving more as a *lingua franca* for normative issues of right and wrong, than a list of precise rights *per se.*[400] R.J. Vincent's later work gestured in this direction, towards a trans-civilizational world polity, one with problem of human rights brought into shared terms, perhaps even a consensus on them, cohered by a shared modernity.[401] Likewise, the variety of modern international world order principles and practices, democracy, capitalism, perhaps first and foremost, would attain an enlarged trans-civilizational understanding of their meaning and the diversity of their legitimate practice. These principles and practices, so enlarged, trans-civilizationalized, would be nonetheless joined and moderated by a larger sense of belonging, constituted by a shared trans-civilizational collective-self-narrative.

This vision of a trans-civilizational world polity, constituted by these enlarged horizons of a shared modernity, is possible under certain circumstances, but it is an extremely unlikely possibility, requiring generational scales of discursive and social action. Practically, it is ambitious, to say the least, because it is in contest with the clash of civilizations narrative that is bleeding into great power rivalries today. This is one of its major weaknesses, its pluralism makes it practically possible, but it is also thereby a tenuous achievement; it requires a constitutive patchwork of narratives that could easily and habitually slip into familiar narratives of clash and difference. Civilizational discourse has roots in European imperialism, in the

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[400] Charles Beitz *The Idea of Human Rights* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).
[401] R.J. Vincent, 'Modernity and Universal Human Rights', in A. McGrew and P. Lewis (eds.) *Global Politics: Globalization and the Nation State* (Cambridge: Polity, 1993), pp. 293-311; Iver B. Neumann, 'John Vincent and the English School of International Relations', in Neuman and Waever (eds.) *The Future of International Relations: Masters in the Making?* (London: Routledge, 1997), pp. 41-70.

imperial notion of European civilization as the definition of Civilization, needing to be spread and imposed upon the world through colonialism. In practice, the envisioned attempt to appropriate and transform civilizational discourses away from great power politics towards cosmopolitan purposes would carry with it the danger of a reversion from trans-civilizationalism to narratives of civilizational clashes, regardless of the incoherence of those narratives in theory. Practically, a trans-civilizational world polity has a fragility, an inherent vulnerability to the dark side of civilizational discourse in the counter-interpretation of rival and exclusive civilizations. Regardless of the incoherence of that interpretation of civilizations as implacable and conflicting things, the use of that interpretation of civilizational discourse is capable of ripping up the patchwork of a trans-civilizational aspiration, to undo the whole thing, revert it from a productive and "higher" co-constitution to a clash. Extending this speculative discussion a little further, it is reasonable to suggest that a world polity, whether constituted through civilizational discourses or otherwise, may always suffer from the weaknesses of fragility, where the principle of all-inclusivity and total human belonging, can always and likely will be turned against it. There may always be a contest between cosmopolitan ideas and their detractors. In its historical patchwork character, the trans-civilizational idea of a world polity finds its strength, conceptually, but, because it is not universal and foundational, because it is an historical patchwork achievement, it seems particularly vulnerable to detractors who may seek to divide and disrupt it in practice.

A further practical hurdle to the vision of a trans-civilizational world polity is the need for the support of a new cosmopolitan political economy. Instability and division follow from poor economics. In times of economic collapse, revolutionary discourse and divisive practice abounds, as J.M. Keynes theorized. Globalist neo-liberal cosmopolitanism, with its world order project of global governance and economic globalization, found a practical source of validation in the utopian dream of economically lifting all boats, the notion that global economic growth translates into global prosperity.[402] This practical justification, supporting its more lofty world order complex of rights and governance, was always subject to criticism, because its growth was unequal, but it has also begun to waver since the 2008 financial collapse. A post-Western trans-civilizational world polity requires an alternative and practical cosmopolitan political economy model to support it, if it is to avoid derailing economic instabilities and overcome a slide into

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[402] Stephen Gill, 'At the Historical Crossroads –Radical Imaginaries and the Crisis of Global Governance', in Gill (ed.), *Critical Perspectives on the Crisis of Global Governance: Reimagining the Future* (London: Palgrave, 2015), pp. 181-196; Stephen Gill *Power and Resistance in the New World Order:* 2nd Edition (London: Palgrave, 2008).

civilizational clash and anti-cosmopolitan autarky. Contemporary global capitalism is under strain and is built for an international order. The absence of a new cosmopolitan political economy model, one that rivals and offers a viable alternative or substantial modification to neo-liberal free market capitalism in theory and practice, is a major impediment to the practicality of the vision.[403]

It is worth considering, however, that this lack of a political economy model might be over-stating the problem, because it is a technical question and would be easier to resolve in a context less structured by the rival interests of nation-states. Depending on the degree of unity a supposed post-Western trans-civilizational world polity would cohere, the degree of legitimated world hierarchies might be sufficient to overcome the massive economic problems created by a world order of multiple national economies. A single world economy with a proper reserve currency could unleash hardly imagined volumes of trade. It would also enable a world progressive taxation system that Thomas Piketty has advocated as the solution to global inequality, but whose application is unrealistic in a divided world order.[404] The agreements and policies of economic organizations like the WTO and IMF would, potentially, be revised and transformed by a transformed world order structure. No longer would all agreements and policies be products of the interests of rival nation states, with the hegemon receiving the lion's share of influence and benefits. World trade and finance could potentially be shaped around a properly world economy. The end of war is not the only good a world polity brings. It also promises to unleash the untold productivity of humankind, debilitated today not only by war and war spending but also by its division into multiple uneven and never free markets. Vast waste on armaments could be channeled to a proper world development programme. The vast amounts of hidden offshore wealth, estimated at 8% of the world's financial wealth, over $7.6 trillion US dollars, is stagnant and unmoving presently but in a world polity it would be vulnerable to a world tax authority and could be re-infused into the global economy, potentially stimulating some of the largest economic growth in human history.[405] The sense of belonging of a world

[403] Stephen Gill, 'Market Civilization, New Constitutionalism and World Order', in Stephen Gill and Claire Cutler (eds.) *New Constitutionalism and World Order* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), pp. 29-42.
[404] Thomas Piketty *Capital in the Twenty-First Century* Arthur Goldhammer trans. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014), p. 471-514.
[405] Gabriel Zucman *The Hidden Wealth of Nations: The Scourge of Tax Havens* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015), p. 3.

polity, if sufficiently cohesive, could legitimate these presently wildly radical global economic proposals.

Here, however, discussion is moving into technical questions of the best design of institutions to realize a world polity. I wish to hold off on these institutional questions until I have considered the ecological and space ship earth visions in the next chapter, because the ecological crisis seems to be unavoidable and important for these institutional questions.

5.7 Conclusions

In this chapter, I have argued the notion that an historically and sociologically ascendant global civil society is a less and less a defensible vision, due to its incoherence in theory and practical limitations in practice. In its wake, I have argued, is not necessarily a return to a Hobbesian world and clash of civilizations, but rather, in the context of a shared civilization of modernity, what follows is the opportunity of a post-Western cosmopolitanism, based on a new enlarged cosmopolitan sense of freedom and belonging, potentially bridging a post-Western world order to a pluralistic conglomerate-like trans-civilizational world polity. I argued that in a late modern context, any world polity that did not involve a trans-civilizational narrative would be impractical because it would be unacceptable to humankind, who in a modern multicultural and anti-imperial age demand accommodation of their modern identities and beliefs in political and social life. Humankind is, today, in some ways similar in condition to the Hellenistic age. Both systems had multiple rival powers of mixed but interrelated cultural horizons thrown up by failed imperial projects. And both systems were ages of flourishing trans-cultural accomplishments, where cultural practices, whole peoples and personal lives, science and technology, art, commercial goods, and ideas mixed in brilliant ways, producing important and impressive civilizational achievements. Globalized world politics today, situated in a modern, post-colonial and cosmopolitical context, begs important questions about cosmopolitan ideas, such as those we have studied in this thesis thus far. Whose cosmos? What laws? How can a cosmopolitan order be imagined in a late modern world of multiple modernities? These questions, in the modern context, demand more complicated trans-civilizational answers. I have suggested the empire of modernity, in its multiple forms, nonetheless provides a minimal background upon which a unifying collective-self-narrative based on post-Western cosmopolitan principles might be

fathomed and defended. There is a possibility, however slim, that if clarified and circulated, such a cosmopolitan collective-self-narrative could cohere the ambitions of multiple great powers, which might put it into institutional practice, given sufficient world order insecurity and crisis. This is speculative and aspirational however, and a remote hope, but a possibility nonetheless worth clarifying, conceptually, as an answer in the search for a world polity. Because this idea of a trans-civilization of global modernity is complicated, and forcefully met by the alternative clash of civilizations narrative that bleeds into geopolitics, it is more likely that the great powers will continue to shuffle the system and never transform the game, accumulating regional bases of their power, perhaps, again, not entirely unlike the Macedonian kingdoms of the Hellenistic age, who routed, in a grand alliance, Antigonus's final defense of Alexander's unifying project, and maintained an era of rival warring empires set amidst flourishing trade and learning, for hundreds of years.

The speculative and aspirational vision of a systemic unification around a trans-civilizational cosmopolitanism is not the end of the search, however. In the next chapter, I want to explore how the coming deluge of climate change complicates this trans-civilizational world polity vision. The changing nature of nature, so aptly put by Paul Wapner, raises alternative conceptions of a planetary geo-polity that complicate the vision I have been exploring in this chapter.[406] Does the common community of ecological fate usher a post-political and post-human cosmopolitanism, as some have suggested? Will it wash away the ideas I have been exploring in this chapter, before they ever take root in practice?

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[406] Paul Wapner, 'The Changing Nature of Nature: Environmental Politics in the Anthropocene', *Global Environmental Politics,* 14:4 (2014), pp. 36-54.

Chapter Six.

Space Ship Gaia: Common Community of Fate or Common World?

6.1 Introduction

In the search for a world polity, the importance of Pythagoras should not be overlooked. There could be no cosmopolis until there was a cosmos. Diogenes and Zeno, the first theorists of a cosmopolis, did not arrive at the concept out-of-the-blue, or from up on high. Its conceptual precondition was the awe inspiring and dazzling grandeur of Pythagoras's teachings of a mathematically ordered cosmos. What Diogenes and Zeno did was make that cosmology political. In an age of ecological crisis, when the world is increasingly seen as a planetary ark, when humankind is reacquainting itself with nature, it is helpful to remember the achievements and legacy of Pythagoras. Of equal significance to his connections between earth and knowledge through measurement, Geometry, is his harmonic connection between an ordered cosmos and spiritual life. He was not really a scientist. He was much more than that. His vision carries that polymathic stamp of the remote Axial Age, the historical epoch distinguished by the emergence of such world reforming figures as the Buddha, Confucius, and Zoroaster.[407]

> The essence and power of [Pythagoras's] vision lies in its all-embracing, unifying character; it unites religion and science, mathematics and music, medicine and cosmology, body, mind and spirit in an inspired and luminous synthesis.[408]

There could be no cosmopolis without this grand cosmology.

In this chapter, I want to argue a common climatic situation qualifies rather than invalidates the vision of a trans-civilizational world polity discussed in the previous chapter,

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[407] S.N. Eisenstadt (ed.) *The Origins and Diversity of Axial Age Civilizations* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1983); Charles Taylor, 'What Was the Axial Revolution?' in *Dilemmas and Connections* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011), pp. 367-380.

[408] Arthur Koestler *The Sleepwalkers: A History of Man's Changing Vision of the Universe* (London: Macmillan, 1959), p. 27.

because its coherent and pragmatic conception in this context requires reformulation of the connections between cosmos, politics, and spirituality, not least because their disconnect is a spur to the problem. Bruno Latour's vision of a 'common world', I argue, points the way, but I question how 'common' it can be and what is common about it.

I structure my argument in three parts. First, I explore the scientifically inspired notion of space ship earth politics but find it struggles to achieve a coherent basis in theory and doubts arise concerning its practical feasibility. Second, I explore the Gaia cosmopolitics of Bruno Latour and his idea of building a common world, reconnecting the cosmos and politics and resetting modern distinctions between immanent and transcendent, society and nature. I find Latour's contributions to be immensely important but caution against overly singular conceptions of a common world. I argue what is common about a common world is not a common cosmos, but a world constituted by a common ambition of ecological wellbeing. Third, with these ideas, I revisit the less singular image of what a trans-civilizational planetary polity might mean. I conclude with a measured dose of pessimism about meeting the conditions of achieving a common world polity.

6.2 Same Boat Arguments

Concerns for environmental degradation are found in sources as old as Plato, where the soil was seen to be washing away. But it was in the 20th century that these concerns took on a planetary scope and excited new ideas of a planetary world community. The famous NASA image of the blue marble, combined with a new awareness of the possibility of global nuclear winter and mass extinctions suggested for some intellectuals the image of the one earth as a common habitat, with finite resources, constituting the space ship earth common community of fate.[409]

Daniel Deudney has called this a "terra-politan" outlook, the sense of the Earth as a homeland.[410] The most well-known and eloquent voice of this movement was Carl Sagan. His famous *Cosmos* and earlier *Cosmic Connection* attempted to reframe human existence as minute

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[409] Barbara Ward and Rene Jules Dubos *Only One Earth: The Care and Maintenance of a Small Planet: An Unofficial Report Commissioned by the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment* (New York: Penguin, 1972).

[410] Daniel Deudney, 'Global Village Sovereignty: Intergenerational Sovereign Publics, Federal-Republican Earth Constitutions, and Planetary Identities', in Karen T. Litfin (ed.) *The Greening of Sovereignty in World Politics* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1998), pp. 299-325.

and fragile, within an immense and impersonal universe. He drew attention to the smallness of human affairs on the cosmic scale. He conveyed something of that humbling awe Pythagoras once evoked. Sagan also attempted to reconnect humankind and nature, but on the level and scale of a modern secularized cosmos, by drawing attention to the atomic composition of everything, and everyone, by showing how every thing and every one is made of stardust, wrought by primeval cosmic events.[411]

The intellectuals of this movement, such as Barbara Ward, Kenneth Boulding, and the Club of Rome, were scientifically and technically minded Economists, Architects, and Systems theorists. They took up the practical questions of devising a responsibly managed space ship earth, of realizing the scientific cosmopolis.[412] This vision was not entirely limited to the confines of the earth. In the pioneering era of space exploration, particularly for the more starry-eyed Soviet Cosmonauts, the cosmopolis took on the infinity of secular dimensions, when they spoke of being citizens of the universe. This current of thought carries on in more recent responses to planetary climate change. In 100 years, physicists have estimated, humankind will have developed the technologies of what is, according to the Kardashev scale, a Type I planetary civilization, able to harness the entirety of the energy within earth systems.[413] Currently, the global civilization of modernity classifies, according to this scale, as a pre-planetary Type 0 civilization. Achieving a planetary civilization, requires, no doubt, planetary planning, but, already, humankind is struggling to manage its Type 0 civilization. To manage the climate, a new generation of scientifically minded space ship earth visionaries are planning the planet with geo-engineering proposals, meant to turn climate change into climate control.[414]

A minor problem with this scientifically minded current of thought is the question of the ability of technology to master and order ecological problems on a planetary scale. Is it really a question of the right use of technology or are some of these ecological problems inherent to its

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[411] Carl Sagan *Cosmos* (London: Macdonald & Co, 1981); Carl Sagan *The Cosmic Connection: An Extraterrestrial Perspective* (New York: Dell Publishing, 1973).

