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# TRANSVERSAL RESISTANCE AND POWER:
# AN INTERPRETATION OF THE WORLD SOCIAL FORUM

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วาระการพัฒนาโลกซึ่งประกอบด้วยนโยบายเสรีนิยมใหม่ และลัทธินิยมโลก นำมาซึ่งความสมดุลย์ตั้งแต่ตอนปลายสงครามเย็นที่คงไว้อย่างถาวร อีกทั้งยังได้รับการส่งเสริมจากหลากหลายสถาบัน อันได้แก่ ธนาคารโลก องค์การค้าโลก และกองทุนการเงินระหว่างประเทศ อย่างไรก็ดี วาระการพัฒนาโลกมิได้จำกัดแต่เพียงแค่สถาบันเหล่านี้เท่านั้น หากแต่ยังค่อนข้างที่จะอยู่ต่างขั้วและเป็นเรื่องชีวการเมือง ซึ่งได้เผยผ่านภายใต้กรอบการวิเคราะห์ที่ว่า วาระการพัฒนาโลกถูกกำหนดและคงไว้โดยสถาบันที่ถูกก่อตั้งขึ้นในอดีต บรรทัดฐาน ประเภท และหลักฐาน ที่ประเทศทางเหนือมีบทบาทในการดำรงให้อยู่อย่างถาวร โดยเฉพาะอย่างยิ่ง ประเทศสหรัฐอเมริกา ในการขานรับวาระการพัฒนาโลก ความเคลื่อนไหวของสังคมโลกใหม่ที่กำลังต้านทานต่อความเชื่ออย่างเป็นเอกพันธ์ของลัทธินายทุนและนโยบายเสรีนิยมใหม่ การพัฒนาและความชัดเจนของตรรกะใหม่ภายใต้ความหมายที่กำลังเปลี่ยนแปลงเงื่อนไขและประเภทของวาระการพัฒนาโลก การต้านทานดังกล่าวนี้มีลักษณะที่ข้ามกรอบเกณฑ์ เพราะได้ข้ามขอบเขตของรัฐชาติ อีกทั้งยังได้ตั้งคำถามต่อตรรกะผ่านขอบเขตเหล่านี้อันเป็นสิ่งที่ตั้งกรอบการเมืองระหว่างประเทศ

คำถามในการศึกษาวิจัยของวิทยานิพนธ์ฉบับนี้คือ การต่อต้านอย่างพ้นกรอบเกณฑ์ดังกล่าวได้ท้าทายวาระการพัฒนาโลกอย่างไร โดยอาศัยการวิจัยเชิงคุณภาพและการตีความในแบบหลังโครงสร้างนิยมของอำนาจและการคัดค้าน วิทยานิพนธ์ฉบับนี้ได้ศึกษาความสามารถที่เปลี่ยนรูปของการต่อต้านโดยอาศัยการเนื้อเรื่องกระแสหลัก (ทฤษฎีคัดค้านต่างขั้วของโรแลนด์ ไบลเคอร์ และ ชีวอำนาจของมิ-เชล ฟูโกต์) บนฐานของการพิจารณาสภาสังคมโลก (WSF) ในด้านการต้านทานที่มีลักษณะข้ามกรอบเกณฑ์ วิทยานิพนธ์ฉบับนี้ได้เพ่งพิจารณาไปที่การเปลี่ยนแปลงอย่างมีศักยภาพใน 3 ด้านอันได้แก่ มิติของ 'ชีวิตประจำวัน' พื้นที่ และ อัตลักษณ์



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## *4781186124*: MAJOR: INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STUDIES
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The global development agenda, encompassing neo-liberal policy convergence and global capitalism, has gained momentum since the end of the Cold War and has been perpetuated and upheld by the multilateral institutions of the World Bank, World Trade Organisation and International Monetary Fund. The global development agenda is not limited to these institutions, however, and is rather transversal and biopolitical, which is revealed through an analysis of how the global development agenda is regulated and maintained by historically constituted institutions, norms, categories and identities that are perpetuated by countries in the North, particularly the United States.

