

Third Worldism and the lineages of global fascism: the regrouping of the global South in the neoliberal era

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ABSTRACT *We come to an analysis of Third Worldism through an historical understanding of the development project, one that locates Third Worldism as a moment in a broader series of resistances both to capital and colonialism, and to the techniques used by the state to maintain hegemony. Viewing Third Worldism in this wider context, we argue, enables us to not only explain the failure of Third Worldism to deliver on its vision of emancipation from colonialism, but to also explain the shape of contemporary resistance to the world capitalist order. We argue that the theory and practice of development depends on a certain biopolitics, rooted in a regime of sovereign state control, and designed to mobilise citizens in ways favourable to capital. We hold that Third Worldism embraced this form of sovereignty and its biopolitics. Further, by blending cultural studies analysis with a Polanyian interpretation of the rise of fascism, we argue that Third Worldism can be situated as a moment in the maturation of ‘global fascism’. Finally, we argue that contemporary resistances to neoliberalism have recognised the complicity of the state with capital. These ‘new internationalisms’ arise from the ashes of Third Worldism, with an altered understanding of ‘sovereignty’ that challenges the trajectory of the Third World sovereign state.*

The despised, the insulted, the hurt, the dispossessed—in short, the underdogs of the human race were meeting [in Bandung]. Here were class and racial and religious consciousness on a global scale. Who had thought of organizing such a meeting? And what had these nations in common? Nothing, it seemed to me, but what their past relationship to the Western world had made them feel. This meeting of the rejected was in itself a kind of judgment upon the Western world!¹

Even in the horrors of the Nazi regime, then, it is possible to see some resemblances to the trajectories of other countries.²

Historians can only see the past through the lens of the present. Our enterprise explicitly views the rise and demise of the Third Worldism launched at Bandung through contemporary offensives and resistances to capital.³ Today, at the World Social Forums, at the protests against the World Bank, the IMF, the WTO, NATO and G8, we see phenomena strikingly similar to Richard Wright’s observation in

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Bandung, quoted above: a variety of different causes allied in their opposition to, now, variants of a single kind of capitalism. There is, however, a key difference. While Bandung trumpeted the possibility of national–statist politics as a vehicle of resistance to the inequalities both of the world capitalist order and of the Soviet alternative, few parliamentarians have taken seriously the demands of the contemporary resistances to neoliberal capitalism. The demise of Third Worldism coincides with the capture of Third World elites by capital, and by its ideology.

We contend that the seeds of the takeover were already in place at the time of Bandung, and germinating in the greenhouse of developmentalist politics. In order to demonstrate this, we trace the history of development as colonial project and show that, at its inception, it instituted a particular politics of biopower necessary for state-led capitalist accumulation. Crises of capitalist accumulation in the early 20th century reveal these tropes most clearly, but they are present, and dynamic, throughout the colonial process. Importantly, they are left substantially untouched either by national liberation politics or by changes in subsequent regimes.⁴ Indeed, the process of postcolonial nation-building deployed disciplinary colonial technologies to create, through coercion and consent, a national hegemony that operated through the state. This was an outcome predicted, albeit in different language, by Fanon. At the very same time as the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) matured, deploying the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) as a seat of Third World power in inter-state politics, states and rulers were internalising the disciplines, self-definitions and elitism of developmentalism.

The development illusion is a persistent but ever-changing one. There are continuities, however. It is striking, for instance, that the Declaration adopted by the UN General Assembly at its 18th Session in 1963 calls for trade arrangements and concessions fundamentally similar to those currently, and equally unsuccessfully, being demanded by developing countries at the World Trade Organization. More recently, the bubble of development rhetoric has been resoundingly punctured by a variety of commentators.⁵ While some groups (the South Centre, Third World Network) are keen to participate in the modification of development institutions, many are vociferous about the limits of the developmental state. We highlight the global justice movements (such as the *Via Campesina*—the international peasant farmers’ movement) as organisational attempts to transcend developmentalism. We argue that their projects, grounded in a firm scepticism of the state, and wedded to a robust internationalism that maintains an uneasy and increasingly critical relation to the ‘nation’, come not as a continuation of the Third Worldist project, but have risen, phoenix-like, from its ashes. The intentionally provocative component to our argument is to link contemporary and historical phenomena in world history, Third Worldism included, to fascism. We explain, in the following section, exactly why we choose to do this.

Two conversations about fascism

In the political-economy literature ‘fascism’ has a fairly specific and historicised definition.⁶ It refers to that period of politics in Germany, Italy and, arguably, Japan incipient in the two decades before the beginning of World War II,

In the political-economy literature fascism has a fairly specific and historicised definition.⁶ It refers to that period of politics in Germany, Italy and, arguably, Japan incipient in the two decades before the beginning of World War II, concluding with the defeat of Nazi Germany in 1945. The fascism of these regimes lies in the following characteristics:

1. Fascism was a response by capital to a direct threat to its hegemony. At the time, this threat was that of communism.
2. It offered itself as a solution to the woes of the Great Depression, through a pseudo-corporatism that brought the needs of workers, capital and the state together.
3. Fascism was, however, profoundly anti-worker. There was, in other words, a contradiction between the state's mobilisation against unions and autonomous worker organisation on the one hand, and its self-proclaimed interest in workers' welfare on the other. To resolve this, elites within the (dominant) hegemonic bloc deployed state apparatus to banish working-class demands with the surrogate of nationalism. Cultural technologies that elided state with nation, and demanded fealty to the unified nation-state, were deployed in the service of quelling class discontent. These included, but were not limited to, notions of national purity—extended, famously in the Nazi case, to environmental, bodily and geographical purity.
4. Culture was strictly controlled and non-state-sanctioned thinking was suppressed. *Weltanschauungskrieg* (world-view war) was systematically and scientifically propounded, with rigorous justification by elites for particular suppressions and celebrations, accompanied by a strict policing of cultural interactions in order to root out deviance.
5. A hetero-normative sexual division of labour was strenuously enforced. Reproductive labour was vigorously policed, through cultural celebrations of female domesticity, through strict monitoring of women's entry into the formal economy, and through the extermination of homosexuals.
6. Technologies of coercion and consent, particularly military authoritarianism, were used by the state in order to secure hegemony over dissidents.

We modify the term 'fascism' with 'global'. This we do for a number of reasons. We do not claim that the tendencies we see at work from the early days of the development project to contemporary developmentalism replicate exactly the features of mid-1930s and –1940s Germany, Italy and Japan. Although, as Gourevitch notes, important features of Nazi Germany were present in the policies of other states at the time, we readily acknowledge the historic specificity of this period.⁷ What we attempt to do, however, is to broker a conversation between two different kinds of heterodox approaches to development in which the idea of fascism plays a key role. The first lies in the tradition of Marx and, specifically, Karl Polanyi. The latter's *The Great Transformation* (1944/1957) is usually read as an argument about the dislocation of social relations through the instantiation of 'fictitious commodities', and the markets that trade in them. We note that Polanyi's contribution to an essentially Marxist corpus of ideas lies not in his re-presentation of *Capital*, but in his application of these ideas to the rise of fascism.⁸

