

The London School of Economics and Political Science

*World Power - to be Taken (f)or Granted?:
The Concept of Political Power and its Significance for an
Analysis of Power in International Relations*

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Abstract

This thesis focuses on the importance of the concepts of political power, structure and agency in the study of International Relations. It argues that mainstream IR theory has yet to incorporate the main findings of critical theories, such as post-modernism and feminism, into its analytical toolbox. It will offer the author's own theory of world power, which combines a Foucaultian with a structurationist approach to argue for the existence of four-faced power relationships across twelve interdependent sites of material and cognitive power: i) the site of time; ii) the site of space; iii) the site of knowledge and aesthetics; iv) the site of morality and emotion; v) the site of identities; vi) the site of the body; vii) the site of welfare; viii) the site of culture/cultural life; ix) the site of civic associations; x) the site of the economy; xi) the site of the organisation of violence and coercive relations; and xii) the site of regulatory and legal institutions. These power relations operate at multiple levels of agency across world society, from the individual through to world polities, as well as across the twelve sites of power interdependently. The case of HIV/AIDS is then used to illustrate the necessity of broadening mainstream conceptions of power in International Relations.

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Chapter One: Introduction – The Importance of the Concept of Power for the Study of World Politics

“Reports that say that something hasn't happened are always interesting to me, because as we know, there are known knowns; there are things we know we know. We also know there are known unknowns; that is to say we know there are some things we do not know. But there are also unknown unknowns - the ones we don't know we don't know.”¹

Playground Politics

The above quotation by the U.S. Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld has received much global coverage since he initially made the statement, even winning a so-called ‘Foot in Mouth’ award for its perceived bizarreness and thus hilarity.² The simplicity of Rumsfeld’s statement is however part of its geniality – there are ‘known knowns’, which are known and can be identified, there are ‘known unknowns’, which are not known but could possibly be identified if access to this knowledge was available, and there are ‘unknown unknowns’, which might possibly never be known since we do not know we need to look for them. As this thesis hopes to make clear, the remark is illustrative of the main problems facing anyone wishing to construct a theory of world relations, since such a theory will always be limited by the existence of ‘unknown unknowns’ – events or circumstances that the theorist has very little if any knowledge about. That is not to say that it is a futile enterprise however – on the contrary, some theories can help to understand the complex realities of the world a little better, while others can distort these realities to the point of obscurity.

Imagine the case of George, a 12-year-old boy, who attends The United Kids School in Country A. Born of wealthy parents and with a self-confidence to match his ‘superior’ social standing, George dominates the school playground with his fists. He has security in his ‘hegemonic’ or ‘imperial’ position³, in the form of an assured alliance, or posse, that always backs him up when the going gets tough.

¹ U.S. Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, cited on the BBC, Tuesday 2nd December 2003.

² Ibid.

³ It should be noted that I do not take the concepts of ‘hegemony’ and ‘empire’ to be interchangeable. However, as shall be argued in the introduction to this thesis, I do perceive an urgent need for a more comprehensive debate on the underlying concept of power in much of the current debates on each of the two concepts.

The income of the group is maintained by coercing the other children to give them their lunch money – initial verbal threats are followed up by violence if needs be. It is usually the newer children who fall victim to the group – the children who have been there longer either avoid the playground when they can or have developed a routine to deal with the situation – either by giving George the money up front, no questions asked, or by offering him other services – such as helping him with homework etc. One group of children, mostly female, try to avoid the playground at all costs – since George and his friends do not (yet) like girls – and keep themselves busy by practising in the school orchestra and theatre group at lunchtimes. There is also a school football team that practices at lunchtime – George is not good enough to be a member of the team but he occasionally lets a couple of his comrades take part, when they are not required in “other matters”. There is also a school tuck shop, run by a couple of George’s classmates, which he and his comrades regularly frequent with their stolen earnings. And, finally, at the other side of the playground, there is another group of children who George and his friends usually leave alone, since they rarely have any money to spare and do not interest him.

The question is – is George truly the ‘hegemonic’ or ‘imperial’ power of the playground? He does admittedly have the ultimate say over which children are able to walk home without a black eye. Even when his group is fully assembled however, he cannot pick more than one battle at once. Nonetheless, he knows how to subordinate the other children, even when he is alone – name-calling and taunting are frequent tactics to remind the others of his superiority. “Sticks and stones may hurt their bones but words *may also* harm them” is one of his father’s favourite paraphrases. Indeed, it seems that George has not only inherited his social position from his father and older brothers (who were also quite active in playground politics), but they have also taught him all of the necessary tricks of the trade – such as accepting responsibility for fights where he was not even present, just to maintain the image of ‘supreme’ power. And while he knows that there are ‘rules’, of sorts, to playground politics – simply to maintain the order of things – he is also aware that these are only to be adhered to when it suits his own interests. And, of course, he knows how to behave in class and to deny everything if asked by any of the teachers.

So, George certainly knows how to behave as the 'hegemonic' or 'imperial' power, but is he really the most powerful? The children who take his stolen earnings in the tuck shop and go on to become successful business leaders might disagree. In fact, George also has to share his earnings with his comrades – indeed he has to pay for their support in many ways, including backing them up in fights of their own and helping them out with their homework – all to maintain their allegiance. The football field is also an arena where George has little power – the team has won many matches and recognition – indeed, one of the players in later life gains world acclaim. And while the girls in the orchestra and theatre group may be restricted access to the playground because of George and his antics, they too succeed in their ambitions when they leave school. As for the children who are left alone on the other side of the playground, they are, at least for now, equal to George in access to territory, if not to economic resources.

“Ok”, you might ask, “apart from a couple of ‘clever’ names and an over-stretched plot in its attempts to mirror current world events, what does this story really have to do with the study of International Relations (IR)?” Well, the point is that all I have done so far is to paint a very stereotypical, essentialist picture of ‘playground politics’. The reader will probably recognise many of the sub-plots, since I have intentionally included some of the ‘storylines’ that would suit many neo-/realist, world-system, constructivist or even some feminist analyses of current world events, if translated to the ‘international’ level. But the reader will also probably agree that, as far as storylines go, these sub-plots are all pretty general and tell us very little about the politics of this particular playground, or any other playground for that matter, in any greater detail. Indeed, there are so many possible dynamics going on even here, that this playground alone could consume an entire academic thesis!

For George might actually be a fairly lonely boy, with few ‘real’ friends to help him when he really needs them, and little to show for his conquests other than a few bruised noses and a couple of crumpled notes. And while he enjoys ‘hegemonic’ power in the playground, at home he struggles to maintain any form of autonomy, other than when he escapes to his room. In fact, he wishes he could

be on the other side of the playground with the quiet children, where all is 'peace' and 'harmony'. Those children, however, are actually terrified of George and wish for nothing more than to gain access to his group – with internal rivalries within the 'quiet' group thus in abundance. The girls in the school orchestra are likewise pretty fed up with the situation and would much rather earn their share of the takings – either in the tuck shop or through the playground's clandestine deals. In another 'playground' altogether, however, it is the gymnastics team that is doing well instead of the football team and George is in fact Georgina, who lives in the local council estates opposite the school. And in yet another 'playground' again, it is the neighbouring 'playground' that provides for all the excitement, as their bullies wait outside the gates after school has finished for the day...

... I could of course go on! The varieties of this story are as numerous as they are diverse and I am fully aware that, even with such a 'simple' case, I have not yet deconstructed it enough. Which is exactly my point. For it is difficult to tell which power relations are operating even on a 'local' level, with the simple analogy of a 'playground'. I have yet, for example, to examine more closely the most basic neo-/realist claim about power, namely that the most effective or dominant form of power is 'military' – or, as I will call it, 'existential power' – i.e. the power over life and death. If George/-ina walks into the playground with a loaded gun one day, for example, he or she will certainly have 'existential' power over the other children, especially if he or she actually uses it. However, as I will come to argue later in this thesis, this simplification of analysis ignores the fact that 'existential' power comes in many different forms – many of which are not governed by the use of direct physical violence but rather by subtler, less obvious means.

More on this and the different forms of power later in the thesis however. The main point that I wish to make here, with the example of the playground, is that it is difficult enough to define *who* the main players are, as well as *where* they are actually located, even in such a 'simple' case study. For although the initial reaction might be that George/-ina is the 'hegemonic' or 'imperial' power, a closer inspection will probably reveal that there are numerous other actors involved who could also contend for that position (if it even exists), depending on which form of power one gives precedence. It is also unclear exactly where the 'boundaries' of

this power are located, since these can be geographical, sociological, cultural, economic or even psychological, dividing the children into ‘rich’/‘poor’, ‘male’/‘female’, ‘majority’/‘minority’ etc. – and not as simple dichotomies but rather as diffuse, overlapping identities that will matter in some cases and not in others. And each child will have their own *individual* psychological boundaries, both between each other and within themselves, which will also be multiple and diffuse, mattering in varying degrees depending on the context of the situation. The combination of *all* of these boundaries together – which not only overlap but also change in content and form over time and space – will result in multiple relations of power between the children that cannot adequately be summarised with the simple statement “George/-ina is a (hegemonic/imperial) bully”.

By now, the reader may think that I have dwelt on the case of the school bully for rather too long, given that this is supposed to be a discussion of *world* relations of power. What I am talking about is commonly perceived to constitute little more than ‘interhuman society’ or ‘first-order society’ in standard IR terminology.⁴ And yet all of the above scenarios – as well as many more besides – could be said to hold true even in world relations. It is just as difficult (if not more, due to the sheer vastness of scale) to determine the boundaries of interaction between the different actors on an ‘international’ level. And it is the aim of this thesis to reveal why this must be so.

Although the story of George/-ina reveals that there are many possible accounts of power in the playground, this thesis argues that traditional theories of power typically fall into one of three categories: i) behaviouralist; ii) structuralist; and iii) post-modernist. This on its own is not so surprising perhaps – after all, together all of these three schools of thought have dominated the social sciences for most of the 20th Century and beyond, contributing greatly to their development. What is a problem however is that none of these three approaches on their own is sufficient to encapsulate the full complexities of relations of power. Rather, they prioritise one of power’s many dimensions over the others – i) behaviouralism typically focuses on the power of social actors to change or maintain the relations of power

⁴ Buzan, Barry. (2004), p xvii.

in which they find themselves; ii) structuralism typically views power as a social structure that constrains or facilitates all actors in their capacities to change these power relations; iii) while post-modernism rejects the notion of theorising about power altogether, maintaining that the very discourse of power itself constitutes a relation of power that benefits some actors at the cost of others. It is the contention here however that, although each of these approaches highlights important aspects of power, none of them can be used on their own if one wishes to fully comprehend the complexities of power. Instead, all three approaches need to be combined, using theories of structuration and relational power, if the concept is to be fully understood. This thesis will examine this argument in detail, not only arguing why this must be so but also examining the consequences that this has for the theorisation of world politics in general.

World Politics – U.S. ‘Hegemony’ or ‘Empire’?

“[My] belief that the end of U.S. hegemony has already begun does not follow from the vulnerability that became apparent to all on September 11, 2001. In fact, the United States has been fading as a global power since the 1970s, and the U.S. response to the terrorist attacks has merely accelerated this decline [...] U.S. decline in the world-system is structural, and is not the result of merely errors in policy committed by previous U.S. governments. It cannot be reversed. To be sure, it can be managed intelligently, but that is precisely what is not happening now.”⁵

(Immanuel Wallerstein, 2003)

“Not since Rome has one nation loomed so large above the others [...] The United States is undoubtedly the world’s number one power, but how long can this situation last, and what should we do with it? [...] Declinism tends to produce overtly cautious behavior that could undercut our influence; triumphalism could beget a potentially dangerous absence of restraint, as well as an arrogance that would also squander our influence [...] Simply put, power is the ability to effect the outcomes you want, and if necessary, to change the behavior of others to make this happen.”⁶

(Joseph Nye, 2002)

“The notion of the American superpower is a myth, as Joseph Nye has argued with different words. True, there is no match for American military power. But this does not make it possible for America to bomb all the important countries or areas: Europe, Russia, China, Japan, India, Pakistan, and the like. So, yes, it is possible to bomb Afghanistan or Iraq or, eventually, Colombia. But this does not add substantial power [...] the USA is a superpower of the industrial age that is only now starting to build up defenses against the networks of the information age. For these networks, the USA cannot proceed with its current unilateralism. It needs cooperation, information, cultural and political ability to penetrate the networks.”⁷

(Manuel Castells, 2003)

The above ‘soundbites’ – chosen not only for their independent strength of conviction and, more notably, disagreement, but also since they originate from some of today’s main ‘spokesmen’ within the Western social sciences on the current state of U.S. power – illustrate the fact that contemporary debates on world power are, quite simply put, all over the place. What forms this power actually takes, whether it constitutes ‘empire’, ‘hegemony’ or neither of these, and whether the extent of the said ‘state’s’ power is on the rise or in decline, are all hotly disputed points of contention. This is not surprising perhaps, since the case of the

⁵ Wallerstein, Immanuel. (2003), p13 & 306.

⁶ Nye, Joseph S. (2002), p1 & 4.

⁷ Castells, Manuel and Ince, Martin. (2003), p114-115.

playground has made clear that there are always many sides to any story. To come up with a definitive theory of world power is thus not only impossible but also unadvisable, as it is difficult to envisage a theory that manages to encapsulate every single story that could be told about the relations of power that affect world politics.

There is however a need to understand power more fully than is currently the case in many analyses of world relations. It is argued here that this can be done by bringing together the main arguments of the behaviouralists, structuralists and post-modernists, since these three schools of thought span the spectrum of the many possible stories it is possible to tell about world power relations. There have of course been uncountable attempts throughout history and across the academic disciplines to define this 'thing called power' – from the Ancient Greeks and Machiavelli to more contemporary approaches, such as behaviouralism and structuralism, as well as post-modernist calls to abandon the cause altogether – but none of these ideas have been synthesised into one area of study, as has been the case with other major social concepts such as democracy, culture or nationalism. This means that a study on the *power* of the U.S. does not face the same methodological 'stringency' as one on, say, U.S. democracy, culture or nationalism would do. On the contrary, the underlying *theoretical* concept of power used in many contemporary studies of 'hegemony' or 'empire' is rarely questioned, debated or (re-)defined. Rather the definition of what is actually meant by U.S. power is often taken as a given, and comments on its prevalence frequently thrown around haphazardly, without regard for other theoretical approaches to the subject.

To demonstrate the importance of defining one's underlying perception of power, let us look again at the above three quotations. In their defence, it should be noted that another reason for their selection is precisely because, unlike much current discourse on the state of U.S. power, they are surprisingly open about their underlying theoretical definitions of power. To begin with Immanuel Wallerstein, it is obvious (indeed, it is stated) that his is a structural definition. In his view, U.S. power is not taken by the 'state' itself but is rather granted to it by the very nature of what he calls the 'world system'. Although he still allows for some notion of

agency, by stating that the U.S. government can deal with the rise or (in his view) decline of such power with varying degrees of 'intelligence', he does not believe that the process itself can be halted. It is quite simply the inevitable structural changes in the world system that do and will dictate the extent of U.S. power from one day to the next.

Joseph S. Nye, in turn, offers a stark contrast to this argument and is quite obviously behavioural in his approach. He argues that the future of U.S. power lies firmly in the government's own hands, stating quite openly that power is the ability of one actor to change not only outcomes, but also the behaviour of other actors. This can be done either by using 'hard' (military or economic) or 'soft' power (culture), but the underlying assumption is that the U.S. government ultimately decides over its own fate in the world, since power, in his view, is fundamentally agency-based.

And finally, Manuel Castells argues that the capabilities of the U.S. are severely limited by its positioning in world 'networks' – specifically those relating to information technology. The notion of networks indicates a more 'structured' approach than the other two, as it retains the concept of agency (in contrast to Wallerstein), but instead of confining it to one 'state' actor (as Nye does), Castells 'spreads' it out to include other social actors (networks) than 'states' alone. More on structurationist approaches to power later however.

Suffice to say at this point that contemporary debates on the eventual rise or decline of U.S. power thus appear to be in complete disarray. Many theorists seem unable even to agree upon what it is they are actually talking about – i.e. *what* is U.S. power? – nevermind on whether or not the U.S. 'has' more or less of this 'thing' than before. That theorists disagree over this is obviously partly due to the problem that behind every concept of power lies the theorist's own normative view of society⁸, and it is clear that, for instance, Wallerstein, Nye and Castells all have very different normative views both of what world society *is* and what it *should be* – indeed, further reading of their respective works makes this point very

⁸ Hay, Colin. (1997), p45.

clear. In the social sciences in general, however, disagreements on the extent of U.S. power also seem to stem from a common and rather unrefined usage of the concept of power itself. And this part of the problem will not and *cannot* be resolved until a more thorough theoretical debate on the concept of world power is (re-)opened. In sum, then, this thesis sets out to open up for debate exactly *what* it is that the U.S. may 'have', or alternatively is 'granted', more or less than everyone else of – and more specifically, *who* the 'U.S.' and 'everyone else' is.

It is argued here that, by categorising theories of power as being either behaviouralist, structuralist or post-modernist, a more coherent overall analysis of the concept of power can be achieved. Of course, a theory may never be purely behaviouralist, structuralist or post-modernist – indeed, some more structurationist theories of power already cross this methodological divide, as shall be examined later in the thesis. It is also possible that the theorists in question may themselves reject the label attributed to their theory. It is however necessary to try to ascertain the main dividing lines that separate one theory of power from another and it is the argument here that this is most easily done using these three categories as a reference point. It should not be taken as a definitive categorisation of theories of power however – it is certainly possible that there are theories of power which do not fall into any of the three categories, although it is difficult to conceive which these might be. Nonetheless, it is the argument here that these are the three schools of thought that most typically represent not only the main dividing lines that currently prevail in the social sciences but also those which best summarise the main differences between different conceptions of power.

When it comes to theorising world politics in general, the same division can be said to apply. Mainstream IR theory can also be divided into those who prioritise either a behavioural or structural analysis, as well as those who favour a post-modernist approach. Dating back to Kenneth Waltz' and Immanuel Wallerstein's respective reification of structures (the former denoting a system of states, the latter a capitalist system), to Hans Morgenthau's reification of human nature and individualism, IR theories can be seen to have prioritised either agency or structure in their accounts of world power. Globalisation theories, similarly, often favour a structural approach, prioritising the structural properties of the capitalist

system over behavioural analyses of human agency. Indeed, the complex world of global politics is frequently ordered into neat little boxes or theories, in the hope that this will make the world an easier place to understand. It is the argument here however that it does not – on the contrary, all such simplifications lead to a weakened understanding of the world as a ‘whole’.

Traditional Definitions of Power in International Relations and Globalisation Theories

“The disciplinary tendency to associate power with realism and to work primarily with the realist conceptualization partly owes to the fact that rivals to realism typically distance themselves from ‘power’ considerations [...] A consequence of this failure to develop alternative conceptualizations of power has been to reinforce the discipline’s gravitation toward the default conception as defined by realism.”⁹

As the above quotation makes clear, IR has historically been closely associated with the realist concept of power, meaning that it is thus often seen as state- and agency-bound. Indeed, until very recently, there was such consensus about this that it was difficult to find detailed debate about the concept within realist and indeed IR literature in general. One had to delve deep into adjacent debates on hegemony, empire or structure/agency to disentangle theorists’ implicit views on power. The dominant realist lens views a *hegemonic* power, for example, simply as that state which is powerful enough to maintain the essential rules governing international relations, is willing to do so and, in addition, can revoke existing rules, prevent the adoption of new rules that it opposes, or play the dominant role in constructing new rules.¹⁰ This is clearly a behaviouralist perspective, as it focuses merely on the capacity of an actor (a state) to behave in certain ways and set the agenda in international politics. Indeed, it is dangerous to fall for the common claim that realism (and indeed IR in general) constitutes a highly ‘structural’ perspective. The fact that its main assumption is that states are the most important actors in world politics, who rationally seek power in an anarchic system, makes it highly behavioural. As Barry Buzan et al point out:

“The Waltzian [neorealist] notion of structure is, as has often been pointed out, derived from the units. It is not, as in some of the more metaphysical versions of structuralism in linguistics, a preexisting force that generates units and interactions. Rather it is generated by the interaction and arrangement of the units.”¹¹

⁹ Barnett, Michael and Duvall, Raymond. (2005a), p40-41.

¹⁰ Keohane, Robert O. and Nye, Joseph S. (1977), p44.

¹¹ Buzan, Barry et al. (1993), p11.

The units are of course the states and power is thus reduced to nothing more than a product of state interaction. A classical example of this in IR literature – made all the more noteworthy for its unique attempt at a definition of international power, albeit with considerable reluctance and marked frustration – is that offered by Robert Gilpin in *War and Change in International Politics*:

*“The concept of power is one of the most troublesome in the field of international relations and, more generally, political science [...] In this book, power refers simply to the military, economic, and technological capabilities of states. This definition obviously leaves out important and intangible elements that affect the outcomes of political actions, such as public morale, qualities of leadership, and situational factors [...]”*¹²

The fact that Gilpin admits only to having left out other ‘outcomes of political actions’ and not to the absence of a structural dimension, reveals the implicit acceptance of behaviouralism in mainstream IR theory. For although some might argue that a state’s *capabilities* differ from its actions – in that capabilities could be said to constitute the state’s structural positioning in the international system – the focus is in my view still far too concentrated on the *potentiality to action*. Like Gilpin, Nye also (perhaps unwittingly) proves this point when he admits that references to the resources or capabilities of a state, far from denoting structural power, are simply “shorthand” for what, ultimately, amounts to little more than a behavioural definition (note: I have put emphasis on all of his references to action):

*“Simply put, power is the ability to effect the outcomes you want, and if necessary, to change the behavior of others to make this happen [...] The ability to obtain the outcomes one wants is often associated with the possession of certain resources, and so we commonly use shorthand and define power as possession of relatively large amounts of such elements as population, territory, natural resources, economic strength, military force, and political stability. Power in this sense means holding the high cards in the international poker game. If you show high cards, others are likely to fold their hands. Of course, if you play poorly or fall victim to bluff and deception, you can still lose, or at least fail to get the outcome you want.”*¹³

¹² Gilpin, Robert. (1981), p13-14.

¹³ Nye Jr., Joseph S. (2002), p4-5.

Much has been made of Nye's definition of 'power as being broader and more multi-dimensional than mainstream IR theory, but the above quotation proves that he too falls into the realist trap of behaviouralism. For although he includes 'soft' power in his definition of the concept, this turns out to be just another term for what in earlier debates has been called the third face of power (a theory by Steven Lukes, which shall be examined in more detail later in this thesis), as Nye defines 'soft power' as "the ability to set the political agenda in a way that shapes the preferences of others."¹⁴ Although this is an important and frequently forgotten aspect of behavioural power, it is nonetheless just that – a behavioural definition. Add to this the fact that Nye is still preoccupied solely with the power of states and one is left with yet another near-perfect example of a realist definition of power.

"Gramsci took over from Machiavelli the image of power as a centaur: half-man, half-beast, a necessary combination of consent and coercion. To the extent that the consensual aspect of power is in the forefront, hegemony prevails. Coercion is always latent but is only applied in marginal, deviant cases [... This] connection frees the concept of power (and of hegemony as one form of power) from a tie to historically specific social classes and gives it a wider applicability to [...] relations of world order. It does not, however, sever power relations from their social basis (i.e., in the case of world-order relations by making them into relations among states narrowly conceived), but directs attention towards deepening an awareness of this social basis."¹⁵

As with all hegemonic discourse, there is always resistance. And, as in most of the social sciences, it is structuralism, with its roots in Marxist theory, which has been the main opponent to the mainstream behavioural approach of IR theory, in the form of much 'globalisation' theory. Here, the definition of power is not implicit but is instead more freely discussed, being one of the central normative concerns of Marxist ideology. The problem, however, is that the definitions offered are almost exclusively structural. Attempts by theorists such as Robert Hunter Wade to talk of 'The Invisible Hand of the American Empire'¹⁶, although refreshing in the otherwise stagnant world of behavioural IR, (and despite all the agency implied in the title), still focus solely on the structural (and then solely economic)

¹⁴ Ibid, p9.

¹⁵ Cox, Robert W. (1983), p127.

¹⁶ Hunter Wade, Robert. (2003)

aspects of international power, paying little or no regard to other structural or behavioural dimensions.

It is still worth accounting for the history of structural theory of world politics, however, since it helps to open up the 'blackbox' that is structural power. Despite rarely having discussed global politics per se, focusing instead on theories of national power and hegemony, it is the work of Antonio Gramsci that has provided much of the inspiration for much globalisation theory. Perhaps this is because his international influence has penetrated beyond mainstream left-wing political thought. As Eric Hobsbawm writes in his introduction to Gramsci's prison notebooks:

*"[Gramsci] has demonstrated his independence of the fluctuations of ideological fashion. Who now expects another vogue for Althusser, any more than for Spengler? He has survived the enclosure in academic ghettos which looks like being the fate of so many other thinkers of 'western marxism'. He has even avoided becoming an 'ism'."*¹⁷

It is Gramsci's use of the term 'historic bloc' (*blocco storico*), (which he developed from the ideas of Georges Sorel), that has had the most resonance in critical IR theory. Such 'historic blocs' are formed by structures and superstructures he states, noting that "the complex, contradictory and discordant ensemble of the superstructures is the reflection of the ensemble of the social relations of production."¹⁸ Indeed, it is production that is the main focus of Gramscian IR theory, albeit a broader definition of production than is normally to be found in traditional Marxist thought – "[it] includes the production of ideas, of intersubjective meanings, of norms, of institutions and social practices [...] Looking at production is simply a way of thinking about collective life, not a reference to the 'economic' sectors of human activity".¹⁹

And so although, at first glance, one could be forgiven for interpreting Gramsci's distinction between consent and coercion as being somewhat behaviouralist, it becomes apparent on closer reflection that nothing could be further from his mind.

¹⁷ Hobsbawm, E.J (1999), p13.

¹⁸ Gramsci, Antonio, quoted in Forgacs, David (ed.) (1999), p192.

¹⁹ Sinclair, Timothy J. (1996), p9.

By equating consensual power with hegemony, he wishes to point to manipulative power (similarly to Lukes, as shall be examined later in the thesis) but avoids entangling himself in a behaviouralist discussion of such manipulation, focusing instead on the consensual power that is manifest but latent in structures and superstructures. The rare marginal, deviant cases of coercion (read behavioural power) are instead the hegemonic power's rare need to reign in its subjects from trying to escape, through acts of counter-hegemony, this all-encompassing, consensual structure.

One of the principle IR theorists to use Gramsci's concept of power and hegemony is Robert W. Cox. He advocates a critical approach to a theory of world order that includes:

*"an awareness that action is never absolutely free but takes place within a framework for action which constitutes its problematic [...] The framework for action changes over time [...] and] has the form of a historical structure [...] These structures do not determine people's actions in any mechanical sense but constitute the context of habits, pressures, expectations, and constraints within which action takes place."*²⁰

Cox prioritises history and change, observing that the major driving forces of world order change over time, however slowly. The hitherto major actor of this world order, the state, has thus already undergone change under pressure from forces from above (world order) and from below (civil society).²¹ He criticises neorealism for reducing: i) states to material actors; and ii) world order and the balance of power to a configuration of material forces. Such an approach disregards the normative and institutional values of world order.²² Instead there are, according to Cox, three categories of forces that interact in a structure, namely material capabilities, ideas and institutions.²³ One particular quote neatly summarises his view on international power mechanisms:

"The imperial system is at once more than and less than the state. It is more than the state in that it is a transnational structure with a dominant core and dependent periphery [...] The unity of the

²⁰ Cox, Robert W (1981), p97.

²¹ Sinclair, Timothy J. (1996), p3.

²² Cox, Robert W. (1981), p102.

²³ Ibid, p98.

state, posited by neorealism, is fragmented in this image, and the struggle for and against the imperial system may go on within the state structures at both core and periphery as well as among social forces ranged in support and opposition to the system.”²⁴

What is more, Cox shares Gramsci’s notion of consensual hegemony, making the classical comment: “Hegemony is like a pillow: it absorbs blows and sooner or later the would-be assailant will find it comfortable to rest upon.”²⁵ Indeed, to compensate for the fact that Gramsci never offered a theory of world order and power, Cox does it for him, stating:

“Hegemony at the international level is thus not merely an order among states [...It] can be described as a social structure, an economic structure, and a political structure; and it cannot be simply one of these things but must be all three.”²⁶

²⁴ Ibid, p106-107.

²⁵ Cox, Robert W. (1983), p139.

²⁶ Ibid, p137.

The Post-Modernist Critique of Mainstream Theories of World Politics

“The concept of [international] power [...] must include cultural and ideological factors as resources of power. Furthermore, the concept of power must include both relational and structural mechanisms of power. The former denotes power in relation to other parties. The latter refers to that power which can be gained via a dominating position in the international system or through some of its institutions.”²⁷

Mainstream theories of world politics have not only tended to rely too heavily on either behavioural or structural definitions of power however, but also in the range of political issues (ie. actors and structures) that are taken to be relevant. There is a continued dominance of ‘state-centrism’ in the field that has much to do with the historical and normative origins of IR in particular – namely to secure world peace through diplomacy and negotiation on an ‘interstate’ level. As Jacinta O’Hagan points out, “[t]he discipline of International Relations was born from a desire to understand and prevent war between states and all the key paradigms, to a greater or lesser extent, continue to acknowledge the centrality of the state.”²⁸ As shall be examined in this thesis, even those theorists who have managed to avoid ‘state-centrism’ have typically found themselves focusing solely on one issue, whether that is the power of the economy, history or culture.

Those theorists who do take other actors and structures than ‘states’ into account are mainly to be found in the critical sub-disciplines of constructivism, scientific/critical realism, gender and post-colonial studies. These critical schools of thought have tended to focus on producing critiques of mainstream approaches, thus implicitly (however unintentionally) acknowledging and helping to maintain the ‘state-centric’ stronghold of the discipline. As of yet, there have been very few attempts made to incorporate these critical approaches into mainstream theories of IR – those few brave souls who have tried to ‘rewrite’ IR theory will be accounted for later in the thesis. Indeed, it seems that, while there has been a plethora of highly admirable attempts to *deconstruct* mainstream concepts of world relations, there have been very few attempts made to *reconstruct* new ones that take, for example, gender and post-colonial critiques into account.

²⁷ (My translation) Hveem, Helge. (1996), p17.

²⁸ O’Hagan, Jacinta. (2002), p21-22.

I am aware that not all IR feminists or post-colonialists would agree with me on this point. In a recent publication of *International Affairs*, Gillian Youngs claims that feminist IR theorists have dealt with tasks that have been “both deconstructive and reconstructive.” She does however acknowledge that there is a “gulf that continues to exist between what might be called mainstream (‘malestream’ is a term frequently used in feminist critiques) International Relations and feminist International Relations”, the latter of which, while ‘flourishing’ as a sub-field, has failed to make “much impact on the field as a whole.”²⁹ This is contrary to the aims and ambitions of feminism however, for as Youngs points out “[f]eminism requires an ontological revisionism: a recognition that it is necessary to go behind the appearance and examine how differentiated and gendered power constructs the social relations that form that reality.”³⁰ Hers is a call for feminism to be fully integrated into mainstream theory – a task that has yet to be accomplished.

Some feminists have resisted the notion of incorporating their discourses into mainstream approaches altogether however. Jill Steans for example, warns that those feminists who have been incorporated into mainstream IR have tended to be “those scholars who seemingly work with stable and unproblematic gender categories. In turn, in embracing what appears to be a settled and essentialist conception of gender, mainstream scholars have effectively attempted to reduce gender to the status of one of many ‘variables’ that might be used to inform our theories on causality or to quantify impacts in international politics.”³¹ This is not the approach I am advocating however. As I shall argue below, it is not my intention to just add gender into a theory of world power as one of many variables, but rather as one that permeates any analysis of world relations, as a social reality that still today affects world politics.

This thesis intends to incorporate those issues of power that have been raised by feminists and post-colonialists into a theory of world power without reifying the concepts of gender or ethnicity per se, in the hope that a theory that includes all of

²⁹ Youngs, Gillian. (2004), p75.

³⁰ Ibid, p77.

³¹ Steans, Jill. (2003), p430.

these issues of power does away with the need to separate feminist, post-colonial and mainstream theories. This does not mean that I am advocating that IR ‘does away’ with feminist or post-colonial discourses altogether however. On the contrary, as this thesis shall show, inequalities based on differences of gender or colonial experiences are as real and as violent in today’s world as they ever have been – thus, as specialist subjects that are able to highlight many of the dimensions of these inequalities (in much greater detail than is possible in a general theory of world politics) both schools of thought are unfortunately still of the utmost relevance to IR. Indeed, it is since both schools of thought are of such importance to the discipline, that it is the argument here that it is high time both were incorporated into ‘mainstream’ conceptions of world power and society. Mainstream IR theories need to give as full a description of world politics as possible – issues of gender or post-colonialism can no longer be side-lined as issues of secondary importance.

It is thus the argument here that mainstream IR’s continued ‘state-/economic-centricity’ leaves the discipline unable to examine other, very real causes of conflict that operate on ‘non-state’ levels. These are conflicts that are not only military in nature but can also be socio-economic – using Johan Galtung’s definition of structural violence.³² Indeed, it is one of the main contentions of this thesis that conflict can – at least partly – be explained by unequal distributions of all forms of social power across the globe. For such *inequalities can lead to the struggle between different actors* (including both ‘state’ and ‘non-state’ actors, as well as other, less organised forms of human organisation, such as those built upon divisions of gender) *to gain access to ‘resources’ (material and non-material) on a global and/or local level.* However, to date, most mainstream IR theories have failed to fully account for relations of inequality and thus power. This leaves the discipline unable to adequately explain fundamental structures of power in world relations, such as those that have resulted in the predominance of HIV/AIDS amongst women in the ‘developing’ world. For, as shall be seen later in this thesis, such phenomena cannot be explained by ‘state-/economic-centric’ theories alone – indeed, they demand instead that mainstream IR learns from feminist and post-

³² Galtung, J. (1969)

colonial discourses and incorporates their methodologies into its theoretical frameworks.

“In particular, theories of power must explain the immersion of human beings in nets of power relations that constrain their possibilities while simultaneously uncovering the means by which human beings have the ability to resist and challenge those relations.”³³

This thesis will argue that, at the very essence of power, lies *the ability of human agents to maintain, create or challenge existing power structures, at the same time as they are themselves being maintained, created or challenged by prevailing power structures*. These two processes lie at the very heart of human existence and society, and neither process can exist without the other. Individual agents (be they individual humans, states or other human aggregates) both affect and are affected by societal constraints. They may be influenced by their cultural upbringing, for example, and may live their whole lives never questioning its roots, but they can also change that cultural heritage to mean something quite different in a fairly short period of time – the relative successes of feminism in Western societies over the past hundred or so years being a fair case in point.

In a recent publication entitled *A New Weave of Power, People and Politics...*, Lisa VeneKlasen and Valerie Miller make a useful distinction between the different realms of power that are relevant to its conception:

- i) *the public realm of power* – refers to the visible face of power as it affects women and men in their jobs, employment, public life, legal rights, etc.
- ii) *the private realm of power* – refers to relationships and roles in families, among friends, sexual partnerships, marriage, etc.
- iii) *the intimate realm of power* – has to do with one’s sense of self, personal confidence, psychology and relationship to body and health.³⁴

One of the main reasons for choosing HIV/AIDS as the empirical focus of this thesis is that it highlights the highly political nature, not only of the public realms

³³ Wartenberg, Thomas E. (1992), pxix.

³⁴ VeneKlasen, Lisa – Miller, Valerie (2007), p51.

of power, but also of the private and intimate realms of power – all of which, it is argued here, affect and are affected by world society. Indeed, as VeneKlasen and Miller point out, “[t]he challenge of AIDS prevention further illustrates some of the contradictions that occur with regard to relations of power in the intimate realm. Many seemingly educated, empowered women and men around the world fail to take measures to protect themselves against the disease despite the knowledge and resources to do so.”³⁵ It is the argument here however that the intimate realm of power is not only dependent on agency but also constitutes a structure of power. It is thus the hope that this thesis will reveal how all three of these realms play a significant role in shaping world relations.

For there is simply no part of human existence, or agency, which is free from societal conditioning and thus independent from networks of power. But these networks of power cannot exist freely of human agency either, since they need human (in-)action to be maintained, created or challenged – that is, to exist – in the first place. As shall become apparent, however, the inclusion of everything in a concept of power is a somewhat controversial point, even to those who advocate similarly ‘structured’ approaches. For even those IR theorists who accept the need to combine agency with structure when defining political power, have so far done so without then following what in my view is the inherent logic of that power – that it is (only) as extensive in its reach as is human society and existence itself.

³⁵ Ibid, p52.

Conclusion – Overview of the Thesis

Part One of this thesis will explore the theoretical implications of restricting an analysis of power to one of the three schools of thought – behaviouralism, structuralism and post-modernism – and suggest a way of combining the insights of all three, using structurationism to tie them all together. Chapter Two will begin to do this by looking at the three schools' conceptions of power in detail, accounting for the main debates on power that have taken place within the social sciences over the past century or so. The main strengths and flaws of each school of thought will be examined, leading to the conclusion that, while each school certainly has something to offer a definition of power, none is capable of grasping the full complexities of power relations on their own. Chapter Three will then examine theories of structurationism as a means of tying together these three schools of thought. The ontological existence of power, agency and structure will be defended, using the scientific realist argument for the study of unobservables (namely the known unknowns – the unknown unknowns can, as already stated, not even be theorised), with the limitation that, while power might be ontological in its existence, any definition of it will always be epistemological and thus always up for dispute. A theory of power can thus never be verified to be certainly true or false, but it can be judged according to how much more certainly true or false it is compared to other theories. The final chapter of Part One, Chapter Four, then presents the theory of power that is offered in this thesis, as a combination of behaviouralist, structuralist and post-modernist theories of power, using structurationism as the glue which holds them together.

Part Two then sets out to exemplify why a structurationist definition of power is preferable to any of the three schools of thought on their own, using the case of global HIV/AIDS to illustrate both the theoretical and practical dangers and limitations of using a more narrow analysis. Chapter Five begins by giving a brief overview of what is known about the disease and why it has been chosen as an example of world power relations. Chapter Six will then show that most research on the social causes and implications of HIV/AIDS can also be categorised according to the three schools of thought (behaviouralism, structuralism and post-modernism), with a brief overview of both the theoretical and the practical

implications of each analysis. Chapters Seven, Eight and Nine will then conclude the thesis by examining the case of HIV/AIDS using the structured definition of power that is offered in this thesis, arguing that it is only by combining all three approaches that world relations of power (exemplified here by HIV/AIDS) can be understood in their full complexity.

Chapter Two: Political Debates on Power – Behavioural, Structural and Post-Modernist Definitions of Power

Introduction – Reining in the Concept of Power

“Power has always been the most fundamental concept in the study of politics. [...]n the history of political theory and political science since their origins in ancient Greece, power has constantly stood out as the single most important defining conceptual issue.”³⁶

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“That political scientists remain divided by the common language of power is perhaps testament to the centrality of the concept to political analysis. Quite simply, power is politics, politics is power.”³⁷

/

“It is said that it is easy to recognise an elephant – but much harder to define one. The same with power.”³⁸

Despite being one of the most fundamental concepts – or as Henri Goverde et al (in the first quotation above) would have it, *the* most important concept – of political theory, power is a notoriously difficult, if not impossible concept to rein in, its definition depending on the context of the analysis and the normative stance of the theorist. As a concept which has captured the attention of political philosophers since ancient times, one recent estimate by Dennis H. Wrong is that there are now “hundreds, perhaps thousands, of more recent definitions of social power”.³⁹ This is because power is what Ludwig Wittgenstein termed a ‘family resemblance’ concept⁴⁰ – it cannot be captured by a single definition. As Goverde et al point out however – “[t]his does not entail that all usages of the word ‘power’ are unrelated. They are related, but not by any single characteristic. Rather, their relationship is formed from a criss-crossing set of commonalities that interweave into a complex tapestry of related meanings.”⁴¹ As mentioned in the previous chapter, it is argued here that theories of power can be divided into three main

³⁶ Goverde, Henri et al. (2000), p1.

³⁷ Hay, Colin. (1997), p45.

³⁸ Strange, Susan. (1996), p17.

³⁹ Wrong, Dennis H. (1993), p9.

⁴⁰ Wittgenstein, Ludwig. (1968), p36.

⁴¹ Goverde, Henri et al. (2000), p18.

categories, namely those which are behaviouralist (viewing power as the capacity of one actor to maintain or change a relation of power over another actor), those which are structuralist (viewing power as a structure that either constrains or enables all actors in relation to one another), and those which are post-modernist (viewing power as something which cannot and should not be defined).

Regardless of the commonalities between these many definitions of power however, there is often very little unity to be found in the opinions of their makers – namely the theorists of power themselves. As Colin Hay points out in the second quotation above, political scientists ‘remain divided by the common language of power’ for the simple reason that ‘power is politics, politics is power’. For, underlying each theorist’s definition of power is their normative conception of the world which, when brought into conflict with someone else’s, can naturally be conceptually very divisive. According to Goverde et al, the debates on power that have taken place in the social sciences and normative political theory have done so “in relative conceptual isolation from one another. When debates do cross, it becomes obvious that the concepts of power at the center of these debates refer to different social phenomena. Over time, many strategies have been developed for coping with this, including: (a) insisting that ‘your’ concept of power is the ‘right one’; (b) arguing that what others are analyzing constitutes a trivial aspect of power; or (c) ignoring what others are doing.” Goverde et al maintain however that there are four theoretical issues that have been central to these strategies and debates, namely: “1. power as a contested, family resemblance concept; 2. the problematic of structure and agency in power analysis; 3. the evolving debate on globalization and structuration, or the restructuring of power in a globalizing world; and 4. the relationship between power and democratic decision-making.”⁴² The next three chapters will focus on the first, second and third theoretical issues listed by Goverde et al, albeit not in that particular order.⁴³

⁴² Ibid, p17.

⁴³ The fourth issue, that of the relationship between power and democratic decision-making, will be left already at this early stage of the thesis, as that issue seeks to answer the question what power *ought to be* rather than what it *is* – the latter of which is the main focus of this thesis. That the two issues are connected, by the very fact that they both involve normative judgements on the state of the world – as it is and as it ought to be – is of course accepted. Nonetheless, the main focus of this thesis is on where to find power rather than what to do with it.

Steven Lukes (whose own theory of power shall be examined in more detail later in this chapter) makes the useful distinction between ‘potentia’ and ‘potestas’ (citing Spinoza’s definition of the two Latin terms) – the former relating to the power of things in nature (including persons) ‘to exist and act’, the latter meaning the state of being in the power of another.⁴⁴ Although the rest of Lukes’ work focuses on potestas – power in the form of domination – it is clear that the analysis of power also includes the notion of potentia. For if power is defined as the capacity to act in society, then it is the argument here that this action is not only dependent on the actions of others (potestas) but also of the structural potential or placing of the relevant actors in the first place (potentia). In other words, it is argued here that *it is necessary to include both potentia and potestas in a definition of power*. This is similar to the typical distinction that is made between ‘power over’ and ‘power to’. And similarly, it is the argument here that, *in order to be able to study a social actor’s ‘power to’, one must necessarily include ‘power over’*, since it is the placing of this actor in relation to others that dictates his or her power to do anything at all. In other words, any definition of power must necessarily include both its behavioural (potestas) and structural (potentia) aspects, since the power that people have over each other is highly dependent on their capacities to act in society at all.

Structure and agency alone cannot ‘solve’ the problematic of defining power however. Indeed, as already mentioned, post-modernism has long criticised any attempts to define power in the first place. As shall be examined in more detail in this chapter, one of the main proponents of this approach, Michel Foucault, dedicated his life’s work to showing the underlying discourses of power and long fought against the idea that there is any one definition of power that suits all power relations. Instead, he argued that knowledge itself is power – thus, any definition of power can be used as a means with which to sustain current power relations. The post-modernist approach must therefore also be taken into consideration in any attempt to define the concept, since it not only highlights the problems with settling with any one definition, but also reveals the interrelationship between the discourse of power and power itself. Furthermore, post-modernism highlights the

⁴⁴ Lukes, Steven. (2005), p73.

importance of contextually specific definitions – prioritising the empirical over the theoretical if you will – arguing that power is always case-specific to the particular power relations in question. Thus power theorised can never fully comprehend power empiricised – it is always dependent on the particular power relations in a certain relationship.

Structurationism can help to bring together these three approaches however. As shall be examined in the next chapter, structurationism highlights the relationship between structure and agency – arguing that they are interrelated and cannot be separated from one another. It highlights the processes that relate structure (society) and agency (people), which in turn affect people’s knowledge of the structures in which they live. These processes are mutually dependent – agency can change structure and vice versa. Thus, structurationism can also be used as a link between post-modernism and theory – highlighting the interdependence between theory and society. For just as theory can affect empirical realities, so too can they affect theory – our place in the world is to some extent governed by our knowledge of it, but so too is our knowledge of the world affected by our place in it.

To this end, the aim in this thesis is to focus on the problematic of structure and agency in power analysis and to try to resolve this with contextually specific structured theories of power that accept that power means many different things to many different people around the world. For it is only when conceptual divisions of power are understood as being fundamentally normative divisions that a common ground can even be hoped to be found in the form of a contextual, relational and structured approach to the concept. Thus, the aim here is not only to link behavioural and structural theories of power, but also to problematise these more general definitions by adding the post-modernist critique. Before revealing in the next chapter how structurationism can help to link all three approaches however, this chapter sets out to uncover the main strengths and weaknesses of each approach.

Behavioural Power as Agency – The ‘Faces of Power’ Debate.

Max Weber defined power as “the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance, regardless of the basis on which this probability rests.”⁴⁵ This idea – that power is the exertion of influence of one (or more) social actors over other social actors – is one that, according to Gerhard Goehler, is still widespread throughout the social sciences and which also, in his view, corresponds to our everyday understanding of power.⁴⁶ For although it is a definition of power that is most closely associated with the pluralists and the behaviouralist school of the 1940’s and 50’s, such definitions of power still abound in the discourse of power today. Popularly known as the ‘faces of power’ debate, these definitions focus on the ‘faces’ or agents of power, rather than on its structural constraints. Four ‘faces’ of power have so far been defined in this debate - all of which will be discussed below.

The first ‘face’ of power (although not entitled as such until later in the debate) was introduced by Robert Dahl in 1957:

“My intuitive idea of power, then, is something like this: A has power over B to the extent that he can get B to do something that B would not otherwise do.”⁴⁷

There are two important conditions on which Dahl’s theory rests – relevant since they provoked the rest of the ‘faces of power’ debate. Firstly, the theory assumes that there is a *conflict of interests* between the actors A and B, and secondly, that A can only be said to have power over B if A ‘wins’ a process of conflict that is *overt*, and in which A and B *participate consciously and actively*.⁴⁸ Thus, as Hay points out, “by virtue of A’s power, B not only modifies her behaviour, but does so in full knowledge that her modified behaviour is contrary to her own genuine interests.”⁴⁹ This raises the thorny question of whether it is theoretically possible or even indeed normatively desirable to locate an actor’s ‘genuine’ or ‘real

⁴⁵ Weber, Max. (1993), p37.

⁴⁶ Goehler, Gerhard. (2000), p41.

⁴⁷ Dahl, Robert. (1957), p202-203.

⁴⁸ (My emphasis and translation) Hveem, Helge, (1997), p25.

⁴⁹ Hay, Colin. (2002), p172.

interests'. For not only is it highly questionable whether a theory of power can, should or indeed needs to subscribe interests onto actors in order to be able to state that relations of power exist, but it is also possible that the actors involved in the actual power relationship themselves may not always fully comprehend what is in their 'real' interests in the first place. This will be discussed in further detail below, since it is of most relevance to Steven Lukes' 'radical' third 'face' of power. Suffice to say at this stage that it is an issue that has plagued the 'faces of power' debate since the very beginning. For the main problem with the notion of interests offered by Dahl here is, as Hay states, that "[a]ctors are assumed to be blessed with perfect information and hence to know their real interests."⁵⁰ As shall be examined in greater detail below however, access to 'perfect information' cannot always be taken for granted in the decision-making process, nor can actors always be assumed to be acting in their real interests, however these are defined.

Dahl was only interested in observable conflicts of power however, where each actor's interests are clearly set out and stated. Indeed, the support of empirical evidence was crucial to his idea of power – he claimed in a subsequent article that "a theory that cannot even in principle be controverted by empirical evidence is not a scientific theory."⁵¹ That there may be problems finding the data to calculate power relations, as he suggested doing and indeed attempted, was no deterrent to Dahl: "The observations may be exceedingly difficult but they are not inherently impossible: they don't defy the laws of nature as we understand them" he concluded.⁵² In his 1957 paper and subsequent publications, he set out to establish algebraic equations on the probability that B will do as A wishes, and on the amount of power that A can be said to hold. These empirical investigations were limited to observations of the formal and thus overt proceedings of political institutions, such as the local politics of New Haven or the United States Senate, thus ignoring other relationships of power that might exist either covertly within the institution itself or across institutions and society.⁵³

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Dahl, Robert. (1958), p463.

⁵² Dahl, Robert. (1957), p214.

⁵³ Ibid, p209-214.

Indeed, Dahl's is a state-centric view of the world, as he assumed that power is solely to be found in the hands of the political decision-makers of the state and that this power is always overt and observable. This was in response to proponents of the so-called ruling elite model, which he criticised for its potential of being "a type of quasi-metaphysical theory made up of what might be called an infinite regress of explanations. [...] If the overt leaders of a community do not appear to constitute a ruling elite, then the theory can be saved by arguing that behind the overt leaders there is a set of covert leaders who do. If subsequent evidence shows that this covert group does not make a ruling elite, then the theory can be saved by arguing that behind the first covert group there is another, and so on."⁵⁴ On his subsequent 'proposed test' of the model, he stated "I do not want to pretend either that the research necessary to such a test is at all easy to carry out or that community life lends itself conveniently to strict interpretation according to the requirements of the text. *But I do not see how anyone can suppose that he has established the dominance of a specific group in a community or a nation without basing his analysis on the careful examination of a series of concrete decisions.*"⁵⁵ Thus, the idea of power as overt, observable behaviour in the form of concrete decisions was vital to Dahl – for without evidence of its existence, there was in his view simply no point in theorising about it. As Hay points out however, such an approach could actually help to maintain existing power structures by allowing them to go unquestioned:

*"It is all very well to consider the exercise of power within the decision-making chamber, but if this is merely a talking shop from which consideration of all contentious issues has already been excluded, then the wood is being missed for the foliage on the trees. Indeed, such a narrow concern with decision-making is tantamount to an endorsement of systematic and deep-seated power relations. It is, in short, a normative legitimisation of the political elite masquerading as a neutral and dispassionate science of the political."*⁵⁶

Linked to the serious normative implications of ignoring other mechanisms of power than those found in the official decision-making process, are the equally grave theoretical limitations to Dahl's definition of power as it stands. Indeed, the

⁵⁴ Dahl, Robert. (1958), p463.

⁵⁵ (Emphasis in original). Ibid, p466.

⁵⁶ (Emphasis in original). Hay, Colin. (2002), p175.

very reason that Dahl's theoretical definition of power is called one-dimensional is because of "its narrow focus on power as decision-making"⁵⁷, as it thus leaves out the multitudes of other ways in which actors can have power over each other. As shall be examined in more detail below, there are numerous other 'faces' or dimensions to agentic power that Dahl's definition fails to capture. Common to all of the 'faces of power' definitions however is the problem that they are all also actor-centred – neither Dahl nor any of the other 'faces of power' theorists have so far been able to satisfactorily account for structural constraints on agency. Indeed, Clarissa Rile Hayward (who advocates 'defacing' the concept of power altogether, as shall be examined in more detail towards the end of this chapter) criticises all of the 'faces of power' definitions for retaining Dahl's original formulation of the problem, which focuses solely on the power that actor A has over actor B. Her main criticism is that, throughout the discourse on power's various 'faces' or dimensions, "Dahl's statement of the question [...] remained unchallenged."⁵⁸

Another serious limitation with Dahl's definition of power is that he sees it as a zero-sum phenomenon – a view which, as Hay points out, maintains that "some gain [power] only to the extent that others lose out. If Anna has power, Ben does not; the extent of Anna's power is the extent of Ben's lack of power."⁵⁹ As shall be examined later in this chapter, power relationships are rarely if ever this simple – both actors will, except in extreme cases of total domination, always have the power to change the power relationship. Thus A's power cannot be said to cancel out or replace B's power to act in the relationship. It is for this reason that power cannot be satisfactorily explained as simply constituting a commodity that passes from one actor to another, as Dahl's theory seems to suggest.

*"[A] fresh study of power is called for, an approach based upon a recognition of the two faces of power. Under this approach the researcher would begin [...] by investigating the particular 'mobilization of bias.'"*⁶⁰

⁵⁷ Ibid, p173.

⁵⁸ Hayward, Clarissa Rile. (2000), p18.

⁵⁹ Hay, Colin. (2002), p173.

⁶⁰ Bachrach, Peter and Baratz, Morton S. (1969a), p99.

It was Peter Bachrach and Morton S. Baratz who launched the debate into the concept of different dimensions, or 'faces' of power. They criticised Dahl and other pluralists for claiming that power could only be analysed after careful examination of a series of concrete decisions. For this ignored the fact that power can also be exercised "by confining the scope of decision-making to relatively 'safe' issues". In other words, they wished to include the "*nondecision-making process*" into the concept.⁶¹ This is not to say that they rejected Dahl's definition, however. On the contrary, they accepted that "of course power is exercised when A participates in the making of decisions that affect B."⁶² And they agreed that power is relational between actors.⁶³ They simply wished to add a second dimension, where A could be said to "devote his energies" to limiting the scope of the political process so that only issues that were of benefit to A were brought to the agenda.⁶⁴ Three additional prerequisites were included: i) that there be a conflict of interests or values between two or more persons or groups; ii) that B actually bows to A's wishes; and iii) that one of the parties can threaten to invoke sanctions.⁶⁵

The main contribution of Bachrach and Baratz's definition of power, as Hay so succinctly puts it, was that it "extended the sphere of political analysis from the parliament or formal decision-making arena to include the corridors of power, the boardroom, the masonic lodge, the golf course and the clubs and pubs in which agenda-setting occurs behind the scenes." However, as Hay also makes clear, this "did not come without a price. [...T]he analysis of power was set to become an altogether more complex, exacting and, arguably, subjective task. This led a number of pluralist critiques to conclude that non-decision-making was simply unresearchable".⁶⁶ This was however a criticism that Bachrach and Baratz had "reject[ed] in advance [...] In reacting against the subjective aspects of the sociological model of power, the pluralists have, we believe, made the mistake of discarding 'unmeasurable elements' as unreal. It is ironical that, by so doing, they have exposed themselves to the same fundamental criticism they have so

⁶¹ Ibid, p95 -96.

⁶² Ibid, p95.

⁶³ Bachrach, Peter and Baratz, Morton S. (1969b), p101.

⁶⁴ Bachrach, Peter and Baratz, Morton S. (1969a), p95.

⁶⁵ Bachrach, Peter and Baratz, Morton S. (1969b), p101-102.

⁶⁶ Hay, Colin. (2002), p176.

forcefully levelled against the elitists: their approach to and assumptions about power predetermine their findings and conclusions.”⁶⁷

Even though Bachrach and Baratz’s definition of power was a significant improvement on Dahl’s, in that it allowed for the (albeit difficult) analysis of agenda-setting, it also and somewhat paradoxically retained the limitation of only looking for power in processes of decision-making – the very limitation that it critiqued. For even non-decisions are decisions – in this case, decisions to ignore or sideline an issue. Indeed, if a non-decision is, as Bachrach and Baratz claimed, “a decision that results in the suppression or thwarting of a latent or manifest challenge to the values or interests of the decision-maker”⁶⁸, then it is clear that this too is a conscious decision not to make a decision. As Alan Bradshaw has pointed out, a non-decision cannot exist per definition: “We cannot legitimately conceive of an actor [A] who possesses relevant information, or who is in a position to acquire that information (and aware of that), ever making a nondecision which is a *no*-decision, i.e. simply failing to make a decision” he claimed. Rather, A has in that case “made a *decision to neglect*”.⁶⁹

Moreover, not only did Bachrach and Baratz’s definition of power limit its scope of analysis to non-/decision-making but it thus also focused solely on the power of agency, meaning that it faced the same problem as Dahl’s definition in that it too ignored structural constraints on this agency. One theorist who tried to resolve this problem – albeit unsuccessfully – was Steven Lukes:

*“The trouble seems to be that both Bachrach and Baratz and the pluralists suppose that because power, as they conceptualise it, only shows up in cases of actual conflict, it follows that actual conflict is necessary to power. But this is to ignore the crucial point that the most effective and insidious use of power is to prevent such conflict from arising in the first place.”*⁷⁰

⁶⁷ Bachrach, Peter and Baratz, Morton S. (1969a), p99.

⁶⁸ Bachrach, Peter and Baratz, Morton S. (1970), p44.

⁶⁹ (Emphasis in original.) Bradshaw, Alan. (1976), p124.

⁷⁰ Lukes, Steven. (1974), p23.

It was in a thin volume entitled *Power: A Radical View (PRV)* that Lukes first offered his 'radical view' on the concept of power. He too accepted Dahl's first dimension, as well as Bachrach and Baratz's second – his contribution was to add a complementary third.⁷¹ Now, thirty years on from its first publication, Lukes has reissued a second edition of the same work, where the original version (which remains largely untouched) constitutes the first chapter and is followed by two chapters that further elaborate as well as delimit his original theory. Before reviewing this and the critics of his revised theory, it is worth considering the work as it first came out, as this not only highlights many of the problems with it but also enables a more detailed analysis of the revised version, enabling an assessment as to whether or not Lukes has managed to resolve the issues with the concept of a third 'face' of power. For while it is a concept that will be used later in this thesis, it is the argument here that there are still amendments to be made to the Lukes version of it.

Lukes' 'radical' conception of power meant adding the notions of manipulation and socialisation to the other two dimensions of decision- and nondecision-making. Bachrach and Baratz had explicitly excluded manipulation from the concept of power, claiming that it was instead "an aspect of force".⁷² In Lukes' words, however, he maintained that "the bias of the system is not sustained simply by a series of individually chosen acts, but also, most importantly, by the socially structured and culturally patterned behaviour of groups, and practices of institutions, which may indeed be manifested by individuals' inaction." Quite simply, he criticised Bachrach and Baratz for having followed the pluralists by adopting "too methodologically individualist a view of power."⁷³ In this third dimension, A could also exercise power over B "by influencing, shaping or determining his very wants"⁷⁴. This cemented the concept of 'real interests' into the power debate. Controversially, Lukes argued that B could only know of these interests if he or she was under the conditions of 'relative autonomy'. He also stated that until B had realised his or her 'real interests', it was defensible for A to continue to exercise 'short-term power' over B – a relation that would 'self-

⁷¹ Ibid, p25.

⁷² Bachrach, Peter and Baratz, Morton S. (1969b), p103.

⁷³ Lukes, Steven. (1974), p21-22.

⁷⁴ (My emphasis) Ibid, p23.

annihilate' once B had discovered these interests.⁷⁵ As shall be seen below, it is on the notion of 'real interests' that Lukes has been most heavily criticised and to which he has subsequently most strongly responded in the second edition, since it opened him up to the charge of paternalism. As Hay neatly puts it:

*"The problem with such a formulation is the deeply condescending conception of the social subject as an ideological dupe that it conjures. Not only is this wretched individual incapable of perceiving her/his true interests, pacified as s/he is by the hallucinogenic effects of bourgeois (or other) indoctrination. But, to confound matters, rising above the ideological mists which tame the masses is the enlightened academic who from a high perch in the ivory tower may look down to discern the genuine interests of those not similarly privileged."*⁷⁶

It is clear that Lukes' theory was initially inspired by Marxist thought on 'false consciousness', as well as Gramsci's concept of hegemony, and that he wanted to include structural power into the debate – indeed, he now clearly states this in the introduction to the second edition.⁷⁷ It is not clear however, even initially, exactly how the third 'face' was supposed to include these aspects of power. For having read numerous articles criticising the theory, as well as later work by Lukes himself where he withdrew from much of its initial content, it is apparent that a lot of what he earlier set out to prove has been omitted from subsequent accounts of the third dimension. This is most neatly summarised by the rather long 'disclaimer' he writes in the second edition of *PRV*, where he sets out the limitations of the theory:

"PRV [...] focuses on the exercise of power, thereby committing the 'exercise fallacy': power is a dispositional concept, identifying an ability or capacity, which may or may not be exercised. Secondly, it focuses entirely on the exercise of 'power over' – the power of some A over some B and B's condition of dependence on A. Thirdly, it equates such dependence-inducing power with domination, assuming that 'A affects B in a manner contrary to B's interests', thereby neglecting what we have seen to be the manifold ways in which power over others can be productive, transformative, authoritative and

⁷⁵ Ibid, p33.

⁷⁶ Hay, Colin. (2002), p179.

⁷⁷ Lukes, Steven. (2005), p7-9.

compatible with dignity. Fourthly, assuming that power, thus defined, affects the interests of those subject to it adversely, it offers no more than the most perfunctory and questionable account of what such interests are and, moreover, it treats an actor's interests as unitary, failing to consider differences, interactions and conflicts among one's interests. And, finally, it operates (like much of the literature on power) with a reductive and simplistic picture of binary power relations, an unending array of permutating relations between A and B"⁷⁸

Indeed, the idea of covert manipulation as a form of behavioural domination neatly sums up Lukes' overall contribution to the 'faces of power' debate. As already mentioned, however, it originally also contained the concept of structural power. He had claimed that "the power to control the agenda of politics and exclude potential issues cannot be adequately analysed unless it is seen as a function of collective forces and social arrangements."⁷⁹ And yet, although there are still other researchers who build their analyses on his first, more 'radical' conception of power⁸⁰, Lukes seemed in later years to retreat back into the behaviouralist school.

The reason that structural power fell out of the theory is that it simply did not fit into a behavioural analysis. Lukes seems to have recognised this very early on, as he returned to a restricted, behavioural definition of power in an essay entitled 'Power and Structure', that was published only three years after the first publication of *PRV*. Here he did not even mention the third 'face', using the word 'power' only to refer to individual (presumably conscious and intentional) action.⁸¹ For although he stated that "the agents operate within structurally determined limits", he added "they none the less have a certain relative autonomy and could have acted differently." Most striking was his comment that "the notion of a power structure becomes a self-contradiction, since power operates within structures."⁸² This is a turnaround from his original argument, for as Margaret Groarke points out, he now "defines the social forces acting upon the agent as structure, not power." And yet, she continues, "the [whole] point of his original

⁷⁸ Ibid, p109.