In response to the global development agenda, new social movements are resisting the homogenising thrust of global capitalism and neo-liberal policy, and developing and articulating new logics of meaning that are challenging the terms and categories of the global development agenda. This resistance is transversal, because it transgresses national boundaries and questions the very logic through which these boundaries frame international politics.

The research question of this paper is: How does transversal resistance challenge the global development agenda? Using qualitative methodology and post-structuralist interpretations of power and dissent, this paper explores the transformative capacity of transversal resistance in regards to dominant narratives. Using the World Social Forum (WSF) as a site of transversal resistance, the paper focuses on three sites of potential transformation: The realm of 'dailiness'; spaces; and identity.

The research reveals that values and norms play an important role in perpetuating dominant power, and that the WSF is a unique form of politics that challenges the terms and categories of the global development agenda and demonstrates the capacity to destabilise these dominant terms and categories. It does this via the creation of new logics of meaning and practice, by providing a platform for new forms of communication and collaboration, and by contributing to a process of reconstituting and transforming identities.



Field of study International Development Studies Student's signature Rochelle Jones

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# CHAPTER I

# INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background

The 'global development agenda', for the purposes of this paper, refers to processes of globalisation since the end of the Cold War, and specifically, neoliberal policy and global capitalism, which have gained momentum since the end of the Cold War and have been perpetuated and upheld by the multilateral institutions of the World Bank, World Trade Organisation and International Monetary Fund. The global development agenda is not limited to the multilateral institutions, however, and is rather transversal and biopolitical, which is revealed through an analysis of how it is regulated and maintained by historically constituted institutions, norms, categories and identities that are perpetuated by countries in the North, particularly the United States.

In response to the global development agenda, new social movements are resisting the homogenising thrust of global capitalism and neo-liberal policy, and developing and articulating new logics of meaning that are transforming the terms and categories of the global development agenda. The focus in this paper is on the World Social Forum (WSF) as a manifestation of the type of global dissent we have witnessed from the new social movements. The World Social Forum is an annual event held in parallel to the World Economic Forum, and attracted over 100,000 activists, non-government organisations, intellectuals and other concerned individuals and groups to the last forum held in January 2005. With the theme "another world is possible", it acts as a platform from which ideas can be shared and discussed regarding the facilitation of 'another world' in opposition and resistance to dominant neo-liberal policy and descending power from the North. It also represents the existence of a new, transversal political space within which non-traditional forms of power are operating. The WSF is an interesting locus of concern when analysing the new social movements because it is both a *product* of resistance against hegemonic forces, and a *mechanism* for resistance.

Rather than analysing the global development agenda and resistance through the lens

of the international; domestic; and individual, I prefer to use David Campbell's concept of "transversal" (cited in Bleiker, 2000:2) that goes beyond the representation of the "borders that are currently being questioned...[and] draw[s] attention to the multiple and multi-layered interactions that make up contemporary life" (Bleiker, 2000:2-3). Furthermore, in identifying the transversal and nature of global society, a focus on structure becomes less predominant, and the role of discourse becomes more obvious because it "encapsulates not only the structural terrains of rules and norms, but also a variety of other aspects such as language and culture, that interfere with the mutually constituted and transversal production of power and knowledge" (Bleiker, 2000:12). A discursive approach to the discourse(s) of the global development agenda investigates how social dynamics within it have been infused with meaning over time and how the process of rendering these social dynamics rational delineates the boundaries of their norms and categories.

These ideas are particularly relevant to the new social movements because of the density of relationships representing much more than the interests of an international system predicated on the concept of the state as the most powerful actor. The production of power and knowledge is not limited to the desires of individual states, rather it is constituted in an environment comprising a network of actors and discourses utilising various forms of agency. These actors include those that transgress the boundaries of states, such as international NGOs, as well as the wider social movements that exert influence over the ordering of national and global priorities and interests, and that are independent from and often directly opposed to state interests.

Terence O'Brien (2002), for example, has suggested that global reform will in fact be driven "by the embracing of social movements such as those concerned with the environment, women's rights and peace that now challenge states and international agencies". O'Brien argues that these movements have access to and membership in, diverse communities of "co-operative non-government behaviour" (2002: no page no.). Bleiker (2000:281) has described the transversal dissent practiced by these movements as a process that enters the social context in the form of a 'trace element'... engender[ing] human agency through a multilayered and diffused process, through a gradual transformation of societal values". It is the notion of 'transversal'

resistance that forms the basis of my analysis of the WSF and how they are challenging the global development agenda.