The literature to which we connect Polanyi stems from the British Cultural Studies tradition. We borrow the term ‘global fascism’ from Paul Gilroy, who uses it extensively in *Against Race*, in which he situates the continuities of contemporary capitalism, in North and South, in biopolitics (the deployment of disciplinary technologies at the level of the individual). Gilroy’s definition of fascism: ‘anticonservative, antiliberal, populist, fraternalist, and revolutionary’, assigns a central role to the state in orchestrating the production and reproduction of its citizens.⁹ Caution and history are important here. Following Tariq Ali, we do not want to suggest that the presence or absence of certain criteria exclude or include a particular regime or time within the ambit of fascism. Ours is not a ‘checklist’ approach to the study of fascism. We want, through the addition of the adjective ‘global’, to render the term ‘fascism’ more porous. We do this not to scandalise, but to recast the present. Fascism does not arise *ex nihilo* but as a result of a particular configuration of social forces—it is the subtle dynamics of these forces to which we want to direct our attention, and it is a lesson we willingly learn from the cultural studies tradition. As Gilroy suggests, the ‘threat of fascism’

should not be an open license to indulge in paranoia. It loses none of its force when we appreciate that the trains are not necessarily being loaded right now in our own neighbourhoods. Fascism is not permanently on the brink of assuming terroristic governmental power ... If we wish to live a good life and enjoy just relations with our fellows, our conduct must be closely guided not just by this terrible history, but by the knowledge that these awful possibilities are always much closer than we like to imagine.¹⁰

Second, we emphasise that global fascism, as a form of ruthless (for want of a better qualifier) biopolitics, has always been a world-historical phenomenon. This is not to say that fascism *qua* fascism is, and always has been, smeared across the world. We do, however, suggest that its component forces, in coming together under colonialism, have informed the project of development, albeit in attenuated form. We have only to think of the colonial project—beginning with the cultural genocide in Iberian America, through slavery to forced/contract labour in the late colonial period, and perhaps including the forced expropriation and starvation of Indians, Chinese and Brazilians, among others, documented in *Late Victorian Holocausts: El Niño Famines and The Making of the Third World* by Mike Davis.¹¹ Indeed, we see our project as allied to Davis. He extends the notion of ‘holocausts’, which had previously been applied to a European phenomenon, into the colonial past.¹² We go one step further, pushing the historical boundaries of global fascism back into colonial time and space, and then drawing it forward, into the colonised present.

We conjecture that fascist relations are immanent in global capitalism, intensify state biopolitics at moments of crisis, and may be sustained post-crisis for hegemonic purposes. Consider the 1930s, when a rogue state (Germany) was forced to structurally adjust by the League of Nations powers as a consequence of the collapse of the gold–sterling regime. The result was what has come to be known as fascism: a manoeuvring of elites and a populist appeal by the Nazi party to regenerate an idealised national culture through selective mobilisation

based on ethnic and racial intolerance, and dedicated to reconstructing modernity via state technologies of control. Culture is, of course, always part of capitalism. Stuart Hall's work informs our use of culture as synonymous with 'ideology'. The relation between culture and capital that informs our use of 'global fascism' is one that invokes particular relations of control between the state, media, the military, and tropes such as 'family', 'homeland', 'nation', 'God' and the market.¹³

Our use of 'global fascism' is also an attempt to represent today's *transformed* international conjuncture, where the crisis of market rule is premised on the defeat of Third World utopianism, and on a definitive 'globalisation' of the commodity form: the combined assault on organised labour (global labour market casualisation), on peasant cultures, and public goods. As early 20th century fascism was premised on the defeat of anti-capitalist forces, so global fascism now targets forces with collective claims that stand in the way of commodification. The increasingly unaccountable institutions of market rule (including the 'market state') provide a mechanism for one of the key forces of 'global fascism' and, while this is a universal process, it is so contingently, because it continues the racist project begun under colonialism. In this sense we submit that fascism has foundational roots in European-centred development. The capitalist cultural technologies, with their origins in Europe, have now, under a US aegis, been extended under multilateral developmental institutions. This is very much in keeping with the idea of development—an idea with distinct cultural roots and heritage, but an idea that must, of necessity disavow these roots if it is successfully to claim its goal of disinterested and normalised universality.

The project of development

Colonialism and development

Development was integral to colonialism. While 19th century Europeans may have experienced development as a specifically European phenomenon, colonialism nevertheless represented it as a universal necessity. Development praxis involved managing the social transformation attending the rise of capitalism and industrial technologies.¹⁴ Development matched the apparent inevitability of technological change with social intervention—represented ideologically as improving human society, but pursued as a method of control of citizen subjects subordinated to wrenching social transformation.

This social engineering impulse framed European colonisation of the non-European world. The always-contested relationship of plunder between Europe and its colonies necessitated new forms of social control of subject populations in metropolitan as well as colonial regions. In the latter development served a legitimacy function, since, compared with Europeans, native peoples were cast as 'backward'.¹⁵ Subject populations were exposed to a variety of new disciplines, including forced labour schemes, schooling, and segregation in native quarters. Forms of colonial subordination differed across time and space, but the overriding object was either to adapt and/or marginalise colonial subjects to the European presence.

Adaptation included the use of the popular factory model of schooling, where knowledge was subdivided into specialties, and pupils submitted to continuous monitoring by supervisors. Punctuality, task specialisation and regularity were the hallmarks of this new discipline, breaking down social customs and producing individual subjects who confronted a new, rational order, which they both resisted and reproduced. In 1843, for example, the Egyptian state (under the suzerainty of the declining Ottoman, and rising British, empire) introduced the English ‘Lancaster school’ factory model to the city of Cairo, in order to consolidate the authority of its emerging civil service. Egyptian students learned the new disciplines required of a developing society that was busy displacing peasant culture with plantations of cotton for export to English textile mills, and managing an army of migrant labour building an infrastructure of roads, canals, railways, telegraphs and ports.¹⁶ Across the colonial divide industrial capital transformed English and Egyptian society in lock-step, producing new forms of social discipline among labouring populations and middle-class citizen-subjects. Given the world-historical relations of industrial capitalism, the new class inequalities within each society were premised on a racist international inequality produced by colonialism. It was this inequality, and its ‘local face’ in the colonies, that fuelled anti-colonial resistances.

As Europeans were ‘civilising’ their colonies, colonial subjects explored the paradox of European colonialism—the juxtaposition of the European discourse of rights and sovereignty against their own subjugation.¹⁷ The decolonisation movement peaked as European colonialism collapsed in the mid-20th century, when World War II sapped the power of the colonial empires to withstand anti-colonial struggles. After millions of colonial subjects were deployed in the Allied war effort for self-determination against fascist expansionism from Europe to Southeast Asia, the returning colonial soldiers turned this rhetoric and sometimes violence on their colonial masters in a bid for independence.

Sovereignty was linked to overcoming the deprivations of colonialism, through an expression of state-centred autonomy from the colonial metropole. The idea of sovereignty demands more treatment than we can afford here. In its classical sense it is a call for autonomy, delimited by geography, and accompanied by a unitary sovereign, an agent with a monopoly on force within prescribed boundaries. Equally traditionally, this agent has been the state, and its boundaries have been those of the state. Yet, in this context, it is also a technology of disavowal, of amnesia—for it projects Third World elites *exclusively* as victims, as a class absolutely sinned against and unsinning, demonising—correctly—the imperial apparatuses of control without implicating themselves in its functioning. It also permits a platform not only for cultural nation building, but also cultural *state* building. As we shall see, contemporary understandings of sovereignty come shorn of the state apparatus, with conflicting and complex geographies of claims to autonomy.¹⁸

Fascism and development

It is important to recall that, from the outset, both sociology and development were responses to European class tension. Auguste Comte, the founding father

of sociology, published his *Plan des travaux scientifiques nécessaires pour réorganiser la société* in 1822, when the social dislocations of industrial capitalism were beginning to be felt. Comte could hardly have failed to be aware of the nascent working class's conditions in Paris, London and Manchester. The spreading phenomenon of urban unemployment (against the backdrop of empire) taxed the theories of human progress advanced by the Scottish enlightenment.¹⁹ Under these material and historical circumstances, Comte, building on Saint Simon, completed the positivist project.