⁷⁹ Lukes, Steven. (1974), p22.

⁸⁰ See Samson, Colin (1994) and Vogler, Carolyn (1998) for unabridged usage of Lukes' initial theory.

⁸¹ Groarke, Margaret. (1993), p37.

⁸² Lukes, Steven. (1977), p6-7 & 9.

theory was to show that structures and institutional arrangements were not neutral.”⁸³ Regardless of this critique however, Lukes continues to echo similar sentiments in the second edition of *PRV* when he states that “social life can only be properly understood as an interplay of power and structure, a web of possibilities for agents, whose nature is both active and structured, to make choices and pursue strategies within given limits, which in consequence expand and contract over time.”⁸⁴ In a critique of the revised edition, Peter Morriss neatly summarises the continued problem that Lukes seems to be having separating agency from structure:

“the difficulties Lukes has with the interrelationship between power (as agency) and structure only arise because he continues to work with a concept of ‘power-over’. The problem is that talk of ‘structural power’ would seem to be either oxymoronic, or require structures to be held responsible for exercising or having power over people. But the problem simply disappears when we focus on ‘power-to’, and have a context of social evaluation that does not involve responsibility; for there is no difficulty in saying that structures limit the ends that people can obtain (and should, for that reason, be altered).”⁸⁵

Already after the first publication however, Groarke neatly summed up the dissatisfaction felt by many of Lukes’ critics: “his ‘radical’ alternative ultimately disappoints. Lukes offers a useful critique of those who have come before him in the power debate [...] but he only sketches his alternative [...] Despite his provocative statements to the contrary, Lukes’ concept of power [...] never transcends the limits of the agency-based concepts of power he criticizes.”⁸⁶ Somewhat remarkably perhaps, Lukes seems to echo Groarke’s ‘disappointment’ himself in the second edition of the book, when he admits that it is purely a behavioural definition and thus “entirely unsatisfactory in several respects”.⁸⁷ Although he concedes that “[p]ower can be at work, inducing compliance by influencing desires and beliefs, without being ‘intelligent and intentional’”⁸⁸, it is

⁸³ Groarke, Margaret. (1993), p38 & 41.

⁸⁴ Lukes, Steven. (2005), p69.

⁸⁵ Morriss, Peter. (2006), p130.

⁸⁶ Groarke, Margaret. (1993), p31-32.

⁸⁷ Lukes, Steven, (2005), p109.

⁸⁸ Lukes, Steven. (2005), p136.

clear that there is little room for a structural argument in his now otherwise purely behavioural account of power as domination.

Nonetheless, Lukes' 'radical view' can be considered to be both a theoretical milestone and thus also a success in the power debate, since it opened up a large can of worms, as critics attacked both the methodological and moral sustainability of his argument. Bradshaw was one of the first, questioning the logical soundness of a state of 'relative autonomy', where B is independent of all influence. For even if B were to become independent of A's influence, there would be no guarantee that other actors, (C, D or E), would not continue to exercise their power over B. His second objection was that such 'relative autonomy' was thus a purely theoretical construct, falsifiable only in the impossible event of one being able to manipulate society as a huge laboratory. "We cannot envisage a scenario in which any actor is somehow liberated from all structural conditions, and hence able to correctly identify what his real interests would be in the best of all possible worlds"⁸⁹ he stated.

Bradshaw (who, as already mentioned, had argued for the term 'decision to neglect', rather than Bachrach and Baratz's preferred term 'nondecision-making') also pointed out that the notion of an unconscious 'nondecision' by A is contradictory to Lukes' subsequent normative claim that A is responsible and to blame for his or her power over B. Contrary to Lukes, Bradshaw wholly rejected the notion of responsibility, saying that it is not difficult to imagine a circumstance where two independent, individually harmless actions by two actors, A and C, could combine to produce harmful effects to B.⁹⁰ Indeed, he summarised his critique by stating that Lukes seemed confused as to what to include in his theory – unconsciousness or responsibility – "a confusion [...] marked out as two discordant notions of the nature of power combined, or rather juxtaposed, within a single essay." He concluded: "Unfortunately, Lukes' *Power: A Radical View* is a work divided against itself."⁹¹

⁸⁹ Bradshaw, Alan. (1976), p121-123.

⁹⁰ (Emphasis in original) Ibid, p124.

⁹¹ (Emphasis in original) Ibid, p126.

Bradshaw's critique hit home. He was offered a reply from Lukes in the same journal where he denied that he had anywhere spoken of absolute autonomy – not seeming to accept that the logical implication of his claim (that B should and could only decide his or her 'real interests' when free from the influences of power) was in fact just that, an implication of absolute autonomy. He defended the second dimension's concept of nondecisions, saying that the exercise of power could very well be unconsidered, routine or in ignorance of alternatives. And then, ultimately, he proceeded to agree with the rest of Bradshaw's critique. He consented that harmless action by two actors could harm B and that the third dimension needed elaboration to include "more complex cases such as these."⁹²

Bradshaw was by no means the last to criticise Lukes, for the debate on the actual contours of the third dimension was only just beginning. Like Bradshaw, T. Benton criticised the concept of 'real interests' for implying that B could ever be absolutely autonomous from power – "how do we know when enough of [A's] power has been withdrawn [...]?", he asked. He also argued that B could very well, even after experiencing the results of a multiplicity of policy options, choose to do something that was not in his or her best interest. Lukes' argument could only be made to work, he said, if a notion of 'objective' interests were to replace 'real' ones. These would instead be ascribed on the basis of principles and standards of general applicability.⁹³ Here we can trace a normative ambition in Benton's argument to counter Lukes' radicalism with a liberal universalism, where both can thus be criticised for involving moral judgements of B's interests. That Benton's main concern with Lukes' theory seems to have been political and not theoretical is supported by the fact that he at one point states that "the problem is rooted in the radical intellectual's despair of the working class."⁹⁴ For although there may be some truth in the comment, Benton's solution is not any less subjective. For who is to decide whether or not B has 'objective interests'?

It was when David West entered the debate in 1987 that a viable alternative to Lukes' 'radical' third dimension presented itself. West expressed the need for a

⁹² Lukes, Steven. (1976), p129-131.

⁹³ Benton, T. (1981), p167-169.

⁹⁴ Ibid, p173.

theory that “is able to recognize manipulations of people’s values or desires as instances of power”, and still resist paternalism. His argument was that there is *no need to identify people’s interests*, (‘real’, ‘objective’ or otherwise), *in order to be able to recognise processes of manipulation and thus relationships of domination or power*. He gave the example of advertising as a case in point.⁹⁵ This meant that “futile arguments about real or true interests can be avoided, because interests [...] cannot be anticipated or revealed in a purely intellectual discussion [...] and] are not necessarily subject to any useful generalisations. People start from different cultural and social origins.” Even those who come from similar backgrounds, he stated, may end up with different constellations of interests.⁹⁶

Take the example of female education for example. Like any other relationship of power, this will be determined both by the behaviour of the actors concerned (that of the educational authorities (global, national and local), as well as the teachers, parents and students) as well as by the structural constraints that either facilitate or constrain action for all concerned. If the educational system is geared towards domesticating the female students for a life in the home, then this can be said to be a process of manipulation, regardless of whether or not the female students agree with the idea or not. Likewise, if their education instead gears them towards a career in business, then this too can be said to be a process of manipulation – indeed most, if not all education by its very definition is geared towards forming its subjects in one way or another. One might therefore argue that, interpreted this broadly, power as manipulation becomes a useless concept – indeed, this is where Lukes et al would argue that the notion of interests is crucial in determining when the third ‘face’ of power can be said to operate. This argument is however based on the idea of power as always being negative and repressive and misses the fundamental point that manipulation, just as all of the other faces of power, can just as easily work in B’s interests as in A’s. To continue with the case of female education for example – if it is clear that an education system is solely geared towards the interests of its male students, ignoring those of female students, then it is clear that an inequality of power exists. The same would be true in the reverse however. And if no separation is made between the two groups and all of the

⁹⁵ (My emphasis) West, David, (1987), p141-142.

⁹⁶ Ibid, p152.

actors interests are taken into account, the education system can still be said to be manipulative, but in a positive and productive way. All of these examples constitute relations of power and each of them will be normatively more attractive and desirable to some than others. The point is that each case needs to be reviewed separately and empirically, trying to ascertain from all of the actors involved what their interests in the case are. Trying to subscribe interests onto them theoretically in advance however – before exploring the particularities of a case – will always be paternalistic, no matter how strongly it is defended.

The importance of West's contribution cannot in my view be overestimated, as it rescued the third 'face' of power from potential theoretical ruin. It allows for an analysis of the *process* of manipulation by A (or B), without implicitly making assumptions about the *outcome*, namely the effects it has on the interests of B (or A). It is therefore surprising that Lukes does not address West's contribution in the second edition of *PRV*. For although he is mentioned as a reference in the bibliography, there is no mention of him (or the subject of advertising as a case in point) either in the index or the actual body of the text itself.

“These difficulties become less serious if one simply takes what count as ‘real interests’ to be a function of one’s explanatory purpose, framework and methods, which in turn have to be justified. There is no reason to believe that there exists a canonical set of such interests that will constitute ‘the last word on the matter’ – that will resolve moral conflicts and set the seal on proffered explanations, confirming them as true. [...] Or ‘real interests’ can be understood as a way of identifying ‘basic’ or ‘central’ capabilities which existing arrangements preclude.”⁹⁷

Indeed, Lukes continues to defend the use of 'real interests' in the second edition of *PRV*, as well as strongly resist the charge of paternalism: *“the very idea of power’s third dimension requires an external standpoint. Power as domination [...] invokes the idea of constraint upon interests, and to speak of the third dimension of such power is to speak of interests imputed to and unrecognized by the actors.”⁹⁸* On 'false consciousness' he states that “to recognize its very

⁹⁷ Lukes, Steven. (2005), p148.

⁹⁸ (My emphasis) Ibid, p146.

possibility is not [...] to be loftily condescending.”⁹⁹ It is not the point here to deny that ‘false consciousness’ can exist – indeed, it is likely that all actors at some point in their lives will act in ways which are not always in their own interest and may not be aware of this. What Lukes seems to have missed however is the fact that it is still possible to analyse the third ‘face’ of power – through its processes – without making pre-made judgements about people’s interests. If processes of manipulation can be traced back to an actor or actors A, which are meant to have the desired effect of changing actor or actors B’s interests, then the third ‘face’ of power can be said to exist. One need not make assumptions about the possible results and thus a priori subscribe interests onto either A or B, ‘objective’, ‘real’ or otherwise.

“Who is Steven Lukes to criticise the values of others? I think the answer is straightforward: Lukes, just like anyone else, can analyse and evaluate the situation of others. To suggest that people are always the best judge of their own interests and have privileged moral status over their own preferences is to deny any sort of normative social analysis. Nevertheless, the charge is one to be taken seriously and Lukes examines it carefully.”¹⁰⁰

PRV is clearly a work of ‘normative social analysis’, as Keith Dowding states in the above quotation. Hay agrees: “[o]nce it is recognised for what it is then – an invitation to an ethical critique of power relations as distinct from an analytical technique for the identification of power relations – Lukes’ schema is not in itself contradictory.”¹⁰¹ This is not extraordinary for any theory of power – for, as already stated, it is impossible to conceive of any definition of power that is free from normative bias. However, if one is interested in trying to find an analytical technique for the identification of power relations, as opposed to an ethical critique of them, then Lukes’ account of the third ‘face’ of power must be modified. It is the argument here that – as a purely behavioural account of processes of manipulation – the third ‘face’ of power qualifies as an analytical concept. It is when structure and ‘real interests’ are imposed on it that it moves from an attempt at an analytical technique to a purely ethical critique. As already

⁹⁹ Ibid, p149.

¹⁰⁰ Dowding, Keith. (2006), p137.

¹⁰¹ Hay, Colin. (2002), p183.

argued, interests can never be assumed a priori in a purely analytical account. Nor can structure be squeezed into agency – as shall be seen in the next chapter, these two concepts need to be kept ontologically separate in order to be able to both distinguish and analyse the interdependency of the two. Before moving onto structure however, there is one more ‘face’ of power to be taken into account – namely Peter Digeser’s interpretation of Foucault’s concept of power as constituting its fourth ‘face’, or as Digeser calls it, power₄:

“[T]he model for the modern form of power₄ is the panopticon: [...]the perpetual possibility of surveillance forges a self-disciplined prisoner even when the jailor is not in the watchtower. [...] We become our own jailors and perpetuate disciplinary practices through our own actions. It is unlike the other conceptions of power in which power is exercised by something outside the subject.”¹⁰²

The above quotation by Digeser encapsulates his interpretation of Foucault’s contribution to the ‘faces of power’ debate (despite the fact that Foucault never actively participated in it). He neatly summarises the four faces of power thus: “Under the first face of power the central question is, “Who, if anyone, is exercising power?” Under the second face, “What issues have been mobilized off the agenda and by whom?” Under the radical conception, “Whose objective interests are being harmed?” Under the fourth face of power the critical issue is, “What kind of subject is being produced?””¹⁰³

The fourth ‘face’ of power is thus the power of both subjects – both A’s and B’s – to ‘become [their] own jailors’ and constitute themselves as both producers and subjects of power. This interpretation rests on Foucault’s observations regarding Jeremy Bentham’s ‘panopticon’ design for prisons – where, as Digeser puts it, the ‘perpetual possibility of surveillance’ means that all subjects (both A and B) self-police themselves to comply with prevailing relations of power. As Foucault himself put it: “the system of surveillance [...] involves very little expense. There is no need for arms, physical violence, material constraints. Just a gaze. An inspecting gaze, a gaze which each individual under its weight will end by

¹⁰² Digeser, Peter. (1992), p994.

¹⁰³ Ibid, p980.

interiorising to the point that he is his own overseer, each individual thus exercising this surveillance over, and against, himself. A superb formula: power exercised continuously and for what turns out to be a minimal cost.”¹⁰⁴

Digester’s interpretation of Foucault thus hinges on one of Foucault’s main arguments, namely that power operates through the very formation of the subject. “[The subject] is not a substance” Foucault once stated. “It is a form, and this form is not primarily or always identical to itself. You do not have the same type of relationship to yourself when you constitute yourself as a political subject who goes to vote or speaks at a meeting and when you are seeking to fulfil your desires in a sexual relationship. Undoubtedly there are relationships and interferences between these different forms of the subject; but we are not dealing with the same type of subject. In each case, one plays, one establishes a different type of relationship to oneself.”¹⁰⁵

In the language of the ‘faces of power’ debate, this means that both A and B are at the same time both the subjects and the producers of power – both forming and being formed by prevailing power relations. In order to properly examine Digester’s interpretation of Foucault however, an introduction to the work of the latter is first necessary. For, although Digester interprets Foucault as having made a contribution to the ‘faces of power’ debate, his definition of power can also be taken as a structural account, as shall be examined below. Indeed, as shall be explored further in the next chapter, Foucault’s work, along with that of structurationism, can also be seen to function as a bridge over the structure/agency divide. Perhaps most importantly, however, Foucault’s writings highlight the contested nature of power and the importance of an empirical, rather than a theoretical study of its existence, in order to cater for its many different interpretations across time and space.

¹⁰⁴ Foucault, Michel. (1980a), p155.

¹⁰⁵ Foucault, Michel. (1996), p440.

Michel Foucault and the (Politically) Contested Nature of Power

Foucault is commonly recognised as having been one of the most influential theorists of power in the 20th century. His earlier works focused on the disciplinary measures that were historically taken in Western societies against perceived societal deviancies, such as criminality, madness and sexuality¹⁰⁶. Although these works contain the seeds of his later conceptions of power, he later admitted that they were quite specifically written with these particular institutional practices in mind.¹⁰⁷ Over time, however, he expanded his scope of vision to constituting a general critique of society and its overarching power structures. In an attempt to summarise this overall critique, it is therefore perhaps most useful to focus on two publications – *Power/Knowledge*, (edited by Colin Gordon and published in 1980) and *Foucault Live: Collected Interviews, 1961-1984* (edited by Sylvère Lotringer and first published posthumously in 1989) – both of which constitute seminal anthologies of selected interviews with and writings by Foucault on the subject towards the end of his life.

“Nothing is fundamental. That is what is interesting in the analysis of society. That is why nothing irritates me as much as these inquiries – which are by definition metaphysical – on the foundations of power in a society or the self-institution of a society, etc. These are not fundamental phenomena. There are only reciprocal relations, and the perpetual gaps between intentions in relation to one another.”¹⁰⁸

Even with a narrower focus on his later works, however, it is still not the easiest task to summarise Foucault’s overall contribution to the power debate, for the very reason that his views on the matter varied over relatively short periods of time (sometimes even within the course of an interview itself¹⁰⁹) – indeed, it is almost impossible to pin him down on the subject. As he himself stated, “I am not at all the sort of philosopher who conducts or wants to conduct a discourse of truth on some science or other. Wanting to lay down the law for each and every science is

¹⁰⁶ e.g. Foucault, Michel. *The Birth of the Clinic. / Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison. / The Will to Knowledge: The History of Sexuality: Volume One.*

¹⁰⁷ Foucault, Michel. (1980b), p65.

¹⁰⁸ Foucault, Michel. (1996), p341.

¹⁰⁹ Foucault, Michel. (1980b), p77.

the project of positivism.”¹¹⁰ Foucault’s idea of a theory of power was that it should instead be based on a specific and historical analysis. “The notion of theory as a toolkit means: (i) The theory to be constructed is not a system but an instrument, a logic of the specificity of power relations and the struggles around them; (ii) That this investigation can only be carried out step by step on the basis of reflection (which will necessarily be historical in some of its aspects) on given situations.”¹¹¹

Integral to Foucault’s notion of power was the importance of knowledge or truth claims about its existence. “Knowledge and power are integrated with one another, and there is no point in dreaming of a time when knowledge will cease to depend on power” he stated. “It is not possible for power to be exercised without knowledge, it is impossible for knowledge not to engender power.”¹¹² This mutual dependency between power and knowledge hinges on the idea of the construction of ‘truths’ in each society – a construction which is necessary to maintain power relations as they are. In Foucault’s own words: “[t]ruth is a thing of this world: it is produced only by multiple forms of constraint. And it induces regular effects of power. Each society has its régime of truth, its ‘general politics’ of truth [...] It’s not a matter of emancipating truth from every system of power (which would be a chimera, for truth is already power) but of detaching the power of truth from the forms of hegemony, social, economic and cultural, within which it operates at the present time. / The political question, to sum up, is not error, illusion, alienated consciousness or ideology; it is truth itself. Hence the importance of Nietzsche.”¹¹³

As shall be seen below, Foucault’s frequent references to Nietzsche have made his view of power normatively unpalatable to some, especially those who advocate liberating subjects of power from ‘false consciousness’ to discover their ‘real interests’. The idea of power defining and being defined by knowledge is however a crucial aspect of his contribution to the power debate. For it ties Foucault closely to the notion of power being a contested, family resemblance concept, which has different meanings to different people in different contexts. Indeed, one of the

¹¹⁰ Ibid, p64-5.

¹¹¹ Foucault, Michel. (1980c), p145.

¹¹² Foucault, Michel. (1980d), p52.

¹¹³ Foucault, Michel. (1980e), p119.

most important legacies of Foucaultian analysis is the prioritisation of empirical over theoretical research, which might seem to suggest that all theoretical research is thus made redundant. I would argue here however that this does not necessarily need to be the case. For, whatever his claims to the contrary, Foucault was indeed a philosopher of power, with his own notion of the concept which, it turns out, is very useful in bridging the divide between agentic and structural accounts of power.

For, in general, Foucault's was a relational concept of power – indeed, he once stated: “I scarcely use the word ‘power’, and if I use it on occasion it is simply as short-hand for the expression I generally use: ‘relations of power’.”¹¹⁴ He insisted that power is everywhere and must be analysed as something which circulates. It is never located anywhere, never in anybody's hands and is never owned, either as a commodity or as a piece of wealth. In his own words, “[p]ower is employed and exercised through a net-like organisation.”¹¹⁵ Relations of power are interwoven with other kinds of relations, and hence do not take the sole form of prohibition and punishment.¹¹⁶ He stated that he found it impossible “to say that one thing is of the order of ‘liberation’ and another of the order of ‘oppression’”. He admitted that a concentration camp perhaps constitutes an exception, as it cannot really be defined as an instrument of liberation. Neither, he consented, can torture or execution be included as they do not offer any opportunities to resistance. (To prevent having to list these examples each time I refer to them in the thesis however, I have chosen hereon to categorise them as cases of ‘total domination’, to signify that there is no possibility of resistance.) However, he held fast to the view, (which he recognised is not generally accepted), that, except in cases of total domination, there is otherwise always an opportunity to resistance, disobedience and oppositional groupings.¹¹⁷

Indeed, Foucault strongly resisted simply defining power negatively as repression. “What makes power hold good” he claimed, “what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that it doesn't only weigh on us as a force that says no, but that it traverses

¹¹⁴ Foucault, Michel. (1996), p441.

¹¹⁵ Foucault, Michel. (1980f), p98.

¹¹⁶ Foucault, Michel. (1980c), p142.

¹¹⁷ Foucault, Michel. (1996), p339.

and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse. It needs to be considered as a productive network which runs through the whole social body, much more than as a negative instance whose function is repression.”¹¹⁸

*“Let us not, therefore, ask why certain people want to dominate, what they seek, what is their overall strategy. Let us ask, instead, how things work at the level of on-going subjugation, at the level of those continuous and un-interrupted processes which subject our bodies, govern our gestures, dictate our behaviours etc. In other words, rather than ask ourselves how the sovereign appears to us in his lofty isolation, we should try to discover how it is that subjects are gradually, progressively, really and materially constituted through a multiplicity of organisms, forces, energies, materials, desires, thoughts etc. We should try to grasp subjection in its material instance as a constitution of subjects.”*¹¹⁹

The above quotation by Foucault brings to mind Digeser’s interpretation of his work, namely that power operates through the very constitution of subjects themselves. It is not clear, however, that Foucault meant this as a purely agentic conception of power. On the contrary, the above quotation highlights the fact that Foucault asked for a turn away from traditional behavioural accounts of power towards more relational accounts of the concept. Indeed, the above quotation continues to criticise what Foucault perceived as being political theory’s obsession with the power of the sovereign, as symbolised by Thomas Hobbes’ figure of Leviathan – a subject to which he also devoted a whole series of lectures, published posthumously in *Society Must Be Defended*¹²⁰. It was not that he did not see the state as an important institution of power, however, as he himself admitted. It was simply that “relations of power, and hence the analysis that must be made of them, necessarily extend beyond the limits of the State.”¹²¹ And central to Foucault’s concept of this power was the idea of the subject as socially constituted through these relations:

¹¹⁸ Foucault, Michel. (1980e), p119.

¹¹⁹ Foucault, Michel, (1980f), p97.

¹²⁰ Foucault, Michel. (2004)

¹²¹ Foucault, Michel. (1980e), p123.

“The individual is not to be conceived as a sort of elementary nucleus, a primitive atom, a multiple and inert material on which power comes to fasten or against which it happens to strike, and in so doing subdues or crushes individuals. In fact, it is already one of the prime effects of power that certain bodies, certain gestures, certain discourses, certain desires, come to be identified and constituted as individuals. The individual, that is, is not the vis-à-vis of power; it is, I believe, one of its prime effects. The individual is an effect of power, and at the same time, or precisely to the extent to which it is that effect, it is the element of its articulation. The individual which power has constituted is at the same time its vehicle.”¹²²

For all the stress he put on the relational aspects of power, however, Foucault has come under fire from some critics for being structurally deterministic. In the second edition of *PRV*, Lukes cites “widespread critical discussion and accusations” of Foucault’s idea of the constitution of the subject as “a structuralist commitment to determinism. What scope”, he asks, “does this picture leave for the agency of the subject?”¹²³ However, as Digeser has already made clear, Foucault can also be interpreted as offering an agentic definition of power (providing the means with which to study its fourth ‘face’) and so it is not possible to maintain that his is a purely structural conception of power – nowhere does he state that just because power is everywhere, that it affects everyone in the same way. Indeed, Foucault can also be interpreted as having stressed the importance of agency in maintaining power relations. And, as the next chapter will show, his work proves a useful bridge between both structure and agency.

Indeed, it is clear that Foucault’s notion of power and domination is very different from that of more traditional accounts, such as those offered by Lukes et al in the ‘faces of power’ debate (a point which Lukes also makes clear in his revised version of *PRV*¹²⁴). In Foucault’s own words: “in speaking of domination I do not have in mind that solid and global kind of domination that one person exercises over others, or one group over another, but the manifold forms of domination that can be exercised within society.”¹²⁵ This is very different from Lukes’ concept of

¹²² Foucault, Michel. (1980f), p98.

¹²³ Lukes, Steven. (2005), p95.

¹²⁴ Ibid, p88-107.

¹²⁵ Foucault, Michel. (1980f), p96.

domination which, he claims, “concerns power over another or others [...] *PRV* focuses on this and asks: how do the powerful secure the compliance of those they dominate – and, more specifically, how do they secure their *willing* compliance?” However, on the very same page as the above quotation, Lukes also states that “power as domination, is only one species of power”.¹²⁶ Thus it is clear that Lukes accepts that power is much more than just the behavioural domination of one group over others. It is merely that the ‘faces of power’ debate limits the scope of its analysis to this aspect of power.

There appears to be more to Lukes’ criticism of Foucault than simply a difference in opinion as to the definition of domination however – and, not surprisingly, it is political. “The trouble is” he states, “that, for most of his life, Foucault never ceased to clothe this idea in Nietzschean rhetoric, within which power excluded both freedom and truth. [...] According to this rhetoric, there can be no liberation from power, either within a given context or across contexts; and there is no way of judging between ways of life, since each imposes its own ‘regime of truth’.”¹²⁷ It should also be noted that, despite dedicating 8 pages of the second edition of *PRV* to Foucault, Lukes does not critically engage with how Foucault’s concept of power relates to his own other than to complain about the latter’s Nietzschean tendencies, as well as to make the claim – also made here – that Foucault’s relational concept of power very closely resembles sociology’s (and thus structurationism’s) assertion that “[i]ndividuals are socialized”.¹²⁸ Were Foucault alive today, he would probably have responded to Lukes’ rather hollow and polemic criticisms exactly as he once did in an interview: “Nietzsche is the philosopher of power, a philosopher who managed to think of power without having to confine himself within a political theory in order to do so. [...] The only valid tribute to thought such as Nietzsche’s is precisely to use it, to deform it, to make it groan and protest. And if commentators then say that I am being faithful or unfaithful to Nietzsche, that is of absolutely no interest.”¹²⁹

¹²⁶ (Emphasis in original). Lukes, Steven. (2005), p12.

¹²⁷ Ibid, p91.

¹²⁸ Ibid, p97.

¹²⁹ Foucault, Michel. (1980d), p53-4.

As already mentioned, Lukes' work shows a commitment to a 'truth' of some kind – as an ethical critique of existing power relations. It is not clear however that this is a preferable approach to studying power. For if power can only be studied from above, by people who share a certain normative standpoint, then their concepts of 'freedom' and 'truth' must also surely be brought into question. In this regard, Foucault's notion of power is in some ways more 'true' than Lukes', as it allows for any definition of the concept, according to empirical realities, rather than some higher ideal. For by denying an overall theoretical truth about power, Foucault helped to open up the debate to include cases of positive power, as well as the negative cases that have so far pre-occupied most theorists of power. Moreover, Foucault's concept of power allows B as well as A the possibility to act in any power relationship, except in cases of total domination. This added complexity avoids making pre-made theoretical assumptions that dichotomise power relationships as being between the 'oppressors' or 'victims' and the 'oppressed' or 'victimisers'. For such simplified dichotomies, although empirically certainly perfectly possible, cannot constitute the sole theoretical premise for relationships of power, as reality is often much more complicated than that.

It is not that Foucault viewed the formation of the subject or the location of power as politically neutral however. Indeed, this is where Digeser's interpretation of his work is useful, since it recognises the political agency that Foucault saw operating in relations of power. In 'The Eye of Power', for example, Foucault accounts for the historical processes that lead to the establishment of a surveillance society, in which he accounts for the agency of the bourgeoisie in much the same way as a Marxist analysis would do: "The bourgeoisie is perfectly well aware that a new constitution or legislature will not suffice to assure its hegemony; it realises that it has to invent a new technology ensuring the irrigation by effects of power of the whole social body down to its smallest particles. And it was by such means that the bourgeoisie not only made a revolution but succeeded in establishing a social hegemony which it has never relinquished."¹³⁰

¹³⁰ Foucault, Michel. (1980a), p156.

Neither Foucault's nor the 'faces of power' approach need necessarily cancel out the other however. For while power can certainly be exercised by some individuals over others – through the four 'faces' of power – it is also true that all actors are both constrained and facilitated by relationships of power from the very moment they enter into social relations, in other words, from their very conception as human beings. There is quite simply no escape from power. As Digeser so succinctly puts it:

“Within the radical and liberal conceptions of power there is always the possibility for human relationships not to be mediated by power. [...] Unlike the other conceptions, power₄ is not defined in opposition to freedom. Liberation, if understood as an act that escapes power₄ assumes that we could jump outside our social skin to some unsituated arena where power₄ had no play.”¹³¹

¹³¹ Digeser, Peter. (1992), p981.

Power as Structure – Should It Be Defaced Altogether?

While Foucault's contribution to the power debate enables an understanding of the inescapability of relations of power, of its positive as well as of its negative dimensions, as well of its links with knowledge, it does not define what these relations of power are as such. Indeed, to do so would be to go against Foucault's most fundamental belief – that to define power is to participate in its very constitution. Although there is much to be said for this approach, it does not leave those who wish to find structural relations of power with much to go on. However, as has already been discussed, Foucault need not be taken quite so literally. The main point of his argument was that relations of power – if they are to be defined at all – should be viewed specifically and historically, in a given context and at a certain point in time.

Structural accounts of power fetch their inspiration mainly from the historical materialism of Marxist and Gramscian thought. Each of these two theorists engaged in similar projects to Foucault, in that they attempted to historically account for structures of power that shaped society at the specific time of their writing. Put very generally, while Marx focused mainly on the role of capital and labour in economic production and the subsequent division of society into different classes, Gramsci centred his work on the role of hegemony in maintaining power relations as they were in Italian society at the time. Modern-day proponents of each approach often broaden their respective views on power to also include social relations of race, identity and/or gender – indeed, Marxist thought nowadays constitutes somewhat of a discipline in itself. As such, it is impossible within the constraints of a single chapter of a thesis to review all of the possible interpretations and usages of his view on power – there are quite simply too many of them.

Generally put, however, it can be said that structural power is seen as the power of society to shape and influence not only the actions but also the very wants and needs of the people within it. According to Hay, “[s]tructuralism is the explanation of political effects, outcomes and events exclusively in terms of structural or contextual factors. By such a definition, few if any pure forms of structuralism

persist. Nonetheless, the term is widely deployed to point to the marginalisation of actors and agency in social and political analysis.” Hay continues to state that, defined as such, “structuralism is little more than a term of abuse” – not many people “would claim that their own thinking was structuralist”. Nonetheless, even though many structuralists would not define themselves as such, Hay claims that “structuralism lives on in various forms of systems theory. Such approaches seek to account for regularities in observed patterns of political behaviour (for example, the behaviour of states within an international system) by appeal to the operation of systemic logics (logics operating at the level of the system as a whole). In so far as these logics are seen to operate in some sense independently of – and over the heads of – the actors themselves, recourse is being made to a structuralist mode of argument.”¹³²

All too often this approach can therefore lead to the problem of structural determinism, which reifies the structures of society (such as race or capitalism) as somehow existing outside of human agency. Although it is possible to interpret both Marx and Gramsci as resisting such structural determinism, since both of them also accounted for the processes by which people could unite to change these structures, these accounts were mainly prescriptive (revolutionary) and focused on the capacities of specific actors (e.g. the working or middle classes) to change specific power structures. Thus, while some Marxist and Gramscian theorists manage to maintain a relational view of power, all too often these analyses fall into the traps of structural determinism, that reify certain structures of power (whether these be those of capitalism, race or gender) and ignore the possibility for agency, except for certain specific and again reified groups.

It is interesting to note however that the concept of structure in historical materialism has many links with the interpretation of structure in linguistics and thus Foucault’s interpretation of power as discourse. For although they are quite distinct discourses themselves, they do overlap, most predominantly regarding the argument that our knowledge of the structures that affect us in turn affects the very shape of these structures themselves. According to Terence Hawkes, structures

¹³² Hay, Colin. (2002), p102.

cannot be perceived neutrally for “every perceiver’s *method* of perceiving can be shown to contain an inherent bias which affects what is perceived to a significant degree. A wholly objective perception of individual entities is therefore not possible: any observer is bound to *create* something of what he observes.”¹³³

Thus, although structuration theory grew out of a dissatisfaction with sociological theories of structuralism, while Foucault’s work was more a frustration with linguistic structuralism, the two critiques do in my view meet half-way, to end up discussing the same thing – namely relations of power. It seems simply to be the case of two different vocabularies or discourses pursuing a similar cause, namely that of uncovering the mutually constitutive relationships between the individual and society, most easily recorded in relationships of power. Indeed, if one deliberately reads ‘relationships’ where structurationists write ‘structures’, and ‘structures’ where Foucaultians talk about ‘relationships’, one can soon see that this is a mere linguistic division, even if the more devout followers of each school would probably contest the idea. The concept of power is central to both approaches, and both schools of thought define power as the capacity of human agents (as socially constituted rather than sovereign individuals) to re-/act in all (or most) social relations, by drawing upon a number of issues and resources (both material and non-material). Most importantly, both schools regard these structures or relationships of power as always reciprocal and that there is always the potential for resistance and change, except in extreme cases of total domination (e.g. a concentration camp).

Central to both the historical materialist and the linguistic definitions of structure, therefore, is the idea that knowledge of these structures is key to the power that they hold over us. Marxist thought often focuses on the idea of ‘false consciousness’ – that if only the less fortunate members of society were made aware of their situation, they would be able to change their predicament, which in some regards resembles Foucault’s argument that power is knowledge. There are however, as already mentioned in the discussion of Lukes above, some real problems with the idea of ‘false consciousness’, as it risks ascribing interests onto

¹³³ (Emphasis in original) Hawkes, Terence. (1977), p17.

actors regardless of their actual interests – which may never be known to anyone but themselves. Furthermore, it is not clear that simply acquiring a knowledge of structures is enough to change one's position in society, however much one might wish to. Marx and Gramsci argued here for collective agency – that by uniting the proletariat or the middle classes, social change would be possible. Although this may certainly be the case in some instances, it cannot be taken to be so in all situations, many actors in less fortunate positions in society are surely aware of their social standing and many may wish to do something about it, but they may be limited in their capacities to do anything about it due to the very structural constraints under which they are living. Indeed, this is where a structural definition of power is useful, since it highlights the limitations of social agency.

Thus, it is clear that a structural definition of power has much to offer an analysis of the concept, since it highlights the structural constraints on agency. People cannot simply do as they wish, nor can states simply invade or conquer whomever they choose, since they are not only constrained by their social standing but also by their knowledge of it. Taking this argument too far however means risking structural determinism, taking all agency away from the actors concerned. Society does not simply happen while people look on – social structures would have no meaning, indeed they would not exist at all, without human interaction.

One modern-day structural theorist of power who tries to avoid the trap of structural determinism is Clarissa Rile Hayward. For although her recent and influential work advocates 'de-facing power' from its three (or, if one includes Foucault, four) dimensional past altogether, she does allow some room for agency. Her main criticism is of the origin of the 'faces' theory. As has already been mentioned above, one of her main criticisms of the 'faces of power' debate is that it has retained Dahl's original formulation of the problem.¹³⁴ For although contemporary theorists have challenged almost every aspect of Dahl's answer, they did not question his definition of the problem itself, namely "What do we mean when we say that A has power over B?"¹³⁵ According to Hayward, all of the contributors to the debate "embraced [Dahl's] more basic premise that power

¹³⁴ Hayward, Clarissa Rile, 2000, p18.

¹³⁵ Ibid, p11.

necessarily wears some face, that it is an instrument powerful agents use or direct in order to alter the free action of the powerless.” The definitions of ‘power-with-a-face’ thus alternated solely between a notion of free action and action shaped by the action of others.¹³⁶

These arguments drew attention away from “the politically significant ways power shapes freedom for all social actors,” says Hayward. Her proposal is that we instead “de-fac[e] power by reconceptualizing it as the network of social boundaries that delimits, for all, fields of possible action.”¹³⁷ This means replacing the behaviouralists’ concept of free action with social action, as the mechanisms of power are not instruments, but boundaries that define all fields of possible action. Such boundaries can both facilitate and constrain action, and consist of, for example, laws, rules, symbols, norms, customs, social identities, and standards.¹³⁸ To simply see the powerful individual (A) as evil or bad, she continues, is to ignore A’s own boundaries, rendering them unchangeable. In reality, A’s limits are often institutionalised and codified, for example in socially constructed racial and gender identities. Nor are they always understood by or of benefit to A, she says. For focusing solely on the evil nature of A means that other non-evil A’s are made invisible, as they just do not fit the bill.¹³⁹

It is also apparent that, by her own admission, Hayward is influenced by Foucault, as she claims that power is a continuum with an end-point, namely domination. She emphasises that the other end of the continuum is not political freedom itself, but rather relations that promote participants’ political freedom.¹⁴⁰ Nonetheless, there are few power relations that realise a state of domination, she concludes, for this only occurs when the boundaries to action are widely accepted as extra-political – i.e. divinely ordained, biologically given or sociologically necessary.¹⁴¹

In summary, Hayward argues that attention should be redirected from agents to the political mechanisms that comprise relevant practices, as well as the institutions

¹³⁶ Ibid, p14-15.

¹³⁷ Ibid, p27.

¹³⁸ Ibid, p30.

¹³⁹ Ibid, p33-34.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid, p166.

¹⁴¹ Ibid, p174.

that sustain and govern these practices.¹⁴² By advocating the use of the concept of social action instead of free action, she goes some way towards defining a relational concept of power that allows for action, as long as it is socially structured and not 'rational' or 'free'. Indeed, as shall be seen in the next chapter, the concept of 'social action' is crucial to any understanding of power, as it immediately places it in its social – and thus structural – context. It is however questionable whether one should advocate defacing power altogether, since by so doing, one also altogether removes from the concept the idea of political agency and thus responsibility. Although this is not Hayward's intention, one result of her call to 'deface' power could be a return to structural determinism, where structures are somehow deemed to operate by themselves. The risk of such an analysis is that one misses one of Foucault's main points, which was that, except in cases of total domination, there is always the potential for change. Indeed, how else does this change come about if not by human action? For what is a culture without people to maintain it? What is a 'state' without people to support it? What is an economy without consumers and producers? Even in the case of total domination, where it can seem that these relations or structures are 'permanently' embedded in human consciousness and thus existence, one must still accept the prerequisite of human agency to maintain these relations. Hayward makes an important point when she states that 'dominators' do not necessarily have one face – in the case of culture or patriarchy, the dominators can equally be the dominated, in that both those who benefit from and those who are disadvantaged by relations of power can be equally as responsible in maintaining them – but by suggesting that power be 'defaced' altogether, she runs the risk of being interpreted by some as missing the fundamental notion that these power relations ultimately need the continuation of human agency to survive.

Another contemporary theorist who has attempted to define structural power is David Held, in his account of 'nautonomic structures'. 'Nautonomy', according to this theory, "refers to the asymmetrical production and distribution of life-chances which limit and erode the possibilities of political participation" – in other words, a reversed concept of autonomy, or freedom. Nautonomic structures, states Held,

¹⁴² Ibid, p38.

are shaped by the availability of a diverse range of socially patterned resources, from the material, through the coercive to the cultural – all of which can undermine or corrode the principle of autonomy. Thus, a theory of power which can disclose nautonomic structures and processes is “potentially a theory which can highlight obstacles to the empowerment of persons as equally free agents in a community”.¹⁴³ In order to disclose these nautonomic structures, Held claims that we must analyse seven ‘sites of power’:

- 1) ***The Body:** how physical and emotional wellbeing are organised*
- 2) ***Welfare:** organisation of the domain of goods and services that aids the transition of the citizen from private person to full membership of the community*
- 3) ***Site of Culture/Cultural Life:** those realms of social activity where matters of public interest and identity can be discussed, where differences of opinion can be explored and where local custom and dogma can be examined*
- 4) ***The Sphere of Civic Associations:** the array of institutions and organisations in and through which individuals or groups can pursue their own projects independently of the direct organisation of the state or of economic collectivities such as corporations or trade unions*
- 5) ***The Economy:** the collective organisation of the production, distribution, exchange and consumption of goods and services*
- 6) ***The Organisation of Violence and Coercive Relations:** concentrated physical force for/against the community*
- 7) ***The Sphere of Regulatory and Legal Institutions:** the state as an independent corporation, made up of an ensemble of organisations¹⁴⁴*

These sites of power constitute an interaction context or institutional milieu in and through which power operates to shape the capacities of people – “that is, to mould and circumscribe their life-chances, effective participation and share in public decision-making.” Each site may operate independently, or shape and delimit other sites.¹⁴⁵ Nautonomy (and thus the extent of political agency) in a site of power can be detected by three indicators: i) whether and to what extent people

¹⁴³ (Emphasis in original) Held, David. (1995), p170-172.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid, p176-185.

¹⁴⁵ (My emphasis) Ibid, p173.

have access to that site; ii) whether opportunities within the site are open or closed and iii) whether outcomes (e.g. education levels, jobs, range of cultural activities) are biased in favour of certain groups or interests.¹⁴⁶

Held's definition is one of the most elaborate theories of structural power to date, since it includes most of the structures of power that play a part in shaping people's lives and thus human agency. Indeed, it is the definition of structural power that will be used in this thesis, albeit in a somewhat modified and extended form. For although it lists many prevalent structures of power, it is the argument here that it still misses out some important ones and that there are some problems with Held's overall argument. To begin with, although Held's seven 'sites of power' certainly offer a more detailed view of the number of resources over which humanity competes, there are still in my view a few sites missing, namely: i) the site of time; ii) the site of space; iii) the site of knowledge and aesthetics; iv) the site of morality and emotion; and v) the site of identities. These shall be argued for later – suffice to say at this stage that the first two denote the importance of time and space to social change, as advocated by structurationism, while the latter three refer to the importance of cognitive power, as advocated by Foucault.

The idea that structures are 'nautonomic' also restricts Held's definition to simply encompassing negative power – however, structures can also be positively enabling, helping people to live their lives. Foucault's notion of power as being both positive and negative means that Held's seven sites of power can be interpreted as being both autonomic and nautonomic – they may enable agency in some instances and constrain it in others. It is also interesting to note that Held, although initially entitling them as 'sites of power', then interchanges between the words 'sphere' (sites 4 and 7) and 'site' (site 3). There is no apparent reason for this interchange of terminology and so – in my modification of his theory – I have opted for the word 'site' throughout, as it in my view better denotes the idea of a node of human interaction and thus agency. Moreover, Held's seems to be more a structural definition of power than a behavioural one (although he does allow for some agency by the very fact that he states that these sites 'mould and

¹⁴⁶ Ibid, p176.

circumscribe [people's] life-chances, effective participation and share in public decision-making') – it is the argument in this thesis however that an account of the sites of structural power alone is not sufficient. Behavioural power must be given equal attention and it is the aim of the next chapter to reveal how this can be done.

Conclusion

Power is a multifaceted concept that has many different ‘faces’ as well as structures, dependent on the empirical context that is under study. It is the argument here however that theories of power can most usefully be divided into three main categories: i) behaviouralist; ii) structuralist; and iii) post-modernist. The distinctions made between *potentia* (‘power to’) and *potestas* (‘power over’) in the beginning of this chapter can help to make the distinction between the first two categories, namely behavioural and structural power. Structural theorists typically focus on the resources that are deemed necessary to act in society (*potentia* / ‘power to’), while behaviouralists have typically focused on the power of one actor over another (*potestas* / ‘power over’). The interrelationship between *potentia* and *potestas*, or ‘power over’ and ‘power to’, disables both the behaviouralist and the structuralist notions of power however, since neither can adequately explain power on their own. Post-modernism – most notably the contribution of Foucault – makes clear the need to also see the processes of power production within society that connect agency with structure, as well as the need for contextually specific definitions of power. Power thus envisaged is never solely negative, nor positive, but rather a continual process of social interaction within certain social parameters.

The idea of free action for example, on which the ‘faces of power’ debate (bar perhaps the fourth ‘face’) has been so wholly dependent should rather, as Hayward advocates, be defined as *social action* that is dependent on the social constraints relevant to the actors in question. Power defined as the capacity for social action necessarily includes the agentic concepts of authority, domination, influence and manipulation (to name but a few of the commonly cited sub-categories), since all of these actions can delimit the social action of others in one way or another, but it is necessary to remember that all of these actions are also delimited by social constraints. For an actor’s ability to dominate or influence another actor (through action) depends on their relationship to this actor in the first place (ie. social positioning). Structural power, thus defined, helps to reveal the societal constraints that are placed on agency. There is however also a risk with structural definitions

of power, namely that they become structurally deterministic, leaving agency out of the equation altogether.

The next chapter will thus make the case for a relational and structured analysis of power, which combines structure with agency, as this is the only way to overcome the logical dilemma faced by Lukes et al, when trying to squeeze a structural account of power into a behavioural definition, or by purely structural accounts that do not allow for any concept of agency at all. Indeed, one of the main points of this thesis is that one *cannot equate agency and structure* as denoting the same thing – they necessarily require the existence of each other and are *interdependent*, but they are also *distinct and so must be kept ontologically separate*. The next chapter shall reveal in more detail why this must be so.

Chapter Three: Agency, Structure and Structuration – Bringing Behaviouralists, Structuralists and ‘Foucaultians’ Together

Introduction – The Ontological Status of Structure, Agency and Power: Scientific Realism and the Study of Unobservables

“[I]n structuration theory there are no ‘social facts’ sui generis. Social agents, through their praxis, make ‘social facts’, albeit they make them in circumstances they inherit from the past. Fifteen years ago this insight seemed incidental to the concerns of many social theorists.”¹⁴⁷

It is apparent then that there are three main approaches to viewing the concept of political power. Whereas behaviouralists speak of the various ‘faces’ of power, regarding it as a relationship that exists solely between agents, structuralists see it as a structural phenomenon that influences all agents alike. Post-modernists, following Foucault, resist the notion of conceptualising power at all, arguing that power is everywhere and as such cannot be conceptualised. The question remains however, which theory should be used? Is it not possible that they all have their appeal because each one has something important to say? And is it not therefore viable to try to combine these three approaches so that one can analyse the full complexities of political power? I maintain that it is possible and will argue the reasons why this is so in this and the following chapter. For even post-modernists have a concept of power, even if they might resist the fact that that is the case. As Colin Wight points out, “[e]ven contemporary postmodern sceptics wish us to take their pronouncements as ‘real’. [...W]hen faced by a sceptic who wishes to state their scepticism, we need only ask them to repeat or clarify the meaning of their initial statement. To do so they must regard their initial statement, or its content, as a socially real entity that is external to them.”¹⁴⁸ In other words, all those who state that there can be no theory of power are themselves guilty of stating a theoretical ‘truth’ about power, namely that it can never be theorised and thus understood.

The question remains how to combine these three seemingly fundamentally opposed approaches? The solution is not as complicated as it may at first appear.

¹⁴⁷ Parker, John. (2000), p287.

¹⁴⁸ Wight, Colin. (2006), p27.

Indeed, as shall be shown below, if one strips each approach down to its fundamental ontological premise, it becomes apparent that each approach is already engaged with the others. The main point of this chapter is to show that the relational aspects of power highlighted by Foucault can be further analysed using *structuration theory* – a theory that is regarded by some as being one of the most influential contributions to the question of structure and agency.¹⁴⁹ Many ‘Foucaultians’ might argue that this is to misuse Foucault’s concept of power. As already shown in the previous chapter however, Foucault argued for the existence of power as reciprocal relationships between individuals and society. As such, not only did he grant power ontological status – as a concept that can be said to exist in its own right – but his definition of it was in fact very similar to a structurationist account. Indeed, it shall be argued here that power, if it is defined as the capacity to act in society, should be granted the same ontological status as structure and agency. For power is the very glue that ties structure and agency together. Just as with structure and agency however, exactly how power does this (relates structure to agency) and how it is to be further defined is up to epistemological dispute and thus debate. For granting power the same ontological status as structure and agency still leaves open the debate regarding its various definitions. The definition of power that is offered in the next chapter of this thesis is thus necessarily an epistemological account and should not be misinterpreted as an attempt to reify the concept of power. To do so would be to ignore the importance of the post-modernist contribution to the discourse on power. Indeed, although this chapter deals mainly with structurationism – and as such, the links between the first two schools of thought (behaviouralism and structuralism) – it should be borne in mind throughout that this is also a defence of Foucault’s argument that power is forever a process. Thus, the ensuing analysis, although constrained to the terminology of structurationism, is precisely an attempt to theorise the relationships between agency (people) and structure (society) that Foucault envisaged. As shall become clear, this is not an easy task and involves many theoretical pitfalls, that often lead to a theory falling on one side of the structurationist fence or the other, either prioritising agency at the expense of structure, or vice versa. The main point in this chapter however is that the three –

¹⁴⁹ Hay, Colin. (1995), p197.

structure, agency and power – are ontologically inextricably intertwined (a point that Foucault would find it hard to deny) and that structuration theory can help to disentangle how they are linked.

Traditionally associated with the works of Anthony Giddens and Pierre Bourdieu, 'structuration' theory grew out of a dissatisfaction within the discipline of sociology with theories of structuralism. The main criticism of structuralism on which all structurationists agree is that it always manages to subsume agency into structure to such an extent that it is made irrelevant. Structuration theory is therefore a call to bring agency back into the equation and for focus to be put instead on the *processes* that link structure to agency. As shall be seen below however, structurationists are divided as to whether structure or agency is the more important – for although the theory seems to suggest a neutral stance akin to 'sitting on the fence', most structurationists tend to fall down on one side or the other of this 'fence' if pushed. Indeed, as shall become clear below, there are several points of contention between structurationists themselves, which ultimately boil down to the question of how much attention to give structure and agency respectively. These disputes will be examined in more detail later in this chapter but can be summarised as relating to the following: i) the degree of autonomy (and/or knowledgeable) granted to the actor; ii) the degree of autonomy granted to structure; iii) the distinction between structure and system; iv) the number of structuration processes involved (duality or 'tripality'); v) the role of time and space in these processes; vi) the different resources of power available to individuals; and vii) the potential for social change/power of resistance.

Before approaching these questions however, it is first necessary to deal with the overarching problem of how to study potentially unobservable mechanisms such as power, structure and agency. For, as has already been mentioned in the previous chapter, the most fundamental point of contention with any theory of power is how to define its unobservable elements, such as unconscious decisions and 'invisible' structures of power. Behaviouralists struggle over the unobservable elements of the decision-making process, while structuralists have difficulties proving that a structure of power exists. Post-modernists face a greater dilemma

still, namely how to prove that power is everywhere at once, or does not exist at all as a common denominator in social relations, if left with no tools with which to theorise it.

The question of unobservables has also troubled the structurationist debate, as the main problem with defining both structure and agency is precisely that they are often unobservable. The main task for any structurationist is therefore to prove that these unobservable processes do exist, regardless of their empirical observation. This may at first glance seem to be a hopeless task. Empirical realists, for example, tend to argue that, without empirical observation, social facts cannot be said to exist, while post-modernists/post-structuralists tend to question the possibility of any social observation at all, claiming that it is always subjective. There is however a school of thought that strongly makes the case for the study of unobservables, namely that of scientific realism. Indeed, scientific realism can be seen to offer a solution to the divide between empirical realists and post-modernists/post-structuralists, since its main claim is to open up the social sciences to allow for as many epistemological accounts of fundamental ontological phenomena (such as structure, agency and power) as possible, while still maintaining a focus on empirical research.

For although scientific realists are divided on some issues, they are generally agreed on the main claims of the approach, namely that there are certain social realities which exist independently of social scientific knowledge of them. The disagreements mainly concern defining which of these social realities are independent of such knowledge and which are conversely constructed, maintained or transformed through knowledge of them. In this section, I shall therefore offer my own argument for the independent, ontological existence of structure, agency and power, with the claim that how these are then defined will always be up to epistemological dispute.

“[A]t the heart of the [scientific realist] SR account of science” claims Wight, “is the view that the entities postulated by mature scientific theories [...] are believed

by scientists to be real.”¹⁵⁰ The approach draws on the work of Roy Bhaskar, who argued that “[s]ociety, as an object of inquiry, is necessarily ‘theoretical’, in the sense that, like a magnetic field, it is necessarily unperceivable. As such it *cannot be empirically identified independently of its effects*; so that *it can only be known, not shown, to exist*. [...S]ocial systems are not spontaneously, and cannot be experimentally, closed.”¹⁵¹ The fact that social systems are necessarily open and can never be revealed in their entirety in any form of social ‘laboratory’ does not mean that they do not exist however. On the contrary, most scientific realists argue that social realities exist independently of their observation and thus a social scientist’s knowledge of them. In a defence of scientific realism in a recent forum on the subject in *Millennium*, Jonathan Joseph writes:

*“[S]cientific realism focuses on the independently existing reality that knowledge tries to comprehend./ [P]erhaps the answer to the question of the ontological status of objects, ideas, relations and structures is to say that they are all real. Both the material and the ideational should be conceived in the context of real entities that exist independently of our conceptualisation and have real powers, liabilities and causal effects. Thus ideational things as much as material things can be said to have a real existence independent of particular conceptions and understandings we may have of them.”*¹⁵²

This reality is the stuff of ontology – the status that objects, ideas, relations and structures have regardless of epistemological or methodological debates about them. As shall be seen below, ensuing definitions of ontology, (namely which objects, ideas etc. are ontological) remains up to dispute. What most scientific realists do agree upon however is the importance of ontology to social scientific research. For, as Wight states, “the ontological question of whether [something] exists is independent of the epistemological claims.”¹⁵³ Simply put, scientific realists argue that social realities exist independently of the social scientist’s knowledge of them and although academic theory certainly can influence social practice, this does not necessarily have to be the case. As Wight points out later in the same article, “[n]o matter how deluded academics might be about their own self-importance, there are no sound philosophical arguments that suggest that if

¹⁵⁰ Wight, Colin. (2007), p382.

¹⁵¹ (My emphasis) Bhaskar, Roy. (1998), p45.

¹⁵² Joseph, Jonathan. (2007), p346 & 354.

¹⁵³ Wight, Colin. (2007), p384.

the social sciences were to disappear tomorrow then so would the social world. The fact that something is socially constructed and dependent on concepts, beliefs, language use, and so on, does not mean it is not real.”¹⁵⁴

The reality of the social does not mean that scientific realists advocate one single ‘truth’ or description of its existence however. On the contrary, its main purpose is to defend the necessary variation of epistemological and methodological approaches that this interdependence of knowledge and reality entails. Theories should therefore try to embrace all of these social realities. Indeed, this is where scientific realism can appease post-structuralist/-modernist critiques that realism necessarily involves endorsing hegemonic discourses. Instead, scientific realism means opening up the social sciences to allow for as many epistemological accounts of fundamental ontological concepts – such as structure, agency and power – as possible. Thus, a scientific realist approach is also a Foucaultian approach, as it allows for as many possible accounts of these concepts as is empirically necessary. However, scientific realism should not be interpreted as defending the position that ‘anything goes’ – a common criticism made by empirical realists. On the contrary, this would be to deny the realist claims of the approach – the whole point is that “the object the theory is attempting to grasp exists independent of the theory.”¹⁵⁵

“Fallibilism can be embraced without endorsing a debilitating epistemological nihilism. Nor do we need to know that a particular viewpoint is ‘true’, since the choice we face is very rarely, if ever, that of a single account of a given phenomenon. On the contrary, theories are refuted or accepted by virtue of their explanatory power vis-à-vis both the object they seek to explain and their ability to go beyond competing accounts.”¹⁵⁶

As Wight argues in the above citation, ‘theories are refuted or accepted by virtue of their explanatory power’. At another point he states: “[s]cientific realism is epistemologically relativist, that is, relativist about the transitive object, not ontologically relativist. And because it is knowledge of an intransitive object, some knowledge claims may be better than others. [...] In fact, there may be, and

¹⁵⁴ Ibid, p389.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid, p384.

¹⁵⁶ Wight, Colin. (2006), p45.

often are, good grounds for preferring one theory or account of some aspect of the world to another.”¹⁵⁷ “Rejecting the idea that knowledge is an all-or-nothing affair”, Wight suggests conceiving of an epistemic hierarchy, (based on an approach by Roderick Chisholm), that spans from knowledge claims which are certain, through knowledge claims which are counterbalanced, to knowledge claims which are certainly false.¹⁵⁸ In his conclusions, Wight writes “I am not suggesting that there are no epistemological or methodological standards to guide research. So I am not advocating an ‘anything goes’ approach to research practice. I am however suggesting that as a discipline we should be much more relaxed about epistemological and methodological matters and more rigorous about questions of ontology.”¹⁵⁹

Wight’s seminal and lengthy exposition on the implications of scientific realism for the study of IR – *Agents, Structures and International Relations: Politics as Ontology* – sets out some basic ontological premises which he argues theories of world politics need to take into account. Taking the concepts of agency and structure as ontologically given, Wight’s defence against “the question of how one knows anything at all” and therefore whether even structures and agents can be proven to exist is simple – “[w]ithout taking some things as given, no research would ever get off the ground. [...] Indeed, it would be hard to find a social theorist who denied that [actors and their interpretations] were the stuff of the social world, although there may well be substantial disagreement about whether or not they were exhaustive of it, and of the specific role they should play in explanations.”¹⁶⁰ As shall be discussed in the next chapter, Wight himself argues for a ‘structural relational account’ of ‘global social relations’¹⁶¹ (preferring the latter term to that of ‘international relations’), basing this argument on structurationist theories.

I shall return to Wight’s use and interpretation of structurationism later in this chapter. What matters here is the import that scientific realism has for the

¹⁵⁷ Ibid, p39-40.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid, p241.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid, p291.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid, p249-250.

¹⁶¹ Ibid, p299.

possibilities of social research. For although it focuses mainly on the philosophical questions surrounding the possibilities for a social science, scientific realism is inextricably bound up with the question of structure and agency – indeed, as shall be noted in the next section, the founder of scientific realism himself (Bhaskar) has offered his own contribution to the structurationist debate. Based on his work therefore, scientific realists argue that structure and agency both exist ontologically and that they cannot be confused with one another, nor kept separate, since they are interdependent. Furthermore, scientific realism questions the extent to which knowledge is linked to the processes that link the two. For scientific realism cuts straight into the very core of the structure/agency debate, since it deals with the question of how knowledge of the social and thus agency affects and is affected by the social itself, again linking Foucault to the concepts of structure and agency.

There are other theorists who argue that agency and structure are not ontologically given however, favouring instead an ontological view of the world that prioritises the relationships between agency and structure, rather than agency and structure themselves. Diana Coole, for example, argues instead for a phenomenological approach that prioritises the transpersonal, finding the terms structure and agency too dichotomous. Her main concern with structurationism is that, by retaining the terms structure and agency, it reifies the concepts and maintains their separateness, instead of focusing on the transpersonal relationships between the two.¹⁶² Rosanne Lynn Doty similarly argues that the ontology of agents and structures should be replaced by an ontology of practices that are radically indeterminate.¹⁶³

The problem with both of these approaches, however, is that they grant the relationships or practices that connect structure and agency ontological status, without allowing for the ontological existence of structure and agency themselves. As shall be shown in the next section however, these relationships – whether they are labelled as transpersonal, practices or otherwise – cannot exist at all without their constituent parts. And there is enough evidence to support the ontological premises that: i) structure and agency exist; and ii) agency does not constitute

¹⁶² Coole, Diana. (2005)

¹⁶³ Doty, Roxanne Lynn. (1997)

structure, nor structure agency. That they are inextricably linked is not in dispute, but the problem with Coole and Doty's respective solutions is that they reify these relationships without explaining what they are made up of. For a relationship cannot be said to exist between two things that do not in turn exist. Indeed, giving the relationship between agency and structure ontological status, whilst denying the ontological status of agency and structure themselves, seems to make no logical sense at all. Granting agency and structure ontological status however does away with this problem, as long as this status is seen as being co-dependent – i.e. acknowledging that agency cannot exist without structure and vice versa.

It is argued here that power – as the processes or relationships that bind structure to agency – is the ontological 'stuff' that ties the two together. Any definition of this power (or relationships) however, will always be epistemological – for there are no given ontological relations of power between humans that always have and always will exist for all time. Gender relations, for example, may have existed for a very long time but this does not mean that they will always continue to exist or that they have always looked the same. On the contrary, there are countless examples of varying gender relations across time and space and so granting the relations themselves, or gender as a social construct, ontological existence simply reifies the epistemological assumption that gender should matter. It is not ontologically given that it should – it is simply the case that many societies have organised social relations around the biological differences between men and women. The fact that this has been the case however does not mean that it always will be, nor that it is an ontological given. It is also perfectly conceivable to imagine a society where gender plays no role at all.

If adequately defined, the concepts of structure and agency can fully incorporate the aspects of those transpersonal relationships or practices that both Coole and Doty wish to highlight, without reifying either concept, something which neither avoid, since they instead reify the processes as somehow existing independently of structure and agency. For as Wight rightly points out with regard to Doty's proposal in particular: "[t]his position replaces the determinism of conventional structural accounts with a new 'indeterminate determinism' of poststructuralism.

Equally, Doty does not explain what she means by practices, hence it is difficult to see the methodological implications of this new ontology.”¹⁶⁴

At the root of all of these disputes – both internally between scientific realists themselves and externally with other approaches – lie differing concepts of ontology. I am fully aware, for example, that the understanding of ontology and epistemology that is offered in this thesis may not concur with that of other scientific realists. According to Wight, epistemology is concerned with “the definition of knowledge and related concepts; the sources and criteria of knowledge; the kinds of knowledge possible and the degree to which each is certain; and the exact relation between the one who knows and the object known.”¹⁶⁵ Ontology on the other hand constitutes theories “of what the world is like.”¹⁶⁶ “Politics is about the terrain of competing ontologies” he claims. “Politics is about competing visions of how the world is and how it should be.”¹⁶⁷ In this thesis however, I use Hay’s definition, namely that ontology asks the question “what exists to be known?”, while epistemology asks the question “what can we (hope to) know about it?”¹⁶⁸ I thus take epistemology to denote ‘what we know’ about ‘what actually exists’ ontologically. Politics in this thesis is therefore taken to be about the terrain of competing *epistemologies* (as knowledge-claims) about ontological facts. These ontological facts however are few and far between – for the only ontological facts that remain constant across time and space are agency and structure – namely the existence of human beings and their organisation in social relations. How they go about organising themselves however will always be up for epistemological dispute.