### 1.2 Principal research question

**Research question:**

*How does transversal resistance challenge the global development agenda?*

This paper is an analysis of power as it is used and exercised by and within the WSF. I will argue that the WSF is an example of transversal resistance against the dominant, discursive power of the global development agenda, and that the type of power exercised by the WSF challenges discursive domination.

**Objectives:**

1. Analyse power and resistance as exercised by and within the WSF;
2. Describe the nature of transversal resistance as manifested in the WSF; and
3. Discuss the transformative capacity of transversal resistance within the WSF.

**Hypothesis:**

The main problematic regarding resistance to the global development agenda, is that there is a perception that dissent, of which the WSF is one example, only gains a significant level of legitimacy when it produces an end-point or generates indicators of success that can be measured against the successes of the dominant power. This is illusory, however, because transformation cannot always be objectified and measured in a positivist sense – it is rather a process of becoming that has no end.

My hypothesis then, is that power as exercised by and within the WSF, lies in the pluralistic and fragmented subjectivities of the people that constitute the WSF, and the unique forms of mobilising and communicating that are taking place within the WSF. These unique characteristics of the WSF are able to transgress and manoeuvre back and forth between established norms of development and find weaknesses within the discourse of development, creating an opportunity to destabilise and deconstruct these

norms, while at the same time constructing new logics of meaning that are challenging the global development agenda in a process of becoming.

### 1.3 Relevance to development studies:

Social movements and civil disobedience have historically played a central role in political and social change. Contemporary anti-systemic movements are no different. This particular thesis finds its relevance in development studies because it is concerned with the increased empowerment of new social movements, as represented by the WSF, who are resisting global policy convergence. Neo-liberal economics – which spearheads the movement's motivation for resistance - has been a dominant force in development since the end of the Cold War, and has been fiercely resisted by an aggregate of localised social movements who find solidarity in the WSF. These social movements highlight the role of the West in the design and management of the 'development project' that has failed millions of people in terms of alleviating poverty and has in fact exacerbated the inequalities between the North and the South.

It is important to understand how power is operating at the level of the global development agenda, within transversal resistance and the spaces in between, in order to reveal the potential for a rejection of the global development agenda and a transformation of the concept of 'development' itself. This paper explores the power dynamics of the WSF as a site of transversal dissent, and focuses on its transformative capacity. This can have significant implications for development thinking, because it can help to explain the transformative potential of resistance against a dominant power force.



### 1.4 Analytical Framework

Analysing transversal resistance to dominant power inevitably requires an analysis of power within the global development agenda to expose how power is constructed and organised as a discursive system of domination. I suggest that power within the global development agenda is based on Foucault's concept of biopower, which is interpreted as "a form of power that regulates social life from its interior, following it, interpreting

it, absorbing it and rearticulating it" (Hardt & Negri, 2000: 24). In this sense, it is regulated and maintained by historically constituted institutions, norms, categories and identities that are perpetuated by countries in the North, particularly the United States. My analysis of the global development agenda is also based on Hardt & Negri's (2000) notion of 'Empire', which also uses biopower to explain how a new, supranational world power has been constituted.

Exposing omnipresent power structures, however, does not negate the existence of forms of resistance and popular dissent to a dominant system of power, which forms the dominant theoretical base of this paper. The notion of transversal resistance is based on Roland Bleiker's (2000) conceptualisation of 'transversal dissent' in his rereading of the East German revolution and the collapse of the Berlin Wall. My framework for analysing the nature of transversal dissent and how power is exercised by and within the WSF centres on the work of Bleiker and other post-structuralist theoretical frameworks on how power and resistance operates such as Foucault and interpretations of his work, and James Scott (1985 & 1990) and his work on domination and resistance. My discussions on the role of identity in the destabilisation of dominant norms is based on the work of William Connolly (2002) and some feminist analyses of identity by Judith Butler (1990) and Donna Haraway (1989).

