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POLITICAL SCIENCE ■

Empathy at the Intersections of Care: Articulating a Critical Approach to the Ethics of International Development

Diego de Merich

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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 in it).

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With the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) set to expire in 2015, focus has turned to a new framework which might replace them. Heavily influenced by the Human Capabilities Approach (HCA), the MDGs reflected a relatively static, liberal understanding of what 'human development' is meant to signify (prioritising notions of freedom, individual capability and justice). Not an evaluation of the MDGs *per se*, this project suggests instead that critical reflection on the ethical underpinnings of any approach is key to articulating a future vision for development. I argue for a contrasting line of ethical thought, the ethics of care (which prioritise notions of context, vulnerability and relationship), suggesting how it could be more fully embodied in development practices. I further suggest that an emphasis on human empathy would serve to strengthen the values of responsibility and responsiveness which care (and development) ethicists champion.

To this end, I first describe the ethical context (the HCA) within which the MDGs have operated; I then challenge its rationalistic or agentic biases and highlight the importance of human vulnerability, relationship and trust. I outline key elements of care theory (responsibility to 'the other', relational agency and 'context') and further argue that empathy should take a more central place in it. I finally describe empathy in practice (i.e. those programmes which foster empathic learning and understanding) and empathy in promise (by combining lessons drawn from the discussions above with deliberative democratic theory). Across these connected arguments, therefore, I describe a collaborative-expressive, praxeological ethics of international development; an ethics based in expressed need over abstract right, in the pluralism of development goals, in empathic deliberation on these needs and goals, and in the fostering of relationships of care and trust; necessary for any meaningful, future vision of human development – of 'self' and 'distant other' – to take form.

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1. LOCATING LEGACIES, EMPHASISING ETHICS – PROSPECTS FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AFTER THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

... Development is no abstraction, but a historical reality situated in time and place. Consequently, before analysing its goals and its nature as a change process, one must identify the context or matrix within which change occurs (Goulet 1971: 13).

...after many decades of development, we are rediscovering the obvious – that people are both the means and the end of economic development. Often this simple truth gets obscured because we are used to talking in abstractions, in aggregates, in numbers (Haq 1995: 3).

1.1) Ethical Call and Critical Response: Situating the MDGs

As most introductory texts to international development make clear, while precise definitions can be offered to capture the nature of ‘economic modernisation’ or ‘industrialisation’, ‘direct foreign investment’ or ‘micro-lending practices’, the concept of ‘development’ itself, is rarely made clear. Given the vast number of ‘official’ adjectives used to further define the concept – ‘over-’, ‘under-’, ‘post-’, ‘good’, ‘bad’, ‘sustainable’, ‘gender-conscious’, etc. – the simplest conclusion is that development means different things to different people or to different positions of authority. The paradox is that while it is a concept which defies definition it is also often understood (at the global level) as the ‘central guiding concept of our time’, with every national government and the United Nations itself having its own development agencies (Cowen and Shenton 1995: 27). Perhaps even less clear, as a result, is a guiding definition for Development ‘ethics’. In fact, so ubiquitous is the term in most texts published on the topic in the past thirty years, that it becomes difficult to differentiate between theory and practice, methods and approaches, ethical theory and bureaucratic process.

What does however become clear, when teasing out the underlying threads of any number of these theories, is an understanding of both the history and trajectory of

their individual lines of thought within Development discourses. The combination of early economic modernization schemes of the 1960s, for example, combined with economic crisis in the 1970s, meant that some ethical voices (perhaps early harbingers of the human development projects of today) went largely ignored until picked up again in the works of Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum among others. The basic understanding of ‘development’ as ‘how people can live as judged by a range of human values’ – a vague but unchallenged definition – only became much more visible and influential when it was taken up by a network led by a well-situated and charismatic politician and economist (Mahbub ul Haq¹), in partnership with another famous economist (Amartya Sen), operating through a ‘favourable combination of circumstances’ (Gasper and St. Clair, xxix). So, while the economic writings of Louis-Joseph Lebret² in the 1950s and Denis Goulet in the 1960s clearly made reference to other (or similar) values, aspirations and ethical behaviour in Development before the Haq-Sen partnership, their theories were overlooked in favour of a different constellation of ideas, goals and visions. It would be instructive, I suggest, to consider (in the case of Goulet especially) those early writings, to determine which other points of emphasis might well have been hidden beneath the current dominant discourses. Where current writings focus on ‘human dignity’ (Haq 1995: 19), for example, Goulet referred instead to the centrality of ‘human vulnerability’ (Goulet 1971: 38). In both cases, the ‘human’ is prioritised – understood not as an aggregate outcome of the success or failure of various development policies. The different focus or salience given to particular terms, however, can be shown to lead to quite different ethical theories and responses.

¹ Influential Pakistani economist, game theorist and once Finance minister of Pakistan (1985-1988), he was most noted as the founder of the *Human Development Reports*, an annual report published by the UNDP, charting the progress (not purely economic) of developing countries. The premise of the reports, as defined by ul-Haq himself, is that Development is meant to offer people choices; not simply access to income, but also long life, knowledge, political freedom, personal security, community participation and guaranteed human rights (see UNDP 1990, foreword).

² French post-war economist and member of the Dominican order, he was the first to coin the term development *ethics* (‘une éthique du développement’, see Lebret 1963), introducing it both to the Catholic Church and to Western European economic policy debates. Mentor to Denis Goulet (whose writings form the critical basis for my own project), Lebret founded the research centre *Économie et Humanisme* in 1941, where his goal was to articulate a ‘humanistic approach to national and international development’ (see Gasper 2008, 455), whose the guiding principle was that development should be for ‘all people and for the whole person’ [*pour tous les hommes et pour tout l’homme*] (see Goulet 2000, 34).

To date, the Human Development Approach, which contains the capabilities approaches (HCA)³ of both Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum, represents *the* ethical grounding for much of the political agenda in international policy circles with regard to Development. In fact both the MDGs and the Right to Development programmes find their ethical basis in many of the writings of Sen and Nussbaum. For Sen, human development requires ‘advancing the richness of human life, rather than the richness of the economy in which human beings live’ (see Shaikh 2007, 4). Key to this ethical understanding of human development is a prioritisation of ‘fairness’, ‘freedom’ and ultimately human ‘flourishing’. In fact, in reading Sen’s work on Development and human rights within the context of his later treatise on justice (Sen 2009), it becomes clear that the values of human development are firmly couched in the language of ‘justice as fairness’, with the increasing of capabilities as the primary vehicle for achieving this justice. At the same time, however, in recognising the potentially ‘totalising’ effect of a discourse on the perceived success or failure of a project, initiative or agenda, it is worth taking Gasper and St. Clair’s astute observation (p. 9, above) as an invitation to consider which alternate or competing narratives might well have been present or circulating before the ‘winning out’ of the MDG and RTD narratives. While in recent years, some scholars have asserted that, from a social science perspective, development ethics or even development studies constitutes a new discipline (Clark 2002), there are notable examples of pioneers in the field who for decades have provided thoughtful insight into the meaning of the concept, its limitations and political or ideological implications, but whose work has not achieved the policy prominence of other theorists.

While the economic and contractual tools used for international foreign aid and development have seen a number of permutations since the middle of the 20th century, in the broadest of senses the stated moral-philosophical underpinning for such interventions seems to have remained constant. From President Truman’s inaugural address (the so-called “Point Four” speech) in 1949, to the more recent UN Millennium Development Goals, the notion that economic assistance to under-developed States was a ‘*moral*’ action that embodied a vision of international peace and prosperity’

³ I use ‘capabilities approach’, the ‘Human Capabilities Approach’, the capabilities approach and HCA interchangeably throughout this study, opting for the plural only when drawing comparison between the two principal variants of the approach, Nussbaum and Sen (see Chapter 2).

(Hattori 2003: 229), has dominated such discourses. In practice, from Rosenstein-Rodan's *big push* model⁴ or the post-war Marshall Plan – involving large-scale direct capital investments in developing economies – to more recent calls for debt elimination, the moral voice has appeared to crystallize around the simplistic notion that development is realized through the reduction of poverty, or by 'making poverty history.' Consistently, the operationalization of development discourses has been based on the premise that 'through economic growth and modernization *per se*, dualism and associated income and social inequalities which reflected it would be eliminated' (Thorbecke 2000: 19). The legal parallel to this economic equation, inspired by a Kantian recognition of the universal principle of public law, has led to a tendency in international policy discourses (and primarily through the voice of the United Nations) to view development as a 'right' of individuals. As an iteration of cosmopolitan law, 'development as right' is intended to 'secure the conditions for an associative community that could co-operatively pursue the conditions of human development' (Anderson-Gold 2001: 107).

Some have problematized this recent trend toward human rights justifications for international development, by pointing to the tension between national foreign policy interests and stated human rights intentions (Barratt 2008). Others, in pointed criticism of the neo-liberal Washington Consensus, describe a 'culture' of development which 'despite progress in some areas (with increased focus on gender and human rights, for example), persists with a way of relating to developing countries that is at once arrogant and patronizing, and at the same time self-interested and short-sighted' (Glennie 2009: 364). For its part, the United Nations, in its Millennium Declaration (UN 2000), stated that:

- "no individual and no nation must be denied the opportunity to benefit from development" (Sec I: 6);
- it will spare no effort to promote "respect for all internationally recognized human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to development" (Sec V: 24);

⁴ In development economics, and in its most basic form, the 'big push' model referred to large investment of capital in developing economies so as to generate wide-scale industrialisation. The reasoning behind this approach, championed by economist Paul Rosenstein-Rodan, was that smaller or incremental investment would lead to wastage of resources and individual firms clinging to traditional (rather than modern) methods of production. Unless sector-wide investments were made, incentives to modernise would be limited (see Misra and Puri 2010, 218-221).

- it is committed to “making the *right to development* a reality for everyone and to freeing the entire human race from want [...by promoting...] generous development assistance, especially to countries that are genuinely making an effort to apply their resources to poverty reduction” (Sec III: 11, my emphasis).

In essence, then, the moral imperative for intervention in international development is predicated on the universal application of liberal justice (rights), coupled with a simplistic economic remedy (poverty reduction or ‘official development assistance’ - ODA).

Within this narrow framework, then, heated debate on the efficacy of these measures abounds. Jeffrey Sachs and Christian Schabbel point to the historical effectiveness of ODA in helping to eliminate the trap of endemic poverty (Sachs 2005; Schabbel 2001). William Easterly and Dambisa Moyo question the very existence of such a “trap,” polemicize State-driven planning of official assistance and argue that ODA *is* the problem because it has created a culture of dependency (Easterly 2008; Moyo 2009). The only solution, they argue, is to stop foreign aid altogether and to rely instead on a free-market system of business investment, currently exemplified by China’s interventions in Africa. Jonathan Glennie, instead, challenges the neo-liberal solutions advocated by Moyo and Easterly but *also* argues for far less money to be sent to Africa. Bristling at Prime Minister Tony Blair’s description of the G8s relationship with the developing world as one based on ‘charity,’ Glennie posits that ‘good old-fashioned exploitation remains a dominant feature as well’ (Glennie 2008: 137). So if the sum result of human rights justifications in development discourse and practice leads to declamations of ‘dependency’ on the one hand and cultural ‘condescension’ on the other, how then can the moral imperative of human rights – based as it is on a Western, historically-situated understanding of liberal justice – ever be expected to succeed at advancing the goals of development? And if it cannot ultimately succeed, what possible other moral or ethical framework would serve as a better starting point upon which to build international development policies?

These questions, or possible answers to them, are made all the more pressing, by the fact that 2015 will mark the conclusion of the Millennium Development Goals project. Initiated in 2000, the MDGs were meant to recognise a growing consensus and shift in thought to the understanding that ‘poverty’ represents a state of

‘multidimensional human suffering’ (Fukida-Parr 2011: 126). Centred around eight goals, with attendant targets, the MDGs have sought to:

- 1) Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger
- 2) Achieve Universal Primary Education
- 3) Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women
- 4) Reduce Child Mortality
- 5) Improve Maternal Health
- 6) Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other Diseases
- 7) Ensure Environmental Sustainability
- 8) Create a Global Partnership for Development

Countless studies have been written in the intervening years to evaluate the successes, failures and difficulties caused by the implementation of this ‘targets’ framework in developing countries. From doubts on whether the MDGs could even be applied to all contexts (Haines and Cassels 2005; Easterly 2009); to specific plans for how they might best be achieved (Travis et al. 2004; Sachs and McArthur 2005; UNMP 2005); their connection to current human rights frameworks (Alston 2005); sober assessment of specific targets such as maternal health, infant mortality or TB reduction schemes (Lozano et al. 2011; Uplekar et al. 2006); on questions pertaining to infrastructure (Leipziger et al. 2003; Fay et al. 2005) or on specific strategies such as finance-sourcing for target achievement (Cheru and Bradford 2005; Addison and Mavrotas 2007), detailed reports have passed judgement, offered praise or called for hope that the goals might eventually be realised. For its part, the United Nations maintains a hopeful but realistic stance with regard to the MDGs, identifying key indicators of success and suggesting three means by which to carry the project to completion in 2015 and then beyond. Poverty and hunger have been reduced, those living on less than \$1.25 per day fell by over half; the proportion of under-nourished people in developing regions fell from 23.2% in 1990 to 14.9% in 2010-2012; the number of children out of primary school has been halved; new HIV infections have declined by 21%; in many developing contexts, however, girls are denied the right to education and gender-based violence continues to blight any conceivable notion of progress toward goal 3; child mortality (children dying under the age of 5) has been reduced by 41%, far short of the 2/3 target

envisioned; and the improved access to clean water sources and sanitation to 200 million slum dwellers was actually double the original target (SecGen 2013: 5-6).

But to step back for a moment from the din of countless progress reports and ideological battles of will over how best to 'deal with poverty', I suggest that it is in returning to the underlying ethical justification and approach contained within the goals, targets and tentative conclusions of the MDGs and Human Development reports, that the most insight can be gained with respect to the 'simple' questions: 'What is Development?', 'Why are we engaged in it?', 'What is its *end*?', and 'How do we best pursue that *end*?' Sen's response is equally simple and compelling:

...'the ends and means of development call for placing the perspective of freedom at the centre of the stage. The people have to be seen, in this perspective, as being actively involved – given the opportunity – in shaping their own destiny, and not just as passive recipients of the fruits of cunning development plans' (Sen 1999: 53).

As the genealogy/chronology I described above demonstrates, the crystallization in economic, political and advocacy circles in the 1980s and 1990s of the notion of human development – defined broadly as the flourishing of human capabilities and development *as* freedom – has broadened *and* narrowed the scope of international development. It has amplified the scope insofar as Development can no longer be understood as an economic matter of income maximisation in developing contexts. The MDGs represent one way of attending to the various aspects of individual well-being which were deemed to be commensurate with a good life. But it has limited the scope insofar as it presents one form of moral justification for the *ends* of Development – the flourishing of *individuals*, commensurate with their capabilities and freedom, guaranteed by their 'right' to such freedoms and flourishing. Whether praising the argument on the grounds of the new philosophical foundation which it gave to the issue (Stewart and Deneulin 2002); or for the 'voice' and full ethical implication of human 'agency' that it engendered (Crocker 2008); or for a new more comprehensive analysis of practical applications of development policy that it offered (Deneulin 2006); it is difficult to deny that the simple force of Sen's argument has not had an impact on the

way scholars, analysts, politicians and informed citizens alike are asked to think of the development 'problem'.

And yet a number of critical voices in Development have emerged. Critics of the MDGs specifically, raise the doubt that they have served only to de-politicise and compartmentalise aspects of human life and experience into discrete goals, thus ignoring the interconnectedness of many of those aspects with respect to inequality and deprivation. Reflecting a neo-liberal logic which 'colonizes' everyday practices and narrows recognition of these realities to discrete statistical measures, they suggest that these goals and targets provide a 'superficial treatment of complex issues, and abstracts them from structural inequalities and the specificities of place' (Wilson 2014: 6; see also Saith 2006 and Feldman 2010). Allan Schmid instead points to a missing emotional 'squirm' factor in Sen's capabilities approach (Schmid 2010)⁵, while Gasper and Truong suggest that the *real* creativity and energy in development ethics rests not in a simplistic articulation of justice, but in the interplay between practice and a number of alternate 'streams of ethically sensitive theorizing' (Gasper and Truong 2005; Gasper 2008: 471; Gasper and Truong 2010). In their more recent piece, they highlight one such 'alternate' stream, *the ethics of care*, which forms the critical basis for my own study here.

In contrast to broader contemporary theories of justice, the ethics of care have instead drawn our attention to a different 'moral voice', in opposition to formal or abstract notions of justice and rights. This conception of morality (pertaining to the activity of care), 'centres moral development around the understanding of responsibility and relationships, just as the conception of morality as fairness ties moral development to the understandings of rights and rules' (Gilligan 1982: 19). Therefore in questioning the moral understanding of the development 'problematic', it is necessary first to recognise that the people (read: individuals) who Sen seeks to free from passive reception of cunning development plans, are actually embedded within social connections and relationships which themselves have bearing on human flourishing. As

⁵ Schmid here argues, perhaps too succinctly, that 'if the construction of ethical choices does not make us squirm, it is not well constructed' (38). To paraphrase his argument, it is fine to elaborate upon the ethical merits of a 'freedom approach' to individuals in distant lands; but if the approach does not have a real impact on me and on the ethical choices I make (far removed from them), then it is not a useful theory. While I do not agree with this conclusion about what *ultimately* constitutes a useful or non-useful ethical theory, it is the affective requirement which he places on the ethical observer which aligns with the critique I seek to establish throughout this project (basing a critical ethics of Development, as I do, in practices of care, informed by empathic understanding).

Fiona Robinson has argued, of primary importance to a care ethics approach is a 'commitment to relationships and sensitivity to the particularity of persons'; this particularity is also 'an important aspect of moral motivation which, in an ethics of care, is a crucial part of thinking about morality and moral responses' (Robinson 1999: 156). Care ethics, then, foregrounds the importance of relationships in arriving at moral understandings and prioritises those relationships of care and responsibility which sustain human flourishing.

In proposing a care ethics response to Sen's theories on development and on justice, I challenge the assumption that if we simply think long enough and act decisively enough on our judgements, assuming them to be universal principles around which the entire global community can rally, the end and the *ends* of Development will be achieved. I also question the belief that there is a universal notion of what human flourishing is meant to look like, measurable by a number of discrete variables, meant to be the 'human face' of what would otherwise be an economic response to poverty alleviation. A justice or capabilities approach – in seeking to address inequality, poverty, disadvantage and deprivation – emphasises moral judgement and ethical response. But again, as Robinson argues, our focus should be:

...'not only on judgement and action but on our capacity to learn how to focus our *sustained* moral attention on others, on how to build strong attachments which encourage agents to be attentive and responsive and to recognise *shared* responsibilities, and on how to become more aware of the extent to which relationships can themselves act as a guide to the process of naming 'difference' and thus of exclusion and marginalization...' (Robinson 1999: 145 – my emphasis).

In revisiting the care/justice debate (Kroeger-Mappes 1994; Rodriguez-Ruiz 2005; Sherblom 2008) in the context of international development, then, I suggest that a great deal of the moral 'spectrum' of human activity is missed if development ethics is seen only as a set of principles (universal and impartial) which simply outline duties and rights. Of the two principal questions which my study will seek to explore, therefore, the first is simply:

Does an ethic of care provide a more appropriate ethical and theoretical approach to the 'problematic' of international development?

But before laying out the structure and principal aims of this project (section 1.3 below), I would like to turn my attention first to three critical legacies or voices which will inform my study throughout – Carol Gilligan's 'different voice'; Denis Goulet's emphasis on 'vulnerability' and development ethics as a 'means of a means'; and Arturo Escobar's post-development 'pluriverse'.

1.2) Locating Legacies: Critical Voices

Carol Gilligan's 'Different Voice'

Understood as 'the most influential argument in feminist moral and political theory' (Hutchings 2005: 156), Carol Gilligan's 1982 *In a Different Voice*, marked a decisive shift in our understanding of moral development, developmental psychology and, more broadly, to questions of how *care* and caring responses affect moral judgements. In direct contrast to the androcentric models of moral maturity established by fellow psychologist Lawrence Kohlberg, Gilligan reviewed the *actual* moral responses of girls and boys to identify a 'different' moral voice, contextually-based rather than abstract, which she argued was equally mature. And while she found this different voice in the responses of women on the whole, rather than men, she has consistently argued on the importance of understanding this as a *different* (albeit undervalued) voice and not simply a female one (see Gilligan 1986; 2011)⁶. Kohlberg's model of moral maturity⁷

⁶ Furthermore, Gilligan has consistently related this empirical reality (of the unequal distribution of these two modes of moral reasoning between boys and girls) to structural patterns of patriarchy rather than to inherent differences of sex or gender. In her later writings on love, including in one novel penned by her, she challenges the inherency 'myth' and points to the possibility of a more equal distribution of the values of love, care, interdependency and relationship (see Gilligan 2003; 2008; 2011).

⁷ See for example Kohlberg 1981. It is important to note that Gilligan did *not* suggest deontological moral reasoning to be immature (i.e. she has continued to uphold it as a sign of moral maturity). Rather,

suggested stages through which notions of justice, individuality and freedom (autonomy) were internalised by children until such point that their ability to operate by and apply those 'rules' to their ethical dealings with others became automatic. In contrast, the different voice which Gilligan observed, revolved around four broadly defined concepts: a) relationships and interrelatedness were more important than autonomy or individuality; b) rationality is not emotion-detached but emotion-informed; c) moral judgements focus on particular situations rather than general abstractions; and therefore d) an 'ethic' of care stands in contrast to an 'ethic' of justice. In brief, in her countless interviews with women, what emerged for Gilligan was 'the moral imperative' which claimed 'an injunction to care, a responsibility to discern and alleviate the "real and recognisable troubles" of this world'. For men, instead, 'the moral imperative appears rather as an injunction to respect the rights of others and thus to protect from interference the rights to life and self-fulfillment' (Gilligan 1982: 100).

With this significant empirical observation of an alternate moral imperative or voice, it is unsurprising that Gilligan's findings in developmental psychology should have had such a profound impact on countless other fields or be recognised as being 'of the first importance' for moral philosophy in particular (Blum 1993: 49). This different voice was then linked to mothering, caring, gender-sensitive ethics, nurturing activities and moral education (Noddings 1984; Ruddick 1992; Held 1993; Bowden 1997; Kitay 1999). In philosophy, politics, international relations and social policy, instead – as a means of transcending these more parochial applications of this ethic – theorists such as Joan Tronto (1993), Fiona Robinson (1999; 2011), Olena Hankivsky (2004; 2006), Marian Barnes (2006; 2012) and countless others have emphasised the importance of care as both a moral *and* a political concept, one which informs not only our close relationships, but which can also serve as a guide in how to address the concrete needs of others; individuals, bound up in their own relationships of care and meaning, with whom we 'exist in mutually interconnected, interdependent, and often unequal relations' (Hankivsky 2014: 253). Such a re-centring of moral and political focus dispels the notion of distant others who are bearers of rights and whose innate capabilities must simply be harnessed or fostered so that they might flourish. Distant others, just as proximate ones,

hers is an argument for more consideration to be given to the post-conventional modes of moral reasoning, which her empirical studies identify.

are not discrete agents of an individual 'need' to be free, but rather are implicated in a network of relationships and connections which give meaning to their understanding of need, aspiration or sense of 'self'. And in recognising the vulnerability (of self) which permanent implication within relationships and social connections generates, Gilligan noted one of the paradoxical truths of human experience: 'that we know ourselves as separate, insofar as we live in connection with others, and that we experience relationship only insofar as we differentiate other from self' (Gilligan 1982: 63). The ethical challenge, then, as Selma Sevenhuijsen succinctly stated it, begins with the view that 'all people are vulnerable, dependent and finite, and that we all have to find ways of dealing with this in our daily existence and in the values which guide our individual and collective behaviour' (Sevenhuijsen 1998: 28).

In finding ways of 'dealing with' the vulnerability, interdependency, need and care of everyday experience – and in linking it to the 'problematic' of Development – an ethics of care can serve as a guide in how to *respond to* these aspects of the human condition. Development, more than simply a policy 'problem' requiring a specified solution, is seen as dependent upon and generated by these myriad connections of care and responsibility. Or as Robinson argues:

'a critical ethics of care refuses to reduce ethics to a moment of judgement but instead focuses our attention on the permanent background to those decisions which must be taken in times of crisis Ethics in international relations is concerned not only with specific issues, dilemmas, or conflicts but with the nature and quality of existing social relations' (Robinson 1999: 144).

And if emphasis is to be placed on this 'permanent background' and in recognising this different voice within it, I suggest that attention should also be paid to *how* this voice operates within these multiple social connections. In fact I have sought in this introduction to emphasise Gilligan's use of the term *voice*, not simply as a mode of moral reasoning, but also as a means of expression and form of meaning-making. Given the psychological, evolutionary and neuro-scientific literature which I introduce in Chapter 5, I argue that not enough emphasis in care theory has been placed on a key aspect of intersubjectivity and voice, namely empathy. For her part, Gillian makes reference to

‘empathy’ only three times in her original work. She states that the girls she observed, emerge from childhood ‘with a basis for “empathy” built into their primary definition of self in a way that boys do not’ (Gilligan 1982: 8); equates it with sensitivity in one instance (11) and then simply with ‘feelings’ such as compassion, in another (69).

And yet if the girls in her study were revealed to have a basis for empathy which was *built into their primary definition of self*, it seems that a more thorough treatment of this concept should be considered when attempting to theorise the nature of the moral reasoning and ethical behaviour which she identified and which care theorists have further linked to notions of responsibility and responsiveness toward vulnerability. And so the second key question this project will explore is the following:

Does ‘empathy’ (understood as a primary mode of human understanding and as a driving force in responding to the perceived needs of others) provide a more effective means of applying an ethic of care than care theory (with its emphasis on responsibility) alone does?

To date, the only care theorist to have considered seriously the role of empathy in our understanding of care ethics is Michael Slote (Slote 2007; 2010; 2010a). For Slote, empathy is the ‘cement of the Moral Universe’ (Slote 2010: 13), wherein the normative distinctions which we seek to make can be understood ‘in terms of *sentimental distinctions* of empathy or, more precisely, of empathic caring/concern about others (Slote 2010a: 6 – my emphasis). And yet this particular understanding of empathy focuses solely on the *affective* component of what is actually a multidimensional phenomenon, involving emotion, perception, cognition and understanding⁸. Political

⁸ Here Slote demonstrates the genealogy of his own particular understanding of ‘empathy’ by referencing primarily the literature in developmental psychology (Batson 1991; Hoffman 2000) which emphasises the affective component of empathy, in relation to compassion and altruism. In contrast, empathy in psychoanalytic literature (e.g. Kohut 1981) focuses on the cognitive processes of ‘role-taking’ and empathic understanding, rather than on affective import. In fact, as Martha Nussbaum has elsewhere argued, Batson’s use of the term empathy is similar to her own use of the word *compassion* (see Nussbaum 2001: 328). These ‘slippages’ of language, I suggest, can be found across many different writings on care, moral philosophy, ethics and political theory. Rather than having to choose which of the ‘definitions’ of empathy is correct, I argue that a better appreciation for it as a multidimensional phenomenon at least allows a theorist the ability to specify *which* aspect of empathy she is referring to when making particular ethical claims.

theorist Michael Morrell, for example suggests that, despite its complexity, empathy should be thought of as containing three key components – emotions, projection and understanding – each of which may carry greater or lesser significance at any given point in an empathic exchange between two people. The point he makes and the one which I also wish to emphasise is that empathy – as a mode of perception, recognition, communication and intersubjective understanding – is *not* a feeling or simply an affective construct. While ‘feelings such as compassion, sympathy, and even anger may result from the process of empathy [...] we never “feel” empathy’ (Morrell 2010: 41).

While I explore these concepts further in Chapters 5 and 7, I wish here to offer a definition for the concept which I have employed throughout my research. It is philosopher and psycho-therapist Louis Agosta’s ‘working definition’ of empathy. As he argues, ‘at the level of phenomenal awareness of everyday human experience in the world with other humans, the minimal essential constituents of empathy include:’ *openness or empathic receptivity, empathic understanding, empathic interpretation and empathic listening* (Agosta 2011: 3). The first element refers to receptivity to the emotions of others with whom we are in direct contact *or* as constructs of human imagination and memory; the second reflects the understanding of ‘the other’ as a ‘potentiality’ of behaviour or action reflective of her taking of choices and making of commitments; the third refers to the ability of the subject to distinguish herself as a ‘self’ from the other; and finally – crucial to my discussion of deliberation in Chapter 7 – empathic listening refers to the ‘articulation in language of this receptivity, understanding and interpretation, including the form of speech known as listening that enables the other to appreciate that he or she has been the target of empathy’ (Agosta 2011: 4). Therefore it is with the aid of this working definition that I wish to explore the multidimensional nature of empathy so as to determine its effects on the psychological, sociological and moral-ethical realities of the ‘constant background’ of relationships and interconnectedness which care theory so values. In turn, I argue, it is with a clearer understanding of the centrality of empathy to moral judgement and everyday ethical practices, that questions pertaining to the ‘problematic’ of Development might best be addressed.

Well over a decade before Carol Gilligan's influential volume on care, development ethicist Denis Goulet had embarked on a lifelong mission to define a 'Development Ethics for Our Times'.⁹ In the humanist tradition of his mentor L.J. Lebreton and likely reflective of his own studies in religious philosophy, Goulet suggested that development means 'changes which allow human beings, both as individuals and as members of groups, to move from one condition of life to one which is more human in some meaningful way' (Goulet 2006: 7). Having completed graduate studies in theology, Goulet joined the graduate research centre *Économie et Humanisme* in Paris, where he began work on development projects in the most marginal communities in French societies. Over the next few decades his work led him further afield – to Spain and Lebanon, Guinea-Bissau, Sri Lanka, Mexico and Brazil – all the while crystallising for him the idea that a practiced ethics of development should 'transcend the rupture between utopian normative political theory that was not grounded in real life and predictive theory that had no interest in ethics' (Gasper 2008: 455). In emphasising the importance of ethics in a field which theretofore had not considered it of relevance, Goulet defined his life's work 'to become a development ethicist operating in several registers – theory, analysis, pedagogy, planning and field practice' (Goulet 2006: xxxi).

His most influential work *The Cruel Choice* (1971), focussed the purpose of ethics in this field on one key factor: vulnerability. In the face of the dominance of the modernisation narratives of development (to be followed soon after by their neo-liberal variants), Goulet stressed the vulnerability that *any* programme of development engenders in affected communities. An individual, he reminded us, 'is vulnerable when he is exposed to injury, societies when they have no adequate defences against the social forces which propel them into the processes of change' (Goulet 1971 [1985]: 38). For Goulet, 'vulnerability' was *the* key to understanding the nature of development as it affected all societies (not simply the underdeveloped). Any theory of development which sought to attend to the perceived needs of developing communities would have to contend with this reality. Understood in this light, then, underdevelopment was:

⁹ The title of his original article '*Pour une éthique moderne du développement*' (Goulet 1960), later translated and included in a collection of his essays where this piece appears in Chapter 1 (Goulet 2006).

...’not merely poverty, unsatisfied wants, or minimal opportunities, but, above all, the powerlessness of societies in the face of destiny, of nature, of a machine age, of scientific technology, of advanced countries [...]. Developed countries possess the knowledge, the wealth, and the experience needed to face the problems of nature with some degree of confidence, but ‘underdeveloped’ societies feel exposed to forces they cannot control’ (Goulet 1971: 44).

In fact throughout all his writings, questions of power and vulnerability, powerlessness and recognition of the ‘shock’ of underdevelopment figure prominently. In response to the questions *where* and *how* do development unfold, he suggested that ‘it is in the interstices of power and in the structural relationships binding the weak to the strong that development ethics must unfold itself’ (Goulet 1971: 19). So in the same way that post-development literature provides a useful critical backdrop against which to view the structural *narratives* of development (see below), at a human level, Goulet asks us to consider the ethical *practices* which might best address the realities of asymmetries of power and of vulnerability. I suggest that what is most notable about *The Cruel Choice*, then – given the centrality of ethical importance it places on human vulnerability and power relations – is its absence from myriad writings on the ethics of care.¹⁰

Elsewhere, in attempting to better define what precisely he understood development *ethics* to be, Goulet stressed that any attempt at a unified theory of the *ends* of development, determined a priori and foisted upon developing contexts, was wrong-headed. Development ethics, he argued:

¹⁰ The connection between Goulet’s writings on development and later works by leading care theorists, both emphasising the importance of ‘vulnerability’ is clear. In my review of countless texts on the topic of care ethics, I have not come across any references to Goulet. It is true that in the spirit of interdisciplinarity, many of Goulet’s concerns might subsequently have been met in writings on human security. I suggest however that the centrality of ‘vulnerability’ to his thinking, combined with his understanding of development ethics as ‘a means of a means’ and desire to fashion a ‘specific’ theory of ethical development practices, might provide for quite fruitful dialogue between these literatures. In attempting to articulate an ethics for international development which might serve as a clearly identifiable counter to the prevailing HCA-MDG discourse, I argue that bringing the insights of care theorists (on relational autonomy, on power asymmetries, on caring practices and on responsiveness and responsibility) to bear on Goulet’s writings and ‘life’s mission’ would give new urgency to his writings, at a time when they could effect the most impact on post-2015 policy discussions.

...’must pay attention to political and economic imperatives while recognizing that these operate in highly diverse settings marked by varied cultural antecedents, resource endowments, and explanatory meaning systems. In a word, development ethics must become “a means of the means”...’ (Goulet 1995: 24).

In effect, development ethics wield no effective power (or legitimacy) unless they can move the debate beyond the realm of moralism. Or rather, in recognising the historical and cultural situatedness of one particular moral standpoint in relation to the development tools it then ‘validates’, development ethics must occur at the meeting point between such tools and specific developing contexts. Even if clarity of ends is agreed upon, focus must yet still be given to how those ends, across different contexts might best be achieved. And the reason for this, in Goulet’s understanding, is simple. ‘Any society’s values,’ he earlier argued, ‘as to what are essential needs and what *basic relationships* are precious directly condition its choice of goals and its use of means’ (Goulet 1976: 26). Here again, then, Goulet’s reflections prefigure later writings on care ethics which place primary importance on the role and nature of relationships in determining questions of moral or ethical importance in particular contexts.

Goulet’s *means of the means*, then, while vague in its articulation or turn-of-phrase, provides a significant starting point from which to argue for a critical care ethics response to the dominant HCA-MDG development paradigm. While Goulet limited himself to describing this approach as one best suited to the realities of development and underdevelopment, later writings by care theorists would expand the scope of an ethical theory which attends to relationships, vulnerability and context-specificity. For Goulet, development should be a means by which we recognise many possible means, each one suited to particular communities, societies or historical moments. It is for this concept (among others)¹¹ and his commitment to this humanistic project for development that he has, within the rather small field of development ethics, been considered its founding father and pioneer (Dutt and Wilber 2010: 2). Or as David

¹¹ The ‘shock of underdevelopment’ and ‘existence rationality’ are two others. The concepts relate to, in the case of the latter, recognising the frames through which individual groups and communities understand themselves in relation to the world around *and* to development programmes and tools; in the case of the former, and linked with the centrality he places on ‘vulnerability’, the idea that *only* when the development practitioner is confronted with the perceived ‘shock’ of underdevelopment (as experienced and communicated by members of that developing context) can she begin to adequately respond to this reality.

Crocker more recently remarked, 'what Denis Goulet said about his own mentor, Louis-Joseph Lebret, may be applied as well or even better to Goulet himself: he "stands as a giant in an infant discipline" (Crocker 2006: xiv).

Arturo Escobar and the Post-Development 'pluriverse'

From giants and different voices, I turn to one last 'legacy' thread in the ethical narrative I attempt to construct with this project. Running parallel to the human development and human capabilities discussions in the 1980s and 1990s, the post- (or anti-) development critique suggests that the very concept of 'Development' is a sociological construct reflective of Western and Northern hegemony over the rest of the world. Because development 'theory' itself responds to or clarifies pre-determined political and economic goals (e.g. modernisation, structural adjustment, debt relief), it continues to reflect and uphold those hegemonic tendencies. Post-development thinkers include Ivan Illich, Gustavo Esteva and Arturo Escobar, among others. In fact Escobar's *Encountering Development* can be said to have been as influential within this small field of scholars, as Sen's work on rational choice theory or human-centred development were in the field of development economics. While it is beyond the scope of this study to address the many critiques levelled against 'Development' by post-development thinkers, I wish here to place them into the broader debates over development which were being conducted at this time, in relation to the equally significant contributions of economic and political theorists such as Sen.

In particular, Sen's work on development represented a watershed not simply for its moral philosophical and political implications, but primarily for the effect which it was intended to have on the field of Economics more broadly. By questioning the centrality of Rational Choice Theory, a clear critique of a purely utilitarian justification for Development could be forwarded. A discussion on valuational principles, allowed him to highlight the theretofore limited understanding of Development, which the field of Economics had allowed. His careful use of empirical evidence and reasoned approach in highlighting the 'unproblematic' nature of the concept were meant, in his words, to mark 'the demise of the brashness which characterized the initiation of development economics' (Sen 1988: 23). And yet, despite an *ex post facto* admonition of the discipline

for its reductive tendency of seeking to achieve Development purely through GDP and economic modernisation, Sen's analysis seems to have pointed to a problem which is not easily resolved. While he was pointing to the reductive danger of a purely economic solution to tackling poverty or development, post-colonial, post-structuralist and post-development scholars of all stripes were questioning the entire idea of development *a priori*.

For Ivan Illich, a long-time critic of development discourses, the issue is not so much with the competing intents of development projects (from missionaries to Marxists, social interveners to developmentalists), but rather in the *rituals* of development. Even more than any particular ideological underpinning, for him it is the performance of these rituals since the 1970s, which generated 'not just specific goals like "education" or "transportation" but a *non-ethical state of mind*' (Illich and Rahnema 1997: 104). Here, the chasing of projects, goals or goods serves only to reify them, converts 'good' into 'value'. In earlier work, this is what Illich referred to as 'planned poverty', or the idea that 'in less than a hundred years industrial society has moulded patent solutions to basic human needs and converted us to the belief that man's needs were shaped by the Creator as demands for the products we have invented' (Illich 1971 [1997]: 95). The very notion of development - the perennial state of under-development into which various groups will inevitably fall, given the never-ending nature of this process of forever catching up – resulted in an unsustainable imposition of inequality on the so-called 'third world'. The development narrative imposed, in this case, therefore is non-ethical precisely because it insists on pre-packaged 'solutions' to what in some cases or contexts might be considered invented problems of a comparative nature (or "keeping up with the Joneses"). As a result, he claims, present satisfaction (or, more aptly 'enoughness') is never possible insofar as 'one always longs for something better that lies in the 'not yet' (Illich and Rahnema 1997: 104).

Meera Nanda, however, points to one possible shortcoming of a post-development critique which focuses solely on traditional or local knowledge as the primary response to perceived Western bias in the development narrative. Here, she worries that if 'we let traditions define what autonomy and justice are, that is, if we accept that different cultures have different norms of what is true, just and good, we run the risk of easy appropriation by traditional patriarchs who are taking the lead in the

rising tide of religious revivalism in many parts of the world' (Nanda 2002: 223). In this sense, it seems, that while still recognising the violence implicit in the wholesale acceptance of the Western development canon, it is equally important to avoid the violence which would continue to be inflicted on particular segments of traditional societies in the name of local culturalism. It is the balancing between these two violences which must be strived for. This is in tune with feminist post-development scholars who argue that while it is true that simply locating and tearing down implicit binaries of truth does not constitute a new alternative grand theory, it is perhaps precisely *any* attempt at an alternative which should be avoided. As such, the ethical aim in post-development would be in the 'processes of negotiation' which could ultimately lead to the establishment of knowledge (tested against a local context) which would then be adopted as practice (Subramaniam, Bever and Schultz 2002: 210). To the authors, these constitute the new global circulations of negotiated knowledge which should serve development practice.

Common to most texts on post-development, therefore, 'is that they criticise development simultaneously as a Eurocentric discourse, an at least partly imperialist project, and (often) a meaningless concept' (Ziai 2004, 1046). Ziai identifies two broad 'traditions' in post-development literature. Ultimately, however, he takes Arturo Escobar's description of the guiding principles which constitute the hallmarks of this type of thought. From Escobar's 1995 *Encountering Development*, they are: 1) an interest not in development alternatives but in alternatives to development, thus a rejection of the entire paradigm; 2) an interest in local culture and knowledge; 3) a critical stance towards established scientific discourse; and 4) the defence and promotion of localised, pluralistic grassroots movements (Escobar 1995 [2012], 215). And while, there might not be widespread agreement, even among post-development scholars about the first point, broadly speaking all are in agreement about the other three. In his seminal work, Escobar refers to the idea of a development 'pluriverse' constituted in the myriad trajectories, paths and programmes for change which could exist in contrast to a universal or unitary development agenda.

Escobar goes on to describe this pluriverse as ultimately residing within the notion of sustainability, rather than globalisation. In this most recent articulation, 'the evolving pluriverse might be described as a process of planetarization articulated around

a vision of the Earth as a living whole that is always emerging out of the manifold biophysical, human and spiritual relations of the elements that make it up' (Escobar 2011: 139). He takes heart in the notion that in response to the violence imposed by the unitary economic vision of globalisation, there are signs (in a number of developing countries, especially in Latin America) that re-localisation and a new priority given to ecology and the natural environment are helping to pick away at the monolith and commercial juggernaut that is a development project which has been primarily driven by neo-liberal corporatist economics (Escobar 2001).¹² The idea that 'culture sits in places' is reflective of the desire to view the world not as a (unitary moral) universe, but as a pluriverse within which many worlds (or conceptions of the good) can reside. For Escobar, the construction (or realisation of the immanence) of this pluriverse requires the convergence of a number of critical threads of thought – philosophical, biological, indigenous narratives – which help to reconceptualise the world as 'a pluriverse, ceaselessly in movement, an ever-changing web of inter-relations involving humans and non-humans' (Escobar 2011a: 9).

Ultimately, then, what post-development (and to varying degrees post-structuralist and post-colonial) critiques have helped to highlight is the hegemonic bias of the moral and *ethical* underpinnings of traditional responses to development. At a *meta*-level, then, post-development would seek an ethics of development which first considers the origin of any exclusionary body of knowledge and the violences that it may inflict on local development contexts. At a *micro*-level, it recognises the myriad constellations of connection and interconnection, human and non-human, which might sustain the imaginary of a pluriverse containing many 'worlds' of *the good*. I suggest that it is entirely consistent with a critical ethic of international development based in care and empathy, constructed as a 'means of the means'.

¹² The example he often refers to is the adoption by the Ecuadorian and Bolivian constitutions in 2008 of the concept of 'living well' as a principal value or goal of each society. *Suma qamaña* or *Sumak kawsay* or '*buen vivir*', inspired by indigenous traditions, reflect the belief that *quality* of life is only possible within community (which includes the well-being of Nature) and is therefore dependent upon *relationships*, understood in the broadest sense. It is therefore seen as a critical counter to HCA programmes which emphasise individual well-being and flourishing.

1.3) Aim and Structure of the Project

As I attempted to demonstrate in the discussion above, ideals of international 'development' have seen a wave of new advocates in the past three decades – from politicians to musicians (*LiveAid, Make Poverty History*), activists to policy-makers alike. The international community, following a liberal tradition informed by an ethic of justice, has defined the issue – through the United Nations Millennium Development Goals – as a question of basic human rights. Within this context, economists, politicians and policy-makers have then advocated for either more foreign aid to be given to developing countries or for all such aid to be halted (Sachs 2006 and Moyo 2009, respectively). However, despite trillions of dollars in aid spent over the past fifty years, this simplistic equation (human rights = direct foreign aid = development) may have “actually increased poverty in Africa and put off the development of states capable of fulfilling the rights and needs of its citizens” (Glennie 2008: 2). When, politically, a concept as multi-faceted as 'human development' is reduced simply to a notion of liberal or human rights – and then coupled with policy tools which limit themselves to only one facet of the problem – social justice ideals cannot be properly addressed.

The problem which my study seeks to explore, then, is the simplistic framing of international policy issues which a traditional justice ethic tends toward. An ethic of care, I suggest instead, as an indispensable response to an ethic of justice, would provide a more nuanced, context-specific and responsive framework through which to address development issues. As care ethicists have argued, it is precisely “because care forces us to think *concretely* about people's real needs, and about evaluating how these needs *will* be met, [that] it introduces questions about what we value into everyday life” (Tronto 1993: 124). Indeed, there currently exists a substantive disconnect between the caring dispositions of groups or individuals and the rationalistic or utilitarian responses which policy-making apparatuses then generate. This alternative ethic, instead, emphasizes relationships and prioritizes the responses of empathy and care which development problems *should* engender. Given the very real demonstrations of care from citizens around the world with regard to development – through *Live Aid* concerts

and street protests, international advocacy and activism – this ethical paradigm shift is critical.