I do not therefore agree with Wight when he argues, for example, that the divisions within IR are ontological and not epistemological or methodological,¹⁶⁹ although he concedes that the widespread view is that they are epistemological¹⁷⁰. For while I agree with him that they are fundamentally located at the level of

¹⁶⁴ Wight, Colin. (2006), p82.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid, p231.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid, p26.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid, p2.

¹⁶⁸ Hay, Colin. (2002), p62-4.

¹⁶⁹ Wight, Colin. (2006), p2.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid, p227.

ontology – that depend on how much weight each theorist attributes to structure or agency respectively – this does not mean that they are not epistemological. On the contrary, any proposed ‘solution’ to the agency-structure dilemma will always be epistemological. For as Wight himself has pointed out, there is no ontological solution to the agency-structure dilemma¹⁷¹ – any proposed solution will always be political, weighing down more heavily on one side of the structurationist ‘fence’ or the other. Relationships between agents and structures can only ever be understood on a case-by-case, empirical level and never a theoretical one – something which Wight himself argues. Logically, however, this means that all differences of opinion on the subject will always be epistemological. For although Wight is correct when he states that “[t]he only comprehensive way to address an ontological problem is at the level of ontology”¹⁷², the problem here is that there is no way to address the agency-structure problem ontologically – it will always be a question of different epistemological approaches to a fundamentally unsolvable ontological dilemma.

Divisions within any academic discipline can therefore never be ontological – they are not based on different realities but rather on different perceptions or knowledge of those realities. That there is a relationship between epistemology and ontology goes without saying – what humans know about what exists in society has an effect on these social phenomena and vice versa. This means that what exists is always subject to epistemological influence – social realities today are not the same as social realities a couple of millennia ago for example. The basic ontological components of human society however – namely structure, agency and power – never change – “no people, no society” as Margaret Archer has put it.¹⁷³ These are the only fundamental ontological phenomena that exist in society – the ‘stuff’ that exists regardless of epistemological debate. Everything else however – namely how these structures and agents are defined and seen to be arranged – is always epistemological. This is especially the case with structures, since they are to some extent more difficult to observe than agents of power who, even if they remain hidden for considerable lengths of time, are usually exposed at

¹⁷¹ Ibid, p63.

¹⁷² Ibid, p4.

¹⁷³ Archer, Margaret Scotford (1995), p141.

some point in history. For although structures can certainly be proven to exist ontologically – both as material and non-material realities that exist regardless of a social scientist’s knowledge of them – any definition of them will always be epistemological, only ever capturing a part of that reality.

Indeed, it is the interaction between epistemology and ontology that makes the relationships between structure and agency not ontological but rather epistemological, since they are always subject to being reproduced or changed through human knowledge of their existence. For, as shall be argued in the next chapter, concepts such as the ‘state’, the ‘economy’ and ‘gender’ are not taken here to denote ontological realities but rather social constructs and, as such, necessarily epistemological. Their existence is always contextual, subject to human knowledge of them and thus also subject to being reproduced or changed according to this knowledge. This does not mean that epistemological concepts such as the ‘state’ and ‘gender’ do not exist at all as social realities however. On the contrary, these concepts denote very real structured relationships that have a very real impact on societies across time and space. They can also be empirically studied in given contexts, but this does not make them timeless ontological realities that exist across time and space. This is exactly why politics is about competing epistemologies (not ontologies), since it concerns the different narratives or knowledge-claims that are made about what actually exists.

“[T]he agent-structure problem has highlighted the way in which there is simply no theoretical substitute for empirical research. Man, [according] to Marx, makes history, but not under conditions of his own choosing, and it is the interplay of these elements that requires integration into our theories, not the a priori epistemological, or methodological, privileging of one over the other.”¹⁷⁴

Above all, scientific realism highlights the importance of empirical research over theoretical hypothesising. As Wight argues in the above quotation, ‘there is simply no theoretical substitute for empirical research’. Indeed, even those who remain sceptical about the value of scientific (and critical) realism to the study of IR

¹⁷⁴ Wight, Colin. (2006), p294.

support the importance it places on historical analysis. In the aforementioned forum in *Millennium*, Chris Brown states:

*"If critical realism is going to lead to a revival of historical materialism, then it gets my vote. [...] Though not a Marxist myself, I would like to see more of this kind of Marxism around, and insofar as critical realism provides a foundation for this work, I'm all for it. If, on the other hand, the effect of critical realism is to revitalise debates over epistemology and ontology it will do the discourse no service."*¹⁷⁵

It is the argument here however that the distinction that scientific (and critical) realism makes between epistemological and ontological debates is, contrary to Brown's view, of the utmost importance to the study of IR. Indeed, it means that the unfortunate labelling of discourses as being either Marxist or non-Marxist, for example, becomes superfluous. This is not to deny that Marxist discourses exist – as already mentioned in the previous chapter, they constitute a significant share of structuralist theory. The point here is that it is what lies at the core of each discourse that is of interest – namely the importance that each attaches to structure and agency. For it is only once the ontological premises on which each theory is built are uncovered that its epistemological claims can be revealed.

This thesis thus follows the basic scientific realist argument that agents and structures are the fundamental ontological 'stuff' of social relations and adds the concept of power as the 'stuff' which links the two. For if power is defined as the capacity to act in social relations, it is also the glue which ties structures and agents together in relationships of social action and is thus also an ontological concept in its purest form. All further elaborations on the definition of the concept, however, will always be up for epistemological dispute. Indeed, as shall be seen in the next chapter, the relevant agents and structures of power in a particular context can never be ontologically defined as set or given – they will always vary across time and space and according to both subjective interpretation and empirical context. What is offered in the next chapter of this thesis therefore is one particular epistemological interpretation of the relevant structures and agents of contemporary world power – there will, of course, be many other possible

¹⁷⁵ Brown, Chris. (2007), p416.

accounts. Those theories that will be deemed to best account for current relationships of world power will therefore be those on which most theorists can agree. No ontological claims of 'absolute truth' can be made on the matter – other than the claim that is made here that it is power which binds structures and agents together, albeit in many different ways, in many different contexts. For, as the next section shall show, structure, agency and power are ontologically inextricably intertwined and structuration theory can help to reveal why this must be so.

Traditional Structuration Theory – Giddens (the Behaviouralist Structurationist) and Bourdieu (the Structural Structurationist)

“So to the extent that sociology’s raison d’être has always been the explanation of a certain sort of structure, structuration is nothing other than its central problem. Since sociology’s task is to account for the reproduction and transformation of phenomena, which being social are necessarily relational and therefore structured, then the sociological imagination must have the concept of structuration at its core.”¹⁷⁶

As already noted, although Bhaskar is rarely mentioned in mainstream structurationist literature, the founder of scientific realism himself has offered his own theory of structuration – namely *the transformational model of social activity* – which he bases on the works of Aristotle and Marx. The model’s “central features are the definition of human intentional agency as criterial for the social, as distinct from the purely natural sphere; and the characterisation of the onto-logical structure of human activity or praxis as essentially transformative or poietic, as consisting in the transformation of pre-given material (natural and social) causes by efficient (intentional) human agency.” Social causes “exist and persist only in virtue of human agency” he writes – “society is itself a social product. [...It] is at once the ever-present *condition* and the continually reproduced *outcome* of agency: this is the duality of structure.” Important to note is Bhaskar’s insistence that, although society and agents are “existentially interdependent”, they are also “essentially distinct”. Structure and agency are thus ontologically distinct – “they cannot be reduced to or reconstructed from one another.”¹⁷⁷ As already noted however, Bhaskar’s main concern was on the relationships between social activity and knowledge. For a more detailed account of how structure and agency are related, one must turn to traditional structuration theory.

Until the 1960s, the structuralist view of society made barely any reference at all to agency, focusing instead on structures. Typically, Marxist theories of revolution sought to understand the mechanisms of the capitalist system; humanist Marxism focused on the power of ideology; while French structuralism concentrated on the

¹⁷⁶ Parker, John. (2000), p14-15.

¹⁷⁷ (Emphasis in original) Bhaskar, Roy. (1986), p122-4.

meaning-producing mechanisms of culture¹⁷⁸ – and no matter how detailed their work on structures, they all seemed to forget about agency. Even Talcott Parsons, who (alongside Jean Piaget) is accredited with having been one of the most influential structural theorists of the time,¹⁷⁹ has been criticised for reducing the autonomy of actors “to the point where they merely provide the energy required to satisfy the expectations of social roles”.¹⁸⁰ (Similarly, his contribution to the debate on power, although giving a useful account of some of the structural properties of power, was also just that – a purely structural account.¹⁸¹) Indeed, structuralism tended to give structures a natural, reified existence completely out of the control of human agency. On the other side of the methodological divide, non-structuralists (behaviouralists) focused solely on agency, either suggesting that people could take the reins and produce new and better structures for themselves,¹⁸² or, in most cases, ignoring structuralism altogether.

In 1964 however, David Lockwood’s accounts of ‘social’ and ‘system integration’ – which focused on the “orderly or conflictual relationships” between the actors *or* the parts of a social system respectively¹⁸³ – provided the inspiration needed for a change in the methodology of sociology. *Structures* (as rule-resource sets¹⁸⁴) are marked by an absence of the subject, out of time and space, while *systems* (as the patterning of social relations¹⁸⁵) are the situated activities of human agents, reproduced across time and space. It should be noted that Lockwood was not actually advocating ‘structuration’ in any way, using instead Alvin Gouldner’s notion of the “functional autonomy” of parts of a social system,¹⁸⁶ to keep structure and agency still separate.¹⁸⁷ Nonetheless, the theoretical path had been cleared for the analysis of the relationships between these parts of the social system, and Giddens stepped forward with a proposal on how to do just that.

¹⁷⁸ Parker, John. (2000), p10.

¹⁷⁹ Haugaard, Mark. (2002), p67.

¹⁸⁰ Parker, John. (2000), p17.

¹⁸¹ Parsons, Talcott. (1963)

¹⁸² Parker, John. (2000), p10.

¹⁸³ (My emphasis) Lockwood, David. (1964), p245.

¹⁸⁴ Giddens, Anthony. (1984), p377.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹⁸⁶ Gouldner, Alvin. (1959)

¹⁸⁷ Lockwood, David. (1964), p249.

*"[I]n social theory, the notions of action and structure presuppose one another; but that recognition of this dependence, which is a dialectical relation, necessitates a reworking both of a series of concepts linked to each of these terms, and of the terms themselves."*¹⁸⁸

Giddens' self-entitled 'structuration theory' is widely regarded as being one of the most influential contributions to the question of structure and agency.¹⁸⁹ Although, as shall be shown below, he is certainly not the only theorist to have since written on the subject, it was he who first introduced the social sciences to the term, in a discussion on the processes of class formation in 1973.¹⁹⁰ It is difficult within the confines of a section of a single chapter to summarise Giddens' extensive writing on the theory of structuration, since it encompassed several publications on the subject. *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration*, published in 1984, was the end-result of several publications by Giddens on the matter and is that which most adequately summarises the arguments made in his other writings on the subject. It was here that he presented his own 'reworkings' of key concepts (just as he had advocated doing five years previously in his book *Central Problems in Social Theory: action, structure and contradiction* – see above quotation) including, most importantly, refined definitions of structure and agency that he claimed preserved their interdependency. What is cited below therefore is mostly taken from *The Constitution of Society...*, since it was here that he summarised most of his main arguments, as well as provided a useful glossary at the end of the publication defining the main concepts of the theory.

*"Recognition of the nature and significance of structural constraint does not mean succumbing to the attractions of structural sociology, but neither, as I try to make clear, do I accept a viewpoint close to methodological individualism."*¹⁹¹

The above quotation summarises Giddens' overall view of the split between structuralists and behaviouralists. His 'structuration theory' attempted to bridge this gap, using a concept of structure that differed from its usual usage in the social sciences.¹⁹² There is no dualism between agents and structures, Giddens

¹⁸⁸ (Emphasis in original) Giddens, Anthony. (1979), p53.

¹⁸⁹ Hay, Colin. (1995), p197.

¹⁹⁰ Giddens, Anthony. (1973)

¹⁹¹ Giddens, Anthony. (1984), pxxvii.

¹⁹² Ibid.

claimed, only duality. “The constitution of agents and structures are not two independently given sets of phenomena, a dualism, but represent a duality”, he wrote. “According to the notion of the duality of structure, the structural properties of social systems are both medium and outcome of the practices they recursively organize.”¹⁹³ Thus, structure and agency are – in Colin Hay’s interpretation of Giddens – “two sides of the same coin”.¹⁹⁴

Building on Lockwood’s distinction, Giddens defined structures, systems and structuration as follows:

“Structure: Rules and resources, recursively implicated in the reproduction of social systems. Structure exists only as memory traces, the organic basis of human knowledgeability, and as instantiated in action.

Structures: Rule-resource sets, implicated in the institutional articulation of social systems. To study structures, including structural principles, is to study major aspects of the transformation/mediation relations which influence social and system integration.

System: The patterning of social relations across time-space, understood as reproduced practices. Social systems should be regarded as widely variable in terms of the degree of ‘systemness’ they display and rarely have the sort of internal unity which may be found in physical and biological systems.

Structuration: The structuring of social relations across time and space, in virtue of the duality of structure.”¹⁹⁵

Structuration, according to Giddens, therefore consists of the conditions governing the continuity or transmutation of structures and thus the reproduction of social systems. These systems are ‘intersocietal’ and are distributed along ‘time-space edges’ (boundaries) between societies. That is to say, each society is constituted

¹⁹³ Ibid, p25.

¹⁹⁴ Hay, Colin. (1995), p197.

¹⁹⁵ Giddens, Anthony. (1984), p376-7.

by the intersection of multiple social systems, across time and space.¹⁹⁶ ‘Time-space distancing’, therefore, is “the stretching of social systems across time-space, on the basis of mechanisms of social and system integration.”¹⁹⁷

“In general (although certainly not universally) it is true that the greater the time-space distancing of social systems – the more their institutions bite into time and space – the more resistant they are to manipulation or change by any individual agent [...] Time-space distancing closes off some possibilities of human experience at the same time as it opens up others.”¹⁹⁸

Social change, in Giddens’ view, is therefore inextricably tied up with the concept of time-space distancing. He argued against the predominance of theories of evolutionary change, advocating instead that social change is dependent on structuration processes. These processes are further characterised by the concepts of ‘episodic characterisation’ and ‘world time’ (the latter of which he took from Wolfram Eberhard¹⁹⁹). “All social life is episodic” he stated – an episode consisting of “a number of acts or events that have a specifiable beginning and end, thus involving a particular sequence”²⁰⁰. World time consists therefore of “conjunctures of history that influence the nature of episodes” as well as “the effects of the understanding of historical precedents upon episodic characterisations”²⁰¹.

Giddens used the notion of episodes to make a problematic distinction between three ‘major’ types of society that he claimed can be distinguished in human history: tribal cultures; class-divided societies; and modern nation-states associated with the rise of industrial capitalism²⁰² - problematic since it not only universalises the ‘Western’ experience, but also because it does after all seem to reflect a notion of evolutionary change, something he had intended to avoid. He also identified four interrelated institutional bases of social order and social change: i) symbolic orders/modes of discourse; ii) political institutions; iii)

¹⁹⁶ Ibid, p164.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid, p377.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid, p171.

¹⁹⁹ Eberhard, Wolfram. (1965)

²⁰⁰ Giddens, Anthony. (1984), p244.

²⁰¹ Ibid, p377.

²⁰² Ibid, pxxvii.

economic institutions; and iv) legal institutions.²⁰³ As shall be seen below, Giddens was not alone in dividing the social world into four categories. There is no apparent reason why theorists of structuration settle for a taxonomy consisting of only four components, but as shall be argued below, such four-faceted taxonomies tend to be very rudimentary and generalised, missing out on many other types of social order that are relevant to the analysis of political power.

*“Power cannot be tacked on, as it were, after the more basic concepts of social science have been formulated. There is no more elemental concept than that of power. However, this does not mean that the concept of power is more essential than any other, as is supposed in those versions of social science which have come under a Nietzschean influence. Power is one of several primary concepts of social science, all clustered around the relations of action and structure.”*²⁰⁴

Giddens was very aware of the importance of power to social order. As the above quotation makes clear, Giddens regarded power as one of several primary social concepts clustered around the relations of structure and agency. He criticised prevalent conceptions of power for “faithfully” reflecting the structure/agency dualism of the social sciences in general – defining power either exclusively in terms of will and intent, or as a property of society or the social community. “The point is not to eliminate one of these types of conception at the expense of the other, but to express their relation as a feature of the duality of structure” he stated. He attempted to do this himself by stating that resources – as structured properties of social systems – are “drawn upon and reproduced by knowledgeable agents in the course of interaction.” *Power* thus constitutes *all forms of action*, and is not a resource in itself. Instead, *resources* are “*media through which power is exercised*”²⁰⁵ and are either ‘allocative’ or ‘authoritative’.

According to Giddens, *allocative resources* constitute i) material features of the environment, ii) the means of material production/reproduction and iii) produced goods; while *authoritative resources* refer to i) the organisation of social time-space, ii) production/reproduction of the body and iii) the organisation of life chances. None of these resources are fixed – “they form the media of the

²⁰³ Ibid, p33.

²⁰⁴ Ibid, p283.

²⁰⁵ (My emphasis) Ibid, p15-16.

expandable character of power in different types of society.”²⁰⁶ Put more simply, allocative resources refer to material objects, such as raw material or land, while authoritative resources refer to non-material resources, such as status or hierarchical positions.²⁰⁷ And they can be drawn upon either by those who are superior or (occasionally) by those who are subordinate. This duality of agency he entitled the “dialectic of control in social systems”²⁰⁸ – and allows for the notion of the power of resistance, as advocated by Foucault.

Importantly, Giddens stated that structural constraints do not operate independently of the motives and reasons that agents have for what they do. “They cannot be compared with the effect of, say, an earthquake which destroys a town and its inhabitants without their in any way being able to do anything about it.”²⁰⁹ And yet the social sciences have often treated agents as much less knowledgeable than they really are, Giddens complained.²¹⁰ If agents lose the capacity to influence, then they cease to be agents. “[A]ction depends upon the capability of the individual to ‘make a difference’ to a pre-existing state of affairs, or course of events.” In other words, social constraint need not be equated with the dissolution of action as such. “To ‘have no choice’ does not mean that action has been replaced by reaction,” he stated.²¹¹ A view which he neatly sums up in an interview with Christopher Pierson:

“agency [is] essentially the capability to have done otherwise, the whole of social life rests upon it. Even someone who is threatened by a bullet from a gun remains an agent in a philosophical sense. Many social scientists have failed to acknowledge what is obvious to any lay person – that we are conscious, intentional beings”²¹²

Indeed, ‘in a philosophical sense’, Giddens is by no means alone in attributing the notion of choice to agency, for it is a concept that has been much debated within philosophy itself. Alan Gewirth, for example, claims that *all action* has “a ‘normative structure’, in that evaluative and deontic judgments on the part of

²⁰⁶ Ibid, p258.

²⁰⁷ Wight, Colin. (2006), p142.

²⁰⁸ Giddens, Anthony. (1984), p16.

²⁰⁹ Ibid, p181.

²¹⁰ Ibid, pxxx.

²¹¹ Ibid, p15.

²¹² Giddens, Anthony – Pierson, Christopher. (1998), p78.

agents are logically implicit in all action [...] Any agent, simply by virtue of being an agent, must admit, on pain of self-contradiction, that he ought to act in certain determinate ways.”²¹³ What agency actually is however, and who constitutes an agent or actor (for not all theorists agree with Giddens that the two terms should be treated synonymously²¹⁴, although they will continue to be used as such in this thesis, for the simple reason that there is no apparent reason to prefer one above the other) remains heavily disputed among structurationists, as shall be seen in the next section of this chapter.

“Human social activities [...] are not brought into being by social actors but continually recreated by them via the very means whereby they express themselves as actors. [...] To be a human being is to be a purposive agent, who both has reasons for his or her activities and is able, if asked, to elaborate discursively upon those reasons (including lying about them). But terms such as ‘purpose’ or ‘intention’, ‘reason’, ‘motive’ and so on have to be treated with caution [...] because they extricate human action from the contextuality of time-space. Human action occurs as a durée, a continuous flow of conduct, as does cognition.”²¹⁵

This quotation most neatly sums up what form of actor it was that Giddens wished to put back into structure. It is a knowledgeable agent, who motivates, rationalises and reflects over its actions. He conceded that motivation can also be unconscious, but advocated that the social sciences guard against a reductive theory of consciousness “which, wanting to show how much of social life is governed by dark currents outside the scope of actors’ awareness, cannot adequately grasp the level of control which agents are characteristically able to sustain reflexivity over their conduct.” Giddens spoke of the ‘rationalization of action’, where actors “routinely and for the most part without fuss [...] maintain a continuing ‘theoretical understanding’ of the grounds of their activity.”²¹⁶ “What agents know about what they do, and why they do it – their knowledgeability *as* agents – is largely carried in practical consciousness. Practical consciousness consists of all the things which actors know tacitly about how to ‘go on’ in the contexts of social life without being able to give them direct discursive expression.”²¹⁷ Not

²¹³ Gewirth, Alan. (1978), p26.

²¹⁴ Giddens, Anthony. (1984), pxxii. / Wight, Colin. (2006), p189-190.

²¹⁵ (Emphasis in original) Giddens, Anthony. (1984), p2-3.

²¹⁶ Ibid, p5.

²¹⁷ (Emphasis in original) Ibid, pxxiii.

surprisingly perhaps, it is regarding this knowledgeable ability of the actor – indeed regarding his concept of agency in general – that Giddens has deservedly received the most severe criticism, as shall be seen in the next section of this chapter. Indeed, I have chosen to call him the ‘behaviouralist structurationist’, as his account of structurationism tends to fall on the agency side of the structure/agency fence.

The theory of structuration subsequently spread rapidly through the social sciences,²¹⁸ albeit restricted mainly to methodological discussions. (The few attempts that have been made to use it in the study of international power structures are listed in the next chapter.) Giddens himself, however, intended it to be put to practical use, believing that “[s]ocial theory has the task of providing conceptions of the nature of human social activity and of the human agent which can be placed in the service of empirical work.”²¹⁹ Criticising theorists such as Parsons for granting the social sciences the same logical framework as natural science,²²⁰ Giddens instead demanded that social scientists “be alive to philosophical problems”. This did not mean that they should turn to speculative research, as opposed to empirical – on the contrary, empirical research could, and already had disproved some of the more fundamental philosophical assumptions of social science theory.²²¹ And, of course, this was most apparent regarding the concepts of agency and structure.

Before accounting for many of the problems that critics have found with Giddens’ ‘structuration theory’ as it stands, it is also worth noting the work of a theorist I have chosen to call the ‘structuralist structurationist’. Bourdieu, like Giddens, was namely also interested in the processes that link structure and agency. Although he preferred to describe his work as ‘genetic structuralism’ rather than ‘structuration theory’,²²² he is widely accepted as having dealt with the same fundamental problems of social theory as Giddens. In Parker’s words: “Despite his hostility to Giddens’ mode of producing theory (which he dubs ‘theoretical theory’ or

²¹⁸ Parker, John. (2000), p3.

²¹⁹ Giddens, Anthony. (1984), pxvii.

²²⁰ Ibid, pxiv.

²²¹ Ibid, pxxvii-xviii.

²²² Bourdieu, Pierre. (1990), p14.

‘scholastic’), he cannot easily avoid being associated with Giddens’ ideas.”²²³ I will deal much more briefly with Bourdieu than Giddens however, since his terminology does not easily lend itself to a discussion of structure and agency per se and may therefore end up just confusing matters. However it should be noted that, although the analysis in the rest of this thesis will deal mainly with the terminology provided by Giddens, it is assumed here that both Giddens and Bourdieu were arguing more or less the same case, albeit with different terminology. Moreover, while Giddens’ theory of structuration can be criticised for giving too much weight to agency, Bourdieu’s theory of the ‘habitus’ can likewise be criticised for giving too much weight to structure, thus revealing how easy it is for a structurationist to fall down on one side of the fence or the other.

Bourdieu’s alternative to structurationism, ‘genetic structuralism’, focused on the concept of ‘experience’ and its relevance to knowledge. He was mostly interested in the knowledge that underpins the formulation of rules and, more specifically, what comes before that knowledge – namely practice. In his own words: “the theory of practice puts objectivist knowledge back on its feet by posing the question of the (theoretical and also social) conditions which make such knowledge possible.”²²⁴ Indeed, Bourdieu’s wide-ranging empirical studies all showed that the individual and the social are not mutually exclusive categories – humans do not simply interpret their experience of the world, but rather actively produce it. Individuals must therefore be seen as collective beings, meaning that social theory must focus on the patterning of individuals and their consequent actions.²²⁵

Fundamental to Bourdieu’s concept of agency was the mediaeval concept of ‘*habitus*’ – an interpretation of the Aristotelian term ‘*hexis*’.²²⁶ Bourdieu defined the *habitus* as:

“ *precisely this imminent law, lex insita, laid down in each agent by his earliest upbringing, which is the precondition not only for the co-ordination of practices but also for practices of co-*

²²³ Parker, John. (2000), p39.

²²⁴ Bourdieu, Pierre. (1977), p164.

²²⁵ Parker, John. (2000), p41.

²²⁶ Bourdieu, Pierre. (1985), p12-13.

ordination, since the corrections and adjustments the agents themselves consciously carry out presuppose their mastery of a common code and since undertakings of collective mobilization cannot succeed without a minimum of concordance between the habitus of the mobilizing agents (e.g. prophet, party leader, etc.) and the dispositions of those whose aspirations and world-view they express."²²⁷

Habitus is thus the practice of individuals who, having been formed into typical examples of their group or class – in other words, having been given a social role or identity – can *reproduce these structures without giving it a second thought*. To describe this more simply, in Parker's words: "Ours is not merely embodied being, but doing. [...] It is the creative use of a history in the practice of agents which keeps it 'alive' and moving on into the future." It is this habitus, or knowledge, that makes agents reproduce historical structures. For even if agents can afford the luxury of reflective and rational thought on their practice, they vary in their capacities to exercise power – thus it is that structures are maintained that tend to favour certain groups and classes.²²⁸

*"The structures constitutive of a particular type of environment (e.g. the material conditions of existence characteristic of a class condition) produce habitus, systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures, that is, as principles of the generation and structuring of practices and representations which can be objectively 'regulated' and 'regular' without in any way being the product of obedience to rules, objectively adapted to their goals without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary to attain them and, being all this, collectively orchestrated without being the product of the orchestrating action of a conductor."*²²⁹

Bourdieu's notion of structuration then (if he had conceded to the term) is therefore one of structure conferring agency onto actors by distributing power to them. He distinguished between four types of power, or 'capital', namely: i) economic; ii) political; iii) social; and iv) cultural (symbolic). This taxonomy bears a strikingly close resemblance to Giddens' aforementioned four-faceted account of social order, the only difference being that here 'social' power replaces Giddens' 'legal'. Thus it is clear that, for Bourdieu also, a study of society inevitably means a study of power, and vice versa. It was however his view that

²²⁷ (Emphasis in original) Bourdieu, Pierre. (1977), p81.

²²⁸ Parker, John. (2000), p40-46.

²²⁹ (Emphasis in original) Bourdieu, Pierre (1977), p72.

the historical struggle for dominance in these fields is not between individuals but rather between collective agents.²³⁰

There is however a very serious problem with Bourdieu's account of structuration, in that, like Coole and Doty, the concept of 'habitus' seems to be granted ontological autonomy – as something that exists freely of structure and agency. This is a grave problem since, as Anthony King states, “the habitus formally rules out any external intervention which has always been a key motor for social transformation [... and so] [i]n order to circumvent the formal immutability of the habitus, Bourdieu has to construct a theory of social change for the habitus”.²³¹ Quite simply put, the habitus is granted an existence of its own, instead of denoting the interrelated processes that connect structure to agency. This attempt to theorise about the habitus reaches almost ridiculous levels of abstraction at times, exemplified when Bourdieu states: “the habitus, which at every moment structures in terms of the structuring experiences which produced it the structuring experiences which affect its structure, brings about a unique integration, dominated by the earliest experiences, of the experiences statistically common to the members of the same class.”²³² In this quote it is the habitus – as a process – that is doing the structuring, not the structures or agents. By granting the habitus ontological status – as a 'thing' which structures structures and agents – Bourdieu loses most of the analytical usefulness of the concept. Processes or relationships can never be ontologically given but are rather always in a state of flux, changing according to the relevant structures and agents that affect them, according to the given context at a particular time and space.

Nor should the habitus be seen as constituting the only possible structuration process. For while Bourdieu's concept of the habitus is a very enlightening account of one of the many structuration processes that exist in the social world – namely that of the structural conditioning of individuals to act without giving it a 'second thought' – it is simply that, an account of one of many processes. As mentioned above, crucial to his argument for the habitus was the role of power in

²³⁰ Parker, John. (2000), p48.

²³¹ King, Anthony. (2000), p427.

²³² Bourdieu, Pierre. (1977), p86-7.

affecting people's abilities to transform structures – only those in certain positions can do so. While this may very well be the case some, or even most, of the time, it centres on a negative definition of power that ignores the many ways that the 'subordinate' also affect relationships of power and thus structures. Although Bourdieu described the habitus as a two-way process, he seems to have focused mainly on the question of how structures are *reproduced* through agency, not on how they might be *transformed*. As it stands therefore, the habitus seems to denote a one-way process rather than a dualistic one, as it seems to focus mostly on the effects of structure on agency, without leaving any room for agency to have very much effect on structure, other than to reproduce it.

There are numerous problems with this approach. To begin with, individuals frequently do reconsider their 'second natures' and upbringings to break free from social conditioning. Even when they do not, their actions are never pure repetitions of what came before, but will always affect the relevant structures in different ways over time and space. For although it is plausibly the case that no single individual ever manages to fully escape their social conditioning – in that one's upbringing will always, at least partly, condition one's actions – this conditioning cannot be made to be the only reason for human action. This not only denounces the possibilities of social change *en masse*, but it also gives each individual pre-determined attributes that he/she cannot then escape. A child may very well "imitate[...] other people's actions", as Bourdieu put it, but social actors – individuals as well as collective – are not 'children' all their lives. Indeed, for all their social conditioning, they can and frequently do act in ways not in line with their institutional 'make-up' or upbringing. Thus Bourdieu can be said to be the 'structuralist structurationist', since his is a definition that prioritises structure over agency.

It is thus the argument here that Giddens' theory of structuration is much better equipped to deal with the many processes of interaction between structure and agency, not only because it does not grant these processes ontological status in their own right but also because it allows for a multifaceted account of the many processes involved, instead of focusing solely on the effects of structure on agency. There are however many shortcomings with Giddens' account of

structuration as it stands. It is to these criticisms that this chapter will now turn, in order to find a definition of structuration that allows both structure and agency equal weight.

A Critique of Traditional Structuration Theory

*“All sociologists are interested in accounting for social structures and almost all accept the interdependence of structure and agency. But it is wrong to say that because this is so ‘we are all “structurationists” now’ because not everyone accepts Giddens’s way of relating the two. The debate is no longer about whether structure and agency are related, but about the nature of that relation [...]”*²³³

Although structuration theory helps to understand the links between structure and agency, there are, as already mentioned, quite a few problems with it as it stands. For, despite its strengths, structuration theory is, after all, nothing more than that, a theory – a way of looking at agency and structure – and even those who agree with Giddens’ premise that there is an ontological duality between the two, dispute some of the assumptions he has made about the nature of this relationship. It is impossible within the confines of this thesis to deal with all of the critique that has been written on Giddens’ work however, since it constitutes a vast amount of writing over the past 20-30 years. Nonetheless, that so much attention has been paid to the theory does reveal the significance of his contribution to the social sciences – indeed many critics have endorsed its main aims, offering instead alternative ways of viewing one or other aspect of the theory. As Ira J. Cohen points out, Giddens gave no indication that the concepts he set out in the theory of structuration are complete as they stand. There is still much to be said about many issues in the theory, while yet more remain to be addressed at all.²³⁴ This, in Cohen’s view, can be seen as “a sign of the fertility of structuration theory”, stating that “the most significant contributions to social theory always leave as many unsettled issues as those which they explicitly confront”.²³⁵

What follows below is therefore necessarily a summary of the main points of contention with the theory, namely: i) the degree of autonomy (and/or knowledgeability) granted to the actor; ii) the degree of autonomy granted to structure; iii) the distinction between structure and system; iv) the number of structuration processes involved (duality or ‘tripality’); v) the role of time and

²³³ (Emphasis in original) Parker, John. (2000), p9-10.

²³⁴ Cohen, Ira J. (1989), p279.

²³⁵ Ibid, p287.

space in these processes; vi) the different resources of power available to individuals; and vii) the potential for social change/power of resistance. Each of these points will be dealt with in the critique that follows and each will also be confronted, in order to operationalise a theory of structuration that can be put to use in the analysis of world power.

i) the degree of autonomy (and/or knowledgeability) granted to the actor; vii) the potential for social change/power of resistance.

The degree of autonomy (and/or knowledgeability) granted to the actor in any structurationist account directly affects the potential that the theorist allows for social change and for the power of resistance – hence the decision here to include both of these problems under one sub-heading. One of the main concerns with Giddens’ account of structuration is that, by making transformative capacity a logical property of *all* agents (that is thus not determined by social positioning), agency is given indeterminate scope. This does not fit in with stark realities where resources are scarce – in such cases, agency is not logical, but rather dependent on the distributional position of the actor in question.²³⁶ For although Giddens does recognise the existence of both allocative and authoritative resources – thus implying a notion of distributional variation – this does not then fit in with his logic of agency.

What is under question here therefore is Giddens’ overemphasis of the transformative capacity of agents. For if Bourdieu can be criticised for being too structural by attributing too little importance to agency – if the habitus is taken simply to mean the tendency to *reproduce* social structures – then Giddens can be criticised being too behavioural by attributing too much importance to the ability of agents to *transform* social structures. This is a rather Foucaultian tendency – indeed, by claiming that every participant in a power relationship has the capacity to transform or resist that relationship, Foucault too can be criticised for failing to see the stark realities of structural power. Not all actors are capable of transforming all of the structures of which they are a part. Indeed, this is one of the

²³⁶ Parker, John. (2000), p62.

key questions where structurationists tend to fall on one side of the fence or the other. Ideally however, a structurationist account of the relationships that exist between structure and agency should be able to take into account both the behavioural and the structural aspects of these relationships – namely the structural potential of agency to reproduce, as well as the behavioural potential of agency to transform structures, both of which are dependent on structural positioning.

Already in 1987, J.M. Barbalet complained that Giddens tends “to conceptualize social structure as a secondary aspect of agency”²³⁷ – “he ties the enablement of power through structural resources too tightly to the reproduction of social structure through action or agency.”²³⁸ Indeed, the central problem here is Giddens’ definition of power itself. According to Parker, “he shifts from theorizing power as a general transformative capacity of agents (who are never power-less) to seeing it as a variable of social relations of domination and distributional hierarchies. [...R]ecognizing that power is *differentially distributed*, and is of *various kinds* (military, economic, ideological etc.), entails attributing relatively autonomous causality to properties of social systems.” This, says Parker, “contradict[s] the mere randomness implied by ‘structuration’ theory’s methodological argument that social system change is no more than the contingent and unintended outcome of agency”.²³⁹ I shall deal with the issue of Giddens’ restricted concept of the different kinds of power in part vi) of this section, where I shall introduce the much extended (epistemological) taxonomy of the resources of power that shall be used in this thesis.

Other critics of Giddens’ structuration theory, such as N. Mouzelis, have been much more sympathetic to its ideas, arguing instead that Giddens does not attach enough importance to the capacities of agency to transform structures. Mouzelis developed his own alternative, by rescuing what he considers to be its more positive elements.²⁴⁰ He accepted Giddens’ notion that agents can act knowledgeably and routinely, in a taken-for granted fashion, and that structure can

²³⁷ Barbalet, J.M. (1987), p12.

²³⁸ Ibid, p9.

²³⁹ Parker, John. (2000), p63.

²⁴⁰ Ibid, p86.

indeed be the outcome of agency, but he insisted that agents can also (dualistically) distance themselves from the rules. Humans are equally (and sometimes collectively) critics as well as followers of routines. He thus differentiated between '*paradigmatic*' dimensions of structure (that he found in Giddens) – which refer to rules and resources in system integration – and '*syntagmatic*' dimensions of structure – relating to games that actors play in social integration.²⁴¹ Central to his theory is the concept of the 'hierarchization' of actors in macro, meso and micro levels, which determine the degrees of agency and constraint on these actors.²⁴² In Parker's words: "[Mouzelis] wants to enable [Giddens'] 'structuration' theory to recognize the variability of social constraint and powers of agency, characteristic of positions in hierarchies".²⁴³ And, most importantly, Mouzelis wished to retain notions of both dualism *and* duality – although, in Parker's view, he rather overcomplicated the matter, since he talks of 'dualism' and 'duality' in both the paradigmatic and syntagmatic dimensions. Instead, says Parker, "If there is to be a place for duality, it is only at the paradigmatic level which Giddens originally proposed."²⁴⁴

Now while I agree with Mouzelis that it is important to open up the concept of agency to the potential for resistance to rules, his seems to be a very confused way of going about it. For the power to resist dominant social structures is not so much a question of hierarchical social placement as a matter of social organisation. If individuals at any level of society organise themselves to resist a prevailing power structure there is always the *potential* for social change – a potential that cannot therefore be ignored in an account of social change. I also disagree with Parker's further complication of the matter when he states that the duality of structure and agency can only be found on Mouzelis' 'paradigmatic' level. Both 'levels', whether relating to structure or agency, ultimately boil down to agent/structure duality. Indeed, the two cannot be held separate, since they are both interrelated. For while structure can both be changed by and change the nature of human agency, so too can agency change and be changed by prevalent structures. And, as shall be explained in the next section, the debate is further confused by dividing

²⁴¹ Ibid, p94-95.

²⁴² Ibid, p91-92.

²⁴³ Ibid, p95.

²⁴⁴ Ibid, p95-98.

structures into the sub-categories of structure and system integration, since this implies that structure is something other than the result of human interaction.

The problem is not only with the level of autonomy Giddens grants each agent however but also with the level of knowledgeability he gives them. Wight argues that “in construing structure as ‘rules and resources’ Giddens ends up with precisely the voluntaristic account of social inquiry he was so keen to reject. [He...] seems guilty of reducing the totality of social being to phenomenological/psychological phenomena.”²⁴⁵ For “[r]ules take primacy in the ‘rules and resources’ account of structure. Rules are the master principle through which all explanation will be provided.”²⁴⁶ Cohen pinpoints one of these psychological phenomena, namely Giddens’ acceptance of ‘unacknowledged’ interests. Although he concedes that Giddens is well aware of the pitfalls implied in such a concept, Cohen complains that little is then offered by way of ground-rules for attributing such interests to agents.²⁴⁷ This is a typical and very important criticism of many agency-based theories, a problem that, as already mentioned, Giddens shares with Lukes’ concept of ‘real interests’ in the ‘third face of power’.

In his seminal exposition of structuration theory, Wight in my view rescues the heavily disputed structured concept of agency from internal combustion. Indeed, it is his concept of agency that shall be used in this thesis. Wight bases his interpretation of structuration on Bhaskar’s transformational model of social activity which, according to Joseph who does the same, “challenges the reified view of structuralist and functionalist accounts of social action, while resisting the voluntarism of alternative approaches that give free reign to human praxis.”²⁴⁸ As already mentioned, Bhaskar’s main contribution was to show the link between structuration and the study of the social sciences, advocating a scientific realist approach. There is little scope here to enter into the more detailed philosophical arguments that Bhaskar makes for this other than those already given above, since that would require a thesis in its own right. However, since Wight not only expands upon Bhaskar’s model, but also modifies its terminology to integrate it

²⁴⁵ Wight, Colin. (2006), p144.

²⁴⁶ Ibid, p155.

²⁴⁷ Cohen, Ira J. (1989), p191.

²⁴⁸ Joseph, Jonathan. (2007), p357.

into the rest of the structurationist debate, it is more useful to immediately consider Wight's conceptualisation of structuration with all of these modifications already onboard.

Similarly to Hayward, Wight distinguishes between *individual action* – which, although perhaps intentional, need not involve any other humans than the one performing the act (e.g. taking a walk, drinking a glass of wine or taking a shower) – and *social action* – which denotes all “human actions involving, or orientated towards, other humans and performed in accordance with social forms such as conventions, social norms, rules, institutions, social groups and organisations.” Individual action is improbable claims Wight, since most, if not all, human action requires “a wide range of socially constructed resources [...] to be in place. So walking on a road requires roads, the drinking of wine requires wine and the taking of a shower requires showers.” The concept of social action on the other hand, argues Wight, requires distinguishing between social groups, institutions and organisations. Social groups are defined by “particular individuals standing in certain relations”, which can either be formally or informally structured. Organisations have “an embodied formal structure” where “specific individuals occupy the roles” but where the “identity of the particular agents [...] is not constitutive of the organisation, whereas for social groups it clearly may be.” Organisations are therefore “identified in terms of the structure they embody” which, once embodied, can also have a normative dimension and a moral character. “An institution is a wider concept” writes Wight, and encompasses “a custom, practice, relationship or behavioural pattern of importance in social life”, such as the institutions of marriage and the family, or the economic institution of capitalism.²⁴⁹

The problem with many accounts of social agency is that they fail to distinguish between these three types, according to Wight. “The conflation of social groups and organisations underpins many of the attempts to ascribe agency, and responsibility, to organisations, and even at times to institutions.” Instead, states Wight, “we must view the locus of intention as residing in the individuals or social

²⁴⁹ Wight, Colin. (2006), p200-203.

group, not the organisation. [...] It would be wrong to conclude that role incumbants can be understood as simply playing out their allotted roles. For to accept this would be to accept a rampant and deterministic structuralism. [...] It seems that human agency refuses to be written out of any coherent story.”²⁵⁰

Refusing the definition of an agent as someone who has the ‘capacity to do’, Wight instead uses the term to describe “the status of an entity as an ‘agent of something’ [...] since this] allows us to link the account of agency [...] to the power agents accumulate by virtue of their positioning in a social context.” “Agency [...] appears as layered and differentiated and inextricably linked to social contexts through the relations in which it is embedded” he writes. He then goes on to distinguish between three levels of agency. Agency₁ refers to the ‘freedom of subjectivity’ and is always employed in the singular. Agency₂ “refers to the way in which agency₁ becomes an agent of something and this something refers to the socio-cultural system into which persons are born and develop. In a sense agency₂ precedes agency₁.” However, “[agency₂] is not to be interpreted as a static category”, warns Wight, “since individuals move between and through such groups or collectives throughout their lifespan. Hence, they reproduce and/or transform their individual and collective identities as part of maintaining or transforming the socio-cultural structures they inherited at birth.” Wight rectifies here the implication in Giddens’ account that all agents are equally placed – this is not the case, he argues, but rather “agents₂ are embedded in structures and are always differentially placed.” Agency₃ “refers to those ‘positioned-practice places’ which agents₁ inhabit.” It refers to social actors such as diplomats, prime ministers, soldiers, generals etc. In this way, “agency₃ refers to those ‘roles’ that agents₁ play for agency₂.” None of the three levels of agency can be understood without reference to the others, claims Wight. “Equally, these distinctions do not refer to different people, but are ontologically different aspects of the same person.”²⁵¹

The importance that Wight’s redefinition of agency has for the study of structured agency cannot in my view be overestimated. The next chapter will

²⁵⁰ Ibid, p200-203.

²⁵¹ Ibid, p212-215.

examine the implications it has for the study of world politics. Indeed, it is when structuration theory has to contend with organisational and institutional agency that Giddens' rather simplified version of agency faces the most severe difficulties. For not all agents are equally placed, nor can they all be held equally intentionally and thus morally responsible for their actions. Wight's concept of agency rightly problematises the typically behaviouralist oversimplifications of intentions and responsibility, to encompass the necessarily more complex accounts of agency that also includes collective agents. For although he admits that it is the individuals within these organisations who ultimately bear responsibility for their actions, it does widen the scope from focusing solely on individual agency.

Similarly to Wight, Giddens also denied that human aggregates could ever constitute individual agents, claiming that to make such a claim is simply metaphorical. "[T]he only true agents in history are human individuals" he has argued, for even if institutions may be regarded by the law as agents, they are ultimately the product of structuration and thus reducible to individual human agency.²⁵² The problem is that Giddens' account of agency is too individualistic, causing problems if one wishes to apply his theory to IR, since the discipline most often appropriates agency to collective agents, such as states. This, along with his tendency to collapse structure into agency, is neatly summarised in the following statement:

*"All social life is agent-controlled in the sense that to be a human being is to monitor one's behaviour constantly in relation to that of others – there is no time out from this process, which is simply chronic. On the other hand, vast areas of social life aren't agent-controlled, if that means consciously directed by anyone. [...] Markets aren't simply the 'outcome' of millions of individuals taking individual decisions to buy, sell, save and so forth. They have highly structured properties which – as structuration theory underlines – are simultaneously the consequence and the means of actions individuals carry out."*²⁵³

ii) the degree of autonomy granted to structure; iii) the distinction between structure and system; iv) the number of structuration processes involved (duality or 'tripality')

²⁵² Giddens, Anthony – Pierson, Christopher. (1998), p87-8.

²⁵³ Ibid, p85-6.

As already mentioned, Giddens' concept of structure collapses into agency, thus granting it very little autonomy at all. He problematically defines structure as consisting of 'rules and resources' – problematic because, according to Wight, it constitutes "an ontological reduction of structure to agential understandings and instantiations of such structures: in effect, the individualism Giddens wishes to avoid."²⁵⁴ Giddens also problematically differentiates between structure and system – a distinction that shall be abandoned altogether in this thesis. Indeed, the reason for examining parts ii), iii) and iv) together here is that the root of all three problems is that Giddens overcomplicates structure by adding an unnecessary dimension into the structuration process – namely system. The 'logical' implication of this becomes a 'triplicity' between systems, structures and agency, rather than a duality between structure and agency. The reasons for this lie in his individualistic interpretation of agency, as well as his conception of structuration over time and space – the latter of which will be dealt with in the next section. What is under focus here is the definition that Giddens gives structures in the first place. For, as rule-resource sets that are implicated in the institutional articulation of social systems, these include the collective aspects of agency (namely organisational and institutional agency) highlighted above. This denies structure its usual meaning, as those organisational features of society that place all agency in its context – something that Giddens has to rely on system to do instead.

The main problem here is that, although he modifies them, Giddens maintains Lockwood's claim that there is an ontological distinction between structure and system. Even worse, as Barbalet has pointed out, he borrows Lockwood's concepts of system and structure without then explaining why he has modified them, which implicitly translates as a rejection of them as they stand.²⁵⁵ Defending Lockwood's original distinction, Barbalet insists that power "has to be understood in terms of two separate and distinct phases, parallel to social and system integration, which are subject to independent variation."²⁵⁶ Indeed, it is clear that it is the concept of power which is crucial to any defence of Lockwood's distinction

²⁵⁴ Wight, Colin. (2006), p154.

²⁵⁵ Barbalet, J.M. (1987), p13.

²⁵⁶ Ibid, p18.

between structure and system – Barbalet, for example, argues that “power must be seen as having two aspects or phases, one relating to its fundamental basis in social structural resources and another pertaining to its exercise in social relationships”.²⁵⁷ It is the argument here however that this distinction can be more sensibly maintained with the concepts of structure and agency, while still maintaining the duality between the two. Ontologically, there is nothing more ‘out there’ than people and social structures – structures which, no matter how old or embedded, can either be reproduced or transformed into something else. The notion of system reeks of structural determinism, as a form of structure that somehow becomes locked into time and space as reified and unchangeable. This is not to deny the power of structures however – indeed, this would be to fall off the structurationist ‘fence’ into an agentic definition similar to that of Giddens. For his is not a structurally deterministic account of structure – bar the reference to systems – but rather one that collapses into agency.

Once again, this thesis will rely instead on Wight’s definition, since it ties in with his definition of agency given above. He writes that “many of the important causal factors that arise from the organisational features of society are neglected, hidden or denied if structure is interpreted as ‘rules and resources’.”²⁵⁸ “The practical difference between structure as ‘rules and resources’” he continues, “and structure as ‘relations between social objects’ is one of the causal significance of objective, and perhaps unknown to social agents, social relations.”²⁵⁹ Preferring instead the concept of structure as denoting *social relations*, Wight states that these relations “not only co-exist and articulate but endure. The most durable social structures are those that lock their occupants into situations that they cannot unilaterally change. [...] We need to see agents as socially positioned in networks of social relations that provide interests, identities, motivations and materials that enable and constrain social agency.”²⁶⁰ We need, he concludes, “to concentrate our attention on the important structure (relations) between the material and ideational aspects of social life. Hence, brute material facts, the distribution of capabilities, for example, are not a structure but one element in a social field of activity that is

²⁵⁷ Ibid, p21.

²⁵⁸ Wight, Colin. (2006), p141.

²⁵⁹ Ibid, p153-4.

²⁶⁰ Ibid, p173.

structured. As structured it stands in a relation to the ideas held by agents about such a distribution as well as the relationship between the agents engaging in the activity.”²⁶¹

Structural power – those resources that are available to an agent – necessarily affects the power exercised by that agent. Likewise, the power exercised by agents helps to either reproduce or transform the structural organisation of social life. To divide the concept of structure into the separate ontological realms of structure and system is a case of adding one too many concepts into the ontological melting pot – structure and agency will suffice. For, as already mentioned, resources need not only be material but can also be non-material, so structure can also encompass all of the ideational or cognitive resources necessary for human agency. Put simply, an agent draws on many resources in social action – from the power of ideas to the power of material wealth. The definition of resources offered in this thesis will be expanded upon in section vi), but suffice to say here that the distinction between structure and system is not only unnecessary but also ontologically incorrect.

v) the role of time and space in these processes

Linked to Giddens’ problematic notion of systems is another serious flaw in his account of structuration, namely “the extent to which [his] account of [time-space] distanciation finds [him] acknowledging the durability, autonomous temporality and causality of social systems, which his ‘structuration’ programme was intended to deny.”²⁶² Critics argue that he has replaced the dualism of structure and agency with a dualism between structure/agency on the one hand, and time-space on the other. What is more, he then leaves us “with only *ad hoc* means for theorizing the relations between them, since the ‘duality of structure’ has been exhausted.”²⁶³ This is perhaps the most serious criticism of Giddens’ version of ‘structuration’ theory.

²⁶¹ Ibid, p175.

²⁶² Parker, John. (2000), p63.

²⁶³ (Emphasis in original) Ibid.

For it is Giddens' interpretation of the role of time and space in structuration processes that is fundamental to his distinction between structures and system. He defines social integration as a reciprocity between actors in contexts of co-presence, while system integration is a reciprocity between actors or collectivities across extended time-space. In his own words, "[s]ocial integration then means systemness on the level of face-to-face interaction. System integration refers to connections with those who are physically absent in time or space."²⁶⁴ As already mentioned, however, Giddens' notion of social integration can be incorporated in Wight's multi-layered concept of agency – for what is face-to-face interaction if not agency? This does not mean however that agency is ever completely 'physically absent' from structure, in either time or space – indeed, such a definition once again risks structural determinism. It seems that, despite his intention to break free from structuralism, Giddens still manages to get ensnared in Lockwood's rather unfortunate distinction between system and structure, the former of which – being absent of the subject and out of time and space – all but replicates the reified concept of structure that Giddens had hoped to replace. As mentioned above, the duality between structure and agency becomes now instead a 'tripality', where agents are both affected by as well as affect structures, which are then affected by and affect systems, which are somehow out of time and space.

M.S.Archer has written extensively on structuration theory and has called for strengthening the ontological defence of the existence of social systems.²⁶⁵ While she does not wish to reify them, she argues that they should be conceptualised as distinct and different from individuals. She defines systems as: i) relatively autonomous; ii) pre-existing agents; and iii) causally efficacious – and that these claims do not entail reification.²⁶⁶ 'Action' and 'system' should therefore in her view be replaced with a strong concept of social system that is both dependent on and independent from action. It is important to note that, while she thus advocates 'analytical dualism', she rejects 'philosophical dualism'. She accepts that a notion

²⁶⁴ Giddens, Anthony. (1984), p28.

²⁶⁵ Ibid, p70; Archer, M.S. (1996), p680.

²⁶⁶ Parker, John. (2000), p71.

of individuals presumes a notion of society and vice versa – “no people, no society” as she puts it.²⁶⁷

Archer offers instead her own definition of the processes that operate between structure and agency, based again on Lockwood’s awkward distinction, which she redefines as being the difference between the ‘parts’ and the ‘people’ respectively. She develops this idea to state that the ‘emergence’ of new forms, relations and powers between these two basic categories consists of three kinds, namely the structural and the cultural (both of which relate to the parts) and the agential (which relates to the people). The natural necessity of the internal relations in each is what gives them their relative autonomy to contribute to the process of structuration. All three have the properties of pre-existence, autonomy, durability and causal efficacy.²⁶⁸ The problem with this categorisation however is that, like Lockwood’s distinction, it cements structure as being somehow independent of human agency.

Archer does however make a very useful objection to Giddens’ account of structuration theory, by criticising it for failing to address the varying relations that may exist between agency and structure over time. She refers to her methodology as one of ‘*morphogenesis*’ that allows for *variable relations*. For it is notably the concept of time which, in Archer’s view, determines which relations predominate between agency and systems – systems can only be conceptualised as real, without reification, by relating them to the agentic powers of individuals over time.²⁶⁹ Her main criticism of individualism is thus that, if agents are considered to be the only mediums of constraint, then there can be no explanation of systems of power that, although perhaps produced by individuals, remain relevant even after the death of those individuals.²⁷⁰ I would argue however that, while the remnants (or, as I shall call them, ghosts) of agency-past cannot be said to verify the existence of autonomic structures, they do reveal the importance of the concepts of time and space to the variability of relations. Archer’s notion of morphogenesis is thus a much more fruitful concept of the third dimensions of time and space, since it

²⁶⁷ Archer, Margaret Scotford. (1995), p141.

²⁶⁸ Parker, John. (2000), p79-80.

²⁶⁹ Ibid, p74.

²⁷⁰ Ibid, p75.

allows for both the temporal and spatial variance in the relations between structure and agency. For, despite her reification of structures, Archer's most important contribution to the structurationist debate lies in the comment: "[s]tructururation itself is ever a process and never a product",²⁷¹ thus rejecting Giddens' more utopian ideals for the theory.

However, while I agree that structuration must include the third dimensions of time and space – as the past, present and future multilayered loci of social interaction, from micro to macro, through which structuration processes operate – these dimensions surely only reflect the relationships between agency and structure *and nothing else* (systems or otherwise) over time and space, i.e. structuration all over again. For although history may seem to cement certain processes to such an extent that it does not seem as if they will ever change, all social enterprises, no matter how persistent their perceived longevity, are only ever maintained or torn apart by human agency itself – in the present. This does not mean that past agency is irrelevant however – indeed, the reproduction of structures (reflected in Bourdieu's concept of habitus) relies heavily on past agency. I call this the 'ghost of agency' and shall return to it in the next chapter. Giddens however only seems able to include agency in the present – using time and space to differentiate between and cement structures ('systems') past, present and future. This is perhaps how he arrives at the aforementioned problematic distinction between 'tribal cultures', 'class-divided societies' and 'modern nation-states'.

vi) the different resources of power available to individuals

As already mentioned, Giddens distinguished between allocative and authoritative resources and identified four interrelated institutional bases of social order and social change: i) symbolic orders/modes of discourse; ii) political institutions; iii) economic institutions; and iv) legal institutions. The problem with this definition as it stands however is that it is not a very nuanced account of structural power. Bourdieu also distinguished between only four types of social 'capital', namely: i)

²⁷¹ Archer, M.S. (1990), p75.

economic; ii) political; iii) social; and iv) cultural (symbolic) – the only difference between the two being Giddens’ inclusion of legal institutions as opposed to Bourdieu’s social capital. As shall be shown in the next chapter, Michael Mann offers a similar four-faceted taxonomy of society, claiming that ‘societies’ should be seen as overlapping interrelations of ‘the four sources of social power’ – i) ideological; ii) economic; iii) military; and iv) political – the IEMP relationships.

²⁷² There is no apparent reason why these theorists have settled for taxonomies of social order, capital or power that consist of only four components, but it is clear that all three of these four-faceted taxonomies are quite rudimentary and generalised, missing out on many of the other structures or resources of power that people may draw upon in human agency. As already mentioned, this thesis chooses instead to use Held’s account of seven sites of power, expanding it to include another five sites that shall be argued for in the next chapter.

However, it should be clear that all of the aforementioned theorists – from Giddens, Bourdieu and Mann through to Held – are essentially talking about the same thing – namely human freedoms. For regardless of whether one chooses to call these freedoms ‘structures’, ‘re-/sources’, ‘issues’ or ‘sites of power’, they all fundamentally denote the same concept – namely the social organisation (through relationships) of resources on which humans can draw upon in order to be able to act freely.

²⁷² Mann, Michael. (1986), p1-2.

Conclusion

It is clear then that, regardless of whether one opts for Giddens or Bourdieu, or any one of the number of modifications that have built on their theories of 'structuration' and 'practice', there are still many issues which remain unresolved. As already mentioned, these can be summarised as involving: i) the degree of autonomy (and/or knowledgeability) granted to the actor; ii) the degree of autonomy granted to structure; iii) the distinction between structure and system; iv) the number of structuration processes involved (duality or 'tripality'); v) the role of time and space in these processes; vi) the different resources of power available to individuals; and vii) the potential for social change/power of resistance. The important contribution that structuration theory has made however is to highlight these problems in the first place, since they are problems that confront any theory of society.

To use structuration theory, therefore, is not to take the works of either Giddens or Bourdieu as ready and set frameworks that can be cited and applied word-for-word and concept-for-concept, but it is rather a question of trying to use the discourse of structuration as the foundations for theory-building. By this I mean that any theory of society – be that 'international' or 'local' – must ask itself to what extent it addresses these problems. Are the actors granted unprecedented autonomy or knowledge, free from structure, or do the structures themselves seem to predetermine every act, and every event that that theory sets out to prove? Are the processes of structuration themselves granted a 'natural' deterministic status that somehow exist freely from structure and agency? Is time and space granted ontological independence or woven into structuration as the third dimension that, ultimately determines the variability of the structures and the actors within them? What are the resources of power available to individuals in that society? And what is the potential for social change or resistance? It is on all of these questions that the rest of this thesis will now focus, as I account for my own epistemological account of world power.

For, as shall be seen in the next chapter, the debate on structured international power is still in its infancy. I therefore offer my own contribution to this debate,

by following up on the aforementioned structurationist debate in the social sciences in general. For, as has been made clear, structuration theory itself is still a relatively new concept, on which much yet remains to be said. The question of how to depict the relationships between structure and agency remains a heavily contested one and, thus far, all attempts (including Giddens) have tended, unwittingly or no, to prioritise either structure or agency above the other. I will therefore attempt to show how a structured approach that can deal with these problems is beneficial to the study of world power. For it is my contention that the rather ironic problem with structuration theory, as it stands, is that it does not grant *enough* attention to behavioural and structural power respectively. It seems that, by combining the two approaches, a little is lost from each – not enough attention is paid to those accounts of structural or behavioural power that preceded Giddens' call for structuration. I argue that, however methodologically blinkered these 'old school' theories may have been to each other, they do still illustrate the complexities involved in each in much greater detail than any structured account has done thus far. And, more importantly, it is only by examining these complexities that we can begin to see how the relationships between structure and agency actually operate. Indeed, a structured account of world power not only bridges the ontological divide – it can also help us answer the more fundamental questions of structure and agency in world politics. For, as has already been stated, definitions of power and society are inextricably linked, since they not only raise the question of who is considered to be an agent or a player, so to speak, but also which structures or games they are actually playing.

Chapter Four: Setting the Stage For An Analysis of World Power – Structurated Power in World Society

Introduction: The 'Real World of Politics'

*"The real world of politics has always been one of layered, overlapping, and interacting polities. Our task as theorists is to explain that most defining characteristic of politics: the manner in which individuals come together (or are brought together) to behave collectively. We need to understand the sources and consequences of political change – the processes by which polities emerge, evolve, expire, and are sometimes resurrected."*²⁷³

As Yale H. Ferguson and Richard W. Mansbach make clear in the above quotation, the 'real world of politics' is a complex one – of this there is no doubt. John Burton made a similar point when he stated that "[s]ocial and political interactions are beyond comprehension on a world scale. [...] At best we can have a concept of the whole." According to Burton, most humans build their conceptions of this 'whole' by moving from their knowledge of the local to a wider knowledge, "from discovery of parts to wholes".²⁷⁴ Despite the inherent difficulties in doing so however, all of these theorists have subsequently offered their own conceptions of 'world society', all of which shall be examined in further detail in this chapter, along with the conception of world society and power that shall be used in this thesis.

As already mentioned, there are certain criteria that any theory, including all theories of world relations, can be asked to fulfil. A theory can be judged against other theories according to how well it depicts the social realities that are 'out there', realities that exist independently of any of the theories that may be written about them. Furthermore, all theories can also be fairly accurately judged according to a scale of how certain or certainly false they may be. A theory may be correct for example in stating that, in current day politics, the U.S. president is a powerful agent, but it would slip further down this scale if it claimed that he or she was the most powerful agent or ruler of the world, who could do anything that he or she wanted. Equally, a theory that states that capitalism is a powerful

²⁷³ Ferguson, Yale H. – Mansbach, Richard W. (1996a), p42-43.

²⁷⁴ Burton, John. (1987), p23-25.

structure that has power over most human agency today would be higher up on the scale than a theory that stated that capitalism is the only or even the most important structure of power that is relevant to world politics. It is thus the argument here that – for a theory of contemporary world society to be as high up on the scale as possible – it must take into account as many of the relevant structures and agents that have an effect on current world politics as possible.