### 1.5 Research methodology

**Type of study:** Inductive
**Methodology:** Qualitative
**Epistemological stance:** Post-structuralist

**Sources of information:**
This study uses *qualitative* methodology to answer the research question and meet the research objectives. In terms of information regarding the WSF, I will be undertaking a critical analysis of the available literature on the WSF, its formation, roles and actors, focusing on literature from both within as well as external to the WSF itself. This will involve analysing materials such as publications, campaigns and press-releases from

Non-Government Organisations, individuals, academia, mainstream and independent media, as well as documentation coming out of the WSF.

**Analysis:**

For the theoretical base of my paper, I will be analysing post-structuralist interpretations of power relations based on established theoretical frameworks of how power operates – specifically looking at the work of Michel Foucault (1978), Roland Bleiker (2000), and James C. Scott (1985 & 1990). In addition, I will be relying on secondary research regarding the nature of the global development agenda. Power within transversal resistance – as exemplified by the WSF - can be analysed specifically by analysing the power of the global development agenda, as each constitutes the other.

I will be focusing on three sites of transformation within the WSF:

- The realm of 'dailiness', which includes the daily activities, tactics and cultures emerging from the WSF;
- The 'spaces' of the WSF, which are both physical and conceptual and exist outside the realm of institutional control; and
- Identity – both individual and collective identity.

In terms of the transformative capacity of the WSF as a result of transversal resistance, I am focusing on the destabilisation of norms and categories. I will discuss in the context of each transformative site, how destabilisation of the norms and categories of the global development agenda is taking place. As outlined in my hypothesis, there is a perception that resistance only gains legitimacy when it produces an end-point or generates indicators of success that can be measured against the successes of the dominant power. This is not always the case, however, because transformative processes cannot always be objectified and measured in a positivist sense – they are rather a process of becoming that have no end. In order to fully understand this concept, I will be using the theoretical framework already discussed to show how there are sites of transformation that transcend the state, multilateral institutions and governance bodies.

# CHAPTER II

# THE GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT AGENDA AND POWER

## 2.1 Introduction

'Development' in all its different forms and manifestations since World War II has achieved at best, sporadic and isolated results. Increasingly, people all over the world are speaking out against 'development' as a whole, calling for not just participatory frameworks in the way development projects are developed and implemented, but new conceptualisations of the term 'development' in regards to what it means, who it is for and whether it is actually required or desired. 'Development' is a complex term, representing a practice, a discourse, a process and an outcome. Some people advocate it as a way forward, whereas others reject it as an agenda and purport alternatives.

It is impossible to define 'development' because it is not a one-way, linear force encompassing specific aims and processes. Increasing inequalities between the North and the South, however, reflecting the existence of a power asymmetry, have created a rising conviction from people around the world that development is largely an agenda and a discourse that has relegated countries of the South to the status of 'developing' or 'underdeveloped' in comparison to 'developed' countries of the North. This global development agenda can be traced back to the end of World War II with the establishment of the United Nations and the Bretton Woods institutions that have promoted a top-down approach to development in an attempt to bring countries in the South under the umbrella of the development agenda. Most recently, since the end of the Cold War, development has fallen under a system of free market capitalism, neo-liberal economics, and a reduced role for the state, which is what this chapter will discuss.

Commonly grouped under the phenomenon 'economic globalisation', this approach to 'development' has increasingly empowered the North and weakened whole populations in the South. The advent of 'globalisation' has on the one hand created the potential for enrichment of experience and culture through the sharing of information (Ranald, 2000) and the dissolution of territorial boundaries, but on the other hand has

resulted in threats to community cohesion caused by economic instability, social dislocation, health and cultural insecurity (UNDP Report, 1999). In the past decade and driven by market expansion, economic interdependence advocated by the countries of the North, has emerged as a major enemy of the new social movements that have emerged, (Ranald, 2000; Bello, 2001) as it provides the structural foundations for many of the inequalities we see between the North and the South.

There are many different actors working under the rubric of 'development', with the United Nations being key. The UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), for example, are supported by national governments and non-government organisations as being a benchmark to work towards on areas such as extreme poverty and hunger, education and gender equality. Unfortunately, there are contradictions between stated goals and the development policies promoted by national governments, predominately because the multilateral institutions obstruct policy sovereignty and push their own development agenda that undermines commitment to the UN MDGs (Focus on the Global South, 2003: 11).