Within this international context, the debate between an ethic of justice (a normative rights-based paradigm) and an ethic of care (an ostensibly ontological, responsibility-based paradigm) seems highly appropriate. Given the most recent trend toward “development as right” – and mindful of the historical precepts used to root both liberal justice and development discourses – it becomes important to critically examine the moral legitimacy of a rights-based or justice ethic within international relations. Such an analysis would have normative implications not only in this particular issue but also in addressing other global challenges of the 21st century – from peacekeeping to economic globalization, sustainability to increased urbanization, to name only a few. And while critiques of the dominant ethical paradigm abound – from communitarian to Marxian, feminist anti-contractarian, post-structural and post-colonial – care ethics appear to be better suited to a discussion of empathy for and responsibility toward distant others. This differently rooted moral ontology, argues Olena Hankivsky, ‘deepens and makes more comprehensive current approaches to examining and understanding globalization, especially its implications for vulnerable countries and marginalized and poor persons’ (Hankivsky 2006: 92).

To this end, then – and in response to the two questions I posed in Sections 1.1 and 1.2 above – this study will proceed through a series of debates and rejoinders so as to tease out the claims and assumptions made by particular theoretical views and then suggest either count-claims or additions to the original. In Chapter 2, I return to the writings on development and capabilities by Amartya Sen and read them within the context of his much broader works on economics, justice, rights and social choice theory. His 1999 *Development as Freedom* (DaF) marks the single most important shift toward ‘development as a moral theory’ in recent years. Further, his insistence that his *Idea of Justice* (2009) is a comparative-evaluative one, rather than an ideal-type construct is also examined to show how his ideas on human flourishing differ from those of his contemporary in the HCA, Martha Nussbaum. The purpose here is to root the supposedly ‘de-politicised’ MDG project (Wilson 2014a: 304) within a much clearer moral-philosophical (and ultimately liberal political) understanding of the *ends* of international development. This becomes especially clear when reading Sen and

Nussbaum's writings on justice and the HCA in conjunction. As some authors have pointed out, it was a means by which they could bridge the human flourishing aspect of virtue ethics with the understanding that certain universal conditions need first to exist for that flourishing to occur (Hutchings 2010: 94; Gasper and St. Clair 2010). And recognising this shift in development thinking is even more critical so as to be able to place into context the writings of later/current theorists on the topic. David Crocker, for example, explicitly combines the Sen/Nussbaum understandings of self, virtue, capabilities, justice and rights to propose his own model for deliberative democracy in a development context (Crocker 2007; 2008; Alkire 2002; Deneulin 2006).¹³

In Chapter 3, having clarified the link between DaF and broader theories on human capabilities, rights and justice, I present my first critical response to the HCA-MDG/Sen-Nussbaum approach. Where HCA theorists present an 'intuitive' case for the idea of human development based in 'justice through dignity of the individual', a critical ethical response to development – following the reasoning of Goulet described in 1.2 above – would attend to 'vulnerability' in the face of the reality of development. Vulnerability, rather than disadvantage-to-dignity becomes the centrepiece of a critical ethical response to development. I address the ubiquitous nature of vulnerability (as experienced by the weak and the powerful) and suggest the need to refocus attention not on the *ends* (the 'flourished individual') presented by Sen, Nussbaum and others, but rather on the practiced means by which the ethicist attends to that vulnerability. I explore the concept of 'trust' and how it might be considered an appropriate ethical goal for a critical ethics which, I argue, must attend to relationships, interconnectedness, vulnerability and asymmetries of power. Attending to trust and vulnerability, furthermore, suggests the need for a critical development ethics which is *praxeological* in nature.¹⁴ This is consistent with the notion that any successful theory of development

¹³ I explore Crocker's work, combining the Nussbaum and the Sen variants of the HCA (in the context of deliberative democratic theory) in Chapter 7 and present a modified understanding of deliberative practices through empathy.

¹⁴ Praxeology refers to a deductive (rather than empirical) understanding of human behaviour, based in the notion that humans *do* engage in purposeful behaviour and that an ethical theory can and should be drawn from a reflective study of these behaviours (in contrast to purely rationalistic constructions of action/behaviour). While the term has historically been linked to the writings of the Austrian School of Economics, there is also an alternate use of the term in social psychological literature which suggests simply that there are 'constitutive practices in social action endowed with intersubjective meanings' (Pouliot 2008: 279). This is the use of the term which Michel employs in his writings on trust in International Relations (see my discussion in Chapter 3). I employ the term to further emphasise the care ethics focus on relationships and my own argument that empathy, employed within a care ethics

must understand it as a practiced phenomenon. Finally, in presenting a critical ethics which purports to address the rationalistic and agentic biases of the dominant HCA approach, I introduce one other tool for the critical development ethicist's toolkit – the intersectional lens. Intersectionality theorists have argued that for any broad political agenda to be effective 'we must recognize social categories as specific, historically based, contextualized, intersecting and constructed through power, while simultaneously remembering that our common heritage is that we share the experience of life within this web of intersections' (Cole 2008: 451). An intersectional lens allows the theorist to locate asymmetries of power and also to disrupt simplistic dyads and dualistic categories such as wealthy/poor, powerful/weak, developed/underdeveloped, etc. It focuses attention on power and on the ethicist's implication within those matrices of power.

Having therefore sketched the outlines of a proposed critical ethic of international development – based largely on Goulet's focus on vulnerability, on the establishment of trust and on an intersectional appreciation for asymmetries of power – Chapters 4 and 5 are meant to add further clarity as to the content of this alternate ethic. I suggest that the insights of care theorists – with regard to relational autonomy, context/place, relationship and responsibility – are key to further articulating this critical approach. In Chapter 4, Robinson's suggestion that we attend to the 'permanent background' of relationships; the on-going, rather than teleological nature of development; and ideas of co-responsibility are explored. In Chapter 5 I present the case for a stronger appreciation for human empathy which might be employed in a critical care ethics approach. I first explore the writings of care ethicist Michael Slote and suggest that his wedding of a virtue ethics understanding of care, coupled with a misplaced insistence on a *deontological* justification for care and empathy, are not helpful. In presenting empathy as biologically, neurologically and evolutionarily 'hard-wired', I further explore the implications of understanding human empathy as a *process* and a 'special hermeneutic' (Agosta 2010). Empathy, empathic understanding and the

approach is a communicative act of meaning-making which informs social action. A critical development ethics, therefore, must attend to the ways in which care, responsiveness, empathy and trust are practiced in particular contexts.

fostering of empathic communication are key to the constitutive practices and co-responsibility advocated by care theorists.

To further build the case, for the centrality of empathy to care ethics – and, combined, for their centrality to a re-oriented development ethics – in Chapters 6 and 7, I present what I have broadly termed ‘empathy in action’ and ‘empathy in promise’, with regard to international development. In Chapter 6, I look at the use of ‘immersions’ by development practitioners and suggest that – in ‘spending a weekend’ with a family in a development context’ – if the only goal is an affect response on the part of the practitioner, then the establishment of long-term connections and ‘understanding’ of concrete realities is being missed. In contrast, the work of the International Child Development Programme, while not *specifically* understood as a ‘Development’ initiative – despite its having operated in over 40 countries and, in the case of Colombia, under the direct auspices of UNICEF – provides a much clearer example of a focus on empathy in service of lived, embodied, ongoing relationships. What I attempt to suggest is that, in tandem, they are examples of how empathic learning, participation and empathic understanding, are key to strengthening relationships of care and trust and to giving voice and recognition to the vulnerable.

This, linked with broader democratic goals of participation and deliberation, is explored further in Chapter 7. Here I critically analyse recent work by development ethicist David Crocker and in particular his elaboration of a Sen-Nussbaum rationale for deliberative democracy in international development. While I support the underlying principle he posits – that participation in development requires a more active use of deliberative fora in decision-making – I suggest a care and empathy rejoinder. A care ethics approach to deliberation would emphasise the centrality of *care* and *caring practices* to the ‘objects’ of deliberation; an empathic focus on modes of expression/communication would emphasise the intersubjective nature of the ‘subjects’ of deliberation. And so as to place this discussion within my original line of critique (contra Sen et al.), I suggest that the critical development scholar should no longer engage in the moral and ethical issues related to development as an ‘impartial spectator’. Rather, he is an ‘empathic participant’ – cognizant of his own position within asymmetries of power; open to the experiences of relationship as a source for ethical meaning; reflective of the intersubjective nature of a commitment to *means* and *ends*

and to the notions of co-responsibility which they require; and humble enough to recognise the vulnerability and contingency of his own judgements.

With this collaborative-expressive ethic of international development sketched, I conclude in Chapter 8 with a brief description of the preliminary international agenda for a post-MDG world. Currently described as the ‘golden thread’ approach, the planned goals are still vague and the underlying normative rationale (read: HCA) remains unchallenged. By returning to Robinson’s discussion of ‘partnering’ (rather than the ‘partnerships’ of MDG 8), possibility exists for the application of the critical ethical approach I describe. A focus on care, grounded in a commitment to empathic dialogue, I suggest, is one way to move forward and to re-construct and re-imagine the ‘web of relationships’ which care theorists emphasise. The commitment to care *about* and to care *for* – to be responsive to expressed need and to attend to the concrete realities of people, proximate and distant – re-orientes the discussion of international development in significant ways. In direct contrast to Kantian-inspired moral theories of individual rights and liberal justice (or human rights and cosmopolitanism by extension), care ethics *qua* moral paradigm are different in three fundamental ways. Tronto outlines an ethic of care wherein: ‘1) the central concepts are responsibility and relationships instead of rights and rules; 2) the moral questions are concrete and narrative rather than formal and abstract; 3) the moral theory is best described not as a principle, but as the activity of care’ (Tronto 2008: 182). How then would international development as a practice look, if it is understood not as a principle of ‘right or entitlement,’ but rather as the natural extension of the human ‘activity of caring’? The moral implication of such a definition, in international relations, can then be drawn. An ethic of care, argues Virginia Held, ‘clearly implies that the members of wealthy societies must recognize their *responsibilities* to alleviate the hunger and gross deprivations in care afflicting so many members of poor ones’ (Held 2006: 160). Again, then, the emphasis is placed upon human responsibility rather than human right; a concrete, albeit generalized, disposition to *act* morally *versus* an abstract, arguably passive, concept of moral entitlement.

If the discussion of international development is meant to be understood as a moral action or activity, a care ethic would provide a more appropriate framework for such relations. The reason for this is found in what constitutes the purview of traditional or dominant moral theories, broadly termed liberal institutional, cosmopolitan, or

justice theories of moral action. For Held, such theories limit their attention to an individual's perceived interests on the one hand and to abstract universal norms on the other; 'but anything between these extremes of individual self and 'all others' is virtually invisible' (Held 2006: 157). As a relational moral paradigm – and therefore, one might argue, more appropriate than dominant theories *especially* in matters pertaining to relations among and between people – care ethics fundamentally challenge the validity of a dominant moral theory which has 'resulted in the creation of a global *culture of neglect* through a systematic devaluing of the notions of interdependence, relatedness, and positive involvement in the lives of distant others' (Robinson 1999: 7).

The ideal of *interdependence* – or at the very least a re-valorization of *dependence* as an integral part of the human condition (Tronto 1993: 162-163; Clement 1996: 35-42; Engster 2007: 94), fluid over time and space, and context-, rather than person-specific – which care theorists posit, appears to offer a substantively different framework upon which to conceive of the relation between aid-giving and aid-receiving countries; between care-giving and care-receiving peoples. This ethical framework emphasizes the 'ongoing and permanent status of *all humans* – even able-bodied, freedom-enjoying adults as *vulnerable*, [where] to be vulnerable is not the same thing as being incapable of self-development, but it surely changes the nature of such development and makes questions about development more social and political' (Tronto 2007: 39). And so from broad ethical considerations, the political (and arguably social justice) significance of care ethics is revealed, challenging researcher and policy-maker alike to develop instruments which will better deal with the vast "life-sustaining web", so often referred to by Tronto and others.

By attending to these questions, I aim to suggest a more nuanced and more appropriate understanding of the Development 'problematic'; appropriate in so far as it reflects the potential for multiple modes and worlds of development within an ever-shifting pluriverse of value and interconnection. This approach would address the criticism of 'Western bias' waged by post-development theorists, but then also address questions of 'sustainability'. Is there an 'end-point' to development(s)? Should 'over-development' be addressed with the same zeal as 'under-development'? As to implications for the broader field of International Relations, if it is true that the very basis of human 'intersubjectivity' is found in empathy (as a mode of understanding and

as a precursor for moral reasoning and action), then it might be argued that empathy and our ability to respond to the needs of distant 'others' must be taken seriously in most of our international 'relations' (diplomatic, humanitarian, trade). Articulating a clearer understanding of this moral imperative is crucial in being able to effectively address the many existential challenges (gross inequity, a widening poverty gap in the creation of a 'Global North' and 'Global South', excessive consumption, waste of limited resources, global warming - to name only a few) of the 21st century.

Ultimately, my proposed study rests within intersections of its own – at the boundaries of the political theory, international relations and development ethics sub-disciplines. It is precisely within this liminal space that greater insight into the concepts of practiced ethics, structured morality and interdependence in a global environment can be explored. I contend that care ethics – properly elaborated, structured and conceived through a more ample appreciation for human empathy – are precisely the innovative approach that international relations (theory) and development policy (practice) warrant; a means by which to better understand the complexity of human relations and to prioritize empathic and caring responses to human development, thus finally realising long outstanding social justice ideals which, in practice, have so often eluded even the most well-intentioned of international development policies. In the broadest of senses, then, I would wish to explore the intersections of thought and lived experience (justice/care, structured morality/practiced ethics, intent/action) where our most basic needs are perceived, where our ability to empathize with different and distant 'others' is challenged or engaged with and where the transformative socio-political potential of need and empathy, responsibility and collective action, in concert are realized.

2. CAPABILITIES CODIFIED (OR 'THE ACRONYMS OF IMPARTIALITY'): THE MDGs AND THE RTD – DEVELOPMENT OUTCOMES OR DEVELOPMENT ETHICS?

'The Capabilities Approach is not a theory of what human nature is, and it does not read norms off from innate human nature. Instead, it is evaluative and ethical from the start: it asks, among the many things that human beings might develop the capacity to do, which ones are the really valuable ones, which are the ones that a minimally just society will endeavour to nurture and support?' (Nussbaum 2011: 28)

'The problem is not with listing important capabilities, but with insisting on one pre-determined canonical list of capabilities, chosen by theorists without any general social discussion or public reasoning. To have such a fixed list, emanating entirely from pure theory, is to deny the possibility of fruitful public participation on what should be included and why' (Sen 2004a: 77)

Introduction

The tale of 'two capabilities' captured above, represents one of the key distinctions between the two leading proponents of the Human Capabilities Approach (HCA), Martha Nussbaum and Amartya Sen. The former sees her version as 'the core of an account of minimal social justice and constitutional law' (Nussbaum 2011: 71). The role of the philosopher is primarily one of persuasion, having first undertaken a process of Socratic deliberation (wherein a range of ethical judgements are compared against traditional theories resulting in a Rawlsian 'reflective equilibrium') to determine that her 10 Central Capabilities are an essential requirement of life; life where each individual is considered *an end* and where these central capabilities are irreducible and commensurate with the intrinsic value she affords to human dignity. As a political (read: liberal) approach, it is understood as universal in that 'it could, over time, become the basis for an "overlapping consensus" among holders of the main religious and secular views' (Nussbaum 2011: 79). In somewhat tenuous contrast to this political-theoretical version of the CA, Sen is concerned not with the specific contours of these capabilities, but rather with the centrality that freedom (read: capabilities) holds in our most basic and intuitive understanding of justice. While he too undertakes a *method* of reflective

equilibrium (drawing heavily upon traditional theories, Indian philosophy and real-world moral and ethical concerns), he leaves the definition of specific goals to public deliberation. While the central role given to capabilities is understood as a universal aspiration, of paramount *political* importance is the ability for each group – clan, village, country or supranational – to publically discuss and democratically decide which capabilities might take priority and how they might then inform policy prescription. For Sen, *both* human rights and human capabilities ‘have to depend on the process of public reasoning, which neither can lose without serious impoverishment of its respective intellectual content (Sen 2005c: 163).

Development as Freedom (Sen 1999) could be said to have marked a watershed in understanding, analysis and policy-making concerned with international development. It marked the crystallization of Amartya Sen’s ‘freedom’ approach to social progress, placed in direct contrast with utilitarian or economic maximization approaches to development which preceded it. Whether praising the argument on the grounds of the new philosophical foundation which it gave to the issue (Stewart and Deneulin 2002); or for the ‘voice’ and full ethical implication of human ‘agency’ that it engendered (Crocker 2008); or for a new more comprehensive analysis of practical applications of development policy that it offered (Deneulin 2006); it is difficult to argue that the simple force of his argument (that what matters in development is human flourishing, evidenced by the capabilities or freedoms that one has to be able to lead the life that she values) has not had an impact on the way scholars, analysts, politicians and informed citizens alike are asked to think of the development ‘problem’.

Some authors have also pointed out that it was a means by which Nussbaum and Sen could bridge the human flourishing aspect of virtue ethics with the understanding that certain universal conditions need first to exist for that flourishing to occur (Hutchings 2010: 94; Gasper and St. Clair 2010). Again, Nussbaum specifies these pre-political conditions, while Sen intimates at some (health, education, nutrition) but ultimately puts faith in public reason to determine the (unspecified) others. In the discussion which follows, I describe in three parts the monumental shift which occurred in international development discourse with the adoption of a capabilities approach as the moral-ethical basis for ‘human’ development. In the first part, Sen’s *Development as Freedom* (1999) is outlined in contrast to the more purely economic understandings

of development which preceded it. The capabilities approach provided a robust method with which to address the theory-practice divide, insofar as it offered a philosophical response to the ‘why development?’ question (so as to guarantee individual human flourishing) *and* suggested possibly quantifiable/measurable capabilities to address the ‘how development?’ question.

Given that Sen himself gives an even more central role to public deliberation and public reason (both his capabilities approach *and* his understanding of human rights require it), I then also discuss his writings on this topic. In the second part, I outline the most notable contributions made by Nussbaum with regard to capabilities, in both the ten central capabilities she identifies and in the ‘architectonic’ roles played by affiliation and practical (not necessarily public) reason (Nussbaum 2011: 39). Finally, in the third part I return to Sen, his writings on human rights and their influence on the Right to Development, so as to ultimately demonstrate that despite its shortcomings (the focus on impartiality or the non-focus on human vulnerability), Sen’s iteration of the Capabilities Approach is less *theoretically* (and ultimately politically) restrictive than Nussbaum’s.

2.1) Development’s Eudaimonic Turn: Amartya Sen and the ‘ethical spaces’ of Development and Justice

Development as Freedom

The new broader philosophical understanding of human development which was outlined in *Development as Freedom*, put it in direct contrast with methods and approaches which gave primary importance to market mechanisms and economic growth as the primary vehicles for social processes. And while the noted economist clearly values the contribution of the market mechanism to *economic* growth, he also argues that its true impact can only ever be properly measured “after the freedom to exchange – words, goods, gifts – has been acknowledged” (Sen 1999, 6). The central thrust of the argument here, therefore, is that the overarching (or comprehensive) purpose of development and the process by which it is realized rests in the expansion of

the freedoms that people enjoy. The significance of this change of focus (on freedoms rather than simply on economic growth), he argued, is that it directs attention “to the *ends* that make development important rather than merely to some of the means that, *inter alia*, play a prominent part in the process” (Sen 1999, 3).

The differences, he argues, arise for two clear reasons, which he describes as the *process aspect* and the *opportunity aspect* of freedom (Sen 1999, 291). On the first, it is said that the scope of development cannot be limited purely to production output of an economy or to mean income levels alone, inasmuch as this would mean devaluing or rather discounting the importance of participation in the political process or social choice. Or rather, such participation and social choice must be seen as constitutive of the *ends* of development. Furthermore, the very enjoyment of economic output or increased wealth may very well depend upon these integral elements. On the second, opportunity aspect, of freedom, the argument relates to the agency of the individual. It is not enough to give value (from outside) to the markers of development iterated above, but rather to analyse the extent to which individuals enjoy the opportunity to achieve the life that *they* themselves value. In tandem, these two aspects relate to a broad quality-of-life assessment, which is not necessarily linked to, nor entirely explained by, economic advancement.

Within a capability approach, living is understood as “a combination of various ‘doings and beings’, with quality of life to be assessed in terms of the capability to achieve valuable functionings (Sen 1993, 31). Here, *functionings* are understood as those states of being of a person, specifically those activities which she is able to do in order to lead a life of value to her. Furthermore, a firm believer in the importance of theory, for Sen, “the theory of evaluation and assessment does [...] have the exacting task of pointing to the relevance of what we are free to do and free to be (the capabilities in general), as opposed to the material goods we have and the commodities we can command” (Sen 2004a, 78). And on the issue of evaluation required by the capabilities approach, he emphasizes that the subject of evaluation can be either on *realized* functionings of individual lives (what a person is *able* to do) or on the ‘capability set’ that an individual has (measured as real opportunities or a range of possible capabilities) (Sen 1999, 75). Capabilities, within this measurement, are also alternatively referred to as

‘vectors of functionings’, when they are examined in concert and in comparison with one another.

For Sen, a major reason for which economic development can be seen at best as conditional or contingent upon a broader understanding of social development, is the observation that the reach of economic development in further advancing people’s lives relies upon concomitant social policies and factors, such as healthcare provision, education and the cultivation of good relations among people within a given society. Put in the reverse, “through good social policies, human lives can be made much longer, richer and fuller even with low income levels” (Sen 2008, 101). He uses the example of China to show that universal health played the key role in advances of health and longevity, well before market reforms and enhanced economic growth post-1979. In a similar vein, in addressing the current contention within policy circles that the reduction of poverty must be achieved so as to reduce incidents of crime and criminality in developing countries, Sen is again sceptical. Kolkata, he points out, is not only one of the very poorest cities in the world, but it also appears to hold the lowest murder-rate in the world as well (Sen 2008, 106).

Much of Sen’s approach to both capabilities and to a broader idea of justice (described below) rests in the ability to measure and compare certain processes or elements – in the case of development, to measure capabilities while in the case of justice, to measure levels of justice or injustice. The measurement of capabilities, he shows, can be done in three ways – the *direct* approach, the *supplementary* approach, and the *indirect* approach. The direct approach could follow three lines of investigation, depending on the data available. In the first place, it could involve a ‘total comparison’, the ranking of all ‘vectors of functionings’ (mutually reinforcing capabilities). In this case, the relative impacts of gender equality, health, education, infrastructure, a free press, could be ranked. Less rigorous would be a ‘partial ranking’ which might rank the impact of some capabilities, without a requirement that all be considered. And finally, the ‘distinguished capability comparison’ would entail the comparison of one particular capability as the focus. It should be noted that here, comparison, would refer to comparing a development context with or without that particular capability. A parallel could be drawn here, methodologically, with the employment of comparative approaches vs. case study analysis within the broader social sciences, the former

providing an analysis of the relative weights of different functioning vectors and the latter providing thick description in terms of the impact of one capability on a development process.

The second, or supplementary approach to measuring capabilities, is one considered less radical. Traditional procedures are still employed (income measurement for example), but are supplemented by a description of the social indicators mentioned above. Here, the more common strategy is to use a 'distinguished capability comparison,' providing a qualitative description of the possible impacts of either gender disparity or the prevalence of joblessness in a society (Sen 1999, 82). And finally, the indirect approach is considered more ambitious than the supplementary one, inasmuch as it ascribes some metric value to the social variable (gender, joblessness, health care) in question. Under this method, the analysis is still conducted within the traditional sphere (income or domestic output), but the value of these is *adjusted* to reflect the weighted impact of a contributing social, or capability, factor (Sen 1999, 83).

Speaking more broadly on their role in social processes (which he understands to guide or put into action previously agreed upon social choices), Sen argues that 'capabilities can hardly serve as the sole informational basis for the other considerations, related to processes, that must also be accommodated in normative collective choice theory' (Sen 2004, 337). Although this particular argument is made in relation to his framework for a theory of human rights (discussed below), it captures the importance and role that he gives to capabilities in terms of their metric value. They are considered crucial to social development (measured in relation to actual positive social outcomes achieved), but they are never seen as singular in importance. Put differently, Sen argues for the importance of many factors to be considered within the ambit of human development, with 'capabilities' as being of primary importance among them. A robust accounting of an individual's freedom, he specifies, "must, of course, go beyond the capabilities of personal living and pay attention to the person's other objectives (e.g. social goals not directly related to one's own life), but human capabilities constitute an important part of individual freedom" (Sen 1993, 33).

Indeed the robustness of the freedom or capabilities approach rests, it would seem, in its openness to a variety of other perspectives which, when instead employed

alone, are seen to be lacking (utilitarianism or libertarianism, for example). Again, in his words:

... 'the freedom-based perspective can take note of, inter alia, utilitarianism's interest in human well-being, libertarianism's involvement with processes of choice and the freedom to act and Rawlsian theory's focus on individual liberty and on the resources needed for substantive freedoms. In this sense, the capability approach has a breadth and sensitivity that give it a very extensive reach, allowing evaluative attention to be paid to a variety of important concerns, some of which are ignored, in the alternative approaches. This extensive reach is possible because the freedoms of persons can be judged through explicit reference to outcomes and processes that they have reason to value and seek' (Sen 1999: 86).

The importance which *Development as Freedom* holds, then, is also in the applicability of its principles to a much wider discussion on the nature of human rights, the ethical implication of said rights, the elaboration of a comprehensive and practical theory of justice and the ethical (albeit 'imperfect', in a Kantian sense) obligation that we each hold toward others. In the spirit of social process over social contract, for Sen 'it is not so much a matter of having exact rules about how precisely we ought to behave, as of recognizing the relevance of our shared humanity in making the choices we face' (Sen 1999, 283). These basic principles of personal capability, of the freedom to live a life of one's choosing, commensurate with those capabilities, need not translate into political action by means of a pre-determined set of actionable principles for Sen. The ability to compare contexts, so as to be able to determine where there is 'more' or 'less' freedom (and by extension justice), is tied up with the vehicle by which Sen makes this broader theory 'actionable', namely 'public reason'. Where the other principle variant of the Capabilities Approach (see Nussbaum, below), would argue for the necessity to establish a set of central capabilities *a priori*, for Sen the key is in recognising the ability of an individual to express her own freedom through various avenues of public reasoning and deliberation. Furthermore, woven through this understanding of his capabilities approach is that the shift from private to public ethical demands and action, requires individuals to 'take a step back'. Impartiality in public reason appears to be the central ethical space (and broadly conceived evaluative mechanism) through which individual

freedom is understood, valued and fostered at the social level. In fact, understanding the importance to Sen of these ethical ‘ingredients’ (impartial moral judgement and public reason), is key to being able to understand my own critiques of (and rejoinders to) the capabilities approach in Chapters 3 and 7.

Sen on Reason – from private to public

To the question ‘does the pursuit of ethical objectivity take the form of some particular ethical *objects*’? Sen answers no, consistent with Hilary Putnam’s belief that such a line of reasoning is unhelpful. The point is not a valuational one (i.e. a line of enquiry meant to determine the nature and content of some particular ethical object) (Sen 2009, 41). Rather, the reasoning employed in analysing the requirements of justice incorporate ‘some basic demands of impartiality’ (Sen 2009, 42). Impartiality here, is not understood as an abstraction from ethical claims based in sentiment, but rather simply an invitation for individuals to see these deeply held beliefs ‘at a distance’ from themselves. Only thus, is it possible to speak in a common ethical language, so as to be able to consider an ethical problem, scrutinize and deliberate upon it, and arrive at an ethical outcome in a fashion which is commensurate with the equal moral status of the participants engaged in this discussion.

Here, Sen turns to what he describes as the ‘ancient approach’ of Adam Smith, by invoking the ‘impartial spectator’. Methodologically, we must be able to view our sentiments (broadly understood to include reasons or reasoning) from a certain distance from ourselves, or as Sen describes Smith’s methodological concern:

... [it is] ‘the need to invoke a wide variety of view-points and outlooks based on diverse experiences from far and near, rather than remaining contented with encounters – actual or counterfactual – with others living in the same cultural and social milieu, and with the same kind of experiences, prejudices and convictions about what is reasonable and what is not, and even beliefs about what is feasible and what is not’ (Sen 2009: 45).

In fact, while the ethical commitment to impartiality is most often attributed in contemporary moral and political philosophy to Immanuel Kant, Sen sees Smith's impartial spectator as being pioneering in this regard.¹⁵ He draws a distinction between closed and open impartiality, the former (a description of Rawls's 'veil of ignorance') being less adequate in arriving at principles of justice and the institutions which they would require; the latter (employing Smith's 'impartial spectator') instead seen as necessarily more open. The distinction of openness here, relates to the fact that in a Rawlsian elaboration of 'the original position' and of the 'veil of ignorance' (behind which members of a community come to agreement about principles of justice and the institutions which they would ultimately require) relies primarily on 'membership entitlement'. Instead, Smith's insistence on what Sen terms 'open impartiality' relies upon the importance of 'the enlightenment relevance [...] of views from others' (Sen 2009, 134).

So for Sen, the distinction between Smith and Rawls is three-fold. The first (described above) relates to who can be involved in deliberation over the principles of justice and their attendant institutional set-up. The second regards the comparative approach employed by Smith, in contrast to the transcendental institutionalist one employed by Rawls. And finally, Smith is understood by Sen to be more concerned with social outcome or realization than Rawls is. These differences lead Sen to argue that Rawls, eminent moral and political philosopher of our time, wholly misunderstood the importance of Smith's 'impartial spectator'. Rather than being based in strict contractarianism (as Rawls champions) or Benthamite utilitarianism, for Sen the usefulness of the 'impartial observer' stems from the fact that she can remain impartial (without closing off by way of membership entitlement); can 'work and enlighten without being *either* a social contractor, *or* a utilitarian in camouflage' (Sen 2009, 138).

This broader understanding of reasoning, impartiality and objectivity afforded by the use of Smith's 'impartial spectator' is also seen in contrast to both Rawls and Habermas, in the potential for practical determination of principles of justice. Rawls's

¹⁵ Sen, ever the champion of Adam Smith, points to the latter's invocation to 'examine one's own conduct as we imagine an impartial spectator would examine it', set out in his *Theory of Moral Sentiments*. This argument, he points out, pre-dates Kant's *Groundwork* and *Critique of Practical Reason* by over a quarter of a century. In fact, in a letter to his friend Markus Heinz at the time, Kant makes reference to Smith, causing Sen to suggest that Kant was indeed familiar with the 'proud Englishman [sic] Smith' (In Sen 2009, 124).

argument, quoted in a number of Sen's pieces on the subject of public reasoning and objectivity in the pursuit of justice, is as follows:

'To say that a political conviction is objective is to say that there are reasons, specified by a reasonable and mutually recognizable political conception (satisfying those essentials), sufficient to convince all reasonable persons that it is reasonable (quoted in Sen 2009, 43).

Here Sen also points to the normative implication/problem inherent in the identification of 'reasonable persons' to then draw the distinction with the more strictly procedural category which Habermas places on the act of public deliberation (rather than on the participants, reasonable or not, within that process). In the case of the latter, while the exacting demands placed by Habermas on public deliberation are categorically significant, Sen sees little that is very different between the two approaches in terms of their understanding of objectivity as being linked with the ability of a reasoned argument to withstand public scrutiny.

Finally, in a global context, Sen concerns himself with the reach and coverage of reasoned arguments and evaluations about justice. He bases his argument - that reasoning about justice should go beyond the boundaries of a state or region – on two grounds: *interests* and *perspectives*. Again, always within the remit of reasoned scrutiny of an 'impartial spectator', the importance of the first relates to fairness; to taking into account individuals' interests so as to avoid bias. The second, equally important in a discussion of global justice, relates instead to being able to avoid parochialism in our investigations of justice and injustice. To the practical reality of the first, Sen argues:

... our involvement with others through trade and communication is remarkably extensive in the contemporary world, and further, our global contacts, in terms of literary, artistic and scientific endeavour, make it hard for us to expect that an adequate consideration of diverse interests or concerns can be plausibly confined to the citizenry of any given country, ignoring all others (Sen 2009: 403).

In other words, there is an explicit understanding here of how the importance of 'interests' and 'perspectives' to moral reasoning is currently situated in a global context with competing examples of each. It is therefore inconceivable to Sen that a particular community or society should think itself able to come to a wholly adequate ethical decision without factoring in (in some fashion) those myriad interests and perspectives. It is this plurality of ethical stances which, through deliberation and public reason, fosters the universality of his basic understanding of freedoms and capabilities.

The avoidance of parochialism, in fact, necessitates the open impartiality upon which the broader framework of public reasoning within his idea of justice rests. If the discussion of the demands or elements of justice rest solely within particular localities (a country or region, he suggests, but to which we might also add institutional setting perhaps), he argues, 'there is a possible danger of ignoring or neglecting many challenging counter-arguments that might not have come up in local political debates, or even been accommodated in the discourses confined to the local culture, but which are eminently worth considering, in an impartial perspective' (Sen 2009, 403).

Most tellingly, Sen's appeal to public reasoning forces a distinction between sentiment or emotion and rationality in the context of public reasoning. He draws distinctions between Smith and Hume, arguing that the former's respect for the role of sentiment in the personal understanding of interests is often overlooked by contemporary theorists, but that it is ultimately his appeal to impartiality and reasoning which provides the proper vehicle for any effective deliberation on social choices. This distinction (both within the history of ideas and for the respective places for reason and emotion within any broader framework of justice and deliberations about justice) is one to which I will return in following chapters.

Suffice it for the moment to say that there is an implicit belief within Sen's placement of the two values that emotion and sentiment, while motivators for social action, are not transferable to the social level, in the way that reason might be. Put differently reason, as a mode of understanding, can be employed at the individual level and also at the social level, by virtue of its amenability to impartial reasoned scrutiny. Emotions, by extension, cannot. At most they appear to be relegated to an expression of *interests*. Ultimately, as he argues:

Resistance to injustice typically draws upon both indignation and argument. Frustration and ire can help to motivate us, and yet ultimately we have to rely, for both assessment and for effectiveness, on reasoned scrutiny to obtain a plausible and sustainable understanding of the basis of those complaints (if any) and what can be done to address the underlying problems (Sen 2009, 390).

Affect or sentiment, then, is understood as a ‘vested interest’. It may compel us to act upon a certain grievance or injustice but is neither an effective means of arriving at a ‘plausible and sustainable’ understanding of a problem; nor is it an ‘effective’ (read: sufficient) basis from which to act upon a given set of complaints. In essence, I would argue, Sen – by describing sentiments as vested interests – relegates them to an almost parochial status which would be inconsistent with the open impartiality demanded by Smith’s ‘spectator’. For Sen:

Smith’s insistence that we must view our sentiments, *inter alia*, at ‘a certain distance from us’ thus extends, beyond the imperative to scrutinize the influence of vested interests, to the need to question the captivating hold of entrenched traditions and customs (Sen 2009a, xx).

The implication is clear. Sentiment is understood as an emotional motivator but ultimately lacks the capacity to ‘travel’ beyond the parochial confines within which it necessarily finds itself. Impartial reason requires a certain distance from these particular expressions of emotion, so that any resultant decision or outcome of a social process can be said to meet the requirements of *interest* and *perspective* described above.

Put differently, the only real utility – by the logical extension of viewing affect as an ‘interest’ – of taking emotion (from various involved parties) into account is to avoid the charge of bias. The most important judgements however, stem from reason. Or, in Sen’s words again:

I believe Smith was right in thinking that ‘our most solid judgements... with regard to right and wrong, are regulated by maxims and ideas derived from an induction of reason’ (Sen 2009a, xxi).

For Sen, then, only reason affords the spectator with an adequate tool for assessing social matters inasmuch as it tends toward impartiality *and* inclusivity. As will be discussed in subsequent chapters, however, this reflects an understanding of inclusivity (as an antidote to parochialism) which is perhaps more quantitative than substantive. The idea that more ethical perspectives (or actors) leads to better (read: less parochial) ethical outcomes, fails to address *real* asymmetries of power and authority within which those ethical voices are free to be expressed in the first place. It also leaves unchallenged the notion that for an ethical perspective to be included in the first place, it must take on this ‘reasoned’ (impartial) appearance. Memory, context, sentiment (rage, shame, vulnerability) and need – those elements which provide not only the initial ethical sentiment but also the emotional sustenance for our concern toward these particular ethical questions over time – are often omitted, truncated or restricted in this framework of constitutive elements and ethical actors, ‘included’ in ethical discussion.

However, while the discussion thus far has highlighted a number of the constitutive elements which make up Sen’s approach, what is most important to emphasize is that, taken together, these elements provide a substantive, richer and more nuanced understanding of justice than a strict consequentialist or contractarian approach might. Social choice theory represents the basis of Sen’s writing in economic theory but also of the comparative or realization-based approach to his understanding of justice, described above. Most basically understood, this theory is used to “investigate how a group of people who make up the collectivity, a nation, a community, a family, a committee, an academy or whatever, how they can aggregate or put together rationally, the diverse and possibly divergent preferences and priorities the different members of that group have” (Sen 2009b, 264). This aggregation of myriad interests and preferences reflects an underlying critique waged by Sen against strict rational choice theory (RCT) within economics, over thirty years ago.

In “Rational Fools” (1977), Sen outlined what he saw as the fundamental weakness of RCT in predicting economic outcomes based on past ‘revealed’ preferences. The limitation of the approach, he argues, rests in the fact that it ascribes only one

foundational reasoning behind observed choices, namely personal utility maximization. If an individual is observed to make the same choice, time and time again, so that a revealed choice theorist might then be able to ascribe a utility function to her, any actual reason for her having made that decision, would be entirely lost. As he argues: 'whether you are a single-minded egoist or a raving altruist or a class-conscious militant, you will appear to be maximizing your own utility in this enchanted world of definitions' (Sen 1977, 323). The difficulty, in this limited understanding of the 'inputs' involved in individual choice, rests in a lack of appreciation for both sympathy and commitment. It is important to stress that even here, sympathy is understood in a selfish sense, insofar as an individual may make a decision based on not wanting to feel pain from another person's suffering, for example. In other words, rather than coming to that decision based on some notion of maximizing her own utility – and therefore on purely individualistic grounds – she arrived at this decision based on an understanding of the social context within which she found herself and in relation to which she might make a decision.

The strict RCT method of understanding individual choice – and, crucially for this discussion of social choices, the fact that all such decisions are only based on a single preference ordering of all possible choices – flattens all inputs to rest within one dimension of analysis. In other words, even if a decision is seen to fly in the face of social norms and conventions, it is understood as fully 'rational' if consistent with an individual's choice behaviour of utility maximization. Scornfully and, by now rather famously, Sen comments:

The *purely* economic man is indeed close to being a social moron. Economic theory has been much preoccupied with this rational fool decked in the glory of his *one* all-purpose ordering. To make room for the different concepts related to his behaviour we need a more elaborate structure (Sen 1977: 336).

In reality, the 'structure' of which he speaks, is better understood as a comprehensive process which leads to comprehensive outcomes (discussed below). While it is true that Sen goes on to describe a two-part 'structure' which takes into account an individual's ethical and subjective preferences, understood within the context of his writing on social

choice theory it is clear that an actual 'structure' (in contrast to RTC) is not so easily defined. The point to be emphasized here, then, is that in the determination of social action, it is necessary to take into consideration a number of often competing preferences and interests. Equally important is the understanding that individuals, when acting collectively, can and do make decisions based on personal interest, sympathy, commitment or a combination thereof, without there being one framework to describe how they will always behave. In this regard, then, sympathy and commitment (to a cause, for example) are not 'externalities' (as a RCT might contend), but central to a better understanding of the interests and preferences which will guide *actual* choices.

Of equal interest is Sen's discussion of what amounts to 'context' within our understanding of the bases upon which an individual's views (on a particular issue, for example) rest. As he describes it, "the nature of objectivity in epistemology, decision theory, and ethics has to take adequate note of the parametric dependence of observation and inference on the position of the observer" (Sen 1993a, 126). These 'parameters' are what he calls *positional objectivity*, namely the idea that an individual's 'objective' observation of phenomena in the world around is located within parameters relating to that individual's social context (education, background, etc). How this differs from 'subjectivity' is quite nuanced in Sen's description. In essence, subjectivity in the characteristics which are seen to influence views and opinions can still be said to fall within certain positional parameters (objective to the person in question). Furthermore, he argues:

In the context of scrutinizing the subjective arbitrariness of some views, it remains necessary to examine whether those views could be made to fit positional objectivity only through parametric specifications that invoke special mental tendencies, particular types of inexperience, or constrained features of reasoning (Sen 1993a: 137).

In other words, only those other subjective viewpoints, outside of these parameters, would be understood as properly 'subjective'. In many regards, this distinction appears tenuous. Ultimately, however, it is not how the positional objectivity is *defined* which makes it an important element in Sen's broader theories, but rather how it is *employed*.

The argument he forwards is one which understands all observation as position-dependent. In that regard, it appears, context matters and would figure prominently in his ideas of social choice. In terms of the actual process of public scrutiny or decision-making within a particular social context, he advocates the approach of ‘trans-positional assessment’, or the synthesis of different views from different viewpoints (Sen 1993a: 130). Unlike the impartial spectator described above, in the case of employing such a trans-positional assessment, he argues that it is very much an *internal* scrutiny. In other words, such an assessment is conducted within the society in question. And the reason that such a distinction is important, is that it calls into question some of the more generalizing tendencies inherent within a cultural relativism approach. Often times, those arguing for such an approach take the viewpoint of only one segment of society as if it were the view of the society as a whole. If instead a trans-positional assessment is conducted,¹⁶ the positional views *within* that society, can be properly assessed. In light of his other writings on human rights (specifically in response to ‘Asian values’) discussed above, it is then clear why he would argue that “the terms of the debate on cultural relativism have to be thoroughly re-examined in the life of the issues raised by the positional conception of objectivity” (Sen 1993a, 140). It would not be acceptable, by this logic, to simply take an establishment view or majority opinion on a particular issue when assessing the appropriateness of the extant social choice outcome.

As multi-faceted as his understanding of inputs (utility, sympathy or commitment) or of their aggregates (understood here as the synthesis of positional objectivities), Sen emphasizes also a more nuanced understanding of outcomes. While a very basic distinction is drawn between *culmination* (or cumulative) *outcomes* and *comprehensive outcomes*, it is the description of the latter which is key to his exposition of both social choice and justice, I would argue. Comprehensive outcomes are seen to include ‘actions undertaken, agencies involved, processes used, etc. *along with* the simple [culmination] outcomes seen in a way that is detached from [these] processes, agencies and relations’ (Sen 2009, 215). Similar to his critique of the banal simplicity of utility maximization in predicting economic choices, his rejection of purely culmination-

¹⁶ Sen does not however outline what is to be done in the case of societies within which such an assessment may not be possible, due to repression, lack of information, etc. It is perhaps left to be assumed that in most cases, with enough effort and collection of information/data, these viewpoints (dissident and otherwise) are identifiable.

based outcomes, reflects a deeper critique of utilitarian justifications for social choices which runs through his work.

At the same time, however, a fine line is tread here between strictly utilitarian determinations of social choices and the understanding that ‘consequence-sensitive reasoning is necessary for an adequately broad understanding of the idea of responsibility’ (Sen 2009, 218). Following a more general definition of consequentialism (thus escaping the utilitarian limitation of ignoring all consequences except those relating to utility) proffered by Philip Pettit, Sen therefore understands consequentialism thusly:

It is ... ‘the requirement that any choice of actions (or rules, or strategies, or whatever) be based on selecting an alternative that produces no worse an overall outcome than any other available alternative’ (Sen 2000: 478).

By defining a consequentialist evaluative method more broadly, then, Sen is able to argue that any critiques of consequentialism are due to a conflation of this basic idea with three extraneous (and unnecessary) assumptions: 1) that all possible choices must be ranked, thus mistaking *optimization* of choice for maximization of outcome; 2) the removal of “actions, motives, processes,” which would be necessary in and just evaluation of the comprehensive outcome of a particular choice; and 3) disregarding the positionality of the constitutive elements of the aggregate viewpoint (and thus perhaps over-simplifying an assessment) (Sen 2000, 502).