For, as Foucault held, power is everywhere²⁷⁵ and, as Hay puts it, ‘power is politics, politics is power’²⁷⁶ – arguments that many feminists have used to fight the distinction that is often (still) made between public and private politics. It is thus the assumed concept of ‘political’ power which lies at the core of most mainstream theories of world politics that I wish to contest, since they all too often make the assumption that all other forms of power are apolitical. Following the assumption that everything is power and thus political, this thesis assumes that all of the ‘sites’ of power that are listed here are just as political as traditional definitions of ‘political’ power. Do not misunderstand me here – there is a clear difference between economic and cultural power, for example, and they will be dealt with separately throughout this thesis (albeit with the argument that each ‘site’ of power affects and is affected by the others). All of the networks or ‘sites’ of power studied in this thesis are however taken to be forms of ‘political’ power, in that they affect and are affected by the abilities of human agents to change outcomes and thus live their lives. Traditional notions of ‘political’ power – relating to matters concerned with the ‘citizen’ and the ‘state’ politic – are instead categorised in this thesis as just that, as relating to the state, and are to be found in the sites of structural power in which the state plays a dominant role in either maintaining or being maintained by the structural properties of that site.

More on this later in this chapter however. Suffice to say here that I take all social (human) power to be political, meaning both that power which is maintained, created or challenged by human agency, as well as that power which exists in networks of (human) society to maintain, create or challenge human agency. The inclusion of the word ‘human’ may seem somewhat overstated at this point, but as

²⁷⁵ Foucault, Michel. (1980f), p98.

²⁷⁶ Hay, Colin. (1997), p45.

I will later come to discuss the social and thus political power of the natural environment, as well as of time and space respectively, I wish to make it clear already here that these are only considered to be forms of political power in the contexts in which they are used by human agents. For human society consists of a rich variety of ingredients that can each be made more or less politically relevant over time. It is finding the relevant set of ingredients that are relevant at a certain point in human history that constitutes the challenge for any theory of power. For as Wight again so succinctly puts it:

*“[O]ur embodied nature as a ‘species being’ has direct implications for social science. Thus when talking of what the human person can do, we are also talking about the human animal since the characteristic capacities of *Homo sapiens* cannot be reduced to society, even if they can only be exercised within it. [...] Recognition of the notion of ‘species being’, although perhaps passé and unfashionable within the social sciences, is, I think, a necessary component for any critically orientated social theory [...since it] allows us to determine whether social conditions are dehumanising are not.”²⁷⁷*

In this chapter, I will therefore begin by deconstructing the ‘state-centric’ theories that have thus far dominated IR, then account for other attempts that have been made to theorise ‘world society’ without focusing solely on ‘state’ actors, including those attempts that have been made to use structuration theory in the study of world relations. I will then account for some core definitions that I believe are fundamental to the study of world society, in order to clear the ground for the theory of world power relations that will be used in this thesis. It is the argument here that mainstream IR theory must contend with the complex realities and thus inequalities of the world, which far transcend ‘state’-level analysis. They may be epistemological realities – in that they are not timeless, ontological phenomena that have always existed, but rather have the potential to either be reproduced or transformed dependent on human knowledge of them – but that does not make them any less real to the humans who are experiencing them. On the contrary, and as this thesis shall argue, social inequalities are frequently as real and limiting to social agency as death itself and may also lead to this very real, biological end to human agency.

²⁷⁷ (Emphasis in original) Wight, Coliin. (2006), p211.

The 'International 'State' System' Revisited – Deconstructing the 'State'

“States as concrete political entities came into existence recently and in a historically specific context. Born of and in a complex social environment, there were numerous intra-, inter-, and extrastate influences that helped to constitute the European states system that eventually emerged and exported itself throughout the known world.”²⁷⁸

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“In conventional international theory, states, like Hobbes’s individuals in the state of nature, appear to have sprung like mushrooms into maturity: States look alike, differentiated only by their power and capacity to act on the international system.”²⁷⁹

To call for a review of the ‘international ‘state’ system’ is certainly not news, as the above quotations, made almost a decade ago, make clear. The criticism has come both from within IR itself, as well as from other disciplines in the social sciences, extending from gender and post-colonial studies to historical sociology and political science. The basic demand is the same across the board however. The two theorists quoted above, for example, may on further examination seem to have quite different agendas, but they are united in their charge that there needs to be a reformation of the ‘state’ concept. Sujata Chakrabarti Pasic, for example, concentrates on the importance of culture to IR, and sees the ‘state’ as a cognitive construct, that will “only survive if the historical arguments for unity within them continue to convince an audience”.²⁸⁰ J. Ann Tickner, on the other hand, concentrates on the impact of the concept of ‘state’ on issues of gender, stating that “the collective *we*, embedded in the historical construction of the state-as-unitary actor model of international theory, represents men’s rather than women’s voices.”²⁸¹ She concludes, in common with many other feminists, that “[w]e should, therefore, be thinking about reconceptualizing state identities in ways that are not associated with an exclusionary, militaristic, gendered form of patriotism. This would depend on rethinking the identities of citizens also.”²⁸²

These are both fundamentally important criticisms but it seems they have yet to be properly addressed by the main ‘theory-builders’ of world power – i.e. by (neo-

²⁷⁸ Pasic, Sujata Chakrabarti. (1996), p97.

²⁷⁹ Tickner, J. Ann. (1996), p151.

²⁸⁰ Pasic, Sujata Chakrabarti. (1996), p102.

²⁸¹ Tickner, J. Ann. (1996), p152.

²⁸² Ibid, p159.

)realists, (neo-)liberals, 'globalisation' and world-system theorists and even, as shall be seen below, by some constructivists, such as Alexander Wendt – all of whom typically continue to settle with 'state'-centric theories. This is a very serious problem, for until the 'state' is accepted for what it is – a historical construct of human agency – theories of world power will continue to give only a very fragmented and biased view of the world, where the unitary 'state' actor continues to dominate all epistemological thought on world relations. It is the contention in this thesis that it should not be the question of choosing between 'state' and 'non-state' actors however, but rather a choice to refrain altogether from theorising solely around the concept of the 'state'.

Historical sociologists, such as Mann, and political scientists, such as Ferguson and Mansbach, have illustrated this point in great historical detail, in their respective comparisons of the modern Westphalian 'state' with other forms of political organisation in world society. Although Mann retains the concept of 'state', Ferguson and Mansbach choose to speak instead of 'polities' as constituting the main actors in world politics.²⁸³ For, as they so eloquently put it: “[t]he question is not whether the state exists and is observable, but to what extent it explains the things we need to understand.”²⁸⁴ I shall return to the arguments of these theorists in the next section, since they both offer helpful alternative ways to theorising world politics. For now, however, my focus is on deconstructing the 'state'.

The reason that the 'state' still dominates most theories of world power could reside in a methodological dispute that still seems to maintain its grasp on the discipline of IR. This dispute has its origins in the three so-called 'Great Debates' within the discipline: i) concerning realism and idealism; ii) concerning how to conduct social scientific research; and iii) the role of naturalism. As Wight has pointed out, all of these debates shared a common concern – “[i]n all of these 'great debates' [...] the underlying logic concerning the issue of naturalism is similar and two traditions are typically represented. The first – the naturalist tradition – asserts that there is, or can be, an essential unity in method between the

²⁸³ Ferguson, Yale H. – Mansbach, Richard W. (1996b).

²⁸⁴ Ferguson, Yale H. – Mansbach, Richard W. (1996a), p34.

natural and social sciences. The second – the anti-naturalist hermeneutic tradition – posits a radical distinction in method between the natural and social sciences.”²⁸⁵ Typically, mainstream IR has fallen down heavily on the naturalist side of the debate, advocating such scientifically stringent methodologies – whether this be the methodologies followed by neo-/realists or by neo-/liberals – that the complex realities of world politics cannot possibly be encompassed within their theories. One of the most illuminating examples of this is the ‘levels-of-analysis’ debate, which seems to have spun itself, and possibly even the discipline, into an epistemological quagmire – a mess that, as Wight points out in the below quotation, has to do with its close relation to the agent-structure dilemma.

*“Although the language of agents and structures was alien to IR until recently the discipline has nonetheless been forced to grapple with a version of the problem in the guise of the ‘levels of analysis’ problem.”*²⁸⁶

The ‘levels-of-analysis’ debate began with J. David Singer’s paper on the subject in 1960, where he stated that “the responsible [IR] scholar must be prepared to evaluate the relative utility – conceptual and methodological – of the various alternatives open to him, and to appraise the manifold implications of the level of analysis finally selected.”²⁸⁷ Singer and his followers deemed to have settled this matter by deciding that one could choose to theorise *either* about the ‘nation state’ *or* the ‘international system’, thus also implicitly accepting that, epistemologically, this is what IR was about. He did, however, concede that other actors might eventually replace the ‘nation state’:

*“[I]t may well be that existing institutional forms will take on new characteristics or that new ones will appear to take their place. As a matter of fact, if incapacity to perform its functions leads to the transformation or decay of an institution, we may expect a steady deterioration and even ultimate disappearance of the national state as a significant actor in the world political system.”*²⁸⁸

Since Singer, there has been a plethora of literature on the levels of analysis that are considered relevant to the study of world relations. The arguments that have

²⁸⁵ Wight, Colin. (2006), p16.

²⁸⁶ Wight, Colin. (2006), p72.

²⁸⁷ Singer, J. David. (1961), p77.

²⁸⁸ Ibid, p90.

followed have revolved around the relationships between the ‘international system’, the ‘nation-state’, ‘bureaucracy’ and the ‘individual’, bringing the total to four levels of analysis in all: i) ‘international system’; ii) ‘nation state’; iii) ‘bureaucracy’; and iv) ‘individual’²⁸⁹.

There has, however, been a great deal of confusion in IR over what should determine the level of analysis one chooses to focus on, as a very illuminating debate between Wendt and two other IR theorists, Martin Hollis and Steve Smith, has revealed. It all began with the publication of Hollis and Smith’s book *Explaining and Understanding International Relations* in 1990. In this they stated:

“Someone who inclines to a Structuralist view in International Relations will be best suited by some kind of realism in a unified philosophy of science and hence by taking the main task to be one of explaining international relations. Someone who inclines to a hermeneutic view in philosophy will be best suited by an International Relations theory which works from the inside and tries to understand international relations in terms of rules, actions, and their (often unforeseen) results. [...] Singer’s level-of-analysis problem is classically one of whether to explain top-down or bottom-up, whatever quite one identifies for the purpose as ‘system’ and as ‘unit’.”²⁹⁰

Hollis and Smith then proceeded to argue that the ‘levels-of-analysis’ problem needed to be abstracted to instead comprise of two poles, the *holistic* and the *individualistic*. Crossed with the notions of *explaining* and *understanding*, they produced Figure 1 (see below). In their view, *structuralists* use external structures to *explain* the holistic level and rational choices to explain the individualistic level, whereas the *hermeneutic* view uses collective rules to *understand* the holistic level and reasoned choices to understand the individualistic level. It is important to note that Hollis and Smith were referring to structuralism as it has often been interpreted in IR, (originating in Waltz’ *Theory of International Politics*, where he conceived of the structure or system as comprising of the sum of the rational units, namely states) not in the social sciences in general – not many structuralists outside of IR would include rational choice on the individualistic level for example.

²⁸⁹ Hollis, Martin – Smith, Steve. (1991), p395.

²⁹⁰ (Emphasis in original) Hollis, Martin – Smith, Steve. (1990), p214-5.

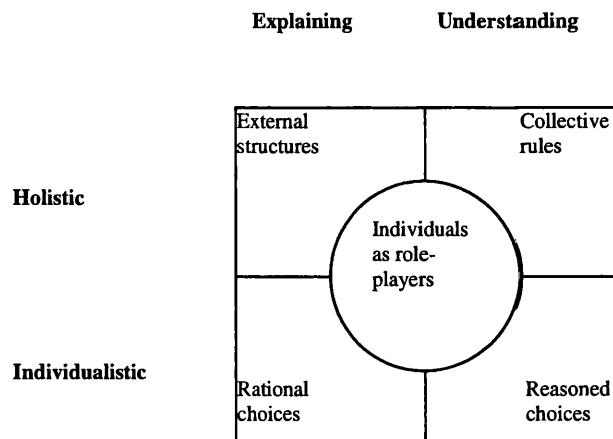


Figure 1: 'Mapping theoretical disputes' (Hollis & Smith, 1990, p215.)

The circle in the middle – comprising of individuals as role-players – represented “the core” of Hollis and Smiths’ matrix and “should be thought of not as a position of four-way compromise but as a movable counter to be manoeuvred to whatever place on the chart the reader finds most satisfactory.”²⁹¹ They could not agree where they would put the counter themselves, compromising instead to leave it in the centre, to let the reader decide,²⁹² but in a later article they claimed that, wherever it was placed, it would always end up being like “a dance round the maypole [...] As the dance goes round and round [...] the ribbons grow shorter, the circle closes and the bemused theorist is drawn to a centre where everything mediates everything and is mediated by everything.”²⁹³

As I shall argue below, it is very difficult to box society up in this way, be that on a global or a local scale. For there is no dualism between holism (structure) and individualism (agency), only duality, and so individuals do not so much move around from one box to the other as find themselves in the midst of it all – both affecting and being affected by social structures. Using Bourdieu’s notion of the ‘synoptic illusion’, Wight warns of the dangers of using diagrammatic theories such as Hollis and Smith’s matrix:

²⁹¹ Ibid, p214-215.

²⁹² Ibid, p216.

²⁹³ Hollis, Martin – Smith, Steve. (1991), p409.

“[T]he deployment of the matrix by Hollis and Smith produces an image of rigid boundaries that may not hold when the issue is considered in other discursive and less dichotomous ways. [...]

First, the relationships created between entities in the diagrams are often an artefact of the exercise of the production of the diagram: they do not exist in practice. Because these relationships never actually occur in interaction as depicted in the diagram, what appears to be logically incompatible ‘on paper’ may be compatible in practice. In effect, the entire diagrammatic creation is a kind of fiction, which does not exist in reality. Second these diagrams always do violence to time and space. For, on the one hand, they represent in simplistic two-dimensional form what is, in fact, multi-dimensional, and on the other hand, all sense of the playing out of strategies in practice over time is lost.”²⁹⁴

To their credit, however, Hollis and Smith did bring to light the importance of agency and structure to the level of analysis problem in IR theory – a point which many structurationists in the discipline surprisingly seem to have missed. In his critique of Hollis and Smith’s book, Wendt for example stated that the authors “conflate two distinct problems: the ‘level of analysis’ problem and the agent-structure problem.”²⁹⁵ He admitted that the two problems are related, since “at any given level of analysis (bureaucratic, nation-state, or systemic) there will typically be a problem of relating structure to agency – but the point is that the relevant agents keep changing across different levels of analysis.” In their constant focus on holism and individualism, Wendt argued, Hollis and Smith were only in fact discussing issues of agency and structure and not levels of analysis.²⁹⁶ In his view, the latter “is a problem of explanation: of assessing the relative importance of causal factors at different levels of aggregation in explaining the behaviour of a given unit of analysis.”²⁹⁷

Wendt’s main ambition has been to open up the concept of ‘state’ to a ‘structured’ analysis of culture and identity, claiming that “states’ identities and interests are in important part constructed by the process of interaction”.²⁹⁸ This is a very important contribution to IR theory – which has otherwise generally favoured an individualist approach, where ‘states’ are regarded as pre-determined, ‘rational’ actors – but there is a major problem with his approach, namely that he

²⁹⁴ Wight, Colin. (2006), p86-87.

²⁹⁵ Wendt, Alexander. (1991), p387.

²⁹⁶ Ibid, p388.

²⁹⁷ Ibid, p387.

²⁹⁸ Wendt, Alexander. (1992), p183.

wishes to open up the 'state' without including other agents. For he continues to proclaim the existence of a 'given unit of analysis', namely the 'state'. It is very odd that Wendt should do this, since he himself has criticised "deep-seated individualism about social relations [in which] agents with given powers and interests are the ontologically privileged starting point for theory."²⁹⁹ Nonetheless, it seems that Wendt is determined to stick with the 'state' and his sentiments on the subject are most clearly stated in the following statement:

*"The point is merely that states are still the primary medium through which the effects of other actors on the regulation of violence are channelled into the world system. It may be that non-state actors are becoming more important than states as initiators of change, but system change ultimately happens through states. In that sense states still are at the center of the international system, and as such it makes no sense to criticize a theory of international politics as 'state-centric' than it does to criticize a theory of forests for being 'tree-centric'."*³⁰⁰

It would appear however that it is Wendt himself who cannot see the wood of world society for the trees he is growing there. Pasic (who advocates the inclusion of culture into IR theory) certainly seems to think so, stating that "Wendt still begins at the statist departure point of both realism and rationalism" – "the standard overemphasis on unitary state actors and their interaction is a real drawback."³⁰¹ Wight has also criticised Wendt for "employ[ing] a conventionalist defence of his own acceptance of the analogy between states and individuals", adding that "it is precisely this institutionalized assumption which any discourse on the agent-structure problem should surely have addressed."³⁰² This is a highly problematic theoretical move says Wight, that reduces the 'state' to an individual, instead of accepting that "the state, as a constructed social form, can only act in and through individual action. State activity is always the activity of particular individuals acting within particular social forms."³⁰³

Wendt's rather contradictory approach raises some fundamental questions as to the validity of current thinking about the 'level-of-analysis' problem. For if

²⁹⁹ Wendt, Alexander. (1991), p389.

³⁰⁰ Wendt, Alexander. (1999), p9.

³⁰¹ Pasic, Sujata Chakrabarti. (1996), p87-9.

³⁰² Wight, Colin. (1999), p127.

³⁰³ Ibid, p127-8.

'states' are created from and interact with something, *where* and more importantly *what* is that something in a 'state'-centric theory? By maintaining the 'state' as the sole unit of analysis, one is left with only two areas of study – inside and outside the 'state' – with the focus on how 'domestic' and/or 'international' politics help to shape the 'state' in question. But if 'states' are themselves created, maintained and changed through societal processes, their very identities differing from each other and subject to change as a result, how then can Wendt essentialise them into being the only entities relevant to world politics? There is no fluidity – read structuration – in this notion of world society, only a static fixation with a reified concept of 'states' and their perceived interests and capacities.

Wight agrees with Wendt that the agent-structure problem is distinct from the 'levels of analysis' problem, although he concedes that they are both "choices that all analysts must make."³⁰⁴ Wight argues that "it is possible to defend a vertical yet non-hierarchical (in the sense of an a priori privileging of one level over another) account of levels whilst accepting and expanding on Walker's horizontal point."³⁰⁵ (Walker's point being that the relations between individuals, states and system might be better grasped as horizontal relationships.³⁰⁶) The problem as Wight sees it is that Hollis and Smith relegated individuals to a separate level, with bureaucracies as their only structure. "This treatment of the level-of-analysis problem takes the relocation of agency as unproblematic."³⁰⁷

As already noted, Wight offers his own conception of agency as one that stretches across all 'levels' of society – indeed, it is his account of different types of agency that shall be used in this thesis. He also criticises IR's tendency to attribute human agency onto the state, stating that "[a]cceptance of the 'personification theory' of the state accords human *agency* no role, because the state now takes on the properties of human agency and the real human agents that act in the world are theoretically redundant."³⁰⁸ Moreover, as already mentioned, Wight also advocates that, "under a structural relational account, we should think not of international

³⁰⁴ Wight, Colin. (2006), p102.

³⁰⁵ Ibid, p106.

³⁰⁶ Walker, R.B.J. (1993), p134.

³⁰⁷ Wight, Colin. (2006), p107.

³⁰⁸ (Emphasis in original) Ibid, p198.

relations, but of global social relations”³⁰⁹, although, coming as it does in the last pages of his most recent book, he has yet to set these out in any detail. He is however critical of IR’s focus on the ‘state’, arguing:

*“The state system we currently exist within is, in many respects, a chimera. It is a powerful chimera, but it is nothing other than the result of a particular configuration of structural relationships that are constantly changing. The vision of IR as a realm with the state (as actor) at its core existing in a structural environment that can be usefully analytically separated from all other realms only serves to feed the chimera.”*³¹⁰

Although it is thus clear that Wendt and Wight have differing opinions as to the usefulness of current IR theory – Wendt defending the continued focus on the ‘state’ while Wight’s is a call to include other agents in any analysis of ‘global social relations’ – it is very curious that, as structurationists, both claim that the ‘levels-of-analysis’ problem is unrelated to that of agency and structure. It should be noted that both of their criticisms are directed towards Singer’s conflation of the two problems and that it is not my intention here to defend the arguments that either Singer or Hollis and Smith have made for different levels of analysis. On the contrary, it is the argument here that the agency-structure problem renders traditional IR concepts of ‘level-of-analysis’ more or less useless, except to distinguish between distinct forms of external and internal ‘state’ politics, either between each other or within their own borders. Thus, while I agree with both Wight and Wendt that the ‘levels-of-analysis’ problem does constitute a separate theoretical problem to that of structure and agency, it is the argument here that the two are inextricably related to one another and that a structurationist account of world relations necessarily and logically leads to a reconsideration of traditional IR frameworks. Wight may have recognised this in his call for the discipline to focus instead on ‘global social relations’ but as he has yet to define what these are, it is necessary to turn to other theorists to see how these might be conceptualised.

“The most important single fact about the evolution of politics over the past three centuries or so is that virtually the entire world has been progressively carved up into political units of a single broad type – the nation-state – to the exclusion of others. [...W]e still have little idea what the

³⁰⁹ Ibid, p299.

³¹⁰ Ibid.

world of politics would look like if the nation-state were to be transcended by some other predominant structural pattern."³¹¹

The above quotation by Philip G. Cerny is taken from his publication on the implications of structurationism for theorising about the state, namely *The Changing Architecture of Politics: Structure, Agency, and the Future of the State*. He openly admits that while, in this publication, he focuses on the state as the "core structure of political life [...], the modern state – as it has developed in post-feudal and capitalist society – is viewed here not as a reified, determining, large-scale structure analogous to, e.g., race, but as a contingent phenomenon. It is the product of a certain amount of historical accident, of circumstantial choices made by political agents, and of pre-existing structures being in flux due to a wide range of interconnected changes along [...] structural dimensions".³¹² Cerny maintains however that the nation-state is still "the central, active, structuring feature of a rapidly changing global environment" and regards it as "highly improbable that it will actually be replaced by any alternative structure." Nonetheless, he argues that the twenty-first century will transform both the institutional structures and the dominant ideas of world politics – e.g. through processes such as the rapidly integrating global financial marketplace and the growing issues of environmental resource management – in ever more complex ways.³¹³

Indeed, in a more recent publication, Cerny hints at what this future might look like. He claims that there is a "process of reconfiguring of political power going on – indeed, of its effective disarticulation or *disordering* in a more complex world – integrally rooted in and arising from globalization, making traditional state-based notions of political power increasingly problematic and in some ways redundant."³¹⁴ He deems it unlikely that the nation-state will be able to respond to these changes with a system of global governance, but rather that such changes must in that case come from "within the newer, essentially transnational structures" of the world.³¹⁵ He concludes his original analysis of the future of the

³¹¹ Cerny, Philip G. (1990), p3.

³¹² Ibid, p11.

³¹³ Ibid, pxiv.

³¹⁴ (Emphasis in original) Cerny, Philip G. (2000), p171.

³¹⁵ Ibid, p185.

state with the words “it will never be the same again.”³¹⁶ This thus also has consequences for the theorising of world politics within IR, which he criticises for not keeping up with the empirical realities of these changes. He neatly sums up his call for theoretical reformation within IR with the statement: “What is needed is an analysis which looks at political structures such as states as processes of structuration – as complex patterns of ongoing but uneven interactions between agents and structures, and as complex mixes of stasis and change.”³¹⁷

Cerny is not alone in calling for a theoretical reformation within IR to keep up with the times, so to speak. Equally, and as already mentioned, identity theorists and feminists (such as Pasic and Tickner) and political scientists (such as Ferguson and Mansbach) have been calling for the discipline to move away from its traditional ‘state’-centric approach for some time now. And it seems at last to be resonating with some of the key ‘theory-builders’ within the discipline. In his recent book on ‘English School’ theory, for example, Barry Buzan states that “[m]anaging this expansion from interstate to world politics is important to IR as a discipline.”³¹⁸ He distinguishes between ‘international system’, ‘international society’ and ‘world society’ and claims that it remains the discipline’s biggest challenge to incorporate all of these perspectives.³¹⁹ He believes that the English School is the sub-discipline that is best suited to manage this expansion, given that it already includes all of these perspectives (albeit with varying degrees of success). This project is not without its difficulties however, for “[t]he concept of world society, and especially how world society and international society relate to each other”, he states, “is in my view both the biggest weakness in existing English school theory, and the place where the biggest gains are to be found.”³²⁰ The only problem is that Buzan’s own proposed solution to this dilemma retains the great epistemological divide between ‘state’ and ‘non-state’ actors, despite his wish to include the latter.³²¹ For despite stating that IR “needs [...] to avoid ensnaring itself in the trap of unnecessary choices between state and non-state

³¹⁶ Cerny, Philip G. (1990), p246.

³¹⁷ Ibid, p22.

³¹⁸ Buzan, Barry. (2004), p2-3.

³¹⁹ Ibid, p1-7.

³²⁰ Ibid, p2.

³²¹ Ibid, p4.

alternatives”³²², he later in the book argues that it “is perfectly clear that a global-scale pluralist interstate society exists on the basis of effectively universal acceptance of Westphalian institutions such as sovereignty, territoriality, diplomacy and international law.”³²³

Although it is certainly not the intention of this thesis to deny that the world of ‘states’ constitutes a very important part of contemporary world society, it is the argument here that the Westphalian ‘state’ is only one of many agents to exist in world relations. It should not therefore be granted exclusive focus of analysis when studying world events – past, present or future. Although theorists such as Buzan may wish to incorporate these agents into already existing theories of IR – English School or otherwise – it is not exactly clear how this will work, without fundamentally rewriting some of the main concepts of IR theory itself, including its continued focus on levels and systems. There are some theorists in the discipline however who have recognised the need for a fundamental epistemological makeover of the discipline and it is to these theorists that the next section now turns.

³²² Ibid, p3.

³²³ Ibid, p208.

If Not 'States' Then What? – Alternative Concepts of 'World Society' and Power in IR Theories

“The study of world society is the study of the total environment in which the behaviour of individuals, groups, nations and states occurs. The social and political behaviour of others is the social and political environment of each system. The behaviour of one part of a society affects the behaviour of others.”³²⁴

Burton is the IR theorist who is perhaps most closely associated with the study of ‘world society’ and whose ideas, as can be seen in the above quotation, are very similar to those of structurationism, since he claimed that behaviour (agency) creates the environment (structures) in which behaviour (agency) can take place. Indeed, as shall be seen below, Burton’s main interest was in understanding world *relations*, not just between states, but across both physical and epistemological boundaries. He criticised what he saw as the discipline’s “past preoccupation with relations between nations” and claimed that the term “[‘international relations’] is an unfortunate title for our present purposes. [...] The study of world society is a much wider study than the relations of units within it.”³²⁵ Indeed, Burton had wide ambitions for the study of ‘world society’, stating that it “needs to be built into educational systems, just as is mathematics, language, health and road safety.”³²⁶ Since the publication of his seminal work *World Society* in 1972 however, very little has changed in the conceptual study of ‘international relations’ within the discipline of IR itself.

Burton was fundamentally opposed to separating ‘world society’ into different levels – “any artificial separation of politics from international politics, or any approach to an understanding of world society that implies one set of theories to explain behaviour at one social level, and another set at another level, must be misleading. [...] We will understand behaviour of states, of groups within states, and of men if we place them in the broader framework of world society.”³²⁷ He was also acutely aware of the potential power of theories of ‘international relations’, stating that “the images and models held of reality contribute to the

³²⁴ Burton, John. (1987), p4.

³²⁵ Ibid, p19.

³²⁶ Ibid, p3.

³²⁷ Ibid, p164.

creation of reality”. Specifically on neo-/realist assumptions about the ‘aggressive’ state, he wrote “[t]he assumption that states are potentially aggressive is one that leads states to adopt defensive measures, alliances and collective security. Other assumptions could lead to other behaviour.”³²⁸

Thus aware of the inherent difficulties in studying ‘world society’ and of the potential dangers of simplifying its realities into geographical relationships between states alone, Burton instead advocated studying ‘world society’ using a cobweb model, that mapped out world behaviour, such as population movements, links and transactions (both material and non-material) etc.:

*“What we really need to have, either in map form or conceptually, is an image of world society that shows behaviour by showing these linkages. If we could superimpose on successive sheets of transparent paper air-passenger movements per week, telegraphic flows, ethnic and language relations, movements of scholars, technical advisers, migration, tourism, and all other transactions, we would begin to build up a picture of relationships which would help to explain behaviour in world society far better than traditional maps.”*³²⁹

Thirty years after Burton wrote this, one does of course not have to resort to superimposing these links onto successive sheets of transparent paper – there are plenty of computer programmes available today that can and do do this for the social researcher. Many ‘globalisation’ theories (usually associated with political science, sociology and development studies) typically try to amalgamate these many patterns into the single claimed conceptual reality of a new emerging pattern of ‘globalisation’ – a school of thought which has blossomed over the past two or three decades since Burton wrote *World Society*. Mainstream IR theory however has struggled to keep up with these new epistemological conceptions of world society, maintaining its old-fashioned state-centric theories. Indeed, as recently as 1995, Burton was referred to as being regarded within the discipline as “a marginal figure at best, unreal at worst and idealistic”.³³⁰ This comment, however, came from David J. Dunn, in an article praising Burton’s contribution to IR theory. He concludes:

³²⁸ Ibid, p27.

³²⁹ Ibid, p35-6.

³³⁰ Dunn, David J. (1995), p206.

*“As far as international relations is concerned – and it is as well to put in the caveat, for Burton has gone well beyond the limits of the discipline – he has actually provided a framework within which international relations can be both located and reinvigorated. If it had discrete concerns once, it has problems now (for example, making old words work in a new world, setting a new agenda, addressing emergent novelties) and Burton, for all that he has been marginalized and dismissed, offers more than many others in terms of pointers as to where we go from here.”*³³¹

Mann is another theorist (notably a historical sociologist) who has offered definitions of world society and power that seem to rest on a structurationist methodology. In the first volume of *The Sources of Social Power*, where he sets out the conceptual framework of the ensuing historical analysis, he claims that “societies are constituted of multiple overlapping and intersecting sociospatial networks of power. [...] They are not social systems (closed or open); they are not totalities”. Indeed, Mann argues that, if he could, he “would abolish the concept of ‘society’ altogether”, since there “is no master concept or basic unit of ‘society’”³³². He is thus in agreement with Burton that to “conceive of societies as confederal, overlapping, intersecting networks rather than as simple totalities complicates theory”, but adds “we must introduce further complexity.”³³³ And it is not, he states, that the contemporary world is exceptional in this regard, thus undermining the argument, made by many ‘globalisation’ theorists, that contemporary global interdependency is a relatively new phenomenon. On the contrary, “[i]n prehistory, trading and cultural interaction was of enormously greater extent than could be controlled by any ‘state’ or other authoritative network” – “the forms of overlap and intersection have varied considerably, but they have always been there.”³³⁴

*“Human beings need to enter into social power relations, but they do not need social totalities. They are social, but not societal, animals.”*³³⁵

³³¹ Ibid, p208.

³³² Mann, Michael. (1986), p1.

³³³ Ibid, p17.

³³⁴ Ibid, p16-17.

³³⁵ Ibid, p14.

As already mentioned in the previous chapter however, like Giddens, Mann offers only a four-faceted taxonomy of the sources of social power that he believes are 'primary' or 'determining' in societies – namely the ideological, economic, military and political (IEMP) relationships. According to Mann, these are: i) overlapping networks of social interaction (not dimensions, levels, or factors of a single social totality); and ii) organisations, institutional means of attaining human goals.³³⁶ The methodology that he adopts is distinctly structuralist and is summarised best in his own words:

"I operate at a more concrete, sociospatial and organizational level of analysis. The central problems concern organization, control, logistics, communication – the capacity to organize and control people, materials, and territories, and the development of this capacity throughout history.

The four sources of social power offer alternative organizational means of social control. In various times and places each has offered enhanced capacity for organization that has enabled the form of its organization to dictate for a time the form of societies at large. My history of power rests on measuring sociospatial capacity for organization and explaining its development."³³⁷

Mann's concept of agency is made up of organisational power – "in pursuit of their goals, humans enter into cooperative, collective power relations with one another."³³⁸ By this he does not mean that the driving force of human society is institutionalisation – it is rather that humans need to enter into various networks of extensive and intensive power relations in order to achieve their goals in life. And this can happen in direct conflict with existing institutions, or it may happen "unintentionally and 'interstitially' – between their interstices and around their edges – creating new relations and institutions that have unanticipated consequences for the old."³³⁹ This also answers the question why the masses do not always revolt – because "they lack collective organization to do otherwise [...] They are *organizationally outflanked*"³⁴⁰. He does not mean that power relations themselves are always so very organised however, distinguishing between 'authoritative' power (which is actually wielded by groups and institutions) and

³³⁶ Ibid, p2.

³³⁷ (Emphasis in original) Ibid, p2-3.

³³⁸ Ibid, p6-7.

³³⁹ Ibid, p15.

³⁴⁰ (Emphasis in original) Ibid, p7.

‘diffused’ power (which typically comprises an understanding that practices are natural or moral or result from self-evident common interest).³⁴¹

Different relations or institutions may be relevant in each of the four sources of social power, says Mann. The simplest empirical proof to this, he claims, is the typical answer to the simple question ‘in which society do you live?’ Answers generally refer either to national states or to a broader ‘economic society’ (e.g. ‘the West’ or ‘industrial society’). Delve deeper however and it becomes more complex, as more and more identities are included. Mann explains this eloquently in the following statement:

“Human beings do not create unitary societies but a diversity of intersecting networks of social interaction. The most important of these networks form relatively stably around the four power sources in any given social space. But underneath, human beings are tunneling ahead to achieve their goals, forming new networks, extending old ones, and emerging most clearly into our view with rival configurations of one or more of the principal power networks.”³⁴²

He does not leave it there however. Not only are societies confederal, overlapping and intersecting networks, as opposed to simple totalities – they also “weave across each other in the historical process”.³⁴³ And, most importantly, we can never know in which direction they will go. The four sources of social power are therefore ‘tracklaying vehicles’ (here he amends Weber’s railway metaphor of ‘switchmen’ to describe the power of religious ideas), which lay “different gauges of track across the social and historical terrain.” More importantly, “the tracks do not exist before the direction is chosen”.³⁴⁴

The problem with Mann’s IEMP model as it stands however is that it remains ‘state’-centric. For, despite his wish to abolish the concept of ‘society’, Mann seems to be quite content with the concept of ‘state’. The reason for this is to be found in his definition of ‘political power’, which he “restrict[s] [...] to regulations and coercion centrally administered and territorially bounded – that is,

³⁴¹ Ibid, p8.

³⁴² Ibid, p16.

³⁴³ Ibid, p16.

³⁴⁴ Ibid, p28.

to state power”.³⁴⁵ Such a narrow definition of political power not only excludes from analysis the political power of ‘non-state’ actors, but also that of structured processes such as gender and culture. Despite his overemphasis of the autonomous power of the ‘state’ however, Mann is credited (by Ferguson and Mansbach) with having recognised “that there is a good deal more to the story than Westphalian polities.”³⁴⁶

“[T]here is no logical, historical, or empirical justification for universalizing the Westphalian polity, which is only one of many forms of political organization. A reality of overlapping authorities, organizing citizens in different ways and attracting their resources for limited purposes, is messier than the myth of a system of states, but it is closer to what actually prevails in the world.”³⁴⁷

As the above quotation makes clear, Ferguson and Mansbach replace the concept of ‘state’ altogether with the concept of ‘polities’, in order to be able to include all of the ‘forms of political organisation [...that] prevail[] in the world’. Polities are defined by the authors as being “entities with a significant measure of institutionalization and hierarchy, identity and capacity to mobilize persons for value satisfaction (or relief from value deprivation).” A polity’s domain “includes the persons who identify with it, the resources (including ideological resources) it has, and the issue(s) it affects. No polity is omnipotent, controlling all persons and resources with regard to all issues.” And “[a]lthough all polities have a territory of sorts – where the persons that identify with the polity are – that territory need not be clearly demarcated. A polity need not have a ‘center’, although it is (in their view) a disadvantage for it not to have one – or to have more than one, like the medieval papacy at one stage or the late Roman Empire.”³⁴⁸ They stress that “a polity in our conception is distinguishable from any unitary notion of society” (about which they agree “Mann rightly cautions”) and is also distinguishable from “social networks”. This is because “social networks, interactions, or transactions – for example, a market – that produce value satisfaction may lack sufficient identity, institutionalization, and hierarchy to be a polity.” Instead, they will only

³⁴⁵ Ibid, p26.

³⁴⁶ Ferguson, Yale H. – Mansbach, Richard W. (1996b), p32.

³⁴⁷ Ibid, p16.

³⁴⁸ (My emphasis) Ferguson, Yale H. – Mansbach, Richard W. (1996a), p22.

allow “organized social groups, from families to transnational firms” to be polities.³⁴⁹

This thesis will also use the term ‘polity’ rather than ‘state’ to describe the relevant entities that operate in world society, using a modified version of the definition offered by Ferguson and Mansbach above. Before embarking on a critique of their definition as it stands however, it is important to note that – however it is defined – a polity is as much an epistemological concept as any other. Indeed, just as the concept of ‘state’, it cannot be said to have existed in exactly the same form across time and space and thus cannot be granted the status of an ontological concept. The problem with Ferguson and Mansbach’s definition as it stands however is that it leaves out of analysis many other forms of polity that have had an effect on the structures of world society through the power of agency.

A polity in this thesis takes Ferguson and Mansbach’s basic definition as read – as an entity that has the capacity to mobilise persons for value satisfaction (or relief from value deprivation) that includes the persons who identify with it, the resources (including ideological resources) it has and the issue(s) it affects. It is thus an entity which has the ability to reproduce or transform structures of power for its (members) own purposes – in other words, although it certainly includes ‘states’, it is not restricted to ‘states’ alone, but rather includes all entities that are relevant in the politics of world society, whether they be political, economic, religious or other socio-political entities. It is on their final point however – that only organised social groups (and not other, less organised social groups or social networks) constitute polities – that I find I cannot agree with Ferguson and Mansbach, as it thus omits from analysis not only organised social networks but also more informal and diffuse networks and groups, such as those found within patriarchal structures. For while these networks of power may operate on widespread and sometimes even purely cognitive levels, without a centre of authority, they necessarily require agency to maintain them. They may be so diffuse that it is difficult to attribute individual agency or locate any organisational structure to them but agency is fundamental to their operation and this agency is

³⁴⁹ Ferguson, Yale H. – Mansbach, Richard W. (1996b), p34.

not limited to the individual man or woman alone. Instead, it is usually a question of collective agency (in the form of social networks or groups, however loosely defined or organised) that reproduces or transforms these structures.

The reason that Ferguson and Mansbach are epistemologically 'forced' to omit these social groups and networks from their concept of polity is due to their equally problematic claim that a polity must have a hierarchy. Indeed, they generally seem to be at a loss when it comes to these more diffuse forms of social power, since they state that, in some cases, "authorities are more difficult to locate in a precise way because of the diffuse manner in which an interest is organized – gender, class, race, ethnicity – but role models or spokespersons can usually be identified."³⁵⁰ They define authority as "the ability to exercise influence or control across space over persons, resources, and issue outcomes; in other words, it is the capacity to govern"³⁵¹ and claim that "[v]irtually all polities have some means of disciplining or coercing persons within their domain."³⁵²

Authority and the means to discipline and coerce are not seen in this thesis as being the sole property of certain, individual agents within a polity however, although such hierarchical structures do of course exist. Thus, authority here not only includes the capacity of certain specific individuals or groups to *govern over* others but also includes the capacity of all agents within a structure (the 'oppressed' as well as the 'oppressors') to *govern together* by mutually creating, reproducing or transforming the structure in question. For structures do not have authority in and of themselves – indeed, this would be to totally remove agency from the equation. Structures may provide certain agents within them with more authority than others, but it is not the structures themselves that hold this authority. No matter how vast or dispersed the group in question, as in the case of patriarchal structures, it is agency that always lies at the root of the structure, either working to reproduce or transform the structure in question.

³⁵⁰ Ibid, p26.

³⁵¹ Ibid, p35.

³⁵² Ibid, p35.

Moreover, even if a spokesperson can be located that advocates social division along the lines of gender, class, race or ethnicity, they are usually not the authorities behind these divisions. This is not to deny the fact that such cases have certainly existed throughout history, in the form of socio-political preachers advocating social separation on the basis of their beliefs. It is the argument here however that these cases do not constitute the norm of most everyday social segregation. Indeed, although divisions of identity do build on human interaction and thus agency, this agency is usually so diffuse that it is difficult to attribute individual agency and thus responsibility. The limits of agency in such diffuse cases cannot therefore be attributed to a particular hierarchical authority but rather to all human interaction within that polity, which can operate on both individual *and* collective levels.

To continue with the example of patriarchal structures, these are not maintained because a group of men somewhere have the authority to discipline and coerce other men and women into submission, but are instead the result of more diffuse networks of human agency – across time and space – which ultimately need not include all men and can and usually also do include women. Wight's three-faceted concept of agency can help here to maintain the distinction between patriarchy as a structure and patriarchy as agency. Patriarchy as a structure is the social organisation of men and women according to divisions of gender. Agency₁ refers to the individual men and women within the structure. Agency₂ – as the socio-cultural system into which persons are born and develop – is the level at which the patriarchal structure (and all other structures besides) either facilitate or constrain the men and women located at agency₁ to either reproduce or transform the structure. Agency₃ – as the 'positioned-practice' places which agents₁ may or may not inhabit – refers to the hierarchical positions of authority that Ferguson and Mansbach claim are essential for a polity to maintain power over agency₂ and agency₁. And it is on this final point that I disagree with them. Depending of course on agency₂ and thus their positional placing within the patriarchal structure, the men and women in agency₁ are perfectly capable of either reproducing or transforming the structure without agency₃ – Wight's distinction between social groups (as either informally or formally structured) and organisations (as formally structured) is again useful here. For although it certainly helps a polity in its

agentic capacities to have a formal organisation, it does not necessarily need to have one in order to have an impact on world society – the power of consumers to boycott certain goods for being deemed socially unacceptable proving another case in point. For although these consumers may be steered in their opinions by advocacy or media groups and organisations, their ability as consumers to mobilise and change structures of power is not necessarily dependent on hierarchical organisation, but can sometimes operate in a quite arbitrary, almost spontaneous fashion.

It is important here to once again distinguish between agency and structure, at the same time as recognising their interdependency. Agency is never restricted solely to a ‘polity’ but rather operates across and between structures – this is what Foucault meant when he said that power is everywhere, exercised by all agents except in cases of total domination. It is also the argument here however that a structure of power – such as a patriarchal structure – can, through its organisational capacities to place agents in different positions of power, also operate as a ‘polity’. For a patriarchal structure can also function as an entity in society that can be used to mobilise persons according to its values and will as such also comprise of persons who identify with it, the resources (including ideological resources) it has, and the issue(s) it affects. It does not however necessarily need to have an organised structure, with people in positions of authority dictating the rules and norms of that structure. This is not an attempt to reduce structure to agency – as already mentioned, structures operate by constraining or facilitating all agency within them, depending on the positional placing of the agents in question – but it is an attempt to ‘humanise’ structures. For as networks of power, structures operate solely through the agency of their members and as such cannot be reduced to somehow being inhuman structures that exist freely of human agency.

It is useful here to recall Wight’s distinction between social groups, organisations and institutions. Although Wight is against any attempts to ascribe agency (and thus responsibility) onto organisations and institutions (much less structures), stating that it is instead always the individuals who are at the centre of these who are the relevant agents, his distinction between the three does help to define

collective agency more thoroughly than Ferguson and Mansbach manage in their definition of polities. While a social group, for example, may eventually grow into an organisation with a formalised hierarchical structure, it may equally comprise of a collective with no clear hierarchical structure – the relative successes of local uprisings such as those organised by the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo in Argentina (a group of mothers who met once a week to protest against the disappearance of their children) to change existing political structures constituting a case in point. For although this particular group did eventually expand into a large, organised group that eventually branched off into two separate organisations, its initial successes were due solely to the collective efforts of fourteen mothers to find their missing children.³⁵³ So while Ferguson and Mansbach restrict their notion of collective agency to solely encompassing organisations, this thesis extends the definition to also include more informal social groups and networks, as well as institutional agency, such as that found in patriarchal structures.

It is highly probable however that Wight would be just as opposed to the term polity as he is to the term state, if it meant the ‘personification’ of that polity, by attributing agency and responsibility onto the organisation or institution per se. That is not the intention here however, for the agency and thus responsibility always belongs to the individuals or groups who have the capacity to act within the relevant polity in question. The argument here is that – by including individuals, social groups and social networks as well as organisations – the term polity, as it is defined here, not only avoids the personification of abstract institutions and structures but also and importantly allows for the study of other entities in world society than states alone.

“The fundamental form of domination in our society is based on the organizational capacity of the dominant elite that goes hand in hand with its capacity to disorganize those groups in society which, while constituting a numerical majority, see their interests partially (if ever) represented only within the framework of the fulfillment of the dominant interests. Articulation of the elites,

³⁵³ Bosco, Fernando J. (2001)

*segmentation and disorganization of the masses seem to be the twin mechanisms of social domination in our societies. In short: elites are cosmopolitan, people are local [...]*³⁵⁴

Another sociologist who has written about the power of networks is Manuel Castells. His theory of a network society is an interesting, if slightly ‘space-age’ notion of world order which, contrary to mainstream IR theories, can instead be criticised for attaching too little significance to the power of the ‘state’. According to Castells, the ‘nation-state’ today constitutes merely a node in the ‘network-state’, which is instead a complex make-up of various actors – financial institutions, NGOs etc. Global power is to be found in these networks of organisations – indeed, the network society is itself global, leaving outside everything that is not valued by the networks. It is the network that defines the power holder – for example, the US is the power holder of state military power, while the financial markets are the power holders of global capitalism. This brings Castells to the rather radical conclusion that the question of power therefore hopelessly dissolves in the network society. This does not mean that power is non-existent however – on the contrary, it is held by many different networks.³⁵⁵

*“From the pinnacles of power and their cultural centers, a series of symbolic socio-spatial hierarchies are organised, so that lower levels of management can mirror the symbols of power and appropriate such symbols by constructing second-order spatial communities that will also tend to isolate themselves from the rest of society, in a succession of hierarchical segregation processes that, together, are tantamount to socio-spatial fragmentation.”*³⁵⁶

Castells’ hypothesis of global power holders thus has two main categories: i) *programmers* – power holders who have the capacity to programme a particular network to reach certain goals; and ii) *switchers* – power holders who have the capacity to incorporate, or switch between the various networks. The actors in Castells’ theory are humans but they are not individuals – they are instead networks of actors or elites. The process of programming a network is specific to each particular network and each programme is generated by ideas and culture. Thus, ideological hegemony precedes the ability to programme a network. Due to their ability to switch between the various networks, the switchers are more

³⁵⁴ Castells, Manuel. (1996), p415.

³⁵⁵ Castells, Manuel. (2004)

³⁵⁶ Castells, Manuel. (1996), p416-417.

powerful than the programmers, as the connections make possible an even greater power. Indeed, each network left on its own is instead quite fragile.³⁵⁷

The primary mechanism of domination is therefore through presence in the networks – you are either in or out. The power of the media, for instance, is in its networks, not in its ownership, as otherwise stated by many other structural theorists. Similarly to Gramsci's notion of counter-hegemony, Castells' theory also allows for the concept of counter-power, as the resistance to power is also operated through the programming of power. Activists can both try to re-programme individual networks, by campaigning to impose new regulations or values in the networks – e.g. actions taken against the WTO and the global financial market – or they can try to block the switches – eg. through acts of terrorism.³⁵⁸

Castells' theory of power is obviously very different to the traditional strands in IR of realist and structuralist theory. He allows almost no priority to state agency, nor does he allow structures to consume the agency of networks. The main problem with his theory can be summarised in the same way however. By totally disregarding the agency of states, he cannot even begin to problematise the concept of US hegemony since, in his view, it simply does not exist. This is clearly a view of society that does little to explain current trends in world relations. Completely disregarding the importance of US power does not seem credible, as does handing all power over to diffuse, nameless networks, which somehow operate outside of individual human agency. Castells seems to demand that we hit fast forward and transport ourselves to a dimension of world politics that quite simply does not yet exist. Old traditional 'networks' of power – namely those between states – still have too much importance in the structure of world order to be so totally disregarded.

“The social scientists, in politics and economics especially, cling to obsolete concepts and inappropriate theories. These theories belong to a more stable and orderly world than the one we

³⁵⁷ Castells, Manuel. (2004)

³⁵⁸ Ibid.

live in. It was one in which the territorial borders of states really meant something. But it has been swept away by a pace of change more rapid than human society had ever before experienced."³⁵⁹

One IR theorist who already 20 years ago argued for the declining relevance of the 'state' in world politics, but who was equally fundamentally opposed to what she called the "string of vague and woolly words" that have tried to fill the holes left in IR discourse, namely 'globalisation', 'interdependence' and 'global governance', is Susan Strange. Such terminology "often serves to dull or even conceal the reality of relationships, the crude facts of structural power over other governments and over other societies", she stated.³⁶⁰ Claiming that "politics is larger than what politicians do, and what power can be exercised – and is every day being exercised – by non-state authorities as well as by governments", Strange called for a 'new realism' that could "look seriously at the power exercised by authorities other than states".³⁶¹

*"the realist school of thought in international relations has held that in the last resort military power and the ability to use coercive force to compel the compliance of others must always prevail. In the last resort, this is undeniably true. But in the real world, not every relationship is put under such pressure. Not every decision is pushed to such extremes. There are many times and places where decisions are taken in which coercive force, though it plays some part in the choices made, does not play the whole, and is not the only significant source of power."*³⁶²

Strange conceded that her work was closely related to that of Giddens in sociology, although she called 'structuration' a "rather clumsy term".³⁶³ Indeed, Strange was one of the first IR theorists to offer a relational definition of world power. Although she proclaimed herself to be a realist, as Robert Cox makes clear "she certainly cannot be classified with those theorists who posit an exclusively state-centered view of world political economy or with the oversimplifications of neorealism."³⁶⁴ She did however focus heavily on economic power, stating that "the impersonal forces of world markets, integrated over the postwar period more by private enterprise in finance, industry and trade than by the cooperative

³⁵⁹ Strange, Susan. (1996), p3-4.

³⁶⁰ Ibid, pxii.

³⁶¹ Ibid, pxiv-xv.

³⁶² (Emphasis in original) Ibid, p31-32.

³⁶³ Ibid, px.

³⁶⁴ Cox, Robert W. (1981b), p183.

decisions of governments, are now more powerful than the states to whom ultimate political authority over society and economy is supposed to belong.”³⁶⁵

*“[P]olitics is a common activity; it is not confined to politicians and their officials. [...] Power over outcomes is exercised impersonally by markets and often unintentionally by those who buy and sell and deal in markets. [...] Authority in society and over economic transactions is legitimately exercised by agents other than states, and has come to be freely acknowledged by those who are subject to it.”*³⁶⁶

Claiming not to have much patience with semantic discussions as to whether power should be broadly or narrowly defined, Strange “prefer[red] to stick with a larger, more all-inclusive definition of power. Power is simply the ability of a person or group of persons so to affect outcomes that their preferences take precedence over the preferences of others.”³⁶⁷ Hers was a relational approach, which she admitted made analysis more complicated – “if, and when, you have to add will and skill to the kind of resources of men (and women) and material that can be counted, you have added two unquantifiable and often largely unpredictable factors to the equation.”³⁶⁸

Strange identified four *primary* structures of power in the international system: i) security; ii) finance; iii) production; and iv) knowledge, and four *secondary* power structures that are subordinate to and ruled by the primary structures, namely: i) trade; ii) communication; iii) energy; and iv) welfare. The four primary structures are held together in a four-faceted triangular pyramid or tetrahedron, where each plane touches the other three and is held in place by them.³⁶⁹ The possessor of any of these types of power is “able to change the range of choices open to others, without apparently putting pressure directly on them to take one decision or to make one choice rather than others.”³⁷⁰

³⁶⁵ Strange, Susan. (1996), p4.

³⁶⁵ Cox, Robert W. (1981b), p183.

³⁶⁶ Strange, Susan, (1996), p12-13.

³⁶⁷ Ibid, p17.

³⁶⁸ Ibid, p18.

³⁶⁹ Strange, Susan. (1994), p26 & 139-140.

³⁷⁰ Ibid, p31.

Strange also spoke of a 'hegemonic obsession' within IR theory, that has "tended to exclude all other questions relating to the nature and use of power in the world system [...] Power is still seen primarily as capabilities, as a property of persons, or of nation-states as organised societies, not as a feature of relationships, nor as a social process affecting outcomes [...]".³⁷¹ Indeed, she used this claim to argue that, in the late 1980's, the US was much more powerful than academics cared to admit, who instead spoke of a hegemonic decline.³⁷²

However, despite her claim to combine structural and behavioural definitions of power, she has been criticised for falling onto the behavioural side of the structurationist 'fence'. Cox, amongst others, has criticised her for affording too much attention to behavioural power:

*"Perhaps her structural power sometimes seems to retain too much of relational power, when she speaks of the United States determining the frameworks. Perhaps she appears to underestimate the autonomy of frameworks, their basis in intersubjective meanings, in acquired and deeply rooted habits of thought, sustained, to be sure by a hierarchy of real power, but not necessarily shaped consciously by powerful states."*³⁷³

It is, perhaps, not surprising that it is Cox who claims to have this "quibble", given his own preference for theories of structural power. Indeed, by straddling the fence, Strange has attracted criticism from both sides of the theoretical divide. Other critics of her approach, such as Helge Hveem, have stated the opposite, meaning that she granted structural power too much weight in her theory of world power. He also criticises Strange for ignoring the links between different resources of power – an actor that can collect together its various resources, he states, has much more power than one that cannot.³⁷⁴

The main problem with Strange's theory is not that it tries to satisfy both sides, however. It is that it does so inadequately. Her definition of structural power remains centred on economic theory and as such does not delve as deeply into other power structures as the theories offered by, for example, Held. It is not just

³⁷¹ Strange, Susan. (1996), p21-23.

³⁷² Strange, Susan, (1988a).

³⁷³ Cox, Robert W. (1981b), p184.

³⁷⁴ Hveem, Helge. (1997), p25-26 on Strange, Susan. (1988b).

that she prioritises economic power however, but also that she speaks generally of primary and secondary structures of power, sub-setting trade, communication, energy and welfare under security, finance, production and knowledge. It is the argument here however that all structures of power – listed here under the twelve sites of power – are of equal importance to world relations of power. For despite her acknowledgement that military power is only superior ‘in the last instance’, Strange makes a similar mistake to that of the traditional realists she criticised, namely by giving some forms of power sole priority. This means that many other structures of power, such as those found in patriarchal structures, remain unidentified. This is exemplified when she writes of women’s empowerment – “[e]lectrical technology has liberated millions of women from the drudgery that imprisoned previous generations in the day-long labour of preparing food, keeping the family’s clothes clean and mended, and houses clean and warm.”³⁷⁵ It should be noted that this sentence constitutes one small reflection in a paragraph highlighting the overall importance of technology to empowerment, not just of women but in general. Nonetheless, her general view on the subject can be discerned – economics and technology are the way to empowerment, not cultural or social change. Indeed, there is no reflection in her analysis that her sentence implies that it is women who are expected to perform these ‘duties’ – power to her does not seem to include questions of social identity, leaving her structural account of power with gaping holes that cannot be filled by economic analyses alone.

Strange’s structural account of power is nonetheless richer than her behavioural one. For, as Hveem rightly points out, her combined theory leans more toward structuralism than behaviouralism – there is very little mention of behaviouralist power in her writings. As such it, it is a lopsided and unfinished theory. The importance of Strange’s contribution to the power debate in IR cannot be overestimated, however. Her demand to open up the concept of power for multidimensional analysis was much needed at the time of her writing and she left behind her an alternative to the traditional realist conception of power.

³⁷⁵ Strange, Susan. (1996), p8.

“Power is the production, in and through social relations, of effects that shape the capacities of actors to determine their circumstances and fate.”³⁷⁶

Strange is not the only IR theorist to have attempted a combined theory of power, however. Accusing IR and ‘global governance’ theorists respectively for not giving the concept of power “sustained consideration”³⁷⁷, Michael Barnett and Raymond Duvall also offer a multidimensional approach to the concept. As the above quotation suggests, they advocate a dualist concept of power, (as a combination of both behavioural and structural qualities), and suggest an alternative to the typical realist approach. They warn IR theorists that “[t]he failure to develop alternative conceptualizations of power limits the ability of international relations scholars to understand how global outcomes are produced and how actors are differentially enabled and constrained to determine their fates.”³⁷⁸ They thus argue that “scholars of international relations must work with multiple conceptions of power” and hope that their taxonomy “demonstrate[s] how a consideration of power’s polymorphous character will enhance and deepen theoretic understanding of international politics.”³⁷⁹

In order to reflect these multiple forms, Barnett and Duvall propose a taxonomy of four types of power: i) Compulsory; ii) Institutional; iii) Structural; and iv) Productive Power. Compulsory Power “is power as relations of *interaction of direct control* by one actor over another”, while Institutional Power, is “the control actors exercise *indirectly* over others through *diffuse relations of interaction*”. Structural Power is “the constitution of subjects’ capacities in *direct structural relation* to one another”, while Productive Power “is the socially *diffuse production of subjectivity* in systems of meaning and signification”.³⁸⁰ It is not clear, however, exactly how Barnett and Duvall’s taxonomy differs from traditional behaviouralist/structuralist theory. Indeed, on closer examination, their taxonomy consists only of the usual two components, namely agency and structure, not four as they claim. For, as shall be revealed below, not only do the

³⁷⁶ Barnett, Michael – Duvall, Raymond, (2005b), p3.

³⁷⁷ Barnett, Michael – Duvall, Raymond, (2005b), p2. / Barnett, Michael – Duvall, Raymond. (2005a)

³⁷⁸ Barnett, Michael – Duvall, Raymond, (2005a), p41.

³⁷⁹ Ibid, p40.

³⁸⁰ (My emphasis) Ibid, p43.

two categories of Institutional and Productive Power collapse into Compulsory (read behavioural) and Structural Power respectively, but Barnett and Duvall also seem to confuse structural and behavioural power in their description of institutional power.

To begin with the first two behavioural types of power – Compulsory and Institutional Power – rather than constituting separate forms of power as Barnett and Duvall claim, it is the argument here that both are related. Indeed, the only difference between them is the location of agency in each – a distinction which the authors oversimplify since, as shall be seen below, the location of agency across time and space is much more complex than simply constituting direct action in the present and indirect, institutional action in another time or place. In Barnett and Duvall's interpretation, however, compulsory power concerns direct control between actors in close spatial and temporal proximity to each other, while institutional power refers to indirect institutional control, across time and space.

The reason that Barnett and Duvall make a distinction between direct and indirect control is that they argue that it “becomes more difficult to observe power in operation the greater is the social distance”³⁸¹. To support this, they quote Dahl's claim that there is “no action at a distance”³⁸². The problem with this claim however is not only that it reduces institutional power to structure but also that it implicitly reifies that structural power as somehow being beyond agency, instead of seeing it as being continuously reproduced or transformed by agency in the present. Nonetheless, Barnett and Duvall back up Dahl's claim by maintaining that theorists such as Bhaskar and Giddens point to “specific relations [which] concern the direct causal/constitutive connection between actors that are in physical, historical, or social positional proximity.”³⁸³ This is to misinterpret Bhaskar and Giddens however. For, as already mentioned, both of these theorists include the notion of indirect control in their respective descriptions of the processes of transformation/structuration – across time and space – as well as direct control.

³⁸¹ Ibid, p47.

³⁸² Ibid, p47. / Dahl, Robert. (1957), p204.

³⁸³ Barnett, Michael – Duvall, Raymond. (2005a), p47.

The main problem with Barnett and Duvall's distinction between compulsory and institutional power is thus that it removes agency from the latter. This is exemplified when they write "A cannot necessarily be said to 'possess' the institution that constrains and shapes B."³⁸⁴ For although they are correct in stating that "rare is the institution that is completely dominated by one actor", this does not mean that "power is no longer a matter of A's direct effect on B"³⁸⁵ as they claim. Agency is always present in institutional power, however indirect or diffuse – it cannot be removed from the equation. Indeed, according to the interpretation of Wight's account of agency that is used in this thesis, institutional agency includes both the direct, individual agency of people in positions of power in agency₃, as well as the more diffuse, indirect agency of people located in agency₁ and agency₂, since all actors involved in an institutional arrangement help to reproduce or transform its structures. The added concepts of the 'ghosts' and 'myths' of agency that are offered in this thesis can also help to account for the indirect agency that Barnett and Duvall wish to include here – namely that agency which occurs either across or completely outside of (in the sense of never having occurred at all) time and space but that remains relevant to institutional power in the present.

It is the argument here therefore that direct and indirect control are not so easily separated as Barnett and Duvall advocate – agency at close temporal and spatial proximity can be just as complex and indirect as agency across time and space – indeed, this is not what separates the two. They argue that the 'faces of power' debate is imprecise and blurred³⁸⁶ – but it is the argument here that the 'faces' debate, once refined as it has been in this thesis, distinguishes between direct and indirect control more precisely than Barnett and Duvall's distinction between compulsory and institutional power – namely through decision-making, agenda-setting, manipulation and self-governance. It is thus the argument here that the refined account of the four faces of power, along with the interpretation of Wight's conception of agency that is offered in this thesis, more adequately

³⁸⁴ Barnett, Michael – Duvall, Raymond. (2005b), p15.

³⁸⁵ Ibid, p16.

³⁸⁶ Barnett, Michael – Duvall, Raymond. (2005a), p43. / Barnett, Michael – Duvall, Raymond. (2005b), p8.

describes the behavioural aspects of power than does Barnett and Duvall's rather simplified distinction between compulsory and institutional power.

When it comes to Barnett and Duvall's second two types of power – Structural and Productive Power – here the distinction is even more unclear. To begin with, Barnett and Duvall claim that institutional power “focuses on the constraints on interest-seeking action [whereas] structural power concerns the determination of social capacities and interests.”³⁸⁷ As already mentioned, their definition of institutional power as such collapses into structure, for what are the constraints on action if not structural constraints?

Furthermore, although they admit that “[p]roductive power and structural power overlap in several important respects”, they distinguish between the two by stating that “whereas [structural power] works through direct structural relations, [productive power] entails more generalized and diffuse social processes.”³⁸⁸ While it is clear that they are using productive power to account for systems of knowledge and diffuse social processes, it is again not clear that it is correct to separate these from structural relations on the basis that the latter are more direct. Indeed, this is not only to fall into the same trap as Strange's theory of power, by differentiating between different structures of power, but also suffers from the same problem as their behavioural definition, in that it is not clear that structural relations are direct while productive relations are indirect. This is made even less clear when they claim that, in productive relations, “the move is away from structures, per se, to systems of signification and meaning (which are structured, but not themselves structures) and to networks of social forces perpetually shaping one another.”³⁸⁹ This distinction relies heavily on the unfortunate structurationist distinction between structures and systems which, as already mentioned, risks reifying systems as somehow reproducing or transforming themselves outside of agency.