[412] Barbara Ward *Space Ship Earth* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1966); Kenneth Boulding, 'The Economics of the Coming Spaceship Earth' in Henry Jarrett (ed.) *Environmental Quality in a Growing Economy* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins Press, 1966); Kenneth Boulding, 'Cowboys on Spaceship Earth', *Monthly Labor Review,* 97 (1974), pp. 33; Stephen Toulmin *Cosmopolis: The Hidden Agenda of Modernity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990).

[413] Michiu Kaku, 'Future of Humanity: Planetary Civilization', *Physics of the Future: How Science Will Shape Human Destiny and Our Daily Lives by the Year 2100* (New York: Anchor Books, 2011), pp. 378-426.

[414] Clive Hamilton *Earthmasters: The Dawn of the Age of Climate Engineering* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013); see, also, The Oxford Geoengineering Programme, http://www.geoengineering.ox.ac.uk/.

use? There is a sense of irony in the use of technology to solve problems produced by technology. For instance, proposals for the geo-engineering of the climate, with the distribution of sun-reflecting particles into the atmosphere, prompted the climate activist Naomi Klein to ask, "the solution to pollution is pollution?"[415] The major problem, however, is the conceptual leap from a common habitat, even a common Earthwide planetary homeland, to a common community, in the sense of common moral obligations and commitments. The global commons, furthermore, implies common interests, but not common sympathies or solidarities. The Earth Charter, established in 2000 by civil society actors, working in association with the United Nations, calls for humankind to, 'recognize that in the midst of a magnificent diversity of cultures and life forms we are one human family and one Earth community with a common destiny.'[416] The Earth Charter prescribes the realization of a common Earth community by asserting the shared principles of 'respect and care for the community of life', 'ecological integrity', 'social and economic justice', and 'democracy, nonviolence, and peace'. Yet, the obligations following from a common habitat can just as validly be thought of as amounting to no more than a proscription of destroying the common habitat of humankind. Critics of the space ship earth thesis rightly argue that being on the same boat does not necessarily mean that passengers ought to or will collaborate as a crew, or elect a captain.[417] There is a missing connection between the problem of sharing a common habitat and the idea of a common Earth community. What gives these criticisms their bite is the lack of clear and sure moral footholds in the secular outlook of scientific space ship earth thought; the unmooring of morals in a disenchanted universe, where cosmos, politics, and spirituality are all untied and, even, at odds.[418] Space ship earth thinkers carry the legacy of Pythagoras's cosmos, but they have lost its spiritual connection to the transcendent. They struggle to find universal morals in an impersonal secular cosmos.

Accordingly, Deudney suggests a "terra-politan" sense of homeland needs to be spiritually supplemented by a 'Gaia Earth religion'.[419] An interesting but quaint strain of this notion is what we can call the neo-pagan approach. I only bring it into the discussion as a

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[415] Naomi Klein *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. The Climate* (Toronto: Penguin, 2014), ch. 8.
[416] The Earth Charter Commission, 'The Earth Charter', http://earthcharter.org/invent/images/uploads/echarter_english.pdf
[417] See, for instance, Hedley Bull *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics* (London: Palgrave, 2002 [1977]), p. 282-283.
[418] Charles Taylor *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007).
[419] Deudney, 'Global Village Sovereignty', p. 317.

contrast, to help clarify the sense of disconnect and reconnect between human being and nature at play in the question of the ecological crisis. This neo-pagan alternative seeks the footholds of a spiritual reconnection by reviving the understanding of the mother earth as not something that can be mastered by science, but as a creator and destroyer, to be worshiped. This approach has little expression in academic contexts, or in policy discourse, but it is a social movement, one largely found in Western secular cultures. It is helpful to take note of this movement, even if it does not have a clear political statement, since it responds to the ecological crisis by attempting to revive spiritual connections between human beings and the earth. Its advocates are those who gather at Stonehenge on the solstice. We can also contrast these neo-pagans with the Sierra Club, the American conservationist movement. This movement, with Christian rather than pagan roots, developed the idea of the 'cathedral of nature', the majesty of nature as a vision of the divine Spinozian cosmos, where God and nature are one.

Both movements attempt to muster a spiritual reconnection between humankind and nature, the first by reversion, the second by a new reverence, but both are modern attempts. The Sierra Club's reconnection of the immanent and transcendant in nature re-enchants nature and justifies the reservation of a place for nature, perhaps even half the earth.[420] It can be said that the ability to revere the earth in such ways is less and less feasible in the age Earth Systems theorists are calling the Anthropocene, an age where the footprint of humankind has been measured on the geological history of the earth. For the geo-engineers of space ship earth, who are drawing plans for global climate control systems, the earth has lost much of its sublime quality.[421] But, more to the point, what is interesting is that this is a modern *re*-connection, since nature is, in its modern outlook, still distinct from the world of humankind, the social cosmos, society and the modern world. There is a more thorough-going and, in a sense, cosmopolitan reconnection in the neo-pagan movement. It harbors the eccentric notion that we are all children of a wrathful mother earth. The neo-pagan movement forms a current in the larger green movement, pushing for local small crop agriculture, and earth worship as a way of life. Practically, this neo-pagan approach would doom the interdependent global civilization of modernity to logistical collapse. The global food supply requires its technologically facilitated global economy. But, what is interesting is the neo-pagan attempt to recall a worldview from a time before the distinction between humankind

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[420] Edward O. Wilson *Half-Earth: Our Planet's Fight for Life* (London: Liverlight, 2016).
[421] Bruno Latour *Facing Gaia: Eight Lectures on the New Climatic Regime* (Cambridge, MA: Polity Press, 2017).

and nature was made. This is why it is eccentric, because the ambition of a reconnection, of getting *back* to mother earth is a modern assumption, but also one that is not only against the trend of modern attitudes and beliefs, but also one that can never really be fulfilled because of those same modern assumptions. The distinction of the immanent and transcendental, and later abandonment of the latter, giving rise to what Taylor has described as the immanent frame, is a cosmology peculiar to Western modernity.[422] But, the connection the neo-pagans attempt to revive can never really, authentically, be remade.[423] It is always a re-connection in a modern secular context.

Claude Levi-Strauss, the French anthropologist, grasped more of what the emergence of a world polity connected to ecological wellbeing involves.

> It would take a spiritual revolution as great as that which led to the advent of Christianity. It would require that man, who since the Renaissance has been brought up to adore himself, acquire modesty, and he learn the lesson of all the atrocities we have experienced for thirty or forty years. He would do well to learn that if one thinks only that man is respectable among living beings, well then, the frontier is placed much too close to mankind and he can no longer be protected. One must first consider that it is as a living being that man is worthy of respect to all living beings –at that point, the frontier is pushed back, and mankind finds itself better protected.[424]

What would clarify the prescriptive question of the ecological crisis, what would make that connection between planetary crisis and a world polity, is a transformative understanding of common self-constitutive values, a new sense of who humankind is and what it aspires to as an ecologically embedded species on a planetary scale.

This promotion of ecological wellbeing as a shared value can, hypothetically, amount to a collective-self-constitutive good. The adoption of ecological wellbeing as what the communitarian philosopher Charles Taylor has described as a strong evaluation (a good valued

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[422] Taylor *A Secular Age.*
[423] Charles Taylor *The Ethics of Authenticity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991).
[424] Quoted in Richard Falk *This Endangered Planet: Prospects and Proposals for Human Survival* (New York: Random House, 1971), p. 19.

so strongly that is it constitutive of the self and can used to measure other goods against), would constitute a historically specific and self-conscious collective-self-narrative of humankind as a planetary polity collaborating towards the valued end of ecological wellbeing. It can transform what Bruno Latour calls our modes of existence, by reshaping the constitutive and structuring value-based logics of human and non-human relations.[425] This alternative approach to the ecological crisis involves the use of constitutive self-descriptive explanations of ecological prescriptions, rather than the rule-based moralism of space ship earth thinkers.

This alternative constitutive approach is more promising than the space ship earth theorists and quaint if illustrative neo-pagans and Sierra Club, because it offers what we might call a "reformative" response, where the neo-pagans offer a problematically anachronistic "subtractive" response and the space ship earth theorists offer a morally unsuccessful and practically questionable "additive" response.

6.3 A Common World?

Concluding his genealogy of the concept of a world community, Jens Bartelson argues climate change,

> leaves us with the task of reformulating our conceptions of community in the light
> of our cosmological beliefs about the human habitat, rather than conversely. … If
> mankind is no longer separate from nature, we might as well reunite in the face of
> the Flood that threatens to diminish the habitability of our planet. But that Flood is
> also what now promises to wash the maps of empire away for good.[426]

What Bartelson is calling for here is a reformative alternative, one based on changing cosmologies about the human habitat. This conclusion, is complemented by the post-colonial thinker Dipesh Chakrabarty, who argues,

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[425] Bruno Latour *An Inquiry Into Modes of Existence: An Anthropology of the Moderns* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013).
[426] Jens Bartelson *Visions of World Community* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 181-182.

climate change poses for us a question of a human collectivity, an us, pointing to a figure of the universal that escapes our capacity to experience the world. It is more like a universal that arises form a shared sense of a catastrophe. It calls for a global approach to politics without the myth of a global identity, for, unlike a Hegelian universal, it cannot subsume particularities. We may provisionally call it a 'negative universal history.'[427]

But, what could the contents of such a "reformative" alternative universal be? What collective-self-narrative could it coherently and practically espouse? How could it reweave humankind and nature in a more compelling way than Sagan's impersonal cosmic perspective?

Far and away the most inventive and intellectually liberating contributions relevant to these questions are those of Bruno Latour.[428] Exploring his conceptual revision of the distinction between humankind and nature opens the search to new terrain. His cosmos re-connects humankind and nature in a way Bartelson and Chakrabarty gesture towards, but I want to caution against an over-reliance on one cosmos, and Latour's cosmos in particular. I question how 'common' his 'common world' can be. I attempt to clinch the point by showing the historical contingency of Latour's own cosmology, its place in what Wade Davis has called the ethnosphere, 'The sum total of all thoughts and intuitions, myths and beliefs, ideas and inspirations brought into being by the human imagination since the dawn of consciousness.'[429] If Latour's cosmology is idiosyncratic in this dynamic and immense ethnosphere, how common can an envisioned common world be? Will it not inevitably involve many rival and historically peculiar cosmologies? I argue in this section that what is common about a common world is not a common cosmos, but a world constituted by a common ambition of ecological wellbeing.

Latour's thought is complicated, at times counter-intuitive, and offers important insights, but also has subtle limitations, so I wish to take some time to spell it out, to give it a proper account. The keystone in Latour's movement is a Whiteheadian process cosmology. This is a post-Darwinian picture of the cosmos, one that sees the cosmos as a web or network of interrelated processes. Gone is Newton's clockwork cosmos of fixed regularity. The cosmos of

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[427] Dipesh Chakrabarty, 'The Climate of History: Four Theses', *Critical Inquiry,* 35 (2009), p. 222.
[428] Anna M. Agathangelou, 'Bruno Latour and Ecology Politics: Poetics of Failure and Denial in IR', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies,* 44:3 (2016), pp. 321-347.
[429] Wade Davis *The Wayfinders: Why Ancient Wisdom Matters in the Modern World* (Toronto: Anansi, 2009), p. 2.

Latour and his followers is an empire of diachronicity. For them there is only the dynamism of process. This throws analytical philosophy out the window. Is a feature of the sky blueness? Only if eyes that receive certain wavelengths of light look at it: only if those eyes are a part of the process. Things, in this view, are synchronic abstractions, constellations plucked out from the diachronic process. It problematizes the possibility of synchronic distinctions between past present and future. In this way, this empire of diachronicity transforms conceptions of causality. No longer are there causes and effects, since every effect is also a cause and vice versa. This means that what matters are the networks making up the process. Most importantly here, Latour's ally Isabella Stengers argues that if a Whiteheadian cosmology is adopted then the makeup of the cosmos, its synchronic image, becomes a political question, because its construal is always open to question. There is always a cosmopolitical question.[430] For Latour, there is only the ongoing causal process.

This seems, in a way, like a return to Heraclitus. All is flux of fire. But, I think Latour's Whiteheadian inspired movement is more like a return to Pythagoras, for it was Pythagoras who overturned the cosmological debate of the ancients from the question of the primary elemental constituents of things, to the question of the movement and transformation of things, to know things not by their constituents, but by their actions and changes, which he showed can be measured, mathematically, and analyzed to reveal the hidden harmonic patterns of the cosmos. Drop a lump of coal, a fish head, or walnut into the water, and they all produce a marvelous series of rings, Pythagoras showed.

For Latour, there is no subject and object, there is no human society and material nature, there is only the process of changing networks of actant things, human and non-human. For Latour, since all things have tendencies, which impact other things, and so collaborate in the networks they form, agency is not an exclusively human property, or exclusive to a part of the animal kingdom, or even life. The planetary scale network of actant things is Gaia, the earth systems, incorporating everything and everyone on earth into one vast network. By Gaia, Latour does not adopt James Lovelock's hypothesis of Gaia as an organism, but, like Lovelock, he does see its macro earth systems that tend towards a stable climatic equilibrium conducive to life,

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[430] Isabella Stengers, 'The Cosmopolitical Proposal', in Bruno Latour and Peter Weibel (eds.), *Making Things Public* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005), pp. 994-1003; Bruno Latour, 'Whose Cosmos, Whose Cosmopolitics?', *Common Knowledge,* 10:3 (2004), pp. 450-462.

consistently over millions of years, as a product of a dynamic process, not a fixed design.[431] Humankind is part of, embedded in, born from, this process and vast network of networks. With this vision, Latour erases the distinction between natural systems and human systems, the human world, society, and the natural world. With reference to the sociology of Gabriel Tarde, his monadology, Latour argues there is no society, since every thing is, in a sense, already a society of things, a network of monads, in the vast and dynamic process network scheme of things.[432] For Latour, the vision of society as a collaborative endeavor of human subjects, the modern social imaginary, is just that; it is an imaginary; it never existed.[433]

For Latour, in the grand network of Gaia, there can be no world society, there can only be what he calls 'a common world.'[434] For Latour, it is the distinction between human beings and nature that has spurred the ecological crisis. Disavowing the distinction, and composing the proper relations of humans and things, is Latour's idea of a common world. In a context of ecological crisis, this vision offers an important way forward towards answering Derrida's key question of 'living together well', that we encountered in chapter 4.[435] For Latour, if the modern distinction of subject and object, society and nature, is escaped, 'The old metaphor of a Political Body might take on a new lease on life, if it is another name for living with Gaia.'[436] For Latour, composing a 'common world' means a, 'good common world, cosmos, the best of worlds'.[437] It is a positive world, one of maximal ecological wellbeing. It means living with Gaia well.

Latour's early political theory in *The Nature of Politics* suggests a common world can be created, democratically, through the establishment of what he calls a parliament of things. Rather than science dominating politics, as the space ship earth thinkers suggested, or for politics to dominate science, as climate deniers wish, Latour crafts the parliament of things as a political

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[431] James Lovelock *The Revenge of Gaia: Why the Earth is Fighting Back –and How We Can Still Save Humanity* (New York: Penguin, 2006); Bruno Latour *Facing Gaia: Eight Lectures on the New Climatic Regime* (Cambridge, MA: Polity Press, 2017).