And it is on the incorrectness of the second assumption, I would argue, that a great deal of Sen’s other arguments (on justice as process of comparison or on objective positionality) rest. Furthermore, in relation to the exposition of care ethics which will be highlighted in subsequent chapters, this importance that he gives to relationality, is most germane. Because his idea of justice centres on a relative ranking of different social choices and because these choices reflect ongoing relations and capabilities within a particular societal context, *relations* (important to care ethics) figure prominently. Again, in his words:

A person not only has good reason to note the consequences that would follow from a particular choice, but also to take an adequately broad view of the realizations that would result, including the nature of the agencies involved, *the processes used and the relationships of people* (Sen 2009: 219 – my emphasis).

In other words, just as individual choices cannot be understood without reference to questions of sympathy or commitment, so too socially, choices cannot be properly assessed only by the tangible (e.g. policy) outcomes which they generate. For Rawls, individuals in an original position, behind a veil of ignorance, will create ideal institutions and rules and norms arrived at by reasonable people and upon which all reasonable people should agree. In a sense, the construction of a good process is, in a first instance, important; the result, however, is a given. By Sen's iteration instead, consequentialist evaluation occurs during *and* after a process, taking into account actual positional (rather than abstract) views and the resultant choices which they generate. Furthermore, importance is given to sentiment and relationships, although never explicitly ranked in importance in relation to public reason or scrutiny by an impartial spectator.

Regardless of the ambiguity which remains with regard to how precisely sentiment or relationship are to be 'taken into account', it is not surprising that the capability approach has been described as one of 'relational ontology'. By this interpretation, a particular capability or set of capabilities, is seen as being the outcome of 'the interaction of an individual's capacities and the individual's position relative to others in society' (Longshore Smith and Seward 2009, 214). There are both individual and social causes for the functioning of a given capability and for the social choices which it allows members within that society to take. It is, in fact, to questions of relationality (how are ethical actors situated in relation to one another?), normative moral decisions ('what should we do?') and ethical decision-making and practice ('how should we decide?') that I will return in subsequent chapters.

2.2) Development's 'Ten Commandments': Martha Nussbaum's Central Capabilities

Within their many writings on capabilities, both Sen and Nussbaum would systematically and methodically work through the alternating ethical frameworks for development, so as to reject the least theoretically powerful. As mentioned above, this method for or method toward a reflective equilibrium (while not focussing as does Rawls on primary goods or, specifically, commodities) involved dismantling the more popular ethical approaches for development to date – the commodity approach, the utilitarian approach and the basic needs approach. With regards the first, a basic critique could also follow a Marxist approach which suggests that development ethics which are based primarily on a notion that a society develops when its basic resource needs are met, can degenerate into a form of commodity fetishisation. The critique of one (important and influential) variant of utilitarian development approaches was already assessed in the discussion on RCT (above).

So, in terms of the Basic Needs Approach (BNA)¹⁷, both effectively understood it to have 'failed to clarify the nature and variety of needs to justify (basic) needs as a moral category more fundamental than commodities, utilities, human flourishing, or 'rights' (Crocker 2008: 131). As Crocker goes on to explain, Sen – sympathetic to the role that basic need might play in moral deliberation – understood the BNA as an approach more properly subsumed into his capability approach, so that it could better address the *depth* of particular deprivations. Capabilities could here 'be employed to address such questions as the depth of poverty, those unable to reach the threshold (of basic need), and inequalities within and between poor countries' (Crocker 2008: 134).

Nussbaum instead appears to take a more normative view of 'need'. While also still emphasising the centrality of capabilities, she seems to imply that there is a

¹⁷ As articulated in the 1970s and 80s by development economists, the Basic Needs Approach to international development was both a precursor to the Human Development approach and a means of establishing an *absolute minimum* for the measurement of absolute poverty, understood as the possession of those consumption goods (and in some iterations resources) necessary for the promotion of long-term physical well-being, or the type of life that people are able to lead (See Crocker 2008: 129-130; Ghai 1978: 16-18). It is also a very clear precursor the Human Capabilities approach insofar as its focus is on the various *good* lives which people and communities might choose. While Sen understood it to be a breakthrough in development economics thinking, he understood the HCA as being a better version of a needs approach, providing more secure theoretical foundations (see Sen 1981: 301).

fundamental *need* for functioning which, as individuals and societies we *should* value and promote. In this sense humans need to develop their nascent capabilities and, more importantly, certain valuable human capabilities are acquired and displayed precisely in relation to certain needs in the sense of what we may lack or by what limits us (Crocker 2008: 139). In this one regard, Crocker views Nussbaum's as a more nuanced treatment of the concept of human need. It is also one which informs her central capabilities. For Nussbaum, upon careful reflection, there are ten central capabilities, without which none other can follow. In other words, it is understood that a 'decent political order must secure to all citizens at least a threshold of these ten Central Capabilities' (Nussbaum 2011: 33):

- 1) Life
- 2) Bodily Health
- 3) Bodily Integrity
- 4) Senses, imagination, and thought
- 5) Emotions
- 6) Practical Reason
- 7) Affiliation
- 8) Other Species (to live with concern for the world of nature)
- 9) Play (freedom to enjoy recreational activities)
- 10) Control over one's Environment
 - a. political (being able to participate in political choices)
 - b. material (specifically having property rights, equal to others)

Furthermore, there are two of these which she understands to be 'architectonic' insofar as they 'pervade the others' (Nussbaum 2011: 39) – affiliation and practical reason. The latter refers primarily to having the ability to form a conception of the good life and being able to plan that good life. Although not made explicit, it can be assumed here that the emphasis is on the individual and that such a 'conception' of the good life has most value within that individual. While it is true that, perhaps obviously for what is considered a liberal political theoretical framework, the capabilities listed are understood first and foremost to belong to individuals and (only by extension to groups) (Nussbaum 2011: 35). Lest we imagine this to be a purely solitary understanding of individual value and aspiration, the second architectonic capability, affiliation, is defined by Nussbaum in two specific ways. On the one hand it relates to being able to live 'with

and toward' others, to recognise and to show concern for other human beings (Nussbaum 2011: 34). On the other hand it also requires being able to have/enjoy the 'social bases of self-respect and nonhumiliation' (Nussbaum 2011: 34). Here too, the emphasis remains with the individual, rather than which the social milieu within which the *meaning* for that self-respect might take place.

In effect, it would appear that Nussbaum, through these supposedly 'pervasive' two capabilities provides a social / public reasoning alternative to Sen's more elaborate discussion above. However, it is difficult to see this more concise variation as anything more than a highly individualised lens through which to understand the dynamics of both (public) reasoning (ultimately the emphasis is on the critical view that the individual supposedly comes to on her own) and of relationship (where again the emphasis on non-humiliation relates solely to ensuring primarily a sense of *self*). Ultimately, and as will be discussed in subsequent chapters, while the individual is meant to be *respected* as a social being, there is little sense of how these basic, fundamental moral principles reflect the social and relational reality, at least alluded to in Sen's description.

2.3) Human Rights, Public Reason and the Right to Development (RTD)

While the Millennium Development Goals have come to dominate most discussions of the contemporary policy approach to international development policies, there is another which also warrants discussion, as it works to buttress the MDGs and can further be linked to Sen's broader 'idea' of justice and specific writings on human rights. In 1986 the UN General Assembly adopted, albeit with opposition, the Declaration on the Right to Development which stated that:

'...The Right to development is an inalienable human right by virtue of which every human person and all peoples are entitled to participate in, contribute to, and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development, in which all human rights and fundamental freedoms can be fully realised' (UNGA 1986: Art. 1)

Though full consensus could not be reached, further deliberations took place and in 1993, at the World Conference on Human Rights, the Vienna Declaration was unanimously adopted, which recognised the ‘interdependence and indivisibility of all human rights’ (Kirchmeier 2006: 4), thus linking the Right to Development (RTD) with the wider context of a human rights framework. As the Independent Expert on the Right to Development, Arjun Sengupta¹⁸ was tasked with better clarifying the concept and in so doing he found his reports and articles to be ‘overwhelmingly influenced’ by Amartya Sen’s writings on rights and development (Sengupta 2008: 82).

Given the ubiquitous nature of the rhetoric of human rights in international policy circles, and the more recent trend to conceive of development as the ‘right’ of individuals and societies (UN 2000), it is clear that Sen should devote a substantive role within his development argument to human rights, which he then goes on to further elaborate in subsequent expositions (Sen 2004; Sen 2009). And yet, one of the primary objections to rights-based arguments “is that rights are essentially entitlement claims but that claims to entitlement don’t make sense unless it is clear from whom those entitlements can be claimed” (Hutchings 2010: 87). Or, less generously, “the suspicion is that there is something a little simple-minded about the entire conceptual structure that underlies the oratory on human rights” (Sen 1999: 227). In the context of development, it would seem, this objection is most appropriate, given the lack of an ‘entitlement-guaranteeing’ body.

In *Development as Freedom*, three broad critiques of human rights are outlined, to which the author then offers an initial response. The *legitimacy* critique, described by Hutchings (above) would argue that the absence of an international legal authority (exercising real political power) makes the ‘right’ to development rather nominal at best. In response, Sen argues that human rights should be seen “as a system of ethical reasoning and as the *basis* for political demands” (Sen 1999, 230). The second critique, related to the first, he calls the *coherence* critique. If person A has some right to x then there has to be some agency B that has a *duty* to provide A with x. Here, Sen invokes the Kantian distinction between ‘perfect’ and ‘imperfect’ obligations to argue that an ‘imperfect’ duty could manifest itself as the reasoned scrutiny of a human rights claim

¹⁸ Arjun Sengupta – Indian Member of Parliament from 2006-2010 and UN Expert on the Right to Development 1998-2003.

and the attempt within all means possible to meet that claim. This distinction is further elaborated in Sen's particular theory on human rights (Sen 2004) described below.

Finally, the *cultural* critique, argues that because rights are the domain of social ethics, they cannot be universal or universalizable. From this vantage point especially, Sen argues, the dismissal of human rights has at least tacitly undergirded the justification for various authoritarian regimes in Asia. Furthermore, such an argument does not take into account the myriad differences within Asia (and within Asian philosophical and historical traditions, from pre-Confucian and Confucian philosophy to Mahayana Buddhism) through which a practice of human rights would very easily flourish.¹⁹ Pointing to the complexity of Confucian thought and also to examples of political tolerance and freedom in Indian philosophy, Sen then casts an equal admonishment toward a backward reading of European history which takes recent (post-Enlightenment) traditions of liberal freedom as somehow 'unique' to the European experience (Sen 1999: 233). So in his initial articulation of the importance of human rights in development (compared, say, to simply a discussion of freedoms), his case for them rests on three elements: 1) their intrinsic importance; 2) their consequential role in providing political incentives for economic security; and 3) their constitutive role in the genesis of values (Sen 1999: 246).

In a more nuanced elaboration of these same principles, he subsequently goes on to suggest that any theory of human rights – where human rights are properly understood ethical claims – would need to address six key questions (Sen 2004: 318-319):

- 1) What kind of statement does a declaration of human rights make?
- 2) What makes human rights important?
- 3) What duties and obligations do human rights generate?
- 4) Through what forms of actions can human rights be promoted, and in particular, should legislation be the principal, or even necessary, means of implementation of those rights?

¹⁹ See here also Kim Dae Jung's critique of the 'culturally-based' justification for authoritarianism often given by then Prime Minister of Singapore, Lee Kuan Yew (Kim *Foreign Affairs* 1994); see also Doh Chull Shin's comparative empirical survey of six Confucian countries (Shin 2012) – far more nuanced than PM Lee, the study argues that Confucian values, insofar as they reflect social legacies of interpersonal trust and tolerance, *do* provide a cultural environment within which democratic civic life (and by extension *human* rights, broadly conceived) would easily flourish.

- 5) Can economic and social rights (the so-called second-generation rights) be reasonably included among human rights?
- 6) Last but not least, how can proposals of human rights be defended or challenged, and how should their claim to a universal status be assessed, especially in a world with much cultural variation and widely diverse practice?

The answers to these questions can already be gleaned throughout the exposition of his theory on capabilities and freedoms in relation to development. To the first, fourth and fifth questions, the answers are: ethical claims; monitoring, public recognition or advocacy (discussed below); and yes, insofar as these second-generation rights reflect freedoms and freedoms lie at the heart of the discussion on development and justice. More meticulously specified, instead, are his responses to the other three questions. Firstly, the importance of a human right can be determined, he argues, based on the freedom to which it relates. This, in turn, can be measured or defended if it meets a ‘threshold condition’ which is constituted by a right’s a) special importance and b) social influenceability (Sen 2004: 319). To illustrate this point, he gives the examples of the right not to be assaulted and the right to tranquillity. In the case of the former, both threshold conditions are easily met, while for the latter it is, at first blush, difficult to see how it could be socially influenceable (or actionable). In this case, ‘the right to tranquillity’ would not be seen as a human right proper.

To the third question, the response is that inasmuch as the ethical claims engendered by human rights language require action from agents who are *in a position to be able to help* in upholding the underlying freedom of the right-holder in question, there is an attendant duty. Here the distinction between perfect and imperfect obligations is revisited, in which he argues that “*if one is in a plausible position to do something* effective in preventing the violation of such a right, then one does have the obligation to consider doing just that” (341). Otherwise, for all intents and purposes, “even though they differ in content, imperfect obligations are correlative with justice in the same way as perfect obligations are” (Sen 2004: 319). The real world example which Sen gives for this distinction involves a legislated right – the right to not be assaulted. The oft-cited example (albeit in discussions of group psychology) is that of Kitty Genovese, the young nurse in 1964 who was stabbed to death outside her apartment building in Queens, New York, in clear sight many onlookers (in their apartments). In this

case, the murderer had a perfect obligation not to inflict harm upon Ms. Genovese, but (more importantly) the onlookers had an imperfect obligation to “seriously [or reasonably] consider providing the help which they could reasonably be expected to provide” in such a case (Sen 2004, 341). It should be noted that this fine point is not simply high-minded or philosophical, but one with comparative (practical) import. To paraphrase, the simple requirement to give *reasonable consideration* to these ethical claims is not empty because the fact that we should be willing to consider seriously what ought to be done in response, is already *better* than the assumption that unless we have actually caused the harm or the loss of freedom for which the right is being claimed, we have no reason to consider its actionable implications. *This*, for Sen, is precisely where the ‘territory’ of human rights lies (Sen 2004: 340).

As stated above then, for Sen human rights are best understood as ‘pronouncements in social ethics, sustainable by open public reasoning’ (Sen 2004, 355-356). Pointing to a number of international declarations (from the UN to the EU) which uphold or rather outline a list of clearly definable human rights, he argues that such declarations are “motivated by the idea that the *ethical* force of human rights is made more powerful in practice through giving it social recognition and an acknowledged status, even when no legal enforcement is instituted” (Sen 2003: 84). While not necessarily under the strict purview of legal frameworks (or legislation), they can be implemented through public recognition, agitation and monitoring. Furthermore, in this sense social recognition, informational monitoring and public agitation can also themselves be seen as explicit of the reasoning which moves human rights activists and which therefore gives moral legitimacy to human rights claims. In other words, the invocation of and advocacy for a certain right *gives* it its legitimacy.

In countering the claim that some human rights do exist, but that second-generation (socio-economic) rights do not, he responds:

‘A human right can serve as a parent not only of law, but also of other ways of advancing the cause of that right. Even the fulfilment of the first-generation rights (such as religious liberty, freedom from arbitrary arrest, the right not to be assaulted and killed) depends not only on legislation but also on public discussion, social monitoring, investigative reporting, and social work’. (Sen 2008a: 2010)

And finally, in response to the question regarding the universalizability of human rights, he is equally affirmative. Again referring to the importance he gives to the role of reasoned public scrutiny (discussed further in Section IV below) in our deliberations on development, rights, or justice, he argues that “the universality of human rights relates to the idea of survivability in unobstructed discussion – open to persons across national boundaries” (Sen 2004, 320). This, however, is realized “given a free flow of information and uncurbed opportunity to discuss differing points of view” (Sen 2004, 320). However, it seems difficult to imagine how such an optimistic view, unencumbered by the obvious reality of despots and dictators and lack of access on the part of the world’s most disadvantaged to this happy free-flow of information, could ever adequately be realized.

In conjunction with this language of rights, in fact preceding it and supplanting the basic needs approaches of the 1970s, Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum were the principal architects of the ‘capabilities’ approach. While differences exist between their understanding of this concept – primarily with regard to the separatedness (Sen) or not (Nussbaum) between agency and well-being – this new philosophical orientation offered both a new conceptual definition of development (freedom) as well as a means by which to measure or investigate it (the number of capabilities a person is able to enjoy). It is not difficult then to see the genealogy of this approach, when coupled with the language and instruments of ‘rights’ that the Millennium Development Goals should emerge.

Conclusion

My overall aim in this chapter has been to describe and contextualise the key ethical themes around which the past fifteen years of international development policy have been oriented, as will likely the next fifteen. In understanding this ethical backdrop, it is necessary to see both the MDGs and RTD within the context of both Sen’s wider work on justice, and within the capabilities approach more broadly understood (even if more explicitly specified, as with Nussbaum). It is not difficult then to see how Sen’s understanding on public deliberation and impartiality provides the basis for a framework of MDGs which were articulated and codified in advance of the project and then used primarily as a social barometer of sorts to ‘measure’ the attainment of certain

capabilities. And while he might not specify basic capabilities as Nussbaum does, both see the Right to Development as a logical (if imperfect) extension of the capabilities approach (Nussbaum in fact sees her central capabilities as perhaps more robust than many human rights approaches).

Specifically on the question of whether or not their particular theories constitute an outcomes-based understanding of Development, the picture is slightly more complex. The fact that capabilities might be easily identified and fit well into Sen's notion of measurable aspects of 'beings and doings', one might think that it is his iteration of the capabilities approach which would most easily lead to a more limited 'outcomes' emphasis in development policy. And yet, given his repeated refusal to prioritise specific capabilities, coupled with the highest of value which he places on public deliberation and reason, it is perhaps in this context that we might view his approach as most related to an ethical space. Further, the distinction between development theory and development practice is quite helpful. While Nussbaum's central capabilities preclude the possibility of any type of public reason which might reject, amend or dispute those 10, it is arguably the most restrictive and partial approach and therefore also runs directly against those post-development writings (see Chapter 1) which strive for myriad different notions of what development 'is'.

Here, Amartya Sen's various works (on rational and social choice, on development and on human rights) serve to paint a picture that is more open and perhaps most amenable to modification and discussion (especially when taken up in discussions of deliberative democracy, in Chapter 7). By contrast, while Nussbaum presents some nuance to the appreciation for physical disability and a cursory assessment of human vulnerability – discussed further in Chapter 3 – it is difficult to recognise her central capabilities as more than a decidedly particularist notion of the central values or versions of 'freedom', passing itself off as a universal (singular) truth with regard to development.

In effect, David Crocker is correct in suggesting that Sen and Nussbaum respond to Rawls on two entirely different levels, with regard to justice. For Sen, his rejection only of the Rawlsian emphasis on primary goods in favour of broadly undefined capabilities, allows him to 'carve out' (within an ethical context) 'capability space' (Crocker 2008: 125). Nussbaum, instead, by reading Rawls's as a liberal conception of

the human good (with choice *and* sociality understood as intrinsic to that good), feels justified in being able to specify particular capabilities. This, I contend, would lead to an ever more restrictive understanding of ‘the good’. In fact, one wonders if – given recent talk of including property rights in the post-MDG framework – we are not already seeing this particularistic, liberal, individual desire (or need) ‘outcome’ on the horizon. With regard to human emotion and sociability (*not* related to public reason), Nussbaum does however manage to emphasise a theoretical space for the concept of ‘need’ and also (albeit very superficially addressed) human vulnerability. In particular, her rather basic treatment of Wolff and De-Shallitt’s concept of corrosive disadvantages (see Chapter 3), and discussion on human dignity, provide an important starting point for understanding the ‘ethical space’ so nicely sketched by Sen, to be better understood in an intersectional and fundamentally relational way, given contextual meaning and dependent upon human emotion, need and care for self and other.

3. FROM THE ETHICS OF BETTER DEVELOPMENT TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF BETTER ETHICS: DIGNITY IN JUSTICE OR THE INTERSECTIONALITY OF HUMAN VULNERABILITY?

Too many ethicists who comment on social justice rest content with portraying ideal ends and passing adverse judgement on the means used by politicians, planners, or others to mobilize social energies. This approach fails because it remains outside the real criteria of decision invoked by those who, in plying their craft as decision-makers, make and unmake social values. (Goulet 1988: 157)

Introduction

In his desire to define the contours of a ‘new discipline’ (development ethics), Denis Goulet outlined the four levels at which he understood ethical discourse to be conducted (Goulet 1995: 11). In the first instance, it related to general ends. Next, it required the specifying of criteria which could indicate when these ends could be shown to exist in particular situations. This involved deciding upon c) systems of interrelated means, understood as ‘strategies’ for pursuing the particular ends in question. And finally d) individual means, understood discretely. But development above all else was, for Goulet, ‘a question of values and human attitudes, self-defined goals, and criteria for determining what are tolerable costs to be borne out in the course of change (Goulet 1997: 1161). To the extent that Sen’s understanding of capabilities leaves space, through the mechanism of social choice, to determine what those values or ends are, parts of his theory can be said to fit Goulet’s understanding of ethical discourse. Goulet believed that most of the heated exchanges occurred within the middle two categories, simply because the first (stated values of the good) could be used by anyone and to justify any political ideology (e.g. a dictator will still claim to cherish peace). The fourth, that of individual means, instead, ‘breeds little discord because each means, taken in isolation, can usually be put to a good or bad use and cannot be characterized as good or bad except by reference to diverse circumstances, motivations, constraints and consequences’ (Goulet 1995: 12).²⁰

²⁰ I am less convinced by this last element, insofar as Goulet’s writings on this particular argument (he repeats it across various later writings – see Goulet 1997; Goulet 2006) don’t offer examples as to which

In Chapter 2, I sought to contextualise Sen's work on development as 'freedom' within his broader philosophical thought on justice and on social choice. I then contrasted it with the other primary capabilities approach (Nussbaum) to argue that in many respects it can be considered both a theory of right and a theory of good (human flourishing, the good; constitutive central capabilities-attainment, the right). Sen's own focus on social choice theory and Nussbaum's reliance on a deductive approach to articulating ten universal capabilities, underscore a rationalist bias to their approaches (even when appeal is made to 'intuition' – see 3.1 below). In this Chapter, I will describe the shift from Rawlsian justice and the notion of primary goods to the HCA, so as to highlight the agentic bias which then develops in the theorists' understanding of concepts such as 'dignity' and 'disadvantage'. Goulet, instead, through his descriptions of dignity, appears to understand the concept as relating to a threshold of possessions or goods. Surely, he argues, 'human dignity is defined in myriad ways, but beneath a minimum level of possessions life is sub-human' (Goulet 2006: 30). It is an idea of 'dignity', therefore, wedded to the value of 'having enough' (so as to live a dignified life). It is the agentic shift, in the writings of Sen and Nussbaum, then, which I wish to explore before returning to Goulet's idea of the *central* concern of development, namely 'vulnerability'.

It is vulnerability, not disadvantage or dignity (although they are related), which must take centre-stage in the four-part ethical dialogue he envisions. He sees the concept as being of primary concern because it is the human condition felt most acutely in the face of the large-scale and often disruptive impact which social change engenders. His is a reflection, then, on an aspect of the human conditions which he understands to be present, to varying degrees, in all societies. As such it requires imaginative and collaborative engagement and an understanding of development ethics, not as a science but as an art. In his words:

discrete means he's referring to. Are they the disaggregated version of the interrelated system of means described in c? For example, if empathy is understood as a discrete means to a particular end (where for example Nussbaum interrogates whether it is necessary/sufficient for compassionate responses – see my discussion in Chapter 5.1) is it the isolation of this one means which Goulet discounts, or the fact that a particular means cannot be characterised as good or bad (in which case, given the Nussbaum example, she would disagree insofar as, by her definition of compassion, for it to be 'good' it *always* must contain a eudaimonic component).

‘No abstract deductive ethics can serve, for the discipline of development is an art and not a science: it deals with decisions and actions taken in domains of high uncertainty, not with orderly or perfect patterns of logic or design’ (Goulet 1995: 24).

My discussion of his understanding of vulnerability (of the weak and of the powerful), combined with his idea of the ‘*shock* of underdevelopment’, is meant to premise my discussions on a critical ethics of care (Chapter 4) and on empathy (Chapter 5). Perhaps most useful to Goulet’s intended goal of creating a ‘new discipline’ within the context of development, I introduce Kimberly Hutchings’s treatment of the concept of ‘vulnerable judgement’. Here, the ethicist, rather than aspire to the invulnerability of judgement, derived from a rationalist mode of moral reasoning, accepts or even ‘embrace[s] the risk of judgement as one in which wins and losses are crucial for everyone, including the moral theorist herself as well as those about whom she writes’ (Hutchings 2013: 37).

In the face of multiple, even intersecting ‘vulnerabilities’ (moral, political, social, economic), I then turn to the concept of trust and its treatment across a number of different literatures. I suggest, as would Goulet, that notions of solidarity – but then also tied up with the care ethics notions of dependency, relational autonomy, responsibility and responsiveness, which I explore in Chapter 4 – are very much tied into the idea of ‘trust’. Whether or not Goulet understood it as a new compact (or multiple compacts),²¹ he suggested that it could be ‘based only on increasing trust, shared benefits, and proportionally distributed power’. And with relation to his concept of the ‘*shock*’ of development – signifying an existential-affective response – I discuss how the concept of trust has been understood in international relations literature (through the work of Torsten Michel 2013; 2013a) and also how it relates to empathy (Agosta 2011). I suggest that the focus on vulnerability and the ethical and affective responses of trust (or solidarity), provide a counter to the individualistic, agentic and rationalistic biases in the HCA.

And finally, as another tool in the ethicist’s toolkit, I briefly describe intersectionality or the use of an intersectional lens when examining questions of power. Almost entirely un-investigated within the context of development ethics, I suggest that

²¹ It is a term I have only found once in his writings (see Goulet 2006, 127).

‘intersectionality’ – a multi-dimensional research paradigm which seeks to advance social justice ideals, to emphasize the fluidity of social categories and to interrupt processes of power and domination (Hankivsky and Cormier 2009) – provides an innovative complement the critical ethics being described here. The transformative potential of a more nuanced definition of ‘development’ – not to mention that of ‘need’, ‘responsibility’, ‘interdependence’, ‘justice’ and ‘care’ in international discourse – then becomes clear. Vulnerability, trust and the intersecting nature of power, privilege and identity, point to the need for an ethic of international development which prioritises social connections and attending to them. To respond to vulnerability and to establish trust, means to understand ethical judgement and decisions not from a rationalist standpoint but in relation to how these judgements are then embodied or experienced. Returning to Goulet:

‘the essential task of development ethics is to render development actions humane to assure that the painful changes launched under the banner of development not produce anti-development, which destroys cultures and exacts undue sacrifices in individual suffering and societal well-being, all in the name of profit, an absolutized ideology, or some alleged efficiency imperative’ (Goulet 1995: 27).

Consistently this project, for Goulet, was something best done *with those* who would most be effected by such actions. His discussion of vulnerability and the need to create conditions for trust within and across communities is a compelling one. Further, his emphasis on the fact that development cannot be properly understood, let alone responded to, until such time as ‘would-be developers [...] cross the threshold separating rationalist self-sufficiency from vulnerability [...] to comprehend underdevelopment as it truly is. They need to discover – by experiencing impotence and vulnerability – that what appears normal is abnormal, and that what appears aberrant is the lot of the common man’ (Goulet 1971: 24).

3.1) The Ethics of Better Development: The Human Development Approach or Justice through Dignity

Sen's 'actionable' ethic of justice

Ten years after the publishing of *Development as Freedom*, Amartya Sen's exposition of a fully-fledged theory of justice – which either out of respect for the distinct contribution made by his friend the late John Rawls to the topic, or as a means of distinguishing his approach from the latter's, is presented simply as an 'idea' – draws many threads together from his previous work on capabilities, social choice theory, comparative ranking measures, human rights and comparative philosophy. *The Idea of Justice* may not prove to be as momentous a change in focus as *Development as Freedom* was to long-held views about the nature of human development, but certain parallels of importance can be drawn. Again challenging firmly-entrenched orthodoxy, Sen distinguishes his theory from Rawls's broadly, by highlighting what he sees as two separate traditions within Enlightenment thought.

Contemporary articulations of a theory of justice, he argues, can be described as following a *transcendental institutionalism* line of reasoning, employed by Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Kant and (to greatest contemporary effect) Rawls. This approach is distinguished by two features: 1) a focus on the identification of 'perfect justice' (an ideal type); and 2) a focus on 'getting institutions right' (rather than on the *actual* societies which would result from this idea of justice combined with these institutions). These are alternatively referred to as the social contractarian approaches to justice. More compelling to Sen, instead, is this second thread in Enlightenment thought which he identifies in the writings of such disparate figures as Smith, de Condorcet, Bentham, Wollstonecraft, Marx and John Stewart Mill. From their thought, he establishes a *realization-focused comparison* approach to justice, concerned not with ideal justice but with the evaluation of real justice and injustice in the world around. There is, for Sen, a "momentous distance" between these two approaches (Sen 2009: 7).

To illustrate the point, Sen reminds the reader that transcendental identification does not much help when we are wanting to order or rank or simply compare two sets of justice arrangements in the real world, neither of which would satisfy the

requirements of a social contractarian description of perfect justice. For example, he argues:

How might we compare, say, 1) the USA today as it is, with its totality of problems, including the absence of medical insurance for more than 40 million people, and 2) an alternative where the lack of guaranteed medical insurance had been fully remedied although all other problems existing in the USA remained? (Sen 2006a: 337)

Furthermore, any approach to justice, like Rawls's, "that proposes to follow up the choice of principles of justice by the rigidity of a unique institutional structure... and which proceeds to tell us, step by step, an *as if* history of the unfolding of justice, cannot easily accommodate the co-survival of competing principles that do not speak in one voice" (Sen 2009: 45-46). This point can also be illustrated by the example made above. While neither of the two countries in question might be said to possess the unique, ideal institutional structure, there must be a means within a theory of justice to be able to compare justice with injustice. More importantly, "the grand partition between 'just' and 'non-just', which is what a theory of transcendental justice yields, would leave a society on the 'non-just' side even after all feasible reforms that are accepted as justice-enhancing have been carried out" (Sen 2010, 245). Rather than imposing a rigid institutional framework, then, Sen argues that "considerable heterogeneity of perspectives can be accommodated internally *within* a capacious theory, generating partially complete rankings which help to separate out plausible decisions (if not the 'best' decision) from clearly rejected proposals" (Sen 2009 – 397).

The point to be emphasized, then, is that for Sen, "any theory of justice that tries to give any kind of guidance to public policy or personal behaviour" will necessarily be concerned with comparisons rather than ideal types (Sen 2010: 244). Indeed the formulation – if not even the answer to – the transcendental question is neither necessary nor sufficient in comparative concerns. Furthermore, in all historical (real) examples of the pursuit of justice, the comparative approach has been the driving force behind the search for such justice, despite what political or ideological slogans might have been claimed. What is actually needed, then, he argues, "is an agreement based

on public reasoning, on rankings of alternatives that *can be realized*” (Sen 2009: 17 – my emphasis).

In addition to the broader distinction that Sen draws between his comparative theory of justice and the transcendental one espoused by Rawls, there is also an important procedural distinction which Sen returns to, quite obviously – capabilities. Before doing so, he seeks to emphasize the similarities between both theories’ pursuit of what Rawls termed ‘justice as fairness’. He argues “I am entirely persuaded by Rawls that fairness is the underlying concept that helps us to understand the demands of justice, and even though I do not believe that the impartiality captured in the reflective device of the ‘original position’ is adequate for the purpose [...] this is not a rebellion against the basic Rawlsian idea of the foundational priority of fairness (Sen 2010: 241).

So as not to overstate the distinction drawn between Sen’s ‘capabilities’ and Rawlsian ‘primary goods’, their employment within a very specific aspect of the theory of justice should be emphasised. Two principles underpin Rawls’s contractarian approach. On the first principle – the priority given to liberty of the individual – Sen is in full agreement. The second principle can be divided in two parts: 1) equality in procedural justice (or equal access to the institutions of justice) and 2) the allocation of primary goods (which can, it is admitted, also include rights, liberties, etc.). So it is to the second part of the second principle, then, that Sen’s ‘capabilities’ stand in contrast. Capabilities, as he has argued convincingly elsewhere, are better markers for social progress because they indicate not only a distribution of certain ‘things’ but how these things contribute to individuals’ actual lives and their ability to live a life that they deem to be ‘good’. Primary goods, Sen argues, instead “suffer from fetishist handicap in being concerned with goods and, even though the list of goods is specified in a broad and inclusive way, encompassing rights, liberties, opportunities, income, wealth, and the social basis of self-respect, it is still concerned with good things rather than with what these good things *do* to human beings” (Sen 1979: 218)

And as a final note of comparison, Sen emphasizes the procedural limits of the Rawlsian ‘original position’. At the global level, which Rawls attempted to address in his *Law of Peoples* (1999), a ‘second’ original position is proposed where representatives of various nations could come together to deliberate on the ideal just society and the institutions it would demand. There remains, then, either a ‘nation-by-nation’ approach

in Rawlsian justice, or a focus simply on justice within a functioning state “with no direct link to the world outside the country” (Sen 2010: 243). Put more poetically, perhaps, this is enough for Sen to (rightly) declare that “the Rawlsian vehicle for justice that would take us rapidly forward in pursuit of justice [instead] in a justiceless world remains stalled and stationary in the wintry morning of a world without a global state” (Sen 2006: 227). For practical deliberation and a better sense for ‘what is to be done’, therefore, Sen’s theory of justice is meant to be seen as a comprehensive and an actionable one, even without the need to contain some sense of the ideal just society.

Nussbaum: Prioritising the ‘human’ through dignity, overcoming disadvantage

As mentioned in Chapter 2, one of Nussbaum’s primary points of departure from Sen on the Capabilities approach relates to its normative implications. While his description of human capabilities provides a framework for public reason and for the ability to make comparisons between actual instances of justice or injustice, for her certain concrete capabilities must be the core of any account of minimal social justice or constitutional law. This reasoning leads her to the articulation of ten central capabilities (see Chapter 2), but then also a number of carefully elaborated reflections upon political liberalism, human dignity, justice and the connection between disadvantage and her capabilities approach. Sen and Nussbaum both argue ‘things will go better [...] if development practitioners simply pause to ask tough questions about ethical norms and standards of justice’ (Nussbaum 2011: 77). During this pause, in asking the ‘tough’ questions, she sees the political version of this process as taking on a ‘multivocal’ quality which she likens to Rawlsian ‘reflective equilibrium’. In this process, what individuals do ‘is to bring to the surface *their most secure ethical judgements* about justice’ (77 – my emphasis). As I discuss below, however, there is real concern as to whether or not such ‘secure’ ethical judgements are even possible (or desired, if they result in a static understanding of a moral problem or judgement, divorced from the physical reality in which it is meant to operate).

The shift from a Rawlsian justice of primary goods to an ethical focus on freedom and agency, has been a recent one. Margaret Walker (2007), in tracing the contours of her own mode of moral inquiry, makes a distinction between theoretical-juridical modes

of moral inquiry and expressive-collaborative ones.²² Curiously, for Margaret Walker, neither 'care' nor 'capabilities' approaches embody the theoretical-juridical mode. Instead, these 'approaches tend to identify central moral concerns and to return to broader consideration of human needs and the demands of shared life with an emphasis on plural values and no tight systematization' (Walker 2007: 30). She further explains that virtue ethics have always stood essentially outside of this modern theoretical-juridical fold (30). In the case of Nussbaum's elaboration of the HCA, I find it difficult to support this claim. Nussbaum's (2011) Human Capabilities Approach does appear or aspire to present itself as quite comprehensive. The promotion of freedom as a coherent political project (71); constitutive of the core of an account for minimal social justice (71); a liberal political theory finding its roots in Aristotle (125); close links to deontology and notions of Kantian duty (94); and even a non-welfarist consequentialism in its attendance to justice outcomes (95), if this is not 'tight systematization' by Walker's standards, then at the very least I would understand it as a 'proto-systemization'.

More importantly these shifts or even simply a crystallization in the thinking of Nussbaum with regard to the HCA, has had a demonstrable impact within the smaller development ethics field. David Crocker's *Ethics of Global Development* (2008), makes the same initial rationalist step of determining *a priori* which moral category of the good is to be chosen, combining it with a notion of freedom-agency and then adding an Aristotelian eudaimonic component. His 'new' idea for development ethics is one which 'endorses the development of an understanding of a *minimally adequate or sufficient level of human agency and well-being* (not flourishing) that combines, on the one hand, a neo-Kantian commitment to autonomy and human dignity, critical dialogue and public deliberation with, on the other hand, neo-Aristotelian beliefs in the importance of physical health and social participation' (Crocker 2008: 46). Freedom and agency are central to this understanding of development (see also Alkire 2002; Deneulin 2006), which then has a direct impact on which of those 'categories' of moral importance are given prominence. 'Dignity' is one such category.

²² I return to this distinction in Chapter 7.4. In brief, it is the manner in which Walker broadly divides rationalist/ideal-type modes of moral inquiry from those which modes which understand moral inquiry and behaviour as embodied (the ideal vs. the real).

Similar to the distinction raised above, the shift from primary goods to capabilities focuses then on an agent and her experience of particular conditions. Nussbaum understands her idea of the capabilities approach and the justice model it outlines as relating directly to the idea concept of 'dignity'. In one instance she states that 'dignity is an *intuitive* notion that is by no means utterly clear' (Nussbaum 2011: 29 – my emphasis). She recognises that, as a term, used in isolation or with particular purpose it can be used in a manipulative fashion or without consistency. The recourse to dignity's 'intuitive' notion, is reminiscent of Sen's appeal to the same quality when invoking 'our intuitions about claims of freedom' (Sen 2009: 306). In both instances, rather than locate a particular concept or quality, they appeal to a perceived shared intuition. This also, I suggest, adds to my claim above that perhaps there is a movement toward a more theoretical-juridical mode of moral reasoning within the HCD. As Walker describes it, 'the stance among academic philosophers of professional authority to represent 'our' views, or our 'intuitions,' in these matters continues and continues to be problematic (Walker 2007: 268).

The consistency that Nussbaum eventually appears to give to the concept rests squarely in its relationship to 'agency' for her. When she finally does define it 'slightly', it is 'something inherent in the person that exerts a claim that it should be developed' (Nussbaum 2011: 31). For this reason it should be considered 'equal' in all people. Furthermore, she then defines it as 'related to the concept of active striving' (31). Again, this reinforces the agentic shift or agential bias, as Margaret Walker elsewhere calls it. The appeal to intuition likely enforcing its status in this case, it is an idea of 'dignity' which is founded upon the notion of an identifiable higher moral status. As Walker explains, these questions (or the posing of them in such a manner, emphasising the agency of the individual):

Focus questions sharply about the extent to which a picture of human beings as uniquely endowed with moral personality, a valuation of human beings to the extent that they do possess that endowment, and a definition of that endowment largely in terms of normal adult human intellectual and reflective capacities of independent self-control, intellectual or not. (Walker 2011: 139).

In the process, and herein lies the critique, those non-agential aspects of human *being*, those aspects of the human condition best understood in terms of dependency, receive less attention than they are due. As such, argues Walker, there might not be such a need for us to ‘pack’ so much moral meaning into the concept of ‘dignity’, if it means not paying attention to those aspect – vulnerability, suffering, dependence which would also deserve our moral attention. In an attempt to ‘humanize’ the concept of dignity (much in the way that Goulet suggests ‘humanizing’ development), she goes on to describe ‘humane’ dignity as an ‘interpersonally effective standing’ which is multiply conditioned and must be ‘activated’ (175). In this understanding we get closer to the idea, not of discrete capacities of the individual, but experienced within a ‘matrix of relationships embedded in social practices’ (Kittay 2005: 111). In this sense, Walker’s understanding of dignity puts it more within a relational frame, one within which dignity, but also vulnerability are recognised as component parts of a lived, experienced and shared human condition.

3.2) The development of better ethics: Recognising vulnerability, establishing trust

Goulet, Vulnerability and the ‘shock’ of Underdevelopment

For Goulet, ‘the condition of underdevelopment in its totality is a consciously experienced state of deprivation rendered intolerable because of newly acquired information regarding the development of other societies and the existence of technical means for abolishing misery’ (Goulet 1971 [1985]: 39). These words were ahead of their time, outlining as they did the language later used by post-colonial and post-development scholars. With regard to the estimation of ‘value’ of under-developed countries, Goulet warns that ethical judgements should not be confused with statistical comparisons, especially when it is recognised that the GDP success of one nation may well have come at the expense of many others, often over long periods of time. “‘Underdeveloped’ economies are not stagnant ...[but]... have been undergoing profound change – the disintegration of traditional economic practices and circuits and the implantation in their midst of a modern sector controlled by and serving outside interests’ (Goulet 1971 [1985], 41). Following Marcuse’s logic of the individual within a

State, Goulet seeks to outline that a feeling of vulnerability can rest even with 'powerful' or developed societies, not simply within intra-group relations, but also in relation to those societies deemed 'backward (sic)', or 'under-developed' (Goulet 1971 [1985], 51). Since at its most basic level, trust requires an understanding of reciprocity (the reciprocal respect for the other), it becomes a central response to his central concept of vulnerability. And his understanding of vulnerability – nuanced and poetic though it might be – is rather simplistic (i.e. the powerful become vulnerable and the vulnerable become powerful so that both groups arrive at some stasis in the centre-ground), his understanding of human vulnerability as key to development, should not be overlooked.

His emphasis on reciprocity is however useful, insofar as it would then be conceivable, once trust is established between states and nations to recognise that if vulnerability is a constant condition across time and geography, 'development' will be an ongoing process rather than a teleological one. Elsewhere, Goulet emphasised the need for what he termed a 'mature' kind of ethics, which he viewed as an older ethic which finally liberated itself from the childish fixation with the status quo or with the 'pure' model of achievement to be translated elsewhere at all costs (Goulet 2006, 8). Again, these thoughtful articulations of thoughts on the nature and scale of the concept and reality of development were often published before many of the economic and ethical theories which ultimately prevailed in the MDG and RTD initiatives. Goulet is widely recognised as a pioneer in his field, having advocated a decidedly humanistic discussion of development at a time when the power of the pound still prevailed.

In more recent critical development literature, Luis Camacho has identified one of the key concepts in Denis Goulet's discussions on Development Ethics, namely vulnerability (see also Chapter 2). Goulet had originally described the importance of an understanding of human vulnerability in his 1971 *The Cruel Choice*. In the discussion of capabilities and agency which has developed more recently in the field of Development, the concept of human vulnerability has been side-lined to a certain extent. Further, Camacho notes with interest the recent shift from an understanding of human vulnerability to 'system' vulnerability; how the term is most often employed in discussions of technology (vulnerability to virus or cyber-attack, for example).

In returning to the ethical dimensions of Goulet's discussion of power and vulnerability, Camacho raises an important point about the ethical implications raised

from an appreciation for human vulnerability, which no construction of 'agency' could remedy. In his words:

"Human beings in different types of societies often face similar problems. Since all human beings have in common some basic needs, all cultures share some universal traits, no matter how different their outlooks. Moreover, neither cultures nor countries remain identical throughout the years: poor people may experience improvement in their situation, whereas citizens of industrialized nations are often victims of unemployment, economic crisis, and destitution" (Camacho 2010: 145).

Vulnerability, for Camacho, is "the link between the relationship that people have with their natural and social environment and the social forces, institutions, and cultural values that shape their lives" (Camacho 2010: 150). Ultimately, and in contrast with ideals of an ethic of justice, vulnerability is not seen in 'absolute' terms as a condition (like illness) to be overcome. Whereas in a liberal or especially rationalist conception of justice glaring vulnerability (poverty, drought, pandemic) is seen solely with the purpose of being 'stamped out', as a result of this focus, it is a human condition then simply ignored or brushed aside in those who are considered 'developed'. Agency, for HCA theorists, could be understood as a progressive ideal, with a single aspirational trajectory – from a state of dependence to a state of autonomy and therefore dignity. Based in large part on the expansion of rights, rules and procedures to evermore people, it is concerned solely with betterment of the human condition, its primary vehicle juridical or institutional. Vulnerability, on the other hand, speaks to the human condition and a recognition of the precariousness of economic or political systems or human relationships and contexts in general.