³⁸⁷ Barnett, Michael – Duvall, Raymond. (2005b), p18.

³⁸⁸ Barnett, Michael – Duvall, Raymond. (2005b), p20.

³⁸⁹ Ibid.

It is thus the argument here that productive power be granted the same status as structural power – as non-material structures, that are reproduced or transformed through agency and nothing else. For structural power not only manifests itself through the global networks of economy, culture, welfare and the like, but also, in the more Foucaultian sense, shapes and determines the very discourse and understanding of such processes. These discourses are only ever maintained through agency however, and the idea that the processes that determine these are somehow less direct than those which maintain material structures simply does not hold. Capitalism, for example, is no more direct in its structural power than structures that are built around religion or knowledge. All of them are maintained through human agency, which is either direct or indirect, depending upon the particular instance under study.

Another problem with power as Barnett and Duvall define it, is that they distinguish between negative power (such as constraint) and positive power (such as persuasion and collective choice), arguing that theories of power should only be concerned with the former. Moreover, they distinguish between power and resistance, admitting that the two are related but again, only defining power as the submission or disadvantage of some under others.³⁹⁰ As already mentioned, structures are not only reproduced but can also be transformed by agency – thus any concept of power must be able to take these, what Foucault termed the ‘positive’ aspects of power’, into account. It is also very difficult to distinguish between ‘positive’ and ‘negative’ power conceptually since, as already mentioned, this involves making assumptions about the ‘best’ interests of the agents involved. This can only be done on the empirical level, by ascertaining the perceived interests of the agents themselves and even then, one cannot be sure that one has distinguished between ‘good’ and ‘bad’ power.

To summarise, although Barnett and Duvall are right to problematise IR’s current conceptualisation of power, their attempt to bridge the gap between structuralists and behaviouralists seems instead to create even more divides, further obstructing any chances of uniting, through structuration, structuralist and behaviouralist

³⁹⁰ Barnett, Michael – Duvall, Raymond. (2005a), p42. / Barnett, Michael – Duvall, Raymond. (2005b), p22-23.

theory. For although their overall review of the differences between the various IR schools of thought remains both insightful and instructive, their attempt at a taxonomy fails due to collapsing structure and agency into each other. It is therefore high time to introduce the concept of power that will be used in this thesis, in the hope that this will rectify some of the issues raised here and open up for a debate on the more precise distinctions between structural and behavioural power in world relations.

World Society – A World of ‘Glocalised’ Polities

The reader may have noticed by this point that I have chosen to use the terms ‘world society’ or ‘world relations’, (apart from when I refer to other IR theorists on the subject), instead of using the favoured term ‘international’ as advocated by the very name of the discipline itself. This is simply because a deconstruction of the term ‘state’ also entails a deconstruction of the term ‘international’. For although the terms ‘state’ and ‘nation’ should certainly not be conflated, as they denote very different forms of political organisation, they are very similar in that both are quite recent constructs. As such, they are not the only possible political arrangements imaginable in ‘world society’ and the term ‘international’ – denoting relations solely between ‘nations’ (*not* states) – should be left to reflect only as much (or as little). Indeed, as Burton makes clear: “[T]he recognized term ‘international relations’ is really concerned with inter-*state* relations.”³⁹¹

I do not take ‘world society’ to include *all* the relationships present in ‘global’, ‘interhuman’ or ‘first-order society’ however. For, as Barry Buzan points out, there is “not much to be gained, and quite a lot to be lost analytically, from simply using world society as a label for the totality of human interaction in *all forms* and *at all levels*.”³⁹² However, while I agree with him that not all human interaction is politically relevant to the workings of ‘world society’, I do question whether it is really possible to define the concept without *crossing all levels* of human society and agency. For if ‘non-state’ actors are to be truly incorporated into IR theory (and not just added on as an afterthought), then the discipline has at least to be *theoretically* prepared to include both individuals and collective actors from all levels of world society, even if the prevalence of these actors can vary over time and space. Thus, in this paper, I take ‘world society’ to be that which is formed by the interaction of ‘polities’ on a global level – a ‘world of polities’ in other words.

As already mentioned, a polity in this thesis denotes an entity with a significant measure of institutionalisation, identity and capacity to mobilise persons for value satisfaction (or relief from value deprivation) in world relations. This definition

³⁹¹ (My emphasis) Burton, John W. (1972), p70.

³⁹² (My emphasis) Buzan, Barry. (2004), p2.

differs from Ferguson and Mansbach's original definition³⁹³ in that it does not include the concept of hierarchy, thus enabling the analysis of more diffuse forms of human interaction, *as well as* more traditional, hierarchical forms of polity, such as the 'state'. The definition here of the domain of a polity, however, remains much as Ferguson and Mansbach intended it, in that it includes the persons who identify with it, the resources (including ideological) it has, and the issue(s) it affects. Since processes or structures of power cannot exist freely of human agency, the domain of a polity is thus determined by the sum of its parts – i.e. its human members – and not on more exclusive notions such as physical space – i.e. territory. Indeed, a polity's territory in this paper is simply defined as the persons who make up that polity. Similarly, I agree with Ferguson and Mansbach that no polity is omnipotent, although as to whether it is a disadvantage for the polity not to have a centre³⁹⁴ – here again I would tend to disagree. For, as already mentioned, in the cases of more diffuse social divisions, there does not necessarily need to be a centre of authority advocating that division.

The use of 'world society' and 'polities' (instead of 'international relations' and 'states') thus eliminates the unhelpful distinction that is traditionally made in IR theory between 'state' and 'non-state' actors and also means that it is possible to include all political processes and thus agents and structures of power that are relevant on a global scale. These polities can comprise of individuals and/or collective actors from all levels of world society. For it is my argument that there is always at least a *potential* for individuals and collective actors from any part of world society to be a part of the larger picture and change its structures. And the fact that this potential exists means that these actors and processes must be allowed 'access' to any theory of world society. For while world society – as a matter of fact – is certainly not all-inclusive in its current state (in that it certainly does not include *all* members in their capacities to change its structures) these structures do change over time, and thus also the arrangements of actors within them. Those who have no capacity to change things today may very well have the capacity tomorrow and should not therefore be excluded from theoretical

³⁹³ Ferguson, Yale H. – Mansbach, Richard W. (1996b).

³⁹⁴ Ferguson, Yale H. – Mansbach, Richard W. (1996a), p22.

frameworks simply in order to freeze a short and distinct moment in both time and space.

Having thus established the definition of world society that will be used in this thesis – namely as a world of polities – it is time to examine more closely how these polities relate to one another, more specifically in relations of power. And this is not only a question of interaction – on individual as well as collective levels – in the here and now, but also, importantly, a question of how these interactions change *over time and space*.

Relations of Power – The Interaction of ‘Polities’ Across Time and Space

It is thus the argument here that polities – which all operate under varying structural constraints – shape world society through processes of ‘glocalisation’ – a term I have adapted from Roland Robertson.³⁹⁵ As has already been mentioned, ‘globalisation’ is a rather woolly and imprecise term that sets out to homogenise what are varied global and local relations across time and space. As Robertson put it, “[t]here is indeed a ‘mythology about globalisation’ [...] Much of the talk about globalisation, has almost causally, tended to assume that it is a process which overrides locality, including large-scale locality [...] This tendency neglects two things. First, it neglects the extent to which what is called local is in large degree constructed on a global, or least a pan- or super-local, basis. In other words, much of the promotion of locality is in fact done ‘from above’. [...] Second [...] there has been little attempt to connect the discussion of time-and-space to the thorny issue of universalism-and-particularism.”³⁹⁶

‘Glocalisation’ thus tries to rectify this falsely dichotomised polarity between the ‘global’ and the ‘local’, by maintaining the contextual variance of global forces, not only according to place but also according to temporal and other structural forces that are relevant in each particular context. For, as Robertson points out, “we should become much more historically conscious of the various ways in which the deceptively modern, or postmodern, problem of the relationship between the global and the local, the universal and the particular and so on, is not by any means as unique to the second half of the twentieth century as many would have us believe.”³⁹⁷

³⁹⁵ Robertson, Roland. (1994) / Robertson, Roland. (1995)

³⁹⁶ Robertson, Roland. (1994), p34-35.

³⁹⁷ Ibid, p38.

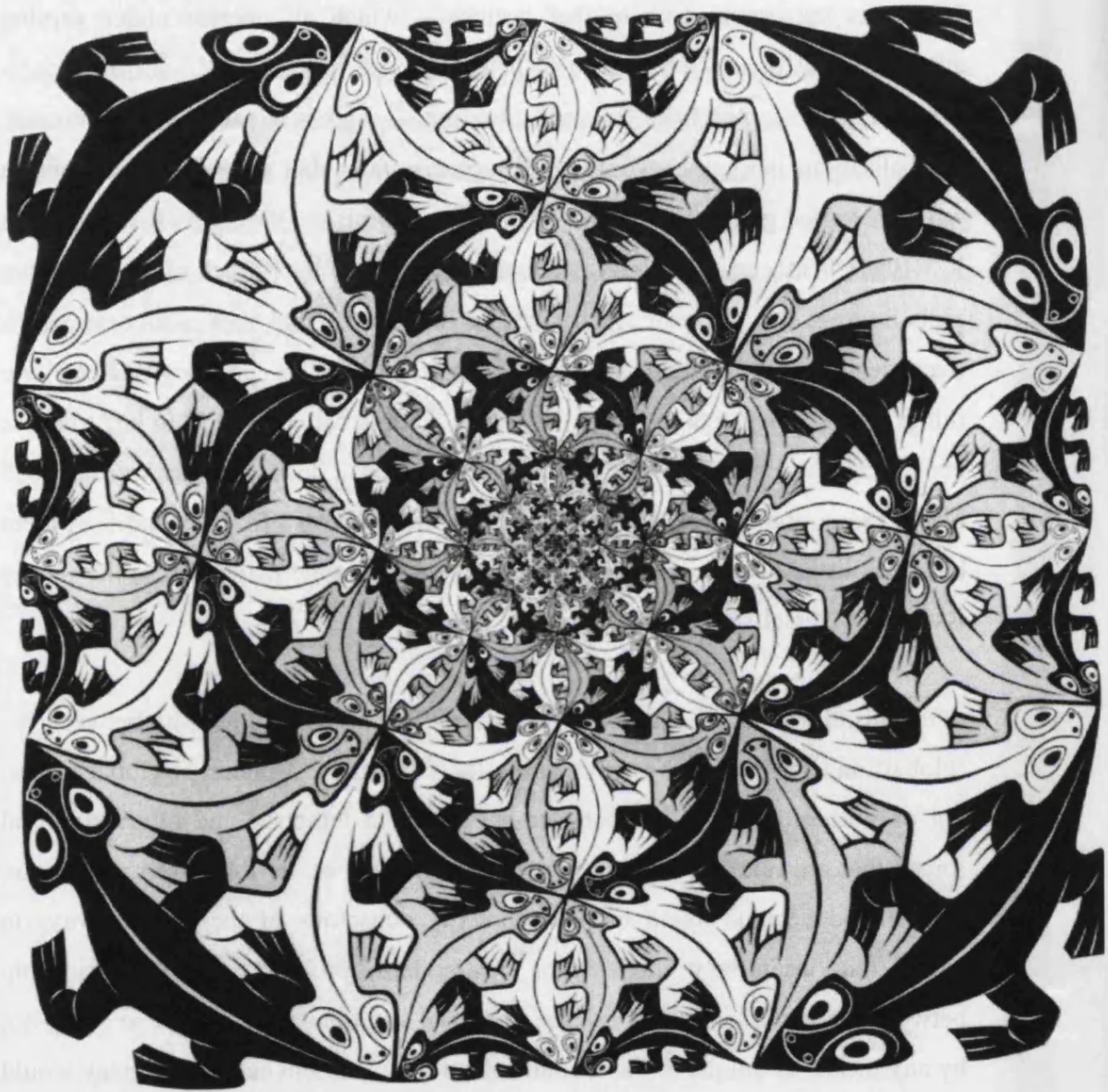


Figure 1:
Escher – Smaller and Smaller
(taken from the M. C. Escher Website)

Figure 1 above, by the illusionist Escher, may help to illustrate this, my structured/Foucaultian 'glocalised' concept of world power more fully. At first glance, it resembles the image of a mathematical fractal that appears to continue until infinity, replicating the same processes over and over again. And so it gives the illusion of a network of individuals that spirals in towards infinity, with an endless number of agents and structures. It is, however, just that – an illusion – since it is clear that the finite point is the single body in the middle. And although this body, or individual, will probably comprise of multiple identities, and possibly even personalities, he/she is, all the same, only one agent, with only the capacity to do as much as one agent can possibly do on their own. Together with others, however, it is a completely different story, since structures/relationships will either constrain or facilitate this individual in his/her actions. And, as we pull out from the centre of the image towards the greater networks, we can see that the size and thus capacity of the agent becomes greater, the further out we go. At the furthest point, one individual is suddenly granted phenomenal capacities of human agency, that barely and frequently do not fit into one body alone – hence the need to also study collective actors. This 'individual' agency is, however, also an illusion, since it depends on support from the structures/relationships of many other individuals besides. So while 'individuals' at this outer section of humanity certainly can and do perform individual acts that affect structures/relationships of enormous magnitude, their capacity to do so depends on the very survival of those structures/relationships. Without them, these bodies too are reduced to the insignificant figure in the centre.

The question is – where does one place a world polity in this Escherian image of society? Do we try to section off the bodies some way down towards the centre – a messy job in itself, since they are all entangled – so that we only see the top levels of society? If so, what do we miss? Well, to begin with, we miss the mutually constitutive relationships that connect the 'top' layers to the 'bottom'. But we also miss the most important dynamics of society and thus of power itself – namely those which constrain certain individuals or networks to the 'bottom' of the social pile in the first place. And this is the whole point – we cannot divide society up into levels or strata if we wish to see the full dynamics of what is going on there.

The overlapping of different polities, across all levels of society, means that the IR theorist must be open to all forms of polity that have an effect on world society.

It is clear then that this is not a simple question of 'levels-of analysis', since there is always the possibility for change, and structures/relationships that seem 'natural' or pre-determined one day, can have disappeared the next. A network at the top may collapse and the individuals within it find themselves lost and alone in the centre again, or individuals from the centre can equally climb their way to the surface and change the structures/relationships that preside there. This is social life at its very simplest – as a set of spatial and temporal social relationships that either facilitate or constrain the individual in his/her life as a social agent. For time and space naturally also have a bearing on the range of relationships that is possible between polities. Unlike most structuration theory, however, which only includes time and space as the 'third dimensions' through which structures/relationships operate, I also take time and space themselves to constitute issues or resources over which humans can compete. I will expand on this later in the thesis, but the persistence of colonial or patriarchal structures/relationships, as well as the competition over their histories, are some examples of time and space as structured resources and issues of social power.

The notion that there is an infinite number of resources or issues that unite or divide these Escherian individuals is also illusionary, since there are only so many issues or resources over which humanity competes. These relate to fundamental human needs and desires – which, although multiple, are certainly not infinite. We are all, after all, but one kind of species, living a particular way of life on a particular planet, and although our ways of life (or actions) may differ enormously across the world, they are not so diverse that they surpass conception. This argument however, (which, in augmented form, also constitutes a paper in itself) brings us dangerously close to the dividing fault-line between Foucaultianism and structurationism. For while Ferguson and Mansbach (in true (albeit unstated) Foucaultian spirit) rather unhelpfully claim that there are as many issues or resources as there are actors and structures³⁹⁸, Giddens, Mann and Bourdieu all

³⁹⁸ Ferguson, Yale H. – Mansbach, Richard W. (1996b), p30.

restrict their respective 'lists' to only include four such issues, or as they call them 'sources' or 'resources' of power. They divide 're-/sources' into: i) political; ii) economic; iii) cultural/ideological/symbolic/discourse and; iv) social/legal/military 'power' respectively.³⁹⁹ The vast difference in the actual content of each of these four definitions naturally goes without saying, as it is near to impossible to conceive of social and military 're-/sources', for example, as denoting similar relationships of power. For although these 're-/sources' may and frequently do overlap, they cannot be said to mean the same thing. Indeed, the very fact that theorists so fundamentally disagree on what constitutes these 're-/sources'/issues of power reveals that there must be much more to the story than each of the four-faceted approaches can possibly recognise on their own.

In an attempt to bridge the Foucaultian/structurationist divide in this matter, therefore, it is the argument here that a compromise must be sought. For at the same time as the structurationist definitions fail to sufficiently cover the vast scope of 're-/sources' over which humanity competes, Ferguson and Mansbach's definition (where the possible number of issues totals the number of structures and agents) is useful only to a historian or an anthropologist, and not a social theorist wishing to more generally map the relationships of power that are possible in the human world. I have therefore chosen to use and augment an already much more extensive definition of 're-/sources'/'issues' offered by Held in his account of 'nautonomic structures'. This augmented definition includes twelve sites of power: i) the site of space; ii) the site of time; iii) the site of knowledge and aesthetics; iv) the site of morality and emotion; v) the site of identities; vi) the site of the body; vii) the site of welfare; viii) the site of culture/cultural life; ix) the site of civic associations; x) the site of the economy; xi) the site of the organisation of violence and coercive relations; xii) the site of regulatory and legal organisation.

And although Held's seven 'sites of power' certainly offer a more detailed view of the number of resources over which humanity competes than the previous four-faceted attempts, there are still in my view a few sites missing, namely: i) the site of space; ii) the site of time; iii) the site of knowledge and aesthetics; iv) the site of

³⁹⁹ Giddens, Anthony. (1984), p33. / Mann, Michael. (1986), p17. / Parker, John (on Bourdieu, Pierre). (2000), p48.

morality and emotion; and v) the site of identities. As already mentioned, Held switches between the notion of 'spheres' and 'sites' of power, without any reason given for why he does so. I have opted for the word 'site' throughout, as it in my view better denotes the idea of a node of human interaction than the words 'structure', 'sphere', 'freedom', 're-/source' or 'issue', all of which sound much more diffuse and thus void of human action.

Structurationism makes clear that the concepts of time and space are fundamental to any analysis of society. And these are usually included as the necessary but relegated 'third dimensions' in most structurationist theories – through which power and other relationships operate. It is one of the main arguments of this thesis however that they also themselves constitute structures and therefore resources of power over which humanity competes and that thus also differentially positionally place people in different capacities of agency. To begin with the concept of space for example, although Held, like Foucault, accounts for the human body as a site of power, both seem to forget about the planet Earth as a body – i.e. the natural environment. In general, the spatial (geographical and environmental) organisation of social life – as a competition over, for example, natural resources, demography and 'urbanisation' – is fundamental to relationships of power across the world. And of course the site of space, as all the other sites, interplays with the site of time – namely the historical organisation of social life. Relevant with regard to the site of time are, for example, the ongoing effects of colonialism and the continued prevalence of patriarchal structures around the world. For although the site of time may have its origins in the past, it is relevant today to the extent that certain relationships of power are still maintained in the present. I call this the 'ghost of agency' and will return to it later.

The next three sites denote non-material or cognitive structures of power, as highlighted by, for example Marx, Gramsci and Foucault, that are often left out of structurationist taxonomies of power. These are the sites of power that are internalised within each individual human being but which interact on an aggregate level through socialisation processes. They are thus just as dependent on processes of human interaction as other sites of power – and, just like the other sites of power, may operate independently, or shape and delimit other sites. The

first is the site of knowledge and aesthetics (linguistic, visual and sonic discourses) – again, a central concept to Foucault and other ‘post-modernists’, as well as Gramscian concepts of hegemony. This site can be exemplified in world power relations by the dominance of modern ‘Western’ academic and political discourses on ‘development’, ‘democracy’ and ‘Orientalism’/ ‘Occidentalism’, as well as by the ongoing ‘battles’ between Hollywood/Bollywood and various other forms of popular art and music around the world.

The second of the cognitive sites to be included here is the site of morality and emotion – argued here to be distinct from the former cognitive site in that this one denotes core psychological ethical and emotional codes, as opposed to the more ‘rationalised’ or ‘intellectualised’ ones of knowledge and aesthetics. For although these two sites, like all of the others, affect each other, the distinction I am trying to make here is that between the rationalising of core beliefs and emotions (the site of knowledge and aesthetics), and the actual core beliefs or feelings themselves (the site of morality and emotion). Examples of the latter include the deep-rooted ethical struggles between religion and secularism (as emotional struggles, not intellectualised debates), or equally contested and core emotional dichotomies such as the belief in monogamy or polygamy respectively.

The third and final cognitive site of power to be included here is the site of identities. This is held to be separate and distinct from Held’s site of culture/cultural life, which denotes the public and local – thus collective – organisation of identity. The cognitive site of identities that I have added here denotes instead the organisation of social life around the *individual* Self / Other, and as such is distinct from more organised Self / Other processes on a collective level. Examples of this include gender, race, ethnicity and class on the individual level – all of which can lead to a struggle within the same individual and thus lead to diverse struggles of power within supposedly homogenous human collectives (as found in Held’s site) such as gender, race, ethnicity and class. Indeed, this site problematises the very concept of homogeneity, for, as Foucault so succinctly put it – the individual or subject “is not a substance”.⁴⁰⁰

⁴⁰⁰ Foucault, Michel. (1996), p440.

My own account of the – now twelve – sites of power is therefore as follows:

- 1) *The Site of Time: the temporal organisation of social life (past, present and future), including the 'ghosts' and 'myths of agency', e.g. Westphalian polity, colonialism, patriarchal structures etc.*
- 2) *The Site of Space: the geographical and environmental organisation of social life, e.g. natural resources, demography, 'urbanisation' etc.*
- 3) *The Site of Knowledge & Aesthetics: the organisation of social life around knowledge and discourse, e.g. discourses such as 'development', 'democracy', 'Orientalism'/'Occidentalism' etc.*
- 4) *The Site of Morality & Emotion: the organisation of social life around morality and emotion, e.g. religion versus secularism, monogamy versus polygamy etc.*
- 5) *The Site of Identities: the organisation of social life around the Self and the Other, e.g. gender, race, ethnicity, class etc.*
- 6) *The Site of the Body: as Held's definition in Chapter Two*
- 7) *The Site of Welfare: as Held's definition in Chapter Two*
- 8) *The Site of Culture/Cultural Life: as Held's definition in Chapter Two*
- 9) *The Site of Civic Associations: as Held's definition in Chapter Two*
- 10) *The Site of the Economy: as Held's definition in Chapter Two*
- 11) *The Site of the Organisation of Violence and Coercive Relations: as Held's definition in Chapter Two*
- 12) *The Site of Regulatory and Legal Institutions: as Held's definition in Chapter Two*

Unlike most other theories of power, I do not give any of these sites of power precedence over the others. That is to say, economic or military power (in sites 10 and 11 respectively) are not considered to be more or less 'powerful' than any of the other sites. For while it is certainly *possible* that the site of the organisation of violence and coercive relations (military power) is more effective than all the other sites of power, this does not *necessarily* have to be the case, and therefore such potential empirical facts must be kept distinct from any such conceptual distinctions in the theory. Indeed, due to the interdependency of all of the sites, military power usually does not have precedence over other forms of power

(except in the final, total act of war), as it requires all of the other sites to survive. This brings us to the concept of existential power which, it is argued here, can come in many different forms. For military power is not the only form of power that can take the 'life' of human agency through total domination – this is also possible through economic, legal or other social means. And again, although social death is at least potentially reversible, until this is actually done, the effects of total domination on human agency remain the same – leaving no possibilities for action and resistance. As Foucault made clear, such instances are rare, but the fact that they can and do occur means that a theory of power must take them into account.

These sites of power shall be presented and argued for in further detail in the rest of this thesis, (where I present my own proposed structured account of world power) as it is my view that world power cannot and should not be analysed without also taking these five sites of power into account. Accounting for the sites of power alone will not suffice for a study of the relations of power that operate within and across them however – indeed, to do so would amount to little more than a singularly structural account of power. For, as I have tried to make clear, these sites, or structures, cannot exist – or, in the case of the physical ones such as the body, have no social meaning – without human agency. It is thus the task of the rest of the thesis to account for how these relationships of power are conceived here to operate, through both structure and agency.

Accounting for the sites of power alone will not suffice for a study of the relations of power that operate within and across them however – indeed, to do so would amount to little more than a singularly structural account of power. For, as I have tried to make clear, these sites, or structures, cannot exist – or, in the case of the physical ones such as the body, have no social meaning – without human relationships. And these relationships cannot exist at all without human agency. How then does the agency of power operate? Here, I turn to Wight's definition of three levels of agency, as well as more traditional notions of political power – namely those describing the political decision-making process – most famously summarised in the by now classical 'faces of power' debate. This may seem to be a most odd turn for a supposedly relational theory of power, in that the 'faces of

power' debate typically saw power as "transparent, expressed in an unambiguous and empirically demonstrable way in the decision-making process."⁴⁰¹ The point is, however, that including the concepts of decisions, non-decisions, manipulation and self-governance does not necessarily need to result in a definition of power as transparent and observable. Indeed, it is certainly not my intention to define power as such, or as a zero-sum game for that matter – another criticism made of more traditional 'faces of power' definitions.⁴⁰² I maintain instead that power exists within and across all of the aforementioned sites of power, not as an observable entity in itself, but rather as a potentially endless number of both observable and unobservable reciprocal relationships. However, these relationships, by their very definition, need human agency, and thus the *exercise* or *practice* of power, to survive. This human agency can be unconscious and without motive, but it still needs to include the vital ingredient, namely action itself. And action, fundamentally, is about making decisions – however unconscious or concealed these may be. Indeed, action cannot exist at all without the decision-making process and vice versa. Not all – indeed, probably very few – of these decisions will ever be observable or even conscious, but they nonetheless exist.

This can again be exemplified with the more traditional and favoured example of military power. As already mentioned, holding a gun to someone's head is only one of the many forms of existential power available to humanity. And it also needs to be viewed as something more than a simple 'do I//don't I?' decision of taking someone else's life. For behind that decision lie a multitude of other – individual and collective – decisions that have already been made. These are the more cognitive ones, denoted in my additional sites of power. To take someone's life for example – except in the rare cases of psychotic illnesses or accidents – is never a random act, but involves cognitive evaluations and thus decisions over different types of action that are deemed to be required at different times – social and ethical conditioning in other words. A culture that endorses violence, for example, is more likely to 'pull the trigger' than a culture that endorses pacifist actions. Thus, the decision of whether or not to pull the trigger has already, to some extent, been made before the actual decision itself. This is not to say that it

⁴⁰¹ Hay, Colin. (2002), p171.

⁴⁰² Ibid, p173.

cannot be reversed – i.e. that another decision cannot be made – but it does mean that it is not the case of one simple, observable decision-making process. Patriarchy is another example of this. The decision of whether or not to employ a woman in a work place may also in some cases be pre-made, depending on the gendered conditioning of the employer. If the employer has a more gender-neutral predisposition, the decision will depend more on the employee's merits and the interview than in the case of an employer who has a gender-biased predisposition either for or against female employees.

This argument is not an attempt to null and void the notion of responsibility from human action, but it is an undertaking to problematise the notion of the decision-making process as a simple case of singular decisions that are without precedence. Indeed, to make alternative decisions to the socialised 'pre-made' one may sometimes require decisions made on a larger, more collective scale than that of the individual – i.e. by a culture that decides to change and adopt a more pacifist or gender-neutral approach to social life.

This said, a multitude of decisions remains, however, a multitude of *decisions*. They do not have to be conscious, or an organised chain of events – indeed, it is rarely the case that decision Z has been preceded by decisions X and Y in a linear sequence. On the contrary, there can be many decisions occurring separately or simultaneously, both within and between individuals. It is rather like the question of structure and agency, in that it resembles the chicken and egg scenario – and, just as in the case of structuration, it is not really that important which did come first. The important thing is that decisions are being *made* – consciously or unconsciously – that favour one type of action, or outcome, over another.

The inclusion of outcomes to this concept of power may seem to signal that it is, after all, a question of a zero-sum game. For as Colin Hay points out, the problem with such approaches is the notion that “[i]f Anna has power [and] Ben does not, the extent of Anna's power is the extent of Ben's lack of power.”⁴⁰³ Thus, if Anna affects the outcome, Ben does not and power as such is a zero-sum game of win or

⁴⁰³ Ibid, p173.

lose. This is not, however, the approach I am advocating. Like Foucault, I argue that Ben can have as much power as Anna to affect the outcome – and this requires *action* on both parts, and therefore necessarily *decisions* and *outcomes*. Thus, if Anna makes a decision that will somehow affect Ben, Ben can – unless there is a state of total domination – counter that decision with another that either changes their relationship of power or maintains it as it is. Either way, both agents have the power to make a decision and thus take an action – why it is necessary to include this most fundamental aspect of human relationships in a concept of power. These decisions and outcomes need not be conscious, intended or coordinated by the relevant actors, or observable to the social scientist. The important thing is that they – as forms of human interaction – *take place*.

I have two more concepts relevant to the agency of power that should be introduced before I conclude, and they are the ghosts and the myths of agency respectively. These are not to be confused with one another, however similar they may sound. I use the former – the *ghosts of agency* – to denote actions that occurred a long time ago but that are still having an effect on current power relations. As already noted, these actions are here ‘listed’ under the site of time, but obviously the ghosts of agency – and thus also the site of time – can affect all of the other sites of power – e.g. the birth of capitalism for example, or the creation of the Westphalian polity. The second concept – the *myths of agency* – refers instead to actions that have never taken place at all. Stories of these mythical actions can be kept alive by human agents that wish to preserve current power relations. Thus, a powerful polity may find that he/she/it benefits from these myths of agency being kept alive, even if they are untrue. This mythical discourse is included here under the site of the knowledge and aesthetics of power, but also, and naturally affects all of the other sites. Examples include conflicting stories of who first discovered the Americas, or who came first, Adam or Eve.

Finally, it is in my view fundamentally wrong to ‘deface’ the concept of power altogether – as has suggested – even if one chooses a Foucaultian approach. Indeed, this is one of the central arguments of this thesis – namely that if power, as Foucault would have it, comprises of reciprocal relationships, then these relationships need both the concepts of structure *and* agency in order to exist. One

thus has no choice but to include the concept of agency – for power cannot exist independently of the ‘faces’ of human society. Hayward and other critics (such as Archer) are right to point out that this agency cannot be defined as a simple equation or universe comprising of only two actors – A and B – but this does not mean that these actors can be excluded from the analysis altogether. For each actor affects the relationships in which they are a part. Here, again, it is useful to return to Foucault and the reciprocal nature of power. In this conception, it is not only A who makes a decision over B, but also B who makes a decision whether to comply or to resist. Thus, the three ‘faces of power’ definitions can equally be written that B makes A do something he or she would not otherwise have done, or neglects to make a decision etc. As already mentioned, most of these are not single, observable decisions – although such processes certainly do exist. The point of structuration theory is that action cannot exist freely from social conditioning, and so decisions can also be unconscious and/or collective ones, such as cultural practices. However, the *exercise* or *practice* of power in these relationships remains the same – culture/group A (and conversely B) can make culture/group B (and conversely A) do something that they would not otherwise have done, or neglect to make a decision etc. In line with David West and others, I do not think it is wise for the social analyst to try to work out what A or B would otherwise have done – i.e. to ascribe interests, ‘real’, ‘objective’ or otherwise – but in the case of manipulation (the third ‘face’ of power), it is not impossible to find the actual *processes* that would cause such a change of interests to occur – advertising, as West argues, being a case in point.⁴⁰⁴

There are, in the end, only so many ways that agents can exercise power over each other. So far, the ‘faces of power’ debate, and I myself, have only been able to come up with four such ways – namely decisions to overtly/covertly change / overtly/covertly neglect / covertly manipulate or consciously/unconsciously self-govern relations of power. In the spirit of a structured/Foucaultian analysis, the argument here is that all of these three ways can be exercised by individuals or groups, (A, B, C ... x), as either initial instances of power or as reactions or resistance to such initiatives. At this point, it may seem that the ‘faces of power’

⁴⁰⁴ West, David. (1987), p141-142.

debate thus has little to offer an analysis of power, being so disarmed of its original conceptions and language. I disagree however, since it is vital to maintain the notion of human agency in relationships of power. These relationships – as processes – cannot exist freely of decision-making to change, neglect or maintain them as they are. And while it may not always be the simple case of one actor exercising power over another, sometimes it is indeed that simple. Indeed, for all the social conditioning of an action – and thus multitude of individual and collective decisions that came before it – power can sometimes be the simple case of one action changing the nature of a certain power relationship for good. At the end of the day, the *reasons* behind that action will never truly be known to anyone other than the relevant actor. The *effects* of the action, however, can usually be traced – either through individual actions or through more diffuse social processes. For actions do indeed speak louder than words.

Conclusion

Power, as reciprocal relationships that are socially, spatially and temporally determined, is ultimately about the freedoms of human agency. A structured/relational approach to this question can help to see these connections between agency and society – how these relationships are constrained by society but also change through agency. In my own definition of these freedoms, I have listed what I regard to be the twelve sites of power most prevalent to human society and shall use them in the second half of this thesis to analyse world relations of power, as exemplified by HIV/AIDS. It is important to note that the twelve sites of power alone do not explain the nature of power however. For they are not static, unchanging sites of power but are rather interdependent and are changed or maintained through human agency – in other words, through the exercise of power. And there are only so many ways agency can do this – namely through re-/action, neglect, manipulation or self-governance.

How then can this conception of world power aid an analysis of ‘hegemony’ or ‘empire’? Namely by looking at the key actors – polities – in each site of power and reviewing their exercise of power, as well as the constraints they face, both from other actors, as well as regarding access to other sites. For these sites of power are not mutually exclusive, but rather intertwine with each other – thus, polities in one site will naturally interact with polities in others. It is not then simply the case of reviewing each site as a separate entity, but rather a matter of seeing which key polities and which other sites have a bearing on the relationships in that particular site of power. This opens up the concepts of ‘hegemony’ and ‘empire’ to more multi-faceted and thus realistic accounts of world power and domination – the latter of which is very rarely total, however ‘hegemonic’ or ‘imperial’ its description. For there is otherwise always the possibility for re-/action, transformation and resistance, and thus also for the formation of other counter-hegemonies and/or –empires in any or all of the twelve sites of power.

One must raise the question however, whether an IR theorist who chooses to use the theory of structuration needs to reduce the level of analysis to such an extent that focus is put solely on those individuals who most stand to influence the

international agenda, such as for example George W. Bush and his closest peers? I would argue that such a simplification is not necessary however. Units such as states or non-governmental organisations can also be said to be capable of making, and more importantly *choosing* to make a difference to a pre-existing state of affairs, or course of events. For although, as Wight has pointed out, they are all reducible to individual human agents and regarded as a product of structuration processes, they do ultimately participate in decision-making processes on an aggregate level and should thus be studied as agents in their own right. They too can be regarded as ‘conscious, intentional beings’, without having to split the responsibility or choice that this entails between the individuals that comprise the aggregate. Such a philosophical reduction disables rather than enables social analysis, since it removes the agency (and thus responsibility/choice) from state and non-governmental actors that highly influence and indeed decide over other human aggregates, and individuals, on a daily and global basis. The question of who comprises an agent, therefore, should not make it impossible to use Giddens’ theory of structuration in IR theory. Indeed, Giddens himself has increasingly acknowledged the need for a framework that takes into account the international setting of the agency/structure dilemma and the interaction between the structures of the state and the international system.⁴⁰⁵

The overlapping of many different polities means that the domain of a polity is also determined by the other attributes found within the actual individuals who comprise it – e.g. cultural or economic. The domain of polity is also very much determined by its resources, which in the case of gender are mainly (although certainly not exclusively) ideological – in that the very foundation of patriarchal structures builds on the cognitive assumption of socially constructed differences between men and women. And, finally, the domains of patriarchal structures are also obviously defined by the issues related to social divisions of gender – although again, due to the overlapping of polities, these issues can and often do span the full spectrum of social life. It is thus high time to turn to the second half of this thesis, where I shall use the example of HIV/AIDS to explain this conception of world relations more fully.

⁴⁰⁵ Buzan, Barry et al. (1993), p110.

Chapter Five – Why HIV/AIDS as an Example of ‘Glocal’ Power?

“Individuals can make a difference, but their institutions are almost as intractable as the epidemic itself. The iron laws of institutions routinely subvert the best intentions.”⁴⁰⁶

/

“Freedom to choose must be accompanied by the possibility of having access to one’s choices.”⁴⁰⁷

Introduction

Power is thus seen in this thesis as ‘glocalised’, structured relationships between agency in the decision-making process (be that conscious or unconscious, collective or individual) and the twelve sites of power. For, as argued in the first half of this thesis and as the above two quotations also make clear, agency and structure are inextricably intertwined – one cannot exist without the other. As the capacity of all social agents to re-/act in all (or most) of these social relations, power is therefore everywhere and (potentially at least) everyone’s, affecting and being affected by every part of socio-political life. Seen this way, it becomes clear that global power is much more than a zero-sum military, economic or cultural behavioural relationship between a few state-actors, or a structural relationship between, for example, centre and periphery. There are many other forms of existential power besides military power that can disable human agency – social death can be as debilitating as biological death, although the former is at least potentially reversible. To this end, this thesis offers its own definition of power, in the hope that this will open up a new debate on the contours of world power by intertwining aspects of behavioural, structural and post-modernist definitions of power. Using the case of HIV/AIDS to illustrate the intricate complexities of these ‘glocal’ power relationships, the rest of this thesis sets out to reveal why previous attempts to map these relationships have ultimately failed in revealing these complexities.

Even when power is more generally defined as the capacity to act in society, it is clear that a deadly and debilitating disease such as HIV/AIDS has the full potential to affect this power negatively. Without treatment, the disease leads to a very early

⁴⁰⁶ De Waal, Alex. (2006), p123.

⁴⁰⁷ Eisenstein, Zillah. (2004), p195.

and painful biological death, bringing to a permanent end human agency itself. It is not the biology of HIV/AIDS that is under focus in this thesis however, but rather its social causes and effects. For as the rest of this thesis will show, not only is the spread of the disease highly dependent on both material and cognitive structural realities such as poverty and gender, but the disease itself can also worsen such social inequalities and even result in the very real social death (in the form of total economic, cultural or other social exclusion) of those who suffer from it while they are still living. Conversely, the relative successes of HIV/AIDS activism and behavioural changes also reveal the positive and empowering aspects of political power, global as well as local, that exist in world relations.

HIV/AIDS is not unique in either of these regards however. Similar to all other human diseases, *it both affects and is affected by structure and agency*, since the extent of its spread both affects and is affected by structured relations of power. According to Tony Barnett and Alan Whiteside – two authors who have written extensively on the ‘glocal’ social processes that have contributed to the spread of HIV/AIDS – “[all] epidemics have their deepest foundations in ‘normal’ social and economic life. [...] As we all share the same world, but unequally, so we are differentially exposed to disease organisms, and for that matter to many non-infectious illnesses. [...] In the poorest countries, it is the wealthier, better-fed, better-housed and more leisured who are most likely to escape infectious disease.”⁴⁰⁸ The only difference between HIV/AIDS and other diseases is that it primarily affects prime-age adults, is fatal and is also widespread – as Barnett and Whiteside point out, “[i]t is unusual for this group (prime-age adults) to be the target of any disease.”⁴⁰⁹

HIV/AIDS has been singled out as a unique and very political disease however, partly because of the predicted and very dire consequences it has already started to bring to certain parts of the world such as Asia and sub-Saharan Africa and partly because of the way in which it is spread. As Barnett and Whiteside so succinctly put it: “HIV/AIDS mixes sex, death, fear and disease in ways that can be interpreted to suit the prejudices and agendas of those controlling particular

⁴⁰⁸ Barnett, Tony – Whiteside, Alan. (2006), p71.

⁴⁰⁹ Ibid, p50.

historical narratives in any specific time or place.”⁴¹⁰ It is for all of these reasons and just because it is so very politically contested that I have chosen HIV/AIDS as an example of ‘glocal’ relations of power, as it reveals not only the very real material and cognitive power of the body, but also because it highlights current ‘glocal’, structured relations of power.

As the next chapter will show, just as with most analyses of world politics, analyses of HIV/AIDS typically fall into three categories: behavioural, structural and post-modernist. Behavioural accounts typically focus on the individual’s role in spreading the disease, while structural accounts centre on societal phenomena such as capitalism or urbanisation to account for the stronghold that the disease has on some parts of the world over others. The latter will be analysed here using Held’s original seven sites of power, as these best encapsulate most traditional structural accounts of power in general and most mainstream structural analyses of HIV/AIDS in particular. Post-modernist accounts typically attribute the spread of the disease to a multitude of factors across societies and resist any attempts to generalise them. All of these three approaches will be examined and critiqued in the next chapter. The next chapter will then frame this discussion around my additional five sites of power, in order to reveal why an augmented, structured and ‘glocalised’ analysis is needed. For it is argued here that power is not only relational between structure and agency, but that the definitions of agency and structure themselves also need to be expanded upon from most traditional behavioural and structural accounts, in order to account for the multiple levels of agency at work across the additional ‘three dimensional’ structures of time and space as well as the cognitive structures of knowledge and aesthetics, morality and emotion, and identities. As Burton has made clear, although it is questionable whether such an analysis could ever be adequately conducted, due to the sheer vastness of scale, the following two chapters will outline some of the main arguments for the inclusion of each structured site of power, using the example of HIV/AIDS to reveal the role that each particular site has to play and thus its necessary inclusion in any analysis of world politics.

⁴¹⁰ Ibid, p71.

Before examining the politics of HIV/AIDS and how these affect and are affected by 'glocal' relations of power however, this chapter will first deal with the basic facts that are known about the disease. For although many of the 'facts' surrounding HIV/AIDS are disputed – as shall be examined later in the site of knowledge and aesthetics – there are some basic empirical facts about the disease which first need to be addressed in order to be able to discuss these other issues coherently. These include the basic biology of the disease, as well as some of the more general material and cognitive realities that can be discerned from current 'glocal' trends – those trends relating to specific sites of power will be dealt with in the final chapter. For although the underlying causes and effects of most, if not all, of these social realities are contested, most commentators agree that HIV/AIDS is a disease which is making a very real and devastating social impact on many parts of the world today – killing the very lives that make up these societies.

The Basic Facts of HIV/AIDS

To begin with, it is necessary to distinguish between infection (HIV) and disease (AIDS) – something which journalists and policy advisers have occasionally failed to do, thus leading to public confusion.⁴¹¹ HIV (the Human Immunodeficiency Virus) is a virus which, if left untreated, will within five to eight years lead to death from AIDS (Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome), which is not one disease, but rather a number of opportunistic infections, such as TB (tuberculosis) or Kaposi's sarcoma, that come about as the immune system fails. Because HIV is a retrovirus – hiding itself in the body's immune system – it is detected by measuring HIV antibodies in the blood. A person is described as being HIV-positive if these antibodies are detected. It is much more difficult to define AIDS however. Where the equipment is available, people are medically regarded as having AIDS when their CD4 cell count falls below 200. In most parts of the world however, such sophisticated tests do not exist and so AIDS is defined clinically by examining the patient and assessing his or her condition (some patients may not seek treatment until their counts are as low as 18⁴¹²). To complicate the measurement of AIDS cases even further, it is possible for people who are very sick with AIDS to return to being HIV-positive and leading a fairly normal life when treated for the disease.⁴¹³

HIV is not a robust virus and is hard to transmit. Unlike many other diseases, it can only be transmitted through contaminated body fluids. The virus has to enter the body in sufficient quantities in order to infect it and must pass through an entry point in the skin and/or mucous membranes into the bloodstream. The main modes of transmission (in hitherto order of importance) are: i) unsafe sex (anal, vaginal and occasionally oral); ii) transmission from infected mother to child; iii) use of infected blood or blood products; iv) intravenous drug use with contaminated needles; v) other modes of transmission involving blood; for example, bleeding wounds.⁴¹⁴ To date, two major strains of the HIV virus have been discovered.⁴¹⁵

⁴¹¹ Ibid, p58.

⁴¹² *The Independent*. (1st December 2007), p4.

⁴¹³ Barnett, Tony – Whiteside, Alan. (2006), p30-36.

⁴¹⁴ Ibid, p41.

However, HIV is similar to other viruses – in that it survives through mutating and forming new sub-types of the virus – and so it may be possible that it mutates into a form that is transmitted in other ways than those listed above, although I have not found any medical evidence to suggest that this has yet happened.

Despite over 20 years of research, there is still no cure or vaccine for HIV and scientists hold little hope of finding one, since the virus has evolved a way to protect itself from the human immune system.⁴¹⁶ There have however been major advances in clinical treatment over the past two decades. There are three stages to the medically recommended treatment of HIV: i) ‘positive living’ – staying healthy, eating the correct food etc, while CD4 cell counts are still high; ii) prophylactic treatment to prevent TB and other common infections when the CD4 cell count begins to drop; and iii) the use of ARVs (anti-retroviral drugs) to fight HIV directly. There are three different types of ARV treatment: i) single therapies (only one drug) – the earliest form of treatment that is no longer used much since it causes fairly swift mutation of the virus into drug resistant strains; ii) double therapies (a combination of two drugs) – often preferred because it is cheaper than the third type, but slower to take effect and also of limited duration; iii) tripart therapy (usually involves two reverse transcriptase inhibitors and one protease inhibitor) – also known as HAART (Highly Active Anti-Retroviral Therapy), so called since it is capable of suppressing HIV for many years in a significant number of individuals.⁴¹⁷

Access to medication is still very restricted in many parts of the world however. In many Western countries for example, patients have over twenty different drugs to choose between, while patients in most parts of Africa are so far limited to a choice of six, despite all the funding for treatment programmes currently available.⁴¹⁸ Furthermore, all of these forms of treatment require long-term economic investment to implement, as well as basic social infrastructure such as

⁴¹⁵ i) HIV-1, which has three sub-divisions – Group M, (which is divided into 11 subtypes or clades (A to K) and causes 99% of the world’s HIV/AIDS infections), and Groups O and the newly discovered Group N; and ii) HIV-2, which is a less virulent form than HIV-1 (Barnett, Tony – Whiteside, Alan. (2006), p39.)

⁴¹⁶ BBC News, Friday 15th Feb 2008.

⁴¹⁷ Barnett, Tony – Whiteside, Alan. (2006), p46-7.

⁴¹⁸ Epstein, Helen. (2007), p266.

medical facilities, personnel and transport etc.⁴¹⁹ – requirements which are lacking in many parts of the world where treatment is most needed. It is not surprising therefore that it is currently estimated that antiretroviral drugs will add, on average, only an extra four or five years to the life of a patient living in Africa⁴²⁰, since his or her chances of survival depend not only on a lifetime's supply of medication, but also on access to the basic infrastructure and facilities needed to administer those drugs, as well as other basic needs such as food, housing and clothing – needs which even a healthy person may struggle to meet and which become even more difficult to satisfy when sick.

*“HIV is a disaster on many levels. [...] Disasters, man-made and ‘natural’, disrupt basic services, exacerbate other drivers of the epidemic, and can increase people’s vulnerability to HIV infection. People living with HIV are among the groups most vulnerable in disaster and crisis situations. But, at the same time, they have much to offer and their fuller participation is crucial to tackling the epidemic.”*⁴²¹

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies recently issued a report listing the HIV/AIDS pandemic as one of the great disasters of modern times. Measuring the number of people currently living with HIV and the number of people who have died from AIDS is very difficult in current ‘glocal’ circumstances however, since these figures remain contested by global as well as by local actors (outlined in more detail below and discussed in relation to power in the site of knowledge and aesthetics in Chapter 7). Nonetheless, although it may be difficult to measure the exact number of people in the world who are suffering or have already died from the disease, it is widely acknowledged that HIV/AIDS has already claimed many millions of lives worldwide. UNAIDS estimated in 2005 that it had already then killed more than 25 million people since it was first recognized in 1981, “making it one of the most destructive epidemics in recorded history”⁴²² and totalling more than most of the wars of the 20th Century put

⁴¹⁹ Barnett, Tony – Whiteside, Alan. (2006), p368-369.

⁴²⁰ Epstein, Helen. (2007), p266.

⁴²¹ International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Press Release (26 June 2008)

⁴²² UNAIDS/05.19E, 2005, p2.

together.⁴²³ It is also a disease which has been reported from every inhabited place in the world.⁴²⁴

HIV (infection) and AIDS (mortality) figures are obviously and inextricably linked. Unlike most other epidemics however, HIV/AIDS has two epidemic curves – the HIV infection curve precedes the AIDS mortality curve by between five and eight years – further complicating accurate analysis of global statistics. This is also what makes HIV/AIDS such a lethal epidemic in comparison to other epidemics such as Ebola fever, for example, since the spread of the former is much more difficult to detect than the spread of the latter. According to Barnett and Whiteside:

“In the [...] case [of Ebola], victims of the disease quickly and visibly fall ill, putting the general population and public health professionals on their guard. [...] HIV infection moves through a population giving little sign of its presence. It is only later, when substantial numbers are infected, that AIDS deaths begin to rise. People do not leave the infected pool by getting better because there is no cure. They leave by dying (of AIDS and other causes). The effects of life-prolonging ARTs is, ironically, to increase the pool of infected people. [...]the reality is that without affordable and effective treatment, AIDS case numbers and deaths will continue to increase after the HIV tide has been turned.”⁴²⁵

It is highly possible, for example, that HIV prevalence figures may decrease due to an increase in deaths from AIDS, conflict or other forms of violence and illness, thus reducing the number of those infected. Similarly, since death from AIDS is never from AIDS itself but from one of the many opportunistic infections caused by the syndrome, many deaths from AIDS may go undetected, if they are recorded instead as deaths from TB, for example. Indeed, since most countries in the world report only the immediate cause of death on patients' death certificates, it is certainly possible that many deaths from AIDS go unnoticed. According to Barnett and Whiteside, “[i]n most countries AIDS is not a notifiable disease, which means that medical staff are not legally required to report cases. Even if they do, there are serious constraints to this process: reporting may be very slow [...], data may be inaccurate because of unwillingness to report cases [...] the

⁴²³ *The Independent*, (Penketh, Anne), 16th May 2006.

⁴²⁴ Barnett, Tony – Whiteside, Alan. (2006), p8.

⁴²⁵ *Ibid*, p52-3.

condition from which a person dies may not be recognised as being AIDS related [...and] doctors may feel that it is pointless to report cases as there is no incentive, they are too busy or they get no feedback.”⁴²⁶ And, in areas where HIV/AIDS is highly stigmatised, many cases may be deliberately mis-recorded, in order to spare shame to the family of the deceased.⁴²⁷

*“Diseases are not only ephemeral biological and social constructions, but they also often acquire moral dimensions which make them susceptible to discriminatory policies, religious sanctions, and administrative action. Conversely, subjected to the vagaries of disease causality and the changing contexts of collection and validation, death records were never employed in a societal vacuum. All collected causes of death continue to be conveniently packaged within socially and bureaucratically acceptable categories that vary in time and place. Before interpreting the historical data, we must always ask not only who did the reporting and collecting, but who was ultimately in control of the data registration and dissemination process: church, governments, hospitals, insurance companies, or the medical profession?”*⁴²⁸

As Günter B Risse makes clear in the above quotation, the deliberate manipulation of death records is not uncommon across the world or throughout history – there are many potential parties who may share an interest in manipulating death records, across both time and space. It is therefore not only the immediate actors involved – the medical official, patient and his/her family – who might have an interest in manipulating the death record, but also other actors who have an interest in the data thus collected, such as governmental and non-governmental organisations. In the same way, the number of reported HIV infections may be increased or decreased according to the interests of the particular actor concerned – they may be exaggerated in order to increase funding for treatment, for example, or be underestimated in order to reduce any perceived stigma. Indeed, a very important fact to note in the particular case of measuring the ‘glocal’ prevalence of HIV/AIDS is that all global data produced by all agencies originate from the actual countries themselves⁴²⁹ and so are not only subject to what data is

⁴²⁶ Ibid, p58.

⁴²⁷ Avert, 2007.

⁴²⁸ Risse, Günter B. (1997), p183.

⁴²⁹ Barnett, Tony – Whiteside, Alan. (2006), p56.

accessible and thus available in each country but may also be subject to manipulation.

The pros and cons of HIV testing have come under close scrutiny since the discovery of the disease. Cuba, for example, tested its entire population when news of the virus broke in the 1980s and consequently isolated all of those who were infected in 'sanatoria' – an action which caused much controversy at the time but that has also undoubtedly contributed to the low level of HIV infection in the country.⁴³⁰ As Barnett and Whiteside point out, the nationwide testing of a population not only raises many practical problems – Cuba only has a population of 11.1 million, other countries would struggle both logistically and economically to test their entire population – but also raises many ethical issues – “do you compel people to take part? If people are identified then what do you do with them?”⁴³¹ The 2004 *UNAIDS/WHO Policy Statement on HIV Testing* advocates that countries adopt the '3 Cs' approach, namely that tests be “confidential, be accompanied by counselling [and] only be conducted with informed consent, meaning that it is both informed and voluntary”. It also states however that “[t]he current reach of HIV testing services remains poor: in low and middle income countries only 10 per cent of those who need voluntary counselling and testing, because they may have been exposed to HIV infection, have access to it.”⁴³²

Problems with data collection are not of course isolated to the case of HIV/AIDS. For even though not all diseases have the same degree of stigma attached to them (although many diseases do incite a similar fear of contamination and thus stigmatisation of those infected), the analyses of many other diseases suffer from similar ethical, practical and logistical problems in obtaining accurate and reliable data. This also relates to the much contested and political nature of census taking – as a recent article in *The Economist* stated, “[n]umbers mean power, which is why counting people is so controversial”. The article goes on to recount numerous examples throughout history when governments have either used a census against their citizens or hidden results that are not in their own or their citizens' perceived

⁴³⁰ *Ibid*, p45.

⁴³¹ *Ibid*, p61.

⁴³² UNAIDS/WHO, 2004, p1.

interests, as well as cases where a census would benefit the recognition of minority groups. Indeed, although history is rife with incidents of census taking – the first known record of a census was by the Babylonians, which dates as far back as 3800BC – the practice was long resisted and feared in many parts of the world, being referred to as ‘the sin of David’, referring to an account in the Book of Numbers in the Bible, where a count by King David was said to have subsequently been punished by God.⁴³³ Numbers have therefore always borne the utmost political importance to policy makers and citizens alike and will probably always continue to do so. Access to these numbers, as well as the interpretation of them will thus also always be political, as there is, as already noted, an inextricable link between knowledge and power – something which will be discussed in more detail in the site of knowledge and aesthetics.

“Epidemiologists and statisticians may make assumptions and extrapolate, but they are dependent on the information they are given. [...] The question was and still is: ‘Do we have a clear picture of the number of AIDS cases or deaths?’ The answer is ‘No’, and indeed we never did. [...] AIDS case data have always been ‘political’. In the early years of the epidemic, countries were reluctant to admit to the existence of the disease because of what they felt its presence might suggest or imply about the morals and behaviour of their citizens, or what it might do to the tourist industry.”⁴³⁴

Data thus reflect what is available in countries and what they choose to report. Epidemiologists and statisticians are dependent on the information provided to them and thus far it is difficult to fully grasp the extent of the spread of the disease. However, although it is impossible to know for certain the numbers of people infected with HIV/AIDS, AIDS case data still have a value: “First, if they are collected consistently and in sufficient quantities, trends will be apparent. Second, they can give an indication of the scale of the problem. Finally, they can show where the epidemic is located by age, gender, mode of transmission and geographical area.”⁴³⁵

Data collection is not the only problem facing the analysis of HIV/AIDS however. The very organisations that track and ‘manage’ the disease themselves constitute a

⁴³³ *The Economist*, 22nd December 2007, p66.

⁴³⁴ Barnett, Tony – Whiteside, Alan. (2006), p56-9.

⁴³⁵ *Ibid*, p59.

vast and complex 'glocal' network that is itself near to impossible to account for fully and accurately:

*"The AIDS pandemic is tracked and 'managed' by an enormous, world-spanning collection of organizations [...] Even a brief look at what the 'structure' of such an organizational universe might look like illustrates the complexity of this system. Just to map this universe is an enormous challenge. [...] This universe is organized partly as a hierarchy, with the big funders and the regulatory organizations like the Global Fund, WHO, the World Bank and UNAIDS at the top; but it is also organized as a network of 'partnerships' and projects, often with specialized focuses or target groups. And then in many respects it is unorganized, with entrepreneurial actors at all levels inventing (or reinventing) themselves as actors in the AIDS drama. [...] Our usual ways of thinking about boundaries, or even about nested hierarchies of social processes (local, regional, national, international, global, for example), do not work very well."*⁴³⁶

As Ann Swidler makes clear in the above quotation, it is difficult to set boundaries for the 'glocal' organisation of HIV/AIDS. There are many multiple levels to this 'universe', which is partly an organized hierarchy and partly unorganized, with actors at all levels 'inventing [...] themselves as actors in the AIDS drama.' This complexity of the 'world of AIDS' again echoes Burton's claim that it is near to impossible to fully comprehend the whole of world relations. At best, all we can hope to do is map the entire 'glocal' organisation of HIV/AIDS (something which is beyond both the scope and remit of this thesis), but even then we would be limited in our knowledge of how this 'glocal' network operates since even the organisations themselves will probably operate in partial darkness with regard to knowledge of each other's existence and operations.

Suffice to say here therefore that there are two main polities which collect and compile global data on the disease and on whom most other organisations are dependent in order to be able to discern 'glocal' patterns – UNAIDS/WHO and the United States Bureau of the Census (which in turn is a primary source of data for UNAIDS).⁴³⁷ The accuracy of this data is highly debated. Some have criticised UNAIDS for overestimating the prevalence of HIV in certain regions of the world – criticism which lead the organisation to change its methods of measuring the disease in 2007. Others have praised the organisation precisely for this capacity to

⁴³⁶ Swidler, Ann. (2006), p270-1.

⁴³⁷ Barnett, Tony – Whiteside, Alan. (2006), p57.

change its methods however. Barnett and Whiteside, for example, state that, “[a]s the epidemic has progressed, so UNAIDS and WHO have improved their surveillance and modelling methods and the demands of advocacy for simple, high and shocking figures have been trimmed in response to criticism.”⁴³⁸ In order to be able to conduct the ensuing analysis however, it is necessary here to first account for current global estimates, since these are the basis for any discussion on competing analyses of the disease.

In its latest report, UNAIDS estimated that 33.2 million people [30.6–36.1 million – “the ranges around the estimate define the boundaries within which the actual numbers lie, based on the best available information”] were living with HIV in 2007, 2.5 million [1.8–4.1 million] of whom were newly infected that year. It also estimated that 2.1 million [1.9–2.4 million] people died from AIDS in 2007⁴³⁹. The regional distribution of the 33.2 million people living with the disease in 2007 is as follows, in declining order of prevalence (the figures for 2006 have been included, to show decreases that are most likely to have resulted from changes in UNAIDS’ measurement of the disease):

* 22.5 million [20.9–24.3 million] in sub-Saharan Africa (down from 24.7 million (21.8–27.7 million) in 2006)

* 4.0 million [3.3–5.1 million] in South and South-East Asia (down from 7.8 million (5.2–12.0 million) in 2006)

* 1.6 million [1.2–2.1 million] in Eastern Europe and Central Asia (down from 1.7 million (1.2–2.6 million) in 2006)

* 1.6 million [1.4–1.9 million] in Latin America (down from 1.7 million (1.3–2.5 million) in 2006)

* 1.3 million [480 000–1.9 million] in North America (down from 1.4 million (880 000–2.2 million) in 2006)

⁴³⁸ Ibid.

⁴³⁹ UNAIDS. (2007), p1.

* 800 000 [620 000–960 000] in East Asia (up from 750 000 (460 000–1.2 million) in 2006)

* 380 000 [270 000–500 000] in the Middle East and North Africa (down from 460 000 (270 000–760 000) in 2006)

* 230 000 [210 000–270 000] in the Caribbean (down from 250 000 (190 000–320 000) in 2006)

* 75 000 [53 000–120 000] in Oceania (down from 81 000 (50 000–170 000) in 2006).⁴⁴⁰

It is clear therefore that sub-Saharan Africa is currently the region in the world that is the worst affected by the disease – accounting for approximately 67.7% of all HIV cases. What is more, UNAIDS states that AIDS is the leading cause of death there.⁴⁴¹ It is also for this reason that most attention has been on this region, resulting in many different explanations as to why it has been so severely hit, as well as a bias of research that has prioritised the study of HIV/AIDS in Africa over other regions, as shall be examined in more detail in the ensuing analysis.

Those who write about HIV/AIDS are also split as to whether to call its spread a global pandemic, or one or more endemics or epidemics. According to Barnett and Whiteside, an epidemic “is a rate of disease that reaches unexpectedly high levels, affecting a large number of people in a relatively short time”, while an endemic “is continuously present in a population [...] at low or moderate levels” and a pandemic “describes epidemics of worldwide proportions”. They argue that HIV/AIDS is a pandemic,⁴⁴² while the same Barnett, this time writing together with Gwyn Prins states in a footnote: “We use the word ‘endemic’ because in many world regions the term ‘epidemic’ no longer suffices to describe what is

⁴⁴⁰ Ibid, p39.

⁴⁴¹ Ibid, p4.

⁴⁴² Barnett, Tony – Whiteside, Alan. (2006), p28.

happening”⁴⁴³ – thus not refuting the notion of a pandemic, but seeming to suggest that this consists of many endemics rather than that of many epidemics. Others, such as Nana K. Poku use the term epidemic to describe its global spread: “From an initial prevailing view that HIV/AIDS was not an important development issue, the world has now come to a consensus that the epidemic is a terrible development disaster of perhaps biblical proportions. [...] Where the epidemic has hit hardest, it has slashed life expectancy in half, doubling or even trebling adult mortality.”⁴⁴⁴ This thesis will follow Barnett and Whiteside’s definition to argue that, rather than one homogenous pandemic, there are many different HIV/AIDS endemics that are present concurrently in different parts of the world that both affect and are affected by different ‘glocal’ realities, both material and cognitive.