Applying positivist methods to the historical record, Comte claimed to derive a three-stage model of human progress. This model came with none of the caveats that accompany many of today's more defensive applications of positivist methods. Comte's work was as much a bold manifesto for a new science—sociology—as a revisionist history. He argued that the laws he claimed to discover were not convenient simplifying assumptions, but actually existed 'in society'.

Comte's observation, produced as it was in a period of high colonialism, was not, however, an explicitly imperial one. It stemmed purely from the logic of domestic considerations—in order for Comte to understand Europe as he did, he cast other parts of the world in particular relationship to Europe, and cast their peoples as populations whose manifest destiny was to become as enlightened as the French. This is the violent consequence of humanism; in imputing universal characteristics to all people, contingency, diversity and specificity are homogenised in the name of a specious and often violent attempt to create human unity. This, in itself, lends legitimacy to cultural and biopolitical colonisation.

For Comte this interpretation involved an explicit set of policy responses *vis-à-vis* the state. His three stages of increasing human order began with savagery, progressed through a belief in God, to a final stage where humans, through their mental faculties, transformed their natural tendencies for self-love into a pan-human altruism. Comte located himself and his followers firmly at the point of transition from the stage of 'love of God' to 'love of humanity'.²⁰ This is an important Occidental cultural technology. The violence of the French Revolution, argued the positivists, had been necessary to sweep away the vestiges of old (second-stage) thinking. But the *laissez-faire* economic policies that followed in the wake of the revolution had, paradoxically, retarded progress. In particular, the slavish pursuit of markets in property and labour encouraged underdevelopment; the most pressing manifestation of this lay in the new phenomenon of widespread urban unemployment.

The forces of natural development could, however, be shifted to a faster track by removing a key blockage—private property. It is in retrospect striking that the positivists should have focused on property as a problem of development. Perhaps even more striking was their solution, which involved not the dismantling of private property, but its trusteeship, in the hands of those most able to manage it with required technical skill. For Comte and the positivists, the remedy for unemployment, and the most effective means to expedite the social transition to altruism, lay in the hands of bankers. Banks would hold property in trust for the community, managing it wisely for the common good. Of course,

these bankers would need to be instructed about their ‘social function’, to be ‘moralised’ in suitable ways.²¹ Banks have remained central to the development project, either as trustees of communal property, sources of finance for national industrial expansion, or indeed as sources of micro-finance for village women.²²

From this summary history of development we make three observations. First, development was, among other central features, a capitalist project. From its very inception, Comte saw development (and sociology writ large) as the ordering of society for progress, through the regulation of private property. In order to render more public the corrupting influence of private property, Comte’s solution was to have bankers (not legislators) administer the public good. These administrators would be guided by positivist rationality. Central to this vision, then, is a conception of *progress*, managed through a system of class relations, not by capitalists *per se*, but by an elite cadre of gurus of order and science. Second, the state was a central locus of the ordering of society. The project of colonial development required the construction in essence, and in effigy, of the apparatus of the modern European state. This ‘gift’²³ was an integral part of the development enterprise. The mechanisms of control and domination, the biopolitics of development, were created specifically to pacify, monitor, police and conscript to labour, the rural communities of the Third World, just as they did in Europe. These politics were predicated on an exclusive state sovereignty, and much effort was spent securing this sovereignty. Third, biopolitics and capitalism are mutually constitutive within the development project. The limit case of development, we argue, is fascism. We take Polanyi’s analysis to be indicative of incipient trends not only at the emergence of Third Worldism, but also in contemporary global political economy.

Biopolitics and development

At the heart of the development project, then, are core ideas of managerialism and, less explicitly, of sovereignty. Managerialism is instituted through a process of ‘civilising’ people as a nation, a class, a race and a gender, specifically through control of individually coded bodies—where they work, how they reproduce, even the language they dream in. This is what we mean when we refer to biopolitics. Gilroy states that biopolitics ‘specifies that the person is identified only in terms of the body’.²⁴ The idea of biopolitical discipline is Foucault’s: ‘For the first time in history, no doubt, biological existence was reflected in political existence’—the fact of living was no longer an inaccessible substrate that only emerged from time to time, amid the randomness of death and its fatality; part of it passed into knowledge’s field of control and power’s sphere of intervention.²⁵ For the successful coupling of biological and political existence, competing conceptions of the biological, and the political, had to be tamed. This process required the extension, and exclusive and absolute maintenance, of state sovereignty. We see the twin facets, of management and sovereignty, in the various businesses of the development project: including the regulation of education, sexuality, criminality and gender.²⁶

A biopolitical approach to understanding colonial development praxis broadens our conventional understanding of what the state does and does not do.

There are few areas of life that the state does not seek to regulate. Gender regulation practices exemplify how the state's engagement was at once biopolitical, orientated through capitalism and ideas of progress. In southern Africa, for example, the decreeing of pass laws in 1892 served to create, institute and discipline a labour market, and to monitor tax payments. These passes served a variety of other unstated purposes. They aimed to identify, to surveille and to push into wage labour the black men required to mine gold, and to work on the farms expropriated and alienated by the settlers. The passes soon became ways of tracking and limiting the movements of male black bodies in and around the colonised terrain. They provided a mark of recognition of colonised subjects by the state, geographically policing the division between colonial citizens and subjects. Mamdani's helpful categories of citizen and subject and his investigation of technologies of governance used to discipline colonies points to the spatial character of juridical control.²⁷

Critical to these operations of power, however, was the creation of exclusive sovereignty by colonial regimes. Indeed, the exercise of biopower and sovereignty were co-eval.²⁸ This should come as no surprise—the existence of competing sovereignties was anathema to the universal and exclusive character of development; given that development was both inevitable and unilinear, competing sovereignties could be permitted neither in theory nor practice.

The case for global fascism

Having outlined our understanding of development, and its biopolitical basis, it is now time to make the case for 'global fascism'. One of the most striking accounts of the rise of fascism lies in Polanyi's *Great Transformation*. Polanyi views fascism as a solution to the 'impasse reached by liberal capitalism'—the untenability of the illusion of the self-regulating market. The liberal market can only ever be a fiction. Despite economic liberalism's rhetorical and ideological separation of the market and the state, and of the separation of economics and politics more widely, the market is an inescapably political construct. The process of its institution undermines the very conditions of its existence.

Fascism, argued Polanyi, explicitly recognises the social bases of productive activity and seeks to reorganise society to rectify the crisis of the self-regulating market. Fascism follows market liberalism inevitably, because the very liberalism that called for global freedom of capital falls victim to the shocks to international capital markets. Through these shocks, paradoxically, the nation becomes a more, not less, important site of political engagement. The logic of fascism is a panicked response 'to protect society from the market by sacrificing human freedom'.²⁹ The logic is flawed, relying as it does on totalitarianism (nationalist, religious, patriarchal) and an emphasis on state support for capital. But the problem is real. The implication that freedom and the market are incompatible opposes Polanyi to Hayek and Schumpeter in his time, and to contemporary neoliberal ideologues in ours.

The importance of deploying the term 'fascism' lies in its ability to help us interpret the present. For Polanyi, the key puzzle was the abrupt transition from decades of relative peace to the Great War and then to fascism in Europe.