Given the ubiquity of the condition, across the lifespan, in different contexts and across time, the rationalist articulation does not seem an appropriate one. How then, can vulnerability be captured within an ethical framework related to development? More importantly, how can it be accepted in a way that those with differing power (and therefore differing level of vulnerability) feel open, comfortable or trusting enough to then negotiate this ethical terrain with one another?

Vulnerability of the ethicist

And perhaps because Goulet's is a project for development ethicists (that of outlining the contours of this 'new discipline', it seems correct to consider how vulnerability might be understood with regard to the ethicist herself. As Kimberly Hutchings and Kate Schick describe it (Hutchings 2013; Schick 2013), it is an acceptance of the *vulnerability* of one's ethical or moral judgements, reflective of the fact that they operate not in the idealised or in the rational, but are embodied and operate in the real. It is the idea that when it comes to social or political dilemmas or challenges or moral questions, 'we can never *fully* know, or know with certainty, but we must never give up the attempt to work towards comprehension of social and political losses, or of the underlying forces that facilitate such losses' (Schick 2013: 51). Vulnerable judgement relates to the idea that moral theorists themselves understand themselves as fallible but more importantly that 'the acknowledgement of error does not damage the authority of the judgement, it simply requires the theorist to improve what they do but not *change who they are*' (Hutchings 2013: 32).

Understanding and fostering trust

One of the dangers of the more rationalistic approaches to development or development ethics is that it can lead to the instrumentalisation of certain human characteristics or relational qualities which are broadly understood to be important aspects of everyday human interaction. Just as a rationalistic approach to vulnerability might be to overcome or 'eliminate' its condition or effects, so too 'trust' can take on a different, or unnecessarily skewed understanding within a rationalist paradigm. As Torsten Michel argues, 'trust has been identified as a key element in responding to vulnerability by achieving a relation in which the openness to harm is accepted and embedded in a mutual dependency which, when properly established, can achieve a more harmonious and less harmful co-existence between agents' (Michel 2013, 87). In international relations, he goes on to argue, the tendency has been to substitute 'trust' with 'reliance' (i.e. the reliability of an agent or actor doing what she says she will). The problem with this framing is that it highlights a highly mechanistic understanding of trust

between actors, one which cannot possibly take into account affect or good will or any other recognition of those intangible aspects lumped under 'the human condition'.

And it is precisely within this context that an ethic of care, rather than an ethic of (social) justice, might best be suited to draw upon this recognition of vulnerability inherent within questions of under and over-development. Whereas an ethic of justice (and the capabilities approach to international development) would count vulnerability as an issue to be overcome, an ethical shift which instead accepts the fluctuating nature of vulnerability across time, context and lifespan, might well take us further toward committing less violence in our establishment of knowledge or as we navigate the (post) development realities of the pluriverse. This would be a space of negotiation of ethical outcomes, where trust is fostered over reliance. Again, as Michel points out, 'whereas reliance can be grasped as an outcome of a rational calculative process of reasoning, trust seems to capture a more existential and emotive relation between human agents within a shared life-world' (Michel 2013, 106).

And this understanding of the emotional component or the affective nature of trust and how it operates also has direct bearing on the ability to first demonstrate the affective receptivity to be able to trust in the first place. This implies not only a social and affective quality to trust, but also an empathic one. And it is an empathic connection on several levels. As Louis Agosta (see Chapter 5) argues, 'one must get in one's gut who can be trusted' (Agosta 2010: 104). This visceral affective component operates in the first order. But a further openness and understanding must occur for that empathic connection to be the source of ongoing interactions of trust. Again, 'without empathy, trust becomes a dicey, unreliable and fragile attitude [...] and attitude, an expectation that the other is reliable and will perform as expected, as promised' (80). This 'temporal' aspect to the affective or 'trusting' bond is important also to a critical care ethics perspective which understand the social nature of human ethical and moral activity as residing within long-term commitments. As Robinson argued, 'when we regard the activities of care as a primary form of moral and social activity, we begin to see the importance of listening attentively to others and making long-term commitments to those others and thereby gaining their trust' (Robinson 2011: 851). And if empathy is understood as a process or intersubjective matrix, then it is possible to understand how intersectionality or an

intersectional lens might also add to this understanding of trust, relationships and asymmetries of power.

3.3) Ethics through an Intersectional Lens

Before turning in the next chapter, to my discussion of a critical ethic of care, I would like to suggest one other ‘tool’ which the critical development ethicist might employ to good effect. Finding its origin in feminist theory and methodological inquiry, “intersectionality” as a “research and policy paradigm” (Hancock 2007) presents a new lens through which to explore the justice/care debate and through which to address some of the simplistic dualisms above. The conceptualization of this framework has remained limited to critical approaches within the fields of biomedical research, psychology, gender studies and migration studies. Its potential application, both as a reinforcement to care ethics and as a research paradigm within international development studies has not yet been explored. Although there does not exist a precise definition of intersectionality as a theoretical framework within the social sciences, it can be said to operate on three tacit assumptions (Hankivsky and Cormier 2009: 8-9) – 1) the advancement of a defined social justice issue is its ultimate objective; 2) social categories (e.g. race, sex, gender, socio-economic status), like the individual lives they are meant to reflect, are fluid, flexible and too often essentialized in traditional theory and policy discourses; 3) power (or rather domination and subordination, systems of oppression and processes of subject formation) are to be explored, engaged, questioned and interrupted. These “intersectional-type approaches” (Dhamoon 2008: 12) to research and policy-formation, therefore, are presented as a means by which to contextualize individuals and their perceived needs, as well as to advocate the necessary social action that such needs require. Intersectionality fundamentally alters “the ways in which social problems are identified, experienced and understood so as to reflect [a]multiplicity of lived experiences” (Oxman-Martinez et al. 2002: 23) – and by extension, one could argue, the multiplicity of interdependencies and relations through which those problems and experiences are manifested.

On a practical level, in development analyses, such a lens has the potential to fully interrogate the simplistic construction of “development = human right = official direct assistance and poverty reduction”; *or*, for that matter, “development = freedom from dependence = free market, laissez-faire business investment”. In addition to identifying asymmetries of power which exist within these relations, it would further interrogate the very process of subject formation (*who* we are speaking about, specifically, when we refer to distant “others”) and the systems of oppression and domination (or dependency and cultural condescension) which serve as a backdrop to these processes. Care ethics, by and large, focus most attention on the lived reality of human relationships and interdependence. Intersectionality, instead, may offer a useful bridge between theory and policy; first by recognizing and elaborating upon the nature of this interdependence (vulnerability and the fluctuating need for care over time and space) and then by operationalizing an appropriate *collective* action response to the perceived needs of other people. A central tenet of intersectionality is that ‘social identities are not mutually exclusive and do not operate in isolation of each other, nor is it sufficient to simply ‘add’ them to each together to create a lens for examining social locations, experiences, and concomitant needs (Hankivsky 2014: 255). Examinations of asymmetries of power and of differently located social positions are also relevant to a care ethics approach. As Robinson argues:

‘an ethical approach to poverty in international relations must not be separate from, but inextricably linked to, economic and political approaches which are committed to the building of long-term attachments, but which are also critical of both existing and potential relations in terms of their capacity for domination, inequality, and even violence’ (Robinson 1999: 164).

These different positions of power are key to understanding the relational aspect of development, both between societies and within them.

Conclusion

In outlining the shift which occurred between Rawls's second element of the second principle of justice and Sen's understanding of it as the site for greater human flourishing, the shift from primary goods to freedom added put a greater emphasis on 'agency' for concepts such as dignity and even disadvantage. For Nussbaum, dignity *is* an act or a capability for striving. For Goulet, the stress was on the goods which one needed to be able to claim to be living a dignified life. And while it's true that, his earlier work being written in the 1970s, it was bound to follow the Rawlsian logic of the time. However even in later writings, if not about goods, he never saw the strictly agentic aspect within it, which Nussbaum ascribes. It is 'a hollow and hypocritical exercise,' he once argued, 'to speak rhetorically about human dignity unless one builds social structures that foster dignity and eliminate obstacles to it' (1997: 1165). That said, his own definition of the term here, would not satisfy Walker's claim to relationality.

This argument made by Walker further emphasises the correct shift in perspective to one which attends to vulnerability. Whereas for Nussbaum dignity means striving, for Goulet it is simply the access to goods. With regard to vulnerability, the picture is less clear. Remarkable for its absence, it is only in the writings of Goulet that vulnerability takes centre stage and, as I will argue, intimates at the possibility for a critical ethics of care to act here. For Goulet, the purpose of Development was not 'to pursue a vision of justice shrouded in a Utopian halo because it is not deeply embedded in the world of real constraints' (Goulet 2006: 3). And yet the tendency of Development theorists and practitioners has tended toward the more abstract and nowhere is this normally more obvious than in the field of economics. In their highly successful *Poor Economics* (2011), for example, the economists Abhijit Banerjee and Esther Duflo, make the argument that the Development agenda (indeed agendas) finds itself at an impasse. The over-arching goals and priorities (first purely economic and then bureaucratic and ethical) have failed to bring about the social transformation (alleviation of suffering, economic growth, the spread of aspirational values of self-empowerment) which so many practitioners had once hoped for. Even more challenging is that the only political solutions which hold any sway in these policy circles are the 'do less or nothing' approaches of Dambisa Moyo and William Easterly or the 'do much more' approach of Jeffrey Sachs. The problem, say

Banerjee and Duflo, is that a genuinely middle-of-the-road approach between these two extremes is necessary.

From this invocation to a moderation between policy extremes, one might then understand the *many* possible solutions to rest in the ability of an international framework to deal with the myriad contexts and the myriad understandings of ‘development’ described in section 2. By emphasising not simply the aspirational promise of capabilities and freedom promised in the human development approach of Sen, but also the vulnerability factor present in any relationship where an imbalance (material or discursive) might exist, a more appropriate development ethic (and one which could serve as a basis for the post-MDG framework) would need to emphasise capability and shortcoming, context and material limitations, within very particular development locations, if more sustainable (and sustaining) development projects are ever hoped to be reached. On the question of universalizability, Goulet was sceptical. Rather, it important ‘not to pursue a vision of justice shrouded in a Utopian halo because it is not deeply embedded in the world of real constraints’ (Goulet 2006: 3). This is entirely consistent with the critical care ethics approach which understands that:

Globalizing care demands not an uncritical extension of caring responses across borders to all of humankind; rather, it demands an awareness of social relations as a starting point for ethical inquiry and a commitment to using those relationships as a critical tool for uncovering, and beginning to address, the relations of oppression and subordination which exist at the global level. (Robinson 1999 165).

And so it is to this critical approach that the discussion now turns, in pursuit of defining the contours of the ‘means of the means’ and in understanding care theory’s wider critique of the justice approach.

4. 'AGENCY', 'BEING' AND 'CONTEXT': THE RELATIONAL SELF AND THE ABC'S OF A FEMINIST ETHICS OF CARE

... our quest for well-being and cultivating a critical, reflective, and creative self which learns to be critical of the arbitrariness of one's free will, struggle for one's denied freedom and suppressed dignity, be responsible for the other, and [to] build appropriate social institutions where such a dialogical relationship between self and other is nurtured and sustained is probably the most important task lying in front of us as we explore, holding the courageous and imaginative hands of Amartya Sen himself, the further meanings and dimensions of our 'momentous engagement with freedom's possibilities' (Giri 2002, 240 – emphasis added)

Introduction

The 'momentous engagement with freedom's possibilities' (Sen 1999: 298), might best capture the "philosopher's clarion call" for Amartya Sen's life-long pursuit of social justice in the field of international development. Any number of justice theorists, ethicists or economists writing in the context of international relations or on issues pertaining to world poverty (Beitz 1979; Pogge 2002; Sachs 2005) might be invoked to support recent trends toward the Right to Development (RTD) in its relation to the UN's Millennium Development Goals. However, it is clear that Sen's articulation of freedom as the constitutive basis for well-being in *human* development – and the practical applications of this foundational premise which were realised through his association with Mahbub ul Haq (founder of the UNDP's *Human Development* Reports) has made him the leading single theoretician in this field (Gasper and Truong 2010: 69). Reading 'development as freedom' within the context of Sen's wider work – on justice, on human rights, on public reason and on social choice theory – was the aim of Chapter 2. In Chapter 3, I reintroduced the work of Denis Goulet so as to highlight the concepts of vulnerability and trust, as being central to a critical development ethic. In what follows, I seek to outline in broad strokes an ethical framework which constitutes a critical dialogue with the underlying principles of an ethic of justice – an ethic of care.

Before doing so, it is worth outlining the elements of a ‘critical’ Development Ethic, articulated by Gasper and Truong, to date the only Development ethicists who have engaged with care theory from within that field. They suggest a deepened understanding of Development which is based on four dimensions (Gasper and Truong 2010, 89). In contrast to Sen’s ‘capabilities’ approach or ‘development as freedom, they weave together feminist care ethics, notions of human security and ideas of the Buddhist ‘relational self’, to describe these elements as follows:

- 1) ‘Development ethics should enrich its conception of the human being. Vulnerability and capability are two sides of the same coin’ and care is what connects these two sides;
- 2) ‘Development ethics should enrich our notions of well-being’;
- 3) An ethics of care could serve to re-orient our understanding of moral responsibility, ‘emphasizing both the interconnected nature of belonging and empathy as a basic human emotion’ (89).
- 4) Recognizing ‘the reality that human processes, and persons, have escaped from national containers’ and therefore require ‘an end to the perceptual and therefore moral blindness regarding interstate care provision’ (89).

While they imply that care theory has not been applied to development theory (by development ethicists) in a comprehensive way, it is clear that it does provide a rich field of inquiry from which a development theorist might draw insight. Furthermore, any desire to find an ‘evolved’ or ‘unified’ position in care ethics, as it pertains to ‘the international’, misses the ethic’s real strength; its ability to interrogate and assess contingent realities and perceived needs within the context of myriad relationships (local, regional, national, international) at once. From articulations of care in the context of globalisation (Hankivsky 2006), international relations and human security (Robinson 1999; 2006; 2011) or cosmopolitan theory (Clark Miller 2010); to political theory, broadly conceived (Hankivsky 2004, Tronto 1993; 2007); whether in relation to virtue ethics (Slote 2007; 2011a), concepts of citizenship (Sevenhuijsen 1998), democratic institutions (Tronto 2010; 2011) or natural law theory (Engster 2007); or as a moral

philosophy separate from purely virtue-based approaches (Held 2006) or in parallel to Confucian thought (Li 2008), care ethics intimate at the possibility of constructing an ethical framework for Development which is more open to the possibility of alternate visions of ‘the good life’.²³

In this chapter, I wish to outline the development of this alternate ethical framework and to highlight three primary points of contrast with an ethic of justice, contained within it. The primacy of relationships to an understanding of ‘being human’, the corollary (relational) understanding of ‘human agency’ and the importance of place, space and context are all explored here. I discuss a nuanced distinction between ‘equality’ and ‘equity’ – nuanced, primarily because success of the latter is underpinned by a commitment to the former. With direct reference to the theories of post-development (see Chapter 1), another link is made clear. As Escobar describes it: ‘relational ontologies are those that eschew the divisions between nature and culture, between individual and community, and between us and them’ (Escobar 2012, xxvii). In contrast to an ethic of (social) justice, upon which modernist or civilizational models of development are based, the elements of an ethic of care herein described, might better capture the development realities currently underway in Latin America (Escobar’s pluriverse) and provide a normative model which is transcendent in practice rather than universal in principle, situated rather than abstract, and better able to articulate both the cognitive and affective bases for a richer understanding of human development than constitutive capabilities or ‘freedom’, alone, could.²⁴

²³ This term is chosen specifically to draw a link with the *Buen Vivir* movement in Bolivia, described in Chapter One. Not simply an alternate vision of ‘the good life’ (in its more traditional, liberal sense), the pluriverse described by Escobar contains indigenous (read: local) understanding of a ‘living well’ which is at times non-liberal and non-capitalist; which incorporates ideas (‘rights of nature’ for example) which are outside of the traditional ‘civilizational’ model of modernization and development.

²⁴ The transcendent aspect of which I speak relates more to the role that ‘empathy’ would play (as a hermeneutic or method of human interpretation), which I will discuss in Chapter 5.

4.1) The Development of an Ethic of Care: from private to public, abstract to embedded, rights to responsibilities

The root of contemporary discussions on care can be found in Carol Gilligan's *In a Different Voice* (1982). While her discussion on psychological development in males and females sought to simply address "the dissonance between psychological theory and women's experience" (Gilligan 1986, 207), its findings have much more profound implications. Gilligan's "different voice" is one in which moral action is less related to adherence to abstract principles, than it is to context, affective bonds and concepts of nurturing, care and compassion. The original critiques of her findings rested on the notion that it only furthered an essentialist understanding of care and 'femininity', because it was primarily her female respondents (test subjects) who identified with the values of care and compassion. The "different voice" was really just a "woman's voice," and was then used to reinforce the moral boundary between public and private spheres, relegating women to the latter. This criticism has been flatly rejected by Gilligan, for as she puts it, "no claims [were made] about the origins of these voices or their distribution in a wider population," and so her understanding of care "is neither biologically determined nor unique to women" (Gilligan 1986 [1993], 209).

In the desire to shift the debate to a principally political realm, Joan Tronto also successfully rejected claims of supposed essentialism in an ethic of care. In analysing the philosophies of the Scottish Enlightenment (centred around Hume, Hutcheson and Adams), she has shown that 'eighteenth century men exhibited the senses of connection, moral sensibility, attachment to others and to community that are often attributed to women' (Tronto 1993, 57). Dismissing, then, the notion of care as a distinctly private sphere, feminine ethic, Tronto describes four elements - 'caring about', 'taking care of', 'care-giving' and 'care-receiving' - which constitute a relationship of care. From these four constitutive elements, four more ethical implications arise: a) *attentiveness* - paying attention to the needs of others; b) *responsibility* - unlike a formal 'obligation', here it is understood as a 'term that is embedded in a set of implicit cultural practices, rather than in a set of formal rules or series of promises' (Tronto 1993: 131-32); c) *competence* - attending to a perceived need, once responsibility is taken, so as to meet that need as best as possible; d) *responsiveness* - attending to conditions of vulnerability and inequality. Here, Tronto effectively argues that 'vulnerability belies the

myth that we are always autonomous, and potentially equal, citizens (Tronto 1993, 135). Any political order which seeks to mask this reality (of vulnerability) likely does so by hiding it elsewhere (like in a rigid construction of public and private spheres).

In the interplay between morality, ethics, public reason, and political action, the debate between proponents of an ethic of justice and an ethic of care has led to a fascinating re-examination of some of the basic tenets which underpin liberal democratic society. Questions of morality in public discourse have been shaped by implicit and explicit boundaries; a dichotomy between morality and politics, between public and private spheres of life, and ultimately by a boundary which delineates how questions of morality are to be properly constructed in the public sphere. This last boundary, “the moral point of view boundary,” according to Joan Tronto, has mandated that morality (and the theories of justice derived from it) is ideally informed by “depersonalized rational thought,” beyond the realm of local custom and habit, which should be relegated to a “lower form of moral understanding” (Tronto 1993, 9). The ethic of care, instead, “locates the source of moral value *in* the practices, relationships and responsibilities of care on which the public sphere depends. Care is thus able to provide a critical perspective on the values that govern public life as well as providing the model for virtue in the private sphere” (Hutchings 2010, 64).

Since much of the basis for an ethic of care is found in the criticism of an ethic of justice, it is appropriate to outline some basic principles of justice (equality, freedom/autonomy, neutrality/impartiality) and those of care (difference and equity, interdependence, agency and context specificity). Tronto’s concept of the moral point of view boundary points out the moral basis for the above principles, which then inform the practice of justice (rights) and of care (responsibility). In essence, it is an opposing set of moral concepts (attending to rights and fairness versus attending to responsibilities and relationships) which lay at the very heart of the justice/care debate (Kymlicka 2002, 401). Comparing the two ethics as two distinct ‘modes’ of morality, in terms of capacities, reasoning and concepts, Kymlicka differentiates justice and care as follows (Kymlicka 2002: 400-401):

<u>Mode of Morality</u>	<u>Justice</u>	<u>Care</u>
<i>Capacities</i>	Learning moral principles	Developing moral dispositions
<i>Reasoning</i>	Solving problems by seeking principles that have universal applicability	Seeking responses that are appropriate to the particular case
<i>Concepts</i>	Attending to rights and fairness	Attending to relationships and care

While my discussion of justice thus far has focused on the work of Amartya Sen, many contemporary understandings of justice can be attributed to John Rawls' *A Theory of Justice* (1971). And while I have highlighted the distinctions to be made between the two theorists' understandings of justice (see Chapter 3), I have also argued that such differences, to Sen himself, do not constitute a significant departure from Rawlsian 'justice as fairness'. Sen has admitted amusement at the constant pitting of his ideas against those of his mentor²⁵, but on the whole perhaps Giri's assessment of Sen's theories as 'uncritical Rawlsianism' is fair (Giri 2002: 235). As such, a brief overview of the Rawlsian conception of justice, to stand in contrast with elements of an ethic of care, seems appropriate.

In broad terms, the theory argues that: 1) "Each person is to have an equal right to the most extensive basic liberty compatible with a similar liberty for others" (Rawls 1971, 60); 2) that any inequalities in power, wealth or resources cannot exist unless they are to the absolute benefit of the least well-off members of society; 3) individuals placed in the original position, behind the veil of ignorance, would undoubtedly agree upon the

²⁵ In one such humorous rejoinder, Sen points out that in his drawing room at home hangs a portrait of John Rawls, painted by none other than Rawl's wife and that, if it were his lot to be lowered into a pit to philosophically battle it out with the great Rawls, then at the very least he (Sen) should like to wear a t-shirt with Rawls' likeness on it (see Sen 2010: 217).

first two principles. The veil of ignorance demands that individuals eschew their actual contexts (positions of power, wealth, etc.), so that in the original position (a hypothetical construction) their engagement in public reason can specify “at the deepest level the basic moral and political values that are to determine a constitutional democratic government’s relation to its citizens and their relation to one another” (Rawls 1999, 132). The original position, then, is “designed to enforce the abstract right to equal concern and respect, which must be understood as the fundamental concept of Rawls’ ‘deep theory’” (Dworkin 1977, 181). And yet it seems impossible to reconcile the necessity for abstractedness of the individual, with the very embeddedness and interconnectedness of individuals in an ever-globalized world.

It is important to note that while Sen emphasizes an arguably more “rooted” ontology as a point of departure for his elaboration of justice, somewhat removed from the Rawlsian ideal type, its emphasis on rationality as a means for comparing realization outcomes of justice, as well as the universality of his ‘capabilities approach’ would still stand in contrast with the feminist approaches to ‘care’. Broadly speaking, the liberal tradition of justice, has led in the international arena to what Fiona Robinson has described as the ‘global justice industry’ (Robinson 2010: 131).

Equality is the *sine qua non* of the justice paradigm and liberal egalitarianism, and is central not only to Rawls’s theory but also for leading thinkers such as Ronald Dworkin. As a guiding concept in juridical and policy-making matters, it has been used in the post-war era to justify the need for the modern welfare state. This principle, in the social policy context, has been used to bridge the gap between free market libertarianism and Marxist notions of equality. In the nexus between politics and economics, equality would have it that the dictates of the market be left relatively free to operate by its “free hand,” and that corrective measures by government be used to restrict the market only when “it penalizes people for their unchosen circumstances” (Kymlicka 2002: 88). Equality allows for redistributive measures and requires a political community in which citizens are treated “as equal in an across-the-board way” (Miller 1999, 250). It masks not only competing conceptions of the good life, but also any differences which exist socially or institutionally in a given community.

Equity, within a care paradigm, instead, requires that difference not be glossed over, but be seen as essential. While intuitively, it might be thought that recognising

difference would lead to disagreement or conflict, a similar criticism could be made about equality. Under a justice paradigm, public policy is devoted to “meeting the intrinsic needs of every member” (Miller 1999, 250). But because these needs are expressed primarily by talk of rights, even justice theorists are forced to concede that:

To stand on one’s right is to distance oneself from those to whom the claim is made; it is to announce, so to speak, an opening of hostilities; and it is to acknowledge that the warmer bonds of kinship, affection and intimacy can no longer hold (Waldron 1993, 373).

Equality (implying sameness), may permit us to take into account the needs of others, but it does so by excluding certain institutional or systemic forms of injustice from the debate. An ethic of care, instead, would permit us to understand the needs of others not as we perceive them (through a clearly defined language of rights), but as they relate them. And in a broader understanding of international development, understood through a care ethics lens, “equality does not mean ‘sameness or equal opportunity’; rather, the focus is on ensuring that all people are able to give and receive care that is adequate to their needs as defined in the context of particular relationships and communities” (Robinson 2010, 132).

For the purposes of the above distinction, it is important to emphasise that “equality” and “equity” are distinguished here in terms of their ability to deal with myriad human needs, wants and expressions of self. Equality is understood as a principle which reduces various needs, wants, desires of all people, to universalizable indicators, often expressed as rights. This, albeit slight semantic distinction, would appear to create vastly different policy outcomes. Equity, in contrast to equality, is consistent with other core values within an ethic of care which seek to place higher value on the particular (needs for example) rather than on the universal (rights for example). This distinction will become most important in any real analysis of the effectiveness of the concept of ‘development as a right’ as implied in the UN’s Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

When care is understood as an on-going practice - and not as an obligation which a citizen finds in its government’s laws - responsibility takes on a very different, and central form. We are responsible, not because of a justice paradigm’s exhortations for

fairness and obligation, but because the interconnectedness and contexts described above imply that we simply are, throughout the span of our lives, either taken care of or responsible for some person, some relationship some entity, some thing. As Joan Tronto and Berenice Fisher describe it :

On the most general level, we suggest that caring be viewed as a species activity that includes everything that we do to maintain, continue and repair our 'world' so that we can live in it as well as possible. That 'world' includes our bodies, our selves, and our environment, all of which we seek to interweave in a complex, life-sustaining web (quoted in Tronto 1993: 103).

Responsibility, then, is an integral part of human experience, both as an ethical and political principle and as practice. It rejects the idea that public policy can only be concerned with rectifying unfairness in society, based on competing rights claims made by "competent adults." The latter approach, argue care theorists, is both profoundly inadequate and morally impoverished (Hankivsky 2004: 31).

The justice paradigm has been instrumental in the development of modes of governance and applications of public policy in western liberal democracy. These have, by extension, influenced much of the discourse at the international level on development and foreign aid. And, as Fiona Robinson points out :

The idea of 'justice' is neither superficial nor morally expendable; moreover the current global, social, economic, and political context is certainly not one in which questions of justice no longer need to be addressed. Nor is justice irrelevant to an interpersonal, relational view of ethics; indeed the concept of justice, in general, arises out of relational conditions in which most human beings have the opportunity, the capacity, and for too many, the inclination to treat each other badly (Robinson 1999: 24).

In human experience, then, we have the capacity to care, and the capacity to do harm. So, as Jeremy Waldron would argue, perhaps the strength of a justice paradigm comes from the position it offers "of fallback and security in case other constitutive elements of a social relationship [love, affection, care, nurturing] ever come apart" (Waldron

1993: 374). However it is a very large leap from “fallback” position to transcendental theory of justice. Instead a more nuanced understanding of both care and justice, or understanding care as being the very “heart of justice” (Engster 2007), may very well strengthen both ethical paradigms. This combined approach, while still clearly maintaining ‘care’ as the driving influence, has also been referred to as a ‘Principled Ethic of Care’ (Crittenden 2001). The language used in this iteration of the care ethic, very clearly incorporates elements of both a relational ontology and an adherence to traditionally liberal rationalist understandings of justice.

In a similar vein, in defining caring practices (thus distinguishing the definition from that of ‘care’, above), Engster argues that they:

“... include everything we do directly to satisfy human beings vital biological needs for food, water, shelter, clothes, rest, a clean environment, basic medical care, and protection from harm; to foster and maintain the basic human capabilities for sensation, mobility, emotion, imagination, reason, communication, affiliation, literacy and numeracy; and to help individuals alleviate unwanted or unnecessary pain and suffering” (Engster 2007: 165).

While perhaps overtly framed in liberal justice language (Engster himself concedes this point), this definition of care could be understood as a more robust, affective understanding of liberal justice, focussing as it seems to on an ‘equality of opportunity’ logic. I will return to the potential pitfalls of this approach in subsequent chapters, as it appears at least intuitively, that Engster’s understanding of care and of caring in society actually puts him more into the same camp as the realization-focussed justice theory proposed by Sen (discussed above).

The real promise of combining a critical ethics of care with a renewed conception of social justice, is that it makes us realise “that [institutional] power conflict as well as ambiguity, contingency and unpredictability are here to stay, but also that we can act ‘as well as possible’ in order to do what needs to be done” (Sevenhuijsen 1998, 68). Care does not replace justice in a wholesale fashion but rather corrects its faulty, individualist, atomistic ontology; “the liberal-impartial view of persons as generalized, rather than concrete, and the concomitant reliance on abstract moral principles” (Robinson 1999, 25). “within a recognized framework [or principled ethic of] care we would see persons

as having rights and as deserving justice [but] should embed this picture [...] in the wider tapestry of human care” (Held 1995, 132). The emphasis of care ethics, therefore, appears to rest on context; both the broader context of care, within which all other discourse and action is embedded, and the myriad, specific contexts of need, as expressed by the individuals within these webs of interaction. It is however clear to see why the iterations of ‘care’ which do not pose a sharper contrast to the theories and methods of ‘justice’ face easy elision with a more robust justice paradigm. It is perhaps only with a more clearly identified methodology and ethic of care – centred on processes of empathy (see below and Chapter 5) – that such elision is avoided.

In any case, because a traditional justice ethic deals with instrumental values of social justice (as a universal concept of fairness, with little regard for context), it does not always have the capacity to prevent human harm caused by certain policies. Instead, by being concerned with the “actual outcomes and practical and material effects on peoples’ lives [in] making certain choices and decisions” (Hankivsky 2004, 38), a principled ethic allows governments and people to judge the effectiveness of social policies not only by the laudable values of social justice they imbibe, but also by the concrete steps they take in addressing structural inequality or subjective harms which social justice theory may overlook. The operationalization of this ethic, argues Hankivsky, would still entail use of traditional procedural and redistributive considerations associated with liberal justice. However, and more importantly, these traditional considerations would be “enjoined with the realization that people’s needs cannot always be so narrowly defined” (Hankivsky 2004, 39).

With an emphasis on the “consequences of choice,” the care-receiver is returned to a position of agency within the care process. Indeed, it is this concept of agency (perhaps if understood in Engster’s, albeit liberal institutionalist iteration of caring practices), which provides care ethic’s contrast to traditional concepts of autonomy. Again, it appears, the Care-givers (in the context of this project, broadly understood as those actors, international, national, non-governmental who are tasked with the caring responsibilities of international development) and care-receivers (no longer labelled as needy or dependent, but in a context-related position of vulnerability), are in this way invested with a more complete concept of global social citizenship. Most importantly, however, it allows for development policy discourses to be more nuanced and for the

extant policies to be far more responsive to the needs of the care-receivers they are meant to address.

4.2) Agency and Relational Autonomy

Achievement of “well-being” for Sen – or ‘the state of a person – in particular the various things he or she manages to do or be in leading a life’ (Sen 1993, 31) – is not determined or analysed in its totality (i.e. as an introspective or subjective state on the part of the individual) but rather as a reflection on the constitutive elements of that well-being. Described throughout his work as ‘functionings’ (the ‘beings and doings’ of life), these constitutive elements can vary from the most basic and tangible (shelter, food, avoiding illness through proper sanitation) to the more esoteric and intangible (‘happiness’, ‘tranquillity’). A clear distinction for Sen arises between ‘well-being’ and ‘freedom’. The latter is determined as very simply the aggregate total of an individual’s functionings. And this distinction, according to Giri, is another excellent example of an Enlightenment dualism which further separates the individual from herself (feelings, emotions, aspirations, etc., seen as separate from even her understanding of her own capabilities, which can be measured, impartially) (Giri 2002: 228).

Much of the critique described here focuses on the relational nature of human *being* and the implications that a relational ontology holds for the ‘self’; a feminist ethic of care ‘begins with connection, theorized as primary and seen as fundamental in human life’ (Gilligan 1995, 122). The autonomous individual, bearer of specified rights; Adam Smith’s ‘impartial spectator’, guided solely by reason (public or otherwise) is a moral philosophical *non sequitur*, insofar as such a being cannot exist outside of or antecedent to interpersonal relationships and intersubjective meaning. For critical feminist scholars, more broadly defined, ‘the nature and conditions of ethical judgement are inseparable from the moral forms of life within which they are embedded’ (Hutchings 2000, 122). In agreement with Hutchings, then, the implication for any attempt to articulate an ethical framework which is meant to address perceived need and a responsibility to adequately attend to those needs, requires a practical ethics of what ‘is’, rather than what ‘ought be’.

And in contrast to communitarian ethics (another, perhaps more common, body of political critique of liberal individualist theories), an ethic of care is not ontologically limited to the understanding of the self as purely socially constructed or determined. Rather it articulates how care and caring relations (or the absence thereof) shape, guide or inspire the individual's understanding of self and other. This seemingly basic point actually highlights 'the enormous reality of the relations we are already enmeshed in from the moment we are born. For many years we are *in* relations, we gradually *find* and become aware of them, we do not "make" them' (Held 2006, 52). And it is in this context, then, that an abstract notion of an autonomous bearer of rights – or the determination of human capabilities as determined by public reason, from the standpoint of the 'impartial spectator' – is not only ontologically inaccurate but carries with it potentially harmful political consequences. As Gilligan argues:

... 'the conception of a separate self appears intrinsically problematic, conjuring up the image of a rational man, acting out of relationship with the inner and outer world. Such autonomy, rather than being the bedrock for solving psychological and moral problems itself becomes the problem, signifying a disconnection from emotions and a blindness to relationships which set the stage for psychological and political trouble' (Gilligan 1995: 122).

Held's articulation of the individual 'finding' herself in relationships is increasingly important in a globalized world within which relations across time and space become more proximate *and* more complex. An even greater need to understand the nature and quality of those relationships, as well as the needs of the people within them raises epistemological concerns as well. While it is clear that the 'impartial spectator' – or the 'separate self,' which as Gilligan argues, 'sounds like an artefact of an outmoded order: a disembodied voice speaking as if from nowhere' (Gilligan 1995: 125) – is inadequate for the task of discovering the perceived needs and aspirations of individuals within these complex relationships or in ascribing moral value to a particular claim. Hutchings describes both a phenomenological and a genealogical dimension to any adequate ethical framework. The latter pertains to finding the origins of and recurring patterns of moral prevalence wherein certain moral judgements take hold within a given context; patterns which determine how costs or benefits for certain

policies are determined and how that reasoning is perpetuated. Phenomenologically, instead, she argues that 'moral judgements make sense within contexts, the intelligibility of those judgements is straightforward when a context is shared but becomes a challenge when contexts are not shared or are partially shared' (Hutchings 2000, 122). Within the context of international development, in an increasingly interconnected world of Global North and Global South, these partially shared contexts require an even more attentive reflection on the embedded nature of relations of power and the injustice, poverty or real harm that they can engender.

4.3) Care in Context and Place

Specificity of context (of time and of place) and the embedded nature of the relational self within networks of care, requires a contingent understanding of 'responsibility' and sits in contrast to a rights-based approach to responsibility (or obligations). The focus, within the former approach, is on the discovery, development and fostering of relationships of care. As Fiona Robinson (1999) has argued, it is specifically within our personal and social relations where feelings of connection and responsibility motivate our responses to perceived needs. Moreover, rather than discounting the values of self-esteem and autonomy, this ethics recognises the social basis for both. In practical terms it would seek at every turn to "promote strong, healthy, caring attachments among members of existing communities, as well as to create new networks across communities and new alliances, which often break down or crosscut traditional personal and social ties" (Robinson 1999: 163). This could be understood as a response to the reason set out by Iris Young as to why and how it is that we allow structural injustice to continue. As she argued:

"Most of us contribute to a greater or lesser degree to the production or reproduction of structural injustice precisely because we follow the accepted and expected rules and conventions of the communities in which we live. Usually we enact standard practices in a habitual way, without explicit reflection on what we are doing, having in the foreground

of our consciousness and intention our immediate goals and the particular people we need to interact with to achieve them” (Young 2003: 41).

By disrupting traditional rules and conventions and seeking relationships outside the boundaries of community, we are forced to constantly question and disrupt the practices (past or present) which may have prevented effective solutions to a problem being met.

In the creation of ‘caring’ networks and spaces, this ethic finds common ground with recent literature in political geography. Here, responsibility is understood as ‘place-making’, whereby “the specificity of place in writing about responsibility is important because without finely tuned contextualizations, discussions of responsibility become generalized and fail to anchor in specific political projects” (Raghuram, Madge and Naxolo 2009, 8). Failure to re-appropriate responsibility in this understanding then leads the term being subsumed within an individualized, agency/autonomy-based framework of responsibility. Instead by taking into account the many and varied ways in which both collective and individual agency interact in the creation of shared ethical spaces, responsibility is understood as constitutive in the act of place-making. And in a similar fashion to the articulation of ‘geographies of responsibility’, ‘geographies of care’ are also understood as ethical spatial relations. In this sense, care is understood as a quality of the spaces produced relationally.

This last reality is demonstrated in two ways. First, care is understood to be stretched across space in different ways. This is manifest in everything from care-givers being moved from Global South to Global North or in the myriad daily acts of care which might be spatially proximate to an individual or community but which also impact distant others within these *caringscapes* (McKie, Gregory and Bowly 2002). Second, it is understood that there are very often spatial re-arrangements involved in care-giving and care-receiving. The rise of the two-wage household in the West led to a drain of care-givers from the Global South, which in turn led to a move of other care-givers from within the Global South to fill that void. Each of these moves has had deleterious effect on how care is effectively distributed throughout this interconnected web.

By taking into account the spatial and temporal nature of our networks of care and responsibility, Raghuram et al. recast the discussion in a postcolonial frame. For

them, the “the notion of distance gets altered as all of us are already implicated in each other’s ‘presents’ in complicated ways. Lines of caring and responsibility are therefore unclear and not wholly pre-decided but do have traces from the past and implications for the future’ (Raghuram, Madge and Naxolo: 9). Furthermore, it takes into account the caveat that ethical values often masquerade as universal. Instead different spaces and networks may well have their own notions of care and responsibility. The example they cite is of Algonquin aboriginals in Canada whose understanding of responsibility is deeply rooted in ecological rather than juridical terms. So the recognition of differing ‘centres’ of care alters the centre/periphery discussion, with direct implication for the nature of Development. Adding an important structural critique to the care ethics suggestion of building networks outlined by Robinson above, postcolonialism “urges an approach to responsibility and care which focuses on interdependence and coexistence and the limits to these and makes apparent the potential connections and disconnections between responsibility, care and power, at a variety of scales (Raghuram, Madge and Naxolo: 10).

4.4) Vulnerability, Agency and Care

This distinction between agency and vulnerability, curiously, reflects a similar critique levelled by Joan Tronto to Carol Gould. To care theorists, most iterations of the human rights agenda, fail to capture the reality of human vulnerability which no shield of codified rights can adequately ‘resolve’. Indeed, perhaps one of the most important contributions made by care theorists:

... ‘has been to emphasise the ongoing and permanent status of *all humans* – even able-bodied, freedom-enjoying adults – *as vulnerable*. To be vulnerable is not the same thing as being incapable of self-development, but it surely changes the nature of such development and makes questions about development more social and political’ (Tronto 2007: 39).

Lest this be understood as a simple dichotomy between autonomy/agency and vulnerability, in terms of which is better understood as central to a more effective theory and practice of international development, the point raised by care theorists is of the contested and contextualised nature of both 'autonomy' and 'vulnerability'. As Fiona Robinson makes central to her understanding of human security, an ethic of care:

...'allows us not only to recognize why most individuals and groups of people are not simply 'autonomous' (like affluent businessmen) or 'vulnerable' (like women and children, especially women of colour in poor countries) but also see how 'autonomy' and 'vulnerability' are constructed through the co-constitution of social relations and dominant norms and discourses' (Robinson 2011: 8).

Herein lies the transformational power of an ethics of care. It is in its 'critical' focus that it eschews the idea that 'ethical critique depends on some account of ethical necessity, whether understood foundationally or teleologically' (Hutchings 2000: 130). It relates, in other words, not to a normative/prescriptive model of ethical reasoning, but rather to the explanatory power which comes about by outlining the co-constitutive nature of the relations of power (gender, race or economic, for example); which determine relations of care in a global context and how these relations are all themselves structured and determined by discourses (neoliberal economics) and materiality (structural adjustment funds, global capital, direct foreign investment). There is no normative statement to be made about how best to take us from a state of dependency to one of autonomy. Instead recognition is given the factors which shape our understanding of each state of being and our shift between the two.

The implication of this for Development Ethics and international political theory is manifold. The relational account of discrete individuals (care givers and care providers), argues Hutchings, 'puts realist assumptions into question without drawing on the abstract universalism characteristic of much cosmopolitan moral and legal discourse' (Hutchings 2002: 60). Further, in addition to offering an alternative to realist and liberal theories alike, care ethics implies the promise of an epistemology based on more than simply rationalist argumentation (Robinson 1999; 2011). One implication of this is the recognition of affective elements involved in the understanding of a relation

between care-giver and care-receiver (by means of caring dispositions). As Robinson points out, beyond the first steps (recognizing this simple relational ontology), this ethical disposition ‘involves *sustained attention* to people not as autonomous rights-bearers but as relational subjects who are *both* givers and receivers of care’ (Robinson 2011: 98 – my emphasis).

It is however important to note that both a development of thought and a tension emerges in Robinson’s thinking of the relationship between the language of rights and the language of care. In analysing Grace Clement’s work on the interaction between care and obligations, she argues that rather than using a language of rights to ‘interpret the moral priorities of care’, an opposite strategy might be more appropriate, where:

...‘care theorists should assert the futility of arguing for substantive moral goods and basic needs in rights language and instead reassert the language of care to address the moral priorities of food, shelter, and proper health care’ (Robinson 1999: 29).

However, she subsequently argues that ‘rights are crucial in the context of both giving and receiving care’ (Robinson 2011: 99). This seemingly contradictory ‘evolution of thought’ may simply reflect a statement on the discursive or structural ‘reality’ of rights language in providing a widely-used lens through which many relations of care in a global context are currently understood. I would argue however, that even this broader understanding of rights – which arguably could account for a theory which explains not only *why* we should care but *how* we should care – does not reflect the rights discourse which underlies the RTD and the Millennium Development Goals. Nor does the outcomes-based approach to international development which they promote, reflect the ‘sustained attention’ which Robinson is intimating.

And while both Hutchings and Robinson point to a critical ethics of care whose strength lies in suggesting ‘a claim about the nature of the world we inhabit rather than a claim about what ought to be the case’ (Robinson 2011: 5; Hutchings 2000: 123), with regard to ‘capacities’ it seems that a normative claim is warranted or at the very least implied. Robinson may argue that hers is not a claim about how to achieve a ‘more

caring world'; that she seeks only to emphasise the need for an understanding of complex webs of relationships and responsibilities which provide the context for relations of dependence out of which practices of care emerge. And yet, it seems impossible to imagine that 'sustained attention' could be anything but a normative claim (one which I also support) about the desirability of 'developing moral dispositions' which are necessary for sustaining these complex webs. There is then, within this 'capacity' a mechanism or process which aids in the development of such dispositions. Presumably augmenting this capacity would be understood by care theorists as a 'good'; as a qualifiable 'ought'; as a normative statement, albeit more grounded in human (inter)action than in abstract principles or norms.

In that regard, Michael Slote, I argue, is correct in viewing 'empathy' as central to the truly transformative potential of care ethics; this despite his reduction of the concept to a 'mechanism' which engenders altruistic responses (Slote 2007: 14). If instead, empathy is understood as a 'process', as described by Michael Morell (see Chapter 5), then not only might it offer a discursive lens through which to view 'interests' and 'needs' of care-givers and care-receivers, but it also might serve to further the epistemological claims made by Robinson. Empathy is more clearly understood as both cognitive and affective. Before turning attention to this process, however, it is important to highlight some of the key tensions which a critical ethics of care helps to elucidate with respect to international development, as understood through the MDGs. First, recognition of a relational ontology serves to highlight the intersubjective reality of care-givers and care-receivers. Second, with reference to the contingent nature of autonomy and vulnerability (both spatially and temporally), critical care ethics serve to problematize, question or interrupt the inherent relationships of power contained within constructions of 'Global North' and 'Global South'. It renders less 'flat' or two-dimensional the reality of a Development 'need' which might be met by any set of rights or goals. Finally, by requiring – beyond emphasising the central relational ontology – a sustained response and interaction between those care-givers or –receivers, the potential for *understanding* and effectively responding to 'need' (especially when understood through empathy, as I will address shortly) is far more complex and nuanced than any iteration of basic rights or outcome-measured goals could aspire to be.