*“[A] national [HIV] epidemic is made up of many sub-epidemics, with different gradients and peaks. These sub-epidemics vary geographically and in terms of their distribution among social or economic groups. In many countries in the poor world, HIV spread first among drug users and commercial sex workers (CSWs). From there it moved into other groups: mobile populations, men who visited sex workers, and eventually into the broader population. One common feature in both the rich and poor worlds is that HIV spreads among people at the margins of society, the poor and dispossessed.”*⁴⁴⁵

As shall be examined in more detail in the next two chapters, aggregate data (the collection and interpretation of which constitutes a serious methodological problem in itself) has typically been based on misinformed assumptions about who is behaviourally at risk and has pigeon-holed countries and people as being either more or less at risk of infection, (thus stigmatising some and leaving others still at risk), without examining the more complex structural causes and effects of the many, varied HIV/AIDS epidemics around the world. A truly epidemiological account – according to the basic definition of epidemiology as ‘the study of the spread and control of diseases’⁴⁴⁶ – would include the many different local, national and global socio-economic contexts governing the spread of the disease but up until now, this has not typically been the case.

⁴⁴³ Barnett, Tony – Prins, Gwyn. (2006), p359.

⁴⁴⁴ Poku, Nana K., 2006, p345.

⁴⁴⁵ Barnett, Tony – Whiteside, Alan. (2006), p53.

⁴⁴⁶ *Oxford Paperback Dictionary Thesaurus & Wordpower Guide* (2001)

There are also ethical problems with using aggregate data. Since HIV/AIDS is primarily transmitted through sexual relations, infected needles or direct contact with blood, it raises issues of stigmatisation. Those who are commonly branded as carriers of the disease are groups who are already often stigmatised – such as ‘women’, ‘Africans’, ‘drug users’ or ‘commercial sex workers’ – identities which are in reality much more complex and diverse than they are homogenous. As the next chapter will show however, analyses of HIV/AIDS risk not only missing these complexities if they build on simplified, aggregate data but they also stand to stigmatise such groups even further, especially if they follow a behavioural hypothesis that puts all the power and responsibility to turn the pandemic around on the individual.

It will be argued here therefore that unprotected sex and drug use are not behaviours that are restricted to certain parts of the world, or to certain homogenous ‘out’-groups, but are rather instead widespread, global phenomenon – albeit in varying ‘glocal’ degrees – and that the reasons why HIV/AIDS has hit sub-Saharan Africa particularly hard are much more complex than simplified behavioural or structural analyses can make out on their own. Sub-Saharan Africa is not one homogenous social region for example, but rather a large and richly diverse region that has many different forms of social organisation, be these political, gendered, cultural, economic etc. And while it is certainly true that the region as a whole is suffering more from the disease than anywhere else in the world at this present time, UNAIDS cites many different patterns of infection rates across the region, with the southern part being the most severely affected.⁴⁴⁷ As I will demonstrate, there are many varying causes and effects of ‘glocal’ political phenomena such as HIV/AIDS, which ultimately depend on the particular combination of ‘glocal’, structured conditions in a particular area. As Barnett and Whiteside make clear, “[w]hether a person contracts HIV depends on his or her social and economic position. Social class, gender, ethnicity, market position all combine to create particular ways of making a living. [...] some of us inhabit a

⁴⁴⁷ UNAIDS. (2007), p15-20.

world where we can be spatially – if not sexually – polygamous; others are stuck in their locality, but the world comes to them”⁴⁴⁸.

These are conditions that affect both the individual’s power to protect him-/herself from the disease, as well as a society’s power to protect its members. Even the best efforts to do so on either side may be futile if there are structural relationships which constrain positive action against the disease. Due to the ‘glocal’, structured nature of such power relationships however, it is also clear that there may very well be behaviours that (consciously or unconsciously) contribute to the spread of the disease. These behaviours will never be free from structural influences however – whether these be material or cognitive – and so any analysis that looks solely at behavioural explanations are as insufficient as any that looks solely for structural explanations. The next chapter will highlight both of these types of analysis, as well as the growing popularity of post-modernist approaches which advocate doing away with traditional analyses altogether. The final two chapters will then look at a way to combine all three approaches by outlining a ‘glocalised’, structured analysis of the power relations that have contributed to the spread of HIV/AIDS in certain parts of the world over others.

⁴⁴⁸ Barnett, Tony – Whiteside, Alan. (2006), p388.

Conclusion

The only empirical facts that can be certainly known about HIV/AIDS concern its biological make-up as a virus – and even these have been contested by some actors who deny its existence. Everything else that is ‘known’ about the disease, from where the disease originated from to more specifically accounting for where and who it affects most today, remains contested and is still up for dispute, despite over three decades of global research. Indeed, the case of HIV/AIDS highlights more general problems regarding the validity and reliability of global statistics, since both the methods of data collection and the consequent interpretations of this data are hotly contested, highlighting the political power of different views or ‘knowledge’ in world politics. For although certain global patterns can already now be discerned, it is still far too early to know exactly how this disease will affect the world as a whole, since this is dependent both on past, present and future structures of agency.

What is certain is that adequate data collection on a global scale remains beyond the grasp of even the largest organisations (as a result of local, national and global obstacles) and that there are many different theories about the underlying causes and effects of the disease which, not surprisingly and in common with most other global issues, generally favour either structural or behavioural accounts – something which will be explored further in the next two chapters. It is also clear that – although it is certainly a fact that the virus is spread by human-to-human contact through body fluids and thus by human behaviour – behavioural accounts for the spread of the disease will not suffice alone.

This thesis therefore argues that it is analytically more useful to speak of a current ‘globalisation’ of the HIV/AIDS virus to sub-Saharan Africa. It will thus be argued that Africa’s particular vulnerability to the disease has not only to do with global factors, both past and present, but also to do with varying local cultural, social, economic and political contexts that heighten the vulnerability of some parts of the continent and lessen that of others, as well as, of course, individual behaviour. This is not to say that there are not unifying factors that link one part of sub-Saharan Africa with another and that make the region as a whole currently

more susceptible to the HIV/AIDS virus. However, the fact that there has also been an increase in infection in other parts of the world, such as India, which in 2006 took over from South Africa as the country with the largest number of people infected by HIV,⁴⁴⁹ (although these figures are now disputed) reveals that sub-Saharan Africa is not alone in facing the challenges of HIV/AIDS.

It is the aim here therefore, just as with every other global political issue, to argue for an empirical, structured and 'glocalised' approach to the issue that takes into account 'glocal' behaviour across the twelve sites of power. For it is only thus that 'glocal' realities can be more accurately discerned and dealt with, both on a global and a local level. For, as shall be shown, current differences in vulnerability to the HIV virus depend on 'glocal' structural inequalities as well as behavioural actions on the part of both individuals and policy makers alike.

⁴⁴⁹ *Financial Times*, Friday July 21 2006, p5.

Chapter Six – Behavioural, Structural and Post-Modernist Analyses of HIV/AIDS

Introduction

Just as with most global phenomena, analyses of HIV/AIDS typically fall into one of the following three categories: i) *behavioural studies*, which put all of the focus on the behaviour of actors (most commonly, the individual) involved in the social process (in this case the spread of HIV); ii) *structural studies*, which focus on the structures that affect the process; iii) and *post-modernist studies*, which advocate empirical, deconstructed discourses that shy away from generalising or compartmentalising any one part of the process. There are some further methodological fault lines specifically with regard to HIV/AIDS which can be useful in separating these three approaches: i) those that prioritise a behavioural analysis of HIV-transmission (the focus of much mainstream epidemiological analysis) typically see the global spread of HIV/AIDS as being dependent on the movement of the virus through certain groups of people, (so-called ‘core-transmitters’, e.g. prostitutes, migrant workers, gays etc.); ii) those that prioritise a structural analysis see the global spread of the virus as being dependent on the history of ‘globalisation’ and the resultant unequal socio-economic distribution of resources (e.g. poverty, gender etc.); and iii) the more post-modernist approaches, that advocate moving beyond epidemiological and structural analyses altogether, usually claim that the global spread of HIV/AIDS is dependent on such a high complexity of socio-economic factors that these cannot be generalised into one global theory of the virus.

Traditionally, many policy makers have favoured behavioural analyses with regard to HIV/AIDS, with ensuing policy prescriptions that sanction to change social behaviour by educating (or at worst isolating) the individual in order to prevent the spread of the virus. As shall be seen below however, such analyses risk concentrating all of the responsibility (and thus also potential blame) for the spread of the virus on the actions of individuals, rather than on the complex social processes that lie behind these actions. Those analyses which focus instead solely

on structural factors equally risk losing sight of the importance of agency, without which, on all levels, none of these structures can be maintained. Policy prescriptions in these cases often advocate changing entire social structures, which is nigh on impossible if human agency is left out of the equation – ‘faceless’ structures are abstract and, it is argued here, ontologically impossible (i.e. do not exist), but they risk becoming analytically reified as somehow existing outside of human interaction if agency is not taken into account. Post-modernist analyses are equally analytically flawed, as they risk leaving the social scientist unable to discern trends which, in the case of HIV/AIDS, could lead to equally flawed and potentially lethal policy prescriptions, as very little can be done about something which is denied existence in the first place.

There is an important distinction which should be made from the outset however between social analytical explanation and consequent policy prescriptions. An analysis which states that it is solely behavioural, for example, while acknowledging that there are other structural aspects of the research matter in question, cannot be blamed if ensuing policy prescriptions are thus also behavioural. There is nothing wrong with social scientists deciding to focus exclusively on one aspect of a phenomenon, if they are conscious and make clear that they are limiting their analysis to looking at that particular aspect. Indeed, it is not the intention of this thesis to advocate doing away with specialist research – that would be potentially fatal to the social sciences as a discipline.

What follows therefore is not meant to be a damning critique of individual research on various aspects of HIV/AIDS – on the contrary, all of this research is extremely useful in tying together the various strands of the structured puzzle, so to speak. What is revealed below however is how limited a solely behavioural or structural analysis is in revealing the structured complexities of any social phenomenon, in this case, HIV/AIDS. Conversely, post-modernist analyses reveal just how little can be said about anything if everything is left wide open to interpretation, without revealing any of the material or cognitive realities that actually exist independently of any research about them.

However, it is also clear that, if the original analysis in any piece of research fails to capture the complexities of a social problem, ensuing policy prescriptions that follow on from this research equally cannot be entirely blamed if they too then are limited in their scope and understanding of that problem. Of course, no social science is ever neutral and there will always be research that follows a pre-determined outcome – throughout human history, policy makers have been known to look for ‘made-to-order’ research that can back them up in their proposed policies. This is a very important aspect of political power that is taken into consideration in this thesis – under the site of knowledge and aesthetics. However it cannot be presumed a priori that all social research is conducted under these conditions or has the power to influence all policy makers alike. As the next two chapters will show, the case of HIV/AIDS reveals the magnitude of social research that exists independently of existing policy – demonstrating that the relations between power and knowledge are as structured and reciprocal as in any other site.

A purely Foucaultian analysis, for example, might state that knowledge is the key site of power in any social phenomenon, but the case of HIV/AIDS reveals that knowledge does not always equal power – social actors can have all of the necessary information they need to act on something but still not have the power to change their situation. Other sites of power also come into play, which is why knowledge here is assigned only as much importance as the other eleven sites. This chapter will thus examine all of the three aforementioned types of analysis of HIV/AIDS – behavioural, structural and post-modernist – in order to make the continued case for a ‘glocalised’, structured analysis that takes into account all three approaches but does not favour one above the other. Since behavioural approaches represent the mainstream response to HIV/AIDS, both in world politics as well as in IR theory, more attention has been afforded to giving a critical summary of these, in order to set the scene for the structured analysis that will follow in the next two chapters.

Behavioural Analyses of HIV/AIDS

“[T]he behavioural change hypothesis, which remains the dominant policy response to the [African] continent’s AIDS crisis, has been less than effective. At the crux of this failure is the inability – or unwillingness – to acknowledge the complex but real relationship between the continent’s traditional problems and the entrenchment of the HIV/AIDS pandemic.”⁴⁵⁰

Behavioural interventions were the initial and necessary response to the unfolding crisis of HIV/AIDS. Upon discovery, little was known about the disease except that it was spread through contact with bodily fluids and so any behaviour that increased the risk of such contact was advocated against – with the so-called ‘behavioural change hypothesis’ – whilst researchers struggled to come to grips with both the biology and epidemiology of the disease. The ‘behavioural change hypothesis’ has consequently been a predominant feature of both much ‘glocal’ research and policy on HIV/AIDS, partly because it is commonly argued that “prevention of HIV through behavioural change is now, and will be for the foreseeable future, the only way to prevent its spread.”⁴⁵¹ Indeed, although thirteen years have now passed since this comment was made in the preface of a WHO publication entitled *Sexual Behaviour and AIDS in the Developing World*, very little has changed. There is still no vaccine against the disease and thus, apart from more radical alternatives, (such as the mandatory isolation of infected individuals, as exercised by Cuba in the 1980s), behavioural change is still one of only two known methods of prevention. The second set of preventative interventions is known as ‘biomedical’, including: i) the use of condoms: ii) the immediate treatment of other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), (since these are known to increase the risk of HIV infection); and iii) trying to discourage or make safer sexual and other practices that increase risk.⁴⁵² It is clear however that this second set of interventions also requires behavioural action. The use of condoms, for example, requires not only that individuals use them, but also requires the manufacture and provision of these condoms (social action on a grander scale) and all of these behaviours depend of course on structural resources, both material and cognitive.

⁴⁵⁰ Poku, Nana. (2002), p537.

⁴⁵¹ Cleland, John – Ferry, Benoît. (1995), pxvii.

⁴⁵² Barnett, Tony – Whiteside, Alan. (2006), p45-46.

The behavioural change hypothesis is based on an assumption of individual, rational behaviour, which is problematic in itself since, like most other behaviour, sexual behaviour is not always, if ever rational and cannot be reduced to the individual alone, since many societal factors influence individual behaviour. Like all human behaviour, sexuality is “a complex of actions, emotions and relationships” that cannot be easily understood by quantitative analysis alone.⁴⁵³ Despite the inherent complexities involved in conducting a behavioural analysis however, many behavioural analyses of HIV/AIDS continue to reduce behaviour to a series of isolated and quantifiable variables (i.e. whether or not people use condoms or how many sexual partners a person has per unit of time).

There are two well-known acronyms associated with behavioural change and HIV/AIDS: namely ABC and KAPB. The classic ABC message refers to A – abstain; B – be faithful; and C – condom if necessary. The underlying moral message here is clear – sex is something that is perceived as best avoided until marriage, at which point monogamy is advocated and condoms should only be used if extra-marital sex is unavoidable. Leaving aside the question of whether or not this or any other moral code about sex is preferable, it is clear that such a message aims to change individual behaviour and that – if it is advocated strongly enough and adhered to – it could also have the power to do so en masse. The danger is that it thus also stigmatises deviant behaviour – such as pre-, extra- or non-marital sex – so that anyone who does not follow this advice risks not only social ostracism but is also in greater danger of infection than if condoms are advocated as always being preferable and thus also, perhaps, made more widely available.

Uganda, for example, has long been championed as the (perhaps only) ‘success story’ in using behavioural change in the form of the ABC message to reduce HIV prevalence rates. This behavioural change is not only accredited to the general Ugandan population however, but also to the country’s leader, President Museveni who, at a time when many politicians around the world refused to talk about

⁴⁵³ Ibid, p80.

HIV/AIDS (perhaps due to squeamishness, ignorance, or embarrassment, although many other reasons could be suggested), acknowledged the epidemic already in its early stages in the 1980s and strongly and widely advocated the ABC approach as a means to combat the disease.

Some argue however that Uganda's success in reducing its HIV/AIDS endemic over the ensuing two decades "has been more celebrated than analysed" and that the Ugandan government has manipulated its prevalence figures to show a decline.⁴⁵⁴ Whatever the case, it is clear that the Ugandan government behaved differently to many of its neighbouring governments. Peter Gill – a journalist who has written a personal account of his many meetings around the world with various HIV/AIDS policy makers over the years, blaming many of them for the current extent of the worldwide pandemic – while by no means remaining uncritical of some of the Ugandan government's policies, writes that "Museveni was one of the very few leaders in Africa to do his duty [...shaping] Uganda's response to Aids with persistence and imagination. Hundred of thousands owe their lives to him."⁴⁵⁵ He goes on however to claim that it is unclear whether or not Uganda's success in reducing prevalence rates was due to the ABC approach alone or to the country's concurrent supply and promotion of the use of condoms, concluding that the current lack of condoms in the country risks reversing the trend to one of higher infection rates. Interesting in this regard is the simultaneous recent change in US policy regarding HIV prevention, which has moved from one of condom promotion to one of abstinence promotion in that The White House explicitly advocates using the ABC model⁴⁵⁶, thus favouring the behavioural interventions of abstinence and monogamy over the use of condoms. Many critics of this policy worry that this too could reduce the efficacy of HIV prevention strategies and actually worsen the epidemic⁴⁵⁷. Regardless of whether or not this is the case however, it is certainly the case that the ABC strategy runs certain risks if it reduces the use of condoms.

⁴⁵⁴ De Waal, Alex. (2006), p95.

⁴⁵⁵ Gill, Peter. (2006), p37.

⁴⁵⁶ The White House (2008)

⁴⁵⁷ Gill, Peter. (2006), p187.

The second acronym associated with behavioural change is KAPB: these are the Knowledge, Attitude, Practices and Behaviour interventions. This hypothesis assumes that, for behavioural change to be effective, people first need to have knowledge, then they need to change their attitudes and finally alter their practices and behaviour. Although this message is less moralistic than the ABC one, it is clear that it too suffers from oversimplification of the problem. Barnett and Whiteside neatly summarise the difficulties of using the KAPB model, stating that “even if people have the knowledge, they may not have the incentive or the power to change their behaviour. If prevention is to move beyond knowledge to action, we must look at the socio-economic causes of the epidemic and intervene there too.”⁴⁵⁸ This is clearly advocating a structured approach to the problem.

Despite much criticism of the approach however, there are still both analysts and policy makers who focus exclusively on behavioural explanations for the spread of the virus.

*“Most journalists and reporters who cover the AIDS pandemic are more socially and politically correct than epidemiologically accurate. Furthermore, most uncritically accept and use information distributed by UNAIDS, an organization that doesn’t deny it is primarily an AIDS advocacy agency – not a scientific or technical agency.”*⁴⁵⁹

This bold statement is made by James Chin, (an infectious disease epidemiologist with a background in the Global Programme on AIDS (GPA)), who very recently came out with a book entitled *The AIDS Pandemic: The collision of epidemiology with political correctness*, where he claims that UNAIDS has overstated the global risk of the epidemic. The reasons that Chin gives for the concentration of the disease on the African continent are solely behavioural – “[h]eterosexual risk behaviours in most populations outside of SSA [sub-Saharan Africa] are insufficient to sustain significant epidemic HIV transmission.”⁴⁶⁰ His argument is based on the epidemiological fact that “[e]pidemic heterosexual HIV transmission requires a high prevalence and frequency of sex partner exchange (i.e. having multiple sex partners on a concurrent basis)”. However, Chin bases his conclusion

⁴⁵⁸ Barnett, Tony – Whiteside, Alan. (2006), p46.

⁴⁵⁹ Chin, James. (2007), pvii.

⁴⁶⁰ Ibid, p3.

that “the pattern and prevalence of these heterosexual risk behaviours in most SSA populations are sufficient to sustain epidemic HIV transmission whereas the patterns and prevalence of these risk behaviours in most other populations are not sufficient to fuel epidemic heterosexual HIV transmission”⁴⁶¹ on some very dubious evidence.

The only global comparison of sexual behaviour that Chin makes is between 3 African and 3 Asian countries, (based on only one data set – a GPA/WHO KABP survey *Sexual Behaviour and AIDS in the Developing World* from 1995⁴⁶² - twelve years prior to the publication of Chin’s book), leading him to the highly questionable conclusion that sexual behaviour is much riskier in sub-Saharan Africa than anywhere else in the world.⁴⁶³ He dismisses outright (with very little evidence, bar a couple of local case studies) UNAIDS’ claims that poverty, gender inequity, discrimination and stigma and lack of access to healthcare are the major determinants of high prevalence in SSA populations.⁴⁶⁴ The limitations of this research notwithstanding lead Chin to the highly questionable (and implicitly racist) argument that ‘Africans’ (as a supposed homogenous group of individuals perceived to be the most susceptible to carrying the virus) are ‘over-sexualised’ and must therefore be educated to change their behaviour.

Another recent study of sexual behaviour, published in the medical journal *The Lancet* and comparing sexual behaviour surveys between 1996-2006⁴⁶⁵, indirectly counters Chins claims. It found that, while monogamy is the dominant pattern in most regions of the world, the reporting of multiple partnerships (the only condition Chin claims is necessary to increase the risk of HIV transmission) is higher in developed countries than in developing countries, as well as more common in men than in women. Nonetheless, the study made reservations about the reliability of data from some parts of the world and thus the ability to make global comparisons at all, stating that “obstacles to sexual-behaviour research remain” “especially in Asia and the middle east” and that “African countries [...]

⁴⁶¹ Ibid, p54.

⁴⁶² Ibid, p71.

⁴⁶³ Ibid, p71-76.

⁴⁶⁴ Ibid, p80.

⁴⁶⁵ Wellings, Kaye et al. (2006), p1707.

have received hugely disproportionate attention from researchers compared with Asian countries, and so the evidence base is partial.” They also note that sexual behaviour studies might be more susceptible to error than other surveys, “since they are especially prone to a social desirability bias – the tendency for participants to respond according to social expectations of what is right.”⁴⁶⁶

And so, while the *Lancet* study does try to pinpoint some regional trends in sexual behaviour, it does so hesitantly. Its importance as a social scientific study lies in what it admits that it cannot tell us and it makes this point clearly throughout. For what is made clear is that sexual behaviour is not only a very complex phenomenon but is also beyond simplified generalisations made either about individual behaviour or about regions in a global context. This is reflected in their warning against a ‘one-size-fits-all’ policy against HIV/AIDS – the authors argue that behavioural intervention programmes need to be tailored not only to suit national and local contexts, but also individual needs.⁴⁶⁷ Theirs is implicitly a structured approach, for while they do not deny the importance of changes in behaviour and thus agency to advancing sexual health, they review this behaviour in the context of prevailing social norms. In their own words: “Although individual behaviour change is central to improving sexual health, efforts are also needed to address the broader determinants of sexual behaviour, particularly those that relate to the social context. The evidence from behavioural interventions is that no general approach to sexual-health promotion will work everywhere and no single-component intervention will work anywhere.”⁴⁶⁸

How behavioural change can be brought about remains therefore a matter of enormous contention. Indeed, condom usage is highly illustrative of the problems facing a purely behavioural analysis. In its simplest terms, it requires that individuals x and y use a condom in the act of having sex – each and every time they do so. Individuals x and y cannot be assumed a priori to be in an equal power relationship however – indeed, much research has been done on the gendered aspects of condom usage and the difficulties many women across the world have

⁴⁶⁶ Ibid, p1706-8.

⁴⁶⁷ Ibid, p1718-21.

⁴⁶⁸ Ibid, p1706.

in negotiating with their male partners to use a condom. This depends not only on individual conflicts of power however, (although shame and blame is often associated with asking a partner to use a condom, since it can be perceived to imply that one of the two has had sex outside the partnership) but also on broader cognitive mechanisms, such as gendered institutions or cultural practices. Even if all concerned favour the use of condoms however, there is no guarantee that there will be any condoms readily available. As already mentioned, this in turn relies on other social actors behaving in a way to ensure the supply of condoms – behaviour that in turn is also highly dependent on the behaviour of other actors as well as structural constraints. A behavioural analysis that puts focus solely on individual behaviour thus risks losing these equally important aspects of analysis.

Following Wight's augmented definition of agency, therefore, it is clear that behavioural theories cannot focus on the individual alone. Indeed, as already mentioned in the case of Uganda, it is clear that the actions of polities can and do also play a major role in fighting the disease. As Chapter 5 has shown however, uncovering which polities play a part in this is difficult if not impossible to discern. There are many actors involved in the 'glocal' world of HIV/AIDS and it is far beyond the scope of this thesis to account for each and every one of them. Major global actors, such as UNAIDS, are easily accounted for – however, their power to influence 'glocal' trends is not clear. For although they may (or may not) have the power to implement policies on a global level, how this then filters down to the local level, through the multitude of social actors that also play a role, will always be unique to the particular local context. These actors are situated across the twelve sites of power – from political and economic actors to religious and cultural leaders, as well as at the level of the household – and so any analysis that tries to simplify any of these relations will always miss out other important aspects of these relations.

“Despite the international scope of the AIDS pandemic, and the growing involvement of a number of prominent international organizations in its management, the discipline of international relations still lags notably behind many of these related fields in studying these effects. Only very recently has the AIDS pandemic begun to make inroads into the core of the field through the efforts

of a small group of scholars exploring the implications of the pandemic for international security.”⁴⁶⁹

Despite the increasing importance of HIV/AIDS as an issue in world politics, it is a subject that has only recently emerged in IR literature. Where it does appear, it is primarily limited to the sub-discipline of security studies and is again primarily behavioural in analytical scope. If one browses the mainstream IR journals, one can admittedly find a few special issues on the subject (e.g. *International Affairs*, March 2006, *International Relations*, Vol 19(4) 2005 and Vol 15(6) 2001 and *Third World Quarterly*, 2002), but the IR theorists contained therein write solely on the security aspects of the epidemic, focusing on the implications of the disease for foreign policy and thus state behaviour. Those that write on the global political and socio-economic causes and effects of the disease mainly originate from other disciplines, (such as political science, sociology etc.). A more general perusal of mainstream IR literature provides little evidence of the subject having penetrated the deeper debates on the content and contours of IR theory itself.

This is not very surprising however. The majority of HIV/AIDS cases are still predominantly to be found in so-called ‘developing’ or ‘Third World’ countries, as well as among women, all of whom are generally underrepresented in mainstream IR theory. The absence of HIV/AIDS from mainstream IR literature (except as an issue of securitisation) is therefore likely to be the result of a continued bias within the discipline as to what constitute relevant issues for analysis. And it is clear that – with perhaps the exception of economy and culture – other forms of structural violence and inequalities still do not count for much:

“The problem is that the discipline of International Relations has defined its core concerns in such a way as to exclude the most marked forms of violence in world politics, in favor of a relatively small subset which ultimately relies on the prior moves of separating the outside from the inside of a state, separating economics and politics, separating the public from the private, separating the ‘natural’ from the ‘social’ worlds, separating the female from the male, separating the moral from the practical, and separating causes and effects. One can add that the discipline’s definition of

⁴⁶⁹ Elbe, Stefan. (2006), p120.

violence looks very closely linked to the concerns of the white, rich, male world of the power elite."⁴⁷⁰

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*"The Third World (and those scholars who have chosen to focus their efforts on understanding it) has long been of secondary importance in Anglo-American International Relations literature. [...] The Third World continues to figure largely on the margins of the International Relations discipline in the US and UK. What lies behind this silence is the failure of the dominant theories of International Relations to engage with the global human condition on the basis of anything other than its impact on the G-8."*⁴⁷¹

Those IR theorists who do write about HIV/AIDS, within the sub-discipline of security studies, are in some disagreement as to whether the disease constitutes a matter of national, international or human security (as shall be examined in more detail below), but they are all united in pinpointing the epidemic as a matter of utmost urgency both for international policy makers and the theorists themselves:

*"The HIV/AIDS epidemic is perhaps the greatest security threat from disease since the bubonic plague ravaged Europe between 1346 and 1351. [...] The short- and long-run impacts vary considerably. While ultimately population decline (in terms of deaths associated with the HIV/AIDS virus) is a humanitarian crisis in its own right, the indirect or short-run consequences of the epidemic are what makes this an immediate security concern to African countries."*⁴⁷²

There are striking parallels between the security literature in IR and the behavioural change literature within HIV/AIDS discourse in general. To begin with, both sets of literature have tended to follow on from initial policy – for, as shall be examined in more detail below and as was the case with the behavioural change hypothesis, it is highly probable that the disease only became securitised *in theory* after certain states and international organisations securitised it *in practice*. Secondly, both sets of literature are predominantly behavioural in their analytical approach – securitisation literature also focuses primarily on behavioural responses to the disease, this time in relation to the world of states and thus politics instead of the world of individuals. The securitisation literature is much more recent than the behavioural change hypothesis however – until only about eight years ago (almost twenty years after the discovery of the disease) both IR

⁴⁷⁰ Smith, Steve. (2004), p510.

⁴⁷¹ (Emphasis in original) Thomas, Caroline and Wilkin, Peter. (2004), p241.

⁴⁷² Ostergard, Robert L. (2002), p346-7.

literature and the international community of policy makers maintained their silence on HIV/AIDS:

*“In the first two decades since the discovery of HIV/AIDS in the mid-1980s, the disease was conceptualized primarily as a public health and development issue. Although the links between HIV/AIDS and security were sporadically explored in the 1990s by a small number of analysts in the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency and in some security think tanks, the major international turning point in terms of conceptualizing HIV/AIDS as a security issue did not occur until 2000.”*⁴⁷³

HIV/AIDS was initially considered – if not by IR theorists then at least by practitioners of international relations – to be a matter for economic and development policy, (albeit not one of the utmost urgency). It was not until pressure from the Clinton administration in 2000 that HIV/AIDS in Africa became designated as a threat to international peace and security by the United Nations Security Council. This decision was accompanied by the declassification of a U.S. policy document – the National Intelligence Estimate entitled *The Global Infectious Disease Threat and Its Implications for the United States*⁴⁷⁴ – which was also used as the underlying reason for the official ‘securitisation’ of HIV/AIDS in the U.S. that same year. It was not long, therefore, before HIV/AIDS also became ‘securitised’ in IR literature. In the few years that have followed since its practical ‘securitisation’, HIV/AIDS has been the subject of “a plethora of reports and scholarly studies mapping out the implications of HIV/AIDS for security in greater detail.” These studies can be divided into three categories, depending on whether they consider HIV/AIDS to be a threat to: i) human security; ii) national security; or iii) international security.⁴⁷⁵

The basic definition of the concept of security is that an issue requires the adoption of emergency measures, either by the nation-states themselves, the international community of states, or the international community at large. Common to all three theoretical approaches therefore has been the thorny question of whether it is possible or indeed desirable to securitise HIV/AIDS in the first

⁴⁷³ Elbe, Stefan. (2006), p121.

⁴⁷⁴ National Intelligence Estimate. (2000)

⁴⁷⁵ Elbe, Stefan. (2006), p121.

place. Indeed, it is necessary here to distinguish between 'security' and 'securitisation' – the former encompasses a more traditional notion of security and is more policy oriented, while the latter is an analytical concept used by 'securitisation' theorists to debate the implications of certain issues becoming securitised in practice. Thus, not all 'securitisation' theorists are for the practical securitisation of these issues – indeed, many of them write about the problems involved when issues such as HIV/AIDS are securitised in practice.

One of the most influential commentaries on the normative process of securitisation is the work of Barry Buzan, Ole Wæver and Jaap de Wilde, entitled *Security: A New Framework for Analysis* from 1998. According to one securitisation theorist, Stefan Elbe, it “remains the only systematic scholarly study of the ethical implications of widening the security agenda to include an array of non-military issues – making it a natural starting point for a more sustained debate about the securitization of HIV/AIDS.”⁴⁷⁶ Although there is not room here to enter into the finer points of Buzan et al’s analysis, suffice to say that the main point of their securitisation theory is to follow the reality of global politics and broaden the theoretical concept of security from the more traditional military concept to also include political, economic, environmental and societal security. They define security as “the move that takes politics beyond the established rules of the game and frames the issue either as a special kind of politics or as above politics. Securitization can thus be seen as a more extreme version of politicization.”⁴⁷⁷ Their aim is thus not only to expand traditional theoretical concepts of security beyond that of purely military issues but also to make possible the distinction between security issues and political ones, in order to avoid “the danger [...] that all things seen as problems will unthinkingly be classified as security issues.”⁴⁷⁸ For “[t]here are intellectual and political dangers in simply tacking the word security onto an ever wider range of issues”⁴⁷⁹. In sum, their aim is:

“[to make it] possible to evaluate whether one finds it good or bad to securitize a certain issue. One rarely manages to counter a securitizing attempt by saying as an analyst, ‘You are not really

⁴⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁷ Buzan, Barry – Wæver, Ole – de Wilde, Jaap. (1998), p23.

⁴⁷⁸ Ibid, p195.

⁴⁷⁹ Ibid, p1.

threatened, you only think so.’ But it is possible to ask with some force whether it is a good idea to make this issue a security issue – to transfer it to the agenda of panic politics – or whether it is better handled within normal politics.”⁴⁸⁰

Robert Ostergard is one of the prominent voices within the realm of security studies who has made the case for the securitisation of HIV/AIDS, although he recognises the difficulties involved.⁴⁸¹ He is also critical of more inclusive security concepts such as those adopted by so-called ‘human security’ approaches, as advocated, for example, by the UNDP:

“issues such as unemployment, crime, pollution, drugs, and human rights violations are issues that all nations must contend with in some form. Changing their status from problems of good governance to a security threat diminishes their distinct importance. [...]o bring these issues to the level of a security problem is almost meaningless – governments have no greater sense of urgency about them. The concept of human security thus becomes insignificant. The HIV/AIDS pandemic is an extraordinary threat to individuals, but by grouping it with a series of social maladies, we lessen the seriousness of the problem.”⁴⁸²

Instead, Ostergard advocates adopting a more traditional concept of security to the spread of HIV/AIDS. His primary empirical focus is on the threat of HIV/AIDS to the political, economic and military establishments of the African continent. As examples, Ostergard cites: i) the risk that illness and death from the virus empties key bureaucratic institutions of their personnel; ii) the risk that accusations of infection are used as a political weapon in, for example, elections; iii) the already high prevalence of HIV/AIDS in African militaries, which not only affects personnel and their families, but also military performance and security; and, finally, iv) the long-run domestic economic impact, such as lost productivity, decreased investment, worker illness, increased government expenditures, higher insurance costs and the loss of trained personnel.⁴⁸³ As shall be examined below however, while all of these examples certainly constitute some of the acute and very real problems currently facing many African countries in their battle against HIV/AIDS, they are by no means the only threats to the continent’s future stability – far from it.

⁴⁸⁰ Ibid, p34.

⁴⁸¹ Ostergard, Robert L. (2002), p338.

⁴⁸² Ibid, p336.

⁴⁸³ Ibid, p341-346.

In his article 'Should HIV/AIDS Be Securitized?...', Stefan Elbe makes convincing cases both for and against the securitisation of the disease, ultimately coming to the conclusion that, due to the urgency of the epidemic, it is better that it becomes securitised than that it remains completely outside the international political arena.⁴⁸⁴ However, the question of whether or not to securitise HIV/AIDS is, as Elbe warns, a highly sensitive one:

*“framing the issue as a security issue pushes responses to the disease away from civil society toward the much less transparent workings of military and intelligence organizations, which also possess the power to override human rights and civil liberties – including those of persons living with HIV/AIDS.”*⁴⁸⁵

Elbe points to several examples where the securitisation of HIV/AIDS has already had detrimental effects on civil liberties. Specific cases include the discrimination against Haitians in the U.S. when the virus was first discovered, as well as against Africans in Europe and Russia. “Portraying HIV/AIDS as a national and international security threat risks fuelling such exclusionary and dehumanizing responses” says Elbe, “and could serve as an implicit legitimization of any harsh or unjust ‘emergency’ policies that states may adopt in relation to persons living with the virus.”⁴⁸⁶ Securitising the HIV/AIDS virus also risks securing preferential treatment for the armed forces and state elites in severely affected countries, thus also discriminating against the civilian population.⁴⁸⁷ However, as already stated, Elbe is not against the securitisation of HIV/AIDS, he merely wants to point to the potential dangers if it is done without consideration for the above difficulties.

One of the primary reasons that Elbe is for the securitisation of HIV/AIDS is that he believes that it will ensure that the issue is brought onto the international political agenda, thus securing high-level political leadership and increased funding.⁴⁸⁸ He also argues that it is essential in terms of potentially overriding the provisions made in the World Trade Organization’s Agreement on Trade-Related

⁴⁸⁴ Elbe, Stefan. (2006), p132.

⁴⁸⁵ Ibid, p128.

⁴⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁸⁷ Ibid, p130.

⁴⁸⁸ Ibid, p132-133.

Aspects of Intellectual Property (TRIPS), which namely contains an important set of 'security exceptions', including Article 73(b). The patents on many AIDS medicines are currently protected by the TRIPS agreement, so the securitisation of the disease could potentially override these protections and ensure poorer countries access to cheaper versions of HIV/AIDS drugs.⁴⁸⁹

Elbe also argues that the state-centric and self-interested nature of security need not necessarily be a drawback – on the contrary, it can act as an important motivation and mobilise both domestic and global responses to HIV/AIDS. Indeed, he goes as far as to claim that “the appeal to the naked self-interest of states is the only strategy left in light of the pressing daily humanitarian implications of the pandemic.”⁴⁹⁰ Finally, Elbe argues that the risk that the securitisation of the HIV/AIDS virus results in the stigmatisation, not of the virus, but of the people who carry it, can also be minimised:

“There is a crucial difference between arguing that ‘people with HIV/AIDS are a security threat’ and arguing that ‘AIDS is a security threat’: while the former aims to be politically exclusionary, and would bring into play a host of normative concerns [...] the latter can be understood as a more inclusive gesture arguing that those living with HIV/AIDS should receive assistance if they so desire. It is also the latter claim that predominates among those linking HIV/AIDS with security.”⁴⁹¹

Indeed, although he points to many of the dangers involved in securitising HIV/AIDS, Elbe remains in favour of the move, providing it is done sensitively. He suggests three ways in which those advocating the links between HIV/AIDS and security can minimise some of the aforementioned dangers:

- i) *“to insist that it is not exclusively a security issue, but rather a security issue in addition to also being a health issue, a development issue, an economic issue, a social issue, a political issue, a gender issue, etc. [...] The security dimension of HIV/AIDS could then complement, rather than supersede, existing frameworks”⁴⁹²*

⁴⁸⁹ Ibid, p133-134.

⁴⁹⁰ Ibid, p134.

⁴⁹¹ Ibid, p137.

⁴⁹² Ibid, p138.

ii) *“by framing the illness as a security issue, or as an issue with an important security dimension, rather than as a dangerous and overwhelming security threat.”*

iii) *“that the problem lies not with the people living with the virus, but with the virus itself.”⁴⁹³*

It is very difficult in practice however to avoid the stigmatisation of people carrying a virus that is deemed a threat to security. Susan Sontag was one of the first Western social scientists to point to the racial and sexist undertones in HIV/AIDS discourses in general. In the context of securitisation, it is interesting to note that Sontag also criticised the use of military metaphors to describe HIV/AIDS, long before the disease became securitised either in practice or in theory. In her own words, “[m]ilitary metaphors contribute to the stigmatizing of certain illnesses and, by extension, of those who are ill.”⁴⁹⁴ HIV/AIDS sufferers on the African continent thus risk a case of ‘double-stigmatisation’ – not only through racism but also through the use of military metaphors to describe the disease. Securitising HIV/AIDS therefore not only directly contributes to the latter case, by ‘militarising’ perceptions of the disease, but it also risks the former, by solely focusing on security issues and ignoring structural aspects of the disease, such as gender, culture and racism.

Another problem with the assumptions made by securitisation theorists who link HIV/AIDS with security is their overwhelming focus on the health and well-being of the military and political elites. There are plenty of other groups in society who could be considered to be essential for security, such as grand-/parents, teachers and health care workers, not to mention the future generation of AIDS orphans, many of whom not only lack access to health care but also to basic resources such as food and shelter. Similarly, only focusing on the risk of HIV infection in conflict (to the military, rape victims etc.) ignores those who could very well be said to contract HIV/AIDS as a result of the structural violence of poverty. Sex is a very common commodity on the black market in many ‘developing’ countries and can be traded for schooling, jobs, money, or sometimes just a bit of food.

⁴⁹³ Ibid, p138.

⁴⁹⁴ Sontag, Susan. (1989), p11.

*“Hardly surprising, then, that young people think of short-term survival before long-term well-being. Short-term survival strategies often include exchanging sex for schooling, a job, money or a roof over one’s head. On a continent where so much of the population is already infected with HIV, such strategies are a recipe not for survival but for premature death.”*⁴⁹⁵

Human security theorists (including the UNDP) could argue that their definition of security takes these other socio-economic factors into account. Ironically, however, the human security definition of HIV/AIDS – to focus on the threat of the disease to Africans themselves – reveals the paradoxes of using a security approach. For how do you secure yourself against a disease when you have little or no other security? People living under conditions of extreme poverty are hard pushed to choose an issue to become securitised, since there are so many potential issues to choose from. HIV/AIDS is by no means the only or worst threat facing the African continent – other diseases such as malaria and malnutrition continue to claim many millions of lives. The lack of response by ‘glocal’ actors to these and all of the continent’s other problems – such as conflict and overall political turmoil, growing international debt and unjust conditions of trade – provide an almost textbook example of Bachrach and Baratz’s ‘second face of power’, where matters of socio-political importance are kept off the global political agenda. What responses there have been – such as the pledge by G8 leaders at the Gleneagles Summit in 2005 to double aid to the African continent by 2010 – have not only been few and far between, but can in a dark light appear to have been little more than a play for the galleries or cognitive manipulation of the political agenda – playing for time, if you will, perhaps to avoid just such criticisms of neglecting the problem. Indeed, according to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the G8 pledge has yet to materialise since African aid from rich countries was static in 2006, excluding a one-off debt relief to Nigeria⁴⁹⁶. Similarly, despite recent amendments to the WTO Agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS), which was hailed by Northern governments as a huge step forward for access to HIV/AIDS medicines, in the three years since these procedures were agreed, no country has yet used them to import generic versions of essential medicines. According to The Stop AIDS Campaign – a registered charity and campaigning initiative of the UK Consortium

⁴⁹⁵ Poku, Nana K. (2001), p198.

⁴⁹⁶ *Financial Times*, April 3 2007.

on AIDS and International Development, a group of more than 80 UK based organisations – “the new flexibilities contained in TRIPS are unnecessarily complex and [...] of additional concern is the fact that many countries are being, or have already been, encouraged to sign regional and bilateral free trade agreements which ensure a higher level of patent protection or other forms of de-facto monopolies - such as protection of pharmaceutical test data and prohibition of parallel importation - than even TRIPS requires. These so-called ‘TRIPS-plus’ policies, favoured by the US, remove any possibility of placing public health above commercial interests such as patent rights.”⁴⁹⁷ Indeed, the WHO admits itself that access to generic drugs is being restricted due to ‘red tape and political pressure’.⁴⁹⁸

Also, and more importantly, the everyday struggle for existence overshadows more long-term decisions, such as whether one dies of old age or a sexually transmitted disease. It is sometimes the simple case of a harsh but devastating choice between ‘death now or later?’ Without also taking all of these structured behaviours and inequalities into account, the full impact of HIV/AIDS cannot be fully understood. Securitising HIV/AIDS seems to be a panic response, (initiated by policy makers and followed up by IR theorists, with little consideration for the theoretical inconsistencies) to ‘push the stop button’, without realising that there are many other factors in play that will override the circuit.

It is also important to note that securitisation does not mean the same as government action – the latter encompasses the former, but securitisation is only one of the many policy options available to a government and is not always necessarily the most effective or normatively appropriate choice. Treating HIV/AIDS as a security threat for example is very different to treating it as a state of emergency. Within the security literature on HIV/AIDS, it is also clear that there is a great difference between writing about the disease as a threat to nations, states or the international community and writing about the disease as a threat to humanity.

⁴⁹⁷ The Stop AIDS Campaign, May 2006, p2.

⁴⁹⁸ World Health Organisation, May 2006.

Following the main point of this thesis, it is argued here that, aside from the very real risk that securitising HIV/AIDS in practice may add to the fear and thus social stigma that is itself a major contributing factor to the continued prevalence of the epidemic, securitising the theoretical debate on HIV/AIDS in IR literature also risks restricting it in two ways: i) to merely encompassing matters of security and behavioural responses to the disease, thereby ignoring the multitude of other global socioeconomic concerns that are relevant both to understanding and curbing the spread of the disease; ii) to simply discussing how to protect those not yet infected, thus ignoring the plight of the millions of people who already live with the disease. This in turn could have dire policy implications – for if HIV is thought of only as a matter of security and other causes and effects are ignored, the pandemic risks worsening rather than improving.

“The danger [...] is that health becomes ‘securitised’: that the international agenda focuses narrowly on the harder security concerns rather than on broader issues involved in global public health, [...] that, in public debate, health issues become secondary to national security, and, not least, that resources and attention are focused disproportionately on hard security issues rather than on issues of global public health. Compare, for example, the newspaper column space and resources devoted to the ‘war on terror’ with those on the global HIV/AIDS epidemic.”⁴⁹⁹

One final but prominent figure in the discourse on HIV/AIDS in security studies who should be mentioned is Colin McInnes. Most of his work is on current international policy and he is very keen for the disease to be both recognised and raised on the international political agenda, although, as the above quotation makes clear, he is wary of the implications of securitisation as a means of achieving this. He cites Ilona Kickbusch, who uses Nye’s definition of soft power to claim that health can (and in her view should) be seen as a ‘soft-power tool’ – stating that the recent lack of leadership by the U.S. in global health has led to a global public health crisis⁵⁰⁰. As discussed in Chapter 1 of this thesis, Nye’s is a solely behavioural definition of power and so, while it encapsulates the agency of power, it fails to take into consideration any of the relevant structures of power that structure this behavioural power. Thus, although Kickbusch may be correct in stating that health can be used as a ‘soft-power tool’ by leading polities, it may

⁴⁹⁹ McInnes, Colin. (2004), p2.

⁵⁰⁰ Kickbusch, Ilona. (2002)

not be the case that leadership by the U.S. or any other polity would make any difference to the spread of the epidemic, without also concurrent broader structural changes occurring.

McInnes does not question this limitation in Nye's (and thus Kickbusch's) definition of power however – instead he criticises Kickbusch's optimism that viewing health as soft power will allow the U.S. “to move beyond the narrow confines of promoting the national interest towards more global communitarian values”⁵⁰¹. He questions the belief that international political institutions are securitising HIV/AIDS for reasons that are in the interests of global public health. And it is in this regard that the McInnes/Kickbusch debate does highlight a very interesting aspect of the securitisation discourse on HIV – namely the ways in which health can be used by governments and other polities as ‘a means towards an end’. For while I share McInnes' concern over the normative implications of securitising the issue, as well as his scepticism about using Nye's definition of ‘soft-power’, Kickbusch's paper (especially since it is more policy prescriptive than theoretical), does reveal that health and thus the site of the body is indeed a contested site of power in world politics – a site that current polities may either use to further their interests or ignore if it is not in their self-interest to pursue the issue. It also reveals the interdependent nature of the sites of power, as health can affect foreign policy and vice versa. For although I share McInnes' normative concerns about this, Kickbusch is guilty only of revealing the importance of health issues to the security discourse.

The behavioural side of the equation is thus very important in highlighting the ways in which actors may use certain issues in order to gain power over others – hence the argument in this thesis for a structured approach rather than a purely structural one. The fact that health is even debated as a securitisation issue reveals that it is an issue that is of importance to world polities, although the reasons for this may be many and varied. It is conceivable for example that some policy makers do indeed regard the disease as an emergency that needs to be securitised, perhaps in order to shut national borders to prevent HIV infected people from

⁵⁰¹ McInnes, Colin. (2004), p3.

entering the country (many countries today impose mandatory HIV testing on immigrants for example) – others however could equally be using the securitisation of HIV as an excuse to implement other security objectives, while others may be more interested in maintaining HIV as a global health issue.

It is argued here however that the case of HIV/AIDS in turn neatly reveals the problems associated with using restricted definitions of power. By confining the definition of world politics to only encompassing state matters of a military (or at best, economic and cultural) nature, mainstream IR forces itself to squeeze in anything and everything else into this poorly fitting framework, usually with the same results as here. For although policy makers may be interested in securitising health issues, it is clear that a securitised analysis of HIV does little to reveal the complexities of the pandemic, nor does it particularly enrich existing theory. But this is once again what makes HIV/AIDS such a good example of the treatment of power within mainstream IR theory – the fact that it has so far only been analysed in securitisation literature reveals the bias (whether intentional or not) within the discipline towards more traditional state- or economic-centric power analyses.

The African continent is often treated externally – by the media, as well as by many academics and policy makers – as one homogenous society. It may seem an obvious statement to make, but it must be remembered that *Africa is not one country* – it is a culturally, socially and politically rich and diverse continent. There have admittedly been attempts since the 1960's to unite the foreign policies of the African states, and the newly reformed Organisation of African Unity (OAU) is gaining some credibility as an international actor. But, as with other regional organisations, such as the European Union, the OAU certainly does not represent a homogenous, unified state, much less people. And yet, most sub-Saharan African states all have one thing in common – HIV/AIDS. Why is this? What else does the region have in common? What separates Africa from the rest of the world, where infection rates are not so high? Well, to begin with, they all share a history of colonialism, Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) and poverty. Indeed – if one wishes to securitise the issue of HIV/AIDS – it could equally be argued that the African continent's security has been under threat ever

since the first European explorers paved the way for slavery, colonialism and, later, SAPs in the 19th and 20th centuries.

It is the main argument of this thesis that structured relationships (involving international, national and local policy makers, as well as individuals) across twelve sites of power are severely constraining sub-Saharan Africa from successfully dealing with HIV/AIDS. As shall be examined in more detail below, the reasons for the continued spread of the disease on the continent are many and varied and it is impossible to find one that alone can explain the many varied endemics that have taken hold there and elsewhere in the world. What is certain however is that behavioural theories by themselves cannot explain these causes and effects. For while they may be useful in revealing the implications that the disease may have on individual behaviour or on foreign policy, they reveal little else besides. To repeat the main contention of this thesis – global power is about much more than simply the relationships between states and, as an example of ‘glocal’ power, HIV/AIDS has both been caused by and created many more structured relationships of power than simply those between individuals.

'Globalised' and Post-Modernist Approaches to HIV/AIDS

*"AIDS fits the common understanding of 'globalization' in a number of ways, including its epidemiology, the mobilization against its spread, and the dominance of certain discourses in the understandings of the epidemic."*⁵⁰²

Outside the discipline of IR, the volume of academic writing on the 'glocal' causes and effects of HIV/AIDS is not only vast, but also extremely rich and diverse in content. Many theorists agree however on the basic premise that the spread of HIV/AIDS has been greatly fuelled by 'globalisation', although there is less agreement about the spatial and temporal boundaries of this global pandemic, as well as whether it is defined by structural or behavioural characteristics. Furthermore, as shall be shown below, post-modernist critics of 'globalisation' theories contest the idea of temporally or spatially determining the spread of HIV/AIDS altogether, arguing that this only reifies racist institutional attitudes that HIV/AIDS is solely the 'developing world's' problem. Post-modernists argue instead for the recognition that HIV/AIDS does not constitute one global 'pandemic', but is rather comprised of many smaller epidemics, with different strains of the virus prevalent in different parts of the world. They further argue that the socio-economic contexts of these epidemics vary according to locality, both between and within nation-states, and so a global analysis of the spread of the disease is not only useless, but also essentialist and at risk of misinforming policies directed towards the prevention and treatment of the disease.

*"AIDS is the first epidemic of globalisation. It has spread rapidly because of the massive acceleration of communication, the rapidity with which desire is reconstructed and marketed globally, and the flagrant inequality that exists within and between societies."*⁵⁰³

The main defining aspect that all 'globalisation' theorists of HIV/AIDS share is that 'globalisation', in whichever way it is defined, has in some way had an effect on the global spread of HIV/AIDS. They focus on the global causes and effects of the spread of the disease, as well as the especially devastating effect it has had and threatens to continue to have on the 'developing' world, particularly sub-Saharan

⁵⁰² Altman, Dennis. (2001), p69.

⁵⁰³ Barnett, Tony – Whiteside, Alan. (2006), p4.

Africa. Many are united in the view that 'globalisation' has not only facilitated the rapid spread of the disease, but could also, if managed appropriately, provide the means with which to contain it. What also distinguishes these 'globalisation' theories of HIV/AIDS from the IR theories considered above is that here there is little focus on the concepts of human or inter-/national security (although some authors do include security as one of the many problems related to the disease) – rather, the primary concern is with the global cultural, social, economic and political causes and effects of the virus.

Another point on which most 'globalisation' theorists of HIV/AIDS are agreed upon is that, regardless of whether they see globalisation as an age-old or a modern-day phenomenon, the movement of people – be that through war, colonialism, slavery, tourism, urbanisation or migration – caused by this 'globalisation' has greatly contributed to the spread of the disease, both across continents as well as within nation-states themselves. On the contemporary effects of 'globalisation', Dennis Altman writes:

*“HIV followed the huge population movements of the contemporary world, whether these are truckers moving across Zaire and India, women taking up sex work as a means of survival as old communities and social order crumbled, men seeking work on the minefields of South Africa and Zimbabwe, or tourists (for example American in Haiti), refugees (Haitians fleeing to the United States), and soldiers (Cubans serving in Angola; UN troops in Cambodia or the former Yugoslavia) moving across national boundaries.”*⁵⁰⁴

This basic claim – that the virus is spread through the movement of people – could be used to support the previous arguments made by those IR theorists and policy makers who wish to securitise the disease, so that it can be contained within nation-state boundaries. According to most 'globalisation' theories (old and new) however, this is a completely impractical policy to implement, since people constantly move across and within nation-state borders (be this as colonialists, slaves, tourists, migrant workers, soldiers or refugees) and, even in the unlikely event that they are ever successfully and completely prevented from doing so, the damage can already be said to have been done since, as already stated, various

⁵⁰⁴ Altman, Dennis. (2001), p70.

strains of the HIV virus are already prevalent in every nation-state in the world. Indeed, for many 'globalisation' theorists, the causes and effects of HIV/AIDS cannot simply be attributed to the movement of people alone.

For although 'globalisation' theorists of HIV/AIDS may disagree on the *effects* that this movement of people has had on the spread of the disease – some focusing on the behaviours that people engage in on the move, whilst others have focused on the gendered, cultural and socio-economic inequalities that make people move in the first place or that they encounter whilst on their travels – they are at least united in the view that the movement of people *in itself* does not adequately explain the spread of the disease – it is the contexts in which they find themselves that is important. Indeed, as Nana Poku and Alan Whiteside so succinctly put it, “being mobile in and of itself is not a risk factor for HIV/AIDS; it is the situations they encounter and the behaviours in which they may engage while they are travelling and living away from home that lead to an increased vulnerability to HIV/AIDS.”⁵⁰⁵

The problem with many 'globalisation' accounts of HIV/AIDS as they stand however is that they tend to ignore the agency of both 'glocal' polities and individuals, reifying instead global structures as somehow operating independently of human behaviour. Economic explanations for the spread of HIV/AIDS, for example, tend to focus solely on the economic structures of capitalism and nothing else. While there is nothing wrong with conducting a partial analysis per se, a more comprehensive understanding of 'glocal' power relations must take into account all relevant aspects. And it is here that the case of HIV/AIDS once more can reveal why this must necessarily be so. To continue with the example of economic structures – it is certainly not the case that it is economic inequalities alone that have contributed to the stronghold of the disease in poorer parts of the world. To make this argument is simply to play into the hands of behaviouralist arguments, which are typically highly critical of such approaches. Indeed, this has as severe implications for policy as a purely behaviouralist or securitised account, as a purely structural policy can constrain action on the ground. Hakan

⁵⁰⁵ Poku, Nana K. – Whiteside, Alan. (2004), pxx.

Seckinelgin, for example, argues that global politics have left local HIV/AIDS organisations with little room for manoeuvre. He claims that not only are NGOs constrained in their potential agency by ‘glocal’ institutionalism and are thus “by and large still under the mandate of the state actors and governed by their foreign policy interests”⁵⁰⁶, but that their link to people on the ground is thus also questioned, claiming that “there is a pattern which appears to falsify the assumed relationship between people and NGOs as people’s organisations.”⁵⁰⁷ Of course, it is difficult to blame such ‘glocal’ institutionalism on the theoretical flaws of structural accounts of world politics – rather it is the combined persistence of structural inequalities, fuelled by agency that causes such rigidity – but it is clear that such accounts do not help to analyse these dynamics. A nuanced account of economic inequalities would recognise instead the inherently complex relationship between structure and agency, both globally and locally, that have combined across time and space to produce the stark contrasts in global susceptibility to the disease. The ensuing structured analysis in the next two chapters, based around the twelve sites of power, will attempt to at least sketch the outer parameters of such an account.

Post-modernist theorists contest the idea of temporally and spatially defining the epidemic altogether. In *Globalizing AIDS*, Cindy Patton argues that attempts to geographically map the epidemic have been rooted in institutional racism. Since hers is more a personal narrative (based on her own experiences as an AIDS activist) than a structured analysis, I have included some longer excerpts from her book below in order to illustrate some of her main arguments:

“Although the simple scheme of [...] world patterns may originally have had broad scientific and heuristic value in preparing for a pandemic, it quickly took on a narrative life of its own, offering supranational policy makers and news reporters a veneer of scientific objectivity for what were essentially racist and class-disadvantaging representations of local epidemics. Almost immediately, the pseudoscientific label ‘African AIDS’ circulated with more resonance, and perhaps more credibility, than did the official WHO term, ‘Pattern Two’, to describe the spread of the disease in places where cases related to heterosexual intercourse seemed to predominate. This recycling of very old racist ideas that alleged unchecked sexuality in Africa, or among black

⁵⁰⁶ Seckinelgin, Hakan. (2008), p63.

⁵⁰⁷ Ibid, p66.

people generally, was devastating for local activism in both Africa and North America. In many African nations, the Global Programme on AIDS (GPA), national health ministries, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and local activists promoted a 'return to monogamy' instead of exploring the complex class, migration, and cultural patterns that concretely framed the epidemic."⁵⁰⁸

Patton focuses on the global discourse of HIV/AIDS, arguing that it was framed by epidemiology, which had already stigmatised certain groups or countries before the discovery of the disease. She begins her discourse analysis by tracing the early years of HIV/AIDS, before it was officially recognised by medical practitioners and given 'The Name', as she calls it:

*"Without having a diagnostic label [...] early affected persons had already been marked as different and were deemed troublesome by the medical systems they attended. Paradoxically, as people matching existing stereotypes appeared within the administrative systems that use medical care for policing, the collision between individual physical need and social desire to control allowed those original cases to become visible to the world medical community. Because surveillance systems were already on the alert for sexual 'deviants' and unwanted immigrants, officials noticed and quickly told their colleagues of their mysteriously ill or inexplicably dead patients. Inaccurate as these initial, discriminatory understandings were, they formed the prerequisite of modern epidemiology: They connected illness with a population whose shared location, traits, or practices promised to yield clues to the origin and dynamics of a disease."*⁵⁰⁹

Patton also levels criticism at structural accounts of the disease, especially those that try to find singularly 'globalised' reasons for its spread, arguing that the divide between behavioural and structural accounts leaves little room in between for a more detailed and nuanced analysis:

"In developing countries, colonialism and modernization were commonly blamed for local epidemics. But although the social and economic relations that undergird the epidemic did in general develop alongside colonial and postcolonial or modern political regimes, from the standpoint of local action, broad political critiques are insufficient bases on which to develop a public health response. The heated battle between those who cloak racism in scientific language and those who attack the colonialist legacy still present within science and global health management quickly resulted in a political and scientific gap between the two sides; both lacked a

⁵⁰⁸ Patton, Cindy. (2002), pxi-xii.

⁵⁰⁹ Ibid, pxvii-xviii.

detailed analysis of local health delivery practices and ignored the political and sociosexual economy of decolonizing or democratizing places."⁵¹⁰

The main problem that Patton's argument faces however is exactly that it is more of a personal narrative of her own experiences working in the field, rather than a detailed discourse analysis of the epidemiological and structural accounts that she criticises. There is, for example, very little referencing in the book and so the reader is reliant on her interpretation of events. This is a problem that is faced by many post-modernist analyses – they either focus on deconstructing a detail or narrate a personal experience as a critique of mainstream behavioural or structural analyses. This is understandable however since, as already mentioned in the first half of this thesis, a thorough post-modernist analysis of world politics is difficult if not impossible to achieve – indeed, although it is the aim here to offer an alternative, 'glocalised' account of HIV/AIDS, there is certainly not room within the confines of this thesis to more than sketch the proposed outlines of such an analysis. It is namely very difficult to fill in the gaps between behavioural and structural accounts, since this not only involves conducting an analysis of vast magnitude but also involves deconstructing 'silent' discourses – a problem that any analysis of power faces when trying to reveal its more covert second, third and (especially) fourth faces. This is also the problem that Patton is confronted with. For although it is questionable whether it is actually possible to find documents or policies referring to HIV/AIDS before it was given 'The Name' – the early period of the epidemic was, as Patton makes clear, one of confusion, as both sufferers and medical practitioners alike struggled to find the reasons for the disease – her account is more of a critique than an attempt to offer an alternative analysis to the behavioural and structural accounts she criticises.

As an activist directly involved in this period however, Patton's own voice must be given some credence. Her thesis that the terminologies used by both epidemiological and structural accounts are heavily influenced by the power of discourse is certainly one worth making, as shall be seen in the site of knowledge and aesthetics. Moreover, Patton's argument that 'global' epidemiological and structural theories of HIV/AIDS distort an understanding of the locality of the

⁵¹⁰ Ibid, pxii.

disease is an important one, as it highlights many of the problems with attempts to find a 'globalised' reality.

A recent publication – entitled *HIV & AIDS in Africa: Beyond Epidemiology*, compiled by a collection of authors ranging from numerous social scientific disciplines – echoes Patton's calls for HIV/AIDS to be de-'globalised'. In the introduction to the book, one of the editors, Susan Craddock writes:

*“Problematic gender and racialized representations of sexual practices, social behaviours, and government actions generated within and outside of Africa are proving detrimental to the lives of millions currently affected by HIV/AIDS. Women are ‘reservoirs of infection,’ Africans are promiscuous, AIDS victims are deprived, African governments are incompetent [...]. The aggregate effects of such interpretations are insidious for the stigmatization, misguided interventions, and indifference they help to produce as well as the lives that continue to be lost. [...] An example within an African context is problematic postcolonial discourses associating AIDS with Western immorality and locating subsequent interventions in ‘traditional’ patriarchal heterosexual praxis.”*⁵¹¹

The aim of the book is “to uncover the various ways AIDS is embedded within social, economic, cultural, political, and ideological contexts.” The contributors to the book “largely disagree with the representation of AIDS as multiple instances of individual risk resulting from lack of information or poor decisions.” Craddock writes that “[w]e understand it rather as deeply rooted in historical antecedents, geopolitical relations, global financial configurations, government policies, local institutions, and cultural politics.” Most of the contributors “employ for the most part variations of a cultural political economy of vulnerability framework that reflects their understanding of AIDS as resulting from material, symbolic, and discursive forces effectively constraining the opportunities and choices available to individuals and potentially creating conditions of vulnerability for large sectors of regional populations.”⁵¹²

There are many illuminating articles contained within the volume, discussing a wide range of issues: struggles over the meaning of AIDS; perceptions and

⁵¹¹ Craddock, Susan. (2004), p4-5.