[432] Bruno Latour *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012); Bruno Latour, 'The Whole is Always Smaller That its Parts: A Digital Test of Gabriel Tardes' Monads', *British Journal of Sociology,* 63:4 (2012), pp. 590-615.

[433] Latour *Reassembling the Social,* p. 5; Bruno Latour *We Have Never Been Modern* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991); Charles Taylor *Modern Social Imaginaries* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004).

[434] Bruno Latour *The Nature of Politics: How to Bring the Sciences into Democracy* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004).

[435] Elisabeth Weber (ed.) *Living Together: Jacques Derrida's Communities of Violence and Peace* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013); Marie-Eve Morin, 'The Spacing of Time and the Place of Hospitality: Living Together According to Bruno Latour and Jacques Derrida', *Parallax,* 2:1 (2015), pp. 26-41.

[436] Bruno Latour, 'Agency at the Time of the Anthropocene', *New Literary History,* 45:1 (2014), p. 16.

[437] Bruno Latour *The Nature of Politics,* p. 239

vision combining science and politics, with the representation of things in politics, and so overcoming the social inside and natural outside through new practices. He means the representation of things, literally the earth systems of Gaia, the oceans, lands, ecosystems, and so on. This representation creates a unification of politics and science in practice. Non-human things would be represented by people, like lawyers represent clients. He suggests they could be represented in a lower house that integrates things of concern, expanding representations. An upper house would legislate the common world, composing it, defining it bit by bit, network by network, into a larger and larger Gaia scale collective, made, by democratic process, into a common world.

Latour is unclear about whether this parliament of things would or could be planetary,[438] with the scale and authority of a world government, but it is hard to see how it could make sense or practically function otherwise, since the networks of Gaia are planetary in scale. To support his scheme, Latour suggests a possible re-conception of sovereignty. The globe, Latour rightly points out, is a spatial designation, a product of European imperial cartography, particularly in the nineteenth century. He suggests the earth, as the grand network systems of Gaia, is the actual place of sovereignty. Thus, rather than understanding sovereignty as demarcating realms of autonomy upon the *globe*, Latour suggests it might instead be conceived as an assemblage of relations, a constellation of networks across the *earth*.[439] Thus, he suggests reimagining sovereigns as interpenetrated networks, inextricable from larger earth systems. Like the systems theorists we considered at the outset of this study, Latour attempts to swamp the sovereigns in larger systems, to drown their autonomy in webs of interconnections. Upon this grand network of systems things, if sovereignty were so reconceived, we might envision the development of a planetary parliament of things, mandated with resolving ecological crisis through composing a common world. How might this hypothetical composition of a common world resolve the ecological crisis? By fixing the importance and meaning of things, by drafting a cosmos, to establish how things are, so to determine how their proper relations are. In this way, it would establish, compose, what ecological well-being means. This is a new way of performing the cosmological move, by composing the world through practice, rather than declaring it in theory.

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[438] Mark B. Salter and William Walters, 'Bruno Latour Encounters International Relations: An Interview', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies,* 44:3 (2016), p. 1-23.
[439] Bruno Latour, 'Onus Orbis Terrarum: About a Possible Shift in the Definition of Sovereignty', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies,* 44:3 (2016), p. 3.

Qualifying his movement, in crucial respects, is Latour's more recent magnum opus 'modes of existence' project.[440] In this project he offers an answer to the question of what we have been, if not modern. His answer focuses on the different modes of network connections that follow from different values. He recognizes a plurality of modes, legal, political, religious, etc., each with a different value-based logic of connections, setting their own conditions of validity. The point of mapping these modes is first, to provide a fair account of modernity, on more coherent terms than modernity provides. Second, this provides an ability to reassess modern modes of existence and third, to begin to envision the possible formation of a universal planetary civilization, a common world, with a common response to the ecological crisis. Latour sees the programme as a reformation not only of Western modern modes, but all collective modes, Western and otherwise, since, he argues, no way of life and no cosmology is prepared for this crisis, even all those unhindered by the Western modern distinctions of subject and object, nature and society. For Latour, all ways of life, modern, indigenous, etc., need to be reformed.

The practicality of his parliament of things is not hopeful. Its theatrical test model, 'Make It Work', organized by Latour's followers, produced a universal agreement on climate governance, but, even with the absence of traditional geo-political power rivalries, it nearly failed to do so, as it struggled to put alternative conceptions of sovereignty into practice. Representing people in politics has proven to be, in the great democracies, difficult. A world parliament of things is practically ambitious, if not completely impractical.

But, nevertheless, Latour's reconnection of humankind and material objects with a political programme is important because of its break from visions of a world polity studied thus far. It is an important step beyond the limitations of the problematic ideas of a need for a salvaged mastery of nature (as with the geo-engineers), a new contract with nature (that appeals but lacks moral and practical footholds in a modern and multicultural context), or a romanticization of the pre-moderns or indigenous horizons that do not incorporate modern distinctions of society and nature. Latour's break opens up thought to the conception of a trans-civilizational planetary polity that reforms prevailing outlooks and modes of existence. The exact contents of that vision are still, alas, far beyond imagination. Yet, Latour has opened the door.

But, has Latour overplayed his hand? Is his break too clean? My major cautionary qualification to Latour's political programme is that the goal of composing a common world

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[440] Latour *An Inquiry Into Modes of Existence.*

needs to be distanced from overly monistic or singular cosmopolitics. A common world, as a singular world, is practically utopian and would be self-defeating on the vast multicultural scale of all humankind. For starters, Latour's own Whiteheadian inspired outlook that supports his scheme is not universal nor will it likely be universally embraced. The cosmological background against which he operates, the impersonal process cosmos, is one idiosyncratic cosmology amongst many. If Latour's programme for composing a common world is dependent on this cosmology, it is as utopian as the modern vision of a secular future, where all religions and competing cosmologies are forgotten. Latour does not intend to overplay his hand. He is aware of his idiosyncrasies and is opposed to fundamentalism. But there is a danger of over reliance on his cosmos, of not recognizing that any cosmology, including Latour's, is not without controversy and multiple rival interpretations.

If there is no final cosmology or ever even one cosmology, only ascendant cosmologies, how common can a common world be? For instance, a challenge for Latour's vision comes from religious traditions that balk against his secular cosmos.[441] He seems to recognize this challenge, where he argues,

> For those who use the term 'religion' are really appealing to another world! And this is exactly the opposite of what we are trying to identify. There is no other world –but there are worlds differently altered by each mode. The fact that the people speak tremulously of 'respecting transcendence' hardly encourages the ethnologist to take this phenomenon seriously, since she sees quite clearly here the wrong transcendence, the one that has immanence as its opposite rather than its synonym.[442]

Without favouring, or even sympathizing with mobilizations of religious fundamentalism, I do doubt the spiritual self-interpretations of people will ever agree with Latour's secular cosmology that reduces the spiritual to a religious mode of network amongst people and things, without some faith based sense of a higher power, Spinozan or otherwise. As I have been consistently

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[441] Charles Taylor, 'Religious Mobilizations', in *Dilemmas and Connections* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011), pp. 146-164.
[442] Latour *An Inquiry in Modes of Existence,* p. 299.

arguing throughout this study, the collective response should not be equated with singularity. The vision of a common world needs to be more pluralistic than singular.

To clinch this cautionary criticism of an over-dependence on Latour's common world cosmology, I want to point out its historical contingency, its sources in the ethnosphere. What I am wagering here is that the dreams, imaginaries, cosmologies, beliefs and intuitions of humankind, the history of the ethnosphere, is prime for any cosmology, and that there is no final *weltanschung,* no last cosmology upon which to build a common world. The conception of Gaia and measurement confirming existence of the Anthropocene is cosmos dependent. As Collingwood argued in response to Whitehead,

> natural science as a form of thought exists and always has existed in a context of history, and depends on historical thought for its existence. From this I venture to infer that no one can understand natural science unless he understands history: and that no one can answer the question what nature is unless he knows what history is. This is a question which Alexander and Whitehead have not asked. And, that is why I answer the question, 'Where do we go from here?' by saying, 'We go from the idea of nature to the idea of history.'[443]

Latour's cosmology is idiosyncratic and not the last.

There never will be a singular common world, where the meaning and relations of all things are agreed in a grand Gaia scale collective. What is common about a common world is not a common cosmos, but a world constituted by a common ambition of ecological wellbeing, reshaping collective-self-conceptions, ushering up new admired and legitimate orders. There are and likely always will be many co-constitutive, competing and conflicting ways of being and relating that draw on many colliding and co-constitutive flows of cosmological imaginaries, stating how things are, so to say how to be. There is no single cosmos that a new Pythagoras can draw upon today. Nor will there be a last cosmos tomorrow.[444] Caution against the utopianism of a singular common world is needed in the ambition of a common world, hence my insistence on

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[443] R.G. Collingwood *The Idea of Nature* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1945), p. 177.
[444] Kikuji Kawada *The Last Cosmology* (London: Mack, 2015).

the import of a trans-civilizational collective-self-conception, albeit one shaped by an emerging planetary politics and shared ambition of ecological wellbeing.

6.4 Planetary Politics

Yet, Latour's question of a common world is important, even profoundly important. In the context of ecological crisis, it is a vital route to Derrida's question of living together well, even if caution is needed in respect to the challenges that that path involves. How do Latour's contributions qualify the vision of a trans-civilizational world polity considered in the previous chapter?

First, they open up the debate for a more thorough-going "reformative" response to ecological crisis. They open the door to the vision of composing a common world, even if caution is needed in thinking about how common that common world can or need be. Latour's programme for composing a common world is symptomatic of an emerging planetary consciousness and is one Western attempt to conceive a means to practice planetary politics.[445] It is one idiosyncratic instance of a "reformative" approach to the ecological crisis. This planetary consciousness is distinct from the consciousness of globalization, the condition of globality, imagining one spherical, circumnavigable, connectable, space.[446] Planetarity is atmospheric, ecological, imagining one interrelated system of earth systems. Global consciousness hangs together with global connectivity. Planetary consciousness hangs together with the planetary ecological interdependence, made evident by the planetary ecological crisis. This planetarity, planetary consciousness, enables, constitutes, a planetary politics, the politics of how to order it, for whom, and why. It is, as Latour puts it, an entirely new form of geo-politics.[447] The earlier space ship earth thinkers also tapped into this consciousness, even urged it on, but were unaware of the question of a common world, and found no footholds for a planetary politics in their scientific, impersonal, cosmos.

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[445] Paul Gilroy, 'Planetarity and Cosmopolitics', *British Journal of Sociology,* 61:3 (2010), pp. 620-626; Anthony Burke et al., 'Planet Politics: A Manifesto from the End of IR', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies,* 44:3 (2016), pp. 499-523.
[446] Roland Robertson *Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture* (London: Sage, 1992).
[447] Bruno Latour, 'From Realpolitik to Dingpolitik: Or How to Make Things Public', in *Making Things Public: Atmospheres of Democracy* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005), pp. 4-31.

Second, Latour's contributions of opening up the question of a common world for ecological wellbeing also offers the substance of a collective-self-narrative. Even if there is no common cosmos, nor last cosmology, the value of ecological wellbeing is an increasingly common need, potentially for all humankind. It, in itself is not enough, but it is important enough to qualify the trans-civilizational image I explored in the previous chapter. It can cement the sense of belonging that a hypothetical trans-civilizational world polity could attain. If the vast majority of humankind were to make ecological wellbeing (even with its various particular definitions) what Charles Taylor calls a strong evaluation, a constitutive good, then it could come to underpin the narrative of a trans-civilizational world polity.[448] Indeed, if this imagined world polity did not embrace this common value, it likely could not practically endure in a world suffering from the effects of climate change.

Working from a Nietzschian tradition of thought, the political theorist William E. Connolly offers an alternative path forward. Connolly advances the cause of ecological wellbeing, but he resists to an extent the adoption of ecological wellbeing as a way of collective-being, however formulated, since, for Connolly, to be, rather than become, restricts, represses, ultimately corrupts and the potential for new ways of being generated by resistance to the social categories of given ways of being. Alternatively, Connolly offers a vision emphasizing becoming through dynamic eco-militancy, a planetary 'politics of swarming', connecting a grand alliance of groups of resistance: indigenous, labour, scientists, trans-national actors, etc., capable of forming new collective identities in collective social actions, such as a global general strike.[449] He explains, if 'the fragility of things is actively pressed by a positive constellation of minorities, it may also be possible to expand the cadre whose political commitments express attachments to the planet.'[450] Connolly suggests,

> a promising lure may be to prepare large minorities within several constituencies
> and regions for the day when we can enact together a general strike in several
> countries simultaneously. Perhaps it could be a graded strike at first, with one-day

[448] Glen Lehman *Charles Taylor's Ecological Conversations: Politics, Commonalities and the Natural Environment* (London: Palgrave, 2015), p. 133; Charles Taylor, 'Heidegger, Language, and Ecology', in *Philosophical Arguments* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1995), pp. 100-126.
[449] William Connolly *Facing the Planetary: Entangled Humanism and the Politics of Swarming* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2017), p. 121.
[450] William Connolly *The Fragility of Things* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2013), p. 178.

actions followed by longer periods. The immediate goal would be to press international organisations, localities, states, corporations, banks, labour unions and universities to defeat neoliberalism, to curtail climate change, to reduce regional and national inequalities, and to infuse a vibrant pluralist spirituality into democratic machines that have lost too much of their vitality.[451]

This alternative, offers some insights,. A politics of swarming may indeed helpfully expand planetary commitments, by making grass roots movements into global actions practically realized in sites of battle and alliance in planetary politics.

The criticism is that Connolly's programme makes an extreme case for the importance of becoming over being and so does not in-itself amount to a world polity able to address the ecological crisis. As I have been arguing in this study, something more is needed, a larger narrative. Connolly's programme is conducive to instigating that narrative on the ground, in and through practice. But, a programme of global alliances and protest is not the same thing as composing a common world, even if it might be a part of the process. Process matters, however, in two important respects. First, an important part of the image of a realizable world polity is how it is an ongoing process of realization, being realized and re-realized, discursively and performatively in practice, on an ongoing basis. Second, process is generative as much as it is regenerative. The realization by agentic action shifts the structure, which shifts the agents, in an ongoing process of change and continuity.[452] This is to say that the image of a realizable world polity is not a stasis, but an ongoing realization of its ideals and social form, becoming realized in its unifying process that is never complete or correct, but always shifting, historically. New and innovative understandings and practices are realized in this ongoing social process of realization.