Conclusion

In highlighting the relational nature of agency, its implications for human well-being and an understanding that both are inextricably linked with context (space and time), the above description of an ethics of care provides the elements for a meaningful interrogation of the ethic of justice upon which the human development, the MDG and RTD movements were formed. Further, in understanding human 'vulnerability' and 'capability' as two sides of the same coin, it is possible to re-imagine international development not as an imposed project (of economic growth, human rights or liberal institutionalism), with a single teleological goal, but rather as an on-going project of many projects, contingent upon specific sets of needs and the actions taken to address them. In its focus on the relationships, new and old, within which we find ourselves, this moral mode of reasoning relates not to the iteration of a prescribed set of rights and our *presumed* responsibility to uphold them, but rather to an understanding of responsibility that is embedded in specific networks, responsive to specific people, attentive to specific needs and accountable for (at least the attempt at) their realization. Finally, Ananta Giri's discussion of aesthetics highlights the possibility of a development ethics which puts the language of empowerment, self-esteem and self-realization at the heart of a participatory and 'creative' approach to development. And care ethics reminds us that these values can only be fully appreciated within the context of our relationships with one another; that 'it is the quality of attachments which can both rob us of our self-esteem and restore it' (Robinson 1999: 163).

5. A CARING CONSCIOUSNESS, FROM MRIs TO HERMENEUTICS: TRACING THE EMPATHIC FOUNDATIONS OF CARE

*When I heard the learned astronomer;
When the proofs, the figures, were ranged in columns before me;
When I was shown the charts and the diagrams, to add, divide, and measure them;
When I, sitting, heard the astronomer,
where he lectured with much applause in the lecture-room,
How soon, unaccountable, I became tired and sick;
Till rising and gliding out, I wander'd off by myself,
In the mystical moist night-air, and from time to time,
Look'd up in perfect silence at the stars.*

Walt Whitman – *Leaves of Grass* 1909 (Book XX: 221).

Introduction

In assessing the second question of this project – that a properly articulated ethic of care requires a full appreciation for the role of ‘empathy’ in moral reasoning in order to unchain care and caring from the unnecessary/spurious union it holds with justice and rights – a definitional problem (what exactly *is* empathy?) must be addressed. I begin with an assessment of Martha Nussbaum’s treatment of the term, before turning to the writings of Michael Slote, the only care theorist who has dealt with the concept in any real depth. His own use of the term – its 19th and 20th century origin, its relation to what we would now call ‘sympathy’ (in the works of Hume, Hutcheson or Shaftsbury) – can be carefully assessed against the origins of the word itself (in contemporary English usage) and against the latest studies in psychology (Baron-Cohen 2011) to determine how precisely the word and concept are being deployed in his ethical framework and, by extension in subsequent chapters, how that might impact a care ethical understanding of international development. The real point to be stressed, for Slote, is that empathy be now “more determinately or centrally located in our present notions of rightness and goodness than it was in earlier notions” (Slote 2007, 127). A quick glance at a current non-fiction best sellers list might even confirm that his wish is being manifest

(*The Age of Empathy* – De Waal 2009; *The Empathic Civilization* – Rifkin 2010; *Zero Degrees of Empathy* – Baron-Cohen 2011). For Slote moral differences (or differences in moral decisions) *are* differentiations in empathy (or levels thereof); empathy (and not rationality or reason alone) is the determining factor. The centrality of empathy, for him, in moral decision-making is summed up as follows:

“...if our empathy and, in particular, our differential empathic tendencies also enter into our understanding of moral judgements or utterances, that would help to explain why we understand/judge an unwillingness to relieve pain we *perceive* to be morally worse than an unwillingness to relieve pain that is *merely known about*” (Slote 2007, 128 – my emphasis).

And yet, his articulation of empathy, which leads at times to its confusion with altruism, presents the opposite end of the same affective-cognitive divide that I will highlight between the writings of Slote and Nussbaum. Rather than view their approaches as diametrically opposed, an appreciation for empathy as being constituted in both affect and cognition, would help to develop the idea of empathy as process or language, embodied expression of emotion and of self-reflection. Through a more ample understanding of the concept it is then possible to mediate and enact caring practices to their fullest effect. Incorporating openness or receptivity along with affective, cognitive and imaginative human processes:

‘Empathy is a form of receptivity to the other; it is also a form of understanding. In the latter case, one puts oneself in the place of the other conceptually. In the former, one is open experientially to the affects, sensations, emotions that the other experiences’ (Agosta 2011: 22).

In the same way that Whitman’s viewer is compelled to ‘perceive’ the stars rather than to sit and to ‘know’ (or be told) about them, empathy involves an active engagement with ‘the other’, upon which subsequent decisions might *then* be made. To be sure, the interplay between empathy and reason/rationality, is a difficult process to capture. Most of the definitions described below, make reference to some affective power of empathy which compels some sort of action (mediated, presumably, by the

moral decision-making that Slote here tries to make central). The importance, however, of Slote's principal claim – that morality *is* empathy (or is, at the very least, mediated primarily by it) is manifold. Any attempt to discuss international development through a care ethical lens, would need to assess this claim. In contrast to the abstract charts and facts and figures of Whitman's unaccountable viewer, an empathic *openness* is required so as to appreciate 'the other'. In this case, the discussion of 'empathic literacy' advocated by Carolyn Calloway-Thomas (2010 – described below), is quite similar.

And both arguments (for empathic moral education and empathic literacy) are further bolstered by anthropologist Frans De Waal's exploration of empathy in human evolution. The 'missing link' as it were – the nexus between moral understanding and moral action – for all these theorists is empathy. What follows is an attempt to outline the biological, evolutionary, and psychological implications of human empathy and to understand this central facet of 'being human'. In contrast to Slote's attempt to valorise empathy in Kantian terms (for the purpose of a 'thick' normativity), however, this chapter suggests that Louis Agosta's hermeneutical understanding of empathy is better suited to the phenomenological and genealogical understanding of Care Ethics described in Chapter Four.

5.1) Empathy: Martha Nussbaum's 'psychological guide'

Of the justice theorists considered in this study, the only to consider seriously the nature of the concept of empathy is Martha Nussbaum (Nussbaum 2001). Her reason for doing so is to help distinguish it from compassion, pity, sympathy, etc. Her primary concern however is with the nature of 'compassion' as an emotion and, therefore, as part of her broader line of inquiry into the role of emotions and how they contribute to an individual's 'emotional health'. This constitutive understanding of emotions, within the concept of a broader moral account for ethical behaviour, reflects her stated aim of identifying a 'mutually supportive relationship between an account of emotional health and a normative ethical view that stresses imagination, reciprocity, flexibility and mercy' (Nussbaum 2001: 297). The substantive question for her, as it

pertains to the motivations for ethical behaviour is 'what reasons do we have to rely on people's emotions, rather than on their will and on their ability to obey rules?' (298). Further, this is reflective of a line of ethical reasoning she employs (and which she traces through Aristotle, Smith and Rousseau), so as to construct a eudaimonic understanding of human flourishing or a complete life for the individual. Such an understanding of human life, or the *ends* of a good human life, requires an agent to ascribe *intrinsic value* to all those aspects of her life which contribute to this human flourishing. It is within this context, then, that Nussbaum frames her discussion of the roles played by empathy and compassion in moral judgement and ethical behaviour. In this eudaimonic tradition, 'if one can show someone that she has omitted something without which she would not think her life complete, then that is sufficient argument for the addition of the item in question' (30).

This leads her, in the first instance, to describe compassion as 'a painful emotion occasioned by the awareness of another person's undeserved misfortune' (299). She then further subdivides the concept into what she believes are the cognitive requirements for compassion (i.e. for an individual to *feel* that pain). Simply described, these requirements are: a) a belief that the suffering felt is serious and not trivial; b) the belief that the person does not deserve the suffering; and c) belief that the possibilities (read: eudaimonic capabilities) of the person who experiences the emotion of pain are similar to those of the sufferer. Judgements of size or scope (of the suffering), of nondesert and of eudaimonia are combined to 'explain' why we might feel compassion in a particular instance. Leaving aside the difficulty in being able to cognitively 'ascertain the level of suffering' of another, before *feeling* it, Nussbaum's emphasis on the eudaimonic aspect of compassion reflects a broader tendency in the liberal tradition which holds that 'emotions should not be trusted as guides to life without being subjected to some sort of critical scrutiny' (Nussbaum 1999: 74)²⁶. Under this form of scrutiny, then, it is correct for the onlooker or observer to question her own feelings of compassion by asking of the subject: 'is this person, or creature, a significant element in my scheme of goals and projects, an *end* whose good is to be promoted?' (Nussbaum

²⁶ As Slote points out, Nussbaum's articulation of this form of critical scrutiny is directed toward care theorists such as Nel Noddings. The latter views this critical step as 'one thought too many', while the former suggests that deep caring is 'fine, so long as you think *first*' (see Slote 2007, 77; Nussbaum 1999, 77).

2001: 319). And yet it seems an almost absurd proposition that individuals, embedded within multiple relationships and interconnections, should (or even *do*) constantly stop and reflect upon their own emotions in this manner. However, since for Nussbaum it is 'in pursuit of the idea that a society, committed to pursuing justice, can *cultivate* compassion' (299), this form of critical-reflection is clearly intended in a prescriptive rather than descriptive fashion.

Insofar as a particular situation or ethical problem elicits a response which can be said to meet her three cognitive criteria for compassion then, 'implicit in the emotion itself is a conception of human flourishing and the major predicaments of human life' (310). In other words, in meeting the three requirements, guided primarily by the eudaimonic component, compassion (and therefore a desire to cultivate it) within society is a good emotion and contributes to the 'emotional health' of an individual, described above. And it is because of her original distinction between the concepts of sympathy, pity, empathy and compassion that she goes on to examine empathy by asking the question: does empathy contribute anything of ethical importance to the proper functioning of compassion? In short, her answer is 'no' it does not. In this construction of compassion, the subject of the moral concern must be in a state of suffering (i.e. a bad state) and the observer must *feel* that state of suffering in the critically reflective manner just described. Empathy, for Nussbaum instead:

... 'is simply an imaginative reconstruction of another person's experience, whether that experience is happy or sad, pleasant or painful or neutral, and whether the imaginer thinks the other person's situation good, bad, or indifferent' (300).

Because it does not necessarily *lead* to a compassionate response, she suggests that at best it is only a psychological guide.²⁷ Nussbaum is correct in suggesting that engagement in empathy does not necessarily lead to compassionate behaviour.

²⁷ While I do not take issue with the definition for empathy that Nussbaum uses, I take issue with the idea that it can only be seen to have ethical value in public life, if it can be shown to link directly to compassion. As I noted in Chapter 1, her definition reflects that of the psychoanalytic tradition (affect-free, imaginative understanding), rather than the social psychological tradition (which emphasises transfer of affect in empathic communication). Further, if she concedes that it is a psychological guide, then it must necessarily relate to a reflection on one's own emotions, unless she understands psychology to refer only to reason/rationality.

However it is unfortunate that the only examples she gives for alternative outcomes to empathy are a) the empathic torturer; and b) the extermination of European Jewry under the Nazis (330). The first relates to the idea that if I am tasked to torture someone, I may understand what their emotional state is and will continue to torture him anyway; or, worse *because* I understand what his emotional state must be, under one particular method of torture or another, I will employ the best possible method for inflicting that state of suffering. This can be linked to the second example, insofar as by understanding the emotional response or psychic state of the Jewish populations of Europe, it was possible to devise the most effective ways to eliminate them.

Nussbaum does however temper this categorical dismissal of empathy in pursuit of ethically good behaviour in her discussion of human vulnerability, where she understands it often to be 'an indispensable epistemological requirement for compassion in human beings – the thing that makes the difference between viewing hungry peasants as beings whose sufferings matter, and viewing them as distant objects whose experiences have nothing to do with one's own life' (318). Clearly, here, the suffering of others 'matters' and is put into focus for the observer, through empathy. On the whole, however, it would appear that for Nussbaum, empathy serves more as a metaphorical 'red line' separating humanity from inhumanity. In her estimation, at best:

... 'empathy does count for something, standing between us and a type of especially terrible evil – at least with regard to those for whom we have it. The habits of mind involved in this *exercise of imagination* make it difficult to turn around and deny humanity to the very people with whose experiences one has been encouraged to have empathy' (Nussbaum 2001: 331).

I however challenge the idea that this 'habit of mind' can only limit itself to the avoidance of denying humanity to another. I further challenge the suggestion that only compassion, read through her very strictly-conceived self-critical lens can be considered an ethical and emotional good. If social and political *goods* are not limited to her eudaimonic reading of compassion, then it is conceivable to engage empathically, *not* feel the emotion of a distant other, and yet still respond to that person's need in a manner that is said to be ethically *good* (insofar as it responds directly to an expressed

need, rather than to some internal eudaimonic ‘compass’). Ultimately, then, I suggest that her separation of the cognitive aspects of empathy from its affective ones is analogous to her divorcing of a self-critical individual from an *actual* empathic interaction. In effect, she paints a picture of empathy as if it were simply an imaginative act which occurs in a self-contained manner, within the mind of the observer. If instead it is understood as a process – at times dialogical or expressive and at others internal and reflective – then a more fair assessment of its ability to attend to the values of care – responsiveness expressed as a mode of responsibility – is possible.

5.2) Empathy: Michael Slote and the Cement of the Moral Universe

In his *The Ethics of Care and Empathy* (2007), Michael Slote takes a significant departure from earlier care ethicists with regard to how ‘all-encompassing’ a moral framework ‘care’ and ‘caring’ should be considered. For him, it is from the earliest work on an *ethics* of caring – Nel Noddings’ *Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education* – that a very common and perhaps ambiguously parochial understanding of care arose. According to Noddings, our most basic moral relations with people we have never met, can never properly be subsumed under a morality of caring (which requires at least a modicum of temporal or spatial proximity). On questions of ‘distant others’, an ethic of traditional justice would have to prevail. As a result of this basic distinction, most care theorists have since held care as being complementary to traditional justice/moral theory (Held 2006; Hankivsky 2004; Crittenden 2001). In our greater understanding of human morality, therefore, care has been seen as most relevant to certain moral spheres but not to others. Slote, instead, highlights the foundational role that empathy plays in any moral theory pertaining to care; in so doing, care is then understood as a direct alternative to justice, whereby it can be used to understand all personal and political issues of morality, but more importantly for the political action which would follow. For Slote, ‘all, or almost all, the moral distinctions we intuitively or commonsensically want to make can be understood in terms of – or at least correlated with distinctions of empathy’ (Slote 2007: 4). Furthermore, as was largely anticipated by moral sentimentalists of the Scottish enlightenment, increasingly our knowledge of

brain chemistry and psycho-social development is demonstrating that empathy is the primary mechanism involved in responses of caring, compassion and benevolence.

For Slote, just because the term ‘empathy’ was not used until the 20th century, it does not mean that “the notion of empathy can’t have played a role in our thinking before that time, or that it couldn’t have been involved in the concept of moral rightness or goodness that existed before the twentieth century” (Slote 2007: 127). In this regard, just because they did not use the term (not yet invented), it is plausible that readers of Hume or Hutcheson would have had some understanding of the moral imperatives inherent in their use of analogous terms. In attempting to better define ‘empathy’, Slote, Morrell and a number of commentators make reference to Bill Clinton’s famous “I feel your pain” comment during the 1992 American presidential campaign (Slote 2007: 13; Morrell 2010: 39). The former does this to distinguish the term from sympathy. For Slote, empathy is ‘feeling one’s pain’ while sympathy does not involve this ‘emotional contagion’ (i.e. it is perfectly possible to wish positively for someone, that their suffering might be eased, without actually feeling that suffering). Such a clear-cut definition is however problematic. As described below, the relation between empathy and sympathy is perhaps more nuanced than this.

One clear distinction which is often made between care and justice theories is the former’s rejection of deontological, Kantian or Categorical Imperative justifications for moral reasoning. Here, Slote seeks to differentiate himself from such a rejection. For him, deontology is not ‘a matter of principles or rules or rational considerations that oppose sentiments, but rather arises from, or can be understood in terms of, the sentiments themselves’ (Slote 2007: 45). Rather than viewing deontological imperatives as extraneous principles or rules, from a care-theoretical standpoint, they can be justified on intuitive grounds; intuition or sentiment, itself, being one of the foundations of care ethics. Deontology is seen here as less ‘categorical’ and more contextual because while agreement can be found that ‘killing one to save five is morally wrong’ at first glance, sentimental proximity to the individuals involved necessarily influences the decision or action taken. In other words, recognition of the empathic foundation of an intuitive moral reasoning, helps to clarify where and how that categorical imperative may be less categorical.

It is in his discussion of 'caring' and 'rationality' that he seeks to elaborate on the grounding of his attempt to bridge deontology and care ethics; to overcome the mutually exclusive philosophical traditions of sentimentalism and rationalism . This is underpinned by his understanding of what sort of normative claims an ethics of care *should* be making. On this latter point we might suggest that both a 'thin' and a 'thick' normative claim about care is being made in his arguments. The first claim sees that the 'normativity of morality simply resides in the fact that moral claims are genuinely evaluative claims and make practically relevant *recommendations*' (Slote 2007: 107). This thin normativity is consistent with a care ethics which does not subscribe to abstract principles or to the idea of categorical imperatives, but is not enough for Slote. Using David Wiggins's reading of Hume (Wiggins 1991), he goes on to outline a 'thick' normativity which rests on Kant's distinction between categorical and hypothetical imperatives. Similar to the distinction between perfect and imperfect obligations, the argument can be described as follows: a person to whom a hypothetical claim is being made can fail to respond to that claim for want of desire or motive; a person to whom a categorical claim is being made cannot, lest she face moral criticism. However, he says, 'according to care ethics, it is or can be wrong for me not to help, say, my daughter, even if I have no desire to help her' (Slote 2007: 107). Furthermore, since Kant's description of these imperatives was to ground them in our everyday practices and understanding of morality, it is not inconceivable (according to Wiggins and Slote) that Hume had an *implicit* understanding of this distinction even if Kant was the first to explicitly articulate it. In other words, in his 'daughter' example, Slote finds a moral sentimentalist example of a Kantian categorical imperative. As it involves my own daughter, I would be morally criticised for not helping her and so, therefore, despite my lack of desire or motivation, I *must* (morally) help her.

Unfortunately, Slote's line of argument, does two things. Firstly, it suggests an understanding of care ethics that is purely of the virtue ethics tradition (that care is primarily about a *disposition* to care and most especially for familial relations). In so doing, secondly, it further reifies the nuanced distinction between proximate relationships of care and distant ones. Oddly, he makes an argument for deontology and categorical imperatives as an abstract justification for a 'thick' normativity within care-ethics sentimentalism, using the example of a relation which intuitively we would expect

to be governed by emotion and, therefore, by concern *and* motivation. 'Of course' we would morally criticize this (somewhat difficult to imagine) father who has *no* desire to help his daughter. Yet it seems a rather 'thin' justification for this more 'thick' normative claim. Can this be the only example upon which to suggest that moral categorical imperatives (might) exist even within care-ethics sentimentalism? Furthermore, it is important to emphasise that Slote's normative claims are predicated upon a virtue ethics understanding of care. I am however more inclined to agree with Virginia Held's understanding that, while it may find its precursors in virtue ethics or moral sentimentalism, care ethics concerns itself primarily with caring *relations* (Held 2006: 19). Such relations capture not only the moral dispositions of the persons held in relation to one another, but also the objective results of caring (responsiveness to a stated or perceived need for example).

Secondly, throughout his articulation for an ethics of care, grounded in empathy, Slote relies often upon abstract situations and comparisons so as to construct this neo-Kantian / neo-Aristotelian justification for care and empathy. As Kimberly Hutchings argues, so often in their attempt to find an ideal justification for moral judgement, rationalist arguments engage in the application of hypothetical or abstract examples to such moral questions, serving only to further divorce them from their places of real application. It is what she refers to as the distinction between 'morality as such' and morality's 'realm of moral application' (Hutchings 2013: 27). In contrast to Nussbaum's assessment of the *lack* of link between empathy and a felt emotion like compassion, for example, Slote argues:

We tend to feel more empathy and empathic concern for those whose situation or condition is bad than for those whose situation or condition is merely not wonderful, and this difference can therefore mean that we prefer to help the former even when we are in a position to do somewhat more good for the latter (Slote 2010: 131).

But such a distinction is unhelpful, if the purpose of empathy is to understand an expressed need and respond to it adequately. If anything, it reflects an equity of ethical treatment, as described in Chapter 4. I suggest therefore that we might still maintain the centrality that Slote places on the role of empathy in care but that we might do so

without the need to bring our moral understanding of care back within the ‘Kantian fold’. If both empathy *and* care are understood as processes and practice – the first a process of understanding or learning based on affect and cognition and the second a practice of commitment and responsiveness to an ‘other’ who we stand in relation to – then it seems that the ‘thin’ understanding of normativity, described above, would suffice. If both care and empathy are *learning* processes, then it is a better understanding of the vehicles for that learning which should be the focus of our normative evaluations. As most care ethicists refer to the epistemological value of an ethic of care, empathy provides a bridge of sorts between the morass of conflicting human emotions and the disembodied (asocial) dictates of abstract reason.

5.3) From Primates to Philosophers: The Evolutionary and Neuro-scientific bases for Human Empathy

In his myriad studies of various species of primate, Frans De Waal has sought to document the inherent sociability of the species most closely related to us. In part, his many lectures and papers in recent years have sought to dispel the so-called ‘veneer theory’ of human morality. By this antiquated understanding of human ‘nature’ (one which Thomas Hobbes would wholeheartedly have concurred with):

“... human morality is presented as a thin crust underneath of which boil antisocial, amoral and egoistic passions. The view of morality as a veneer was best summarized by Ghiselin’s famous quip “scratch an altruist and watch a hypocrite bleed”²⁸ (de Waal 2006, 10).

This bleak view of human nature, repeated throughout history, found its most modern ethical foundations in the writings of T.H. Huxley, who wrote at the end of the 19th century in direct opposition to Charles Darwin. Indeed, the only area (ethics and

²⁸ From Ghiselin, M. *The Economy of Nature and the Evolution of Sex*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

morality) upon which Huxley disagreed with his mentor²⁹, he compared humanity to a gardener who had difficulty in keeping a well-tended garden, constantly seeking out and removing weeds; human ethics and morality (the gardener of human reason), eliminating or removing our emotions and base instincts. But in all regards, and as voiced by a minority of scientists at the time, this rupture represented a misunderstanding of the sociability inherent in Darwin's understanding of human morality, according to de Waal. He points to two errors which continue to muddy the waters in our discussion of both evolution and morality; namely use of language and overlooking the manifestations of 'sympathy' evident in Darwin's findings.

To the first, de Waal points out that the vernacular usage of "selfish" has come to dominate our understanding of genes and genetic evolution. If we have selfish genes then how can we ourselves not be selfish? (down to our very building blocks!). But self-serving genes do not a selfish person make, insofar as genes cannot exhibit a complex intention. To the second point, in outlining passages from *The Origin of Species*, de Waal points to passages which clearly demonstrate Darwin's frequent observations of animals expressing sympathy at the distress or danger of other animals.³⁰ Simply put, de Waal's words:

"...evolution favours animals that assist each other if by doing so they achieve long-term benefits of greater value than the benefits derived from going it alone and competing with others" (de Waal 2006: 13).

A vocal critic of the utilitarian zeitgeist which prevailed in this era before psychological consciousness, Darwin's later writings, such as *The Descent of Man*, spoke of the replicating power of social bonds and sympathetic actions, whereby such instincts and impulses would eventually become "more tender and more widely diffused until

²⁹ Huxley had for many years been referred to as "Darwin's bulldog".

³⁰ It should be repeated that use of the word "empathy" did not enter the English vocabulary until 1909, when American psychologist E.B. Titchener translated it from the German word *Einfühlung*, most literally "feeling into". As such, it is no surprise that in writings by Hume or even Darwin, the term "sympathy" could be construed by a contemporary audience to mean many of the same things we would consider to be "empathy". Moreover, it makes even more evident why a clear distinction between the two concepts is often a difficult one to make.

they are extended to all sentient beings” (Darwin as quoted in Rifkin 2010: 92). For de Waal, the ethical implication of this is that morality, by its very nature is a group-oriented phenomenon but that, moreover, it stems from a basic (fundamental) empathic mechanism. He is however quick to point out that “we are not born with any specific moral norms in mind, but with a learning agenda that tells us which information to imbibe (de Waal 2006, 166). From this high sociability view of species evolution, he describes the ‘Russian Doll’ understanding of empathy in direct contrast to the veneer theory. In his words:

“... at the core of the empathic capacity is a relatively simple mechanism that provides an observer (the “subject”) with access to the emotional state of another (the “object”) through the subject’s own neural and bodily representations” (de Waal 2006: 36).

The complexity of such representations and how they are in turn interpreted, should not be understated. As Baron-Cohen points out, in more recent neurological research involving fMRI scans of human test subjects, some ten different areas of the brain were shown to be involved in empathic responses, or what he refers to as the “empathy circuit” (Baron-Cohen 2011: 18). This point is raised here to underline the very deeply embedded empathic response, lending neurological evidence to support de Waal’s evolutionary moral theory claims. The Russian doll concept relates to all processes involved in this empathic circuit, divided into three stages: emotional contagion, cognitive empathy and attribution (de Waal 2006, 39), where the first – literally feeling what another feels – is at times involuntary and almost reflex-like. In terms of species evolution, de Waal has elsewhere described it thusly:

“...Empathy engages brain areas that are more than a hundred million years old. The capacity arose long ago with motor mimicry and emotional contagion, after which evolution added layer after layer, until our ancestors not only felt what others felt, but understood what others might want or need. The full capacity seems put together like a Russian doll.” (de Waal 2009: 208).

Furthermore, it is that basic core which has been documented across many species, with evolution having then afforded some species those added layers, leading to a mastery of certain empathic processes. That basic empathic core, however, remains key. Emotional contagion, the automatic feeling of another's emotion or of "distress at the sight of another's pain is an impulse over which we exert little or no control: it grabs us instantaneously, like a reflex, without time to weigh the pros and cons" (De Waal 2006: 51). And it is in this observation, according to Rifkin, that the basis for *biosphere consciousness* (in direct contrast to Cartesian consciousness) resides. While seemingly a weak platitude, that "reality is what we make it", the concept that he posits is more complex:

... 'understanding comes not from detachment and exercise of power but from participation and empathic communion. The more deeply we empathize with each other and our fellow creatures, the more intensive and extensive is our level of participation and the richer and more universal are the realms of reality within which we dwell. Our level of intimate participation defines our level of understanding of reality. Our experience becomes increasingly more global and universal in character. We become fully cosmopolitan and immersed in the affairs of the world. This is the beginning of biosphere consciousness' (Rifkin 2010: 154).

A recognition (ethical, philosophical) of the embedded nature of empathy, can be demonstrated in how physically it *is* embedded in so many separate regions of the human brain. What each of these scholars is describing in their respective field, is a shift in understanding which places empathy at the centre of human activity (evolution, co-operation, psychology, sociology). Recent advances in neuroscience, have allowed researchers to analyse different regions of the brain, order to highlight where, if at all, empathy could be said to be operating (physically). As described above, Simon Baron-Cohen, in decades-long research into the nature of autism, has outlined what he describes as an "empathy circuit" – those areas of the brain responsible for different forms of perception or action which, acting in concert, are understood to govern the empathic process. The medial prefrontal cortex (MPFC), for example, is understood to be the 'social hub' of the human brain – processing social 'cues' and allowing us to compare our perspective to someone else's. Baron-Cohen describes the case of a 19th

century rail worker, Phineas Gage, who survived the unfortunate accident of having a rod driven through his brain. Testimonials of the time describe how this charming, polite, mild-mannered man changed almost overnight into a man who was “childish, irreverent and rude, uttering profanities and showing no social inhibition” (Baron-Cohen 2011, 21). When over a century later, neuroscientists recovered the man’s skull, it was determined that the rod pierced the skull at precisely the point which would indicate severe damage to the MPFC.

More than simply a quaint anecdote on social behaviour, the example – along with a host of new brain scans which demonstrate heightened blood flow and neurological activity in these ten regions of the brain which are seen to form the ‘empathic circuit’ – would seem to suggest a human empathy that is very hard-wired. Moreover, one might also argue that the very fact that evolution should have, through millions of years of natural selection, seen fit to place the process within very different regions of the human brain, might suggest the vital or central role that such a process plays within the evolutionary success of the human species (i.e. to safeguard it by not limiting it to only one area which could easily be damaged). Furthermore, Baron-Cohen’s studies have looked at the genetic markers which most appear to influence empathy, tracing the process to three particular genes (Baron-Cohen 2011, 90). Most controversially, his studies have found that among his participants, on average, more of the genetic markers which indicate empathy and more neural activity within the empathy circuit are evident in women than in men.

5.4) From Phronesis to ‘Freud’ : The Psychoanalytic and Philosophical Implications of Empathy

Empathy as Intersubjectivity

Having made the case for an evolutionary and biological basis for human empathy – and more specifically for the centrality of empathy to human action and sociability – its psychological contours can also be traced so as to outline *how* it works and not just where (physically in the brain) it occurs. Here, Louis Agosta’s work (1984), and James

Marcia's (1987) are helpful. As the latter defines it, empathy "requires an attitude or a stance of openness to another's experience" (Marcia 1987: 83). Understanding it as a cognitive process, Marcia describes the psychology behind those outer layers of de Waal's Russian doll. Describing the four aspects of empathy outlined by Theodore Reik in 1949, he shows that the process itself is guided by *identification*, *incorporation*, *reverberation* and *detachment*. Broadly speaking, these four steps involve contemplation of another person; internalizing the other's experience; "experiencing the other's experience while simultaneously attending to one's own cognitive and affective associations to that experience (Marcia 1987, 83); moving away from that inner merging of self and other's emotional experience so as to be able to respond or act, fully cognizant of that separatedness.

This third step in the process is also seen as key in the link between emotional contagion (again, that basic, primal, involuntary empathic response described by de Waal) and intersubjectivity, outlined by Agosta. In attempting to describe empathy as process, in contrast to its more rudimentary impulse, he invokes the concept of double representation. As he defines it:

"... Empathy involves a double representation. First, it involves the representation of another's feeling (this is what empathy shares with emotional contagion). Second, it entails a representation of the other as the source of the first representation. (This is what is lacking in emotional contagion.) Thus, what differentiates empathy from contagion is the emergence, the distinguishing of, a representation of the other as the object as well as the cause of what is being felt." (Agosta 1984: 55).

In fact it is this understanding of the difference between own and other's emotions that makes *detachment* critical in the cognitive functioning of empathy. And it is from here that a comparison, in the political and moral realm, can be made between what Jeremy Rifkin has termed *homo empathicus* and the Smithian *impartial spectator*, so championed by Sen. According to Agosta, the effect on the self is one of the defining results of this part of the process. There are three ways, he argues by which empathy leads to an enriched self:

“...First, in relation to other individuals regarded collectively as an intersubjective community, empathy is part of the foundation of that intersubjectivity [...] Second, in relation to particular individuals, empathy furnishes a way of access to the other person’s emotional life and of disclosing how our lives overlap and diverge. *Here the self is enriched by discovering the variety and multiplicity of experiences of which other individuals are capable.* Third, in the relation of the self to itself, empathy entails an appreciation of how others are affected by oneself...” (Agosta 1984: 60).

What is striking about this description of empathy as a process which feeds and is in turn fed by intersubjectivity, is that it implies an epistemology which is experiential and inherently social. The more we understand of others, the more we understand ourselves. Within the context of development studies, I contend that the implication is far-reaching. As puerile as the logic might seem, the argument could then be made that an individual in a so-called developed country, in somehow participating in this empathic loop (empathy-intersubjectivity-empathy) or empathic circuit, would understand not only the lived needs of some other, but also how the self may have bearing on those needs. Equally possible is for that same person to simply re-evaluate her own understanding of ‘need’.

If, as Rifkin has argued, the clarion call of *homo empathicus* is not the Cartesian ‘I think therefore I am’, but rather ‘I participate therefore I am’ (Rifkin 2010: 87), it is difficult to imagine any process or act (individual or societal) which does not require this fundamental understanding of intersubjectivity. International development could no longer be seen as having a beginning (direct capital investment in infrastructure), a middle (IMF structural adjustment policies) and an end (realization of the Millennium Development Goals). Rather, development – properly conceived as human development – will require a new appraisal of self and other as inherently intertwined. Under-development can only be understood in relation to over-development, with some equilibrium as the constant (negotiated, ruptured, fought over) goal.

To return for a moment to what might best be described as the philosophical foil described in Chapter 3, the construct of the “impartial spectator,” so critical to the moral reasoning of Adam Smith and to the theories of justice outlined by Amartya Sen, simply

fail to take into account the embedded and empathic nature of said “observer”. How and to what extent affect and reason interact with one another within the empathic circuit is not easily delineated. To complicate matters further, sympathy as an act of will or of action (in response to an empathic revelation/understanding) is informed by and then feeds back into this empathic circuit. And while, as stated above, we might now understand the contours of what Hume referred to as ‘sympathy’ to really be more akin to what in a contemporary context we call ‘empathy’, there is a clear distinction between the two, primarily in the nature of ‘understanding’ which arises from each.³¹ In the case of the former, a spectator might feel the pain of another without seeing the source of that feeling as coming from outside of himself (emotional response or contagion). Crucially it might lead to a motivation to respond (to stop the pain), but would not lead to further understanding about the nature of the problem. In empathy, instead, there is a *cognitive* separation between self and other, such that an understanding is inherent that the source of that feeling comes from outside of the self. Louis Agosta refers to this as ‘double representation’ and identifies it as key to human intersubjectivity. Empathy “most authentically becomes a mode of understanding as it is transformed into and communicated as an interpretation” (Agosta 1984: 51). This interpretation is then further considered and deliberated or reflected upon by both subjectivities, constituting an empathic intersubjectivity.

Primarily within the field of developmental psychology, theorists have sought to outline the relationship between cognition and affect within the functioning of empathy (Strayer 1987) and how the two inform or distort each other. One key difficulty in differentiating between the two comes from an empirical inability to do so. Most clinical tests in this regard have been unable to capture those elements of the process which are seen to be primarily cognitive and those which are affective. Both are however seen to be integral to the process. Affect does matter and is what gives empathy its motivating factor. Paraphrasing Piaget’s theory, Strayer argues that for Piaget “cognition ‘acts’, whereas affect ‘energizes’ action” (Strayer 1987, 235). The affect or emotional response is the motivational factor in the further understanding of an ‘other’ or of that other’s plight, issue or problem.

³¹ Empathy, from the German *emfühlung*, is to ‘feel into’ while sympathy, from the German *mitfühlung*, is to ‘feel with’.

Further, with relation to the intersubjective nature of empathy (an empathic response, by its very definition, requires a concrete ‘other’ or subjectivity with which to interact), a distinction is made between the *content* and *process* of empathy (Agosta 1984). Key to this discussion, as will be discussed below, is the *process* by which empathy occurs and the resultant ‘learning’ about self and other which it leads to. The implication, to which I will return, is that if a certain process is said to capture the nature of empathy, empathic understanding or an empathic response – taken to be of value because it responds to the particular need of a concrete ‘other’, rather than to a generic ‘duty’ to all – then the fostering of that process is desirable.

Empathy as Process and ‘Special Hermeneutic’, Personal and Intercultural

In relation to the process aspect of empathy, a further distinction can be made between empathy as a discrete response on a particular occasion or in a specific context and empathy as a competence. If proper focus is given to the competence and process aspects of empathy, the caring ‘disposition’ to which care theorists refer is given more substance and more institutional import. In terms of applicability to the solving of real problems, it also forms the basis for the argument that focus must be given to increasing ‘empathic literacy’ (Calloway-Thomas 2010; Gerhardt 2009), discussed below. Understood as a skill and as an actionable process, empathy provides an enriched sense and understanding of self and other. For Agosta, this occurs in three ways. First, in relation to individuals in an intersubjective collectivity, empathy is understood to be the very foundation of that intersubjectivity; second, empathy provides access to another person’s emotional reality, allowing one to appreciate how our lives to in fact overlap or diverge; and third, empathy “entails an *appreciation for how others are affected by oneself*, how others regard oneself” (Agosta 1984, 60 – my emphasis). This last point, to wit a true understanding of how one’s actions affect another would be a key contribution to an ethics of development by an incorporation of the process and competence definitions of empathy.

There are a number of ways by which an empathic approach to international development complements and builds upon recent literature on care, responsibility and empowerment within the fields of international relations (Robinson 1999), post-

development thought (Escobar 2001) and political geography (Raghuram, Madge and Naxolo 2009). Complementarity is found in a relational understanding of the nature of the problems at hand and of the actors involved in addressing those problems. It is within those relationships, problematic both spatially and temporally, that motivation to respond and to take responsibility is ultimately located. But perhaps specifically on the question of motivation to act, a recognition of the centrality of empathy and of the processes which it could engender would add further weight to the argument laid out by care theorists. To fully separate a liberal justice argument for responsibility from an approach based on caring and relationality, the question of 'motivation' to action remains. As discussed above, in the process of understanding (cognition), empathy (affect) is a key motivator.

While early psychotherapists such as Freud (1925) or Kohut placed emphasis on empathy as a means of understanding the psychic state of others, developmental psychologists (Bohman 1991) were more concerned with the affect evoked in the subject (by an outside person or object). The importance of this distinction rests in how the concept of 'empathy' or even 'affect' was then subsequently used by political theorists. For example, Nussbaum – who unlike Sen did expound a model of empathy and emotions – focused much of her discussion on empathy and compassion (Nussbaum 2001) on the psychotherapy tradition.

The real strength of Morrell's argument stems from his attempt at viewing these various strands and definitions of empathy as parts of a multi-dimensional whole. While it's true that empathy involves emotion to a greater or lesser degree, this emotion is almost always invariably conditioned by, prompted by or the result of cognitive or rational processes (Morrell 2010: 61). Developing upon Mark Davis' 'organizational model of Empathy', Morrell describes a *process model of empathy*, which includes *noncognitive* (primary circular reaction, motor mimicry), *simple cognitive* (direct association or labelling) and *advanced cognitive* (language-mediated associations or role-taking) processes (Morrell 2010: 64). These processes then interact with a number of other factors within the social functioning or performance of empathy (including an individual's biological capacities, the resultant social behaviour, the empathic concern engendered, etc.). This entire complex is Morrell's 'process model', understanding empathy as a multi-dimensional construct. Given the neuro-scientific data emerging on

the functioning of empathy in the human brain (e.g. Baron-Cohen's description of the empathic circuit functioning within eleven different regions of the brain), such a model seems most appropriate.

Empathy is both affective and cognitive, impulse and reflection. Further, Morrell uses recent work in affective intelligence theory to demonstrate that emotion is often critical in the political decisions that we take (Morrell 2010: 133). He uses this more nuanced understanding of empathy to describe the centrality that it should hold in any deliberative body which we would claim to be democratic, for example. Incorporating I.M. Young's argument for the inclusion of greeting and narrative in such fora, with more classically rationalist appeals for rhetoric (Gary Remer); discursive ethics (Habermas) to its critical alternatives (Benhabib 1996), Morrell defines democracy as deliberation with empathy at its heart, defining deliberation as "a practice in which people contemplate a political object (viz. an issue, policy, or candidate) by engaging in an inclusive, attentive communicative exchange (Morrell 2010: 161). Arguably it is the 'attentive' and how it is conceived, which places empathy at the centre of the process, especially if the process model of empathy allows us to understand the concept as a mode of understanding, more than simply a shared emotion or imagining oneself in another's shoes (role-taking). We will return to the deliberative democratic implications of an empathic process in Chapter 7, as it offers a nuanced alternative to the model proposed by David Crocker.

And while Michael Slote has sought to ground his philosophical understanding of care and empathy in the virtue ethics of Aristotle and the deontological normativity of Kant, the embedded *relational* and *processual* nature of empathy would seem to require a different philosophical framework. From his own work as a psychotherapist and student of philosophy, Louis Agosta again appears to provide a helpful alternative. Although explicitly avoiding a discussion of empathy in his own philosophy of hermeneutics, Heidegger acknowledged (in *Being and Time* 1926) that empathy itself would require its own 'special' hermeneutic. Agosta then seeks to apply Heidegger's key distinctions of affectedness, understanding, interpretation and speech to empathy (Agosta 2010, 7). It is important to emphasise here, however, that Heidegger's own use of these distinctions was meant to define human being as authentic in the face of 'death'. Agosta, instead, applies the same principles so as to see human being as authentic in the face of the 'other'. Insofar as we are 'open to' being affected by others,

‘empathy is a form of receptivity that provides input to further processing which results in (empathic) knowledge of another individual’ (11).

So in navigating the fine line between proposing a universal, biological mechanism (empathy) as a basis upon which to construct processes and frameworks which might inform better policy in international development, while still recognizing existent forces of structural injustice which might impede them, a focus on empathy as process might be most useful in arriving at collective decisions, best suited to particular *caringscapes* (see Chapter 4). Although specifically in relation to how empathy might assist in the formulation of a more constructive deliberative democratic theory, Michael Morrell emphasises the impact on ‘understanding’ that such empathic processes (affect, role-taking, reflection) would have. By factoring these in, his preliminary definition of deliberation is of a “practice in which people contemplate a political object by engaging in an inclusive, attentive communicative exchange” (Morrell 2010, 161). Key here is the notion that each person must be able to participate in that communicative exchange and that everyone’s input receives full consideration. The distinction between this definition and, for example, a Habermasian discursive ethics definition of deliberation comes from the inclusion of the empathic process of role-taking (both cognitive and affective) which, he contends, helps to mitigate biases and prejudices inherent in other participants and in the structure of the deliberation itself.

And so from process to empathic practice, a further distinction can be drawn between what Carolyn Calloway-Thomas refers to as ‘soft’ empathy and ‘hard’ empathy in intercultural contexts. As with Morrell, she places primary importance on ‘attentiveness’, which has direct parallels with the importance that care theorists place upon ‘responsiveness’ (Hankivsky 2004). Attentiveness, she argues, “in the right order and in the proper frame leads to adjusting our world to the world of another” (Calloway-Thomas 2010, 17). With specific relation to frames and structures, she understands soft empathy to exemplified by NGOs or other organizations that do the work laid out in their mandate, most often providing short-term respite from suffering and poverty. Hard empathy, instead, “enters the sanctuary of poverty and significantly alters the livelihood of the people being serviced; it brings to the scene an attitude of mindfulness, attentiveness to local concerns, an understanding of the social setting, trustworthiness, and visions of independence for poor people” (Calloway-Thomas 2010, 178).

Two clear examples of the latter, which she cites, are the Grameen Bank and a decision by Malawi's President in 2006 to reject IMF and Anglo-American pressure to exchange maize for dollars. In the case of the first, the empathic underpinnings are clear. The founder, Muhammad Yunus, worked with the local conditions and realities to connect with working people and families, offering trust that micro-loans would be repaid and instilling both a sense of personal empowerment and an understanding of what it is possible for human beings to do when working together. For Calloway-Thomas, the case of President Mutharika highlights both the perils of soft empathy (the IMF stubbornly working within the confines of its mandate and suggesting that Malawi sell-off its own resources of grain in return for aid dollars). The President, instead, recognizing the reality on the ground, the sense of pride in work and cultivation of its own food and resources, ordered his ministers to disobey IMF directives and to set about helping farmers to cultivate even more grain. This reflected a sense of dignity and self-worth ('we will not go begging for food' when we already have the water and land to be able to care for ourselves) which is vital to the care-ethical ideas listed above.

In both cases, it is the building or renewing of connections of trust, empowerment, genuine understanding of a local reality and specific context which brought success in overcoming an intractable problem (poverty or food shortage). Rather than rest within the over-arching construct of a mandate or single policy solution, the actors involved employed processes of reflection and deliberation and began their policy or practical solutions from a place of deeper understanding. Both Calloway-Thomas (2010) and Gerhardt (2009) refer to this in differing ways as empathic literacy. For the latter it is something which in Western countries has been lost in a mad rush to make money at all costs and the neglect of children's' emotional development in this regard will likely result in an even less empathetic society in future. More optimistically, Calloway-Thomas hopes that a more diffused use of information technology (specifically online telecommunications) might result in more frequent and varied face-to-face contact with historically distant 'others', further strengthening these bonds of attentiveness and more considered understanding of people, contexts and problems. Regardless of how we might perceive the (perhaps) tenable distinction between 'hard' and 'soft' empathy – in fact here we might instead suggest 'deep' versus 'shallow', a distinction to which I will return in Chapter 6 – there is a clear sense that an actor's

empathic literacy will very likely determine the extent to which she is able to perceive the needs of a person with whom she stands in relation and how that need might best be responded to.