Of course, this global development agenda cannot be realistically reduced to a binary opposition of an homogenous, top-down power bent on transforming an homogenous 'South'. It can, however, be directly related to a growing number of local, regional and global social movements who are speaking out against this agenda because of real problems that have been exacerbated or created by the current practices and procedures coming from the North, and from the international institutions that are led by the North. With such a global outpouring of dissent coming from these new social movements[1], it is possible to situate a development agenda within a framework that can be identified and thus analysed.

The first section of this chapter will define the global development agenda and reveal how it evolved by focusing on economic globalisation, or the 'globalisation project' in the post-Cold War era. I will outline how the policies and practices of the World Bank, World Trade Organisation (WTO) and International Monetary Fund (IMF) are the major actors in and proponents of the global development agenda, and I will argue

[1] I will discuss why these are 'new' social movements in Chapter 4.

how the UN Millennium Development Goals are subservient to this agenda, using the example of gender equality.

The second half of the chapter will then turn to how power operates within the global development agenda. Corroborating with some aspects of Hardt & Negri's concept of "Empire" (2000), I will show how the multilateral institutions, combined with the United States' (US) position as a political, economic and military hegemon, have fixed global power relations in an asymmetrical way, and normalised a development discourse that is supranational and self-regulating[2].

## 2.2 The Global Development Agenda

For the purposes of this paper, I am defining the global development agenda as global neo-liberal policy convergence and the spread of global capitalism. Globalisation has injected new complexities into development, and has changed the nature of hegemonic power, particularly with regard to militarism, global capitalism and neo-liberal economics. There are two definitions of the term globalisation that are workable within the context of this paper. Firstly, Keohane (2000:1) has defined it as "The shrinking distance on a world scale through the emergence and thickening of networks and connections – environmental, social and economic". Alternatively, or perhaps concurrently, Held & McGrew (2000: 3) have defined it as "a growing magnitude or intensity of global flows such that states become increasingly enmeshed in worldwide systems and networks of interaction".

Both of these definitions are important in that they refer to both an increase in global networks, and a shrinking of distance. The term "economic globalisation' reflects both the interdependencies of economies, as well as the increased complexity of these economic networks. This growing interrelationship is converging individual national economies towards a single global economy with universal rules based in neo-liberalism. The information and communication revolution is at the heart of policy

[2] It is important to note here that I am not suggesting that power exists simply as binary opposites, with a top-down, hegemonic power versus a bottom-up, homogenous force. In both cases, power is operating in a multidimensional, relational manner and is anything but linear – this will be explained later in the chapter. It is necessary, however, to first create the lines of defence on both 'sides' in order to establish the terrain(s) of dissent.

convergence (Keohane et al. 2000). Driven by a capitalist economy, the development of technologies such as fibre-optic cable has borne the "hyper-mobility" of money (Allen et al. 1995: 35) in the global financial system, and has resulted in the shrinking of economic space and facilitation of long-distance trade.

Neo-liberalism has been widely accepted in western civil society as both inevitable and desirable, and has been dubbed "... the most powerful force the world has known for ending poverty" (Latham, 2000: 48). Countries of the North have been opening up their economies to the international market and encouraging the countries in the South to do the same in order to 'modernise' their stagnant economies and promote growth. There is a dominance of market-based rules, resulting in the continued removal of trade barriers, the shrinking of government regulation and increased acceptance of corporate regulation and capitalism.

Whilst I could simply refer to the phenomenon as 'economic globalisation' or 'neo-liberal globalisation', I use the term 'global development agenda' for several reasons. Firstly, because 'development agenda' ties neo-liberal policy specifically and necessarily to the phenomenon of development and the countries of the South where neo-liberal policy is imposed, and also because the term 'agenda' implies a scheme or system of agreements and norms that have been constructed over time, rather than an ahistoric abstract concept such as 'globalisation'. Secondly I use the term 'global' to denote that this neo-liberal, capitalist agenda transcends the national and international, and is buttressed by other phenomena such as language and culture, which do not conform to state boundaries.