A repeated finding of this study is that the conversion of all humankind is practically impossible, especially in a modern context. Universal narratives are suspect today. A collective-self-narrative needs to be in a "rallying" form, we might say, for it to be positively received and so meet the criteria of practicality. With respect to the ecological crisis, once the question is asked why ecological wellbeing matters, there is no agreement in a multi-cultural world, and so

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[451] William Connolly, 'The New Materialism' and the Fragility of Things', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies,* 41:3 (2013), p. 412.
[452] Anthony Giddens *The Constitution of Society* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1984).

an overlapping consensus is the best that can be achieved. This is why realizing a world polity around ecological wellbeing means mustering the many cosmologies towards a common strong evaluation of ecological wellbeing, which could underpin a constitutive trans-civilizational collective-self-narrative. Pope Francis's environmental statement, his *Laudato Si* Encyclical, *On Care For Our Common Home,* is important, not because it declares the cosmos, but because it mobilizes a cosmos, it makes a "reformative" contribution to address the ecological crisis.[453] Equally important is the Tibetan Buddhist spiritual leader, his Holiness the Karmapa, Ogyen Trinley Dorje's treatise, *Interconnected: Embracing Life in Our Global Society.* This book mobilizes Buddhist worldviews, reforming their teachings for a global context and marshaling them towards addressing ecological crisis by realizing a global society that embraces global interdependencies as a way of life.[454] Rallying modern cosmologies requires marshaling them in a "reformative" way as well, moving beyond the distinctions of society and nature, subject and object, as Latour has shown. But this is not the only movement needed to rally the world to address the ecological crisis. Indigenous ecological politics that do not suffer from these modern distinctions between society and nature, but reform in their global application, when joined by a wide array of ecological movements in world politics.[455]

Yet, ecological wellbeing can have all manner of definitions, and so its ambition, the ambition of a common world, also needs to be connected to the trans-civilizational ideas developed in the previous chapter, to be practically realizable. If so connected, the vast kind of pluralistic movement towards ecological wellbeing that marshals multiple cosmoses, would be constitutive of a common world, one totally unlike that which Latour might envision, but one where a strong evaluation of ecological wellbeing would help ground, in a constitutive way, the in-it-together sense of a trans-civilizational world polity. This is highly abstract, yet the point is that rallying the world, not converting the world, is indispensable in practically realizing a common world.

6.5 Conclusions

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[453] Pope Francis *Encyclical Letter: Laudato Si' On Care for Our Common Home* (Liberia Editrice Vaticana, Rome, 2017).

[454] The Karmapa Ogyen Trinley Dorje *Interconnected: Embracing Life in Our Global Society* (Somerville, MA: Wisdom Publications, 2017).

[455] David Suzuki, 'Beyond Species at Risk Act: Recognizing the Sacred', *Journal of Environmental Law and Practice,* 22:3 (2011), pp. 239-253.

In this chapter I explored the ecological conceptions of a world polity. I found the planetary space ship earth tradition to be impractical and somewhat incoherent because a shared sense of place is not the same thing as a shared sense of belonging. Beyond this, I found Latour's vision of a common world to be significant, particularly for its depth of thinking on the relation of culture and nature, but I questioned what is common about his vision of a common world and how common it can be, thus staking out my argument that ecological crisis and ecological conceptions do not wash away the trans-civilizational conception of a world polity, but, rather, are needed to support it, and are themselves equally in need of support from it. In the following chapter, I want to explore the combination of these ideas, the trans-civilizational and planetary world polity.

Part III

Implications

Chapter Seven.

Reimagining the World Polity

7.1 Introduction

Imagining the world polity is a categorically distinct experience to imagining the nation. Benedict Anderson told us, 'Communities are to be distinguished, not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined.'[456] Imagining the world polity, as a trans-civilizational planetary polity, or in any other form, is about imagining oneself and strangers fitting into the world, together, joining up with the world, not imagining being distinct and apart from a divided world. Imagining the world polity is about imagining all the polities of humankind being one. It involves imagining oneself and strangers *in* the world and so *of* the world and inherently belonging in the world, as a part of it. It is an all-embracing imagination. The nation is imagined, Anderson tells us, as a socially and territorially limited and sovereign community.[457] The world polity, by contrast, is almost always imagined as having the opposite qualities, being unlimited in spatial and social if not temporal terms, being an all-embracing community with universal authority. Where the members of nations direct their loyalties and affinities in on themselves, away from the world, to form the nation, within the world, the world polity is formed by directing allegiances and attachments outwards towards the world, joining up with the world and holding up a higher authority under which all belong. Imagining the world polity, in any age, means calling to mind a qualitatively unique variety of images and moods. When we imagine the nation, we recall and conjure up thoughts of persons and events that evince and exemplify the imagined qualities of the community, moments and faces we remember or invent that exhibited a national character and special communal feeling. The images brought to mind when imagining the world polity are inherently immense, in a Bachelardian sense, of vast beyond knowing, quasi-sublime.[458] They are images encompassing all the world, not a part

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[456] Benedict Anderson *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983), p. 6.
[457] Anderson *Imagined Communities,* p. 6.
[458] Gaston Bachelard, 'Intimate Immensity', in Maria Jolas trans. *The Poetics of Space* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964), pp. 183-210.

of it, pictures of cosmopolitan sites and crossings, including the mélange of metropoles and global trade routes, as well as the remotest peripheries of the world, obscure villages and hamlets practicing unique local ways of life. It is an all-embracing imagined community. The difference is a matter of style of imagination, not reality and falsity.

Still, the universal, unshakeable, cosmologically central and divinely mandated doctrines of world unity that ordered humankind for thousands of years, the imagined universal communities of the colossal empires, Egyptian, Babylonian, Roman, Byzantine, and Caliphate, the world-spanning realms of religious belonging in Christendom and the Umma, for instance, have no universal or solid bases in the modern political imagination of a modern age, where everyone has been mobilized to defend their particularisms and particular universalisms, and where, in a secular age, portions of humankind increasingly believe there are no universals. The sweeping era of human history, when most of humankind was ordered in cosmologically grounded empires, from the remote Axial Age, is ended in late modern times.[459] Reimagining the world polity today, in this context means rallying belonging beyond the nation, but not by re-connecting to its religious antecedents. In this study I have argued it necessarily means clarifying the collective trans-civilizational and ecological narrative of humankind in a late-modern era, legitimating a political authority "on top" of the nations, being realized by a new mode of belonging that has a socially unlimited quality.

Imagining the world polity as a "trans-civilizational planetary polity", a "terra-politan civilization", we might say, gives the ancient idea of universal human unity a meaning in a modern context. If the world polity were not realized with a trans-civilizational character, it would not get off the ground, because it would face too many detractors who would find it unacceptable to their modern self-conceptions and ambitions. Yet, if the world polity was not also realized with an ecological component on a planetary level, then it would become overwhelmed by the practical consequences of uncontrolled climate change. The trans-civilizational planetary polity is not the final and ultimate vision of human unity. Other visions will be imagined for other times, times beyond modernity and beyond its late modern and often-called post-modern shadows. In our late modern but still modern age of multiple civilizational modernities, where ecological crisis is a fact of life, any attempt to imagine a realizable world polity of all humankind must necessarily adopt trans-civilizational but also ecological qualities. I

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[459] Charles Taylor *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007).

do not argue that this vision will or must arise in practice, but only that if a world polity were to be realized in the foreseeable future, it would necessarily have to involve these trans-civilizational and planetary features, so long as modernity itself does not collapse, bringing down all its modern assumptions on which our imagined communities are based. This trans-civilizational and planetary vision is complicated and perhaps the most likely path to its realization were if the international system becomes invalidated by proving its inability to sustain modern ambitions, by itself posing a universal threat to humankind. Perhaps a limited thermonuclear exchange between great powers would precipitate such an event, by wiping swaths of the world out of existence. We need to remember that thermonuclear weapons are vastly more destructive than the atomic bombs used against the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. One thermonuclear weapon can destroy all of Japan, Texas, or France. The ballistic exchange of even a few of these weapons would be a world-changing event, cognizing the world-scale threat posed by these weapons, and questioning the competence of the international system to manage them. The worst effects of climate change might also de-legitimate the idea of a "society" of states, proving its incompetence as a society, pushing humankind (by force of a common threat and common ambition of ecological survival and wellbeing), to unite around a world polity, perhaps gradually, perhaps swiftly. These scenarios are unlikely, if less unlikely than we might hope. Yet, if even under such unlikely circumstances this vision of a trans-civilizational and ecological world polity were achieved, it would still be a fragile achievement, always subject to detractors, advocates of division and the politics of difference. It is possible, if imagined rightly, but it is still unlikely and fragile nonetheless.

This vision of a trans-civilizational planetary polity is a long way from the image of the moral community of humankind, the secularized *cosmopolis* that we began the conceptual investigations with. In this chapter, I want to cement this vision of a trans-civilizational planetary polity, to clarify its implications for the image of a realizable world polity. I address three connected lines of questioning: First, what exactly is the image of a trans-civilizational planetary polity? How do we best fit together the ideas of trans-civilizational belonging and planetary ecological wellbeing? Second, what institutional arrangements are fitting and conducive to this vision? How hierarchical and how centralized need they be? That is, what world order does this vision imply and require? Thirdly, can this vision, so specified, satisfy the criteria I laid out at the outset and applied throughout this study? To what extent is its point comprehensible? To what

extent is it coherent? And, to what extent does it represent a practical vision? My argument in response to these questions is first, that the trans-civilizational planetary polity means a larger belonging supported by ecological wellbeing, not the reverse, which, second, practically entails a world federalist order to be achievable, and, taken together, thirdly, that it satisfies my stated criteria.

7.2 Two Concepts of the Trans-Civilizational Planetary Polity

First, how is the relation between the idea of a trans-civilizational polity and the idea of the eco-planetary polity best conceived? What is the relation between the values of an expanded sense of modern freedom and the value of ecological wellbeing? Which takes priority? I want to argue that the relation is not conflictual, rather mutually supportive, but neither is it an equipollent relation, where each has equal priority. Instead, the argument here is that the ideal of a trans-civilizational belonging is more fundamental and necessary, in the vision of a trans-civilizational planetary polity. The common ambition of ecological wellbeing is vital and transformative, I have argued, but I want to argue it is also instrumental to the notion of an enlarged trans-civilizational ambition of freedom. That is, ecological wellbeing is a practical necessity, one of transformative qualities indeed, but it is an ambition that is ultimately secondary to modern ambitions of freedom, the expanded trans-civilizational understanding of which enables a shared sense of belonging and solidarity, because it satisfies the practical possibility of the aims and ambitions that freedom is valued for. Ecological wellbeing is only and can only be a primary and not secondary ambition for a small portion of humankind, the most ardent green advocates, who make ecological wellbeing the center of their lives. As I argued in Chapter 6, ecological wellbeing also requires the support of trans-civilizational belonging, because there are limits to how common a "common world" of ecological wellbeing can be. The two values, trans-civilizational freedom and ecological wellbeing, are mutually supporting. But, the ecological cannot take priority, the aims and life goals of humankind, individual and collective, are too diverse. It is the trans-civilizational component that is more fundamental and primary.

Let me unpack this by setting-up and exposing the opposite position, where the politics of the planet would instead be given a priority. This would be the vision of a planetary polity much closer to Latour's vision of a common world, where ecological wellbeing were to become a

shared strong evaluation for all humankind, albeit necessarily taking on various cultural forms, as I argued in Chapter 6. The shared ambition of ecological wellbeing would constitute a common world, where the entangled and complex multiplicity of civilizational-cultural ways of imagining and practicing ecological wellbeing would be secondary to the primary ambition of ecological wellbeing itself. This would be a world like a new eco-Medievalism, where ecological wellbeing and planetary politics would shape everything else in world affairs, enabling hierarchies of authority that would bring ecological considerations into every realm of world order, security, economic, etc. The difficulty with this vision is that it cannot be practically realized. This is because humankind pursues too many ideals and ambitions for ecological wellbeing to become a common primary ambition. I mean that humankind never will "green" to that extent because ecological wellbeing is valued not in itself but for its instrumental importance for achieving the immense varieties of goals and ambitions, personal and public, individual and collective, that modern notions of rights and freedom are demanded for.[460] Ecological well-being is vital but ultimately instrumental to the ambition of a "higher" freedom, in a larger belonging of humankind. An eco-Medievalism, or any neo-Medievalism, where one primary definitive value coheres belonging and every aspect of social life is not realizable in a modern world of hardly imaginable variety of aims and goals. It is this plurality of modern life-ends that makes freedom highly prized and defended in modern times. Humankind shares ecological wellbeing as a common ambition, increasingly so, indeed, but it will not increase to the extent that it overturns and eclipses all other ambitions, chiefly, the ambition of freedom itself, which ecological wellbeing is vital for but only instrumental to. Because ecological wellbeing is vital but instrumental to modern ambitions of freedom, an expanded notion of which I have argued enables a larger trans-civilizational belonging, it is this latter ideal of trans-civilizational freedom that takes priority in the vision of a trans-civilizational but also planetary polity.

7.3 Realizing the World Polity

Second, what world order model is implied by this vision of a trans-civilizational but also eco-planetary polity? How centralized and hierarchical an order does it entail? What would this

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[460] Robert Falkner, 'Global Environmentalism and the Greening of International Society', *International Affairs,* 88:3 (2012), pp. 503-522.

proposed image of the world polity look like in practice? What kind of institutional set-up fits this imagined world polity? Does it imply a cosmopolitan "solidarist" society of states, transformatively unified by cosmopolitan solidarity, legitimating international authorities above the states?[461] Or, does it imply something more hierarchical and centralized?

I want to suggest that because the proposed form of a world polity I have been distilling is still based on modern horizons, but of a trans-civilizational variety, it is best fit to a global variant of federalism, largely but not exactly along the lines spelled out by Daniel Deudney.[462] Deudney's vision has more practical merits than alternative models. The world polity could not consistently be constructed through a post-Westphalian cross-stitching of the states system with webs of cosmopolitan solidarist regimes, because that structure maintains the primacy of states, even if they imagine themselves as post-national polities, which makes it inconsistent with a larger sense of belonging and makes it inherently brittle, inevitably to be snapped at the flick of the sovereign's wrist. A world union, like the African Union or European Union reimagined on a global scale, likewise, suffers the same underlying inconsistency with a larger belonging and practical fragility. What Deudney proposes might be thought of as a sturdier system of checks and balances, constitutionally more robust, with a higher degree of hierarchy and authority, than a web of regimes across states. If this vision of a world polity I am trying to distill is characterized by a sense of trans-civilizational belonging, the proposed federalist structure is also conducive to the trans-civilizational collective-self-conception, enabling belonging as well as multiplicity. In a modern age, the neo-Medieval vision of a single ethos welding overlapping authorities is no longer practically valid, there are too many variety of modern ambitions to be governed via overlapping authorities, and the practicality of the Medieval system has long been questioned due to the persistence of wars in the Middle Ages. The federalist innovation is a path towards union in a modern context, where a division of powers between federal and local government clearly delineates authorities within a single polity, but with a structure Deudney defines as "negarchy", where the checks and balances negate the ills of pure hierarchies. Yet, while Deudney's world order model has been widely praised and has consistency with a trans-civilizational but eco-planetary vision, Deudney has not sufficiently explored the modernity of

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[461] For cosmopolitan solidarist international society, see, Barry Buzan *An Introduction to the English School of International Relations: The Societal Approach* (London: Polity, 2014), p. 114-120.

[462] Daniel Deudney *Bounding Power: Republican Security Theory From the Polis to the Global Village* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006).

his vision, how it involves multiple modernities, and an unavoidably pluralitistic connection to ecological wellbeing, features which I have been steadily unpacking in this study.