Conclusion

In attempting to assess the centrality of empathy to our understanding of care ethics, I first reviewed the limited cognitive function placed on it by Nussbaum. In her estimation, empathy is reduced to little more than an act of imagination or akin to 'method acting'. Her suggestion that compassion can be quite easily divorced from empathy is unconvincing and does not consider how compassion, in an actual empathic interaction, can be mediated by empathy. On the other side of the spectrum, I then addressed the 'Copernican revolution' claimed by Michael Slote; a paradigm shift which, by recognising empathy at the centre of all our relations, would change the nature of how we perceive moral philosophical questions. Slote's narrower understanding of care ethics as falling squarely within the rubric of virtue ethics (care as disposition and not as relation), allows him to then make a claim for Kantian deontology to be 'tacked onto' this central role care ethics, ostensibly so as to provide a 'thick' normative basis for his claims. I reject both ideas (care as virtue and the very need for a 'thick' or Kantian normative basis for care ethics). The idea, which he expressed elsewhere, that empathy represents the 'cement of the moral universe' (Slote 2010: 13) is both unhelpful and incorrect. Empathy does not 'fix' moral imperatives, nor does it provide the foundational basis for all aspects of caring, political or other social practices. Furthermore, the imagery of 'cement', in this case, does nothing to capture the dynamic and multi-layered nature of the concept. Empathy is a mode, a language, a grammar and a psychological tool which assists individuals *already located within particular relationships of meaning*, to make sense of their moral universe and to act ethically within it.

In fact, Slote's value argument is turned on its head here. By outlining the complex nature of empathy as process, the 'thick' philosophical underpinning of care,

comes from a stronger elaboration of the communicative and expressive practices which lead us to make moral or ethical decisions. His appeal to abstract examples and deontological reasoning simply results in the same difficulty found in rationalist justice accounts of 'the good' -- that the 'centrality of morality' can somehow be thought about and known, separate from the realities within which it is lived and experienced. This is inconsistent with a care ethics approach and fails to capture what exactly happens in empathic engagement with 'the other' in relation to and through constant shifts of focus (affective and cognitive) with 'the self'.

As a multidimensional process which contains emotion, projection and understanding (Morrell 2011: 41), it occurs within an intersubjective matrix³² of meaning. The signs and signifiers, the access made available to the cognitive and affective state of 'the other', occur *through* this process and not independently from it (in an imaginative *or* simply emotional fashion). In bringing together recent literature in fields as disparate as evolutionary biology and Hedeggerian hermeneutics, I have sought to structure a discussion of empathy which differentiates between its content (double representation) as well as its process (affective-cognitive). This *process*, in turn, when added to previous theories about relational and care-ethical solutions to global development problems, leads to a deeper reflection on and understanding of a particular problem and suggests that a solution for care may not be the same in every 'centre' or context of care. Rather than emphasizing individual agency, as a rights-justice ethical approach might, here, agency and dignity and self-worth are understood as necessarily bound by the social contexts within which we find ourselves. In both biological-evolutionary terms and from a moral philosophical standpoint, while for Sen

³² The most basic definition of the intersubjective matrix (term first coined by Daniel Stern 2004), consists of two counter-theories developed as a direct result of the discovery of mirror neurons. The first rejects the notion of monadic subjects and disembodied self-centred minds and the second rejects the assumption (made by Piaget and other child development psychologists) that infants are asocial and ego-centric until acquiring the capacity for interpersonal communion. In fact pre-verbal, pre-symbolic development is now understood to occur within this intersubjective matrix (see Stern 2007: 38; Braten and Trevarthen 2007:2), where empathic and sympathetic responses, by virtue of their embodiment and of the unconscious functioning of mirror neurons, are automatized and embodied by infants. This discovery has direct bearing on my discussion of the International Child Development Programme ('Empathy in Action') discussed in Chapter 6. The programme incorporates this knowledge about pre-verbal empathic cues and sympathetic responses and attempts to activate the practices of care in childcare-givers, with maximum potential for the development of these cues in mind.

Development is an expansion of freedoms, here it is argued that Development is an expansion of empathy.

A recurring element within most definitions of empathy is the fact that temporal and spatial proximity does play *some* role in what moral decision is taken. Contrary to Peter Singer's ethical reasoning, Michael Slote argues that it is not morally equivalent to care for a distant other as it is for someone suffering nearby by virtue of the fact that the empathic connection/understanding is necessarily different. This does not however preclude the possibility (and Slote emphasizes this at length) of a moral education which enhances certain empathic skills or tendencies, precisely so that we might make those distant others seem closer. Furthermore, in a world increasingly connected through technologies of communication, it is not far-fetched to imagine that a moral education which continues to emphasise the centrality of empathy (empathic reasoning and empathic understanding), should be of importance. The complexity of such connections and increase of face-to-face interactions should see a commensurate rise in the complexity of ways by which we seek meaning in other people.

How empathic literacy might be pursued as either an alternative to (or more likely in conjunction with) stated international development goals in a post-2015 framework is the subject of Chapter 6. The introduction of 'immersions' (placing development workers within 'host' families for a short period of time) represents a 'shallow' introduction to empathic understanding. The work of the International Child Development Programme (ICDP), instead, is presented as a 'deep' application of empathic processes within both 'developed' and 'developing' communities. In both cases, however, the emphasis is on the fact that knowledge comes not from sitting, 'unaccountable', and 'receiving' information, but rather in stepping outside (the box, the 'goals', the benchmarks, the lecture-hall) and actively *perceiving* (in that 'mystical' combination of affect and cognition) that distant yet proximate twinkling star which Whitman invokes so beautifully. In the same way as Copernicus placing the sun at the centre of the known universe, a Copernican³³ revolution in moral philosophy would

³³ In fairness to Slote, he never uses the term himself. It is Carol Gilligan who suggests the analogy in the brief back cover review of his 2007 book. I appreciate the analogy but suggest that his focus on the primarily affective components of the empathic process limit the realisation of the shift. In a similar vein, Tronto's recent monograph on the *political* ethics of care also intimate at such a shift (but without reference to empathy).

indeed be underway if the root of all moral decisions was seen to rest in our ability to socialize and empathize with one another, rather than in our ability to harness or contain our emotions by dint of reason, rationality or eudaimonic value. But perhaps, rather than looking for a universe-shifting appreciation for empathy, it is more than sufficient to point to its centrality in our embodied sense of self, in the creation of meaning and then ultimately (for this intersubjective reason), as the basis for that meaning and for the ethical judgements which stem from it. Or as Agosta puts it:

‘In the final analysis, morality is separate from empathy and neither necessarily grounds the other, although arguably both point to a common root in human beings at the source of possibility’ (Agosta 2011: 22).

That common root, I suggest, provides a common route, for the future of international development practice. If empathy constitutes the grammar or language of the intersubjective matrix, which gives meaning to our understandings of care and responsibility, then more consideration should be made to its component structures. In the following chapters, I will discuss how this consideration might be practiced. First in programmes currently used in service of ‘putting oneself in another’s shoes’ and then secondly in how this mode of communication might be applied in deliberative democratic settings.

6. EMPATHY IN ACTION OR 'IMMERSE YOURSELF': LISTEN WELL, PRACTICE OFTEN

... 'There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats children' (Mandela 1995: 1)

... 'Attentiveness in the right order and in the proper frame leads to adjusting our world to the world of the other' (Calloway-Thomas 2010: 17)

Introduction

What Calloway-Thomas refers to above, attentiveness through empathy, can be understood in its simplest form as 'access to others'. In attempting to define the contours of a critical ethic of international development, I have suggested that a care ethics focus on embodied relationships helps to focus attention on the idea that human flourishing is very much dependent on those social interconnections. In Chapter 5, I then suggested that – with the exception of Michael Slote's deontological and virtue ethics understanding of care and empathy – care theory has spoken very little about the ways in which empathy and empathic communication inform and give meaning to many of our most basic relationships of trust and of care. While some theorists locate the 'nature' of empathy in its affective dimensions, I have argued that only a more comprehensive appreciation for its cognitive *and* affective components will allow for a clearer understanding for how it informs moral judgements and ethical responses. I attempted to highlight a number of inconsistencies across the literature on empathy, which have allowed for it to be used in different manners and to different ends. The purpose of this chapter, then, is to build upon the theoretical distinctions raised in Chapter 5, by highlighting, within the context of international development, two programmes which could be said to align with Calloway-Thomas's distinction of hard vs. soft empathy.³⁴ If Development is to be understood, not as teleological and not simply

³⁴ Ultimately I find the distinction which Calloway-Thomas makes rather unconvincing. I imagine her choice of terms reflects her broader argument to give political meaning to empathy, likening it to hard and soft power. However the distinctions I seek to raise are of a broader ethical nature and relate more to the ways in which relationships inform and mediate our understandings of moral problems and

by its proxy (poverty alleviation), then I suggest that part of a critical ethics of international development should seek ways in which to locate and activate this mode of intersubjective communication within existing networks and relationships of care.

In my attempt to locate empathy (and care) within current practices of international development, then, I examine one recent bureaucratic trend (Immersion) and one community-based programme (the ICDP). The former is an example of Development practice which, combined with participatory field research, is understood as a way to overcome institutional bias and to get development workers out of the workshops and conferences and to instead 'give priority to experiential learning and critical reflection', leading to 'personal and professional transformation' (Chambers 2005: 166). The latter programme, instead, while not considered an international development programme *as such*, focuses on psychosocial development of children and tailors itself to specific contexts and relationships of care. Within the scope of the critical ethic I am attempting to articulate, the focus of the ICDP – on local context, on locating practices of care and building upon them, and on activating empathic communication within them – makes it precisely the sort of programme which *should* be understood as international development.

In the case of immersion, middle and senior-level Development bureaucrats are sent to spend 'a few days' with a family within which a particular UNDP programme is being implemented. The idea is to put a 'face' to the 'numbers' and the literature appears to emphasise the 'empathic' nature of such a process (Chambers 2005; 2007; 2014; Pedwell 2012). Ultimately, however, I argue that this falls far short of the level of empathic commitment which a critical ethic of development (based in care) would require. The risk is that, in attempting to 'see how a particular programme for poverty alleviation' plays out in a local community; if that attempt is merely a discrete intervention/incursion/excursion on the part of the development worker, then it represents simply another 'check-box' within the series of interminable lists of 'development practices' which the MDGs have come to represent. To be sure, Robert Chambers' dissatisfaction with the endless conferences and workshops, represents a

ethical responses. Therefore if I were to limit myself to a simplistic comparative dyad, it would more likely be 'shallow' and 'deep' empathy, reflective of the level of *attentiveness* which one subject brings to her interaction with another.

deeper dissatisfaction with the environment of 'simplistic certainty' which has emerged in Development thinking, one which has:

... 'infiltrated some development [...] practice. The downside of the MDGs, and of the inspiring movement to Make Poverty History, has been the belief that 'we know what needs to be done' (especially in Africa) –and that the solution is more money.' (Chambers 2007: 13)

It is a simplistic certainty which development theorist Jonathan Glennie has noted too, in his dealings with countless government officials, business leaders and 'concerned citizens'. Any failure to realise this clear solution, then, is justified in the implicit belief that poor people want to be poor, indigenous people 'don't want to develop' or that 'poor people must be lazy'. It is indicative for Glennie of the fact that 'the failure of so many people to empathise with the reality of life for poor people is a major barrier to poverty reduction' (Glennie 2012: 1). As such, it is perfectly understandable that immersions would be suggested as a means of alleviating this bias and interrogating these hidden assumptions.

It can, however, only be considered part of any concerted effort to deal with the 'permanent background' of relationships and webs of relationships within which we find ourselves and within which development programmes operate. So in contrast to the immersions movement, I examine the work of the ICDP and the emphasis that it places on multiple locations of empathy and care within local communities. While the programme is aimed simply at parents' empathic responses to their children, preliminary assessments of the programme have indicated a 'spill-over' effect of these empathic encounters in terms of other familial and community relations. The ICDP claims to have developed:

... 'a simple and culturally adaptable programme, based on recent research in child development that sensitises and enriches the relationship between caregivers and their children. *Local* child rearing practices are *identified and reactivated* in order to stimulate development that is truly authentic and *long lasting*. The main aim of ICDP training is to *build competence and confidence* in the members of a community or an existing child caring system and to transfer the project to local resource persons' (ICDP 2009: 2 – my emphasis).

While immersions focus on a potential empathic understanding derived from a brief encounter between development practitioner and host family, ICDP facilitators focus on establishing a similar empathic understanding (between facilitator and caregiver) *and* on activating empathic understanding within local relationships of care and dependence. This, I will argue, better represents the ‘web of caring relations’ described by Tronto and Fischer (see Chapter 3 and Chapter 8).

6.1) Immersions: Affect with no Effect?

Within the context of Development programmes, ‘immersions’ have become a method by which development practitioners or government officials are brought into direct contact with the lived experiences of individuals or families within the developing world. It is believed that in this way, the voices and perspectives of the poor will better be ‘heard and integrated into new policy approaches and practices at a senior level’ (IDS 2004: 3). Often a middle or senior-level bureaucrat will be sent to a development context to speak with a family or to ‘live’ there for a day, a weekend or a week. Such an experience, it is thought, then informs future judgements and proposals made by the official, along with relayed accounts of lived experiences of the individuals which a programme may affect. As Carolyn Pedwell argues, these ‘affective journeys’ are understood as vehicles for *self-transformation*, which then might ‘contain the seeds of wider social and political transformation’ (Pedwell 2012: 170)³⁵. It is important to note that the transformation spoken of here is not within development communities but rather of the development practitioners themselves. They are regularly used for staff

³⁵ Similar to my critiques of ‘slippage’ of terminology with respect to ‘empathy’ in previous chapters, Pedwell also demonstrates an understanding of the term which is primarily affective in nature. As she describes it: ‘While empathy is defined differently across the literatures, it is generally understood as similar to other ‘humanising’ emotions such as sympathy and compassion’ (Pedwell 2012, 165). Since she later goes on to quote Nussbaum on the matter, repeating her question about whether or not empathy functions in a manner which *fuses* the observer with a subject’s ‘sense of suffering’ (see also Nussbaum 2001), it is clear that her understanding of empathy is one which might be closer aligned with ‘sympathy’. That said, since the overall purpose of her argument is to highlight how *affect* on the part of the development participant is activated (and mediated through neoliberal realities or structural constraints), it does not detract from her questioning of whether or not much ‘understanding’ can take place in such circumstances.

induction purposes, by SEWA in India, by the World Bank and by ActionAid International. The Swedish international aid agency (Sida) also considers them an integral part of pre-workshop programming guidance, normally requiring that staff spend time in a host village *before* completing a policy proposal.

Originally developed by Karl Osner in the 1980s, for the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), immersions reflected a methodological approach which sought to address the relatively unsatisfactory results of poverty alleviation schemes in the German international development context (Osner 2007: 128). A realisation that vast amounts of German annual spending on development was not reaching intended targets, prompted a review of the system and a realisation that structural reforms which occurred over the years, were not reflected in daily practices (the mindset and behaviour of bureaucrats). The intention of the early immersions, then, was simply for individuals from developed countries to 'stay for a few days with people who live in poverty and are struggling to achieve a decent life by their own efforts; [...] a short *in situ* encounter with the reality of poverty and exclusion' (Osner 2007: 129). After such encounters, reflective consideration on the part of the participant was then meant to answer rudimentary questions: is this the way I imagined poverty to be? Has my will to express solidarity increased? Have I expanded my competence to find efficient solutions? (129).

Osner was later founder of the Association for the Promotion of North-South Dialogue, introduced the concept of Exposure and Dialogue Programmes (EDPs) to SEWA in 1991 and its original purpose was for capacity building. The purpose of the programmes is to 'personalise the abstract', thus bringing staff and practitioners (participants) from donor organisations into direct contact with their clients, or the beneficiaries of their particular projects. The simplest justification for such programmes is that it 'enables the participants to examine their decisions from the perspective of their hosts and frame policy decisions with a lived experience of the voice, views, and situation of the poor' (Nanavaty 2007: 27). Furthermore, in Osner's original version of the immersions, encounters lasted 8-10 days and were comprised of three phases: immersion, reflection and dialogue, which occurred continuously throughout the different components of the immersion in question (Osner 2007: 130). For it to be an

‘immersion’, participants took part in the daily lives of their host families, normally with the assistance of a facilitator.³⁶ Activities conducted during an immersion were many:

...‘there may be activities like working with and helping the family, listening and dialogue, learning a life history, keeping a reflective diary, or trying to explain your work and its relevance. But the essence is to be open to the unplanned and unexpected, to live and be, and relate as a person’ (Chambers 2007: 9).

Of course there is no simple template by which these immersions operate, nor are they necessarily more than a one-off interaction within the larger process of an organization’s development activities. Often they are guided by a particular theme or line of inquiry, sometimes they are unplanned or unexpected visits. In many ways, they find their academic antecedents in participant observations made by social anthropologists in the 1980s. Benefits of an average immersion, in addition to the sense of ‘accountability’ they engender, include: project monitoring, familiarisation with a new post, experiential realism, capacity building and programme development (Chambers 2005: 11). Although the immersions themselves can take many forms, the goal of ‘ground-truthing’ or of ‘face-to-face’ dialogue, ‘walking in another’s shoes’ are all the metaphors employed to express a similar concept. As Chambers elsewhere describes it, the knowledge provided by these empathic excursions becomes helpful to the development practitioner insofar as it ‘provides a touchstone to refer to, and a source of confidence, and the conviction of authority based on personal experience’ (Chambers 2007: 11).

The key argument to be made here, however, is that such ‘events’ run the risk of becoming discrete activities, another in a series of boxes to be checked before the policy process continues apace. Furthermore, as the above quote demonstrates, the emphasis appears to be on the confidence of the development practitioner in his own authority, resulting from direct contact with the recipient of aid. While many of the countless reflections gathered in the 2007 IDS Bulletin (dedicated to the topic of immersions), highlight fascinating dynamics and local knowledge which the participants might not

³⁶ Arguably, the presence of facilitators or even translators, challenges the notion of an ‘empathic’ (in the broader cognitive-affective sense) encounter was occurring. At best, it seems, ‘putting a face’ to ‘stats and numbers’ appears a more fair description. The focus is not so much on dialogue and intersubjective understanding, but on being able to relate a programme to *actual* people.

otherwise have gained, there is a danger that the focus might be placed almost *too* reflexively on the immersion participant and his role in the process, rather than in the connections and interconnections which could be recognised and fostered over time. In the case of an immersion organised by DfID and ActionAid China in 2006, for example, for participant Katy Oswald:

... 'one of the most interesting aspects of this immersion from my perspective was the experience of a local county Party secretary, who accompanied me as translator. He said that he had learnt lessons from my 'bottom up' attitude and was impressed by my wanting to experience life in the village (such as insisting on walking to a neighbouring village when he offered his official car) [...] One of the recommendations I made to ActionAid China was to offer local government officials the opportunity to attend immersion visits as it seemed he had gained as much from the visit as I had' (Birch 2007: 50).

In other words, one of the key aspects of a three night stay with a host family in Qi Zhi for this Social Development Advisor from DfID was the effect that 'her' bottom-up attitude had on someone else. Not to unduly criticise the well-intentioned development worker,³⁷ but this was one of only two 'take-aways' of the experience for her *and* the only one which warranted recommendation for future action. The second positive reflection for Ms. Oswald relates to her own confidence and authority. Normally living 'a pampered life in Beijing' and working for ActionAid, the immersion (singular) was for her 'a reminder of why I wanted to work in DfID in the first place, to alleviate poverty and all the hardships associated with it' (Birch 2007: 53). While the alleviation of *all* the hardships associated with poverty has unlikely ever been the expressed mandate of DfID, perhaps more puzzling is the fact that this single, three-day experience for her, did not result in an expressed desire to continue engaging in such immersion projects. Rather:

... 'in terms of contributing to my daily work here in DfID China, I think it has given me the confidence to talk about poverty in rural China with some personal authority [...] and now, as well as referring to the statistics, I can refer to my own personal experience' (Birch 2007: 54).

³⁷ These were, after all, her reflections on having to contend with immersions when mediated through translators and interpreters.

Again, this discrete moment of engagement *did* allow her to put a face to the many statistics she undoubtedly deals with in her daily work. With regard to empathy, however, it would appear that, despite technically already having a position of some authority, the experience was positive insofar as it added a new dimension to that authority. Given the many component dimensions of empathy and empathic engagement outlined in Chapter 5, it is difficult to see an immersion of this sort satisfying the requirement of most of those. In defence of the immersions programmes, however, *some* examples noted by Osner can be viewed in a positive manner. The original programme with SEWA led to further immersions with Grameen Bank and a number of other local NGOs. This in turn led to participatory projects using grants rather than loans, or the allocation of 15-18% of the overall budgets being to 'pro-poor' projects (Osner 2007: 130).³⁸

With regard to capacity-building and participation, some benefit might be derived from these interactions. But it is clear that the focus is still on poverty alleviation and that the 'effect' of any such immersion was the resultant shifting of allocation toward the same (ultimate) end. In terms of capacity building (in the German context), some development theorists go so far as to argue that pro-poor policy, now taught in some German universities, helps to form 'pro-poor elites, before participants become 'real' decision makers' (Hilgers 2007: 24). Therefore what began as an opportunity for empathic engagement, can also just as easily result in the institutionalisation of one particular 'method'. To use the theoretical distinctions highlighted earlier, they might be considered specific moments of empathic affect, rather than empathic processes maintained over time *within* the community in question. In comparison to programmes which instead deal with empathic learning directly within developing contexts (for the *sole purpose* of empathic activation and understanding), these immersions, therefore might better be described as 'sticking a toe in the shallow end of a pool of relationships'.

In fact a more immersive and context-specific empathic process is found in the projects of the International Children's Development Programme, which I explore in

³⁸ While the term is often used ambiguously in development literature, pro-poor policies generally refer to: a) policies directly targeting poor people or poverty alleviation; and often (although not always) b) programmes which involve poor people directly in the policy-making process.

Section 6.2 below. Or to return to the rather loose distinction raised by Calloway-Thomas (see Chapter 4), between soft empathy and hard empathy, soft empathy does not much more than ‘enter the sanctuary of poverty and render its place of stay relatively undisturbed in regards to long-term, durable changes’ (Calloway-Thomas 2010: 178). In this model or approach, the narratives of local poor or host families serve almost as a snap-shot (mental or otherwise)³⁹, used to buttress already entrenched ‘truths’ represented by fact and figure. Furthermore, in a case of very obvious asymmetries of power, voice and authority, by the participant’s own admission, the process served to increase a sense of authority, though *not* necessarily of understanding.

6.2) I am a Person Too: The Work of the International Child Development Programme (ICDP)

In contrast to the ‘immersions’ programmes described above, I turn to the pedagogical workshops on psychosocial development created by the International Child Development Programme. They are instructive, not only within the context of this project (reflecting both a care ethics emphasis on attendance to relationships and practices of care and an understanding of empathy which is both affective and cognitive), but because it was initially developed as a practical or policy response to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted by the General Assembly in November 1989. The parallel I draw here is to the 1986 UN Declaration on the Right to Development, the spirit of which was incorporated into the UN Millennium Declaration (see Chapter 1). The comparison is not a casual one. In both cases, language of rights and obligations was employed, but responses with regard to policy prescription has been quite different.

The declaration on the RTD states that ‘the right to development is an inalienable right by virtue of which every human person and all peoples are entitled to participate in, contribute to, and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development, in

³⁹ The allusion to a holiday photo or a post card is not casual in this particular case.

which all human rights and fundamental freedoms can be fully realised' (UN 1986: Art1/para 1.1). The implications of the declaration appear to be that: a) RTD is a human and *individual* right; b) that there is a (identifiable? recognisable?) process of economic, social, political and cultural development; and c) that by virtue of the fact that it is an inalienable right, each human being is entitled to participate in this process.⁴⁰ The document emphasises the obligation on the part of states to ensure the realisation of this right and the current literature on the RTD 'describes that obligation as assigned to the primary duty-bearer, namely the state authorities, for designing, adopting and implementing a development policy, and coordinating the different policies for realising the different rights at different phases over time' (Sengupta 2008: 96). The construction of the idea of development in these terms, for Sengupta constitutes a 'meta-right' (97), based in the idea that when an objective of social arrangement (development) is accepted as a human right, then it implies that the agents of society (understood here as the State), must regard the fulfilment of that right as an obligation⁴¹ (Sengupta 2010: 87).

Within some human rights literature, since human rights are linked with human dignity, it is understood that they cannot be traded off with other norms which might be involved in traditional understandings of development – economic efficiency or growth, for example (see Basu 2003). While I have already made reference to the agentic bias in constructions of rights and justice based on the human capabilities approach (Chapter 3), it is worth noting, specifically in the RTD literature, the emphasis that theorists place on the State's obligation to ensure this right on the part of its citizens. Sengupta and others suggest a set of variables, broadly consistent with the capabilities for agency-fulfilment in the writings of Sen and Nussbaum, to illustrate that can achieve this meta-write, even in a phased manner, by attending to its particular components. In terms of the relations between States (developed and developing), he suggests that if

⁴⁰ The Declaration, in its Preamble, further identifies 'development' as 'a regular improvement of "well-being" for all people in the society' (UN 1986: Preamble).

⁴¹ While I do not do justice to the entirety of Sengupta's argument – wherein he links the measures of capability attainment (see my discussion of Sen in Chapter 2) with state programmes – the point I wish to emphasise here is that the literature on RTD focuses primarily on the obligations of States toward their citizens in the attainment of their right to development. It is seen as constituted by multiple policy provisions (consistent with the MDGs, for example) which, if demonstrated by a government to be consistent with those principles, can be said to fulfil that 'right to development' obligation. As such, he provides an extremely 'loose' understanding of obligation insofar as his approach allows for the 'phased' implementation of different aspects of this 'right' (see Sengupta 2010a, 221-222).

all states attend to the constitutive elements of this comprehensive right in their own contexts, they must then also consider the role that some nations and international institutions might have on the ability of other nations to fully realise these constitutive elements. Citing the 5th Report of the Independent Expert on the RTD, Sengupta describes the notion of ‘donor conditionalities’ and a ‘mutuality of obligations,’ linking resource allocation from developed nations to rights-based schemes for poverty reduction in developing countries (Sengupta 2010: 90).⁴²

In contrast to the broader ‘rights-based’ responses to the UN Declaration on the RTD, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child has generated less consistent response from within the ‘meta-rights’ or ‘compact’ school of thought described above. Scholars across different disciplines, from political theory to health care to developmental psychology, have attempted to further define how the UN Convention might best be applied. Recommendations have been made to urge governments to consider *all* their policies with respect to how they might impact children (Hammarberg 1990). Similar to standard development frameworks, some have argued that realization of the goals laid out in the Convention require that attention be paid to, specifically, child poverty (Howe and Covell 2003). Following on Hammarberg’s suggestions for publicity, monitoring, formation of national commissions, international coordination in the creation of such commissions, and follow-up on the reports which stem from the convention, most appear to agree that even without the binding effect of law ‘the Convention now establishes a minimum standard of the conduct for nations’ (Bullis 1991: 250). It should however be noted that States which do not ratify the convention are not bound by it. To date, all nations have ratified the convention with the exception of the United States, Somalia and South Sudan.

⁴² Perhaps only an oversight, in this and two other sources of his reviewed, no mention is made to the fact that *he* was the independent expert in question. Furthermore, his Development Compacts Model, while consistent with similar World Bank and IMF poverty-reduction schemes, it is not without controversy. The controversy stems from how rights-based approaches have been understood within the Development community (NGOs and various departments of international development) in contrast with Sengupta’s own suggestions. The Compacts Model assumes that *the* goal of development is the understanding of it as a right to which individuals are entitled and against which they can claim correspondent obligations from State and international community. By contrast, most development agencies and bilateral donors have viewed rights in an instrumental fashion with *the* goal of development understood as poverty reduction in the first instance and human rights protections as of a secondary importance.

But perhaps what is most notable about the Convention is that, despite its consistent use of the term ‘rights’ (of the child) and the attendant obligations which ‘States shall’ enact (UN 1989: Art. 1-12)⁴³, the document also makes reference to the ‘realities’ of care provision for children which include broader support networks. As such, Article 19, in clarifying that states must protect the child from all forms of violence and exploitation, also indicates that such protective measures should ‘as appropriate, include effective procedures for the establishment of social programmes to provide necessary support for the child and for those who have the care of the child, as well as for other forms of prevention and for identification, reporting, referral, investigation, treatment and follow-up of instances of child maltreatment described’ in the Convention (UN 1989: Art. 19.2). Article 30 makes reference to ethnic, religious, indigenous or linguistic minorities, emphasising the importance of context and culture in the development of children and even in the preamble, the Convention recognises respect for the importance of traditions and cultural values of each people. While both declarations employ the language of rights and state responsibilities, the RTD refers to development as ‘a comprehensive economic, social, cultural and political process, which aims at the constant improvement of the well-being of the *entire* population and of all individuals’ (UN 1986: Preamble). The Convention on the Rights of the Child, instead, situates the expression of the development of individual children within potentially *different* economic, social, cultural and political processes; processes supported by various child-carers and wider community or institutional support structures. Although the distinction is a fine one, this respect for tradition and cultural practices is precisely what informs the response which the ICDP developed in the 1990s so as to ‘realize’ the broader aims of the Convention.

Founded in 1992 in Norway, the ICDP runs projects in over thirty countries including Mozambique, Colombia, Guatemala, Malaysia, Denmark, Australia and the United States⁴⁴. It is based on the idea that “human beings are by nature social and that

⁴³ For the purposes of the Convention, children are defined as all human beings under the age of 18. Mandated provisions include right to life, survival and healthy development of the child, non-discrimination, protection from harm (‘in the best interests of the child’ clauses), that states must ensure these provisions *to the maximum extent of their available resources*, that extended families and relationships be considered in provision of such protection and care, among others.

⁴⁴ In its current form, either independently (as a registered national association or NGO separate from the Norwegian organisation), in conjunction with the Norwegian ICDP, in association with other local NGOs (e.g. *Changing Children’s Worlds* in the United States or *Everychild* UK), as an initiative of the Norwegian

also means that we, as human beings, are particularly vulnerable in our social relationships because that is the domain of our suffering and our happiness” (ICDP 2014: 1). The broad-based educational programme, though aimed primarily at children and their care-givers in local communities, is seen to have application in all other relationships of care (elderly, youth, adults). The mandate (and even motto) of the organisation is a simple one: ‘Empathy in Action’. In wanting to adhere to the principles laid out in the UN Convention on the rights of the child, the programme constructed by the ICDP, rather than focusing on State provision *a priori* for the fulfilment of this right, addresses the realities of care provision across multiple contexts, locating networks of childcare (primarily in the familial context), but then branching this out to local, regional and national level-policies. In understated fashion it therefore argues that in promoting the good quality of caregiver-child interaction, it also ‘promotes the development of positive human relationships as well as democratic social values (ICDP 2014d: 2). An intervention of sorts, it is nonetheless:

...‘different from the classical Cartesian or medical intervention where the basic idea is to repair a part that is deficient. In this case the reparation is in both acquiring new patterns of interaction with a social support system that is a natural part of the socio-cultural landscape’ (Armstrong 2005: 3).

The most important components of the ICDP are: ‘a) the development of the caregiver’s reflection on and conception of their own child (the child as a ‘person’ – feeling, needing, thinking); b) the three dialogues and eight themes on positive interaction; c) the principles for sensitization; d) the principles for implementation; and e) applications for different target groups (Hundeide and Armstrong 2011: 1055). I will focus on parts b and c to illustrate precisely how the ICDP locates, recognises and valorises existing relationships of *good* care, so as to build upon them and then to build them outwards.

Department for International Development or in partnership with UNICEF (as in the case of Colombia 2005-2010), the ICDP (as a programme containing the eight principles, three dialogues and seven methods for sensitization I describe below), operates in: Angola, Congo, Ghana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Israel, Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, USA, Denmark, England, Finland, Macedonia, Moldova, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Sweden, Ukraine, Australia, India, Japan, Nepal and South Korea.

The strategy or approach is considered context-specific, while still adhering to a number of basic guidelines insofar as it recognises:

‘the idea [...] that human resources in the local community should be mobilised and educated to a certain level so that the community itself can take care of its own needs in whatever field this strategy is applied. Instead of *dependence* on outside expertise, the idea of community based intervention is rather to *empower* the community to handle its own needs in line with its own traditional practices, and this may in addition require actions to reactivate and recreate new respect for its own local knowledge and skills in the relevant fields’ (Hundeide 2011: 1).

So with respect to psychosocial-care, the approach attends first and foremost to an appreciation for the context within which the programme is meant to operate. As a first step, it is determined if a care need is recognised within the community itself. If it is determined (again, in consultation with the community in question) that not attending to that need would have negative consequences for the children’s psycho-social development in that context, then the second step is to identify and engage with local networks, groups or communities who can, in effect, become stewards of the project. Recognised as ‘paraprofessional facilitators’ (Hundeide 2011: 1), they undergo a very basic training in the ‘eight guidelines’ or ‘three dialogues’ of the ICDP programme (Armstrong and Hundeide 2005).

The 8 guidelines relate specifically to the interaction between caregiver and child. They are:

- 1) To show affectionate feelings
- 2) To follow the child’s initiative
- 3) To establish close emotional non-verbal and verbal communication
- 4) To praise and appreciate the child’s endeavours
- 5) To help the child direct her attention toward common experiences
- 6) To provide meaning to the child’s experiences
- 7) To enrich and develop the child’s experiences through explanations and comparisons
- 8) To lead the child step-by-step and to introduce norms, values and set limits in a positive way by offering alternatives. (Hundeide and Armstrong 2011: 1066)

Emphasised here are notions of *affection* with an appreciation for *affective expression* (1,3,4); *self-development* through connection (2,5,6,7); providing a relational understanding and context to *ethical behaviour* (8); and the centrality of *empathic communication* to all levels of this interaction. And then in the wider context of weekly group workshops with other caregivers, the emphasis is on capacity building of caring responses which are already present. Instead of instructing parents and caregivers how to act:

... ‘the point of departure in the ICDP approach is to identify and reward the positive aspects of caregivers’ existing interaction. Such an approach does not rely on any imposition on caregiver’s own experience, instead it builds on it. The caregivers are sensitized as to their own good practice and are encouraged through a facilitative process to develop it further. As a result a sense of confidence in own caring capacity emerges’ (Hundeide and Armstrong 2011: 1055).

The caregivers are sensitized as to their own good practice and are encouraged through a facilitative programme to share their doubts and concerns, to do so through the use of example (creating empathic connection with fellow participants) and to find ways to arrive at solutions together and through reflection. The entire set of guidelines, their application to specific child-caregiver interactions and their application to group discussion of modification to existing practices, revolves around three dialogues, described as:

- 1) The *emotional dialogue*
- 2) The *meaning dialogue*
- 3) The *regulative dialogue*

In the case of the first, *emotional dialogue*, the goal is understood to be the formation of a secure attachment between care-giver and child. Exercises toward this goal are of a ‘sensitizing’ and ‘mentalizing’ nature where the focus is placed on a child’s expressions and utterances. Elsewhere, Armstrong has described this as ‘affect attunement’ directed by caregiver to child. By her description:

‘Affect Attunement is very different from simple imitation. Instead of simply imitating what the child does, the mother tunes in to the inner feeling state of the baby and expresses it in a different way (in another modality) but still expressing the same quality of feeling which she acknowledges in the baby’ (Armstrong 2005: 10).

The *meaning dialogue* instead focuses on reciprocal dialogue and takes as a starting point the child’s utterances or expressions or focus of attention. It uses those expressions as a basis for creating meaning for and with the child. This dialogue, more than any other, expands the child’s sense of the world she inhabits and assists in the process of considering herself a part of a wider community, group or culture. It is meant to expand the child’s curiosity and outward focus and is considered ‘essential for a child’s cognitive, moral and educational development’ (Hundeide and Armstrong 2011: 1056). Finally, the *regulative dialogue* involves the setting of limits in a positive way. Seen as the key to understanding one’s actions within a broader social context, the emphasis here is on positive reinforcement of boundaries and of behaviour, thus enabling a child to develop an ability to cope with interactions outside of the zone of intimacy. Combined, all three dialogues emphasise and activate an ability to view the world from the perspective of one more vulnerable than oneself and to be able to respond to that vulnerability. Based on the research of psychoanalyst Peter Fonagy (see Allen and Fonagy 2006), the programme focuses on the ability to ‘mentalize’, or rather to ‘understand the other’s reactions based on an empathic experience of the other’s feelings, state and intentions – from within’ (Armstrong 2005: 11).

In a cultural context, the programme is constantly re-developed while maintaining the above guidelines and dialogues, so as to ‘fit’ specific local contexts and care needs (e.g. post-conflict, immigrant families, orphans, children affected by HIV/AIDS). I would like to now focus specifically on the ‘sensitization principles’ for adapting the ICDP programme to different contexts, insofar as they appear most instructive in terms of both a care ethics approach *and* an empathic approach to the task of recognising and locating communities of care and the broader effect that these connections have on local communities. The principles form the basic model for facilitators of the ICDP and were developed by Nicoletta Armstrong and Karen Hundeide for the Colombian context, in a programme called ‘*ICDP Tambien Soy Persona*’. The

seven principles are summarised from the original facilitators' guide here below (Armstrong and Hundeide: 2005: 14-18 – my translation):

- 1) Establish a contract of trust with the caregiver
- 2) Redefine the child in a positive manner
 - a. Highlight the qualities of the child
 - b. Reframe (perceived) negative qualities of the child positively
 - c. Encourage caregivers to recall memories of positive interaction with the child
 - d. Use exercises to discover the child's (perceived) positive qualities or abilities
- 3) Activate in the caregiver the application of the 8 guidelines
 - a. Encourage self-evaluation in the interaction between care-giver and child, with respect to the 8 guidelines
 - b. Ask care-givers to provide examples from their own experiences which illustrate the 8 guidelines
 - c. Propose observation exercises for care-givers to be able to take note of a child's emotions and reactions in particular contexts and to particular actions/reactions of the care-giver
 - d. Initiate or suggest new communication methods for care-givers to employ with their children
- 4) Confirm/validate a caregivers' competence
- 5) Use an enquiring approach to guide caregivers' discussions about what is good interaction
- 6) Encourage sharing and attentive listening *among* caregivers
- 7) Use two styles of communication when interacting with caregivers:
 - a. A personal style of communication based in narrative examples from facilitator's own experiences
 - b. An 'empathic interpretive style' to either
 - i. describe how a child might experience a particular interaction or situation or
 - ii. offer a comparison of a similar adult situation (i.e. linking a child's emotional experience to how an adult might experience similar or different situations)

Each step of the sensitisation process represents a reflection of multiple connections of relationships occurring simultaneously. Establishing trust with the care-giver, creates an environment for open dialogue. Reflexive questioning causes the care-giver to reflect on his own relationship with his child. In each of the phases of reflexive questioning, emphasis is placed on personal experience and narrative, reflection, positive reinforcement and *good* practices of care. The vulnerability which might be felt by a care-giver in terms of recognising his own ability to respond to the vulnerability of the child, is recognised and his own competence is confirmed and encouraged. The entire process of reflection is done within a community of other care-givers who are attending to similar needs and vulnerabilities. And the empathic focus on language (and the style of language used by the facilitator), again, relates to all four elements of Agosta's working definition of empathy: openness or empathic receptivity, empathic understanding, empathic interpretation and empathic listening (Agosta 2011: 3).

It furthermore illustrates, on the whole, a view of care and caring practices which places empathy at its centre. It also adds to the notion of not simply recognising and attending to the permanent backdrop of existing relations, but fostering them, in incremental fashion; revealing, even for participants, other support networks to be relied upon and interacted with, so as to continually affirm best practice in attending to the needs and expression of the most vulnerable in society. It is consistent with Held's understanding of 'care' as both a practice and a value. It is a recognition that 'practices of care should express the caring relations that bring persons together, and they should do so in ways that are progressively more morally satisfactory' (Held 2006: 42). Indeed, incremental progress abound in the various evaluations of ICDP programmes around the world. I will review a number of the findings in four different contexts (Norway, Colombia, Mozambique and Angola) now. The independent evaluations are meant to show the applicability of the programme to myriad contexts, the level of community interaction and support which the programme engenders and the positive psychosocial effects it is understood to have.

Norway

The first independent review of the ICDP programme in Norway was conducted in 2009 by academics and social workers from the UK and Norway. Initial findings were published internally, but have since also been published in a number of academic journals (see Sherr et al. 2011; 2014). The main focus on 'empathy in action' is understood to be transferable across cultures and continents, 'based on recent research in child development that sensitises and enriches the relationship between caregivers and their children' (ICDP 2009: 4). In the case of Norway, the programme was reviewed in the context of a) the population at large (the programme is offered free by the Norwegian government to all new families); b) programmes targeted at newly arrived families or immigrants to Norway; c) in the context of a correctional facility for men granted parental visitation at the weekends.

So as to factor in different emotional and cultural backgrounds, sample survey data was collected from the general population of participants, from members of ethnic minorities and from incarcerated fathers, all of whom attended basic ICDP training. In response to the basic question "what is the impact of the programme on caregivers and caregiver-child relationships?" 82.6% noted some form of self-transformation and 55.6% noted change in the family (e.g. caregiver-child relationship) (Sherr et al. 2011: 99). Of considerable note, in terms of the 'environments' of recognition and care, it was interesting to participants in the incarcerated fathers group that after participation in the programme it was more likely that fathers would sit in the common room and chat with one another about their children; that in subsequent weeks even relations between inmates and prison staff was less combative (Sherr et al. 2011: 75). In immigrant communities, of most note was the marked increase in social or relationship awareness. The programme had a positive psychological effect insofar as it gave participants a shared sense of community and not having to simply brush off or ignore the stresses and challenges of coping with vulnerability (Sherr et al. 2011: 55). One recommendation of the report was to suggest more outreach to male parents in these communities as the results observed in the correctional facilities environment had been positive.

The sensitivity and context-specificity is noted even by the evaluators in the report. As the authors note, children of 'incarcerated parents are in many ways a forgotten and vulnerable group,'; time spent with parents who had undergone the

programme resulted in children who enjoyed their visitation time more, as a result, and who demonstrated a more peaceful, content disposition after visitation was completed (109). Curiously, in the case of ethnic minority mothers and incarcerated fathers, self-assessment on the part of the participants actually scored lower than before the programme. This, suggest the authors, may simply indicate a higher level of self-reflection on parenting skills leading to a higher level of self-critical reflection on the part of the participants (Sherr et al. 2014: 19). I would however, suggest, in the context of this study, that it demonstrates how a programme (in this case the ICDP) which focuses on care and empathy in relationships, can also serve to highlight varying levels, and interconnection of, vulnerabilities. Care-givers sense and must respond to the vulnerability in their children. They must also, in turn cope with their own structural vulnerability (in marginal places/spaces of society, as inmates or eventually 'rehabilitated'/released prisoners). In highlighting these vulnerabilities, through constant evaluation of the programme and how it is targeted, it is possible to then address those self-critical reflections, build the sense of a network or community of care which is dealing with the very same issues that the individual, previously isolated care-giver is feeling.

The 'ripple-effect' or corollary implications of making a child's vulnerability *the* focus of a parent's attention is also noted in countless anecdotes of parents' experience with the programme. Parents experience what might be described as a self-transformation, but which qualitatively appears to result in more self-confidence in terms of parenting skills and ability, more affective connection between fathers and children, and overall happier, more peaceful relations between children or care-receivers and care-givers. As one participant noted:

"...I have experienced something I never had as a child which is to be appreciated only because I am a person; this is what we need in our community and these guidelines in the booklet I received *need to reach not only families and children but also the elderly in our community as they need it just as much*" (ICDP 2009: 9 – my emphasis).

This is a sentiment which appears to be repeated many times over and is not limited to the Norwegian context (at all). Whether independent report, government assessment in local communities or reflection on the part of participants, results and effects appear

to be consistent. *Appreciation for vulnerability, self-confidence in being able to attend to that vulnerability, building a network from which participants can draw support and find a voice for their doubts and engaging in these connections with attentiveness and openness*, appear to be the principal lessons of the ICDP in practice. By activating attention and care to a familial or localised example of vulnerability, this empathic attunement or mode of interacting is then understood (by the participants themselves) to be of benefit in understanding *other* relationships or in responding to the vulnerabilities experienced by other (non-familial) members of community.