⁵¹² Ibid, p5-6.

misperceptions of AIDS in Africa; critiques of attempts to map the disease; gendered vulnerabilities; sexualities; poverty; migration and war; the roles of the IMF and the WB; research methods, agendas and ethics; as well as personal accounts of the disease (to mention but a few). There is not space here to account for each author in turn, although many of their findings will be referred to in the structured analysis that follows later in this thesis. Suffice to say at this stage that the authors thus draw on a wide-range of disciplines and, put all together, comprise a comprehensive critique of more generalised overviews of HIV/AIDS. Although some of the authors do fall back on more behavioural or structural accounts of the spread of the disease, it is clear that the main aim of the book is to force the parameters of discussion about HIV/AIDS wide open. As such, the volume as a whole presents a post-modernist approach to the question of HIV/AIDS in Africa, that focuses on 'glocalised' realities, rather than 'globalised' generalisations.

As with Patton's analysis however, the problem with such works is that they do leave the door wide open, leaving both theorists and policy makers scrambling in the dark as how best to approach the issue of HIV/AIDS in a broader global context. Not only that, but there is also a real danger that post-modernist theories that focus solely on the discourses and experiences of individuals and localities lose sight of very real 'glocal' material and cognitive inequalities that influence these discourses. This can have as dire consequences for policy as a purely structural or behavioural account, since it leaves the analyst fundamentally unable to say very much about anything, except that HIV/AIDS is a disease that kills people. This fundamental opposition to acknowledging any material or cognitive realities not only means that 'glocal' policy becomes an impossibility, but also that practitioners on the ground are left with very little to go on except other people's narratives and hearsay. A similar point is made by Altman in his critique of the postmodernist turn in sexual theory:

"There are two major problems in the postmodern turn in sexual theory, as well as a minor one, namely a belief that the more impenetrable the language the deeper the thought. The first objection is that the emphasis on discourse, performance, and play too often means a disinterest in material

*realities and inequalities. [...] Second, the emphasis on discourse tends to deny the role of social movements and political work[...].*⁵¹³

⁵¹³ Altman, Dennis. (2001), p159.

Conclusion

As argued throughout this thesis, I thus propose a theoretical approach to understanding 'glocal' phenomena such as the spread of HIV/AIDS that tries to combine all three aforementioned methodological approaches – behavioural, structural and post-modernist – based on the 'glocalised' and structured understanding of power that is the basis of this thesis. For although the mainstream epidemiological approach, with its primary focus on the behavioural aspects of HIV/AIDS, has been strongly and correctly criticised for seeing all behaviour as 'rational' and ignoring structural influences, while structural approaches typically ignore behaviour altogether, it is clear that 'glocal' power analyses must take both structure and agency into account. A structured approach must necessarily therefore combine a behavioural approach with a structural one, but can only do so, it is argued here, by also taking into account the post-modernist critiques against making essentialist generalisations about these behaviours and structures – the primary focus here thus being on 'glocalisation' rather than 'globalisation'. I propose to do this by analysing structured behaviour across the twelve sites of power proposed in this thesis.

In the next chapter, I will conduct a brief structured analysis of Held's more traditional seven sites of power, since these are already well accounted for both in traditional analyses of world power, as well as in much of the literature on HIV/AIDS. Since the site of the body is the lens through which all of the other sites will be examined (as HIV/AIDS is obviously located within the site of physical and emotional well-being), this site has been given a bit more attention. This is also because it is also one of the main points of this thesis that the site of the body is underrepresented in mainstream IR theory and so the definition of the site has been expanded upon, in order to more fully explain why it is absolutely necessary to include the site of the body in an analysis of 'glocal' power structures. In Chapter 8, I will then account in greater detail for the five sites of power that I have added to Held's original seven sites since these, along with the contention that world power must be analysed using a 'glocalised' structured approach, are the main contributions of the thesis.

Chapter Seven – A Structurated Analysis of HIV/AIDS in Held’s Seven Sites of Power

Introduction

“HIV/AIDS marks exclusions that can be found not only across the gross geography of continents, but also in the more subtle geography of social networks and city blocks. It is marked in the ebb and flow of global and local labour markets, where the quest for work and livelihoods may take on a sexual complexion.”⁵¹⁴

There are a handful of analysts who promote a ‘glocalised’ view of HIV/AIDS in southern Africa rather than a ‘globalised’ one. Barnett and Whiteside, for example, stress that the inequalities marked out by HIV/AIDS are not just global, but also national and local: “[n]owhere are the long chain relationships between the microscopic and the macroscopic worlds more evident than in the origins of the HIV/AIDS epidemic and its social and economic consequences”⁵¹⁵. Implicitly throughout their analysis *AIDS in the Twenty-First Century*, the authors emphasise the multi-faceted dimensions of power that create these inequalities. The book is rich with examples of many different types of socio-economic inequalities that affect the spread of HIV/AIDS, in different ways in different parts of the world, many of which will be referred to in the ensuing analysis. They also question a lot of the epidemiological research that has so far been conducted by international organisations, criticising its behavioural focus. The main problem with the book as it stands however, is that it is not itself structured in such a way that it highlights the importance of each of these inequalities, perhaps because it is not meant to provide a definition of social inequalities but rather offer a detailed overview of global HIV/AIDS. Part III of the book, on ‘Vulnerability and Impact’, has separate chapters on: ‘Individuals, Households and Communities’; ‘Dependents: Orphans and the Elderly’; ‘Rural Livelihoods and Agriculture’; ‘Private Sector Impact’; ‘Development and Economic Growth’; ‘Government and Governance’; and there is also a separate chapter on Africa in Part II on ‘Susceptibility’. Of greatest concern here however is that there are no separate discussions or chapters on

⁵¹⁴ Barnett, Tony – Whiteside, Alan. (2006), p6.

⁵¹⁵ Ibid, p74-5.

gender, culture or identity – indeed, although there are several examples of these dimensions of HIV/AIDS offered throughout the book, none of the concepts are even warranted a mention in the subject-index. This is very unfortunate for a book that sets out to offer a comprehensive view of global HIV/AIDS.

In the ensuing analysis, therefore, all of these inequalities will be grouped instead under the twelve sites of power proposed in this thesis – starting with Held's original seven sites of power in the remainder of this chapter, to then argue for the inclusion of my additional five sites in the next chapter. This separation of the twelve sites of power should not be taken as giving any of the sites precedence over the others however – it is merely an analytical separation to pinpoint what is missing if one limits an analysis to Held's original seven sites. Indeed, it is argued here that all of the twelve sites of power are equally relevant in the study of any social phenomenon, not as static structures, but as structured sites that are created and maintained or changed by the behaviour of both 'glocal' polities and individuals alike. As already mentioned however, Held's definitions of the seven sites focus mainly on the negative aspects of power (as autonomic structures) and have a tendency towards falling on the structural side of the fence. All of the sites analysed here will instead be analysed as structured sites of power that necessarily include agency as well as structure and will also include any positive aspects of power currently discernible with regards in particular to HIV/AIDS. The analysis that follows will therefore examine: i) how each site operates as a structure of power; ii) how it functions as a resource for agency; iii) how it forms agency; and iv) who the main actors are in each site with the potential to change its structure (usually a difficult question to answer, since a 'glocalised' structured approach opens up the world stage to a multitude of actors spanning all twelve sites of power).

In order to maintain the union between a structurationist and a Foucaultian approach, the analysis will also make a distinction between the social construction of i) material realities (structurationist) and ii) cognitive 'realities' (Foucaultian) in each site. For, as has already been discussed and shall become apparent in the analysis below, while there are some material realities that are hard to dispute, sometimes the distinction between these and the more cognitive 'realities' can be

so fine that it surpasses even the most careful analyst's perception. The rest of this chapter will thus analyse Held's original seven sites of power, as these are the sites that are most typically approached in most mainstream analysis, leaving the next chapter to argue for the additional inclusion of my extra five sites of power, as it is argued here that power cannot be fully comprehended without also including these sites.

The Site of the Body

“The body is not just skin and bones, an assemblage of parts, a medical marvel [...] The body is also, and primarily, the self. We are all embodied. [...] Controversies rage about the ownership of the body, the boundaries, its meaning, its value, the criteria of life and death, and how it should be lived, and loved. [...] The body and the senses are socially constructed, in various ways by different populations, as are the various organs, processes and attributes of the body. The problem is to demonstrate how the body is constructed, and why, and also why these constructions vary and change. The body is not a ‘given’, but a social category with different meanings imposed and developed by every age, and by different sectors of the population. As such it is therefore sponge-like in its ability to absorb meanings, but also highly political.”⁵¹⁶

Held defines the site of the body as ‘how physical and emotional wellbeing are organised’. This section aims to expand on this definition, using the particular case of HIV/AIDS, to show how physical and emotional wellbeing structure agency both within the site of the body, as well as across all of the other sites. For it is the argument here that the body constitutes as fundamental a resource as any other, both on an individual level, as well as en masse, across all levels of agency. Since agency either reproduces or transforms societal structures and vice versa, a fluid and never-ending creation and recreation of the social definition of the body takes place – it is treated and defined as one thing or another depending on its context in time and space. The body fares more or less well according to power in all of the other sites – it is not served well, for example, by poverty or discrimination against it, but may prosper if allowed access to health, education and other material and ideational sites of power.

It is thus not just a question of addressing material issues such as physical and emotional health or disease as Held would have it, or the more cognitive structures that determine whether or not political power in the site of the body is racialised or gendered as ‘male’ or ‘female’, but rather a question of studying the interplay of all of the social factors that results in the many different embodied realities of this world. It is obviously beyond both the scope and the remit of this thesis to conduct an analysis of all of these ‘glocal’ realities – since, as Burton has made clear, this would require mapping all of the relevant relationships of power that interplay

⁵¹⁶ Synnott, Anthony. (1993), p1.

within the site of the body, which is nigh on impossible. What follows below therefore (as in the rest of the sites in this and the following chapter) are a few examples both of the multiple levels of agency that operate in the site, as well as how it both affects and is affected by these structured relations of power across all of the twelve sites.

In some ways, the human body, in both its biological and its social constitution, is the very essence of politics, for without it there can be no human agency *or* structures and thus no relationships of power. For what is power without life to sustain it? The body is thus *not* merely the vessel through which politics happens, but is in itself a very important part of the reciprocal relationship between agency and structure. It is, as the above quotation so eloquently puts it, a ‘highly political’ ‘social category’ that is ‘sponge-like in its ability to absorb meanings’. It is probably no coincidence therefore that, as one of the main theorists of power, Foucault dedicated a great deal of his life’s work to the subject of tracing the social and thus political roots of the definition of the human body and subject. In his *History of Sexuality*, he wrote that “power is situated and exercised at the level of life, the species, the race, and the large-scale phenomena of population. [...] The disciplines of the body and the regulations of the population constituted the two poles around which the organization of power over life was deployed.”⁵¹⁷ For, as Foucault and Held, as well as many feminists and post-colonialists have made clear, how the body is defined and consequently organised socially is of the utmost importance for political power. Thus, in the site of the body, it is the *embodiment* of the structured interplay of all of the other sites of power that is under the spotlight. It is a case of, as physician and anthropologist Paul Farmer puts it, asking the question “[b]y what mechanisms, precisely, do social forces ranging from poverty to racism become *embodied* as individual experience?”⁵¹⁸

With regards to the site of identities, for example, but also in relation to other sites such as that of knowledge and aesthetics, space and time, the frequent stigmatisation of people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) highlights the central focus that is, or has historically been put on the body in many of the other sites.

⁵¹⁷ Foucault, Michel. (1998), p137-139.

⁵¹⁸ Farmer, Paul. (2005), p30.

The study of tropical disease, for example, highlights the distinctions that can be made between different bodies, as some are considered to be 'exotic', 'tropical' or 'diseased' while others are not. Cindy Patton calls this 'tropical thinking', which originates from the study of diseases in the Western colonial era and was in its conception concerned with the protection of colonialists whilst they were in the colonies. Typically, 'tropical thinking' is based on the premise that: "Where there are tropical diseases, there must be a lack of civilization (tropics), and where there is civilization there must be lack of (tropical) disease."⁵¹⁹

In relation to the site of the organisation of violence and coercive relations for example, as Sontag has made clear, a 'war' against HIV/AIDS-the-virus risks becoming a 'war' against HIV/AIDS-the-body, i.e. a 'war' against its victims rather than against the disease. The infected body itself can thus easily become the target of other sites of power, instead of the issue in question, namely the disease. The mandatory isolation of HIV-positive people in 'sanatoria' in Cuba in the 1980s is one such example, while the blame and stigmatisation of Haitians in the early years of the outbreak of the disease is another.⁵²⁰ The belief that sex with a virgin will cure the disease⁵²¹ is another example where a potent mix of the other sites of power can combine to create an abuse of power against the bodies of others. Furthermore, although it is estimated that the ratio of women to men infected with the disease "remain[s] stable globally", the fact that the proportion of infected women to infected men is increasing in some parts of the world⁵²² highlights the importance of other sites of power on the site of the body. According to UNAIDS:

"Globally, and in every region, more adult women (15 years or older) than ever before are now living with HIV. The 17.7 million [15.1 million–20.9 million] women living with HIV in 2006 represented an increase of over one million compared with 2004 [...] Across all age groups, 59% of people living with HIV in sub-Saharan Africa in 2006 were women. In the Caribbean, the Middle East and North Africa, and Oceania, close to one in every two adults with HIV is female.

⁵¹⁹ Patton, Cindy. (2002), p34-50.

⁵²⁰ Farmer, Paul. (1992).

⁵²¹ Akeroyd, Anne V. (2004), p96.

⁵²² UNAIDS. (2007), p8.

*Meanwhile, in many countries of Asia, Eastern Europe and Latin America, the proportions of women living with HIV continue to grow.”*⁵²³

The predicted impact of HIV/AIDS on life expectancy in those countries worst affected by the disease is, in Barnett and Whiteside’s words, “devastating”. The average life-expectancy in many of these countries now lies between 30-40 years – half a lifetime in more ‘developed’ countries.⁵²⁴ Thus the site of the body also highlights the fact that not only does power in all of the other sites limit power in the site of the body but that this site in turn limits power in all of the other sites. As a structured reality that is formed by both agency and structure, the power of the body is thus determined both by the actual physical and emotional power of the body itself, as well as how it is affected by all of the other sites. With regards to the site of time, for example, it is clear that, with only half a lifetime in which to exercise power, the power of the body is reduced. As Barnett and Whiteside point out, “[t]ime is not neutral, ticking away in the background, measuring out each life in equal amounts. Time is relative. [...] Time, indeed, is gendered and so is the risk of infection.”⁵²⁵

The bodies that are infected with the disease are thus often limited in their power of agency in all of the other sites, risking social exclusion or worse social death (i.e. a total loss of agency) before the biological death that is caused by the disease itself. Even if they do continue to operate in other sites of power, there is a myth of agency here – known as ‘coping’ – as Barnett and Whiteside make clear:

“The constant struggles to survive that characterise the livelihoods of so many do not leave room for coping in the ‘extraordinary’ (in fact, for them, all too ordinary) circumstances in which many poor people live. That is what they do every day of every year. That is the nature of poverty. And when the big crisis hits them they do not cope. Thus, to talk of such poor people ‘coping’ is to cross the line between technical appreciation of what is possible and barely disguised cynicism and clear acceptance that different groups of human beings can only be offered second-, third- (or worse) best options. [...] A term such as ‘coping’ may be a way of escaping from the challenge of

⁵²³ UNAIDS/06.29E. (2006), p3-5.

⁵²⁴ Barnett, Tony – Whiteside, Alan. (2006), p187 & 192-193.

⁵²⁵ Ibid, p22-3.

confronting how people's capabilities are stunted, how their entitlements are blocked and their abilities to function as full human beings with choices and self-definitions are frustrated."⁵²⁶

Of course, there have always been individuals who are either physically and/or mentally incapacitated but who are still able to and/or relied upon to make decisions of social import, whether this be in economic, political or spiritual matters at household or indeed at global level (spiritual or regal leaders who rule until their death for example). Individuals may also become martyred after their death, revealing again that the power of the body is interrelated with all of the other sites, since its actual physical existence is not necessary for the power of that particular individual to continue after his or her death – this phenomena is closely related to the ghosts of agency, since it is the actions of people past that is relevant here. Even fictitious and thus non-existent bodies have power in other sites, as in the case of folklore and superstition. Such sites of power have also granted many physically existing bodies perceived power, as in the cases of witchcraft or religious worship. All of these are examples of myths of agency, although the term 'myth' could be and usually is disputed, only going to show that the body is a site of political contestation as much as any other.

It is also clear that there are multiple levels of agency operating within the site. With regards to the first face of power, for example, it is clear that being infected with HIV/AIDS has the full potential to restrict access to the decision-making process, not only because of the material realities that the disease brings with it, such as poverty, but also because of cognitive realities such as stigmatisation and discrimination. However, even if PLWHA were fully capable to participate equally in all of the other sites of power, their actual ability to do so depends on their structural location in these other sites. As already mentioned, HIV has so far mainly affected people living in poorer areas of the world and so their ability to participate in decision-making processes can already be expected to be limited. Politics on the other hand have been very active in trying to change the course of HIV/AIDS infection, as the prevalence of behavioural change remedies and the securitisation of the pandemic illustrate.

⁵²⁶ Ibid, p351-352.

The second face of power (that of no-decisions) is also relevant in the site of the body, since HIV/AIDS was long neglected on the international political agenda, highlighting the fact that the interests of PLWHA were not recognised politically until only very recently – although, as already mentioned, it is questionable whether it was brought up on the international political agenda with their interests in mind, since it was first and foremost brought up as a matter of security. Indeed, this conflict of interests reveals once more the multiple levels of agency that operate within each site, for it is not always clear who brings what issue on to a political agenda. With regards to the body in particular, some illnesses or disorders may be considered to be so undesirable that they often disappear from sight, as no-one wishes to claim them. Indeed, the body reveals the politics of non-ownership and denial of the second face of power – for where material resources such as economic wealth and prosperity usually result in a contest *for* ownership, more subjective and cognitive resources such as identities can just as easily result in a contest for non-ownership and denial, with no-one wanting to claim them. When such negative identities or problems are discovered, they may very well be denied in the ‘self’ and projected onto ‘others’, as ‘their’ problem to deal with on their own. This can certainly be argued to be the case with diseases such as HIV/AIDS, where fear and denial have led some actors to disclaim the disease as either non-existent or as somebody else’s problem. Thus, while some bodies are defined in a positive light, with desirable attributes, others may be defined negatively, as undesirable.

The third face of power (that of the manipulation of interests) can also be found in this site, for example with regard to discourses on the body – that determine what it is and what it should be. For while it is clear that most people are agreed that it is detrimental to the power of the body to be infected with HIV/AIDS, there are, as already mentioned, many different judgements about those bodies that are infected with the disease, as well as what should be done both to these bodies and to curb the spread of the disease. The fourth face of power can also be located in the aforementioned prevalence of behavioural models in many responses to the disease, which strongly advocate the individual’s responsibility to self-police the body and take responsibility for its own health, regardless of the structural constraints that may be placed upon it.

All of these are examples of the negative constraints that HIV/AIDS can put on the power of the body. However, HIV/AIDS also highlights the positive Foucaultian aspects of power. With regard to the fourth face of power for example, it is clear that a certain degree of self-policing (e.g. not undertaking high-risk behaviours) can empower an agent as much as constrain him/her. However, the point that the example of HIV/AIDS hammers home is that not all agents have the luxury of self-policing their behaviour when faced with the harsh everyday realities of structural inequalities.

The disease has also raised 'glocal' awareness of the importance of global health, as well as awareness of many of the structural conditions that have made some parts of the world more vulnerable than others to the disease – such as economic and gendered inequalities. PLWHA and other AIDS activists have had many successes in bringing the issue up on to the 'glocal' political agenda, even managing to change some of the structures of the other sites – as shall be discussed below in the site of civic associations. According to Alex de Waal:

“People living with HIV and AIDS are among the most marginalized people in the most powerless continent, but a string of successes have been scored by them or on their behalf. One success is making it legally unacceptable to discriminate against people living with HIV and AIDS. De facto discrimination is widespread, but whenever it is challenged the law is clear. Another victory was establishing the Global Fund to fight AIDS, TB and Malaria in 2001, alongside a huge increase in funding for AIDS through existing mechanisms. [...] Perhaps most dramatic was the precipitous fall in the price of antiretroviral drugs between 2001 and 2003, so that they became an affordable option in poor countries.”⁵²⁷

Before leaving the site, it is important to discuss one of the most fundamental aspects of the body that the case of HIV/AIDS highlights, but that is relevant in all of 'glocal' politics, namely that of gender and sexuality. For, like most human behaviour, sex and sexuality are not 'rational' behaviours (as Chin would have it) but are rather heavily structured behaviours that depend on structural realities, material as well as cognitive. Some analysts argue however that these behaviours are becoming increasingly homogenised due to processes of 'globalisation'.

⁵²⁷ (Emphasis in original) de Waal, Alex. (2006), p60.

In his book *Global Sex*, Dennis Altman argues that “changes in our understandings of and attitudes to sexuality are both affected by and reflect the larger changes of globalization. Moreover, as with globalization itself, the changes are simultaneously leading to greater homogeneity and greater inequality. [...] Increasingly sexuality becomes a terrain on which are fought our bitter disputes around the impact of global capital and ideas.”⁵²⁸ Altman claims that the spread of the HIV virus has “made a mockery of national sovereignty”, claiming that it is the “growing internationalization of trade in both sex and drugs [that] has played a major role in the diffusion of HIV, and its rapid spread into almost every corner of the world.”⁵²⁹ He also argues that “[e]qually the international response [to the disease] has implications for the globalization of certain biomedical and sociobehavioral paradigms [...]. Global mobilization around the demands of a biomedical emergency has inevitably meant the further entrenchment of western concepts of disease, treatments, and the body.”⁵³⁰

“Most significant”, writes Altman, “is the impact of the epidemic on regimes of sex and gender. Different cultural understandings of the meanings humans give to their bodies are constantly being challenged and remade by the impact of particular western notions, via economic, cultural, and professional influences; the AIDS epidemic has created ‘experts’ who in turn influence perceptions of sex and gender through HIV education and prevention programs. Such programs further the diffusion of a particular language around sexuality and sexual identities which depend upon particular, largely western, assumptions.”⁵³¹

Altman allows that “[t]here is no one AIDS epidemic, but rather a patchwork which has very different epidemiological patterns and consequences, depending on the economic and political resources available”⁵³². He also concedes that “bodily pleasure is often shaped by political and economic conditions; a sex worker in a Calcutta brothel is unlikely to experience her body in ways similar to

⁵²⁸ Altman, Dennis. (2001), p1.

⁵²⁹ Ibid, p71.

⁵³⁰ Ibid, p73.

⁵³¹ Ibid, p73-4.

⁵³² Ibid, p81.

that of her customers (or indeed to that of a high-class “escort” in Manhattan)⁵³³, as well as “recognizing the diversity of sexualities, and the fact that for most people behaviour does not necessarily match neat categories”⁵³⁴. It is clear however that he sees a tendency towards a global conformity of sexualities.

Others agree that there are trends towards global similarities in sexual behaviour. Catherine Campbell has studied a local project in a mining community in Summertown, South Africa. The project was initiated by a grassroots group of black African residents in the mid-1990s and worked with local, national and international organisations. It aimed to limit HIV transmission through three activities: the control of sexually transmitted diseases (STIs) (given that other STIs increase the likelihood of HIV-transmission); community-led peer education; and condom distribution.⁵³⁵

Campbell’s study pays particular attention to the embodiment of power, namely “to the social construction of sexuality by migrant mineworkers, commercial sex workers and young people”⁵³⁶. She contends that the reluctance to use condoms that she found amongst her respondents (explained by most of them as a need for intimacy due to prolonged periods of up to a couple of years spent away from their families) is not unique to the area, citing research in both Europe and America that has found a significant correlation between level of social support and safe sex. “People are less likely to engage in unprotected sexual intercourse if they live in a supportive social environment. In conditions where they felt lonely or isolated, flesh-to-flesh sexual contact may often come to symbolize a form of emotional intimacy that is lacking in other areas of their lives.”⁵³⁷

Campbell’s research suggests that knowledge of the existence of the disease is not the only issue affecting behavioural decisions regarding sexuality. Indeed, Campbell’s work not only highlights the global and local socio-economic factors influencing such behaviour, but also the more psychological effects that socio-

⁵³³ Ibid, p2.

⁵³⁴ Ibid 2001, p75.

⁵³⁵ Campbell, Catherine. (2003), p12.

⁵³⁶ Ibid, p1.

⁵³⁷ Ibid, p33.

economic deprivation can have – thus challenging more traditional ‘rational choice’ behavioural models:

“the research has illustrated the way in which sexual behaviour, and the possibility of sexual behaviour change, are determined by an interlocking series of multi-level processes, which are often not under the control of an individual person’s rational conscious choice. Sexualities are constructed and reconstructed at the intersection of a kaleidoscope array of interlocking multi-level processes, ranging from the intra-psychological to the macro-social. [...] Thus, for example, one’s innermost needs for trust and intimacy are often symbolized by the closeness of flesh-to-flesh sex. This may become a particularly compelling option in life situations that offer scant opportunities for the development of secure and stable relationships.”⁵³⁸

Campbell’s underlying methodology is obviously structured – indeed, she refers directly to Bourdieu in her theoretical presentation in the book⁵³⁹ and, in another article, also cites Social Identity Theory/Self-Categorization Theory (SIT-SCT) as a theoretical starting point for her research. SIT-SCT focuses on “the way in which [...] cognitive and motivational processes are structured within dynamically changing social contexts”⁵⁴⁰ – a concept in critical social psychology which focuses on the relationships between agency and structure. As she says herself, she “seeks to take account of the social determinants of behaviour in addition to the individual psychological determinants.”⁵⁴¹

In finding similarities between the responses of her interviewees and other groups around the world, Campbell’s research suggests a global socio-psychological human condition that may have existed across time and space, rather than a global structure of power that is currently shaping and changing agency, as Altman seems to suggest in his account of a globalised sexuality. Indeed, there are many embodied similarities between humans which are often denied by politics in their attempt to shape human behaviour, not least sexual behaviour. This links back to the distinction made in the beginning of this thesis between public, private and intimate realms of power since, as VeneKlasen and Miller have also made clear, power in the first two realms does not necessarily mean power in the third. This

⁵³⁸ Ibid, p185.

⁵³⁹ Ibid, p53-4 & 190-1.

⁵⁴⁰ Campbell, Catherine. (2004), p145.

⁵⁴¹ Campbell, Catherine. (2003), p10.

may be due to a lack of power in the site of the body (e.g. emotional wellbeing) but is also likely to be affected by structured relations of power across all of the twelve sites. For as already mentioned, sex (and thus the intimate realm of power) is one of the most heavily regulated of human behaviours, shaped by material as well as cognitive structures. And so, while global similarities may exist, they must also be contextualised locally, according to prevailing structured conditions.

It is not the intention here to deny that there are global mechanisms that may be homogenising sexualities however. Indeed, Altman highlights some very interesting and oft-ignored connections between HIV/AIDS and these global forces, such as Hollywood's portrayal of HIV/AIDS (which I will return to in the site of knowledge and aesthetics), as well as the effects of global polities' efforts to curb the spread of the disease. As he makes clear himself, however, many different concepts of sexuality abound worldwide, that are dependent on a variety of socio-economic factors. And so, although it is certainly important to highlight global trends towards homogenisation, HIV/AIDS also and once again reveals the need for a 'glocalised' approach to world politics.

*"If the body is a site for knowing more, then the global must be interrogated from this local site. No two bodies are identical and all bodies share basic needs or they die. This sharedness is too subversive, so political discourses distance us from this knowing and become a tool for obeying rather than seeing. [...] When I denaturalize a body – as a site of power, as a place of political conflict, and as an attempt at control – it requires an unpacking of hierarchical individuals."*⁵⁴²

In her book *Against Empire...* for example, Zillah Eisenstein focuses on the 'female slave's body', claiming that "if these women had been set free, they would have used their creative power to make a different world."⁵⁴³ Whether or not this would have been or could be the case is not the question here however – the point here is that Eisenstein also recognises the power of the body in both local and global relations, as the above quotation (also by her) makes clear. She speaks of the body in polyversally inclusive terms, stating that "[t]he female body desires freedom from war, rape, unwanted pregnancy. It desires control over the self. One

⁵⁴² Eisenstein, Zillah, (2004), p36.

⁵⁴³ Ibid.

does not need to learn this from someone other than oneself.”⁵⁴⁴ And, similar to Eisenstein, it is the argument here that the body needs to be ‘unpacked’ in order to be understood and ‘denaturalized’ as a site of power in ‘glocal’ relations.

*“Relations of authority, wealth, and signification are imprinted on the bodies and minds of the rulers and the ruled. We may observe without being deterministic that these relations take the form of structural violence whose consequences may be measured in terms of mortality rates and seen in the distribution of suffering. We may observe without being functionalist that these relations are also expressed in denunciations of the Western world, in subaltern and nationalist discourses, and in the moral discourses of prophetic churches and fundamentalist ideologies. The politics of inequality as it may be read in the lives of the South African adults who are dying so young and the politics of defiance against power and science that has manifested itself in South Africa have become global issues.”*⁵⁴⁵

In much racist and sexist rhetoric at least, the body is often confused with agency, since the particular embodiment of social actors – as ‘women’, ‘Africans’, or ‘homosexuals’ – is often used as a reason or explanation for particular patterns of agency or behaviour. As Didier Fassin so succinctly puts it in the above quotation, ‘relations of authority, wealth, and signification are imprinted on the bodies and minds of the rulers and the ruled’. Equally important as material structures are the cognitive ones, as it is clear that how the body is defined – in terms of gender, culture etc. – affects the power of agents in all of the other sites of power. For it is often the agency of the (under-)represented body (the ‘woman’, the ‘homosexual’ or the ‘other’) which is contested in all of the other sites of power.

The example of HIV/AIDS reveals that, at present, agency is heavily structured towards the political preferences of ‘glocal’ polities, excluding those who are constrained in their capacities to act in the site of the body due to these ‘glocal’ structural inequalities. Thus agency in the site of the body seems, at least in the case of HIV/AIDS, still to be in the hands of state actors and NGOs, as well as cultural, religious and other social polities and not in those actually affected by the disease. For despite their relative success in raising awareness of the disease, as de Waal points out, “[p]eople living with HIV and AIDS are rarely an organized

⁵⁴⁴ Ibid, p176.

⁵⁴⁵ Didier, Fassin. (2007), pxx-xxi.

constituency and not [...] a revolutionary one.”⁵⁴⁶ Furthermore, not only is HIV/AIDS currently most prevalent in populations where people have limited agency anyway – due to their structured realities in this and all of the other sites – but they are also limited in their capacities to change their situation once infected with the disease, since it not only results in social death (in the form of unemployment, stigmatisation etc.) but also in the very real and premature biological death of many of those infected.

⁵⁴⁶ de Waal, Alex. (2006), p113.

The Site of Welfare

“[I]n assessing the effect of state intervention on the ‘welfare’ of people, all outlays, all policies and all state activities are taken, at least hypothetically, to be relevant.”⁵⁴⁷

Held defines the site of welfare as the ‘organisation of the domain of goods and services that aids the transition of the citizen from private person to full membership of the community’. As such, it is not limited to state welfare, which is the more traditional definition of the concept. The debates that surround the definition of the concept of welfare demonstrate the political nature of the site, as it too is a much contested site of power and the extent to which the state should contribute to welfare has always been hotly debated.⁵⁴⁸ Other agents in the site of welfare include individuals, households, communities and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and opinions vary as to the extent to which each agent should be responsible for the welfare of the individual citizen. Once again, HIV/AIDS can help to reveal the ‘glocal’ politics of this site of power, as the disease has raised many questions as to who should provide healthcare for those affected by the disease, as well as how to educate people about it.

Agency in the site of welfare, just as all of the other sites of power, is thus ‘glocal’, extending from the individual up to global institutions. The first face of power highlights the decision-making process in the site, which determines how welfare is governed and by whom. The second face highlights the question of whether welfare is considered to be a question of political power at all – indeed, the late appearance of matters of global health and welfare on the international political agenda highlight the fact that the second face of power has probably been operating for quite some time in world politics. The third face of power, that of manipulation, highlights the contested boundaries of welfare, determining how welfare should be defined and who is entitled to it. And the fourth face of power once again highlights the notion of self-policing – those that are deemed to have

⁵⁴⁷(Emphasis in original) Bryson, Lois. (1992), p5.

⁵⁴⁸ Ibid.

brought the disease upon themselves may be less likely to receive help and treatment than those who are not held to be responsible for their infection.

One of the biggest problems facing many communities in sub-Saharan Africa for example is the growing number of children who have been orphaned as a result of the disease. The simultaneous privatisation of many welfare systems in the region has left many communities unable to 'cope'. As Barnett and Whiteside state, "[o]rphans and solitary old people will be among those social groups least able to make effective demands upon a system that is likely to become increasingly dependent upon private insurance provision."⁵⁴⁹ The loss of the parents of these children bears a double strain on the remaining family members, since it not only means a loss of income (hence linking it to the state of the economy) but also the burden of fending for the orphaned children's welfare and upbringing.⁵⁵⁰ Indeed, the once widespread belief among "people ranging from senior policy makers in international agencies to politicians in Africa and Asia and people in local communities" that "an entity called the 'extended family' [would] absorb the orphans and destitute created through AIDS-related mortality", "is now heard less as the full effects of the epidemic are becoming more apparent, above all in sub-Saharan Africa."⁵⁵¹

These local crises also have global dimensions since the provision of state and NGO welfare are globally structured through mechanisms such as the World Bank and the OECD Development Goals. These can determine who to help and how. According to Barnett and Whiteside, "[i]n contrast to children who are orphaned or otherwise at risk, older people are less appealing to donors."⁵⁵² This does not mean that orphans are necessarily appealing to donors either however – indeed, there have been many studies conducted on the potential risks to national and international security that the growing number of HIV/AIDS orphans may present: "[i]n a society which is already stressed and where government may offer very little, large numbers of 'youth' who have been orphaned from an early age can become armed youths, recruits for millenarian cults or prey to unscrupulous

⁵⁴⁹ Barnett, Tony – Whiteside, Alan. (2006), p233.

⁵⁵⁰ Ibid, p232.

⁵⁵¹ Ibid, p201.

⁵⁵² Ibid, p230.

politicians.” This claim, which is cited by Barnett and Whiteside, is immediately remonstrated by the authors however, as they claim that “[m]ost orphans do not become child soldiers. Not all child soldiers are orphans – some of them are abducted from their parents.”⁵⁵³ de Waal agrees with this last statement, demonstrating that myths of agency abound in this site of power also. While acknowledging that “[w]e should not be complacent and we must be truly alert to the places where orphan numbers and needs are truly overwhelming”, he writes that “there is no evidence for children living outside social norms. Some children are heading households and others are living on the streets, but their resilience and determination to live within social frameworks is much more striking than any obvious anomie.”⁵⁵⁴

Another aspect of the site of welfare is of course education. How to educate people about HIV/AIDS and who should provide this education is another much contested issue in the literature. As already mentioned, the ‘glocal’ HIV/AIDS universe is enormous and both hierarchically structured (by global institutions) as well as greatly disorganised. Thus, there are a vast number of actors competing over the provision of HIV/AIDS treatment and prevention, from local groups to global agents such as UNAIDS and USAID. Some of these agents, (such as the U.S. and many religious groups) promote abstinence over the use of condoms, while others advocate safe sex. There is also a global discrepancy in the provisions of welfare for HIV/AIDS, as Seckinelgin makes clear: “The high cost of [...] drugs created a situation in developed countries where treatment was incorporated into the medical system. In contrast in developing countries treatment has remained unavailable and interventions are kept to prevention and care. A case of *drugs for us, condoms for you.*”⁵⁵⁵ This highlights two ways of looking at welfare provision – either as a ‘natural’ communitarian right or as an individual duty or responsibility. It links to the question of agency and responsibility for the spread of the disease, since the advocacy of both abstinence and the use of condoms puts the responsibility firmly on the individual, while the provision of state healthcare

⁵⁵³ Ibid, p226-227.

⁵⁵⁴ de Waal, Alex. (2006), p84-85.

⁵⁵⁵ Seckinelgin, Hakan. (2008), p26.

once infected implies a notion of shared agency, as a common problem that requires a common solution.

These aspects once again reveal how closely intertwined all of the sites of power are with each other, since both material and cognitive structures will not only determine who contracts the disease, but also how they are dealt with once infected. The sites of economy and culture, for example, are highly influential in determining who is educated about the disease or who receives treatment for it. The limitations on agency are thus determined by an agent's contextual allocation within these structures, since those that find themselves in wealthy or culturally liberated societies may find it easier to get help to 'cope' with the disease than those who are constrained by economic or other social inequalities. The assumptions that are made about this agency, regarding the extent of the individual's own responsibility for his/her own welfare, are also thus contextual, highly dependent on the social positioning of the agent in question.

The Site of Culture/Cultural Life

Culture is another concept whose definition is heavily contested – indeed, decades of social scientific debate have contested the issue, with many different definitions being offered. Once again however, this only goes to show the political power of the site, as it is one that is constantly under negotiation. Held defines the site as ‘those realms of social activity where matters of public interest and identity can be discussed, where differences of opinion can be explored and where local custom and dogma can be examined’. What are to be regarded as cultural norms and practices and what are considered to be matters of morality however are often interlinked, revealing once more the link with other sites of power.

Economic power, for example, may increase an agent’s ability to reproduce or transform cultural structures – the global influence of the Hollywood film industry serving as a case in point. As already mentioned however, cultural transformations can also occur regardless of power in other sites – indeed, many customs and norms may originate from a grassroots level. Here, the impact that the ‘gay’ community had on HIV/AIDS discourse in the early years of the epidemic may serve as an example of a cultural ‘minority’ succeeding in changing a political discourse without holding hegemonic power in other sites. Without also having had a strong advocacy group within the global media and film industries however, it is doubtful whether this activism would have been as successful as it was in bringing HIV/AIDS on to the global political agenda.

HIV/AIDS is once again a highly illustrative example of the political nature of the site, as the site of culture is also one that is heavily contested. As already discussed, essentialist stereotypes of various cultures are not uncommon in literature on the disease, with the many countries that make up sub-Saharan Africa often bundled together to represent one homogenous culture. The importance of culture in structuring relations of power cannot be ignored however, for cultural norms do certainly affect people’s abilities to control their own lives – indeed, it is the significance of this structure in shaping and being shaped by structured relations of power which makes it so well studied in much IR literature already.

Instead of limiting the study of culture to a state-centric analysis however, it is once again the argument here that, like all of the other sites, culture must be studied 'glocally', since there are many different actors who both shape and are shaped by the site. HIV/AIDS once again illustrates this, since sexual behaviour is not only influenced by global cultural norms and values but also and obviously by regional, national and local norms and values, as well as individual preferences or indeed social positioning.

Except for some studies on 'gay' culture however, most of the studies on the importance of culture to the spread of HIV/AIDS have concentrated on sub-Saharan Africa. These studies are not themselves culturally 'neutral' however – as Susan Craddock points out, “[u]nderlying many studies is the assumption that Western-centric norms of marital-based sexual conduct either do or should pertain in differing regions of sub-Saharan Africa.”⁵⁵⁶ She also criticises media representations in the U.S. for “couching the epidemic in terms that too often resonate with neocolonialist understandings of African culture”, claiming that they “tend toward unreflexive depictions of cultural practices as causal factors.”⁵⁵⁷

Oliver Phillips also writes on the dangers of essentialising culture, arguing that it can lead to a misrepresentation of cultural realities on the ground. He is less critical of global cultural values than Craddock however, claiming that they can be incorporated with local values to create new identities if local people so wish. Writing about the cultural denial of homosexuality in Zimbabwe, Phillips claims:

“it is [...] simplistic to claim that ‘gay’ or ‘lesbian’ identities are imposed through an imperialist cultural discourse or economic dominance, for they are actively assumed and proclaimed from below, by those marginalized in local social formations that assume exclusively heterosexual relations. These ‘new’ identities are merged into local histories and contexts, so that they include local social signifiers and practices while simultaneously providing a strategy of access to some benefits of globalization. Thus, they are often used as a means for laying claim to the protection of human rights as enshrined in international treaties, or enabling more effective AIDS/HIV

⁵⁵⁶ Craddock, Susan. (2004), p4.

⁵⁵⁷ Ibid, p3.

prevention work, or simply buying into an expanding market of Western signifiers of 'modern' and bourgeois status."⁵⁵⁸

This once again reveals the 'glocal' nature of culture, as it is actively reproduced or transformed both globally and locally. As already mentioned, Altman claims that sexuality is becoming increasingly globalised – Phillips reminds us however that these global cultural tendencies are always locally defined. Culture is always contextually specific and cannot be reified as one static 'thing' or entity. Some critics argue that this is what has happened in the epidemiological study of the disease however. According to Brooke Grundfest Schoepf:

"Culture was designated as the culprit of HIV spread. But while culture was the concept most bandied about, social scientists specialized in the study of culture were left out of the loop. African and Africanist anthropologists were ignored by biomedical researchers and by major funding agencies. This [...] was a political stance. Blaming cultural differences for situations clearly linked to economic and political inequality supports the status quo."⁵⁵⁹

In the case of gender, it is too often the case that each 'gender' is reified as being either the perpetrator (in the case of men) or the victim (in the case of women) of the disease. As Anne V. Akeroyd makes clear, "to create the necessary changes in behavior it is not enough to recognize only the problem *of* men; it is also necessary to understand the problems *for* men, the structural, ideological, and other constraints and cultural entrapments which make men as well as their partners vulnerable to HIV. [...] Culture and behavior are not static – they have long been, and are being, challenged and changed in Africa."⁵⁶⁰ Ida Susser and Zena Stein agree with Akeroyd, stating "[c]ontrary to the view of African women as helpless victims, most of the women we spoke to saw themselves as active participants in the search for a way to protect themselves in sexual situations. Nevertheless, their methods of sexual negotiation are shaped by cultural and historical perceptions of the bounds of the human body."⁵⁶¹ This latter statement could also be accused of essentialising African women however, since it is impossible to hold that all

⁵⁵⁸ Phillips, Oliver. (2004), p158.

⁵⁵⁹ Grundfest Schoepf, Brooke. (2004), p19.

⁵⁶⁰ Akeroyd, Anne V. (2004), p101.

⁵⁶¹ Susser, Ida – Stein, Zena. (2004), p143.

African women will see themselves as active participants, just as it is impossible to hold that they are all victims.

Agency in the site of culture is thus heavily dependent on the structured interaction between global and local customs and norms. The first face of power determines which cultural norms and customs prevail, as advocated by cultural politics, while the second face determines whether they are considered to be politically relevant at all. The case of feminism highlights the second face well here, since it is only in the past century or so that issues relating to gender have been brought up onto the mainstream political agenda in most countries – before this, the ‘private’ realm of domestic politics was considered to be just that, private, with little to do with ‘public’ political life. The third face of power reveals the ways in which cultural norms and customs are ‘advertised’, which is often as ‘neutral’ ‘truths’ that cannot be questioned. Finally, the fourth face highlights the aspect of self-policing in the site of culture. Cultural norms are often, as already stated, difficult to question and those who do so may be considered to be ‘outsiders’, facing social exclusion or at worst, persecution and death. The examples of discrimination and stigmatisation are particularly relevant here, as those who ‘come out’ as HIV/AIDS sufferers often face social exclusion. Self-policing may therefore serve as a means to remaining within hegemonic cultural norms or customs, in order to remain socially empowered. Obviously however, the opposite can also hold true – indeed, it is difficult to imagine any cultural change occurring without people empowering themselves by stepping outside of mainstream cultural norms.

The Site of Civic Associations

The site of civic associations is also a heavily contested site of power, not only since many definitions of civic associations abound but also because there are many different views on the role that they do and indeed should play in 'glocal' politics. Held defines them as 'the array of institutions and organisations in and through which individuals or groups can pursue their own projects independently of the direct organisation of the state or of economic collectivities such as corporations or trade unions'. As already mentioned, HIV/AIDS activists have had many successes bringing the issue of the disease up on the 'glocal' agenda, even managing to change some structures, such as making it illegal to discriminate against PLWHA and putting pressure on pharmaceutical companies and governments to provide affordable treatment. However, the case of HIV/AIDS also reveals that 'glocal' civil society is not only vast but also very disorganised, making an analysis of its 'glocal' structures near to impossible. Certain 'glocal' relations of power can be traced however, partly through its hierarchical governance and partly through its impact at grassroots level, which obviously varies contextually across the globe.

As already mentioned, Campbell has conducted a study of the agency of a community project in the small South African mining community of Summertown. She found that 'grassroots participation is by no means a 'magic bullet'' and summarises her findings as follows:

*"A central theme that emerged repeatedly from the Summertown research was the extent to which the interlocking factors of poverty and gender inequalities served to undermine the social fabric of life in ways that facilitated the transmission of disease and undermined prevention efforts. The research also suggested that grassroots participation is by no means a 'magic bullet'. The potential for local participation to have positive health benefits depends very heavily on the extent to which local attempts by marginalized groups are supported and enabled by the efforts of more powerful constituencies, at the regional, national and international levels, and the development of health systems and organizational infrastructure to co-ordinate joint efforts."*⁵⁶²

⁵⁶² Campbell, Catherine. (2003), p195.

Campbell's study highlights the obstacles that local grassroots organisations face in combating the spread of HIV/AIDS. For despite the project's prevention efforts, widespread condom use remained low and there was no evidence of any reduction in STI levels.⁵⁶³ As already mentioned, Campbell contends that there are multi-layered reasons for this, not least socio-psychological. The interplay between all of the sites of power thus reveals the limited capacities of civic associations to deal with the disease alone – something which they have increasingly been left to do. Towards the end of their study on the global politics of HIV/AIDS, Barnett and Whiteside call for stronger governmental responses to the disease, stating “[c]onsistency and sustainability will be fundamental to these responses; neither of these qualities is characteristic of the NGO sector where fashion and donor inclination often determine policy.”⁵⁶⁴

The HIV/AIDS NGO sector is namely populated with many different actors, ranging from religious groups (who typically advocate abstinence and are not always keen to promote the use of condoms as a method of prevention) to those run by PLWHA. The Global Fund for AIDS, TB and Malaria has made some progress in co-ordinating all of these groups and has become a major actor in the politics of HIV/AIDS. It involves partnerships between the public sector, NGOs, development partners and the private sector of each country.⁵⁶⁵ Not all analysts are convinced that this ‘glocal’ co-ordination, or hierarchy, is beneficial to combating the spread of the disease however.

Seckinelgin, for example, is not so sure that NGOs have so much positive power. To begin with, it is important to note that he uses a structured definition of agency in his analysis of HIV/AIDS.⁵⁶⁶ As an example of the hierarchical governance of NGOs, he cites “the processes following the US President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) in 2004 [...which] soon realised that in many countries these organisations do not exist in the way the funding framework requires. Therefore, intermediary contractors are brought in to build capacity. [...] this need for capacity building is linked with PEPFAR’s focus on

⁵⁶³ Campbell, Catherine. (2003), p185.

⁵⁶⁴ Barnett, Tony – Whiteside, Alan. (2006), p314.

⁵⁶⁵ Ibid, p48.

⁵⁶⁶ Seckinelgin, Hakan. (2008), p53-58.

service-delivery based interventions as well as its strong emphasis on abstinence. [...] This [...] is a clear example of how the international policy perspective is shaping NGO activities.”⁵⁶⁷

It is clear therefore that the site of civic associations is as contested as any of the other sites of power. Agency in the site is heavily contested between ‘glocal’ polities. The first and second faces of power reflect the degree of decision-making that civic associations have over their affairs, or indeed whether or not there are any decisions that can be made in the allocation of funding etc. The third face of power reflects the manipulation processes by which polities may use this site to implement their own interests, whether this be global polities, such as PEPFAR, or smaller local groups. And the fourth face of power naturally highlights the degree to which these civic associations self-police themselves to conform to prevailing power structures. Once again, all of the other sites of power play a role here, since these associations will be differentially capable of agency depending on their power in other sites. Economy is obviously a major factor here, but all of the other sites, material as well as cognitive, will play a role in shaping the agency of a particular association.

⁵⁶⁷ Ibid, p67.

The Site of the Economy

Held defines the site of the economy as ‘the collective organisation of the production, distribution, exchange and consumption of goods and services’. As with all of the other sites, the exact definition of these goods and services and thus of this site is contested however, since throughout the history of economic philosophy, theorists have debated which issues are included in the economy. Many feminists, for example, have emphasised the role of the domestic sphere – childrearing, household maintenance etc – in maintaining the organisation of production, while some economists have criticised mainstream economic theories for missing out informal markets (such as the ‘black market’) in economic measurements such as Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Again however, the contentions over the definition of the site only go to prove its political relevance and the power that the site has over social organisation.

One common point on which many theorists on HIV/AIDS agree upon is its link with poverty, stemming from the fact that the disease is still highly concentrated in certain parts of the world, notably those already suffering from other diseases and epidemics, typically known as the ‘developing world’. Nana Poku, citing United Nations (UN) and World Health Organisation (WHO) data, states “the glaring fact [...] is that 95 per cent of the global distribution of HIV infections and AIDS cases are located in the developing world.”⁵⁶⁸ He admits that the link between HIV and poverty is not a straightforward one, however. At the macro level, for example, the relationship between poverty and the HIV virus is weak, since a majority of the global poor, for the time being anyway, remain unaffected by the virus⁵⁶⁹ – but Poku maintains that poverty is one of the major contributing factors to the African continent’s particular vulnerability to the disease:

“poverty is closely linked with high unemployment, hunger and malnutrition, lack of basic services, inability to pay for or access health care, disintegration of families, vulnerability, homelessness and often hopelessness. Mainstream biomedical literature has long documented the

⁵⁶⁸ Poku, Nana K. (2005), p7.

⁵⁶⁹ Poku, Nana. (2000), p46.

methods by which this combination of factors can undermine the body's specific and non-specific immune response."⁵⁷⁰

Poku's work focuses mainly on the political economy of HIV/AIDS, arguing that the WB's Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) are largely to blame for the African continent's particular vulnerability to the HIV/AIDS virus.⁵⁷¹ He is concerned with the contemporary effects of globalisation, believing that it has made the African state irrelevant.⁵⁷² He maintains however that his is a broad view of the many cultural and socio-economic causes of HIV/AIDS:

*"The real impact of HIV/AIDS can only be understood in the context of the critical social and economic problems already experienced by countries on the African continent: poverty, famine and food shortage, inadequate sanitation and health care, the subordination of women and fiscal policies that allocate insufficient resources to the social sectors. These factors create a particular vulnerability to the devastating consequences of the epidemic. Economic need and dependency lead to activities that magnify the risk of HIV transmission and mean that many people, particularly women, are powerless to protect themselves against infection. Inequitable power structures, a lack of legal protection and inadequate standards of health and nutrition all further exacerbate the spread of the virus, accelerate progression from HIV infection to AIDS, and aggravate the plight of those affected by the epidemic."*⁵⁷³

It is certainly not the intention here to, like Chin, discredit the link between poverty and the spread of HIV/AIDS – for, again, it is one of the main aims of this thesis to reveal the very real material and cognitive structured inequalities that affect the spread of the virus. Poverty is certainly one of those inequalities – and an important and oft ignored one at that – as it puts people at high risk of contracting HIV, both by leaving them exposed to high-risk social environments and behaviours, and by denying them adequate healthcare and welfare provisions. The main concern here is that, as well as lumping Africa together as one homogenous continent, Poku also seems to prioritise poverty above all other structural inequalities – exemplified when he lists the subordination of women along with fiscal policies at the end of his 'list' of inequalities. He does admittedly acknowledge that the link between HIV/AIDS and poverty also has a clearly

⁵⁷⁰ Poku, Nana. (2002), p535.

⁵⁷¹ Freedman, Jane – Poku, Nana. (2005), p676.

⁵⁷² Poku, Nana. (2000), p40-1.

⁵⁷³ Poku, Nana K. – Whiteside, Alan. (2004), pxxi-xxii.

gendered dimension, claiming that many of the poorest people in Africa are women who often head the poorest of households. He points out that, inevitably, these women are particularly vulnerable to engaging in commercial sex transactions, either as a temporary or a permanent means of economic survival.⁵⁷⁴ Again, however, he is looking purely through an economic lens, ignoring many of the other aspects of gendered inequalities that have little if anything to do with commercial transactions. Indeed, it is the argument here that gendered inequalities need to be lifted to an equal position to economic inequalities, as do other socially constructed inequalities, such as those based on sexuality, identity, culture, religion, nationality and so forth.

*“Four phenomena that may result from SAPs have conspired to undermine the social fabric of many developing countries, potentially promoting behaviors that place their citizens at increased risk for HIV infection: (1) declining sustainability of the rural subsistence economy; (2) development of a transportation infrastructure; (3) migration and urbanization; and (4) reductions in spending on health and social services.”*⁵⁷⁵

Peter Lurie agrees with Poku that SAPs have undermined the social fabric of many ‘developing’ countries. His list of maladies that have resulted from this are all macro phenomena – he does not mention the economic impact on the individual, complaining instead that in mainstream epidemiological analysis, “social and economic forces [...] have been largely overlooked in favour of factors that operate at the individual level.”⁵⁷⁶ To rectify these social inequalities, Lurie argues that: i) “the satisfaction of basic human needs such as food, housing, and transport must become a primary goal”; ii) “emphasis should shift from the production of a small number of primary commodities for export to the diversification of agricultural production”; and iii) marginal producers and subsistence farmers must be supported”.⁵⁷⁷ It is clear therefore that Lurie’s is a more structural approach, although his list of remedies are all directed at helping the individual combat the spread of the disease.

⁵⁷⁴ Freedman, Jane – Poku, Nana. (2005), p679.

⁵⁷⁵ Lurie, Peter. (2004), p208.

⁵⁷⁶ Ibid, p204.

⁵⁷⁷ Ibid, p212.

It is clear that economic factors alone cannot account for the spread of the disease however. Linking back to the site of civic associations, Barnett and Whiteside argue that there is a link between the level of social cohesion, economic equality and epidemic prevalence. Societies with high levels of social cohesion and high income can expect an epidemic curve with a low peak and slow decline followed by a slow growth with low endemic prevalence. Societies with high levels of social cohesion and low income can expect to see a slow growth in prevalence, as levels of infection are “kept in check by socially defined behaviour”. A society with low levels of social cohesion and low income can expect exponential epidemic curves, with persistent high levels of infection, while a society with low levels of social cohesion and high income can expect a sharp increase in prevalence followed, “hopefully”, by a sharp decline. This last curve shows the relationship between HIV/AIDS and the economy, for as they say themselves, “[a]lthough the society is susceptible to infection in the early stages, wealth means it has the capacity to respond.”⁵⁷⁸

As already mentioned, the accuracy of knowledge about HIV/AIDS has consistently been questioned, which in turn has delayed or even prevented economic responses to the disease, thus linking the site of the economy to other sites such as that of knowledge and aesthetics. It also links the site of the economy to the site of morality and emotion, since moral questions are frequently asked as to whose problem it is to begin with, whether money for treatment and aid should wait until estimates are more certain, or whether politics should act immediately. And in the case of HIV/AIDS, there has been a long history of waiting and denial:

*“Politicians, policy makers, community leaders and academics all denied what was patently obvious – that the epidemic of HIV/AIDS would affect not only the health of individuals but also the welfare and well-being of households, communities and, in the end, entire societies. [...] It is hard to measure things – quality of life, quality of relationships, pain of loss – for which measures are partial or non-existent. If it is hard to see these things, it is all the easier to deny them.”*⁵⁷⁹

While knowledge about the disease remains uncertain however, it is a very real material reality that the region of sub-Saharan Africa has been the worst affected

⁵⁷⁸ Barnett, Tony – Whiteside, Alan. (2006), p98.

⁵⁷⁹ Ibid, p5-6.

and that the same region as a whole suffers from economic deprivation – linked, as already stated, to its long history of socio-political upheaval and unrest. Only five countries (South Africa, Egypt, Nigeria, Morocco and Sudan) account for almost two-thirds of the continent's output.⁵⁸⁰ This material reality strongly affects not only people's susceptibility to contract the disease (due to the socio-economic situations in which they find themselves), but also their abilities to recover from it. Many African governments are currently unable to provide treatment for their citizens and so have turned to the global community for help. UNAIDS recently estimated however that achieving universal access to anti-retroviral drugs will require spending up to four to five times current levels – nearly 14 million people will need treatment by 2010, rising to 22 million in 2015.⁵⁸¹ To date however, government responses to UNAIDS' call for more money have been limited – so limited in fact that other actors, such as Product RED (a business that donates up to 50 per cent of the profits of its branded goods to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria) have stepped in instead. RED's fundraising success – in the first 20 months of its operation it contributed \$50 million – has made it the 13th largest contributor to the Global Fund, ahead of countries such as Australia, Belgium, China and Russia.⁵⁸² It is important to note here that RED is not a charity but a business – a new form of economic actor, that not only highlights a new, innovative way of raising funds for emergencies, but also the potential for new actors to enter a structure and change its parameters.

Economic growth and development are two concepts which are often confused with one another. As Barnett and Whiteside put it, “[e]conomic growth is the means; ‘development’, improved living standards, better quality of life – all these are the ends. But what is development?” Development is namely a heavily contested term, that is used to distinguish between ‘developed’ and ‘developing’ countries. It is a concept which is impossible to measure, but as Barnett and Whiteside again state:

“We don’t know how to describe development, but we know it when we see it. And, perhaps more importantly, people who want it know when they don’t have it! [...It] implies either tangible

⁵⁸⁰ BBC News, Monday 17th December 2007.

⁵⁸¹ *Financial Times*, 26th September 2007.

⁵⁸² *The Independent*, 1st December 2007, p4.

*improvement in individual or national circumstances, or belief in change for the better. People need to be able to look to the future and have something to aim for – some goal, some promise. [...] Poverty and absence of hope for the future have paradoxical and apparently contradictory effects on attitudes to risk. [...] The shorter the timeframe that people have, the more short-term risks they take with their health and the less willing they are to risk their limited assets which must be used for short-term survival. They are unwilling to invest for the future.”*⁵⁸³

According to Barnett and Whiteside, “HIV/AIDS means [...] development targets will not be achievable. Over the next few decades, gains will be slowed and some past achievements reversed.”⁵⁸⁴ There is namely a reciprocal relationship between HIV/AIDS and poverty – each one exacerbates the other. Economic deprivation limits all regional and local agency – from government to individual level – to respond to the disease. Indeed, agency in the site of the economy is well exemplified by the case of HIV/AIDS. The first face of power reflects the basic ability to be able to make economic choices and decisions – a government or organisation’s ability to provide education and treatment for example, or an individual’s ability to abstain from sex for money, to be able to afford condoms, hospital visits, treatment etc. Indeed, Campbell’s respondents in Summertown are also relevant here, since economic structures determine whether or not mining communities and the brothels that build up around them exist in the first place. The second face of power reflects the assumptions that medical treatment should cost money, for example. Economic political issues can – as the case of HIV/AIDS shows – be kept off political agendas, treated instead as ‘neutral’ material realities that cannot be changed. Indeed, here the difference between a reified structure and a structured one becomes clear, for as the relative successes of HIV/AIDS activists to increase access to pharmaceutical drugs makes clear, economic structures can be changed by agency, sometimes overnight. The third face of power relates to the second, in that it reflects the manipulation mechanisms that are inherent in most economic structures to persuade people to consume and produce goods and services. Finally, the notion of self-policing reflects the tendency of people within economic structures to either reproduce these structures, or indeed transform them by curbing their own participation within them – the wealth of studies on consumer behaviour and the relative successes of socially

⁵⁸³ Barnett, Tony – Whiteside, Alan. (2006), p290.

⁵⁸⁴ Ibid, p291.

'responsible' goods (such as Product Red) to break into mainstream consumer markets proving a case in point.

The Site of the Organisation of Violence and Coercive Relations

Held defines the site of the organisation of violence and coercive relations as ‘concentrated physical force for or against the community’. As already mentioned earlier in the thesis, Galtung’s definition of structural violence would expand this to include the harm caused by all structural inequalities – which in this case would include all of the other sites of power. The case of HIV/AIDS highlights the importance of both material and cognitive structures of violence, as well as actual physical force. According to Grundfest Schoepf:

“[b]y fostering social isolation, [stigma] add[s] to the suffering endured by sick people and their families. In several countries, “free women,” living without male protection, were made scapegoats, rounded up and deported to rural areas where they were unable to make a living; others were imprisoned and raped. Women whose HIV/AIDS was known or suspected were evicted from their homes and deprived of livelihoods and children. Some were accused as witches. While witchcraft may be an ‘imagined violence,’ accusations often have social and material effects.”⁵⁸⁵

There are, in other words, many different forms of violence. According to Akeroyd, “[a]t one extreme are war-rape and other forms of violence; at the other is the refusal of an HIV-infected man to use a condom to protect his uninfected partner, a finding not uncommon in studies of discordant couples.”⁵⁸⁶ In southern Africa, rapes of young girls and even babies have occurred “in the belief that sex with a virgin will cure AIDS”⁵⁸⁷. AIDS orphans in particular are vulnerable to sexual molestation.⁵⁸⁸ Indeed, rape and gang rape have become “potent methods of spreading HIV” in South Africa in particular.⁵⁸⁹ 55 000 South African women were estimated to have been raped in 1997, which translates into 134 women raped per 100 000 of the total population.⁵⁹⁰ Rape also has higher odds of HIV transmission because of physical trauma.⁵⁹¹ If other violence is also factored into the equation – e.g. state violence such as war – the risk of the spread of the disease

⁵⁸⁵ Grundfest Schoepf, Brooke. (2004), p23.

⁵⁸⁶ Akeroyd, Anne V. (2004), p97.

⁵⁸⁷ Ibid, p96.

⁵⁸⁸ Barnett, Tony – Whiteside, Alan. (2006), p359.

⁵⁸⁹ Ibid, p166.

⁵⁹⁰ Statistics South Africa. (2000), p1.

⁵⁹¹ Barnett, Tony – Whiteside, Alan. (2006), p166.

is even higher. HIV/AIDS can be spread both during and in the aftermath of war⁵⁹² - in general, it is well known that war is one of the worst risk milieux for sexually transmitted diseases (STDs)⁵⁹³, the prevalence of which also affect HIV transmission.