Let me first consider a number of alternatives to the world federalist model, before I clarify its precise features. Are there not serious alternatives? Four traditions of international thought, above all others, profess that a world polity has no need for a world state, federal or otherwise: the tradition of political anarchism, the tradition of Kantian democratic peace theory, the tradition of liberal *laissez-faire* economics, and the tradition of international functionalism. I want to argue that it is correct to suggest that a world polity would practically require a world government of some kind, but not because of a need to suppress chaos, as some political realists might suppose. Rather, because a world polity is a response to and is responsible for a broader range of world-scale problems than anarchist, Kantian democratic, laissez faire, and functionalist forms of organization cannot practically manage. Conceptually, this is to say the vision of a world polity is impractical if it rejects the role of a world government.

An Anarchical World Polity?

The "English School" tradition of international thought that includes Hedley Bull's *Anarchical Society,* has resisted this logic, defending the merits of international society.[463] But, this tradition's leading thinkers have supposed that if a transformative world polity were to emerge, a world law and likely some form of world government, or at least world governance, would emerge along with it.[464] However, the tradition of political anarchism, of Bakunin, Kropotkin, Proudhon, and so on holds the principle that the combination of authority, hierarchy, and power is a major source of political problems, not their solution.[465] Conceding the anarchist principle means that the last leviathan would resolve the insecurities of an anarchical system of states, but would inevitably produce greater ills by dint of its greater power concentrations. For the anarchist, a world leviathan would be corrupting, turning human ambitions away from the betterment of humankind, towards the allure of ruling all humankind, blunting and twisting all

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[463] Hidemi Suganami, Madeline Carr, and Adam Humphreys (eds.) *The Anarchical Society at 40: Contemporary Challenges & Prospects* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017).
[464] Hedley Bull *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics* (London: Palgrave, 1977), p. 278-280; C.A.W. Manning *The Nature of International Society* (London: G.Bell, 1962), p. 178.
[465] Richard Falk, 'Anarchism Without 'Anarchism': Searching For Progressive Politics', in *(Re)Imagining Humane Global Governance* (London: Routledge, 2014), pp. 145-161.

the fruits of human creations towards the interest of ensuring the overawing power of the one last state.

The classic puzzle is that if the conditions for a world state were met, via unity, then would the world state still be needed? The anarchist tradition offers a rival non-statist vision of a world community that can exist and is better off without a world state. This broad tradition holds out an alternative path for humankind, one where people are free from arbitrary authorities, able to co-operate creatively, in wider and wider and eventually world-spanning circles, always and increasingly for the betterment of all humankind, not merely for some part of it. This tradition suggests human beings could be free to co-operatively pursue their full potential in service of no goal smaller or greater than the betterment of all humankind. The anarchist supposes a world without states will have no need for a world state, since it is the state, ancient and modern, that has made civilized humankind barbarous and the abolition of the state is, for the anarchist, the prerequisite of human flourishing. It is interesting to note, albeit with awareness of the anachronisms involved, that Zeno himself, the first political theorist of the *cosmopolis*, has been thought of as a kind of anarchist, since he is said to have questioned the validity of individual states, but saw no need for a world state either.[466] In some ways, the trans-civilizational polity can be seen as aided by an anarchistic order, wherein all modes of existence would be free to associate and practice their ways of life, which is part of the trans-civilizational point.

However, the flaw in the anarchist vision, in general, is not so much the Hobbesian drama of primordial violence, the untold chaos the state is thought to suppress. Rather, it is the boring question of the administration of public needs. A stateless world may not need thermonuclear arsenals, but what of the administration of carbon emissions, what of the management of mass economic and climate migrations, regulation of the oceans and skies, peaceful nuclear uses, outer space satellite and debris regulation, and so on. What of all those needs the state and international system is presently administering, for health, clean water, highways, and the like? An anarchical world polity, like any other, would need to rise to meet these challenges or drown in them. If a world polity were to exist, it would be responsible for global challenges, which, in principle are not local problems and cannot be locally managed. Yet, how can an anarchical

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[466] Zeno's anarchism is anachronistic to the modern anarchists, but it has been suggested, amongst other sources, by Isaiah Berlin, who did not always have exacting references, but was immensely erudite. See, Berlin, 'Socialism and Socialist Theories', in Henry Hardy (ed.), *The Sense of Reality: Studies in Ideas and their History* (London: Pimlico, 1996), p. 78.

world polity be held to account? To who do we e-mail the complaints? How would it meet these global challenges? It is unlikely that it would be able to rise to the global challenges without some system or council for making global decisions and directives, which is what the bureaucratic nightmare of a global state would be charged to do. Even an anarchical world polity would need some form of global administration. The question is what structure it could feasibly take on, how centralized, democratic, and how imposing on the presently existing system of states.

A Global Governance World Polity?

In practice, the anarchical system of states has long recognized the need for some form and degree of international administration, but has avoided a world federation. It has instead pursued global administration without global government, largely through the elaborate international organization of the United Nations and development of a global governance system.[467] The rise of global governance through the UN system has established a series of what are theoretically called, "international regimes".[468] This practice of global governance and international regimes is highly complex. Two of the most prominent contributing sources of these institutional practices are the traditions of liberal international economics and international functionalism, combining into a vision of order designed to move towards a world polity without a world government.

The functionalist tradition theorized the path to a world polity without a world government via the establishment of a system of international organizations responsible for transnational and international problems.[469] This functionalist programme was, to an extent, put into practice after the Second World War, with US leadership. As Dag Hammarskjöld reasoned,

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[467] Mark Mazower *Governing the World: The History of an Idea* (Penguin: New York, 2012); Thomas G. Weiss *Global Governance: What? Why? Whither?* (Cambridge: Polity, 2013).
[468] Stephen D. Krasner, 'Structural Causes and Regime Consequences: Regimes as Intervening Variables', *International Organization,* 36:2 (1982), pp. 185-206.
[469] David Mitrany, 'The Functional Approach to World Organization', *International Affairs,* 24:3 (1948), pp. 350-363.

It is because world community does not exist at a time when world interdependence has become a reality, that world organization has become a necessity as a bridge which may help us to pass safely over this period of transition.[470]

Several realist thinkers, notably Hans Morgenthau and Frederick Schuman, threw their support behind this effort, as a second best option to a world state.[471]

Allied with these functionalist efforts has been the applied tradition of liberal economic internationalism. This is the internally divided tradition of Richard Cobden, the early Norman Angell, J.M. Keynes and F.A. Hayek. This tradition of liberal economic internationalism holds out the vision of global order imparted by a global *laissez faire* capitalist economy, with some degree of support from international institutions, the WTO and IMF. Within this shared global market, a global community of entrepreneurial and pacific individuals engaging in free enterprise and trade is envisioned to emerge. The capitalist framework for a world polity was expressed in Fritz Koenig's sculpture, *The Sphere,* formerly installed at the World Trade Centre plaza, a singular golden globe representing world peace and unity through free trade. Even though there is disagreement amongst liberal economic internationalists about the degree of needed institutional supports, they agree a world government is unnecessary for a world polity. The operating principle, Hayek argued, is that the larger the number of participants, the higher the ratio of detractors.[472] Thus, it is more helpful and feasible for states, including a world state, to get out of the way because if a world government were established to plan order and effectuate unity, it would need to unduly impose its plan on its inevitable and (according to Hayek's ratio) numerous detractors; better leave it to the individuals to order themselves. These ideas were put into practice in the post-war order, and reworked by Reagan and Thatcher and in re-envisioned in the Washington Consensus, whose legacy is the vast economic exploit of neo-liberal globalization, thinly regulated and supported by the economic wing of global governance structures. These are the ideas behind the words of Christine Lagarde, managing director of the

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[470] Dag Hammarskjold, 'Address to Both Houses of Parliament, 2 April, 1958', in A.W. Cordier and W. Foote (eds.) *The Quest for Peace: The Dag Hammarskjöld Memorial Lectures* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1965), p. 46.

[471] Hans Morgenthau *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1948); Frederick Schuman *The Commonwealth of Man: An Inquiry into Power Politics and World Government* (London: Hale, 1954).

[472] F.A. Hayek *The Road to Serfdom* (London: Routledge, 1944).

IMF, when she argued in Davos 2013, 'This generation is a global generation and an open generation. Open to the world, and to the idea of a common global community.'[473]

The combination of the functionalist and free market liberal internationalist movements in international affairs find their application in the idea and complex of practices of global governance today, a set of organizations, non-state actors, principles, and practices surrounding the international system, which has had US leadership at its center since its emergence in the post-war era. To some extent, the reimagination of this order along trans-civilizational and ecological lines is already afoot in world politics.[474] The failure of these ideas in practice, however, to facilitate a sufficiently cooperative international society, let alone the emergence of a world polity willing and practically able to meet international and global challenges, is increasingly evident.[475] Both the functionalist and liberal economic internationalists protest that their ideas have been both misapplied and insufficiently tested in practice. This is true, but it is true of all utopias. Functionalist inspired organizations and regimes have struggled to meet their basic goals and the recent near complete collapse of neo-liberal economic globalization has been a cause of disorder and social fragmentation. World affairs are as if at the tail end of a new twenty years' crisis, since the end of the Cold War.[476] Great power rivalries are reemerging, arms control is faltering, diplomatic commitments like the UN Global Goals and Paris Agreement are being unmet, and radical politics is attracting popular support.

The point here is that a trans-civilizational planetary world polity would be no less in need of a world *government* than the anarchical society of states is today. Global *governance* is falling short. In this context, some have called for a regionalist alternative, a piece-meal world polity, using the local hegemons to order their regions first, and the world polity second. There is a sense that this might help facilitate a trans-civilizational ethos, by pluralizing the world order, along regional lines. Yet, regionalism is inadequate for the challenge because the world's regions are already integrated to the point that regionalism is insufficient. A supra-regional governing

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[473] Christine Lagarde, 'A New Global Economy for a New Generation', Davos, Switzerland, 2013: https://www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2015/09/28/04/53/sp012313.

[474] Richard Falk, 'Toward a Global Imaginary', in *Power Shift: On the New Global Order* (London: Zed, 2016), pp. 151-168.

[475] Mazower *Governing the World,* ch. 14; See, also, the special issue, 'Failure and Denial in World Politics', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies,* 44:3 (2016).

[476] E.H. Carr *The Twenty Years' Crisis 1919-1939: An Introduction to the Study of International Relations* (London: MacMillan, 1946).

structure is needed beyond the regions.[477] A world polity would need a world government as much as the society of states is in need of one today. Realist thinkers have revived the security argument for a world government,[478] while liberal cosmopolitans have also touted the need for a world government to meet the demands of universalist liberal democratic principles.[479] There has also been a growing interest in the need for a novel global constitution, one able to support a global government lite, or alternative quasi-federated model.[480]

A Democratic World Federation?

A third alternative to the world government structure, however, issues from the tradition of democratic peace. This tradition provides the structural alternative of a not-quite world republic, a peaceable world federation of republics. Kant argues that, 'if everything is not to be lost',

> in place of the positive idea of *a world republic* they put only the *negative* surrogate of an enduring, ever expanding *federation* that prevents war and curbs the tendency of that hostile inclination to defy the law, though there will always be constant danger of their breaking loose.[481]

The basic idea is that if all the states were republican, or some favoured and consistent version of democracy, then a world polity could be formed without a world government, by establishing

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[477] Amitav Acharya *The End of American World Order* (Cambridge: Polity, 2014); Andrew Hurrell *On Global Order: Power, Values, and the Constitution of International Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

[478] Scheuerman *The Realist Case for Global Reform*; Craig *Glimmer of a New Leviathan*; Kenneth Waltz, the widely applauded neo-realist theorist, has opposed these arguments, offering a mad Texas-style argument that if everyone has the deterrent everyone is deterred. See, Kenneth Waltz, 'Why Iran Should Get the Bomb: Nuclear Balancing Would Mean Stability', *Foreign Affairs,* July/August, 2012; Waltz, 'The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: More May Better', *Adelphi Papers,* 171 (1981). The elimination of thermonuclear weapons, perhaps most effectively eliminated by a world government, is a surer guarantee of their non-use than their universal distribution, since technical accidents and strategic blunders arise, as well as apocalyptic ideas, and since the use of these weapons by undeterred non-state actors is increasingly probable.

[479] David Held and Daniele Archibugi, 'Cosmopolitan Democracy: Paths and Agents', *Ethics & International Affairs,* 25:4 (2011), pp. 433-461; Luis Cabrera *Political Theory of Global Justice: A Cosmopolitan Case for the World State* (London: Routledge, 2004).

[480] See the journal *Global Constitutionalism*; Stephen Gill and A. Claire Cutler (eds.) *New Constitutionalism and World Order* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014); Richard Falk, 'The 4+ Logics of Global Order', *Power Shift: On the New Global Order* (London: Zed Book, 2016), pp. 213-223.

[481] Immaneual Kant, 'Perpetual Peace', Ted Humphrey (trans.), (Cambridge: Indianapolis, 1983), p. 117-118.

rights within, between, and, across a federation of states.[482] There could be a cosmopolitan law, without a cosmopolitan world government, so this tradition claims. We might plausibly imagine a trans-civilizational and eco-planetary world polity along these lines, with a trans-civilizationally expanded notion of democracy and cosmopolitan law as well.

Yet, there is some debate about how peaceable a world of democratic republics would be.[483] Zones of democratic peace create zones of extra-democratic war.[484] We might also question how consistent the constitutions of democracies could be if they were pluralized along trans-civilizational lines. What democracy, whose democracy, do we mean? However, the major issue is that regardless of the character of the states, the system would still require, practically speaking, a political authority for managing and administering system-wide problems, including ecological management, economic affairs, mass migrations, outer space and like concerns. Kant's vision is said to have inspired the League and United Nations, as well as Rawls's *Law of Peoples.* Both this application to practice and extension in theory make some room in their schemas for the establishment of a collective decision making body above the system of democratic states.[485] Yet, even if the problem of war were to fade away, a system of consistently democratic regimes would require an authoritative international decision-making body or system of international authorities to manage and administer crosscutting system-wide problems and ambitions that Kant did not foresee and which the experiments in international governance through the United Nations and League have struggled to achieve. It is a short step from this federation of democracies with a clumsy international decision-making body, to a more secure and extensive world federation.

A World Federal Government?

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[482] Michael W. Doyle, 'Kant, Liberal Legacies, and Foreign Affairs', *Philosopher & Public Affairs,* 12:3 (1983), pp. 205-235; Andrew Hurrell, 'Kant and the Kantian Paradigm in International Relations', *Review of International Studies,* 16 (1990), pp. 183-205.

[483] Kenneth N. Waltz, 'Kant, Liberalism, and War', *The American Political Science Review,* 56:2 (1962), pp. 331-340.

[484] Tarak Barkawi and Mark Laffey, 'The Imperial Peace: Democracy, Force and Globalization', *European Journal of International Relations,* 5:4 (1999), pp. 403-434.

[485] John Rawls *The Law of Peoples* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), p. 42.

Amongst the recent world government proposals, one of the most promising and widely admired to date has been Daniel Deudney's argument for a world federal republican government.[486] The republican tradition that straddles realist and liberal approaches, Deudney tells us, can overcome the dilemma between the political ills of hierarchy and the disfunction of anarchy by its recipe of "negarchy", the negation of both created by federal a division of powers. It is a short step, once we see it, from Kant's loose federation of republics, to Deudney's world federal republic. He makes the important and sensible distinction between a world government and a world state, the former being the administration of governance, the offices and bureaucracies of government, whereas the state is conceived as the larger package of sovereignty, territory, population, and a monopoly on the use of force. The distinction helps Deudney clarify his proposal of world government with a constitutional structure of divided sovereignty, a division of powers not unlike the American system, but global in reach and therefore, with no outside threats, and so in less need for an oversized military or any need for thermonuclear deterrents.