Colombia

Colombia represents perhaps one of the clearest and longest-lasting implementations of the programme outside of Norway and is notable for its direct connection with UNICEF (since 2001). Since the initial pilot projects in the 1990s and then through collaboration with the University of Antioquia, five regional governments, the University of Medellin and a number of teacher training colleges across the country, the programme has grown exponentially. By its own estimates, ICDP Colombia has reached (or affected) half a million children, 2000 trainers and 18,000 facilitators across 300 municipalities country-wide (ICDP 2014a: 1). Throughout various iterations of the programme, workshops were opened to local administrators, psychologists, healthcare workers, teachers, clergy, parents, university students and instructors. In the Department of Boyaca alone (one of the five chosen sites as part of the UNICEF scheme), ICDP training was given to over '5000 agents from education, health and social services [...] in 123 towns, reaching 50,000 families (ICDP 2014a: 2). The initial phase of the project *Tambien Soy Persona*⁴⁵ was initiated across various regional areas, villages and municipalities throughout central Colombia. The programme reached 16,930 adult child

⁴⁵ The name chosen for the ICDP programme in its Colombian iteration. *Tambien Soy Persona* (I'm a Person Too), it was developed on the precise model used across other locations (8 guidelines, three modes of communication and 7 sensitization measures). The programme became so popular in Colombia that it received widespread coverage on television and radio broadcasts, and one programme initiative

care-givers, men and women in the Department⁴⁶ of Huila alone (Solano-Ferero 2010: 24).

When the programme was extended in 2012 to the teacher training programme of the FUNLAM University of Medellín, the experiences of teacher-trainees were collected and focused on both the knowledge generated and on the impact perceived in a wider context. In all cases, the programme was conducted *not* pedagogically separate from actual practices, but rather focused on bringing together groups which included parents and other childcare practitioners (in this case aspiring teachers), so as to focus the learning experience on lived practices. As one teacher stated:

‘For most students, ICDP meetings became a special space not to be missed out on. They learned new principles and were able to practice them in a pleasant, motivating and effective way. The majority of participants said that the most significant learning for them was about ways to create a climate of trust and to positively redefine children; and that this positive way of seeing others is having an overall impact on how they now relate to those around them’ (ICDP 2014a: 3).

Reflecting on the methodology *and* on the learning spaces created, Eumelia Galeano here appears to mirror a similar positive evaluation to multiple commissioned reports and countless other testimonials, not simply in Colombia but in each of the countries where the ICDP has operated (see below).

In addition to reflections of countless participants in the programmes, reflecting both the content *and* the wider effects felt by participation in these workshops, in the case of Colombia, an evaluation was conducted over a five year period and findings were presented on behalf of UNICEF (primary contributor to the project). The final report, presented to UNICEF in 2010 as a justification for further support for the widespread application of ICDP initiatives in Colombia and beyond, the report indicated that:

⁴⁶ The Republic of Colombia is divided into thirty-two departments (*departamentos*) and the capital district (*Distrito Capital*), many dating to the country’s first constitution in 1886. Departments are the equivalent of provinces or states, each having its own elected governor (four year term) and Department Assembly. Departments represent the aggregation of municipalities and, in some cases, include indigenous territories which are jointly administered. The Department of Huila, the location for this ICDP project, covers an area with a population of approximately one million citizens (see La Rosa, Mejía and Murray 2013).

‘the programme and its instruction methods are effective, activate knowledge in adults with scarce or no education and help to transform individual value systems [on the part of care-givers], generating ethical changes *on a broader scale* in the lives of the caregivers’ (Solano-Forero 2010: 6-7 – my emphasis)

Furthermore professionals, healthcare workers and government officials who also participated in the scheme, recognised some of the components of it as being reflective of broader initiatives to tackle family and community violence and that the programme itself should be incorporated into broader public policy programmes which were currently under consideration (Solano-Ferero 2010: 6) in the Social Welfare administration of the Department of Huila. From the literature, and given the positive results which have consistently been demonstrated by the programme, it is unclear why it has not been taken up on a wider scale by UNICEF or potentially put forward as at least a component element of future international development goals. For the moment, while the programme is gaining ground in a number of local communities (in developing and developed country alike), it relies upon co-operative measures and pilot projects with other state-run development agencies.

Mozambique

In Mozambique in 2002, for example, at the invitation of the local Ministry of Social Affairs (MSA) and for the purpose of competence-building in the field of psychosocial care for abused children and orphans of AIDS, ICDP Norway (with funding from Norwegian Development Agency -- NORAD) initiated a five year pilot project. In the city of Maputo, emphasis was directed toward communities in the poorest district (District Four), but then also in provinces as far afield as Gaza and Sofala. By 2006, the programme had certified 200 facilitators/promoters, trained 532 caregivers and reached an estimated 11,993 children (ICDP. 2014b: 2). In 2007, an independent review of this project was conducted by Professor Lorraine Sherr at UCL, on behalf of NORAD. Her findings highlighted that the programme, although structured around a theoretically-based intervention, was ‘well worked through’; ‘tried via quite

considerable experience [...allowing for...] capacity building and local adaptation’ (Sherr 2007: 1). While she noted that the term ‘psychosocial’ reflected a western cultural presumption, local enthusiasm for the programme (on the part of childcare workers) resulted in ‘general consensus and agreement about the needs and importance of emotions and emotional well-being’ (Sherr 2007: 3).

While she found the initial projects to be both sensitive to and reflective of local practices and realities, she suggested that more content development focus be given to the particular realities of HIV/AIDS and children at risk and that a more stable leadership within the individual projects might be considered, to provide consistency of the programme’s message. Changes were subsequently implemented and further outreach was made to regional NGOs and to local tribal and religious community leaders. In 2012, ICDP Moz became one of the newest independent ICDP organisations and from interviews with children and with the caregivers in various orphanages and educational centres, testimonials indicated that ‘the relationship between adults and children had greatly improved and [...] physical punishment as an “educational tool” had dropped dramatically. Interpersonal communication changed for the better among adults too, generating more team work than before and the overall atmosphere in the centre was found to be much better’ (ICDP 2014b: 3).

In 2013, Sherr was invited by the ICDP (Norway) to conduct a follow-up evaluation. Almost six years on, the organisation (now with funding from UNICEF and in partnership with the local Red Cross), had created joint projects with local women’s networks, with the Ministry for Women and Social Affairs, and with the University Eduardo Mondlane. Sherr’s review of the ‘monitoring reports’ of various individual workshops and training sessions found a notable reduction in negative interactions between children and caregivers and a reduction in physical violence; where the children both reported and ‘were observed to be more confident and relaxed with adults, joyful and showing more initiative, more open in expressing of their views and concerns, more involved in activities’ (Sherr 2013: 3). Although anecdotal in nature, in her assessment of the wider impact on community and region, she noted that:

...’by sensitizing some traditional community and religious leaders and community secretaries, they became more attentive and active in

children's matters. They are more attentive to detecting possible emergence of children's trafficking and domestic violence, and are influencing the wider community, as well as informing at the political level (Sherr 2013: 15).

Overall, she concluded that the effects of the programme and the creation of Mozambique's own ICDP organisation have been positive. ICDP Moz, since its founding in 2012 has developed a pole of 27 national, qualified trainers who continue to work in partnership with communities and *within* over 20 other social service organisations, estimated to reach over 9000 children per year (Sherr 2013: 14).⁴⁷ By her estimation, the psychosocial awareness, especially of children affected by HIV/AIDS had increased significantly.

Angola

In a similar approach – starting first with a pilot project through an ICDP-NORAD collaboration and upon the invitation of a local NGO (in this case the Methodist Church), the programme was introduced in Angola in 1994. ICDP International staff worked with and facilitated workshops for Angolan teams of trainers in five provinces across the country. After a positive external evaluation (ICDP 2014c), ICDP Angola was registered as an autonomous organisation. Unfortunately due to war, work was suspended temporarily in 1999 and then resumed in 2001. At this point more targeted efforts were made to address the local realities of a) armed conflict and b) HIV/AIDS. Selected groups were targeted, but again, always within the framework of the eight principles and three dialogues discussed above. In 2004, the programme was extended to primary school contexts which involved the training of almost 400 teachers. As with the examples above, reflections from the teachers indicate that in each case, the programme 'improves the atmosphere in the classroom – developing more positive, humane relationships between teachers, pupils and their families with positive reflexes in the pupils' performance' (ICDP 2014c: 1). Furthermore, in contrast to other ICDP

⁴⁷ Sherr goes on to argue that this figure (of numbers of target groups and children affected) is a conservative one given the 'spin-off' effect which, including the programme, includes the further 'institutionalisation of the 8 principles in the work of other social work organisations and because of the more recent exposure of the programme on local television and radio programmes.

environments (or especially in the more traditional communities within which the programme has operated), in the case of Angola it was men in the local communities who were the active agents of implementation of the programme (ICDP 2014c: 1). Unfortunately, due to budgetary restrictions, NORAD was forced to withdraw funding from the programme here, thus reducing the number of Angolan staff/facilitators *in situ* and now additional facilitation is provided via Skype and telephone.

While it is true that some might point to the estimate of children reached or care provided as merely an approximation and not a helpful guide, I would suggest that Millennium Development Goal 2 – which measures success in achieving universal primary education by no measure other than the number of children attending a class *on the first day of school* – serves as no better guide. In their 2012 Annual Report, the ICDP lists the number of countries, certified facilitators, caregivers and children who have been *directly* involved in the programme. By this conservative estimate of ‘effect’, they indicate that almost one million children have been affected by the programme (ICDP 2012: 12). Incorporation of this programme into any future plans (or goals) for development would reflect the understanding that empathy starts with children and that its effects can be felt across a whole number of other social interactions, upon which successful development will necessarily be built.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have highlighted the work of two different sorts of programme, one directly related to international development and the other understood simply as pertaining to children’s development. My purpose was to demonstrate ethical activities which are thought to represent ‘empathic understanding’ of some sort. The distinction was meant to highlight a number of distinctions in the quality and mode of empathic interaction. In the case of World Bank, SEWA and other ‘immersions’ projects, the empathic communication could be described as discrete, temporary, focused in one direction (primarily on the affective ‘effect’ it might have on the practitioner). The work of the ICDP, instead, presents an understanding of empathy in which multiple

relationships of empathy and caring intersect and are stretched outward from family to community. The ICDP:

... 'proposes a different awareness-raising pedagogy, one based on extending that which people already do, feel and understand. Any development has to start from the individual's existing practices and conceptions of rights and duties, honour and shame. Therefore the ICDP approach is to begin from where people are and through a sensitization program expand their awareness in the direction of children's universal rights' (Hundeide and Armstrong 2011: 1054).

The work of the International Children's Development Programme (ICDP), is presented here as a 'deep' application of empathic processes within both 'developed' and 'developing' communities. 'Immersion' instead – while undoubtedly helpful in helping development practitioners to overcome institutional bias – represents a 'shallow' introduction to empathic understanding.

In Chapter 5 I sought to structure a discussion of empathy which differentiates between its content (double representation)⁴⁸ as well as its process (affective-cognitive). This process, in turn, when added to previous theories about relational and care-ethical responses to global development issues, leads to a deeper reflection on and understanding of a particular problem. It suggests that a solution for care may not be the same in every 'centre' or context of care. Therefore, rather than emphasizing individual agency, as a rights-justice ethical approach might, here, agency, dignity, vulnerability and self-worth are understood as necessarily bound by the social contexts within which people and communities find themselves. In both biological-evolutionary terms and from a moral philosophical standpoint, while for Sen Development is an expansion of freedoms, here it could be argued that 'human development' is an expansion is an expansion of empathy and care.

While for many, anecdotal evidence may seem a weak substitute for the dollar-per-day-type targets of the MDGs, it seems that in terms of fostering connection and intersubjectivity through empathy, across the world, in different contexts and locales,

⁴⁸ In psychoanalytic texts, double representation refers to the condition in which an empathic observer *feels* the affective or emotional state of another (single representation or sympathy) but then also recognises that feeling as coming from outside herself (see Agosta 1984).

the general impression of the ICDP has been the same. These positive reflections have also been expressed in a number of independent evaluative reports on the content, applicability and effectiveness of the ICDP model. The notion of self-transformation within a direct activity of care, arises from an ability to foster and strengthen existing relations between caregiver and child, regardless of structural realities or limitations (income poverty, incarceration, etc.). If anything, a focus on vulnerability, coupled with an effort to attend to it, can help to localise and define those very structural limitations and constraints. Attentiveness through empathic modes of communication, leads to both an emotional understanding of another's experience as well as the imaginative and collaborative language within which to respond to that experience. Or as Calloway-Thomas puts it, 'in terms of empathy and perception, the key is that humans who feel for others are able to interpret reality or incoming data from the perspective of the other' (Calloway-Thomas 2010: 17).

If relationships and social connections within development communities are meant to be understood not solely as a source for moral judgement or an indication as to how best to proceed with a given project or programme; if but a permanent reality of lived experiences of the participants themselves, then perhaps the 'directionality' of the empathic connection should also be considered. My suggestion that immersions, when focused primarily on the practitioner's affective responses to the lived experiences of others (as they relate to the effect of a particular policy), misses the opportunity for empathic understanding which can come about when empathy and care are *first* recognised and activated within a local community. The focus of the ICDP on ongoing and interconnected networks of care, is what provides the empathic mode of communication more room to operate, engage with, interrogate, respond and react to and *through* individual experiences.

It constitutes an important shift in focus with regard to the very notion of 'development'. And in many regards it responds to a requirement noted by Robinson with regard to the possibility for 'globalising care'. What is required, she argues, 'is a restructuring of political action in such a way that *enduring relationships can flourish* and agents can focus their moral attention and, ultimately, act with the virtues of care – attentiveness, responsiveness, and responsibility. (Robinson 1999: 154 – my emphasis). This attention to the enduring nature of relationships has a direct implication for the

quality of care and empathic dialogue which can exist within communities and across borders. It also has direct bearing on the empathic capacity-building required for other participatory and communicative activities to function in a fruitful manner. I suggest that in attending to and fostering the existing relationships of care which exist across most contexts of daily human activity, the *language* and *grammar* of care through empathy are foregrounded and can have a more direct bearing on participatory and deliberative forms of policy-making. And so it is this to this point that my discussion – from ‘empathy in action’ to ‘the promise of empathy’ – will now turn.

7. FROM IMPARTIAL SPECTATOR TO EMPATHIC PARTICIPANT – DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENT AND THE PROMISES OF EMPATHY AND CARE

Could a greater miracle take place than for us to look through each other's eyes for an instant? We should live in all the ages of the world in an hour; Ay, in all the worlds of the ages. History, Poetry, Mythology! – I know of no reading of another's experience so startling and informing as this would be. – Henry David Thoreau – Walden (Thoreau 1854 [2007]: 11)

From wonder into wonder, existence opens. – Lao Tzu (Tao Te Ching 600 BCE)

Introduction

Thus far, my analysis has focused on the constitutive elements of Sen and Nussbaum's understanding of international development and the moral claims with regard to global justice contained within their work; on a 'forgotten' element of development ethics (human vulnerability) and its intersectional nature; on an alternative overarching ethical framework (the feminist ethics of care) as a natural 'home' for this forgotten element; on the development of a social scientific understanding of human empathy as, I argue, an integral, often misunderstood and yet potentially transformative addition to an ethics of care; and examples of social development projects or development project planning which I understand to take empathy, empathic reasoning or empathic understanding as integral to their proper functioning. In this chapter instead, I wish to tie these many ethical threads together in what might be considered the 'promise' or potential of empathy and care in the future of international development. In a similar vein to David Crocker's comprehensive ethical analysis, I too seek to take forward the underlying spirit of Sen's human-centred understanding of development, which takes seriously the promotion of everyone's 'agency and capability for living lives that are – among other things – long, healthy, secure, socially engaged, and politically participatory (Crocker 2008: 390). Given this 'participatory' emphasis in so much of development literature, the focus here is on how

deliberation, democracy, care *and* empathy might provide the basis for a much more nuanced and transformative development ethics in a post-MDG world.

According to Crocker, across the entire field of development ethics, moral claims pertaining to development 'writ large', fall along a continuum upon which three major positions have emerged (Crocker 2008: 45). At one end, universalists (Kantians and utilitarians) argue for development goals which would apply in all places and all contexts. At the other end, he sees moral particularists as falling into two distinct groups. On the one hand, anti-development particularists (amongst whom we might include Escobar and other post-development scholars), communitarians and postmodern relativists see universalism as mask for unchallenged cultural imperialism and ethnocentrism. On the other hand, pro-development particularists (for which he does not give examples) are seen as either rejecting the possibility for universal principles (like their anti-development counterparts but without the underlying imperialist logic) or falling back upon a procedural principle which leaves the selection of a development ethic and path to individual societies' traditions and practices. A third position, still, one the author claims to share with Benhabib (1994; 1996), Nussbaum and Glover (1995), Sen (1999) seeks a middle ground between these two broader positions, based on cross-cultural consensus of a plurality of fundamental norms from which any society would be free to make its own development choices.

In addition to ethical questions of universalist versus particularist moral claims, the distinction between concrete and generalized moral actors must be addressed. Much of the capabilities literature focuses on 'agents', where one is an agent when 'one deliberates and decides for oneself, acts to realise one's aims, and, thereby, makes some intentional difference in the world' (Crocker 2008: 298). And yet in ethical terms, these particular 'agents' are not easily theorized outside of their particular socio-political and historical positions, except in the most abstract or procedural of senses. In fact if the central aims of much deliberative theory are in their appeal to egalitarianism and to the procedures which enable effective deliberation to occur (Gutmann and Thompson 1998; Richardson 2002), a number of critical ethical voices (Young 1997; Hutchings 2005) offer an important corrective to a more Habermasian discursive ethical model. In a similar vein, I review Fiona Robinson's claims as to how a care ethics approach might supplement even critical discursive ethics approaches (Linklater 1998; Benhabib 1996).

Furthermore, Iris Young's emphasis on 'wonder' in ethical relations, linked with her emphasis on 'asking questions' in such encounters and combined with Robinson's emphasis on the need to foster effective 'listening' skills in deliberative fora, all appear to go much further in describing the unfolding of the deliberative process between concrete individuals, much better than a simple procedural appeal to public reason could.

In fact these very human behaviours and feelings, engaged in or ideally manifest in social deliberative settings, are vital to our being able to understand how development goals might be agreed upon in future, within many overlapping realms of social and political activity. If, as Joan Tronto puts simply, democracy is meant to be about 'something' and that something could be about how and to what extent 'care' is distributed within a society (Tronto 2013), then it is even more easy to see how Robinson's claims would hold even more importance to development ethics, understood globally. Furthermore, if creative wonder and listening are not emphasized at the centre of deliberative interaction, then it is easy to understand how Michael Morrell can rightly argue that 'without empathizing citizens, deliberative democracy will likely be no more than a talkative form of aggregative democracy' (Morrell 2010: 129). So while we might be tempted to agree with Crocker or Sen, that 'it is good for people to reason about, make conscious decisions about, and be in charge of their own actions rather than being mere pawns in a cosmic, natural, or social chess game' (Crocker 2008: 298), these 'people' and their emotions, needs, aspirations inhabit bodies and concrete social locations, situated within complex hierarchies and intersecting asymmetries of power. Or, as highlighted most succinctly by Kimberly Hutchings, 'when the apparently egalitarian discursive ideal is operationalised in a transnational context it actually turns out to reflect a hierarchical relation in morality which maps onto, and could be used to endorse, actual hierarchies of power' (Hutchings 2005: 162).

This chapter, then, proceeds in three layers; each adding a particular nuance or element to the layer which preceded it. At the first level, for Crocker – because Sen's capability approach requires democracy conceived as public discussion and free/fair elections – this 'capability' conception of both democracy and development would be enriched with a more thorough appreciation for how it would combine with deliberative theory and practice (Crocker 2008: 297). Furthermore, for Severine Deneulin, given that

Sen's is a freedom-centred understanding of development, it will always occur within contexts of power inequalities and competing interests. Therefore the focus should be on a more clearly articulated understanding of 'political freedom' (Deneulin 2005). At the second level, for Tronto, any notion of democracy (and by default democratic deliberation), should be about *something* and therefore should be about how care is located and distributed within a society or context. While her argument is geared primarily to an American/domestic audience, the notion that care and democracy need to be thought of as inextricably linked, has far-reaching implications. Such a shift 'places greater value on the activities of caregivers, on the time spent engaged in caring, on human vulnerability, and it challenges the wisdom of a political philosophy that so fundamentally misunderstands human nature as to claim that we are creatures of the market (Tronto 2013). And finally at the third layer, as described above, for Morrell it is difficult to understand deliberative democracy as anything but a procedural decision-making process if the participants are not engaged in empathic interaction with one another. For affect theorists, linguistics scholars and social psychologists (Gregg and Seigworth 2010; Wetherell 2012; Cameron 2013), it has become ever more clear the extent to which affective practice is relational and part of a 'normative back and forth', often based in metaphors, memory and narrative. This 'affective pattern is in fact distributed across the relational field and each partner's part becomes meaningful only in relation to the whole affective dance' (Wetherell 2012: 87).

Far from being self-contained and rational agents coming together to deliberate and convince, then, part of our ability in deliberation to care about or with our fellow participants; to empathise, question, listen and approach new expressions of a particular standpoint with wonder; to come to thoughtful, reasoned and creative solutions to pressing problems, will require this layered approach at finding both moral bases for future development ethics, but also some sense of specific skills we might employ to that end. On this layered journey, I revisit a now well-known figure, 'the impartial spectator'. I suggest that he can only really speak to the first two layers described above but is unable to contend with the affective responses and emotional expressions which a broader conception of deliberation would require. Therefore in contrast to this heuristic device or romanticised literary figure (who, I contend, is used in different ways explicitly or otherwise, but with equal importance, in the writings of

Sen, Nussbaum *and* Crocker), I propose the ‘empathic participant’ as the more appropriate, concrete, embodied, affectively interconnected (and therefore morally bound) ethical protagonist in the future goals of international development. For development ethicist and practitioner alike, the empathic participant could be seen as an ethical actor and model, who serves to remind us of the precarity of human life and social contexts, who recognises vulnerability in ‘the other’ (as well as the intersectional nature of the asymmetries of power), who responds with attentiveness to expressions of that vulnerability (and those asymmetries which mediate it), and who recognises her own positionality within those asymmetries.

7.1) Deliberation, Democracy and Development: Moving *Development as Freedom* Forward

With regard to the ability of deliberative theory and democratic participation being able to carry forward the capabilities and freedom project of Amartya Sen, David Crocker establishes three principal claims: 1) Sen’s normative assumptions (agency, capability, functionings), make his claim for the overarching aim of democracy convincing; 2) Sen’s capability approach with commitment to social ethics and international development, requires democracy conceived as public discussion and free/fair elections; 3) this conception would be enriched by explicitly drawing upon features of the practice of deliberative democracy. This would deepen democracy, design participatory institutions and ‘make democracy central to development challenges of our times’ (Crocker 2008: 297)⁴⁹. The first claim I discussed in Chapter 2

⁴⁹ Elsewhere, Crocker has described these challenges as requiring both the ‘humanizing’ *and* ‘democratizing’ of development practice. With regard to the former, the challenge is to understand the best possible means by which human activity (especially with regard to development) might be organised. It is not however always clear what he means by giving development a ‘human and democratic face’. He recognises the normative differences within three contrasting possibilities for international democracy (liberal institutionalist, radical republican or cosmopolitan) with regard to the depth of democratization that each can provide, given how strongly each or all of them are rejected in parts of the world. Therefore his shift toward an emphasis on deliberation in later writings, appears to locate the normative basis for the ‘democratizing’ of development, not in these three theories but in Sen’s emphasis on public reason and social choice. The ‘depth’ of democratic organisation is located not found in one of these three normative justifications but in the quality of the organisational and deliberative arrangements he later develops. This also stems from his own emphasis on the need for interdisciplinarity and cross-cultural dialogue in tackling the development challenges posed by globalisation. See Crocker, 2002.

and – despite the differences which arise between Sen and Nussbaum’s understandings of capabilities and functionings, as well as the more nuanced understanding of agency which care theorists would posit – it is a claim easily supported. The second claim (again discussed in Chapter 2), given Sen’s commitment to public reason and the role of the impartial spectator, would again be incontrovertible. The challenge, I believe, rests in Crocker’s third claim; to wit, what precisely is meant by the *practice* of deliberative democracy.

Democracy, broadly conceived for Crocker, plays a central role in his construction of development ethics. In addition to holding instrumental and constructive value – insofar as it provides an opportunity for citizen’s appeals to be heard or facilitates the structuring of frameworks through which people can learn from one another and then in turn ‘construct’ on existing values or societal goals – it carries also an intrinsic value. Using Sen’s language, he argues that ‘democracy is intrinsically valuable because democracy provides each citizen with agency freedom and, often, agency achievement insofar as democracy provides its citizens with opportunities to shape public policies and select their leaders’ (300). Furthermore, the emphasis placed by Sen on public reason has a direct impact on how a development ethicist might understand both the theory and practice of development *in tandem with* how we think about equality and justice. But rather than resort to an overarching list of normative principles (qua Nussbaum), Sen ‘takes the ball away from philosophical theory and kicks it into an agency-oriented conception of democratic decision-making’ (Crocker 2008: 307).

In specifying democracy as a deliberative process, instead, Crocker’s own definition is adopted wholesale from Rawls, whereby:

The definitive idea for deliberative democracy is the idea of deliberation itself. When citizens deliberate, they exchange views and debate their supporting reasons concerning public political questions. They suppose that their political opinions are not simply a fixed outcome of their existing private or non-political interests. It is at this point that public reason is crucial, for it characterizes such citizens’ reasoning concerning constitutional essentials and matters of basic justice’ (Rawls, 1999: 138).

Influenced also, however, by the work of Henry Richardson (2002), he emphasises that the focus of collective choice through deliberative processes 'is not on preferences (what members want to do) or beliefs (what members believe about the world), but on joint and shared intentions to strive for certain goals and enact certain policies (Crocker 2008: 311). In a four-part deliberative process, participants: a) formulate proposals; b) *argue* the proposals' merits; c) arrive at joint intentions (or informal agreement); d) move from informal to formal agreement through some sort of 'closure device'. While Crocker then goes on to specify what might be considered 'publicly accessible reasons' – somewhere between a Habermasian approach which might accept all declarations of 'reason' as permissible and a Rawlsian one which would instead exclude those reasons which other deliberators might find wholly unacceptable – even his nuanced description manages to obscure the affective or emotive bases for deliberators' 'reasons' which, as I argue below, would be just as 'publically accessible' were empathic interaction in these processes emphasised.

Furthermore, in his framework, proposals are meant to be understood as a 'means-ends' package, presumably further limiting the range of 'acceptable' public reasons for consideration. Ultimately, his process framework is individualistic and rationalistic. Individuals-as-agents (322), 'scrutinize rationally' (323) both ends and means and the only nod given to a justification which might hold a deeper (possibly emotional) sway on a deliberator's mind (Crocker appears to suggest only religion here), is as a 'supplement' to publicly accessible reasons in case we might want to understand where a person is 'coming from' (324). While it is true that such a process is a far cry from one which simply aggregates values so as to validate an outcome, it seems more likely to impose a rationalistic straightjacket on individual deliberators, whereby for it to constitute 'public reason' it must first be individually pre-formulated (or, presumably, not expressed in this forum). Narrative, testimony, curiosity or aspect/role-taking – arguably quite common 'modes' of inter-subjective deliberation – is not given space in this framework. Rather than seeking to actively imagine what it is like to be 'in the shoes of' a fellow deliberator, an individual will concede only wanting to know 'where a person is coming from' (i.e. her underlying moral belief system). Aside from a pre-determined 'grammar' for the formulation of a publically acceptable 'reason', How precisely Crocker

or Richardson would suggest separating one (a valid 'reason') from the other (a value 'supplement' which is ostensibly deeply felt by the deliberator) – is unclear. More importantly, aside from being 'agents' or equal weight and measure in this scheme, who are these deliberators for Crocker?

In shifting from the philosophical (the nature of justifications given in public reasoning) to the practical (*who* precisely does he envision participating in these processes), Crocker draws upon Denis Goulet's ideas on 'nonelite participation in decision-making' (Goulet 1989; Goulet 1995: 91-101; see also Crocker 2010). The key here is that 'persons and groups should make their own decisions, at least about the most fundamental matters, rather than having others – government officials, development planners, development ethicists, community leaders – make decisions for them or in their stead (Crocker 2008: 340). As Crocker correctly points out, for Goulet the one key factor in this form of participation is the point in the decision-making process at which nonelites 'are invited or insert themselves into a group's decision-making process' (Crocker 2008: 341), whether in the initial diagnosis of a problem, a listing of solutions, the selection of a course of action, the selection of one course of action, preparation for implementation, evaluation and 'correction' during implementation or ex post facto evaluation of the course of action implemented. By this reasoning, the more 'upstream' in this process (i.e. closer to the actual diagnosis of a problem or issue) a 'non-elite' participates, the more 'agency' she might then enjoy. And while Crocker goes on to then supplement Goulet's classification (by suggesting a classification of participatory arrangements, by investigating the causes and impediments to participation and by differentiating between modes of participation, from 'thin' to thick'⁵⁰), this re-introduces the spectre of the 'indeterminacy criticism'⁵¹

⁵⁰ Here Crocker supplements a basic classification of participation outlined by Agarwal, Pretty and Drydek, and others, by identifying a thin-to-thick spectrum of modes of participation as follows: Nominal participation – Passive participation – Consultative participation – Petitionary participation – Participatory implementation – Bargaining (collective or individual) – Deliberative Participation (seen as the thickest 'mode' insofar as non-elites participate at all levels of the process from diagnosis of the problem to implementation of the solution), see Crocker, 2008: 343-344.

⁵¹ In its most basic iteration, the indeterminacy objection is the belief that, given deeply entrenched asymmetries of power (across multiple levels of society), democratic deliberation may simply perpetuate, rather than mitigate or eliminate, these asymmetries. In such a context, those with elite educations, or males ('heads of house'), or vested interests (lobbyists or moneyed individuals) will perforce carry more power or influence into the deliberative process, thus reinforcing the marginalisation of the poor or poorly educated, or women or of those individuals who are situated on the other side of that asymmetry. As a solution to this problem, some theorists insist that what is needed is a prescriptive philosophical theory which constitutionalises certain principles of the good. This

and suggests a shift from process (broadly conceived) to procedure (more narrowly defined). An implicit demarcation between non-elite and elite is made, without further clarifying or investigating the role of the latter. The 'thin-to-thick' classification of participation then serves to reinforce a procedural focus (*where* in the process, in what mode and to what extent participation occurs), further limiting avenues for deliberation.

Crocker seeks to challenge Nussbaum's 'indeterminacy objection'⁵², or rather her constitutional response to it. While she speaks specifically about gender imbalances as a potential reason for circumventing purely deliberative processes in favour of pre-determined 'rights' (Nussbaum, 2001: 89), it is understood that other material or power imbalances could be viewed in the same manner. Political and social power is, after all, distributed very unequally in the world and this asymmetry of power afflicts groups at all levels. Therefore, 'rather than mitigate, let alone eliminate, these power imbalances, deliberative institutions and procedures at best have no effect and at worst accentuate unacceptable inequalities. Unconstrained democratic bodies will perpetuate and even deepen minority suppression or traditional practices that violate human rights' (Crocker, 2008: 356). Nussbaum's solution, as discussed in Chapter two is to codify a set of basic principles in the form of central capabilities, which would form the basis for any democratic constitution then flowing from it. Among Crocker's challenges to this response is (correctly) that of questioning the validity of comparing the failures of actually existing democracies and democratic processes against the imagined or potential successes of democracies constrained by Nussbaum's own constitutional list. This is also similar to Sen's critique of ideal types with regard to democracy, as opposed to a simple comparison (more-or-less-democracy 'as-is') of types in the 'real world' (Sen 2009: 5-6). In pointing to the fact that Nussbaum herself has revised her list of central capabilities over the years, in response to various critiques levelled against one or more of the individual elements, Crocker questions the need for normative theorizing as a

is consistent with Nussbaum's invocation of the ten central capabilities and is seen as a way to thwart or mitigate the undue influence of these asymmetries within the deliberative or democratic context. See also Carol Gould's discussion of constitutional mandates for the protection of human rights and protection of those with lesser social power (Gould 2004, ch. 1).

⁵² This is precisely the same concept described as above (see previous note), although in this iteration, Nussbaum applies the indeterminacy criticism to gender imbalances (with regard to relative social, political or institutional power of men and women) rather than to economic inequalities (Nussbaum 2005). It is also consistent with a similar argument she makes in a critique levelled at Rawls, regarding asymmetries of women's rights *within* a national context (in this case Kerala, India) (Nussbaum 2004).

logical palliative for the indeterminacy issue described above. It is a more correct starting point, he argues 'to resist the impulse to absolutize any of the three – normative theory, political constitutions, and democratic bodies. Rather, we should see them in ongoing dialectical tension and mutual criticism' (Crocker, 2008: 358).

The difficulty here however, is that in critiquing Nussbaum, or more specifically her normative constitutional proposals as a corrective to asymmetries of power, Crocker himself does not ultimately address the point himself. In fact, he goes on to simply argue that neither Nussbaum's criticism of democracy, nor his own responses to it, address what he sees as the 'deeper problem' that democracies sometimes (despite full suffrage, transparency and an open process) may decide upon unjust outcomes. In and of itself, I contend, this does not address, the initial observation or reality of asymmetries of power of particularity of a subject's position. In fact, he sidesteps the reality itself by focusing merely on one possible outcome of that reality (an unjust policy outcome). His example is of the possibility of 'slave-owners or white racists' being able to do whatever they want, unconstrained by a 'commitment to the well-being of others'. On the one hand, albeit an unelaborated example from the 'real world' he is wanting to stick to, it *could* have just as easily been resolved by an appeal to a Nussbaum-style central tenet. On the other, it leads him instead to a rather more confusing suggestion that 'democracy, while intrinsically good, is not everything and sometimes democrats concerned with justice will have to bypass or suspend it to prevent or remove some great injustice' (Crocker 2008: 359).

And while we might take his point that it does not follow (from the racists and slave-owners example above) that a normative theory of justice is required - or a list of central capabilities or tenets which prescribe *when* or in which cases well-being outcomes should be chosen over agency-expressing democratic processes – he simply suggests that the choice of justice over democracy should 'itself be an expression of agency (rather than someone else's choice)' (358). But to whose agency is he appealing? And how precisely would this apply to a context within which, presumably, a white racist or slave-owning asymmetry of power would have already severely proscribed *who* that 'agent' (or those agents) might be. Crocker, appealing once again to a deliberative democratic ethic, suggests that in lieu of an overarching normative theory of justice, 'what follows [...] is that our commitments to both equal agency and adequate well-

being for all should lead us to criticize democratic processes both when they fail to be sufficiently democratic and when they fail to deliver on their promise of justice' (360). It is from this rather vague, undefined 'commitment' to equal agency and adequate well-being along with an emphasis on non-elite participation (which fails to address both sides of this dyad), that a potentially more limiting or restrictive procedural response (limiting given the loftier goals of deliberation suggested at the outset) emerges.

Rather than focus on participation, but also exploring the freedom/democracy nexus, Severine Deneulin instead argues that the key limitation highlighted in Sen's writing (and by extension, I would argue, Crocker's), is in the conflation of democratic decision-making with participatory decision-making --- the former limited solely to the existing democratic or decision-making structures and the latter to the direct involvement of people affected by the decisions. Here, her argument rests on the idea that not distinguishing between the two might cause certain power dynamics within the existing democratic or governmental structures to be overlooked (again, the indeterminacy objection). She advocates that the 'capability space' which Sen's approach suggests, be supplemented by a 'procedural space of evaluation which is *outcome-oriented*' and where the central (intrinsic and procedural) capability is the exercise of political freedom (Deneulin 2005:76). Insofar as she sees Nussbaum's articulation of a 'thick vague theory of political freedom'⁵³ as having gone beyond Sen's undefined capabilities, she too posits a 'thick vague theory' of the set of conditions necessary for the exercise of political freedom and deliberative democracy. Her definition of the latter, therefore, focuses on *procedural tools* and *institutional 'tweaking'*, whereby conditions could be set so as to 'level the playing field for inequalities in power that bias the exercise of political freedom' (Deneulin 2005: 81).

In other words political freedom (based in rational expression of means and ends) must take precedence over participatory or deliberative processes. One key

⁵³ The 'thick-vague' description was originally used by Nussbaum to distinguish her articulation of a political theory of justice from Rawls'. Her theory is 'thick' because it specifies a number of concrete human 'ends' across all areas of life which we should all be expected to want, while instead Rawls does not make similar claims. It is 'vague' (so she argued) because it should allow for many concrete specifications of what those ends might look like in a particular context (variations on a theme) or how they might come about (see Nussbaum 1992). Although Nussbaum herself no longer uses the term, preferring the idea of a consensus with the *liberal political* ideals of Rawls' approach (see Nussbaum 2011, 89). Deneulin, however does continue to use the term (as she does not speak specifically about political liberalism), also in relation to the MDGs (see Deneulin 2002).

problem with her iteration, I suggest, relates to its emphasis on practical rationality conducted within these ‘tweaked procedures’. She posits a very limited idea of what emotion is (an expression of the perception of one’s own context) and further role that she understands for how emotion or affect is equated only with perception of context and the potential for arbitrariness. In the context of a deliberative process within which participants are required to give reasons (read: rational justifications) for their choices, it is unclear how one would be able to determine whether an individual is not merely masking emotional expression with rationalist or procedural caveats (in terms of inputs and outputs, respectively). Again, this might then well favour those highly educated or able to engage in this specific style of debate.

Deneulin’s response to the problem of asymmetries is, unsurprisingly, the procedural/institutional equivalent of Nussbaum’s codification of norms. She stresses that while most of the literature on deliberative democracy is fundamentally conceived of as a normative ideal, when understood as ‘necessary conditions’ for free and collective public reasoning, it would be possible to ‘level the playing field for inequalities in power that bias the exercise of political freedom’ (Deneulin 2005: 81). The essential feature is that citizens are treated as free and equal in the deliberation process; participants enter deliberation with an understanding that they are bound to the results of deliberation rather than on prior norms; as such, there is a willingness on the part of participants to change their prior vision of what a plan of action might be. Here, no one voice is meant to dominate and participants are ‘*bound only by the deliberative process itself*’ (81). While it is true that she emphasises the ideal-type nature of this feature, it is difficult to imagine a real-world situation in which individuals in a process see themselves bound solely to a process and not also (consciously or not) to one another and to those prior visions. Here she draws on the work of both John Finnis and Martha Nussbaum to argue that Aristotelian phronesis, understood in this context as practical reasonableness should be the underlying (in fact teleological) goal. From Finnis she takes the ideas of *non-arbitrariness* of preferences among values, *detachment* and commitment and *efficiency* within reason; respect for every basic value, requirement of the common good and following one’s conscience. Curiously, despite some of these ideas (commitment, respect and a notion of ‘the common good’) inconceivable without some emotional involvement on the part of the deliberators, Deneulin makes no

substantive space for the role of emotion, other than to say that because we are ‘flesh and blood actors’, emotions are important in the perception of a particular context (Deneulin 2005: 87).

More troubling still, in this procedural framework with a decidedly ‘ends-more-than-means’ approach to deliberative democracy, is the remarkably circumscribed role she gives to ‘ethics’. Her outcomes-based approach to deliberation, prioritises one main ethical goal, namely ‘being able to revise ends if they do not appear feasible, and being able to choose the most adequate means given the ends that have been chosen’ defined as the *requirement* of ethical efficiency (Deneulin 2005: 88). To paraphrase her example, if the desired ‘end’ is to expand primary education for girls, but if these girls then suffer from violence and humiliation at school, it would be more ethically efficient (and therefore correct) to reconsider (sic!) this end, as perhaps ‘bodily integrity’ is more important. The troubling shift here, from Crocker to Deneulin, is comparable to the shift from Sen’s ‘vague’ to Nussbaum’s ‘thick-vague’ iterations of capabilities. Sen’s construction of a theory of development (consistent with his idea of justice) is one which suggests a number of key freedoms but ultimately relies upon the moral force of public reason as a means of properly articulating what those freedoms, in and across different contexts, might actually be; Nussbaum limits the scope of public reason by defining *a priori* those capabilities which she considers integral to her liberal theory of justice. Crocker recognises the potential for the normative force of Sen’s idea of justice (and by default, public reason) and attempts to construct a deliberative model which, through a focus on joint intention over narrow preference, allows for a more ample inclusion of ‘reasoned’ justifications or inputs within the deliberation itself; Deneulin, instead narrows the field of that deliberative space, with a focus on ethical efficiency and one primary form of freedom (political). Here too, then, the range of both possible means and ends is restricted.

There is however one principal difference. While it is fairly safe to assume that Nussbaum’s carefully tweaked and updated central capabilities have no chance of being adopted by every single polity on Earth, it *is* conceivable that a stripped-down deliberative democratic procedure, based on ‘detachment’ and ‘ethical efficiency’ *would* be adopted by governments or international development organizations, in an effort to mollify those development practitioners who advocate the broader ideal of participation described above, as well as ‘stake-holders’ who wish to see clearly-defined

outcomes. Unfortunately, this risks doing to the promise of deliberative democracy what the MDGs could be said to have done to Sen's Capabilities Approach. By resisting the temptation to 'proceduralisation' and the emphases on ethical 'efficiency' and rationality as a precursor to 'recognised' public reason, it would instead be possible to conceive of deliberative processes which capture many other modes of human interaction, inter-subjectivity and 'meaning-making' which would be central to how we navigate our understanding(s) of development ethics. It would however be necessary to bid farewell to the Smithian moral interlocutor, or 'impartial spectator'.

7.2) Public Reason from on high: The Impartial Spectator

In Chapter 2, I introduced the Adam Smith's 'ancient approach' of the impartial spectator as the single most important ethical heuristic device in Amartya Sen's understanding of justice. His commitment to ethical impartiality (open rather than closed), allows him to see public deliberation as the very basis for a society's principles of justice. He differs in his approach from Rawls on the usefulness of closed impartiality (e.g. the veil of ignorance) although I can only imagine that he too would agree with Rawls' definition of deliberation outlined above. For Sen, Adam Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments* is 'one of the truly outstanding books in the intellectual history of the world' (Sen 2009a: vii). This is due, in no small part to the philosopher's invocation of the impartial spectator which, by Sen's reading, brought to the fore the importance of viewing our sentiments at a distance from ourselves; thus, in turn emphasising reason over - or at least, through scrutiny, ascribing to reason a slightly greater moral weight than - emotions or sentiments. A recurring theme which he finds in the works of Smith, Habermas and Rawls, Sen understands 'reasoned scrutiny from different perspectives to be an essential part of objectivity for ethical and political convictions' (Sen 2009: 45). In justifying this conclusion, however, he emphasises only one aspect of the emotional bases for moral sentiments and obscures the original *intention* of the impartial (or 'at a distance') approach developed by Smith.

To explain the latter point, it would be helpful to describe briefly the contribution which the authors of the Scottish Enlightenment made to the development of moral

philosophy. Francis Hutcheson outlined a 'moral sense', which allows for the approval or approbation of another person's action, and which is *naturally* evoked or aroused in a beholder, when related to matters of *benevolence*. It is similar, but not the same as, a naturally evoked sense about the beauty or ugliness of an object in Aesthetics. For Hume, the moral 'sense' was further developed into a specific theory of moral sentiments, where benevolence was only one among several possible 'virtues'. Here, the capacity to feel approval or disapproval results in 'feelings of pleasure or displeasure of a particular kind, and they arise from *sympathy* with the pleasure or pain of the persons affected by the actions judged' (Raphael 2007: 29). Here, then, benevolence is *felt* insofar as it brings a feeling of love or good-will in spectators *toward* the agent observed. This, broadly understood, is a second-person or spectator theory of moral judgement. The contribution made by Smith, instead, and the reason for his invocation of impartiality, relates to the moral judgements (or actions) made *by* this spectator. As he noted:

...'We can never survey our own sentiments and motives, we can never form any judgement concerning them, unless we remove ourselves, as it were, from our own natural station, and endeavour to view them as at a certain distance from us. But we can do this in no other way than by endeavouring to view them with the eyes of other people, or as other people are likely to view them. (Smith 1790 [2009]: 132).

As D.D. Raphael succinctly describes it, the supposed impartial spectator is 'not the actual bystander who may express approval or disapproval of my conduct. He is a creation of my imagination. He is indeed myself, though in the character of an imagined spectator, not in the character of an agent'. (Raphael 2007: 35). In fact, in tracing Smith's own development of the concept from the first to the sixth edition of his *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, Raphael notes that the shift from 'spectator theory' of moral judgement to the 'impartial spectator', came about for Smith when he began to theorize about the effects on the moral agent of the reactions of 'spectators'.