Polanyi argued that the self-regulating market, despite the counter-movement to mitigate and prevent it, irretrievably weakened the social mechanisms forestalling the sacrifice of freedom on the altar of the market. Similar processes operate today, in a world of neoliberal economics, with concomitant political disavowal. This political-economic understanding of fascism, we feel, can be profitably combined with a cultural studies perspective, such as that of Gilroy, who argues that the genealogy of fascism extends to the present. Traces are found in the obsessions with 'leaders', with the increasing policing of boundaries and nation, with the racialisation of criminality in North and South, and in the troubling rise of nationhood as a mooring for identity on both the left and the right.³⁰

The convergence of biopolitical technologies of control and neoliberal forms operates through the trope of individuality. That the 'individual' is both the simultaneous object of control of biopolitics, and the explicit creation of neoliberalism is no accident. When Margaret Thatcher famously asserted that society didn't exist, she attempted, among other things, to instantiate, and to celebrate, a model of biopolitical control *pur*. The subject of neoliberalism as a disembodied *homo economicus* is precisely the subject which biopolitics seeks to create, individuate and control. This is exemplified through the current commodification of public services, where the substantive criteria for consumption of such market services is distinctly biopolitical, compared with a public welfare arrangement where the state might provide healthcare to all comers, without eligibility criteria—in which case access to such service would only be formal and not subject to an economic calculus and individual monitoring.

In the current global trajectory of privatisation of services, access to healthcare, for example, heightens the policing of bodies—payment systems demand an accounting system at the level of individual bodies, and with that accounting system a prior history of health and of access to cash (and hence paid labour) for the patient. It invokes an entire system of state monitoring, evaluation by capital and control of individuals, individuating bodies as repositories of asymmetrical and delimited (market) rights. The healthcare example is useful because it is also a transnational phenomenon, one increasingly under the scrutiny of supranational organisations, through the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) 2000. The GATS, an agreement within the WTO currently under negotiation, offers (though does not guarantee) providers of healthcare and other (formerly public) services the chance to enter new markets.

Another, different example of the transnational capitalist recognition of the body is through crime. That certain activities are criminalised under liberal capitalism does not stop their occurrence. Although the state is a prime locus of biopolitical activity, its sovereignty is far from absolute. Biopolitics doesn't need the state—the recognition of the body by capital does not require state sanction to occur. For example, it is estimated that 700 000 to two million women and children are trafficked annually, and that there are about 10 million trafficked people working at risk. After drug smuggling and gun running, human trafficking is the third largest illegal trade (annual profit of about \$6 billion). Child trafficking already dwarfs the transatlantic slave trade at its peak, by a magnitude of 10. Destinations include farming, restaurant labour, domestic

servitude, fishing, mail-order brides, market stall labour, shop work, and the sex trade.³¹

These are the tropes associated with biopolitics. We contend that Third Worldism failed to uproot the biopolitics instituted by colonialism and, in the following section, we attempt to demonstrate why, despite the clear differences between colonised and coloniser, Third World colonised elites (to different degrees) operated within a similar set of assumptions as their erstwhile masters about power and the role of statism and nationalism for the masses as loci of development.

Rise of Third Worldism

Third Worldism, situated between the empires of capitalism and communism, embodied the contradictions of the age: the universal institutionalisation of national sovereignty as the representation of independence of decolonised peoples, political confrontation with European racism, and a movement of quasi-nationalist elites whose legitimacy depended on negotiating their economic and political dependence.

Decolonisation was rooted in a liberatory upsurge, expressed in mass political movements of resistance—some dedicated to driving out the colonists, and others to forming an alternative colonial government to assume power as decolonisation occurred. In this context development was used by retreating colonisers as a pragmatic effort to preserve the colonies by improving their material conditions—and there was no doubt that colonial subjects understood this and turned the ideology of development back on the colonisers, viewing development as an entitlement.³²

From 1945 to 1981, 105 new states joined the United Nations as the colonial empires crumbled, ushering in the development era via the extension of political sovereignty to millions of non-Europeans. But political sovereignty was the formal attribute of a new world order substantively rooted in the political economy of imperialism. Fanon understood well the historical shortcomings of African postcolonial elites in these terms, characterising them as a lumpen-bourgeoisie.³³

Just as colonised subjects appropriated the democratic discourse of the colonisers in fuelling their independence movements, leaders of the new nation-states appropriated the legitimating ideals of the development era. Part of the development promise was the proclamation of equality as a domestic and international goal, informed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948). The UN Declaration included *individual* citizens' rights in the social contract: every body 'is entitled to realization, through national effort, and international co-operation and in accordance with the organization and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality'.³⁴ We note that this declaration names states as the exclusive guardians of rights, specifically via the social contract, sanctioning a form of biopolitics and sovereignty originating under colonialism.³⁵

Development legitimised rulers' disciplining of their subject-citizens. In

Africa forms of discipline included ‘tribalisation’—a legacy of European colonialism, combining forms of urban power directly excluding natives from civil freedoms on racial grounds with forms of indirect rule of natives in the countryside via a reconstruction of tribal authority. Independence abolished racial discrimination and affirmed civil freedoms, nevertheless dividing power within new nations according to the inherited artificial tribal constructs along ethnic, religious and regional lines.³⁶

Fanon’s sociology of the postcolonial African state identifies the roots of neocolonial biopolitics:

Powerless economically, unable to bring about the existence of coherent social relations ... the bourgeoisie chooses the solution that seems to it the easiest, that of the single party ... It does not create a state that reassures the ordinary citizen, but rather one that rouses his anxiety ... It makes a display, it jostles people and bullies them, thus intimating to the citizen that he is in continual danger. The single party is the modern form of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie ... In the same way that the national bourgeoisie conjures away its phase of construction in order to throw itself into the enjoyment of its wealth, in parallel fashion in the institutional sphere it jumps the parliamentary phase and chooses a dictatorship of the national-socialist type. We know that this fascism at high interest, which has triumphed for half a century in Latin America, is the dialectic result of states, which were semi-colonial during the period of independence.³⁷

As a bloc the Third World was incorporated into a hegemonic project of ordering international power relations, where states adopted a universal standard of national accounting (GNP), and foreign aid disbursements subsidised state apparatuses and elite rule. In postcolonial India, ‘Instead of the state being used as an instrument of development, development became an instrument of the state’s legitimacy’.³⁸ Internally the reification of the state as the source of order and progress perpetuated a capitalist biopolitics of subjugation introduced via the colonial project. Externally Third Worldism depended on state mediation of a politics of opposition to capitalist dependencies and an unequal world order.

The harmonisation of internal and external demands was not, however, always favourably achieved—US imperial imperatives often trumped the fragile domestic hegemony won by Third World elites. We illustrate this through an account of the changing fortunes of Third World sovereignty. On balance the conscription of Third Worldism to neoliberalism, across four decades, was achieved with a great deal of continuity. Its culmination in the ‘lost decade’ of the 1980s, during which capital’s capture of the state was secured by the debt regime and the elaboration of financial technologies of control, demonstrates this point. These technologies dovetailed with, and intensified, a domestic biopolitics now reconstituted as ‘privatisation’—the explicit shifting of the intensified control of bodies and the economic organisations that serve them to the sphere of capital, beyond the illusion of ‘public’, governmental control.