What makes this proposal promising is that the need for a world government is shaped by current predicaments and its ambitions facilitate those of in a trans-civilizational and planetary-ecological context. Starting from where we are now, with a society of states struggling under an institutionalized security dilemma, gives the vision of a global negarchical order a particular appeal. Scheuerman has argued Deudney's world order scheme is Western and American-centric, not readily applicable or acceptable to all humankind.[487] This objection is unpersuasive, however, because federal schemes can be modified, and parliamentary federalism has been adopted in contexts beyond its Western conception, like India and Japan, and because the very point of federalism is to accommodate plurality, which is what makes it fitting for a trans-civilizational world polity. Alternatives to Deudney's model could be stretched to fit the trans-civilizational vision of a world polity, but they struggle against the practicalities that a world polity and world government are imagined and practiced in response to. A global union model for instance, with a global constitution, reformed UN, integrating the regional organizations, might be equally consistent with a trans-civilizational ambition and its construction might be more easily achievable in practice. But, the ability of its governance to meet global problems

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[486] Daniel Deudney *Bounding Power: Republican Security Theory From the Polis to the Global Village* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006).
[487] William E. Scheuerman, 'Deudney's Neorepublicanism: One-world or America first?', *International Politics,* 2010, 47(5): 523-534.

would be practically deficient without a federal division of powers and federal decision making system needed to sufficiently overcome the underlying structural constraints of hegemony and anarchy, so to practically enable global action. Without authoritative powers and decision making mechanisms, the governance capacity of such a global union would be paralyzed by rival state interests. The federal model is more practical than the alternatives because of its greater governance capacity, whilst also containing the potential to fulfill the ambition of a trans-civilizational plurality of modern uses of rights and freedoms, with a federal division of powers (to negate the impractical paralysis of anarchy) and a system of checks and balances (to negate the potential excesses of an hierarchy).

7.4 Reflexive Appraisals

Third, how successfully does this conception of a trans-civilizational but eco-planetary polity with a world federal government meet the criteria I have been applying throughout this study? Because we have considered the different aspects of this vision fairly carefully across this study, and because it has been formulated by sifting the literature for features that meet my criteria, I can address this question of criteria fairly succinctly. Let me address each criterion in turn.

First, on the criteria of comprehensibility, the point of the use of the conception of a trans-civilizational world polity is somewhat slippery, but is, basically, a combination of a larger trans-civilizational belonging and ecological wellbeing, with belonging taking priority. The point of using this conception is first, to realize a post-Western world order where everyone belongs with an enlarged new cosmopolitan understanding of freedom, wherein the world polity is imagined as incomplete without everyone, and wherein everyone has a place in the world together, in a common world. Ecological wellbeing is instrumental to the primary point of a larger belonging. This implies, in its practical application, I have argued, a world federal government, with inspiration from Deudney's model, but modified towards trans-civilizational and eco-planetary purposes.

Second, on the criteria of coherence, I have striven my best to give this conception a charitable expression, and suggest its most coherent definition above. It is, I have argued, more coherent than the variety of alternative conceptions because it issues from historically specific trans-civilizational self-conceptions, rather than a-historical or idiosyncratic and Euro-centric

conceptions. Much of the coherence of this conception is its congruence with the horizons of modernity in a global context, and how it avoids the false empirical assumptions of nationalistic and universalist Euro-centric conceptions, particularly the universalisms of liberal cosmopolitanism. Contra commonly held notions that a world polity would have a single uniform world culture, I have taken on the assumption that the greater the constituency of a polity the greater the ratio of its diversity, hence the vision that a world polity would necessarily involve trans-civilizational components, particularly in a post-colonial and modern context where singular and universal visions are suspect and resisted.

Yet, third, how practical is this conception? How realizable is it in a practical way that is not doomed to collapse? I suggested that because of the patchwork, meta-narrative, trans-civilizational character of this trans-civilizational conception, it is easily countered by divisive narratives and is undermined by civilizational conflict in practice. Practically speaking, unless new technologies create an unforeseen concentration power in the system, the trans-civilizational vision requires the circulation of its narrative across multiple great powers mutually supporting the establishment of a world governing structure to manage conflict and continue to promote its collective-self-narrative. Thus, the conception, we have to admit, is, if not practically impossible, highly improbable. There is little practical hope of this world polity being realized, although it is not beyond the realms of possibility. If it were to emerge, it would be more practical that alternative visions. Any world polity necessarily would need to involve trans-civilizational and ecological features for it to be practically realizable. But, there is, presently, little hope for the practical realization of a trans-civilizational world polity in the near future. The systemic threats posed by thermonuclear weapons and climate change do not presently appear sufficient to instigate world polity formation. However, I do not rule it out in the next fifty to one hundred years, as the ecological crisis worsens and new disruptive technologies emerge.

7.5 Conclusion

Reimagining the world polity in this way, as a trans-civilizational planetary polity, with a federal world government structure appropriated and customized from Deudney's stock model towards trans-civilizational and eco-planetary needs, helps defog our vision of the possible future world polity and it helps let go of some of the baggage of the past. A world polity is not merely the

connection of all humankind via global economic and communications systems. Neither is it merely the structural unification of humankind, with a world government or global governance. Furthermore, neither is a world polity a moral unity of all humankind, via universal moral codes and neutral moral norms. Moral principles are themselves insufficient to guide a polity without a sociological basis tied to a collective identity. Collective-self-conceptions and feeling of belonging make all the difference. Yet, neither is a world polity a seamless cultural fusion of all humankind. Cultures are not homogenous wholes and a polity is not the same thing as a culture. A world polity is involves the emergence of a common trans-civilizational and ecological cosmopolitan cultural discourse across a vast plurality of cultures and polities. Yet, furthermore still, neither is a world polity the peaceable kingdom or any other millennial or secular notion or planetary paradise, because it would be an historically specific, unique, and necessarily imperfect polity, like any other. Its cosmopolitanism would be historically specific, with its own imperfections and troubles, particularly the politics of belonging, as I suggested in Chapter 5. Even though a trans-civilizational planetary polity would experience conflict, inevitably, however, its sense of belonging, common sympathies of being-in-it-together, would give it the resources of solidarity to overcome conflicts of ideals and interests, providing reasons to share burdens and make sacrifices. The trans-civilizational, ecological, and now world federal components reimagine the realizable if imperfect world polity for our modern times. A world federal government, if it were established, would require a trans-civilizational character to generate legitimacy for itself in a context of modern identity politics on a global scale. Yet, if the world polity was not also realized with a supporting ecological character on a planetary level, then it would become overwhelmed by the practical consequences of uncontrolled climate change. Reimagining the world polity in this way helps shake off the imperial and universalist legacies of the concept, and it helps defog our vision of possible futures, by providing the image of a realizable world polity, albeit one that would be a difficult and unlikely but not entirely impossible or impractical, achievement.

Conclusion.

No New Covenant? World Polity, World Order

8.1 Why there is No World Polity

Like the intellectuals in the Warring States period of ancient China, who formed a consensus that "stability is in unity", a similar consensus is emerging amongst intellectuals today.[488] A diverse group of realists, liberal idealists, constructivists, normative and critical theorists, and English School thinkers are beginning to form a consensus that a more unified world order is a practical necessity and desirable outcome.[489] However, like the intellectuals in the Warring States period of ancient China, intellectuals today debate the possible, necessary, desirable extent and form of unity. In this study I set out to explain what it means for humankind, and its system of states, to form the maximal unity of a world polity, whether such an outcome is possible, under what conditions, from what contributing processes, and in what necessary social form. I have argued that it means all humankind forming one polity out of the problems of systemic insecurity and by the process of the reception and circulatory use of a hierarchy legitimating collective-self-narrative, which, in the contemporary modern context, most coherently and practically would take on a trans-civilizational and ecological narrative content. In a late and post-colonial era of modernity, a world polity must attain a trans-civilizational narrative for it to be acceptable to the peoples and cultures that have been mobilized and marshaled to defend their independence and distinct identities against pseudo-universal ideas and imperial hierarchies.[490] Yet, it must also involve an ecological component if is to be practically sustainable. These arguments form my two contributions: first, the development of an alternative eclectic world polity formation theory

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[488] Yuro Pines *The Everlasting Empire: The Political Culture of Ancient China and Its Imperial Legacy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013), p. 11-43.

[489] Louis Cabrera, 'World Government: Renewed Debate, Persistent Challenges', *European Journal of International Relations,* 16:3 (2010), pp. 511-530; Thomas Weiss 'What Happened to the Idea of World Government?' *International Studies Quarterly,* 53 (2009), pp. 253-271; Scheuerman *The Realist Case for Global Reform*; Deudney *Bounding Power*; Andrew Hurrell *On Global Order: Power, Values, and the Constitution of International Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

[490] Fanon *The Wretched of the Earth* (London: Penguin, 2001); Charles Taylor, 'Religious Mobilizations' in *Dilemmas and Connections: Selected Essays* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011), pp. 146-164; Isaiah Berlin, 'The Bent Twig: A Note on Nationalism', *Foreign Affairs,* 51:1 (1972), pp. 11-30; Hedley Bull, 'The Revolt Against the West', in Hedley Bull and Adam Watson (eds.), *The Expansion of International Society* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), pp. 217-228; Rahul Rao *Third World Protest: Between Home and the World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

that explains how systems of polities become single polities, and second, the clarification of why a world polity does not exist today, the conditions for its realization, and that it must attain a trans-civilizational but planetary form to be realized in a modern context.

Developing this answer has been an odyssey. First, I started out by theorizing whether a world polity is possible, and if so, under what conditions and by what processes. I advanced an alternative eclectic theory of world polity formation by raising the level of abstraction to the question of how systems of polities become single polities. Working with this theory, I argued the emergence of a world polity out of the contemporary system is not entirely impossible, but its conditions of systemic concentrations of power and unifying narratives in a global system of multiple modern cultures are difficult to meet, particularly because the articulation of a unifying collective-self-narrative in this context is difficult to conceive in coherent and practical terms. Second, from this theoretical position, I moved to the question of how to evaluate the rival contemporary visions of what a world polity can and must be if it were to be realizable in practice. I developed a discursive pragmatist approach that aims to clarify what the concept of a world polity can mean within its context of the modern discourse of world order, and what it can be used to achieve when applied to practice. With this discursive pragmatist approach to conceptual analysis, I established three general criteria to evaluate rival conceptions with: comprehensibility, coherence, and practicality. With these criteria based on the general approach of discursive pragmatism, I moved towards a conceptual analysis of the major positions in the world polity debate within the discourse of world order.

Third, I found visions of global democracy lacked a collective-self-narrative connected to a sense of belonging, that a world polity would practically require, particularly a democratic world polity. I argued furthermore that the liberal cosmopolitan vision of the community of humankind based on universal moral codes does not amount to a practical conception, because, even if we can accept that there are universal moral laws, what to make of them, as a world polity, is a distinct and overwhelming question without a further unifying narrative, because nothing is clear in laws themselves, as they nearly always avail multiple and often conflicting interpretations. I found the Kantian inspired visions of dialogue to be a helpful if not guaranteed means towards envisioning and realizing a world polity, but not the same thing as a world polity vision themselves.

Fourth, turning to critical visions of a world polity, I found they also struggled to articulate practical visions of unity, because the universal freedom and equality they strove to achieve also requires a further binding collective narrative, to inform what such freedoms and equalities are for, why and how they mean a larger belonging, to reconcile the innumerable and often conflicting aims and ideals such freedoms and equalities are rightfully demanded and used for. I found that the narrative and sense of belonging needed to overcome these limitations cannot be universally all-embracing across time and space, via neutral moral principles, but that it must necessarily have historically and normatively specific ideals and ambitions.

Fifth, I found the anti-foundationalist but ironically universal liberal-universalist outlook, connected to the vision of a global civil society, to be impractical as a collective-self-narrative for all humankind, because it is not nor will it be ascribed to by all humankind in a late modern world where liberal ideals and identities are one amongst many, representing a secularized Christian Western modernity in a world of multiple and non-liberal modernities resistant to its universal pretenses. There are many equally valid modern ways of life, liberalism being one amongst many. Across these encounters, I frequently found more promise in a trans-civilizational kind narrative, a bricolage narrative of narratives, which I suggested has a post-Western trans-civilizational quality in a late-modern context. I argued the realizable world polity, in a modern era, must chiefly involve a trans-*civilizational* narrative, because in modern times, civilization has been intricately connected to legitimacy in the modern discourse of world order. What it means to be modern, is often taken to be what it means to be civilized in modern times. This is why rising great powers are employing civilizational discourses as a form of soft power to legitimize their great power status and rival Western notions of modernity and civilization. In a modern context, civilization, as the mastery of technological power and "civilized" practices and worldviews, is imagined as the achievement of modernity. As such, civilization has become a source of legitimacy in the modern discourse of world order, as the language for the standards and hallmarks of human excellence and exemplariness.[491] Late modern civilization is global, but also plural.[492] The concept of civilization once used to legitimize European empire, has been appropriated by post-colonial peoples, in their 'systematic defense of the non-European

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[491] Gerrit W. Gong *The Standards of 'Civilization' in International Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984).
[492] Peter J. Katzenstein *Civilizations in World Politics: Plural and Pluralist Perspectives* (London: Routledge, 2009).

civilizations.'[493] Huntington's thesis of an impending "clash of civilizations" has been much critiqued, but it contained the insight that in a modern world, everyone wants 'to modernize but not to Westernize.'[494] Because "civilization" was the historical criterion of legitimacy in the modern discourse of world order, and so became a systematically appropriated concept by post-colonial peoples, legitimate standing as a world power is connected in late modern times not only to global democratic, human rights, and market standards of modernity, but also to civilizational distinctiveness and integrity, distinct ways of being modernly civilized, Japanese, Chinese, Indian, Russian, Iranian, and so on.[495] In late modern times, for there to be a world polity to support a unified world order, a "higher" trans-civilizational narrative is needed to legitimize it as a shared project for all humankind and all its civilizations. In a modern context where multiple modernities attain a common interrelatedness of modern experience and ambitions, I argued these narratives can, nonetheless, potentially form the larger narrative and sense of belonging in a global civilization of modernity, membership of which would entail the shared project of a trans-civilizational world polity.

Sixth, I qualified this finding, however, by examining the implications of ecological crisis and ecological consciousness, in a planetary-scale Gaia-marking Anthropocenic age, where a shared ambition of ecological wellbeing affects virtually all humankind and virtually all human endeavors. I argued against seeing this planetary politics of the common community of fate as eclipsing politics, erasing all division, from a post-political orbital perspective, but instead, with concessions to Bruno Latour's oeuvre, I argued "living together well" takes on a new ecological condition in an ecologically conscious age.

Lastly, considering the relation of these arguments, the image of a realizable world polity that I wrested from the conceptual investigations is the image of a world polity with a trans-civilizational but planetary ecological character, shaped by the common interrelatedness of modern experience of a new cosmopolitanism and "higher" notion of freedom and belonging. If the world polity were not realized with a trans-civilizational character, it would not get off the ground, because it would face too many detractors who would find it unacceptable to their

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[493] Aimé Cesairé *Discourse on Colonialism* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2000), p. 7.