At a global level, germane to the discussion of development ethics, Sen sees Smith's impartial spectator as the only device which can move discussions of social justice beyond the impasse created by contractarians like Rawls. Because no

enforceable 'contract' can exist between all peoples *and* all sovereign states, 'impartial arbitrators'⁵⁴ – from far and near – whose assessments have to be considered in order to get toward impartial reasoning' (Sen 2009a: xix). While I am certain that Sen would include within the remit of these impartial spectators 'on high', the task of evaluating their own moral actions, it is not immediately apparent that this is their primary role. If anything, they are more likely to be Humean sympathetic spectators, morally deliberating on some distant action. What I should like to emphasise with this, perhaps too fine a point, is that this act of putting oneself in another's place, so as to view our own moral sentiments, is *not* an act of empathy, but rather one of imagination, inwardly directed. As such he (the impartial spectator) does not require interaction with others (even if, presumably, past interactions with others serve as the basis upon which he can presume to imagine how those 'others' would judge him). Again, as Raphael points out, Smith described the impartial spectator as 'this inmate of the breast, this abstract man, the representative of mankind, the substitute of the Deity' (Smith quoted in Raphael 2007: 38).

And finally, on the roles played by affect and reason in arriving at moral or ethical judgements, impartial or otherwise, Sen is generous in the role he gives to affect/emotion, but ultimately falls on the side of reason. He has repeatedly quoted Smith's conviction that our 'first perceptions' of right and wrong are not the object of reason but rather of *immediate* sense and feeling. In effect, sentiment is afforded the role of 'gut' or 'knee-jerk' reaction, whilst reason provides the sober second thought required of moral judgement. However, in conflating 'affect' or 'emotion' with 'first perception' as the bases for moral judgement, Sen perhaps underestimates the embodied nature of human affect, likely to always hold some sway (even if 'rationalised away') in the outcome of such scrutiny or reasoning itself. While it is true that 'first perceptions may also change in response to critical examination,' (Sen 2009: 50), it does

⁵⁴ Inexplicably, Sen here replaces the term 'spectator' with 'arbitrator', a move he does not appear to make through the rest of this Introduction to Smith's *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, nor in his own 2009 *The Idea of Justice*. Perhaps because he is attempting to draw the comparison between the social contracts of sovereign states and the 'global mess', as he describes it, of patchwork and incremental agreements. This hypothetical panel of moral arbitrators, then, would be analogous to a sovereign, or constitution. Still, it is remarkable for its singular appearance here. Perhaps instead, it is an acknowledgement of the fact that his own reading of the impartial spectator, at least in this particular context, is slightly different from Smith's invocation of it, because the scrutiny is directed outward, rather than inward.

not *also* follow that subsequent perceptions of right and wrong are not equally informed by the same (or other) strongly felt emotions. Furthermore, it is challenging to imagine a spectator (impartial or otherwise), who would be able to remove himself from *both* interaction with other moral actors *and* from his own emotions, so as to process a set of inputs and arrive at a 'purely' reasoned (and non-affective) moral judgement. Indeed, the impartial spectator, as my discussion of care and empathy in deliberation will show below, would not be equipped to take the ethical steps, between, amongst, or on behalf of the feeling, thinking, reasoning and deliberating actors likely involved in such deliberations.

7.3) The Centrality of Care: Moving Democracy Forward

Returning now to the intrinsic value of 'democracy', broadly conceived by Sen and Crocker as the agency freedom and agency achievement of 'citizens' to shape their lives through policy and the leaders they elect, there is a clear tension between this abstract ideal and the lived realities of countless billions around the world. In effect, the definition rings hollow and could easily be counted amongst the ideal-type definitions which Sen himself so ardently rejects in his comparative approach. From a care ethics perspective, following upon the discussions of vulnerability, responsibility and relational-agency in Chapter 4, it is instead possible to conceive of democracy in a far more radical way. By shifting the central focus of democracy from how best to be 'free' (Sen), to how we might best care for others, support caring behaviour and receive care in turn, even the first step in Crocker's iteration of the deliberative process (diagnosing the problem), would be significantly altered. Care theorists have consistently demonstrated how power imbalances are directly related to imbalances in care and that these imbalances (given the concatenated and relational nature of caring practices in an almost 'push-pull' dynamic) are perpetuated on a global scale (Hankivsky 2011; Robinson 2011; Williams 2011). On a normative level, the reason for this (and for the ease with which the imbalances and therefore insecurities spread), rests in the marginalisation of caring practice and intent in the public sphere. While discussed at

length in her *Moral Boundaries* (1993), it is in her more recent monograph that Joan Tronto captures the essence of the problem. As she puts it:

... 'we have got things backwards now. The key to living well, for all people, is to live a care-filled life, a life in which one is well cared for by others when one needs it, cares well for oneself, and has room to provide for the caring – for other people, animals, institutions, and ideals – that gives one's life meaning. A truly free society makes people free to care. A truly equal society gives people equal chances to be well cared for, and to engage in caring relationships. A truly just society does not use the market to hide current and past injustices' (Tronto 2013: 170).

Free, equal and just democracy then, from a care perspective, takes on an entirely more relational and 'embodied' colour; or as Tronto describes it elsewhere, 'democracy becomes care and care becomes democracy' (Tronto 2011: 33). The referents in her argument are primarily well established democracies, within which institutional norms and procedures are already in place through which to be able to advance this re-centred normative claim. In this regard it is much the same way that Selma Sevenhuijsen's conception of democracy and care relates to citizens with well-established rights and access to such institutions (Sevenhuijsen 1998). However, in the same way that the ethical thrust of the argument in Sen's normative understanding of democracy can be transposed into Crocker's framework for deliberation, so too can Tronto's. Here, Fiona Robinson provides a number of helpful insights.

In responding to Habermasian discourse ethics, often drawn upon in deliberative theory and at the centre of Andrew Linklater's attempt to 'globalize' this ethic, she instead posits the responsibility of moral agents to *listen* attentively. Although not making direct reference to empathy, this would be very much in line with the hermeneutical understanding of empathy discussed in Chapter 5. Robinson takes aim at the Andrew Linklater's 'universal dialogic community' (Linklater 1998), whilst still acknowledging the critiques of Habermas which he incorporates into his own conception. For Robinson, the normative goal of achieving an ever more inclusive and ultimately fully universal communication community is misplaced, because it contains three unchallenged assumptions about the nature of moral decision making and

deliberation: 1) that modes of exclusion can simply be legislated away, thus bringing down barriers to inclusion in a democratic or deliberative forum; 2) that participants in such a forum are 'free agents', individuals, free to participate in open dialogue, once having gained inclusion; 3) that all participants know how to listen; 'that they are able to understand, and are able to practice, what is required for effective communication' (Robinson 2011a: 847). The first of these assumptions can be found in Deneulin's procedural approach to deliberation discussed in Section 2. In fact the emphasis she places on ethical efficiency only serves to prove the persistent power of power asymmetries, to the point that they are able to modify intended aims of a deliberative process. If the goal of girls' education has to be replaced (for the purposes of ethical efficiency) with an unrelated aim (bodily integrity), for the 'reality' of ongoing harassment of said girls, then the deliberative process has simply failed its participants, their aims and aspirations.

With regard to the second assumption, that participants in a deliberative forum are 'free agents', again, a procedural account of these participants and the institutions they find themselves in, offers only 'tweaking' of the systems which may already have been shaped by the asymmetries listed above. Crocker's conception of deliberation can be challenged for a similar reason. His 'free agents' are required to adhere to an, albeit nuanced, guideline as to what can be said to constitute 'public reason'. Deeply held moral convictions are seen merely as supplementary and deliberators are understood to be self-contained 'reason-generators' tasked (at most) with understanding where another deliberator is 'coming from'. And finally with regard to the third assumption, again, both the substantive and procedural conceptions of deliberation discussed in Section 2 would tend to channel moral reasoning into relatively pre-determined 'modes' of reasoning so that they might be 'publicly accessible'. Robinson's focus on active listening gives critical voice, and therefore *more* power and agency to deliberators, but only insofar as it is linked to the ability to question 'why?' (why do certain inequalities persist? Where are the relations of dependence within this framework? Who are the most vulnerable and how are their needs being addressed through this process?).

The teleological conception of Deneulin's procedural model, as well as the means-end 'loops' of Crocker, because they deal with individual participants rather than the nature of the relationships they might already find themselves in, both fail to grasp

the temporal (rather than abstract) potential for deliberative processes. Again, as Robinson explains: 'When we regard the activities of care as a primary form of moral and social activity, we begin to see the importance of listening attentively to others and making long-term commitments to those others and thereby gaining their trust' (Robinson 2011a: 851). And since effective listening requires a level of commitment, attachment and engagement with concrete others, it carries moral significance. Engaged in over longer periods of time, regardless of particular means-ends discussions at hand, it serves to foster not only a sense of shared agency, vulnerability, aspirations and outcomes, but also the values of patience and trust which can be counted upon in future. In addition to this future-oriented promise of the fostering of strong relations of care, trust, openness and continued dialogue, a recognition of the temporality of relations serves to highlight the *origins* and asymmetries of the deliberators as well. Rather than simply gathering disparate members of family, tribe, town, class or country; sitting them in a forum with a handbook on 'how to reason in a publicly accessible manner'; pinning a badge which reads 'deliberator' upon their chests; containing the tone and timbre of discussion within particular modes of speech or communication; and then claiming 'democratic victory' at agency freedom and achievement having been met; consideration to the temporality upon which deliberation *and* ongoing relationships of care unfold, would help to lay bare the asymmetries which concern democratic scholars. As Iris Young described it:

... 'Participants in communicative interaction are in a relation of approach. They meet across distances of time and space and can touch, share, and overlap their interests. But each brings to the relationships a history and structured positioning that makes them different from one another, with their own shape, trajectory, and configuration of forces' (Young 1997: 351).

Bearing witness to the intersection of these trajectories and showing respect through recognition of the origin of these individual constellations of forces (bound up as they are in the values, fears, vulnerabilities and aspirations of the individuals who carry them along) is, I would argue, an ethical imperative for any future conception of development with 'care' at its core. Described differently as openness, a commitment to curiosity or to an invocation of 'wonder' (Young 1997: 354). And while the procedural response to

these deep-seated inequalities, for Nussbaum or Deneulin, might be to codify a pre-determined 'corrective', the ethical approach through care, commitment and responsibility requires first and foremost acknowledgement as a basis for true and open deliberation. Again, Robinson argues:

'Material inequalities and exclusions based on cultural, gender or racial norms are deep-seated and sewn into the fabric of societies; they reflect structures and institutions that are enduring (although not timeless) as well as persistent values and beliefs. To admit this is not to reify these inequalities, nor to condone current divisions of labour or racial and gender stereotypes. Rather, it is simply to argue that there is a need to consider carefully the moral navigation of relationships of dependence and inequality in all spheres of life' (Robinson 2011a: 853).

To summarise, then, the principal contributions of an ethic of care to deliberative democracy is four-fold (Robinson 2011a: 847):

- 1) Care emphasises the importance of 'dependence' and 'vulnerability' not as conditions to be overcome, 'but rather as ways of being for normal human subjects' (847);
- 2) 'The focus on responsibilities for listening attentively to the voices of others is more important to fruitful outcomes of deliberation than are the basic rights of individuals to be included in dialogue.
- 3) 'The need for patience and commitment is central, in recognition of the fact that *responsibilities to others are fulfilled over the long*, rather than the short, *term*' (847).
- 4) Care, understood as the central defining value of democracy, helps theorists to delineate a more substantive, democratic ethic of responsibility.

The first principle has been central to all literature on the ethics of care, as discussed in Chapters 3 and 4. The second principle is a variation of the basic care focus on responsibility toward the other. The third principle adds a temporal dimension to the

spatial understanding of care discussed in Chapter 4. And finally the fourth principle reiterates Tronto's normative definition of democracy *as* care and again adds to it the responsibility to make manifest, bring about and foster this particular understanding of democracy. The 'openness' afforded to deliberative democracy⁵⁵, when viewed through a care lens, also allows for potentially more radical understandings of need, aspiration and common purpose to be expressed. Or as Young argues, 'communication is sometimes a creative process in which the other person offers a new expression, and I understand it not because I am looking for how it fits with given paradigms, but because I am open and suspend my assumptions in order to listen' (Young 1997: 354). And so it is finally to the layer of communication through empathy – which itself requires a suspension of assumptions, affective openness, and meaning-making through understanding of 'the other' – that the discussion now turns.

7.4) Care through Empathy in Deliberation: Moving Development Forward

In the same way that Tronto seeks to recast the normative understanding of democracy as revolving primarily around 'care', Morrell so seeks to recast the empathic process within deliberation. For him, it is 'the only way for us to insure that democracy can move toward fulfilling its promise to give all citizens equal consideration and still allow for legitimate democratic decisions' (Morrell 2010: 128). Morrell's robust

⁵⁵ Although the terms democracy, deliberation and deliberative democracy have been used in conjunction throughout this chapter, the basic distinction discussed relates to the normative and ethical claims pertaining to each, as analysed through the writings of the scholars in question. Where Sen's argument (on agency, capability and functionings) constitutes a normative justification for Crocker's ethical elaboration of deliberation, so too Tronto's argument regarding the centrality of care to our understanding of democracy provides a normative basis for a critical feminist or care theorist interpretation of the process of deliberation. The term democracy has, in both cases, been restricted to the contrasting normative justifications under consideration, while deliberation and deliberative democracy has been used, on occasion, interchangeably. In effect, the former is understood here as the act of engagement in communication for the purpose of arriving at some ethical decision regarding. The latter refers to the process as a whole (i.e. a process of deliberation reflective of the normative justification for its democratic basis *and* the ethical elaboration of its best practice). I take Morrell's definition of *deliberative democracy* to be the most consistent with my broader aims of articulating a praxeological, collaborative-expressive ethics of international development throughout this project.

definitions of empathy, empathic reasoning and empathic processes, (as they relate to deliberation), follow M. Marcus's articulation of affective intelligence theory (Marcus 2002). Described in brief, this theory posits two affective systems which operate/engage by constantly monitoring emotional stimuli. The disposition system evaluates behaviour based on outcomes of success and is linked to the formation of habits. Its emotional marker is 'enthusiasm'. The more often the outcome for a particular thought or decision is successful, the more likely it is to become a habit. The surveillance system, in contrast, operates in the context of unexpected outcomes or contexts. Logically, it is based upon anxiety. Curiously enough, it is the emotional response of anxiety which actually causes this system to be open to, or seek out more inputs and information so as to determine success or failure. Unlike the disposition system, which will now have committed a particular pattern to 'habit', the surveillance system requires continued input. And so, as the authors argue, it is anxiety which (at least initially) is responsible for deliberation (Marcus 2002: 116). To link this with the discussion of temporality, responsibility and trust, above, the emotional responses here, I argue, mean that the ongoing engagement in deliberative processes would eventually become habitual (positive emotion or enthusiasm established through trust). However each and every encounter or deliberative forum, if we take seriously our engagement with asymmetries of power and material resources, across time/space *should* mean that the surveillance system allows us still to operate at a level on which continued emotional markers and input are sought out.

Like Sen (and Crocker), Morrell in recognising the pluralism of values, conceptions of the good, identities and beliefs, does not agree with the Rawlsian limitations on what is or is not admissible in a deliberative setting (Morrell 2010: 159). This, along with a Habermasian 'post-metaphysical' impetus, along with the importance he places upon every individual in a society having 'equal consideration' whenever that society engages in collective decision-making, leads Morrell to a beautifully nuanced definition of deliberative democracy. He defines it as 'a practice in which people contemplate a political object (viz., an issue, policy, or candidate) by engaging in an inclusive, attentive communicative exchange' (Morrell 2010: 161). For Morrell, there does not appear to be a definition of 'publically accessible' reasons. Rather he emphasises the necessity for every individual's 'input' to be given equal consideration.

This allows his deliberative framework to include the use of narrative, oral histories, as well as specialist data and ‘expert advice’. It is an understanding of morality or ethical decision-making that is necessarily social. Or as Hilde Lindemann elsewhere argues, morality is something that is *done*, together. It is a ‘socially embodied medium of understanding and adjustment in which people engage in practices of allotting, assuming, or deflecting responsibilities of different kinds’ (Lindemann 2011: 69).

Lindemann notes a recent narrative trend in ethics wherein stories are not used simply to illustrate moral or ethical situations to others, but are considered a constitutive means by which those stories create a person’s moral understanding of a particular problem, issue or context. From stories that we read, to those we analyse; from those we counter or parody to those we use to construct our sense of self, the idea of ethical deliberation as an ongoing practice would be consistent with the idea that in attempting to arrive at some agreement about a particular ‘object’ (to use Morrell’s term), it is necessary to know where deliberators have come from (i.e. the narrative arc which has brought them to inhabit this particular space at this particular moment in search of some agreement or consensus). For all this knowing, argues Lindemann, we need narratives that ‘display who we are, narratives that depict the history and possible future of our relationships, and narratives that trace the shifts in our shared understandings’ (69). This is consistent with Margaret Walker’s conception of an expressive-collaborative view of the nature of morality and of moral inquiry. Narratives are embodied histories containing affect (often evoked through a particular detail recalled and recounted) which are informed by an awareness of self and situatedness within a given context, relationship, moment in time, etc. They are ‘stories that show how a situation comes to be the particular problem that it is, and that explore imaginatively the continuations that might resolve the problem and what they mean for the parties involved’. And it is the imaginative and affective qualities which they evoke in a listener or fellow participant in deliberation, which can assist in properly attuning a group to the nature of a particular need or its possible solution.⁵⁶

⁵⁶ Although only by tangent, there is a parallel to be drawn here with Lynn Hunt’s compelling historical account about how the notion of human rights came to be so firmly entrenched in the ‘Enlightenment’ mind. Her argument, in effect, points to empathy and empathic modes of understanding which were invoked in the salons of Paris and London, through the reading of serials and novels which depicted the plight of the downtrodden of society and the need for a way to protect our common humanity from the indignity of abject poverty (see Hunt 2009). In effect, human rights are a narrative, the initial sketches of

The use of narratives and the engagement with affect and imagination, for Morrell reveals a further key element in the empathic deliberative process, the use of 'role-taking'. This is not, as I.M. Young would argue, an invocation to 'take another person's view' or to 'stand in her shoes' (as the normally superficial call to empathic response would have us do), but rather a more engaged (attentive to the 'other' and her expression of self) and humble (given the alternating nature of a subject's moral voice or expression) responsibility to engagement with other ethical subjects. In fact, empathic engagement, does not signify a shift to any 'standpoint' basis for moral decision-making. Rather, as already elaborated upon in Chapter 4, it provides the nuanced impetus which bring about ethical behaviour or decisions based in compassion or care. As an empathic deliberator, I do not seek to 'take another's view as my own', but rather to understand as best I can the embodied reality of that standpoint for the other. It is at once an act of affective openness, where I may well feel what he or she feels, but it will always require of me, some strain or imaginative act, to be able to *see* an ethical object *as* he or she does.

Furthermore, by viewing deliberative communication as involving more than simply a series of 'inputs', it is possible to take more seriously (or more seriously than 'first impressions') the embodied emotions of participant deliberators. Here, Margaret Wetherell elucidates on the formation of affect (individually and socially) in a manner which ties in quite well to the intersectional description of vulnerability outlined in Chapter 4. For her, intersectionality for affective practices will 'involve recognising that people are likely to be able to mobilise (and be mobilised by) quite wide-ranging and diverse repertoires of affective practices closely linked to context' (Wetherell 2012: 119). She does not submit her wider social-scientific theory on the formation and communication of affective practices to an intersectional understanding, but she notes that, in the concept of identity formation, intersectionality has been able to 'focus research on the ways in which different threats of social relations, points of identification, and identity-making practices meet and wind together' (118). In a similar

which were imagined in the evocative descriptions of 18th century authors; then, to varying degrees socially constituted and embodied.

fashion, and germane I think to the deliberative setting I am describing, she describes an intersectional understanding of affective repertoires⁵⁷ wherein:

...‘there are likely to be complicated mixes of affective repertoires available to any one individual or social group at any one moment, including some affective practices that are widespread, for instance, and which are very stable, and some which are very local and exceedingly transient, specific to particular workplaces, to some families, to a few streets just for a few months, and to quite particular historical moments’ (118).

Repertoires, roles, narratives – embodied and socially mediated forms of affect and meaning – are the key features of an empathic model which seeks not to narrow the field of discussion to a particular mode or moment of decision. This ‘expressive’ space allows for an understanding of moral questions and ethical answers which is not abstracted from the persons and relationships who embody those questions and wish to live those answers. And so before turning to my idea of the empathic participant who would inhabit these spaces of ethical judgement, I wish to make one minor clarification to Margaret Walker’s theory.

In her broader theory, Walker contrasts the expressive-collaborative model described above with the theoretical-juridical model or moral inquiry. It is clear from her descriptions that the latter view is a ‘template model for organizing moral inquiry into the pursuit of a certain kind of moral theory’ (Walker 2007: 7); where its constitutive elements are easy to distinguish. The theoretical aspect pertains to the formation, through reason, of the template. The juridical aspect is a means by which to enact or ‘constitute’ it. However, with regard to the expressive-collaborative model, the distinction is not so clear. By her description:

⁵⁷ Rather than viewing emotions as a ‘series of tunes within a jukebox’ which an individual chooses (or has chosen for her from that list), Wetherell constructs a social-scientific theory of affect which seeks to situate the social actor within affective practices. These practices are reflective of habits, triggers, learned language and response which are formed by and come into constant contact with other possible ‘palettes of affect’. While I cannot do justice to her rich articulation of this theory of social emotion, I suggest that such an understanding of emotion as socially informed *and* mediated, comes into greater relief when modes of empathic communication are also activated. Empathy allows then for constellations of meaning to appear, disappear and reappear, depending upon the object under discussion, the persons taking part in the dialogue, their histories, emotional support structures and contingencies.

‘this kind of ethics requires a moral judgement with significant expressive, interpretive, and (*where possible*) collaborative features’ (Walker 2007: 113 – my emphasis).

It would appear, then, that the constitutive elements of this alternative mode of inquiry do not always bear the same weight. Apart from the importance she gives to narratives and the embodiment of this view of morality, the distinction is never really quite made clear, with the exception of one passage wherein she describes the combined construct as ‘culturally situated and practice-based’ (xii). While recognising it as the slightest of distinctions to make – for the purposes of the critical ethic of development which I have tried to sketch out and given the understanding of deliberation I wish to add to it – I emphasise the collaborative aspect of this critical ethical space for development. Therefore, in combination with a an understanding of how people come to trust one another (see Chapter 4), combined with an understanding of the practices of care and which are lived through relationships and interconnections; recognising the importance of affect-as-practice and empathy as mode of intersubjective understanding; the critical ethic for international development which I have attempted to sketch out is one which is praxeological in nature (relating to how certain affective practices are embodied and socially mediated) and collaborative-expressive in practice. This strikes me as one way to give context, contour and detail to Denis Goulet’s evocative, but vague call for the need to fashion a development ethics understood as a ‘Means of the Means’.

7.5) Recognition and Understanding from Within: The Empathic Participant

As I suggested in Section 3, and hope to have made clear through my discussions of both caring democracy and empathic deliberation, the much vaunted figure of the ‘impartial spectator’ in moral reasoning, would be ill-equipped to navigate the far-from-predictable terrain that care ethics and empathy would bring to deliberative theory. In search of a counterpart, and for wont of a better term, I propose the ‘empathic

participant’ as the moral agent of choice in this expanded framework of moral reasoning. In contrast to purely reasoned or procedural deliberation on ethical questions, she embodies the openness required to engage with, recognise and address the real, often material asymmetries of power highlighted above. ‘Empathic’, rather than impartial, she is open and more responsive to the affective pull or motivation for her ultimate moral judgement or action. ‘Participant’, rather than spectator, she engages *with* those in deliberation, cognisant of the creative potential of the interchange of ideas at the intersections of asymmetrical power. The appreciation for creativity and generation of new insight *through* deliberation, highlighted by I.M. Young in Section 4 (above), leads Kimberly Hutchings to suggest that such an approach suggests a discourse ethics which might be far more radically democratic, given the plurality of viewpoints which could participate in the process, with no promise or necessity for common ground to be achieved, necessarily. In terms of the moral relation between participants, moreover, it ‘is no longer one of static equality, but instead one of dynamic inequality, in which participants shift between modes of moral humility and moral authority’ (Hutchings 2005: 163).

Indeed it is this distinction which Hutchings highlights between modes of authority and humility which I think best captures the nature of this ‘heuristic interlocutor’ I am proposing. Hutchings’ notion of moral authority and moral humility and the context-specific nature of how and when a participant or ethical actor will inhabit either of these two standpoints, requires a completely different understanding of responsibility. It would be neither to constitutionally entrenched central capabilities nor to normative prescriptions for justice (qua Nussbaum), nor would it be to the different procedural moments in a deliberative process or policy loop. Rather it is a responsibility, in the context of opacity of meaning and radically inequalitarian power relations, *to put your own assumptions into question and strain to imagine what it might mean to be and think differently* (Hutchings 2005: 165 – my emphasis). This is perhaps the most succinct way of capturing the precise contrast between my two interlocutors. While the impartial spectator might have a ‘first impression’ based in sentiment and then retreat so as to reason upon the question at hand; while he might be willing to ‘allow space for’ another participant to supplement reason with some deeper conviction to explain where he might be ‘coming from’; the empathic participant instead embodies

active engagement (or a sense of responsibility) even to 'strain' to imagine what it might be like to be in that other person's place; with humility, accepting even the possibility that she might not ultimately be able to.

If the topic under discussion here is meant to relate to how a development ethicist might see herself within the world of development theory and practice, then I posit the 'empathic participant' as an alternative heuristic device. She stands not above or apart from a particular social context, but through constant reflection, notes the intersecting variables of identity and of power which placed her (even if only temporarily) in that particular position. She is not 'static' in her moral considerations, insofar as she herself might inhabit, at different times, differing moral voices. She may well inhabit a world which requires that she both speak with *and* speak for the needs of particular others. As such, she holds an important ethical responsibility to modulate her moral voice accordingly, recognising her own shifting and variable roles or 'intersected standpoints'. The clearest result of this understanding is both of the precarity of often firmly held moral convictions, but also of the humility necessary to *engage* with the human dignity of 'the other' through acceptance of the ubiquitous nature of human vulnerability, human expression and human aspiration. As Ananta Giri remarked, 'we are now at a cross-road in our vision and practice of development. Much of our difficulties here relate to our inability to look at and participate in the field of development as a field of relationship and as a quest of shared responsibility which brings the self and the other together (Giri 2002: 200). Engaging ethically in a world of contrasting development goals and definitions, competing needs and aspirations, requires moral deliberation of a more robust nature than 'enlightened reason' has been able to provide to date. With creativity, curiosity, humility, shared responsibility and wonder, such a vision of development ethics, may yet unfold.

Conclusion

David Crocker is correct to highlight Sen's appeal to a fairly straight-forward desire that individuals and collectivities *should* be able to discuss, reason about and decide upon those policies and proposals which would constitute the 'good lives' they

wish to lead. It is not, however, a certainty that simply extending his normative principles of justice to an ethical practice of development based in deliberation, would do anything to prevent them from continuing to be 'pawns' on a chessboard. In fact this basic call to freedom does little in terms of taking into account or addressing the real disparities in material and ideational resources which are constantly shifting between actors in this cosmic 'dance'. It also leaves underdeveloped the role that responsibility and care must play in uncovering the intersectional nature of the vulnerabilities inherent in this dance. While it may even be true that 'reasoning is a robust source of hope and confidence in a world darkened by murky deeds – past and present' (Sen 2009: 46), responsibility toward self and other, the arrival at shared visions for development practice and the centrality of both affect and care to our personal and social lives, cannot be undervalued. This basic 'need' to receive care in moments of vulnerability 'and the responsibilities to care for particular others are fundamental to almost all human lives for at least some period of time. Care understood in this sense is neither idealised nor strongly normative; rather, it is a phenomenological argument about the central place of care in human social life' (Robinson 2011a: 852).

The argument was built in an almost 'call-and-response' fashion. Built in layers, it took three specifically conceptualised elements (deliberative theory, care theory, empathy/affect), adding each upon the previous so as to highlight the benefits *and* lacunae in each previous layer. David Crocker is correct to emphasise the need for a more explicit link between both Sen's Capabilities approach and his emphasis on public reason with the democratic promise of deliberation; however his substantive approach is perhaps too focused on 'accessible' justifications for deliberative reasoning; Deneulin further channels, and thus limits, the discussion by emphasising procedural 'tweaks' to ensure democratic 'access'. Joan Tronto is correct to emphasise the centrality of care to a normative conception of democracy; Fiona Robinson, much like Crocker's expansion on Sen's normative justice ideals, takes the centrality of care and demonstrates how and why it is significant to deliberation. Furthermore, her emphasis on 'active listening' and 'responsibility over time' provide a strong basis for further proposing empathic deliberation and the inclusion of affect in deliberative models. Michael Morrell correct to highlight both the affective and cognitive elements of (as well as precursors to and possible outcomes of) empathic interactions. Given the open-ended manner in which

he permits different *voicings* of personal interest (narrative, expressions of passion, anecdote, rational argument or emotional plea), *without the need to link that personal account to a broad or general principle/opinion* before voicing it, his empathic model addresses common critiques of the discourse ethic logic inherent in much of the deliberative literature. Wetherell (as another number of affect theorists) further articulates the complex nature of emotion and affective transmission, potentially offering more insight into what empathy in deliberation might look like and might encounter.

And for the purposes of comparison, I wished to contrast two distinct ‘moral interlocutors’ to this argument, so as to suggest the depth to which they might be able to engage within these three levels. The impartial spectator is seen as unnecessarily detached from the discussion at hand, emphasises ‘impartiality’ and ‘reason over emotion’ with no understanding of his own implication in pre-existing power asymmetries. In contrast to the ‘reasoned scrutiny’ of Sen’s spectator, the *empathic participant* is proposed as the template for an alternative ethical heuristic device. Humility, curiosity and engaging in deliberation cognisant of the asymmetries highlighted, are the focus here. One might even argue that this interlocutor, who uncovers human need/aspiration/expression *embedded within* social relationships of care and meaning-making, is a much more appropriate shift along the spectrum toward human-centred development begun by Sen. She challenges the ‘above-the-fray’ universalizing approaches of Nussbaum, of Jeffrey Sachs’ MDG ‘model villages’⁵⁸, or of the ‘randomized control trials’ of Bannerjee and Duflo (2011).

⁵⁸ An initiative championed by economist Jeffrey Sachs, the Millennium Villages were meant to be beacons for the potential success of the millennium development goals. Located in 12 sites across 10 countries in Africa (see Sanchez et al. 2007). This was understood to be a means of ‘scaling-up’ the proposals outlined within the MDGs, from community to national level, through science-based technologies (insecticide-treated bed nets, agroforestry, the Internet, antiretroviral drugs and GPS monitoring of livestock). While the approach presents itself as a form of community-based decision making (as the projects and activities are meant to be cost-effective and apply to the particular villages in question), each proposal must be linked to specific MDG outcomes and to national processes already in place. Regardless of the success or failure of the individual projects, this constitutes more an imposition or ‘making’ of a particular reality, or structured development outcome, rather than engagement with particular realities on the ground. It is what Japhy Wilson refers to as the ‘colonization of everyday life’ (Wilson 2014), by neoliberal social engineering masquerading as apolitical processes. Already notorious for his shock therapy neoliberal economic prescriptions for Latin America and the ex-Soviet Republics, Sach’s eventual disavowal of the Washington Consensus and public shift to the ‘notion’ of sustainable development, belies a continued application of the ‘neoliberal imaginary’. It is embodied in ‘persistence’ (here, on the part of the theorist) and the perceived ‘transformability’ of social spaces to fit a given logic, if not ideology (Wilson 2014a). What Jaffy refers to as an ‘obsessional neurosis’ on the

As Crocker concludes his thorough examination of development ethics and the promise of deliberative theory, with reference to ‘development ethicists,’ so too will I. For him, ‘beginning in and returning to their own local and national communities, development ethicists become part of global efforts to build institutions in which all human beings, regardless of where they are born, have a say in policies that affect them and fair opportunities to achieve a life they have reason to value. (Crocker 2008: 397). While I am in agreement with this abstract aspiration and ‘call to action’, it is to the spirit of Joan Tronto’s equally compelling call for the placement of care at the centre of our ethical considerations that I return. As Robinson argues, ‘it is through caring for those with whom we exist in relations of *interdependence* and responsibility that we learn how to listen, understand and be attentive to their needs (Robinson 2011a: 856). I suggest that Goulet’s invocation of the ‘Means of the Means’, would be best answered with a critical ethic of development which I have described as praxeological and collaborative-expressive in nature; an ethic which reflects how we *do* behave (and think and feel) in relation with one another; and an ethic which also reflects, imaginatively and empathically, how we might *wish* to behave together. At this critical juncture in the establishment of new goals for the next fifteen years of international development practice, meaningful engagement with both the realities of interdependence (and shifting positions of power and vulnerability across spaces and across time) and responsibility, will require that development ethicists engage with and within the pluriverse of development visions which care, empathy, and ultimately social justice most require of them now.

part of the theorist, is illustrated in a number of candid reflections by journalist Nina Munk, who followed, travelled with and reported on Sachs over the course of six years (Munk 2013). In short, the practice of ‘theorist knows best’ (no matter how well intentioned) is shown to be unable (or unwilling) to attend to the complex, intersecting or often shifting realities in development contexts.

8. 'UNTANGLING THE THREAD, STRENGTHENING THE WEB': DEVELOPMENT ETHICS IN THE 21ST CENTURY

On the most general level, we suggest that caring be viewed as a species activity that includes everything that we do to maintain, continue and repair our 'world' so that we can live in it as well as possible. That 'world' includes our bodies, our selves, and our environment, all of which we seek to interweave in a complex, life-sustaining web (Fisher and Tronto 1991: 40; Tronto 1993: 103).

Empathy heals the self, and a well-integrated self is one able to sustain the commitments required to keep one's word (Agosta 2011: 22).

Concluding Remarks

Globalizing Care (1999) was published one year before the original Millennium Declaration. In it, Fiona Robinson reminded us of the hidden power dynamics which can exist in the language of interdependence and partnership. New models for relations were emerging, based on 'partnering' and 'accompaniment', rather than partnership. Such a model was meant to 'eschew the traditional view of partnership as limited, reciprocal interaction based on mutual gain in the context of a particular issue or project' (Robinson 1999: 160). Rather, partnering was meant to view the relationship between 'developed' and 'developing' as one within which local communities could move along 'side-by-side' in 'dialogue and experimentation,' with a commitment to 'learning', so that the result would be to see 'totalities and people at all levels, not just bits and pieces of each other' (159). This seems more in line with the goal that Goulet had articulated many years ago. In the interim however, the HCA and the MDG projects gained global attention and MDG 8 galvanized efforts around developing a 'Global Partnership'. This 'partnership' was limited to creating transparent trade and financial systems, tackling debt 'problems', cooperate with pharmaceutical companies and with the private sector. By this measure, internet use in Africa has risen and bilateral aid to the continent has risen. Positive results, with regard to specific measures, decided a priori and implemented in a universal fashion.

And so we find ourselves again one year before the establishment of a new set of goals, meant to guide us into the next fifteen years. In contrast to the web of relations described above, some have taken to calling the new set of goals (as yet undefined) the ‘Golden Thread’ – single, unitary (teleological perhaps?), meant to weave itself through all development work to come. It is a term which in recent months has been invoked often by UK Prime Minister David Cameron, one of the three heads of state tasked with putting forward the new set of proposals in 2015. ‘Golden Thread’ is a term he understands to represent ‘economic empowerment’, which links property rights, free markets, free trade, the rule of law, honest government, sound finances, economic progress and social advance (Cameron 2005: 19)⁵⁹. And while this ‘winning combination’ of factors might work within the context of the ‘compassionate conservatism’ he envisioned for Britain, it cannot possibly be ‘the way forward’ for quite disparate development contexts. It does very little to suggest non-economic modes of social advance and it does nothing to understand social advance as a goal to be fashioned *within* myriad different societies. Or as one commentator put it, ‘there is a streak of laissez-faire in the choice of policies that does scant justice to the idea that societies can – and should – shape their own evolution’ (Barder 2012: 1).

In ‘untangling’ or elaborating upon this thread, the High Level Panel presented its report to the UN in 2014⁶⁰, outlining an even more streamlined (and equally vague) set of ‘five big transformative shifts’ (rather than ‘goals’). They are:

- 1) Leave no one behind
- 2) Put Sustainable development at the core
- 3) Transform economies for jobs and inclusive growth
- 4) Build peace and effective, open and accountable institutions for all
- 5) Forge a ‘new’ global partnership

Again, at this stage, goals have yet to be fixed and the panel could only offer ‘illustrative examples’ of goals which might be considered suitable replacements insofar as they would contain clearly identifiable ‘national targets’. Some examples include: ending poverty, empowering girls and women, providing lifelong education, ensuring healthy

⁵⁹ Speech by then leader of the opposition David Cameron, delivered to the Institute for Policy Studies London, outlining his vision for Britain and a detailed articulation of ‘the Golden Thread’

⁶⁰ See (HLP 2014, 30-32).

lives, ensuring food security, achieving access to water and sanitation, sustainable energy, good governance and ‘creating a global enabling environment to catalyse long-term finance’ (HLP 2014: 31). From the last ‘illustrative’ goal alone, it appears clear that certain logics prevail. The purported ‘de-politicised’ nature of the original MDGs may well be eschewed for a much clearer political-economic agenda. Given the language used and the preamble which calls on the international community to improve the lives of billions⁶¹, it would be safe to assume that the language of the HCA could very easily be used to support this document (as it did the MDGs).

I wish, therefore, to return to the image invoked by Tronto and Fisher above to make a point about the language, signs and symbols we use when invoking a concept like ‘development’ and the narratives which we then construct around it. Consistent with the idea that there is a constant intertwining of narratives of identity and of relationship, ‘our identities, moral or otherwise, are produced by and in histories of specific relationships, and those connections to others that invite, or bind us are themselves the expression of some things we value’ (Walker 2007: 119). The language we use and the images we evoke are not static, but rather reflect particular constellations of meaning, of historical location and of moral voice. Perhaps true today as it was for Goulet in 1971:

... ‘the prevailing imagery of relationships between developed and underdeveloped countries assigns to the former the role of ‘saving’ the latter from misery, disease, and stagnation, thanks to superior technology. At the deepest level, however, the roles may have to be reversed. Perhaps it is the ‘developed’ nations which must be ‘saved’ from servitude to means by creative options yet to be made in ‘underdeveloped’ societies as they struggle to ‘modernize’ in a human mode’ (Goulet 1971: 251).

I began this study in response to the call that Goulet, pioneer in a fledgling field, made many decades ago, that of finding a way of thinking *ethically* about Development and of understanding it in a ‘human mode’. Not a ‘golden’ thread then, but a web of relationship and meaning. Taking Goulet’s *The Cruel Choice* as a starting point, I wanted

⁶¹ Curiously the term ‘flourish’ is reserved in this report, only for ‘business’ and ‘private sector’ (pp. 9, 46).

to explore the possibility of articulating a counter-narrative, a different idea of development which might show why the HCA has run its course and how a better ethics of development could be realised. To this end, I began with a reading of Sen's writings on development within the wider context of his writings on justice and social choice theory, and in tandem with the writings of Nussbaum.

Sen's *Development as Freedom* (1999) represented one of *the* most critical shifts in Development thinking in recent years, primarily because it reoriented the focus of this discourse from economics (with emphasis on GDP, income maximization and commodity-output as markers for development) toward an understanding of Development as intrinsically linked to human capabilities. In evaluating the true success or failure of human development, he argued that 'the appropriate space is neither that of utilities (as claimed by welfarists), nor that of primary goods (as demanded by Rawls), but that of substantive freedoms – the capabilities – to choose a life one has reason to value' (Sen 1999, 74). The argument positioned the problematic of Development firmly within the political-philosophical realm, emphasizing Rawlsian freedom of choice and following in an Aristotelian ethical tradition (thanks also to Nussbaum) which suggests that human development entails provision of the *conditions* which would allow for individuals to lead flourishing lives. Indeed this focus on the individual is not casual, as it reflects Sen's broader understanding of autonomy, reason (public and personal) and justice. Justice and rights, then, provided the philosophical underpinning for the most recent international arguments on development made, namely that it is to be firmly understood as the *right* of every individual and society (UN 2000, Sec III: 11). And it is because of this shift to the political-philosophical; especially at this critical juncture when the next fifteen years of Development policy will soon be determined, that an interrogation of this justice-based theory was warranted.

To borrow a term from Gasper and Truong (2010: 90), the last fifteen years of development ethics and policy have seen a Sen 'wave' sweep the globe. At the conclusion of the MDG project and with an eye not only to the projects and projections for the next fifteen years, but also to the increasing threat of climate change and the likelihood that it will affect perhaps it is time for this wave to crest. In a global environment now more likely than ever to be marked with the impacts of climate change, I again return to the notion of the web described above; the idea of

strengthening the relations which, in effect could serve to repair our world. Goulet's placement of the concept of 'vulnerability' at the *centre* of his understanding of development, over a decade before the first copy of *In a Different Voice* appeared, made for a curious realisation. Insofar as care theory had not engaged with his work, I wondered how *in dialogue* these two literatures could construct an ethics of development around notions of care, relationship, interdependence and responsibility. In answer to my first question, then, I believe that a critical ethic of care as I've described it – through its focus on long-term attendance to the permanent background of relationships and interconnections, through its attendance to vulnerability, through notions of relational agency and responsibility and through deliberative settings – do provide a more appropriate ethical approach to Goulet's relational understanding of the Development 'problematic'. In contrast to ethical constructions focused primarily on justice, as Robinson noted:

'to confine the ethics of care to the private sphere is fundamentally to leave in place the dichotomy between 'public' and 'private', as well as to leave undisturbed and unchallenged the traditional approaches to ethics – characterized by impartiality, rationality, and universalizability – which define our understandings of ethics and justice in the public sphere. (Robinson 1999: 164).

Furthermore, given the intersubjective nature of these relationships *and* of the moral and ethical judgements that they engender, I considered Goulet's suggestion that 'unless one has psychologically tuned in on the wavelength of the poor, he cannot imagine even vicariously what it means to be underdeveloped' (Goulet 1971: 260). The idea of having to understand 'the shock' of underdevelopment (psychically/affectively), coupled with the often incorrect uses of the terms empathy, sympathy, compassion and altruism across various literatures and especially in the context of political theory led me to question if 'empathy', properly understood (or at least carefully defined) could serve to better define and engage with this critical ethic of care in a development context. Again, with empathy understood as an affective-cognitive process of emotion, projection and understanding, in part responsible for our 'tuning in' to the needs, aspirations and felt goals of 'the other', yes it could. Empathy, once argued Heinz Kohut, 'is the oxygen of psychosocial life' (Agosta 2011: 49). Given the different literatures I

engaged with for this project, it also became clear that for a concept as 'all-encompassing' as 'development,' when articulating a 'means for a means' which might best guide our practice, only an interdisciplinary approach would suffice. Or as Des Gasper poetically described it:

... 'An intellectual area that calls itself development ethics needs instead to function like a nursery, cultivating ideas and persons that will be transplanted, even if they remain in contact. The nursery is not the long-term destination. Such a self-conception would leave it as a minor ghetto. Influence on mainstreams is the objective. The characteristic development ethics described earlier – comparative, intercultural, international, interdisciplinary, change-oriented and close to practice – implies that a disciplinary nest in which restricted and abstracted formulations of issues which are pursued in great depth will not be ideal. It can form a permanent cocoon from which the fledgling does not graduate (Gasper 2008: 469).

In attending to the web of relations then – fostering *lived* understandings of empathy, trust, co-operation, solidarity and ultimately development in the truest sense, this critical approach would help to address a number of deficiencies noted in the traditional models. So while perhaps more clumsy in its articulation than 'Human Development Approach', the critical approach which I have outlined in this project is meant to intimate at something more. With a deeper understanding of the web of affect-and-effect, of the understanding (moral, social, political) which can come about through empathic dialogue, and caring practices of responsibility, the project becomes one of the 'development of human relationships'; a 'means of the means' for the 21st century.

9. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Pro captu lectoris habent sua fata libelli – ‘According to the capabilities of the reader, books have their destiny’ – Terentianus Maurus (180 C.E.)

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