First World counter-attack

Third Worldism demands to be interpreted within a world-historical context. The 1955 Bandung conference did not, after all, happen in a vacuum, but within a

fraught and tense international context, at one of the nadirs of the Cold War. The process of postwar reconstruction and decolonisation had stretched the pre-war lines of colonial control between the two poles of the USA and the USSR. The liquidation of European economies had both provided an exogenous shock to the colonies, but also permitted degrees of economic and political freedom that had previously been unthinkable, for those in a position to exercise it.³⁹

Just as the Third World was born as an elite political entity, so it died, expressing the dialectic of economic nationalism in the development project. Proclaimed as the objective of the developmental state, economic nationalism nevertheless was at odds with US hegemonic objectives. Early indicators of this dialectic were the 1953 CIA-sponsored coup against Iranian Prime Minister Mossadegh's nationalisation of British oil holdings, and the 1954 overthrow of Guatemalan President Arbenz, whose land reforms threatened United Fruit interests.⁴⁰

A decade later a geopolitically strategic coup in Indonesia opened a door for corporate transnationalism, presaging a two-decade reversal of economic nationalism. By the time of Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru's death in 1964, the non-alignment strategy of Third Worldism was weakening. A key figure in the NAM, Indonesian President Sukarno (as outlined in the introduction to this special issue), nurtured a state- and military-sponsored form of national development, supported by a complex coalition of nationalist, Muslim and communist parties, forming what he called a 'Guided Democracy'. Sukarno's regime had mobilised more than 15 million citizens to join parties and mass organisations encouraged to challenge Western influence in the region.⁴¹

In 1965 President Sukarno was overthrown in a bloody CIA-supported coup, which included a pogrom claiming between 500 000 and a million lives—mostly of members of Indonesia's huge and popular communist party (PKI)—'one of the most barbaric acts of inhumanity', 'the "final solution" to the Communist problem in Indonesia'. Recently declassified documents reveal that a British Foreign Office file called in 1964 for defence of Western interests in Southeast Asia which was 'a major producer of essential commodities. The region produces nearly 85 percent of the world's natural rubber, over 45 percent of the tin, 65 percent of the copra and 23 percent of the chromium ore.'⁴²

Following the regime change, Time Inc sponsored a 1967 meeting in Geneva between General Suharto, his economic advisors, and corporate leaders representing 'the major oil companies and banks, General Motors, Imperial Chemical Industries, British Leyland, British-American Tobacco, American Express, Siemens, Goodyear, the International Paper Corporation, and US Steel.' With Ford Foundation help, General Suharto reformulated a development partnership with foreign investment. Billed 'To Aid in the Rebuilding of a Nation', the conference nevertheless invited corporations to identify the terms of their involvement in the Indonesian economy. James Linen, president of Time Inc, expressed the birth of this new global order, observing: 'We are here to create a new climate in which private enterprise and developing countries work together ... for the greater profit of the free world. This world of international enterprise is more than governments ... It is the seamless web of enterprise, which has been shaping the global environment at revolutionary speed.'⁴³

The coup marked a turning point in the trajectory of Third World nationalism, introducing new forms of state developmentalism, partnering with global corporations in market expansion (anticipating liberalisation 1980s-style). The war waged in Vietnam by a US-led coalition over the next one-and-a-half decades confirmed this policy, and it was followed up with strategic interventions in Chile (1973) and, in the 1980s, in El Salvador, Nicaragua, Grenada and Iraq, as well as with disbursements of military and economic aid to secure the perimeter of the 'free world' and its resource empire. Military power was critical to the securing and prising open of the Third World as part of an emerging project of global development orchestrated by the USA as the dominant power. Through the biopolitical expedient of 'officer training schemes' and strategic support, the USA incited 'military modernisation' and dictatorship as the rule rather than the exception, sanctioning predatory Third World states as the alternative to 'conservative civilian elites with strong nationalist bents'.⁴⁴

The Vietnam War (early 1960s to 1975) came to symbolise global inequality. Just as terrorism of the 21st century is often identified as a product of poverty, so communism and/or national liberation struggles were identified with underdevelopment. (It is instructive to note that, in both cases, structural issues about capitalism itself were never understood as causal factors.) Between 1974 and 1980 national liberation forces came to power in 14 different Third World states, perhaps inspired by the Vietnamese resistance. The possibility of a united South presented itself in two forms in this decade: first, through the formation of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), representing the possibility of Third World control over strategic commodities like oil. Second, with the 1974 proposal to the UN General Assembly by the G-77 for a New International Economic Order (NIEO).⁴⁵ The NIEO proposal demanded reform of the world economic system to improve the position of Third World states in international trade and their access to technological and financial resources. It operationalised the dependency perspective, namely, that First-Third World structural relations compromised the Third World's path of development.

Perceived as 'the revolt of the Third World', the NIEO was indeed the culmination of collectivist politics growing out of the Non-Aligned Movement. But it was arguably a movement for reform at best and, at worst, an intensification of the development project insofar as it called for Northern concessions, geared to increasing external revenues available to Third World elites, strengthening the sovereignty of the rentier state. Its initiators were the presidents of Algeria, Iran, Mexico and Venezuela—all oil-producing nations distinguished by their recently acquired huge oil rents.⁴⁶ Although much of the wealth was oil money, recycled through bank lending to the Third World, it nevertheless met the demands of Third World elites for development financing, including conspicuous construction and consumption (in addition to financing costly fuel imports and military hardware, accounting for about one-fifth of Third World borrowing). Much of this money concentrated in the middle-income states, undercutting Third World political unity, and subsidising military subjugation of citizens. In the short term Third World unity fragmented as the prospering OPEC states and the newly industrialising countries (NICs) pursued upward mobility in the international order. In the long term the redistributive

goals of the NIEO (which were never implemented) were overtaken by the new doctrine of monetarism that ushered in the 1980s debt crisis through drastic restrictions on credit and, therefore, on social spending by governments.⁴⁷

Managing the debt crisis: co-ordinating the technologies of financial discipline

The management of the debt crisis introduced what is euphemistically called 'global governance', which subjects individual debtor state policies to co-ordinated, rule-based procedures strengthening the grip of the international financial institutions (IMF and World Bank). Structural adjustment policies evolved, requiring a comprehensive restructuring of economic priorities and government programmes in order to qualify for new lines of credit. Opening economies, imposing austerity and mandating privatisation became a common formula applied (with some variation, and considerable resistance) across the indebted Third World. The debt managers drew on the Chilean model of the 1970s, where a military junta experimented with monetarist policies (backed up by military force), slashing social expenditures in order to reduce debt. Alluding to the particular biopolitical consequences of the debt regime, in 1989 the Executive Director of UNICEF, James P Grant, observed:

Today, the heaviest burden of a decade of frenzied borrowing is falling not on the military or on those with foreign bank accounts or on those who conceived the years of waste, but on the poor who are having to do without necessities, on the unemployed who are seeing the erosion of all that they have worked for, on the women who do not have enough food to maintain their health, on the infants whose minds and bodies are not growing properly because of untreated illnesses and malnutrition, and on the children who are being denied their only opportunity to go to school ... it is hardly too brutal an oversimplification to say that the rich got the loans and the poor got the debts.⁴⁸

The debt regime divided and ruled the Third World through an impoverishing reversal of development policy, while it also built a new discipline into states. States were brought under direct financial surveillance by the international financial institutions, and given little room to manoeuvre in formulating policies basically geared to ensuring debt collection. Within states, reduction of currency values, wages and development subsidies undermined living standards, and privatisation compromised state capacity to honour the developmentalist social contract. Third World Network director Martin Khor characterised structural adjustment as 'a mechanism to shift the burden of economic mismanagement and financial mismanagement from the North to the South, and from the Southern elites to the Southern communities and people. Structural adjustment is also a policy to continue colonial trade and economic patterns developed during the colonial period, but which the Northern powers want to continue in the post-colonial period.'⁴⁹ Arguably economic and financial mismanagement is the phenomenal form of periodic, *market-induced* financial crises visited upon the global South (most recently East Asia and Argentina), externalising the problem of overproduction of fictitious capital via financial markets that victimise states low in the global currency hierarchy.⁵⁰