The site of violence and coercive relations has also revealed positive power relations with regard to HIV/AIDS however. Violence against women has consequently “become a major concern for women’s groups, and has been taken up by newspapers, international agencies, the courts, the medical profession, and governments in a number of countries.”⁵⁹⁴ Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is now outlawed in some African states and there is a worldwide campaign on non-consensual sex in marriage organized by a London-based NGO called CHANGE. The UN General Assembly adopted the Declaration against Violence against Women in 1993, UNIFEM has a Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women, and violence against women has also been discussed in other United Nations and international organisations such as the WHO and the Commonwealth Secretariat.⁵⁹⁵

The site of violence and coercive relations is obviously linked with both the material and the cognitive sites of power. Violence against women in particular is, according to Akeroyd, “linked to the subordinate legal, social, and economic position of women, and to cultural assumptions about relations between men and women: but it also reflects the general level of violence in the wider society. The tide is now running strongly against male violence – but to change its acceptability strikes at conceptions of masculinity and the structure of gender relations.”⁵⁹⁶

Whether or not Akeroyd is correct in her prediction that the tide will turn away from male violence remains to be seen – it is the argument here that violence is no less prevalent today than it has ever been and that there are still plenty of ‘glocal’ ‘wars’ to be getting on with, from household level to global. Indeed, HIV/AIDS

⁵⁹² Craddock, Susan. (2004), p5.

⁵⁹³ Lyons, Maryinez. (2004) p185.

⁵⁹⁴ Akeroyd, Anne V. (2004), p96.

⁵⁹⁵ Ibid, p97.

⁵⁹⁶ Ibid.

reveals just how deeply engrained violence remains in many societies today, from a material and cognitive structural level to a behavioural one. For, as should be apparent by now, the disease is not just spread by single actions, but is rather the result of many interconnecting structured inequalities.

Agency in the site of violence is not very difficult to ascertain when it comes to physical violence, but more so when it comes to other structural violence in the other sites of power – although here, too, politics can usually be found, as this thesis aims to demonstrate. With regards to physical violence in particular however, the first face of power obviously relates to the direct violent act – although, as already stated, this can be an act that may be considered by some to be ‘harmless’, such as having sex without a condom. The second face reveals the denial of many violent structures and actions from political agendas around the world. Domestic violence is a relatively new issue to have entered ‘glocal’ political discourse for example – it was previously kept out of ‘public’ politics. The third face of power refers to the manipulation that occurs both in defining violence (by individuals as well as politics), as well as the act of using violence to secure certain ends. The fourth face of power – that of self-policing – reveals how the structural limits and constraints that are placed on violence within society manifest themselves within the individual. It is obviously related to the cognitive sites of power, as definitions of what acts are to be considered violent and when they are acceptable are all structurally determined.

The Site of Regulatory and Legal Organisation

Held limits his definition of the site of regulatory and legal organisation to “the state as an independent corporation, made up of an ensemble of organisations”. It is argued here however that this site also constitutes many other regulatory and legal structures, global as well as local, that may also include more informal regulatory and legal organisations, such as customary law. However, since much of state involvement in HIV/AIDS has already been covered earlier in this thesis, the discussion here will be kept to a minimum.

Barnett and Whiteside state that “[w]here the epidemic has been controlled at the national level there has been consistent and high-level leadership. [...] A necessary, but not sufficient, criterion for preventing spread of HIV or turning the epidemic round is political leadership. This must begin at the highest levels if there is to be national success.”⁵⁹⁷ As already mentioned, some governments, such as the Cuban government in the 1980s, also used coercion and segregation in order to try to control the epidemic. For the dilemma facing any government is how to regulate private behaviour, if indeed it should do so at all. Other options include trying instead to find a cure for the disease – i.e. treating it as any other disease, rather than focusing on the way in which it is spread – or trying to use manipulative measures, such as health insurance premiums etc, to try to make people be more careful. All of these are options that are open to states around the world and while very few use coercive measures, it is necessary to account for the fact that they are possible measures that states might take. Indeed, the introductory section in this chapter on the practical securitisation of the disease reveals that many governments already treat it as a matter of security. As also mentioned however, treating it as a matter of security helps to bypass other regulatory systems, such as the TRIPS agreement. This is an example of agency reproducing a structure (TRIPS) – it would be transformative if focus was instead put on trying to change the system.

⁵⁹⁷ Barnett, Tony – Whiteside, Alan. (2006), p359-361.

Land ownership is one of the most fundamentally contested political rights throughout history and it is also relevant here. It also reveals the conflicts that can occur between constitutional, state laws and customary law. As Barnett and Whiteside make clear, “Land is ‘owned’ in many different ways. [...] we can speak of ‘strong’ and ‘weak’ forms of property. [...] Women and orphans may find themselves thrown off the family’s land and on occasions forced to migrate to town to seek a living. This is also an impact of HIV/AIDS and such events have been reported from many parts of east and central Africa.”⁵⁹⁸ Thus ownership of land can both affect and be affected by the spread of virus, once again revealing the interdependency of this site with all of the others.

Agency in the site of regulatory and legal organisation is thus also varied, from the individual level up to the international. The first face of power signifies all the legal and regulatory decisions that are made about HIV/AIDS on all of these levels, while the second face of power signifies those decisions that are not made, as issues related to the disease may be kept off the political agenda. The third face of power reveals the importance of manipulation in these processes, as citizens or indeed states may be pushed towards accepting one dominant view of the disease over another – for example, if a state wishes to quarantine all of those infected with the disease. And finally the fourth face of power reveals the idea of self-policing into the site, which once again can also be either positive or negative – indeed, without self-policing, laws (whether constitutional or customary) would be broken or transformed on a daily basis.

⁵⁹⁸ Ibid, p250-251.

Conclusion

All human behaviour is socially contextual, highly dependent on the relative distributional allocation of resources for agency, both within the immediate locality, as well as in broader, global social surroundings. Focusing solely on structural constraints however, does away with the usefulness of behavioural analyses – structures cannot exist independently of human agency. A structured, ‘glocal’ analysis requires studying the structured behaviour of all relevant agents – global and local – as well as the material and cognitive resources that structure this behaviour. In the case of HIV/AIDS, it is these ‘glocal’ power relations that have in turn affected where and how quickly the disease has spread, affecting some parts of the world much more quickly and devastatingly than others. Having conducted a brief overview of these processes in Held’s original seven sites of power, the next chapter will argue for the inclusion of my additional five sites, as it is the argument here that a fully nuanced analysis of any social relations of power must also include these sites.

Chapter Eight – A Structured Analysis of HIV/AIDS in the Additional Five Sites of Power

The Site of Time: The Temporal Structuration of Agency

“Stories are mines of information, rich in memories and history. Couched in a story, lessons touch their audience at many levels: while the narrative explicitly relays the plot and sways the emotions, it also reaches into the unconscious. Stories raise and answer questions about meanings and values. / Scenarios are rigorously constructed, imaginative stories about the future. The scenario stories and the process of creating them are intended to help people think more freely about complex, poorly defined, or intractable problems.”⁵⁹⁹

The site of time is defined here as ‘the historical organisation of social life (past, present and future), including the ‘ghosts’ and ‘myths of agency’. It is important not to confuse the site of time with history however. History is rather the disputed discourse of time, which will be examined further in the site of knowledge and aesthetics. Time is depicted here as a resource of power in its own right – as a site of both material and cognitive struggles over past, present and future socio-political histories and potential developments. Indeed, the very fact that the discourse of time is so heavily disputed in competing world histories of events reveals the true power of time. The above quotation – taken from a recent UNAIDS report entitled *AIDS in Africa: Three scenarios to 2025* – perhaps best summarises the importance of the site of time to an analysis of power. For although the site of knowledge and aesthetics is about the actual construction of these hi-stories, the site of time represents the site where the many different historical, present and future realities – both material and cognitive – that people either do or believe themselves to inhabit, are structured.

Time is thus a heavily contested resource of power, not least because it encapsulates one of the most abstract concepts known to humankind – namely how and where we both materially find and cognitively perceive ourselves to be in past, present and future contexts. Although, as already mentioned, many structurationists prefer to leave time to one side, as one of the third dimensions

⁵⁹⁹ UNAIDS. (2005), p24.

through which power operates, it is one of the main aims of this thesis to prove that time itself also constitutes a resource of power over which humanity competes – cognitively as well as materially – the outcome of which determines the extent of possible social agency at any one given moment in time.

As such, the site of time serves as a useful analytical concept that can show why some social actors have a greater capacity to act than others. One's position 'in time' can quite simply determine whether or not one has the potential to change a current power relationship. It can be abstract and relative as well as real and material, and does not necessarily need to rest on a Western notion of calendar time running from the Dark Ages to the Present Day. It is also not necessarily historical or chronological – indeed, many people today have no more access to modern-day medicines, technologies or socio-political opportunities than their ancestors did. Equally, there may be little difference between past, present and future cognitive perceptions of time – religious beliefs, for example, prove that some perceptions of time can last for centuries, if not millennia. Indeed, the relevant polities need not necessarily be 'in' the particular timeframe of analysis – some polities may be long gone in actual social existence or action but be just as relevant in contemporary politics (here entitled ghosts of agency), while the potential existence of future polities may cause current polities to change their actions in the here and now.

For time operates as a structure of power by both materially and cognitively situating agents in their respective positions of power. Materially in the sense that some actors have access to more resources simply through their material temporal positioning in the world. Put simply, the passing of time allows some actors to accumulate more resources than others – be they states, corporations or individuals. At the same time, however, time also serves as a structure that cognitively puts people in their place, if you will. A negative perception of one's own potential for past, present and future agency is much more likely to constrain that agency than a positive one, for example. Indeed, material struggles over time can result from cognitive ones, as well as vice versa. Cognitive struggles over nationalist narratives, for example, can result in very real material struggles over these contested histories and potential futures – the recent wars in the Balkans

proving a very bloody and real case in point. In sum, the structure of time allows some actors to establish themselves – materially or cognitively – as the leading polities in any of the other eleven sites of power. It also – in the future sense – allows some actors the potential to become leading polities in ways that would have been inconceivable in previous times, as exemplified by the recent socio-political advances of women in many countries around the world.

Some historical structures are deeply embedded however, and so are not so easily changed by agency – the colonial structures that led the Western world to be so far economically advanced of the ‘developing’ world could be argued to constitute just such an example of slow-moving structures. Indeed, as already discussed in the beginning of this thesis, many structural accounts of global politics adopt this view of unchangeable and cemented structures. Other examples, however, reveal how quickly agency can change the parameters of historical structures – again, the relative successes of feminist struggles in many parts of the world over long-rooted patriarchal structures in the mere space of a century or two proving a case in point.

Some theorists argue that time has become globalised in the modern-day age, with the birth of technologies such as the internet, mobile phones and other scientific discoveries, such as medicines. Giddens has argued that modernity has led to the separation of time from space. “In pre-modern settings [...] time and space were connected through the situatedness of place. [...] The widespread use of mechanical timing devices facilitated, but also presumed, deeply structured changes in the tissue of everyday life – changes which could not only be local, but were inevitable universalising. A world that has a universal dating system, and globally standardised time zones, as ours does today, is socially and experientially different from all pre-modern eras. The global map, in which there is no privileging of place (a universal projection), is the correlate symbol to the clock in the ‘emptying’ of space.”⁶⁰⁰ It is the argument here however that, although it is analytically useful to distinguish between time and space as constituting separate resources of power, this cognitive change in the perception of time and space is

⁶⁰⁰ Giddens, Anthony. (1991), p16-17.

‘glocalised’, as it is still far from universal – many people around the world still do not live according to a universal worldview of time, or limit the extent to which they do so solely to matters of global business or politics. For even if there is universal agreement to label a year 2008, for example, this does not mean that this label bears a universal meaning. Nor is this purely a cognitive disparity, since the actual material access to this universalised and standardised high speed world is, currently at least, limited to a few privileged polities around the globe.

Indeed, the current ‘glocalisation’ of HIV/AIDS to the African continent reveals the continued interdependence between the sites of time and space, as well as all of the other sites. Far from revealing a universally temporally identical world that provides equal access to modern-day structures and innovations, it reveals a world that is still very much spatially divided by the structure of time. For it is a material fact that HIV/AIDS has affected some people and parts of the world much more severely than others – which, at this time, is predominantly women in Africa and India. Historian John Iliffe argues that “the fundamental reason why Africa had the worst Aids epidemic was because it had the first Aids epidemic.”⁶⁰¹ As already examined earlier in the thesis however, others argue that, far from being a matter of biological chance, it is the continent’s history of colonialism, as well as existing ‘glocal’ socio-economic structures of poverty and migration that have made it particularly vulnerable to the spread of infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS. Barnett and Whiteside also trace the high prevalence of HIV/AIDS in Africa to its history of slavery and colonialism claiming that, for the last five centuries, Africa has experienced an ‘abnormal normality’.⁶⁰²

“Africans who detect racist stereotypes in much of the speculation about the geographical origin of AIDS are not wrong. [...] The subliminal connection made to notions about a primitive past and the many hypotheses that have been fielded about possible transmission from animals [...] cannot help but activate a familiar set of stereotypes about animality, sexual license, and blacks.”⁶⁰³

The site of time perhaps reveals itself most potently in speculations about the geographical origin of the disease, a question that, contrary to popular belief,

⁶⁰¹ Iliffe, John. (2006), p58.

⁶⁰² Barnett, Tony – Whiteside, Alan. (2006), p143-145.

⁶⁰³ Sontag, Susan. (1989), p52.

remains unresolved to this day⁶⁰⁴. If one looks up the history of the disease on popular websites for example, such as those of the BBC and UNAIDS, one finds a 25-26 year timeline, claiming that the first incidents of HIV infection were discovered in 1981.⁶⁰⁵ According to John Iliffe however, “[t]he earliest convincing evidence of [...HIV] that causes [AIDS] was gathered in 1959 [... in Leopoldville, the capital of the Belgian Congo, where] an American researcher studying malaria took blood specimens from patients in the city. When testing procedures for HIV became available during the mid 1980s, 672 of his frozen specimens from different parts of equatorial Africa were tested. Only one proved positive. It came from an unnamed African man in Leopoldville, now renamed Kinshasa. [...] Although nothing of this kind can be absolutely certain, there are strong grounds to believe that HIV existed at Kinshasa in 1959 and that it was rare.”⁶⁰⁶ Iliffe is careful to point out however that this case, attributing the source of the disease to one lone unnamed man in Kinshasa, “does not imply that the Aids epidemic began in western equatorial Africa. If that unnamed African had been the first person ever infected with HIV, it would have been an incredible coincidence.” He points to other cases earlier than this – one identified by the scientist Luc Montagnier, whose laboratory first identified HIV, of an American man who died in 1952 of what could have been AIDS-related causes, however no blood was stored for later testing and so this could not be proven. Other cases involve a Japanese Canadian who died in 1958 and a Haitian American in 1959.⁶⁰⁷

Indeed, the history of the geographical origin of the HIV virus is a highly politically contested issue. In a famous speech in 1998, the South African president, Thabo Mbeki, attributed Africa’s particular vulnerability to the virus to poverty and Western exploitation.⁶⁰⁸ The idea that the virus was brought to the continent by the West was strongly adhered to by many people on the African continent at the beginning of the pandemic⁶⁰⁹, with some politicians and religious leaders advocating against the use of condoms⁶¹⁰, since these too were believed to

⁶⁰⁴ Iliffe, John. (2006), p3.

⁶⁰⁵ BBC, 4 June 2006 / UNAIDS (2006).

⁶⁰⁶ Iliffe, John. (2006), p3.

⁶⁰⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁰⁸ Mbeki, Thabo (2000), cited in Barnett, Tony – Whiteside, Alan. (2006), p318.

⁶⁰⁹ Farmer, Paul. (1992), p228.

⁶¹⁰ Iliffe, John. (2006), p96.

be infected. One Western historian, Edward Hooper, supports the suggestion that the virus was brought to the continent, tracing its origins back to trials for a polio vaccine in the 1950s.⁶¹¹ Other historians however, such as John Iliffe, maintain that current biological evidence on the genetic evolution of the disease has “effectively ruled out [Hooper’s] theory [...] a theory also contradicted by negative tests on surviving vaccine samples.” Instead, he traces the origins of the virus back to the transmission to human beings of the ancient and related simian immunodeficiency virus (SIV), an infection of monkeys in western equatorial Africa, that also spread to chimpanzees.⁶¹² Barnett and Whiteside agree with this view, stating:

“HIV derives from a virus that crossed the species barrier into humans. It is closely related to a number of Simian (monkey) Immunodeficiency Viruses (SIVs) found in Africa. [...] The question of when and how HIV entered human populations has been a source of great debate. We know that at some point the virus entered the blood of humans and then spread through sexual contact from person to person. In west Africa the less virulent HIV-2 spread from macaque monkeys. HIV-1 spread from chimpanzees into humans in central Africa. Four lines of evidence have been used to substantiate the zoonotic (transmission of a disease from one species to another) origin of AIDS: 1. similarities in organisation of the viral genome; 2. phylogenetic relatedness of a particular HIV strain to that of SIV in the natural host; 3. geographical coincidence between the SIV and particular HIV strains; 4. plausible routes of transmission”⁶¹³

Barnett and Whiteside also offer a number of hypotheses as to how the virus may have crossed the species barrier: i) through hunting bush meat; ii) contaminated vaccines (e.g. Hooper’s theory above); iii) contaminated needles in vaccine campaigns; iv) ritual behaviour such as the use of monkey blood.⁶¹⁴ None of these hypotheses have yet been proven and it is questionable whether they ever will. What remains certain however is that the search for scapegoats to blame for spreading the deadly virus will most likely continue as long as the disease remains such a threat to humanity.

⁶¹¹ Hooper, Edward. (2000).

⁶¹² Iliffe, John. (2006), p3-9.

⁶¹³ Barnett, Tony – Whiteside, Alan. (2006), p36 & 39.

⁶¹⁴ Ibid, p40.

The gendered dimension of the disease provides another point of contention, for while it is clear that gendered inequalities facilitate the spread of the virus, it is not clear why the many varied cultures on the African continent have proven to be more susceptible than others around the world. One possible link between them all is, once again, colonialism. Elizabeth Schmidt is a historian who has studied the relevance of British colonialism to modern-day patriarchal structures in Zimbabwe. She argues that, while women were certainly not equal to men before colonial rule, their situation worsened during and afterwards. The British are recorded by Schmidt as having made deals with local community leaders to keep their women in check, so that British servicemen could bring their families to the then-called Rhodesia without the risk of intercultural relationships.⁶¹⁵ Other so-called 'third world feminist' analyses have revealed similar patterns of female oppression and restraint around the world as a result of conflict and colonial rule.⁶¹⁶ What perhaps differentiates the African continent from these other countries then could be a synchronisation in time of the many different socio-political contexts which have worked all together to promote the spread of HIV/AIDS on the African continent.⁶¹⁷

The International Monetary Fund's (IMF) Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs), which were applied to many African and other 'developing' countries in the 1980s and '90s, have also hindered 'glocal' agency and can also be seen as a manipulation of the site of time – forcing many countries to remain in a state of stunted economic and socio-political development. The exact nature of the effects of these SAPs on the current HIV/AIDS crisis facing the African continent is unclear – however, it is not difficult to imagine that countries that were stripped bare of their health and welfare systems as a result of the programmes could not be expected to cope with an epidemic of such scope.

As already mentioned, the site of time is not only about the past however. It is also about interpretations and plans for the future, even if these are usually based on past models and projected present-day expectations. Future projections are

⁶¹⁵ Schmidt, Elizabeth. (1996)

⁶¹⁶ e.g. Alexander, M. Jacqui et al. (1997)

⁶¹⁷ Iliffe, John. (2006), p58-64.

problematic however, if not impossible. And again, HIV/AIDS proves an illustrative example of the role of future time for present global action or inaction. UNAIDS' aforementioned report *AIDS in Africa: Three scenarios to 2025*, in which it outlines three different potential outcomes: i) 'traps and legacies', which extrapolates current trends until 2025; ii) 'tough choices', which applies the trajectory of the most successful response to date (Uganda); and iii) 'times of transition', which illustrates what might occur if a comprehensive prevention and treatment response were rolled out across Africa as quickly as possible.⁶¹⁸ There is no need to go into the finer details of these three scenarios here – suffice to say that it is clear that dominant visions of the future are important for socio-political action in the present.

Agency in the site of time thus operates across many 'glocalised' levels, as with all of the other sites. The first face of power reveals itself in the access that people have to the decision-making process according to their structured positions within the site – it is clear, for example, that many (but not all) women in developing countries do not have the same agentic power to combat HIV/AIDS as their male counterparts, due to the structured material and cognitive realities that have resulted both from patriarchal structures and colonialism. The second face of power can be found in the access that agents have to setting the agenda of time – again, individuals and polities in many developing countries are constrained in their agentic power here, as time has situated them outside of mainstream 'glocal' agenda-setting. Manipulation, as the third face of power, reveals itself in the narratives that depict the site of time – as revealed above, there are many polities who have tried to influence the stories of time with regard to HIV/AIDS. Finally, the fourth face of power, that of self-policing, can be found in the more cognitive dimensions of the site, as time constrains not only people's material social positioning in the world, but also their belief that they can do anything to change this. All of these faces can also be interpreted positively however – many people and polities in developing countries, for example, have managed to surpass any temporal structural constraints on their agency to reform the site of time – the

⁶¹⁸ UNAIDS, (2005), p12.

many relative successes of NGO's and women's organisations to raise 'glocal' awareness of the disease proving a case in point.

Although there are probably as many different hi-stories of the world as there are people to tell them, all depending on the relevant 'glocalised' context, the site of time does disclose some key players. It not only reveals *past* 'glocal' polities and ghosts of agency that are still politically relevant today (such as the establishment of Western colonialism and 'glocal' patriarchal structures), but also exposes those 'glocal' polities that *currently* influence the politics of HIV/AIDS (such as the United States (US), the United Nations (UN), the World Health Organisation (WHO), the World Bank (WB), the IMF, the World Trade Organisation (WTO), major pharmaceutical companies, religious leaders (from Evangelical Christians to traditional healers), 'glocal' media, as well as individual men and women across the world), as well as those actors that could (potentially at least) affect the *future* of the epidemic (such as the Global Fund, generic drug manufacturers and those activists fighting to change the socio-political background of the epidemic).

What is also apparent is that there are common threads that unite many of these hi-stories – such as the experiences of colonialism and patriarchy – which make the global relevance of time all the more important. For it is a material reality that the African continent remains deeply scarred by its turbulent past and looks set to remain one of the world's poorest areas, unless 'glocal' polities take action. As it stands however, the agency of many people and polities on the African continent remain disabled by the structure of time – handicapped in their global agency to reverse the clock and win time in the battle to fight HIV/AIDS. For time really is a resource over which people compete and, in the case of HIV/AIDS, for many people in the world that time is running out.

The Site of Space: The Spatial Structuration of Agency

Just as the human body is socially embodied, so is the planet on which we live. The earth and its neighbouring planets and stars have always had social material and cognitive meaning for human beings – from the rising and setting of the sun to the distribution of land and its resources. And with social meaning comes competition, both over the material resource itself as well as over its cognitive meaning. The site of space is defined here as ‘the geographical and environmental organisation of social life’, recognising that space is both a material and a cognitive resource of power over which humanity competes. It is the argument here that, similarly to the site of time, the site of space is more than just a third dimension through which power operates, as argued by many structurationists. Like time, space also operates as a structure of power itself, by both materially and cognitively spatially situating agents in their respective positions of power. Materially in the sense that some actors have access to more resources simply through their material spatial positioning in the world. And, like time, space also serves as a structure that cognitively puts people in their place, if you will. The most obvious example of this is nationalism but overall it includes anything from the positive values attached to areas perceived to be of natural or cultural beauty, to the negative images conjured up by areas that have been the places of human suffering or natural devastation.

Together, the material and cognitive aspects of the site of space both structurate and are structured by agency. If one is born in a small, rural village, for example, one might not just lack material access to resources but may also not believe that one’s chances of entering the global political stage are as great as if one were born in an urban centre. Most traditional concepts of space (in both traditional IR and globalisation theories in general, as well as those studying, for example, the urbanisation of HIV/AIDS in particular) have tended to focus on material relationships however, restricting from view the more cognitive aspects of the site. For although it can certainly be argued to be the case that a majority of people find themselves materially constrained from entering spaces of global political importance, space can also serve as a cognitive spatial barrier that constrains agency simply through the belief that this ought to be the case. History is rife

however with examples of people managing to secure themselves positions of power despite coming from relatively obscure spatial origins, although this usually involves traversing the spatial divide by actually physically moving into the spatial hub of power. Today, this move may be as virtual and as simple as gaining access to the internet, although this is a space that is still not available to a majority of the world's population.

The theory of power proposed in this thesis thus disagrees with some current 'globalised' analyses that argue that the site of space is no longer as important as it once was. Instead, it is the argument here that space is just as materially and cognitively contested as it ever was, as exemplified by the continuation of age-old disputes over physical boundaries, current trends of urbanisation that are creating divides between rural and urban areas, as well as the continued segregation within many urban areas themselves.

The site of space is not just about competition over the natural environment through contested territories and the modern-day state-system however, as portrayed in the traditional disciplines of IR and Geopolitics, although these aspects are certainly also included here. Demography is also included here as a material resource to the site of space, since human populations can also be said to constitute material geographical resources, as illustrated by the politicisation of trends such as migration, urbanisation and slavery. Although there is some overlap here with the site of the body, the distinction I am trying to make here is that, in the site of space, human populations can constitute as valuable a spatial material and cognitive resource to polities as any other natural resource. The focus here is thus not on the individual body, or on the social embodiment of these bodies, but rather on their function as a resource of power simply in and of themselves.

Many countries heavily affected by HIV/AIDS face demographic changes of dramatic and devastating proportions never witnessed before in human history. Some countries risk losing a substantial proportion of entire generations and, given higher infection rates amongst women, some countries could be left with more men than women. Also left behind are a rapidly growing number of AIDS orphans – sub-Saharan Africa alone had just over 10 million AIDS orphans by

2005⁶¹⁹ – the burden of care for whom often falls upon the elderly. This is a serious problem, as Barnett and Whiteside point out:

*“Under normal circumstances the young are cared for by their parents, and later provide support for those parents. Some social scientists describe this as the ‘intergenerational bargain’ [...]. In Greek tradition this has been likened to a vine, where the young adults stand straight and firm as the new shoots climb up and the old ones make their way down to the earth. If you take out the middle support the children can’t climb and the old collapse.”*⁶²⁰

The case of HIV/AIDS reveals the devastating socio-political consequences that mass-death can have on societies, as one of their fundamental resources – human beings themselves – is depleted. Worldwide, many countries have had to face up to a massive depletion of this most fundamental of resources – the human body itself. The disease risks draining the ‘developing’ world of human capital to a much greater extent than the ‘brain drain’ it has faced for many decades already, as whole societies and thus economies risk being wiped out. In some parts of the world, HIV/AIDS thus is creating new, almost apocalyptic-like socio-political spaces. Spaces where disease has wiped out a generation and where orphans and the elderly live together in impoverished communities. Spaces where socio-political and economic activity are severely limited by illness and death. These spaces are not natural however but are rather highly structured, dependent on the actions and inactions of ‘glocal’ polities, as well as the available resources in the other eleven sites of power.

Contrary to the case of natural resources however, where accumulation typically means greater material and cognitive power, it is not necessarily the case that a greater number of people amounts to a greater socio-political or economic value being attributed to a particular site of space. The so-called ‘developing’ world, for example, is typically materially very heavily populated with people but these populations are generally not materially able or cognitively considered (in traditional analyses of power at least, both behavioural and structural) to carry very much weight in global politics or economics. The ‘developing’ world has historically been under-represented in, for example, the United Nations’ Security

⁶¹⁹ UNAIDS. (2006).

⁶²⁰ Barnett, Tony – Whiteside, Alan. (2006), p210.

Council, for example, and finds it difficult to compete with Western and Asian economies. The 'developing' world's power in global political and economic institutions thus remains limited, constraining for example global action towards HIV/AIDS).

The site of space also reveals positive power in a Foucaultian sense however. Many behavioural and structural accounts of global power refuse to acknowledge the 'developing' world's agency, even as a potential. Although the 'developing' world, if it can be generalised as such, is still very much restricted in its access to global political and economic institutions, it does still have some agency both within and without these institutions. Any analysis of the UN for example, must also take into account the power of those member states representing the 'developing world' who are periodically granted a seat on the Security Council, for although they may be few in number and can hardly be said to be representative, they do yield some positive power in the global decision-making process. This is not to say that the Security Council is by any means globally democratic, allowing equal access to all, but a thorough examination of global power must take into account all relevant polities and not just focus on one or two actors, as hegemonic analyses do.

HIV/AIDS provides an example of such positive power. Those 'developing' states that are heavily affected by the disease, for example, have not only managed to collectively put pressure on the international community to take action against the disease but have also managed to establish their own production of generic anti-retroviral (ARV) drugs in varying degrees of success across the world. Also important to note is that these actions have not been solely state-centric – indeed, some of the first, groundbreaking attempts to get HIV/AIDS on the global political agenda were carried out by grassroot organisations based in the 'developing' world. The distinction between top-down and bottom-up approaches is already a classical discussion within geopolitics – the point that I am trying to make here is that both hold true to varying degrees, as both states and non-governmental organisations wield power on the global stage. Their agency will vary in degree according to the respective power of each in the other eleven sites and depending on the issue at stake, but both approaches must be taken into account in a

theoretical account of global politics. For although it is certainly true that the current global political and economic climate currently does not structurally favour the agency of the 'developing' world – either at state or grassroots level – what agency it does have has still managed to transform some of these structures and could potentially transform them even further if more action follows. Having said all of this, it is still the case that this agency has been spurred on by the very dire and desperate situation facing many 'developing' countries affected by HIV/AIDS.

Agency in the site of space is thus highly determined by one's structured spatial positioning. The first face of power can be discerned in the structured potential for agency in the site of space – as already discussed, many PLWHA, as well as 'developing' countries are structurally constrained in their access to this decision-making process. The second face of power reveals itself in the more cognitive aspects of the site – as already discussed, HIV/AIDS only recently became a global issue of importance. It is unclear whether this was due to the securitisation move by global politics or whether it was the result of intense campaigning by activists and 'developing' countries, but it is almost certain that spatial positioning (both material and cognitive) was a contributing factor in the ability of the latter to influence the global political agenda. It is also clear that both the material and the cognitive boundaries of space can be politically manipulated – as already discussed, contentions abound as to the material and cognitive spatial locations of the disease. The fourth face of power reveals itself in the cognitive aspects of the site – agency in the site of space can quite simply be determined by a social actor's perception of his/her/its spatial positioning in the world of politics.

The site of space thus reveals the role that the socially structured geography of the planet has on current prevalence rates of HIV/AIDS. Access to treatment and thus AIDS mortality rates, for example, are highly dependent on spatial location. As Anne-Christine D'Adesky so concisely puts it – "For rural residents, Brazil's vast size can be fatal." She cites one local AIDS activist who claimed that some patients had to travel for ten days in order to get treatment.⁶²¹ Globally, one can

⁶²¹ D'Adesky, Anne-Christine. (2004), p40.

compare this to the example of a leading HIV/AIDS sufferer and campaigner who had to leave Malawi in order to be able to receive treatment in the United States.⁶²²

What is important to note here however is that it is the socio-political contexts of these geographical areas that are relevant, not the actual physical areas themselves. Both of these examples emphasise the importance of the medical and economic infrastructure of an area, which in turn depend heavily on the particular 'glocalised' political environment. Also highly important are other socio-political aspects such as gender and ethnicity – some groups of people are, from their very birth, more able to make use of geographical resources than others. It is also perfectly possible that remote areas manage to either contain an epidemic within their locality or shelter themselves from one, just as it is feasible that heavily populated areas do the same – low prevalence rates in parts of the Western world being a case in point. HIV/AIDS prevalence and treatment is thus not dependent on physical geography more than as a socially conditioned geography. It is thus the interaction with all of the other sites of power that makes the 'site of space' relevant to a study of global power, thus emphasising again the interdependency of all of the sites.

⁶²² Ibid, p6-7.

The Site of Knowledge & Aesthetics – The Discursive, Visual and Sonic Structuration of Agency

A Foucaultian analysis necessarily includes cognitive aspects of power. The remaining three sites all reveal different aspects of this cognitive power, not as diffuse mechanisms that somehow occur freely of human agency, but rather as structured cognitive and material processes. The site of knowledge and aesthetics – defined here as ‘the organisation of social life around knowledge and discourse’ – is the one that is perhaps the most closely related to Foucault’s own work, as the power of knowledge was one of his main subjects of study. The inclusion of aesthetics here is simply in order to broaden the idea of knowledge from being solely discursive – in the form of written and spoken language – to also include vocal and visual discourses, such as the media, film, television, music and art.

Just like all the other sites, the site of knowledge and aesthetics operates as a structure of power by both materially and cognitively structuring agency. Materially in the sense that some actors have more power than others to form discourses, whether that be in the role of a scientist, theorist, politician, economist, priest or Hollywood producer. The cognitive side to the site of knowledge and aesthetics is the more subconscious side of the equation, which situates people according to unspoken understandings about their power of knowledge.

Again, and just as with all the other sites of power, there is scope for agency across all levels of society – actors frequently appear from all walks of life to suddenly have an influence on the socio-political stage. It is a common current argument that the more traditional, rigid routes of access to the site of knowledge and aesthetics are being opened up and ‘democratised’ for example, especially with the birth of the internet. Internet chatrooms, Wikipedia, Youtube and Myspace, to name but a few, have all opened up spaces to create new ‘democratised’ discourses that, theoretically at least, are open access to anyone who wishes to participate. Aside from the previous notation that global internet access is currently far from becoming a material reality however, it is also questionable whether any of these spaces of knowledge have created discourses of

any actual cognitive weight. For although there are certainly signs that the opening up of communication has connected people in ways previously unheard of, it is also possible that the hegemonic cognitive power of more traditional discourses will remain. Folklore and folk music have always existed, for example, and it is possible that these newer forms of discourse will also fall into this category and thus not be able to structure power in the site of knowledge and aesthetics.

Once again, the case of HIV/AIDS highlights the relevance of the site of knowledge and aesthetics to a theory of power. As already mentioned, many different stories have been written about both the history and epidemiology of HIV/AIDS, and although neither discipline is a natural science, many historical and epidemiological accounts of HIV/AIDS present themselves as indisputable empirical fact – and by doing so, emphasise the importance of this site as a resource of political power.

As already mentioned, the epidemiological study of HIV/AIDS has its roots in what Patton calls ‘tropical thinking’. This methodology remains a powerful hegemonic player in the discourse on HIV/AIDS and thus in the site of knowledge and aesthetics, as it still underlies much current thinking about the spread of the disease – be that in the field of tropical medicine, international policy or indeed, common perceptions about the spread of the disease that are fuelled by media, religious or political groups.

One example of ‘tropical thinking’, for example, is Susan Hunter’s *Who Cares? AIDS In Africa* which, at first glance appears rich in empirical and historical content. There is little to no referencing to her sources in the main body of the text however, and the reader can only take Hunter at her own word. This is unfortunate, since she claims that the aim of the book is “to widen our focus from the relatively narrow fields of science and medicine to look at the epidemic’s social, political, and historical antecedents.” One of Hunter’s aims is namely to point out that the slave trade, colonialism, labour exploitation and the Cold War affected the health of Africans for many generations to come:

*“As we analyze the [AIDS] epidemic in Africa and develop strategies to mitigate its effects, it is critical to understand clearly the forces that set the stage there for the epidemic’s horrible impact. When we take a moment to brush aside the mantle of racism inherited from colonial days – shared, tragically enough, even by some Africans themselves – to get a better idea of what Africa is really like and what has happened there over the past 200 years, it becomes very clear why AIDS took off so quickly and why it is worse in Africa than anywhere else in the world.”*⁶²³

The main problem with Hunter’s thesis however is that, underneath the ‘historical’ narrative is a narrative of Africa’s HIV/AIDS epidemic which is – despite her aforementioned desire to ‘brush aside the mantle of racism’ – both narrow and highly subjective. For although she highlights the importance of colonialism in contributing to Africa’s particular vulnerability to the virus, she does so from the viewpoint of evolutionary medicine. This leads her to make some dangerous and sweeping statements based on alleged (and unreferenced) biological differences between different human ‘races’ and between men and women that are not only highly questionable, but that also fail to take into account socially constructed diversities. Africa, for example, is generally presented as one culturally homogenous continent (although at one point she does at least make reference to the continent’s genetic diversity⁶²⁴), exemplified in statements such as “[i]n African societies, the male-female marriage bond is especially weak”⁶²⁵ or “[i]n Africa many women believe they deserve a beating”⁶²⁶. On differences between men and women, she again falls on the side of (again unreferenced) biological distinctions, to make such sweeping statements of ‘truth’ such as “[h]uman females are universally attracted to older, more stable men who can support them while they are pregnant and vulnerable.”⁶²⁷ This claim thus supposes that men and women comprise two neatly homogenous and distinct categories that are universal throughout the world, regardless of cultural or gendered differences. Indeed, it is questionable whether Hunter’s definition of ‘gender’ is the same as the usual social scientific definition of the term (as socially constructed differences between men and women) when she writes:

⁶²³ Hunter, Susan S. (2003), p54.

⁶²⁴ Ibid, p220.

⁶²⁵ Ibid, p197.

⁶²⁶ Ibid, p41.

⁶²⁷ Ibid, p197.

“If gender relations were taken seriously in HIV/AIDS prevention programs and all other development programs, women could gain control of their sexuality and exert more control over HIV transmission. In all known human and nonhuman societies, females are much more conservative and careful about choosing their mates than males. [...] It probably also explains why gender equity is so hard to achieve. Why would a male, driven by entirely different interests, voluntarily cede his control over females?”⁶²⁸

It is obvious that Hunter means to draw attention to the very real pain and suffering that HIV/AIDS is causing in Africa – as well as to find reasons for it – but her methodology is so flawed that her argument ultimately comes undone. The only two reasons it reveals for the continent’s particular susceptibility to the virus are: firstly, that ‘Africa’ (as a homogenous whole) suffered at the hands of (a presumably equally homogenous group of) colonialists; and secondly, that ‘Africans’ constitute a distinct and separate group of people to the rest of the world. With regard to her first argument, it is not the point here to discredit the idea that the history of colonialism still has a very real and heavy impact on the spread of HIV/AIDS in much of the African continent – indeed, this is also one of the main arguments of this thesis. Rather, it is that by lumping all Africans and colonialists together into two distinct homogenous groups, Hunter misses many of the aforementioned differences between colonial experiences on the African continent, as well as the varied impacts that these continue to have on the spread of HIV/AIDS.

“Is it ‘genocide by neglect’, as some have called the world’s failure to respond to HIV/AIDS? [...] If the rest of the human species is more related to one another than they are related to Africans, is it simply a case that human genetics determines that we suffer less guilt in leaving Africa to fall into ruins? Is this intraspecies rivalry, which, as we learned from Darwin, is the most ruthless of all nature’s competitions? If we help Africa, are we helping the “less fit” to survive?”⁶²⁹

In the end, Hunter can only appeal to the reader (who, as the statements of support on the back cover of the book make clear, could very well be an international policy maker) to find within themselves the compassion to ‘help Africa’, as the racist and sexist essentialism, however unintentional, that is implicit in her methodology makes itself all too apparent. This is perhaps why she interweaves

⁶²⁸ Ibid, p217.

⁶²⁹ Ibid, p219.

two compassionate narratives with the ‘historical’ and ‘biological’ analysis throughout the book – one based on Darwin’s personal life and one based on the lives of three fictitious Ugandan women (that the events and dialogues of both of these stories have been invented is only revealed in a footnote, leaving the more careless reader to believe perhaps that this is a piece of historical and/or anthropological fieldwork).⁶³⁰

It is very difficult to measure the impact that a certain discourse, much less a certain book, has on global policy. There has been much speculation, for example, about the role that the academic Samuel Huntington’s book *The Clash of Civilisations* has played in inspiring U.S. foreign policy towards the Middle East. Despite the fact that Huntington was once a key advisor to the White House and that one might expect that his voice carried a certain weight in policy circles, it is almost impossible to prove that one book has altered the course of history. This does not mean that they cannot do so however. Religious books, for example, such as the Bible and the Koran, have certainly maintained an ongoing and steady impact on socio-political discourse for many centuries.

The point here therefore is not to single out Hunter’s book as a prime suspect of shaping current global discourse on HIV/AIDS. Rather, it is to point out the potential power that such a discourse *could* have on global policy. For if one were to hypothesise that Hunter’s book is compulsory reading for any global policy maker about to make a decision related to HIV/AIDS – not an impossibility, given the endorsements on the back cover – one can also imagine that their subsequent views on the causes and potential solutions to the epidemic might emulate her own. There are however a vast number of books written about HIV/AIDS and one might hope that an interested and competent policy maker would set about reading as many different views on the pandemic as possible.

Regarding the disputed origins of HIV/AIDS, for example, rather than revealing one dominant discourse, one is overwhelmed by the sheer magnitude of competing histories of the disease. For, as already mentioned earlier in this chapter, the

⁶³⁰ Ibid, p227.

history of HIV/AIDS is a discourse that nobody wants to claim. Another relevant aspect of the site of knowledge and aesthetics is data bias. As already mentioned, some of the most influential academics in the study of HIV/AIDS, such as Barnett and Whiteside, admit that finding the correct and relevant data is in itself a major obstacle to any study of the subject. One popular theory about the spread of HIV/AIDS, for example, is that it follows migration patterns from rural to urban areas – so-called urbanisation – as discussed in the site of space above. This is a problematic hypothesis, however, since data collection in rural areas is problematic at best and impossible at worst.⁶³¹ It is difficult therefore to make any general global comparisons in HIV/AIDS rates between rural and urban areas, although case specific evidence does suggest that urbanisation may be playing a part in the spread of HIV/AIDS in many parts of the world.

With regard to sonic and visual discourses, the case of HIV/AIDS highlights the importance of these too. It can easily be argued that without major Hollywood films (such as *The Constant Gardener* and *Philadelphia*, for example), global knowledge of HIV/AIDS would be limited. Knowledge comes in many forms, and the inclusion of sonic and visual discourses is meant here to broaden the concept from more traditional definitions that limit the study of knowledge to academic discourses and the like. HIV/AIDS reveals that knowledge can be acquired through many different mediums, as a structured site of power that both enables and delimits agency.

For, just as with all of the other sites, agency in the site of knowledge and aesthetics is determined by the structured positioning of social actors within the site. The first face of power determines who has the potential to shape and delimit discursive, visual and sonic discourses – again, as with all of the other sites, multiple levels of agency are possible here. The second face of power shapes which discourses are brought on to the agenda in the first place – the wealth of discourses on HIV/AIDS reveals that power here is, potentially at least, wide open, although the dominance of behavioural theories mentioned earlier in the thesis highlights that only certain discourses make it onto the global political

⁶³¹ Barnett, Tony – Whiteside, Alan. (2006), p58.

arena. The third face of power, that of manipulation, is also highly relevant to the site of knowledge and aesthetics. As discussed above, discourses can be manipulated to suit certain political agendas and although it may not be possible to see which interests are being served (or denied), processes of manipulation themselves can be discerned if knowledge claims later turn out to be falsified. The fourth face of power is equally relevant to the site, as it reveals the unconscious discourses that underpin most discourses – for subjectivity underpins all discourses by default.

This raises the ultimate question – of what use then is social scientific ‘knowledge’ if it can never be free from bias and thus reliable? Perhaps this is the most poignant aspect of the power of knowledge and aesthetics – the fact that discourses have such great power to shape agency despite their inherent flaws. Indeed, agency requires some form of knowledge in order to happen at all, otherwise all action would be unconscious and spontaneous. The significance of knowledge and aesthetics as a resource of power therefore is its ability to justify and legitimise those actions, whatever the outcome. In the case of HIV/AIDS, it is clear that different discourses of knowledge have been used by each of the relevant polities – from those that choose the uncertainties surrounding the disease to justify inaction, to those that use the magnitude of its spread to justify anything from enforced national screening and subsequent quarantine, to those that advocate abstinence from sex or traditional healing as a means of protection against the disease.

The Site of Morality & Emotion – The Moral and Emotional Structuration of Agency

It is clear then that certain socio-political issues carry more material and/or cognitive value than others. Whereas the ownership of tales of conquest and victory is often desired and thus fought over, tales such as that of HIV/AIDS are often thrown aside and dropped like hot potatoes. For the case of HIV/AIDS reveals another important aspect of power – namely that of the site of morality and emotion. This is defined here as ‘the organisation of social life around morality and emotion’ and is one of the deeper cognitive structures of power. Again, it is a site that involves overt material as well as covert cognitive struggle. The material aspects of this site consist of the more overt conflicts over moral and emotional issues, such as open socio-political struggles between various religious and/or secular polities on how to organise moral and emotional life, e.g. through conflicting views on polygamous versus monogamous lifestyles. The more covert cognitive aspects refer, once again, to the subconscious side of this site. Indeed, agency in these issues can be so deeply cognitively structured that it barely appears to be agency at all. For this is a site where agency is often argued to be ‘natural’, preordained or even commanded by some higher power. Morality and emotion cut to the very core of what it means to be a human being, thus making it a highly contested site of power.

As such, the site of morality and emotion also serves as a useful analytical concept that can show why some social actors have a greater capacity to act than others. One’s moral or emotional positioning can quite simply determine whether or not one has the potential to change a current power relationship. For, just as with all the other sites, morality and emotion operates as a structure of power by both materially and cognitively situating agents in their respective positions of power. The relevant polities may be the same as in the other sites, since morality and emotion is controlled through the discourse of religious leaders, politicians, academics and other social polities. However, it also includes the often unspoken moral and emotional discourses of the masses – the everyday moral and emotional coding that structures what agency is deemed possible. For the distinction I am trying to make here is between the previous more intellectualised and rationalised

discourses in the site of knowledge and aesthetics, for example, and these more hidden discourses that are rarely questioned and thus justified.

A classic example would be that between a priest and a thief, or an emperor and a pirate. Even though the moral power of both sides is structured and thus not natural or preordained, the former group is much more likely to have access to the resource of morality and emotion than the latter group, which is more likely to be shunned from society. Exceptions to this include the 'Robin Hoods' of society, who turn morality on its head and go against the hegemonic moral grain. These instances are exceptional however in their very visibility and may thus serve as an indicator of the often unspoken moral codes of a society. With regard to emotion, there may also be a great deal of difference, for example, between the socio-political power of an actor who is outwardly perceived to be cold and rational and an actor who is perceived to be emotional and vulnerable. For although these are all culturally relative values, it could be argued that, in some prevalent hegemonic socio-political discourses at least, the emotions of mutual love and communication, for example, are often not as highly valued as the emotions of self-preservation and self-improvement. After all, a militarised and capitalist culture needs a different fuel than one which promotes peace and solidarity.

The case of HIV/AIDS once more proves the usefulness of such an analytical concept. As already mentioned, there is a stigma attached to the disease that not only reduces the agency of those carrying the disease but can even result in premature death, by stoning by the community etc. This stigma proves the irrational side to agency – one that is governed by core values and emotions, rather than rationalised 'knowledge' and debate. Indeed, the site of morality and emotion refers to issues that are rarely brought up to debate at all – the truly hidden aspects of power. The stigma attached to the disease is only one of these – also relevant is the often unquestioned social positioning of the actor in the first place. This is the site where social conditioning has its deepest roots, where struggles over what it means to be a man or a woman, an African or a Westerner, are both materially and cognitively fought over. The whole Self and Other discourse may be intellectualised and rationalised in the site of knowledge and aesthetics, but it is fuelled by the heated core values contested over in the site of morality and

emotion. The resulting conflicts within individuals themselves is the final subject of study in the next site of power, that of identities. The focus here is on the broader moral and emotional contexts that lead to these conflicts in the first place.

Regarding the origin of the virus, for example – does one blame an unknown person for being the first ever to contract the disease, the institutions that turned a blind eye to the disease in the initial stages of the various epidemics, or the socio-political structural constraints that facilitated the spread of the disease in the first place? Can one really blame anyone at all for the successful mutation of a biological organism into a killer virus? Or is it the fact that it is spread by human behaviour – through unprotected sex or needle use – that makes HIV/AIDS such a controversial disease? In his book *Body Count: How they turned Aids into a catastrophe*, Peter Gill writes:

“Of the 25 million who have died since 1981, many could have been saved. They died because governments, in the rich world and the poor world, and institutions with global responsibility like the churches failed in their humanitarian duty. [...]

Governments in the poor world must make an earnest priority of health and education, and the rich world must never again put demands for fiscal discipline ahead of people’s lives. [...] Most of the people newly infected with HIV in Africa are women. They have little or no control over their sexual and reproductive lives.

They are often coerced into sex and cannot insist on protection.”⁶³²

As should be clear by now, agency and thus responsibility in a structured world is notoriously difficult to attribute. Agency in this site is similar to that in the others therefore, in that it too operates across multiple levels, through the four faces of power. The first face of power denotes those overt conflicts of power, where moral and emotional codes are openly contested. The second face of power denotes which moral and emotional issues are brought to the political agenda at all – the case of HIV/AIDS reveals the reluctance with which ‘glocal’ polities, traditionally at least, have dealt with issues such as sex and death. The third face of power can be found in processes of manipulation in the site – moral and

⁶³² Gill, Peter. (2006), p196.

emotional codes (however covert) can be used to structure agency in any of the other sites. The fourth face of power lies at the very root of the site – for what is moral and emotional conditioning if not self-policing? This again reveals the positive aspects of power however, for agency without any moral or emotional self-policing at all risks not only disempowering the social actor in question, but also all of those affected by his/her/its agency.

It is clear then that the stigma attached to the virus depends on the moral and emotional coding of the issue. Certain socio-political issues simply have greater moral and emotional value than others. Sex and death are two issues that are highly contested socio-political issues, for example. Although again culturally relative, these are often private affairs but also heavily regulated ones. To return to Foucault once more, the issues of sex and death, as well as madness, reveal the most hidden regulatory mechanisms of a society. And these are ultimately conditioned in the site of morality and emotion. In the case of HIV/AIDS therefore, it is clear that social and ultimately biological death is heavily determined and regulated by the moral and emotional values attached to sex and drug use in the first place, and death in the final instance. For as long as these issues are hidden and kept out of socio-political discourse, the moral and emotional structures affecting them too remain hidden and out of sight. Brought into the open however and these core values and beliefs reveal themselves as constituting powerful discourses of either social acceptance or stigma. The resulting agency depends on the hegemonic moral and emotional discourses in the society in question.

The Site of Identities – The Multiple Structuration of Agency

“[W]hy should we assume that an individual or a collectivity has a particular set of interests simply because one aspect of their identity fits into one social category? [...N]arratives are not incorporated into the self in any direct way; rather they are mediated through the enormous spectrum of social and political relations that constitute our social world.”⁶³³

The final site of power is defined as ‘the organisation of social life around the Self and the Other’ (as advocated by much social identity theory) and refers to the multiple structuration of identities and thus agency. For, as already mentioned, a Foucaultian analysis recognises that identities are never static and homogenous but are rather always fluid and heterogenous. It is close to impossible, for example, to answer the questions ‘what is a woman?’ or ‘who is African?’ ‘Women’ and ‘Africans’ have many different identities, both within themselves and between each other.

Like all of the other sites, the site of identities is both structured by and structures agency and operates both materially and cognitively. Materially in the sense that many groups overtly exercise their power over individual identities, advocating a Self to belong to as opposed to an Other. The more cognitive and covert processes involved here however are within the groups and indeed within the individuals themselves. There is nothing essential about being a woman in a rural setting for example – indeed, even if one were somehow able to anthropologically pin down the exact socio-political conditioning of an individual, noting everything from a person’s religious and cultural background to their personal upbringing and environment, one would not be sure that one would have fully grasped their identity. One ‘woman’ is not another ‘woman’ alike – there are multiple identities at work within each individual that either constrain or enable the potential for agency.

The difference between the site of identities and Held’s site of culture is thus that the focus here is on individual identity as a resource of power, rather than on the cultural norms and practices that homogenise group identity. Both sites of power

⁶³³ Somers, Margaret R. – Gibson, Gloria D., 1994, p66-67.

are deemed here to be equally relevant – Held’s site of culture denotes the broader mechanisms at play in structured relations of power. What I want to explore here is the socio-psychological and cognitive make-up of the individual him-/herself. For how one defines oneself internally determines how one re-/acts in all other social situations, not only within cultural settings but also within all of the other sites of power.

It is thus argued here that the site of identities constitutes a resource of power that is as heavily contested as all of the others. A successful polity is one that manages to structure their identity as being the dominant one. The most extreme and recent examples of this are perhaps the attempts in the 20th Century to create holistic Fascist and Communist identities respectively, as identities that overrode all other conflicting identities such as religious or cultural ones. However, it is a site of power that is as relevant today as it has ever been. And HIV/AIDS once again provides an illustrative example of this conflict of interests within the Self.

The example of HIV/AIDS reveals how one of the most complex human identities – namely sexuality – can suddenly enter the global political arena, both affecting and being affected by the other sites of power. Indeed, it is possible that one of the reasons that global policies on the issue have so far been inefficient at curbing the disease could be because it is so difficult not only to account for, but also to explain and understand individual sexual identity. Equally, it is also possible that much of the outward projection of stigma towards the Others carrying the virus is the result of a denial of the Self’s own sexual desires and thus also potential vulnerability to the disease. As already mentioned, there have been numerous studies which show that there are many unifying trends in sexual behaviour across the world, (albeit ‘glocally’ specific ones), thus directly countering, for example, age-old institutionally racist ideas about the over-sexualised, polygamous ‘African’. The fact that these behaviours are universal however, could thus also signify an example of the projection of attributes that one fears in one’s Self onto the Other. Protection against the virus is also deeply rooted in the site of identities. As already mentioned, many educated and empowered people in various parts of the world fail to protect themselves, thus signifying deeper cognitive structures at

play. For at the heart of the intimate realm of power lie the deepest human socio-psychological mechanisms that govern why certain agency occurs.

Identities thus play an important part in shaping agency in all of the other sites. And just as with all of the other sites, agency in the site of identities occurs at multiple levels of society, both shaping and being shaped by structured relations of power. The first face of power is revealed in overt conflicts of interest in the site – the struggle over identities is one that polities in most sites engage in, demanding allegiance to their particular cause or identity. The second face of power reveals, for example, the denial of underlying Self identities that may be the cause of social stigma or hatred of the Other. The third face allows room for the covert processes of manipulation that shape these Self and Other identities, while the fourth face reveals how the individual can self-police him-/herself into being either the Self or the Other, or indeed both at once! For identities are never easily understood, even on an individual level, and so trying to grasp them on a global level is difficult if not impossible to achieve, without running the risk of thus essentialising them. This does not mean that the site of identities has no place in a theory of global power however – on the contrary, exploring the many possible conflicts of identity that exist both between and within individuals themselves highlights many of the ways in which ‘glocal’ power both structures and is structured by this site.

Conclusion – The Relevance of the Additional Five Sites of Power to HIV/AIDS as an Example of ‘Glocalised’ Power

Including the site of time in an analysis of HIV/AIDS highlights the importance of prevailing colonial and patriarchal structures in determining who in the world is currently most vulnerable to the HIV virus – which, at this time, is predominantly women in the so-called ‘developing’ world. Including the site of space highlights the importance of the geographical and demographic aspects of the disease, as it is primarily thought to be spread through the mechanisms of urbanisation and globalisation, and is causing dramatic demographic changes to the societies thus affected. The site of knowledge and aesthetics adds the Foucaultian twist to the tale if you will. In general, not having access to knowledge handicaps your capacities as a social actor which, in the case of HIV/AIDS, can be a matter of life or death. The site of morality and emotion, in its turn, highlights the extreme sensitivity at the core of the issue – namely that of the action of having sex. Sex is one of the most private of human actions and yet is also one of the most heavily regulated, across both time and space. Frequently, these regulations cut to the very core of the human condition, namely that of morality and emotion, governing what individuals both think and feel about HIV and sex. This site also highlights the stigma that is often attached to ‘coming out’ as an HIV sufferer – which can itself be highly constraining to social agency and can, in extreme cases, even lead to death (by stoning by the community etc.). The site of identities is also at the very heart of the HIV issue, highlighting the variance in attitudes towards the disease between individuals within otherwise seemingly ‘homogenous-looking’ groups.

All of these five sites, together with Held’s original seven, are structured through agency – both shaping and being shaped by social action. It is the argument here that any analysis of ‘glocal’ relations of power must include all of these twelve sites, in order to fully comprehend the relations of power that operate in a specific empirical context. For none of the sites operates without the other, so to speak – the relations of power in one affect relations of power in another, in a continuous process of structuration.

Chapter Nine – Conclusion: The Implications of A Structured Analysis of ‘Glocal’ Power for the Study of World Politics

This thesis has argued that traditional theories of world power typically fall into one of three categories: i) behaviouralist, which typically focus on the power of social actors to change or maintain relations of power; ii) structuralist, which typically view power as a social structure that constrains or facilitates all actors in their capacities to change these power relations; and iii) post-modernist, which reject the notion of theorising about power altogether, maintaining that the very discourse of power itself constitutes a relation of power that benefits some actors at the cost of others. Each of these approaches highlights important aspects of power, but none of them alone fully reveals the complexities of power. Instead, all three approaches need to be combined, using theories of structuration and Foucaultian relational power. For power is a multifaceted concept that has many different ‘faces’ of agency as well as structures, dependent on the empirical context that is under study.

One of the main points of the thesis is that one cannot equate agency and structure as denoting the same thing – they necessarily require the existence of each other and are interdependent, but must be kept ontologically separate. Power has also been defined here as an ontological concept in its own right, as the glue which connects structure and agency. It has been argued that the definition of any of these concepts will always be up for debate however, as they may be ontological – in that they exist – but any definition of them will always be epistemological. This thesis has also found that there are still many issues which remain unresolved within the structurationist literature, namely: i) the degree of autonomy (and/or knowledgeability) granted to the actor; ii) the degree of autonomy granted to structure; iii) the distinction between structure and system; iv) the number of structuration processes involved (duality or ‘tripality’); v) the role of time and space in these processes; vi) the different resources of power available to individuals; and vii) the potential for social change/power of resistance.

I have consequently offered my own epistemological account of power, in an attempt to account for how it connects agency and structure through processes of structurationism. Agency here has been defined using Wight's extended definition of *social action*, where agency₁ refers to the 'freedom of subjectivity', agency₂ refers to the way in which agency₁ becomes an agent of something and agency₃ refers to those 'positioned-practice places' which agents₁ inhabit. This agency has been further defined using the four faces of power: i) decision-making; ii) agenda-setting; iii) processes of manipulation; iv) self-policing, to which I have also added the concepts of 'ghosts' and 'myths of agency'. It has been argued that the structural side of the structurationist equation of power must include both material and cognitive structural realities, in order to bridge the structurationist/Foucaultian divide. To this end, structural power has been defined using Held's seven sites of power, to which I have added an additional five sites, namely: i) the site of space; ii) the site of time; iii) the site of knowledge and aesthetics; iv) the site of morality and emotion; v) the site of identities; vi) the site of the body; vii) the site of welfare; viii) the site of culture/cultural life; ix) the site of civic associations; x) the site of the economy; xi) the site of the organisation of violence and coercive relations; xii) the site of regulatory and legal organisation.

I have argued for the empirical analysis of the structured action of politics in each site of power, both with regard to their exercise of power, as well as the constraints they face from other actors, as well as regarding access to other sites. For these sites of power are not mutually exclusive, but rather intertwine with each other – thus, politics in one site will naturally interact with politics in others. It is not then simply the case of reviewing each site as a separate entity, but rather a matter of seeing which key politics and which other sites have a bearing on the relationships in that particular site of power.

In the second half of the thesis, I have then used the particular case of HIV/AIDS to illustrate this epistemological account of power. The resulting analysis has shown that most mainstream approaches to HIV/AIDS can also be divided into the three categories: i) behaviouralist; ii) structuralist; and iii) post-modernist. Arguing once more for the integration of all three approaches, I have argued that it is analytically more useful to speak of a current 'glocalisation' of the HIV/AIDS

virus to sub-Saharan Africa, since that region's particular vulnerability to the disease has not only to do with global factors, both past, present and future, but also to do with varying local cultural, social, economic and political contexts that heighten the vulnerability of some parts of the continent and lessen that of others, as well as, of course, individual behaviour. Current differences in vulnerability to the HIV virus thus depend on 'glocal' structural inequalities as well as behavioural actions on the part of both individuals and policy makers alike. These structured inequalities have then been exemplified in each of the twelve sites of power, in order to reveal not only the importance of each site on its own, but also the interdependence of the sites, since relations of power not only extend across all of the sites, but also across multiple levels of agency. Indeed, the overall contribution of the thesis is to argue for an empirical, structured and 'glocalised' approach to the issue of world power relationships that accounts for the structured agency of politics across the twelve sites of power. For it is only thus that 'glocal' realities can be more accurately discerned.

There are of course many limitations to any theory of power and this thesis is no exception. To begin with, it contains a broad and complicated set of arguments – indeed, each chapter (as well as each face and site of power) could probably fill an entire thesis in its own right. The illustration of HIV/AIDS has necessarily had to be brief, but then as Burton has made clear, it is close to impossible to fully account for all of the relevant relations of world power with regard to a particular issue. There are also epistemological limitations to the theory offered in this thesis however – for as has been maintained throughout, any definition of power is necessarily epistemological and will thus always be up for dispute. Those theories which hold up best are those on which most theorists can agree – it has merely been the aim here to offer a new way of looking at power, so that its definition might be further debated and refined. Indeed, there are many aspects of the theory that could be explored in future research – the ghosts and myths of agency, for example, the structured relationships between the twelve sites of power, as well as the processes of 'glocalisation' across the twelve sites all inspire further enquiry. It would also be equally rewarding to conduct a more extended structured analysis of HIV/AIDS across the twelve sites of power than has been possible here.

The main inspiration behind this project has always been the theoretical underpinnings of the concept of power and its implications for theories of world power however. For what power is and how it affects world relations is a debate which is still in its infancy within the discipline of IR. It is thus the hope here that this thesis may at least prise open the debate a little further, so that power in world relations can be more fully understood and better explained than has been the case thus far. For if critical theories, such as post-modernism and feminism, are to be fully integrated into mainstream IR theory, the discipline needs to expand its toolbox of theoretical concepts, in order to be able to account for relations of power that cannot be analysed in the world of states and states alone.

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