**(a) Formation of the agenda**

Whilst many analyses of development relate its beginnings to the post-World War II period of decolonisation and the establishment of the Bretton Woods institutions, it is more useful in this paper to focus on the formation of the global development agenda since the end of the Cold War. This is because the globalisation project, rather than the modernisation project, has constructed the current global development agenda that social movements are mobilising against. The sheer complexity of development since the end of World War II, encompassing shifting perspectives and evolving

technologies, makes it difficult to locate any particular agenda running through the currents from the end of WWII up to the present. For example, as Schuurman points out (2003: 1004), some of the paradigms, concepts and theories that have emerged in the post-World War II era include "modernisation, dependency, unequal exchange, basic needs, self-reliance, delinking, New International Economic Order, participation, empowerment and sustainable development". Any attempt to simplify decades of praxis within this era in one paper would be doing a disservice to its complexity and richness, hence for this paper, the timeline of the global agenda begins around the end of the Cold War[3].

The Bretton Woods trio of the World Bank, WTO and the IMF have acted as the major catalysts in the formation and momentum of neo-liberal policy convergence. Born from a 1944 meeting in Bretton Woods, these three organisations were developed to reconstruct the decimated European economies and markets after World War II, but evolved in the late 1980s as vehicles for neo-liberal policy, backed by the US after the end of the Cold War and the so-called 'victory' of capitalism. This period marked the beginning of the globalisation project where there was a shift from state-mediated national development towards an international framework for the global economy. Berger argues that the "end of Soviet imperium and the passing of the state-socialist model of development... were quickly and readily used to strengthen the case for the global applicability of neo-liberal economic policies..." (2004: 130). Quiggin also asserts that the current push for global neo-liberal policy convergence is based in the post-Cold War American conviction of superiority of their economic system (2001: 10).

Countries experiencing poor economic growth and balance of payments problems turn to the IMF and the World Bank, who are the gatekeepers to the international economic system and Western capital (Rajagopal, 2003: 95). The main function of the IMF is to provide loans to countries experiencing these types of problems so that "they can restore conditions for sustainable economic growth. The financial assistance provided by the IMF enables countries to rebuild their international reserves, stabilize their currencies, and continue paying for imports without having to impose trade

[3] Neo-liberal policy and the spread of global capitalism obviously do not have any particular starting point in linear time – but my analysis must have parameters.

restrictions or capital controls" (IMF, 2005). The IMF grants financial assistance to a country pending certain conditions for 'development' that are imposed by the World Bank in a framework based firmly in the western neo-liberal tradition. The World Bank's *Comprehensive Development Framework* (CDF) "advocates: a holistic long-term strategy; the country in the lead, both "owning" and directing the development agenda" (World Bank 2002). The World Bank purports that "the CDF principles [are] widely and explicitly accepted by the international community as a basis for achieving greater poverty reduction and sustainable development" (World Bank, 2002). What they fail to mention is that this "international community" consists only of the richest countries in the world. Technically a country can choose whether or not to adopt policies of liberalisation, but in truth the more affluent countries, and especially the United States, have rigged the game in their favour.

For example, decision-making processes within the IMF and the World Bank are based on a system of investment. The more a country 'contributes' to the organisation, the more voting power they have. For example, the US and Japan represent over 30% of voting, where most poorer countries hold between 0.5 – 3% of votes. This undemocratic system of decision-making results in countries of the North imposing neo-liberal policies on countries of the South because decisions are made based on a system of an 85% consensus. Since the US holds over 17% of the vote, they are able to veto any major lending decisions they don't like (Bello, 2002: 60). This power and knowledge imbalance extends a subtler arm also, with US citizenship being a requirement for the Presidency of the World Bank, and with headquarters located in Washington ensuring that a large majority of senior management are also US citizens (Berger, 2004: 154-55; Bello, 2002: 60). At least 80 percent of economists at the World Bank have been trained in the United Kingdom or the US (Berger, 2004: 154), meaning that the knowledge and discourse(s) within the World Bank and its policy-makers have been largely constituted in the North.