What is today termed ‘globalisation’ is in fact a form of hegemonic crisis management. It stems from the collapse of the Bretton Woods regime of capital controls and fixed currency exchanges and includes the subsequent rupture of the social contract. An unregulated global money market (facilitating arbitrage and raising the opportunity cost of fixed capital) accompanied by currency floats, encouraged ‘financialisation’: an investor preference for liquid rather than fixed capital. Bank deregulation and a proliferation of financial instruments, creating new money out of expected future income, encouraged securitisation and tradeable debt. With the financial liberalisation required by evolving conditions of debt management, destabilising money flows associated with currency speculation characterise the global financial landscape. Currency stability under these conditions depends on speculators’ ongoing evaluation of national economic policies, effectively subordinating all states’ policies to market rationality (including liberalisation) to stabilise national currencies.⁵¹ As crisis management, then, ‘globalisation’ involves a structural (financial) imperative to conform to market relations, and to the political project of market rule (via the IMF, WTO), which, through financial liberalisation, allows the USA to extract financial capital from the rest of the world, *and* transmits/exports financial crises to states with weaker currencies.⁵²

The politics of debt

At the turn of the 21st century, the politics of debt has assumed a new form. As IMF conditionality has evolved, stripping away social protections, so have the forms of resistance. During the 1980s ‘IMF riots’ swept across the Third World, focusing on the withdrawal of public subsidies, and blaming IMF-enforced conditionalities. Urban populations in Latin America, Eastern Europe and Africa targeted policies that eroded social supports, with food subsidies as the characteristic flashpoint. The politics of a diminishing social contract governed this action. As the 1990s proceeded privatisation came to define the IMF’s ‘second-generation structural adjustment’ (linking credit to ‘good governance’), as loan repayment conditions deepened their hold on debtor states. In Indonesia, where living standards plummeted with the loss of three-quarters of the value of the rupiah, resulting from the Asian financial crisis of 1997 (and exacerbated by the IMF response), 80% of privatisation contracts went to President Suharto’s cronies. The political response here was a mass movement for democracy, replacing Suharto’s military regime with a parliamentary regime, but not essentially disturbing the course of privatisation.⁵³

Several thresholds have come to define periods of world ordering. The Indonesian coup in 1965 underlined, geopolitically, the principle of the freedom of corporate enterprise within the US cold war empire. This was followed by the 1973 coup in Chile that implemented, with force, drastic social reversals via economic liberalisation before it became a global strategy. Covert intervention in Nicaragua throughout the 1980s suppressed resistance to imperial policies in Central and South America. Implementation of NAFTA was accompanied, in 1994, by militarisation of Chiapas to neutralise opposition to implementation of new rules of a global property regime (anticipating the WTO regime). And rolling

market-induced financial crises, from Mexico to Asia, to Russia and on to Brazil and Argentina, exerted financial discipline over various forms of ‘fast-track capitalism’ at the expense of the working poor and their activist representatives.⁵⁴

Sovereignty crises, with growing public incapacity in the global South, lead inevitably to the forceful centralisation of power, and the tightening of bio-political controls, pushing the development project to its limit. Arundhati Roy observes this process at work in India, and calls it by name:

Fascism is about the slow, steady infiltration of all the instruments of state power. It’s about the slow erosion of civil liberties, about unspectacular, day-to-day injustices ... Fascism has come to India after the dreams that fueled the freedom struggle have been frittered away like so much loose change ... Over the past fifty years ordinary citizens’ modest hopes for lives of dignity, security and relief from abject poverty have been systematically snuffed out. Every ‘democratic’ institution in this country has shown itself to be unaccountable, inaccessible to the ordinary citizen and either unwilling or incapable of acting in the interests of genuine social justice. And now corporate globalization is being relentlessly and arbitrarily imposed on India, ripping it apart culturally and economically ... There is very real grievance here. The fascists didn’t create it. But they have seized upon it, upturned it and forged from it a hideous, bogus sense of pride. They have mobilized human beings using the lowest common denominator—religion. People who have lost control over their lives, people who have been uprooted from their homes and communities, who have lost their culture and their language, are being made to feel proud of something.⁵⁵

We could never have put it so well. But what we lack in concise eloquence, we can make up for in plodding explanation. This fascist political resolution lies low, prowling, as a real practice in the very idea of development, in the very idea of capitalism, particularly that kind of capitalism nurtured by the state, indeed premised on the state’s sovereignty. Yet it is neither inevitable, nor invincible. We turn now to examine trends in the resistance to this kind of developmental state, and to this kind of sovereignty.

Resistance today: global justice movements

A defining feature of contemporary global justice movements is the reformulation of ‘sovereignty’. Movements attempt to appropriate sovereignty where it has been debased in the state—expressing the dialectic of modernity, which at once celebrated the progressive Enlightenment principle of self-organisation but contained it through the device of state sovereignty.⁵⁶ Historically political sovereignty was constructed as a relationship of power, channelling citizen and subject sovereignties through the state. The bankrupting of political sovereignty, through development and its intensified complicity with capital via neoliberal mechanisms, amplifies movements for alternative sovereignties.

Countering the centralising thrust of development and/or authoritarian politics, global justice movements promote decentralised conceptions of politics governed by locality (place) and/or situated identity (where relations of class, gender, race, ethnicity, environmental stewardship are specified world-

historically—in networks, diasporas and movements). Contrary to the universalist conception of sovereignty governing the modern states system, these alternative forms of sovereignty express the particulars of locality/class/identity-based relations. They transcend corporate globalisation, which reveals, through its capture of the state, the world market to be a political construction—an ‘empire of civil society’.⁵⁷

The unclenching of the ‘empire of civil society’ marks the transition from the citizen-state to the market-state, as national sovereignty yields to the sovereignty of monetary relations, beginning with the debt regime. The devastating devaluation of southern economies and societies, imposed by the multilateral agencies on behalf of finance capital, exposed not only the growing ‘autonomy’ of global economic relations, but also the structural and institutionalised *necessity* of state sponsorship of these relations, thereby exposing the complicity of the state with capital.⁵⁸

The legitimacy problem is underlined by, among other trends, a growing rebellion against neoliberalism across Latin America (significant regime shifts in Brazil, Venezuela, Ecuador, for example), as well as the emergence, in 2001, of the World Social Forum (WSF), as a counter-summit, in Porto Alegre, stronghold of the Brazilian Workers’ Party. While the WSF slogan is ‘another world is possible’, it celebrates difference, viewing itself as a process, not an organisation. Its Charter of Principles declares that it is a body ‘representing world civil society’, and that it is not a ‘locus of power’ as such, rather it is a plural, diversified *context* that ‘in a decentralized fashion, interrelates organizations and movements engaged in concrete action at levels from the local to the international to build another world ... [and] encourages its participant organizations and movements to situate their actions as issues of planetary citizenship.’⁵⁹