[494] Samuel P. Huntington, 'The Clash of Civilizations?', *Foreign Affairs,* 72:3 (1993), p. 41.

[495] David P. Fidler, 'The Return of the Standard of Civilization', *Chicago Journal of International Law,* 2:1 (2001), pp. 137-157; Dimitrios Stroikos, 'Introduction: Rethinking the Standard(s) of Civilization(s) in International Relations', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies,* 42:3 (2014), pp. 546-556; Fred Dallmayr, M. Akif Kayapinar, and Ismail Yaylaci (eds.) *Civilizations and World Order: Geopolitics and Cultural Difference* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2014).

modern self-conceptions and ambitions. Yet, if the world polity was not also realized with an ecological component on a planetary level, then it would become overwhelmed by the practical consequences of uncontrolled climate change.

In effect, my arguments have not only explained what a world polity must be if it were to be realizable in late modern times, but also why there is no world polity, of a world order significant kind in this context, and why its emergence is highly unlikely. The realization of a world polity is unlikely partly due to the diffusion of systemic power and limited and mixed perceptions of systemic threats, but it is also unlikely because of the difficulty and complicated nature of imagining a realizable world polity in a late modern age with multiple modernities and civilizational cultures mobilized against universalist narratives and hierarchical authorities. This thesis is largely about finding the image of a realizable world polity, but its answer, by effect, is also about why there is no world polity and why it is highly unlikely. A trans-civilizational experience of modernity and the transformative implications of planetary ecological consciousness are the most defensible footholds for conceiving a realizable world polity today, I argue, but they are practically weak nonetheless. In practice, the power-political impetus to unification is not yet acute enough and the complex trans-civilizational planetary narrative is vulnerable to counter-interpretations by a simpler clash of civilizations narrative, even if that narrative is incoherent in theory.

8.2 The Insanity of Modernity?

The realization of a unified world polity, if imagined rightly, promises immense if inevitably imperfect benefits for humankind: more equitable distributions of wealth, greater inclusivity and solidarity on a global scale, the dismantling the hegemony and imperialism of the great powers over the small powers, the elimination of thermonuclear weapons amongst great powers, ecological wellbeing, and so on. Some point towards the system of the thermonuclear balance of terror and modern guerrilla warfare, as the main reasons for the absence of a unified world polity. Others point to the failure of the people to achieve a world revolution. These are only reasons for the absence of global conquest or revolution, and do not explain why a world federation or union would be resisted with modern weapons and further revolutions. The reason for the absence of a world polity is also in the realm of the modern mind. Rousseau pointed to

the cornucopia of political unity, where abundance, science, art, and moral human achievement would be liberated from the waste, moral corruption, and destruction of war and its perpetual threat. Rousseau concluded his response to L'Abbe St. Pierre's *Perpetual Peace* with the injunction that, if, 'this Plan', for unity, 'remains unexecuted, it is not because it is chimerical; it is because men are insane, and because it is a sort of folly to be wise in the midst of fools.'[496] All the modern dreamers of a future perpetual peace, Kant, Bentham, Marx, and all the modern dreamers of a final world state, Russell, Einstein, and so on, were sane rational thinkers, with the modern dream of a purely rational world of pristine ethics and world unity efficiently producing modern ambitions of humane peace, unlimited learning and prosperity. Rival dreams, however, are held by modern irrational thinkers, the dreamers of self-defined freedom and moral independence.[497] In a cutting essay, 'Wells, Hitler and the World State', George Orwell wrote of H.G. Wells, the dreamer of a world government and planetary Utopia, that he was, 'too sane to understand the modern world.'[498] Yet, modern rational sanity and irrational insanity are not in a contest of good and evil, with one potentially emerging triumphant. They are of the same modern world, inseparable, with a shared fate. As Theodore Adorno suggested, modern 'irrationality is not necessarily a force operative outside the range of rationality: it may result from the processes of rational self-preservation "run amuck."'[499] The forces of modern sanity and insanity, rationalism and irrationalism, are mutually culpable in the disasters of modernity, the barbarity of modern empire, modern gulags and genocides, two modern total wars on a world scale, nearly a third, runaway climate change. Modern humankind struggles to imagine a possible and desirable world polity, one that is sane, in modern rational terms, but also one that is meaningful, in modern irrational terms. Humankind is not insane, only modernly so. The modern imagination of a world polity enabled by modern outlooks is also constrained by them, giving modern visions their tendency towards either irrationally modern rationalism or rationally modern irrationalism. Struggling to conceive such a vision outside of paradox, the idea of a world polity is forced, in the modern mind, into the realms of utopia, dystopia, and retrotopia.

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[496] Jean-Jacques Rousseau *The Plan for Perpetual Peace* (Lebanon, NH: University Press of New England, 2005 [1760]), p. 49.

[497] Isaiah Berlin *The Magus of the North: J.G. Hamann and the Origins of Modern Irrationalism* (London: John Murray, 1993).

[498] George Orwell, 'Wells, Hitler and the World State', in *Critical Essays* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1946 [1941]).

[499] Theodore W. Adorno *The Stars Down to Earth and Other Essays on the Irrational in Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), p. 47.

At a more general level, it is a modern cosmology that makes modern rationalism and irrationalism possible and condemns the world polity to unreality and irrelevance. Cosmology and conceptions of humankind in the cosmos are the basis on which humankind imagines what a political order is, what it is for, how it is possible. For the ancient Egyptians, for instance, who conceived the earth as raised up from the primordial waters by *maat,* the maintenance of *maat* so to uphold the earth from the waters, became paramount as the basis of what an order is, and was easily made consistent with a unified order of upper and lower Egypt. By contrast, for the ancient Greeks who conceived the cosmos and the earth as made from chaos, in the primordial wars of gods, more variety of legitimate orders could be imagined, because only the fortunes of humans, and not the fate of the earth itself, rested on their order. For moderns, although there are multiple horizons, multiple modernities, secular horizons have been a prominent force in world affairs, shaping, for a time, both the liberal democratic West and communist East. Modern thinkers, Hobbes, Voltaire, Montesquieu, Kant, Marx and Lenin, Bentham, Rawls, Nussbaum, Habermas, Fraser and so on, all share the kernel of St. Simon's politics as the 'administration of things'; the rationally devised secular order, a clock work order, run by moral *calculemus*. Modern irrationalism has rebelled against this cosmological inference and is equally valid in a modern cosmos. Who is to say what is "rational", for me, or any one else, let alone all humankind, in this late modern age? This thinking is evinced by Herder, Hegel, Hiedegger, Arendt, amongst others, perhaps most clearly in Nietzsche, Foucault, Deleuze, Connolly.

Beyond theory, in the realm of practice, in a late modern context where everyone has been mobilized and rallied to defend their independent rights and freedoms, the "rational" forces for a world polity, the functionalist planners and world order modelers, are almost entirely routed and face nearly insurmountable obstacles and resistance to its realization in practice. Humankind has striven and to an extent has, built up a shared order, tying anarchy down, cross-stitching an international society together with diplomacy, peace through law, bureaucratically rational international organization, and free trade interdependence, edging towards cosmopolitan rules and norms.[500] But, the sovereign state, particularly in moments of power shifts and economic collapse, is susceptible to capture by pigheadedly principled modern irrationality, or by a more powerful modernly rational revolutionary vision. So the stitches of rational internationalism,

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[500] Andrew Hurrell *On Global Order: Power, Values, and the Constitution of International Society* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

which never have been tightly sewn, are snapped, with the flick of the sovereign's wrist. This is the pattern of recurrent world order crises in modern times: cross-stitching and collapse. It is why the globalist visions of our early third millennium have receded, just like the internationalist visions of the late 19th century, in Cobden and Ricardo, and again those doubly internationalist visions the inter-war years, the idealism of Alfred Zimmern and others, receded before the rise of nationalism and world war, just as the popular push for a world government after the Second World War sunk beneath the rise of the Cold War. The tide of world affairs will provide the dream of a world polity another chance in future, but if it is to succeed, it must reconcile modern rationalism and irrationalism, rallying all those populations that have been galvanized with nationalist and religious meaning, around a larger uniting trans-civilizational planetary narrative, so to constitute a new shared sense of a larger belonging and collective identity.

8.3 The Prospects for Unity

Is humankind hopelessly modern? The disillusioned idealist Richard Falk has recently been brought to ask, 'Does the human species wish to survive?'[501] He suggests humankind needs to adopt a global imaginary, leaving behind the national horizons of desire, for the planetary and species horizons of a world society. He takes the meaning of "world society" too uncritically however, assuming its possibility of realization, never fully exploring what its historical contents are, what it means to its historical participants, often deferring the question to a democratic means of defining it, with "globalization from below". Yet, if the vision of a world polity comes from above or below, from one part of the world or another, it needs to be clarified, eventually, in theory or in practice, one way or another. I have striven in this study to clarify this question, searching the family of world polity conceptions for a realizable vision.

The answers I have found are thin, nowhere as unshakeable as those ancient cosmologically based narratives of the Stoics, Egyptians, etc.. World order legitimacy in a late modern era is not derived from divine mandate. A world polity project in this context is not a new tower of Babel, gaining legitimacy and unity from a proximity to the divine; the legitimacy and unity of a world polity, in a late modern context, is tied not only to its ability to produce the material and political fruits of modern civilization, health, prosperity, etc., but also its ability to

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[501] Richard Falk *Power Shift: On the New Global Order* (London: Zed, 2016), p. 253.

connect these things to the pursuit of multiple and multiplicitous modern political ways of life. The idea of a trans-civilizational world polity emphasizing ecological wellbeing is a reconciliation of these twin demands of humankind in a late modern age, where everyone wants to modernize but not to Westernize. No matter from what tradition a world polity vision is devised today, it must involve trans-civilizational and ecological components to be practically realizable in the contemporary context. This follows because, in a shared modern context, no universal narrative can be legitimately or practically imposed on the rest. It is the empire of modernity that makes the world polity seem impossible and suspect, but I have attempted to argue that the practically possible world polity, within a modern context, is not unimaginable entirely, even if its practical realization in a new global covenant is highly unlikely. Diversity of interpretations, and thereby likelihood of conflicting interpretations, rises with the number of participants, and the world polity as the largest of polities, will involve the largest diversity of interpretation and thereby, conflict. Yet, finding a sense of shared collective identity is the most feasible way to realize the world polity, because a shared belief in belonging together, of mutual commitment to being in-it-together, is a basis for finding terms and practices of living together well. Conflicts in practice become more practical even technical questions, not mortal differences, where there is a shared sense of belonging partly constituted by a shared collective-self-narrative. Difference and disagreement on the best practice of politically significant practices like secularism, democracy, and economics, and world order in general, are more resolvable and not implacable, because transvaluations are possible and commitment to binding decisions on them is attainable, where there is a commitment to living together well, based on a shared sense of belonging together.

8.4 A World Polity Beyond Modernity?

What of a new cosmology and new social imaginary, beyond modernity? Why not explore the world polity beyond modernity, if it is a late modern world that constrains and problematizes the imagination of a world polity? Why devote so much exploration to the modern discourse of a world polity, if a world beyond modernity might be more hospitable to realizing the world polity idea?

What does a world beyond modernity mean? Ulrich Beck argued humankind has entered a "second modernity", a cosmopolitan and planetary modernity, and this is not entirely inaccurate, but it is a continuation of modernity, not a departure.[502] It is the world in which a trans-civilizational but planetary world polity can make sense. Post-modern thought suggests that belief in modernity is over, and this is not entirely inaccurate either.[503] Progress is a myth, we all see today, and belief in an achievable utopia is a dead possibility, hence the preeminence of dystopian and retrotopian thought in late modern culture. There are shifts in the modern imaginary, amongst them, post-Western shifts, I suggested. Post-modernity is a shift *in* language games, not a change *of* language games.[504] Post-modernity is still modernity in its cosmological dimensions, where Einstein's cosmos forms a common, if not universal, modern picture. Post-modernity is largely what I have been calling a late modernity. It is not a world beyond modernity. By a world beyond modernity, I primarily mean a new epoch with a new view of the cosmos and a re-conception of what humankind is and can be. Modernity has been socially constructed and so an alternative world could in principle be constructed. The trans-civilizational and ecological vision I have advanced represents a partial reimagining *in* modernity, but not a departure from modernity itself. A total reimagining *of* what an order is and what it means to form a polity might be a more effective way to imagine and realize a legitimate world polity, in the long run, if such things could be so radically reimagined.

How might such shifts of social imaginaries occur and what might they usher in? In approaching this question, it needs to be recognized that "seeing" beyond modernity is epistemically questionable. The activity wanders in the realm of futurology and science fiction. What an alternative epoch could be or how it would arise is unclear and wildly speculative. Bruno Latour's position that we were never modern, because modernity is imaginary, phenomenological, has some merits, if we accept his materialist premises, but, regardless, it is not so easy to stop being modern.[505] A speech act of declaring "not modern", is not powerful enough and must be followed by an answer of what we are, if not modern. Major shifts are needed to ground new answers, unavoidable transformations of fundamental outlooks, of the

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[502] Ulrich Beck *The Cosmopolitan Vision* (Cambridge: Polity, 2006).

[503] James Der Derian and Michael J. Shapiro (eds.) *International/Intertextual Relations: Postmodern Readings of World Politics* (New York: Lexington Books, 1989).

[504] Jean-Francois Lyotard *The Post-Modern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1979).

[505] Bruno Latour *We Have Never Been Modern* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993).

kind made by Galileo and Darwin, for instance, transforming who, when, what, and why, we are. A working theory of consciousness, for instance, might have a transformative effect on modern culture. Depending on what a working theory of consciousness reveals about human beings and collective life, it might illuminate new conceptions of humankind and order. Ecological crisis, perhaps most forcefully, is enabling a post-human imaginary, where nature and culture are indistinct, where ecological wellbeing and social wellbeing are indistinct. Yet, the modern conception of order and wellbeing is not entirely transformed by these post-human outlooks, only reshaped, beyond its anthropocentric conception, giving things agency too, not overcoming the vision of order as a collaboration of agents. There are also changes in the time/spatial dimensions in which modernity is imagined, although not to an extent that transforms modernity itself. We might look to quantum cosmology, but that is really only a working through of Einstein's cosmos, deepening down, to unexpected and novel results of entanglement, but still a working through, not really a break or transition. Astronomy is also expanding human horizons of spatial imagination. The spherical globe has preoccupied the stage of the modern spatial imagination since at least the 19th century, and the planetary image of orbital and atmospheric horizons took the stage in the 20th, but the 21st century is finding more and more inter-planetary and inter-stellar horizons, in Martian colonization, and identification of thousands of Earth-like planets, however distant. There are only technological obstacles to the inter-planetary and inter-stellar expansion of humankind. This still impossible possibility is nonetheless having a significant effect on imagined possibilities of human polities. This expansion of spatial horizons however does not really transform when and who is collaborating in imagined orders, only where. The identification of an advanced alien civilization would likely reshape and revise modern assumptions in crucial respects, opening up unimaginable vistas of what an order is and can become. The implications of that event are unpredictable, but likely transformative.