The tools of the CDF - called Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) and referring to the previously named Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) so widely criticised by NGO's and social movements - in reality ensure neo-liberal policy convergence among developing states that, once signed up, weaken the democratic power traditionally granted to a sovereign nation to direct its own policy. In theory, a

PRSP is supposed to be locally owned by governments, who identify the causes of and strategies for overcoming poverty via participatory frameworks at a local level. PRSPs, however, must be approved by the World Bank and the IMF, which leaves little room for ownership at the end of the day (Chavez Malaluan & Guttal, 2003: 6). Loans will simply not be approved unless the PRSP complies with the main tenets of neo-liberalism. For example, in a discussion paper to staff, management and board members of the World Bank, James Wolfensohn, the President of the World Bank, proposed the concept of the CDF at the end of 1999. He addressed many pertinent issues relating to development, but framed the paper and indeed the CDF itself around the importance of privatisation and private sector development. Wolfensohn described social welfare systems as a symptom of economic failure, and asserted that "...It is absolutely clear that domestic and foreign private investment is the key to economic growth and employment... There is a responsibility on governments to provide an appropriate climate for investment..." (Wolfensohn, 1999). Clearly then, given that rapid economic growth is the bastion of World Bank policy, unless a PRSP includes adjustment towards an 'appropriate climate for investment', it would be rejected by the Bank.

Bolivia is one example where the World Bank imposed neo-liberal policy at the expense of democracy. In 1999, the World Bank pressured the Bolivian government to privatise water companies as part of a structural adjustment program. No credit went to the public company that ran the water utilities, and a monopoly was given to Aguas del Tunari, a subsidiary of the US company Bechtel (Lopez Levy, 2001:16). Price hikes were immediate, and locals were forced to buy permits to be granted access to water. This culminated in massive protests in April 2000 where 80,000 people took to the streets, a state of martial law was declared, and President Banzer sent in the military. A seventeen year old boy was killed by his own government, with many more injured and as a result, the company made a rapid exit and the water contract was broken (Lopez Levy, 2001: 17). At the same time these protests were taking place, the World Bank and IMF published a press release on the success of the Bolivian Poverty Reduction Strategy and the support of a further $1.2 billion in debt relief. The press release reported that "Bolivia's eligibility for debt relief under the enhanced HIPC (Highly Indebted Poor Countries) Initiative is a recognition by the international community of its continued progress in implementing sound

macroeconomic and structural policies" (World Bank, 2001). These 'sound macroeconomic and structural policies' included privatisation of public assets, such as water. The same press release mentioned the importance of "a direct role for civil society in the monitoring of the expenditures of HIPC resources" (World Bank, 2001), which ironically played out in the form of mass demonstrations, illustrating the huge divide between World Bank policy and the people it affects.

A more recent example is highlighted by Focus on the Global South, an NGO who has identified several countries where World Bank and IMF policies have divided civil society and the government. In Nicaragua, the World Bank and IMF conditioned further loans on the privatisation of their water resources. This condition came "in the wake of legislation passed by the Nicaraguan National Assembly in August 2002, suspending all water privatisation plans until a national debate on the issue takes place." This clearly showed that "by insisting on such conditionality, the Fund [was] disregarding and undermining national democratic process in Nicaragua" (Chavez Malaluan & Guttal, 2003: 4).

With such clear examples of World Bank imposition of neo-liberal policy in the name of 'development' that have been rejected by whole populations, it is necessary to ask the question why the Bank continues on the same trajectory. Joseph Stiglitz, who spent three years at the World Bank as Chief Economist and Senior Vice President, has argued that beneath the surface, it is values that play a major role in maintenance of the status quo:

> "In spite of the evidence to the contrary, many trade and finance ministers, and even some political leaders, believe that everyone will eventually benefit from trade and capital market liberalisation." (Stiglitz, 2002: 216).

The important role that values play in neo-liberal policy convergence should not be underestimated, and the recognition of values and beliefs as important targets for transformation open up the field of inquiry from policy reform to perhaps cultural reform, which will be discussed later in the paper.