The global justice movement is so called because of its characteristic cosmopolitan activism, located in its constituents’ ‘focus on virtually identical opponents: the agencies and representatives of neoliberal capitalism—global, regional, national and local’. The *Zapatista* resistance to the Mexican state’s complicity in NAFTA articulated such world-historical conditions of a regional struggle, notably in the 1994 communiqué: ‘When we rose up against a national government, we found that it did not exist. In reality we were up against great financial capital, against speculation and investment, which makes all decisions in Mexico, as well as in Europe, Asia, Africa, Oceania, the Americas—everywhere.’ *Zapatista* politics are not about civic inclusion of a marginalised people *per se*, but about redefining citizenship, expressed in the call for ‘A political dynamic not interested in taking political power but in building a democracy where those who govern, govern by obeying’.⁶⁰

Contemporary resistances to the international food order exemplify the new politics of justice—countering globalist conceptions of food security, which are premised on managed dumping of Northern agricultural surpluses that undermine peasant farming, and where free markets exclude and/or starve populations dispossessed by their implementation.⁶¹ *Vía Campesina* organises around an alternative conception of food sovereignty. This means not just protecting local farming, but revitalising democratic-collective, cultural and ecological processes at the sub-national level. The several-million strong *Vía Campesina*, formed in

1992, unites local and regional chapters of landless peasants, family farmers, agricultural workers, rural women and indigenous communities across Africa, Europe, Asia and North, Central and South America. It claims that: 'biodiversity has as a fundamental base the recognition of human diversity, the acceptance that we are different and that every people and each individual has the freedom to think and to be. Seen in this way, biodiversity is not only flora, fauna, earth, water and ecosystems; it is also cultures, systems of production, human and economic relations, forms of government; in essence it is freedom.'

Food sovereignty, in this vision, is 'the right of peoples, communities and countries to define their own agricultural, labour, fishing, food and land policies which are ecologically, socially, economically and culturally appropriate to their unique circumstances'.⁶² Central to this conception of rights is the understanding of a right as something whose content is not necessarily preordained by the state. In fact, *Via Campesina's* conception of a right here is one that is explicitly without content—the right is a right to self-determination, for communities to redefine for themselves the substance of the food relations appropriate to their geographies. This is a contradictory understanding of rights—where the state remains a guarantor of the rights, but where it plays no role in the authorship of these rights. In fact, the *Via Campesina* call for policy formulation runs explicitly counter to the state: since the state has been captured by capital, the rights of small farmers, and the ability of small farmers to influence state policy (despite their numerical superiority *vis-à-vis* large farmers) has been abrogated. This violation of rights has resulted simultaneously both in a disillusionment with the state's ability to represent its constituents to international capital, and in a recognition of the power of the state to impose dicta from international capital. Also important is the 'queering' of the attribution of rights. Rights here are not ascribed exclusively to humans, but to 'peoples, communities, and countries'. This challenges deeply the notion that rights are only justiciable for individual bodies and, therefore, challenges the forms of biopolitics based on this individuating assumption.

Perhaps the most significant chapter of *Via Campesina* is the Brazilian landless workers' movement, the *Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra* (MST). In the past 17 years, the MST has settled over 400 000 families on 15 million acres of land seized from unproductive use. The stimulus has been a Brazilian development model of structural adjustment, in a context where 1% of landowners own (but do not necessarily cultivate) 50% of the land, leaving 4.8 million families landless. Between 1985 and 1996 rural unemployment rose by five-and-a-half million, and between 1995 and 1999 a rural exodus of four million Brazilians occurred.⁶³

The landless workers' movement draws legitimacy for its land occupations from the Brazilian constitution's sanctioning of the confiscation of uncultivated private property: 'It is incumbent upon the Republic to expropriate for social interest, for purposes of agrarian reform, rural property, which is not performing its social function'.⁶⁴ Land seizures, under the slogan of 'Occupy! Resist! Produce!' lead to the formation of co-operatives, which involve social mobilisation 'transforming the economic struggle into a political and ideological struggle'.⁶⁵ Democratic decision making is practised to develop co-operative

relations among workers, and alternative patterns of land use, financed by socialising a portion of settlement income, used for participatory budgeting to cover social and technical needs. The MST has pioneered the production of staple foodstuffs for the Brazilian population at large (with a formal outlet through the national Zero Hunger programme), filling a significant gap left by agro-export priorities. Most recently, the MST has ranged itself against corporate sovereignty. In a declaration (19 May 2003) the MST declared that fields planted with transgenic crops by large farmers would be burned.

On a global scale perhaps the distinguishing mark of this emergent global justice movement is its commitment to building solidarity out of a respect for diversity. The WSF is a springboard for constructing enduring networks of relationships among diverse civic and cultural initiatives, to forge an alternative organisational and discursive space to that occupied by corporate globalisation. Previous anti-systemic social movements worked to reform or institutionalise countervailing power within institutions or societies. While this has been an indispensable part of giving substance to modernity, it has privileged the universalist themes of modernity—which of course crystallised in the statist project of development, and which are now the target of a new sensibility that challenges this singular, reductionist vision of development. This is not to say that the global justice movement should not work to reform or transform existing institutions, but it has the historic opportunity to do this by drawing on, and supporting, alternative models that are not paralysed by the logic of economic reductionism and proto-fascist rationality.⁶⁶

Conclusion: Third Worldism and the lineages of global fascism

At the World Trade Organization talks in Cancun in 2003, a new political grouping in the Global South, the G20 + , was made. As with its predecessors, the G20 is a group dependent on the support of large Third World governments (Brazil, India, China). It emerged in a political space created by tense EU–US relations over trade in agriculture. It is, as with its predecessors, a tentative expression of the dialectics of power in the state system. The targeting and erosion of the G20 by the USA in the weeks since its birth confirm the arguments in this paper. The state sovereignty upon which Third Worldism was founded was always fragile and fractured by international capital. We have offered an explanation of why this has been so, and why contemporary social movements find alternative forms of sovereignty so attractive. The biopolitical proto-fascism of development has always been immanent. Extreme hegemonic crises bring these tendencies in capitalism to the surface. We suggest that they were just as ‘fascist’ in their 19th and 20th century instantiations in the Third World as they were in their more recognisable early-to-mid 20th century European forms. Moreover, we see similar trends arising today in the configuration of state forces, not only in the USA but also in the global South. Fascism deserves to be unmoored from its historical European home; its technologies of control, its ideology, its body count, and even its concentration camps precede its orthodox recognition in European fascism. And, as Guantanamo Bay suggests to us today, the fascist threat is alive and well, for all

people, citizens of the USA no less than those in the global South, especially insofar as empire is accomplished through the mobilisation of ever-decreasing rights for domestic citizens.

Global justice movements have responded to the crises of development and an array of neoliberal projects by detaching ideas of sovereignty from the state and from its attempted (nationalist) monopoly on biopolitics. Through an explicit encouragement of alternative forms of anti-colonial sovereignty, these movements, we have argued, inherit the promise of Third Worldism, a genuine alternative, now, to a form of imperialism spearheaded by the USA and mimicked with alarming precision by nation-states across the globe. Fanon called for the Third World to ‘not want to catch up with anyone. What we want to do is to go forward all the time, night and day in the company of Man, in the company of all Men ... It is a question of the Third World starting a new history of Man.’⁶⁷ Today, to paraphrase Richard Wright, where citizens are despised, insulted, hurt, and dispossessed by Third World states, social movements are fostering resistance to capital as a nexus of social relations on a global scale, not through specious ideas about the nation, but through far more complex, and uncertain, ideas of local sovereignty. These initiatives practice ‘politics without guarantees’.⁶⁸ In world-historical terms, there is no paradox in such initiatives, in that they are a genuine and hopeful alternative to the contemporary totalitarianism surrounding us again.