The fusion of human beings and technology, with genetic engineering and digital consciousness, may be producing a variant of modernity, especially if it enables new forms of collective consciousness, but it would be a variant, a continuation, shaped by and shaping the collaborative modern picture into new technologically enabled dimensions. There are increasing notions of a "smart planet", as well, where everything and everyone is integrated into "smart" technology. In connection to this, in the rise of artificial intelligence, there is a possibility of a significant shift, where human participation in order is less self-directed, and guided by the

greater intelligences of machines, potentially self-conscious machines. The basic pictures of what an order is and how it is made would shift, depending on the powers unleashed by AI governance. The modern picture of order would be settled, in the sediment of history, where a variety of new pictures would take the stage. The variety of modernities would not incorporate AI governance in a single way, because different modern cultural traditions would marshal different reasons and ambitions for adopting AI governance. Modernity is not uniform or universal, neither is it unchanging, but candidates for its replacement or displacement are still barely evident. The keys and doors out of the iron cage of modernity are not entirely apparent. The collapse of modernity, perhaps in a thermonuclear war, would be an invalidation of modernity, creating the basis for the formulation of new horizons. Anything that followed modernity, however, would be constructed out of the rubble of modernity, never making a perfect break from the cultural horizons of modernity.

The major problem with the question of a world polity beyond modernity is that it is a modern question, contingent on modern temporalities. If the world beyond modernity is beyond modern imagination, being itself a modern question, then waiting for such a world would be costly and unnecessary if we can imagine a realizable world polity within modern horizons. I do not mean to be overly alarmist, and argue the world polity must be achieved or humankind is doomed. The international system might survive by the skin of its teeth, as it were, by greening and muddling through diplomatically, avoiding general war, and stabilizing the global economy. But, there are genuine existential threats and systemic injustices raised by the technologically advanced system of states that could be alleviated with the formation of a world polity beyond hegemony and anarchy. The aims of stability and prosperity could be far more powerfully achieved by a unified world. Most people I discuss these questions with seem to scarcely be able to conceive how limited our international world is, hardly grasping the degrees of human potential that a united world represents. Yet, as difficult as it is to imagine, the vision of a trans-civilizational planetary polity represents a better modernity than the international instantiation of modernity. There may be technological fixes to our technologically enabled but modernly shaped global problems, climate silver bullets and unlimited energy supply perhaps, which might make an alternative world order proposal unnecessary, although I have my doubts. Technological fixes may likely produce new problems and moreover there are new technological problems on the horizon. Artificial intelligence, A.I., if weaponized in a state-centric world order, would in the

long term pose a further threat to humankind, for instance, unless carefully regulated against its military application. The modern international imaginary underpinning the modern state-centric world order matters to humankind, enabling the imagination of collective lives in a pluralistic multi-national world order, but it also corrupts humankind, morally, socially, culturally, and technologically, estranging citizens from foreigners and warping science around war powers. Attempts to overcome these corruptions by re-ordering international society form a graveyard. Mazzini's internationalist dream is largely relegated to the ruins of the calamities and failed world order schemes of the 20th and early 21st centuries. The vision of Kant's democratic federation of nations is finding its practical limits in neo-imperial democratic regime change, where a "separate peace" arms against zones of war. The modern international imaginary, is, to a great extent, behind this persistent disorder and contributes to the absence of a world polity today. Yet, a practically achievable world polity is not impossible, or entirely unimaginable; it is only unlikely, largely because it is a difficult to imagine and difficult to achieve ambition, within the horizons of a late modern context.

Epilogue.

Sketching a "Sociological International Political Theory"

This thesis has an amphibious character. It moves between international sociology and international political theory. Several IR scholars have produced similarly amphibious-like texts, crossing between the sociology of norms and normative evaluation of social norms. I have in mind such scholars as Stanley Hoffman and Hedley Bull, amongst others in earlier generations, as well as a good number more in the current context.[506] This species of approach is distinct from purely normative work, Charles Bietz's *Political Theory and International Relations,* for instance. That purely normative kind of text aims at clarifying legitimate international norms, in spite of what international norms exist empirically. The purely "theoretical" text (think Kenneth Waltz *Theory of International Politics*)*,* is different as well, sticking to the sociological theory of international structures and processes, sometimes venturing into prescription based on insights into patterns of change and outcomes, but not normative evaluation as such. It can be suggested that what makes the amphibious texts possible is the position that the history of ideas matters for practice, and that, therefore, the ideas of IR scholars matter for practice, when ideas from practice are refined in theory, or ideas developed in theory, find their way to practice. An underlying notion here is that the idea refined or developed in theory can clarify what norms and institutional orders are possible in a sociological context, viz. a clarified understanding of their range of interpretation and implications for practice in that context.

When Martin Wight wrote his essay, 'Why is There No International Theory?', he meant why is there no international political theory, why is the question of the good society of states lacking the systematic study afforded to the good state?[507] Yet, in that earlier period of IR scholarship, Wight could have just as easily asked why there is no sociology of international society equivalent to the sociology of society? International theory was under developed in general at the time, being a growing mix of contributions from international law, geography,

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[506] Stanley Hoffman, 'International Relations: The Long Road to Theory', *World Politics,* 11:3 (1959), pp. 346-377; Hedley Bull, 'International Theory: The Case for a Classical Approach', *World Politics,* 18:3 (1966), pp. 361-377.

[507] Martin Wight, 'Why is There No International Theory?' in Herbert Butterfield and Martin Wight (eds.) *Diplomatic Investigations: Essays in the Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1966), pp. 17-34.

history, and other relevant disciplinary sources.[508] Today, the literature is much different.[509] Normative international political theory has become a large literature and sociological approaches are gaining speed.[510] But, what of the amphibious variety? Recent generations of "English School" scholars continue to produce these kinds of studies. At least one Constructivist, Richard Price, has explicitly called for more connection between the study of norms and normative theory. Price has argued that Constructivism is particularly well placed to explore the normative dilemmas and implications that arise from and are involved in constructing changes to norms.[511] Feminist, Post-Colonial, Critical, and Post-Structuralist theory, steadily advancing since the 1980s, has the largest literature and widest ranging number of studies imbricating sociological and normative analysis.[512] These different lines of research, while being distinct strains of IR literature, nonetheless form a common front and potential grand alliance against those with narrowly positivist assumptions about theory vs. practice and those that too rigidly categorize normative theory apart from the theory of norms and vice versa.

I do not want to explore the precise relation between theory and practice. What I want to do here is to consider the way forward and offer a sketch of a "Sociological International Political Theory" (SIPT). How can the various trends and literatures I identified above be cohered and advanced as a common front, a general movement, or meta-approach? A common feature of the currents of amphibious-like IR research is that it they commonly bring norms under normative evaluation and bring normative evaluation under the empirical study of norms. Robert Nozick once claimed '*Normative* sociology' is, 'the study of what the causes of problems

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[508] Nicolas Guilhot (ed.), *The Invention of International Relations Theory: Realism, the Rockefeller Foundation and the 1954 Conference on Theory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011); William C. Olson, 'The Growth of a Discipline' in Brian Porter (ed.) *The Aberystwyth Papers: International Politics 1919-1969* (London: Oxford University Press, 1972), pp.3-29.

[509] Duncan Snidal and Alexander Wendt, 'Why there is International Theory Now', *International Theory,* 1:1 (2009), pp. 1-14.

[510] Chris Brown *International Society, Global Polity: An Introduction to International Political Theory* (London: Sage, 2015); Iver B. Neumann, 'International Relations as a Social Science', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies,* 43:1 (2014), pp. 330-350; Justin Rosenberg, 'International Relations in the Prison of Political Science', *International Relations,* 30:2 (2016), pp. 127-153; Justin Rosenberg, 'Confessions of a Sociolator', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies,* 44:2 (2016), pp. 292-299.

[511] Richard M. Price (ed.) *Moral Limits & Possibility in World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Richard M. Price, 'Moral Limit and Possibility in World Politics', *International Organization,* 62:2 (2008), pp. 191-220; See the special forum on *Moral Limit and Possibility in World Politics,* in *International Theory,* 4:3 (2012).

[512] Chris Brown, 'On Our Side? Critical Theory and International Relations', in Richard Wynn-Jones (ed.), *Critical Theory and World Politics* (Boulder, CO: Lynn Rienner, 2000), pp. 191-204.

ought to be.'[513] This is not quite accurate, however, with respect to what I am sketching. It is better to say that it is the study of how the normative purposes of international norms are best understood and practiced. It is sociological because it explores the social relations that norms are applied to, and it is normative, because it explores the normative implications of the different ways those norms are understood and practiced. Cohering the English School, Constructivist, and C/critical literatures noted above into a general agenda means recognizing that they are commonly raising these kinds of questions about how the normative purposes of international norms are best understood and practiced. Advancing this common front means exploring what insights can be developed from its kind of study in general.

A small but potentially helpful step towards the growth of a sociological international political theory is a new Aristotelian taxonomy of international systems. IR has developed decent taxonomies. Sociological taxonomies are based on hierarchies. Martin Wight made the distinction between sovereign and suzerain systems.[514] The language of anarchy and hierarchy provided by Kenneth Waltz matches onto it, with suzerain systems being hierarchical and sovereign systems being anarchical, analytically speaking.[515] Another taxonomy, also first developed by Martin Wight, distinguishes international systems based on the outlook and behaviour of the participants, ranging in a spectrum from a Hobbesian international system, shaped by an outlook of fear and insecurity, to a Lockean or Grotian international society with a cooperative outlook, and onto a Kantian world society systemic outlook.[516] However, these two kinds of taxonomic criteria, structure and outlook/behaviour, have not been properly combined yet. In this respect, I want to suggest that to advance the general insights of what I am calling "sociological international political theory", an Aristotelian style taxonomy of international systems can illuminate a universe of cases for study. Aristotle's *Politics* Book III provided the classic taxonomy of governments for political science, based on the number of rulers and whose interests the polity was governed for, which clarified the distinction between kings and tyrants, aristocracies and oligarchies, etc.. A comparable table for IR would be based on degrees of

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[513] Robert Nozick *Anarchy, State, and Utopia* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1974), p. 247.

[514] Martin Wight *Systems of States* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1977), ch. 1.

[515] Kenneth N. Waltz *Theory of International Politics* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1979), ch. 5, 6.

[516] Martin Wight *International Theory: The Three Traditions* Gabriele Wight and Brian Porter eds. (London: Leicester University Press, 1991); Hedley Bull *The Anarchical Society: A Study of Order in World Politics* 3rd Ed. (New York: Palgrave, 2002 [1977]), ch. 2; Alexander Wendt *Social Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 254.

hierarchy and whose interests the international system was ordered for. The table below exhibits this logic:

Benefiting Interests:

World Government	World Empire
Hegemony	Imperium
Concert of Powers	Oligopoly of Powers
Society of States	System of States

Degrees of Hierarchy: (label positioned to the left of the table)

Working off of the old distinction emphasized by Hedley Bull, between a "society of states" and a "system of states", the former is ordered in the common interests of the states in general and the latter, a "system of states", is ordered for the benefit of the individual states, but not the states in general.[517] One degree of hierarchy up, "a concert of powers", is an international system ordered for the benefits of the system in general, but through great power management. What I have dubbed an "oligopoly of powers", is a system ordered for the benefits of the great powers, via their shared dominance of it. "Hegemony", connecting to but not necessarily following the literature of hegemonic stability theory, means a system ordered for the benefit of the system in general, where an "imperium" is a system ordered for the benefits of a unipolar power. At the highest degree of hierarchy, is a world government contrasted with a world empire, ordered, again, for the benefit of the system or the ruling portion of it.

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[517] The English School pluralist solidarist distinction could potentially be applied here, because it conveys a similar distinction, although it has been applied to the society of states category and not reconciled with the system of states category. I am avoiding the pluralist solidarist language because it is overly complicated and is losing its utility as a distinction in the English School literature because the two terms are less and less able to be distinguished and are increasingly becoming constellations of distinctions, with substantial overlap, rather one neat and simple distinction. See, Barry Buzan *An Introduction to the English School of International Relations: The Societal Approach* (London: Sage, 2014), Part III.

No reality matches the categories of a taxonomy perfectly, but with this simple table a universe of cases is illuminated for analysis with a sociological international political theory approach that can analyze the normative purposes and normatively best practice of different international orders. The world polity, as I have envisioned it in the above thesis, occupies the top left of the table, the "world government", with a maximal hierarchy ordered for the benefit of all the units in the system. We can also see how one of the most interesting questions for the contemporary system for instance, has been the question of its "imperium" versus "hegemonic" character. With a relative decline of US power, however, to what extent is the system sliding towards a "concert of great powers", or more towards an "oligopolistic system", a new "hegemony", perhaps all the way down to the general insecurity and self-help of a "system of states", or is it moving towards a mix of these categories? How are the shifts in the normative purposes of shifting international norms best understood and practiced? And, if power is diffusing in the system, and if a world government is highly unlikely and practically difficult to achieve in a modern context, as the present thesis has argued, then what are the socially constructed but also normative dimensions of hegemonic transition? It is exploring these kinds of questions, about how the normative purposes of international norms are best understood and practiced, which are opened up by the amphibious species of study we might like to call "sociological international political theory".

Appendix I: Predominant Visions in the Contemporary World Polity Debate

Traditions	Liberal Cosmopolitan		Critical Theory		Global Civil Society	Space Ship Gaia	
Outlook	Neo-Kantian		Post-Marxist		Weberian Neo-Liberal	Planetary Ecological	
Sub-traditions	Moral Universalist	Cultural Pluralist	Critical	critical	-	Ecological Scientific	Ecological Post-Human
World Order Problem	Democratic Rights, Poverty, and Indignity	Conflicting Cultural Identities and Practices	Oppression and Exploitation		War and Political Oppression	Ecological Crisis	
World Order Purpose	Global Democracy, Distributive Justice	Tolerance and Coexistence	Emancipation		Global Liberties and Rights Solidarities	Environmental Management	Environmental Harmony
Sources of a World Polity	Common Moral Background of Rights and Duties		Global Socio-Economic Structures		Modern Trans-National Rationalities	Common Planetary Habitat	
Thinkers	Nussbaum Pogge Beitz B. Barry Brock Risse Caney Held Archibugi Cabrera Singer	Appiah Waldron G.W. Brown	Linklater Habermas Fraser Agamben Hardt and Negri	Gilroy Mbembe Shani Ling and Agathangelou	Kaldor Keane Benhabib Frost	Ward Sagan Boulding Lovelock Falk	Latour Connolly Bartelson Chakrabarty
World Order Proposal	Cosmopolitan Global Democracy		Post-Westphalian World Polity		Global Governance Global Polity	Scientific Planetary Polity	Planetary Parliament of Things

Appendix II: Key Terminology

World Polity: A supra-polity of all humankind, with a collective identity legitimating a united and authoritative structure having the ability to organize and distribute resources.

World System: The social, political, and economic relations of humankind on a worldwide scale.

Belonging: The shared embodied sense of "fitting in", with a "weness" feeling accompanying a sense of being understood as a part of a polity, which imparts common sympathies and solidarity across a population.

Collective-Self-Narrative: The historically specific discursive contents of a sense of belonging that has a narrative structure applied to a population.

Collective Identity: The combination of a discursive collective-self-narrative and an embodied sense of belonging across a population.

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