Notes

The authors thank Mark Berger and Dia Mohan for invaluable suggestions on earlier drafts of this article.

¹ Richard Wright, *The Color Curtain: a Report on the Bandung Conference*, New York: World Publishing Company, 1956, p 12.

² PA Gourevitch, *Politics in Hard Times: Comparative Responses to International Economic Crises*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1986, p 25.

³ We should say at the outset that our critique is directed at a particular vision of state nationalism and national statism that, while clear and vehement in its rejection of US- and Soviet-sponsored visions of development, was grounded in a variety of programmes of national development co-ordinated and managed by elites. Clearly, we do not seek to indict anti-colonial struggle—rather, we suggest that it continues to be necessary.

⁴ We note that, while Third Worldism came to be elite managed, its origins were in historic, spontaneous mass movements. The historiography of this phenomenon demands abstraction and an observation of continuities across time. These continuities are not, however, intended to provide any sort of claim about the ultimate permanence or inevitability of any phenomenon, but rather an orthogonal and reorientating framework through which to recast our current understanding of, in this case, Third Worldism. We note, in passing, that the state, though a central feature of our analysis, is not the only locus of power in international political economy. The power of corporations, the media (both domestic and international/imperial), local ‘traditional structures of power’, the family, prisons, schools and the military is also important.

⁵ See, for example, S George, *A Fate Worse than Debt*, New York: Grove Press, 1988; G Arrighi, ‘The developmentalist illusion: a reconceptualization of the semiperiphery’, in WG Martin (ed), *Semiperipheral States in the World Economy*, Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1990, pp 11–42; and A Escobar, *Encountering Development: The Making and Unmaking of the Third World*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995.

⁶ See WL Adamson, ‘Gramsci’s interpretation of fascism’, *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 41 (4), 1980, pp 615–633; RO Paxton, ‘The five stages of fascism’, *Journal of Modern History*, 70 (1), 1998, pp 1–23; and D Renton, *Fascism: Theory and Practice*, London: Pluto Press, 1999.

⁷ Gourevitch, *Politics in Hard Times*, p 25.

- ⁸ K McRobbie & K Polanyi-Levitt (eds), *Karl Polanyi in Vienna: The Contemporary Significance of The Great Transformation*, Montreal: Black Rose, 2000.
- ⁹ P Gilroy, *Against Race: Imagining Political Culture Beyond the Color Line*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000.
- ¹⁰ 'Liberal definitions of fascism adopt the approach of ticking off items from an already printed menu and seeing if they match. But many social-democratic and most Marxist definitions grew out of the actual experience ... deriving from the overall dynamics of capitalist societies. Fascism was a weapon of last resort, used by a ruling class faced simultaneously with an economic crisis and the threat of a revolutionary labour movement.' T Ali, *The Clash of Fundamentalisms. Crusades, Jihads and Modernity*, London: Verso, 2002; and Gilroy, *Against Race*, p 86.
- ¹¹ Mike Davis, *Late Victorian Holocausts: El Niño Famines and The Making of the Third World*, London: Verso, 2001.
- ¹² Davis was not the first to unmoor ideas normally associated with the Shoah. See, for example, DE Stannard, *American Holocaust: The Conquest of the New World*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1992.
- ¹³ Robert Kaplan, writing on technologies of control in the American Empire, demonstrates these relations well through the following approving quotation: 'RULE NO 9 FIGHT ON EVERY FRONT'. R Kaplan, 'Supremacy by stealth', *Atlantic Monthly*, July–August 2003, p 65. In their recent article 'An emerging synthesis for a new way of war', published in the *Georgetown Journal of International Affairs*, Air Force Colonels James Callard and Peter Faber describe what they call 'combination warfare'—a concept derived from a 1999 Chinese text by two colonels in the People's Liberation Army, Qiao Liang and Wang Xiangsui. In the 21st century a single conflict may include not only traditional military activity but also financial warfare, trade warfare, resource warfare, legal warfare, and so on. The authors explain that it may eventually involve even ecological warfare (the manipulation of the heretofore 'natural' world, altering the climate). Because combination warfare draws on all spheres of human activity, it is the ultimate in total war. It 'seeks to overwhelm others by assaulting them in as many domains ... as possible', Callard and Faber write. 'It creates sustained, and possibly shifting, pressure that is hard to anticipate ... Combination warfare has already begun, though it has yet to be codified in military doctrine. The most important front, in a way, may be the media. Like the priests of ancient Egypt, the rhetoricians of ancient Greece and Rome, and the theologians of medieval Europe, the media constitute a burgeoning class of bright and ambitious people whose social and economic stature can have the effect of undermining political authority.'
- ¹⁴ MP Cowen & RW Shenton, *Doctrines of Development*, London: Routledge, 1996.
- ¹⁵ This is a linguistic and biopolitical tactic that is alive and well, for example in the Indian government's Ministry of Scheduled Castes and Backward Classes.
- ¹⁶ T Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988, pp 68–75, 96.
- ¹⁷ See, for example, CLR James, *The Black Jacobins. Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution*, New York: Vintage Books, 1963.
- ¹⁸ P Chatterjee, *The Nation and its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993. We are grateful to Dia Mohan for pointing out the ambiguous role of Third World elites.
- ¹⁹ RL Heilbroner, *Behind the Veil of Economics: Essays in the Worldly Philosophy*, New York: Norton, 1988; and MP Cowan & RW Shenton, *The Invention of Development. The Power of Development*, London: Routledge, 1995, ch 1.
- ²⁰ Indeed, a great deal of Comte's energy was directed towards reducing the influence of Catholicism in French society, in order that French society eventually arrive at the end of history. Gronemeyer reminds us that 'every epoch pervaded with a belief in progress has needed ... the tendency [to] conceive [of the present] as the penultimate stage in history, to fancy itself as a kind of positive final time in which only the last breakthrough remains before the harvest of history can be gathered into humanity's granary.' M Gronemeyer, 'Helping', in W Sachs (ed), *The Development Dictionary: A Guide to Knowledge and Power*, London: Zed Books, 1990, pp 53–69. This is no less true of post-revolutionary France as of millennial Europe and North America, as Francis Fukuyama's current popularity attests.
- ²¹ Cowan & Shenton, *Doctrines of Development*, p 40.
- ²² F List, *National System of Political Economy*, Philadelphia, PA: JB Lippincott & Co, 1856; A Gershenkron, *Economic Backwardness in Historical Perspective*, New York: Frederick Praeger, 1965; R Hilferding, *Finance Capital: A Study of the Latest Phase of Capitalist Development*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1985; and CL Dokmo & L Reed, 'Development and poverty in a global age—building blocks—microfinance and entrepreneurship in the developing world', *Harvard International Review*, 21 (1), 1998, pp 66–68.
- ²³ N Karagiannis, 'Giving development. responsibility and efficiency in the European development discourse towards the ACP countries (1970s–1990s)', unpublished PhD thesis, Political Science, European University, Florence, 2002.

- ²⁴ P Gilroy, *Against Race*, p 196.
- ²⁵ M Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, New York: Vintage Books, 1980, p 142.
- ²⁶ EP Thompson, 'Time, work-discipline, and industrial capitalism', in Thompson, *Customs in Common*, London: Merlin, 1991, pp 352–403; AL Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault's History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things*, Durham, SC: Duke University Press, 1995; and P McFadden, 'Women workers in South Africa', *Journal of African Marxists*, 4, 1983, pp 54–62.
- ²⁷ M Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996.
- ²⁸ G Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998.
- ²⁹ F Block, 'Introduction', in K Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*, Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2001, p 5.
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