In addition to the World Bank and the IMF, the World Trade Organisation (WTO) solidifies neo-liberal policy convergence in the international political system by

creating the rules governing international trade. The WTO Charter "commits member states to alter their statutes and procedures to conform with transworld trade law" (Scholte, 1997: 444). Along with regional trade agreements that cover the same agenda as the WTO, the objective is to "develop one set of global rules to maximise free trade for corporations and to limit national regulation by governments" (Ranald, 2000: 5). Agreements are usually drafted by "The Quad" governments of the United States, Canada, Europe and Japan (From www.WTO.org). These draft agreements are then discussed by a group of representatives from 20-30 countries, with the smaller one hundred or so countries from the South typically excluded (Ranald, 2000: 6) and decision-making taking place in back room sessions in what has been called the "Green Room" (Bello, 2002: 64).

The result is that agreements such as the Agriculture Agreement and TRIPs, or Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights, are discussed and implemented without true democratic participation from all member states. This is exemplified in the collapse of the Seattle round of negotiations in 1999 where a bloc of 70 countries from the South refused to agree to negotiations that were discussed without them. Bello has described what he calls 'stories' regarding the Seattle round of negotiations, about "ministers from developing countries complaining of being lost at the Seattle Convention Center, looking for a 'Green Room' where key decisions would be made, not knowing that the Green Room referred not to a real room at the convention centre but to an exclusive process of decision-making" (Bello, 2002: 63).

Recent research commissioned by Christian Aid (2005) puts a value on the loss that countries in the South have incurred since liberalising trade. According to the report, sub-Saharan Africa has lost US$272 billion over the past 20 years due to trade liberalisation, which would have been enough to wipe out their debts and pay for every child to go to school and be vaccinated (Christian Aid, 2005: 2). Similarly, since liberalising trade in 1986, Ghana's population has lost the equivalent of US$510 per person, which is a significant amount, given that their per capita GDP in 2000 was just US$330 (Christian Aid, 2005: 3).

National governments have little choice but to adopt neo-liberal policy once they become members of the Bretton Woods institutions. Technically, states join the

institutions voluntarily, but in most cases, they are forced into a multilateral or bilateral agreement because there is no other way to obtain flows of foreign direct investment or alleviate their debt repayments. After the collapse of the Seattle round of trade negotiations at the Ministerial Meeting of the WTO in November 1999, there was some recognition of the short-sightedness of neo-liberal policy introduced into countries who simply could not keep up with the pace of a global economy dominated by the richest countries in the world (see Stiglitz, 2002: 250). Unfortunately, this recognition has not translated into clear policy redirection in the past six years, and in fact, instead of significantly changing their policies, they have been defending them. The multilateral institutions remain as undemocratic and opaque as ever, with bullying tactics being used by the US to get their way at the Doha WTO round held in 2001 (Bello, 2002: 87), and the collapse of trade talks at the Cancun round in 2003 due to a stand against US and European Union (EU) agricultural subsidies taken by countries of the South, similar to what happened at Seattle.

Furthermore, the recent G8 Summit in Scotland has been denounced as a "fraud and a circus" by prominent writer John Pilger (2005), who has argued that behind the façade of the G8's "victory for millions", lies "discredited economic programmes imposed by the World Bank and the IMF…[and] while Blair was declaiming his desire to "make poverty history"… his 'department for international development' was forcing, by the back door, privatisation of water supply in Ghana for the benefit of British investors" (Pilger, 2005). A joint statement issued by ten civil society organisations from Africa echoed their disappointment in the Gleneagles outcome also, claiming that "The resolutions fall far short of our expectations for a comprehensive and radical strategy to make poverty history in Africa. The Summit has simply reaffirmed existing decisions on debt cancellation and doubling of aid" (cited in Health Development Network, 2005).

**(b) Subordination of other agendas**

The UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) state clearly some of the current global development problems that require urgent action, such as extreme poverty and gender inequality, and adopt a different approach to development with a human security agenda rather than economic. These promising initiatives, however, seem to

be subjugated by the multilateral institutions and their homogenising thrust towards neo-liberal policy convergence. Women, who already constitute the majority of the poor, feel the negative consequences of the global development agenda on a greater scale than men do, so it is useful to briefly look at the goal of gender equality within the MDGs and how the global development agenda thwarts the achievement of this goal, particularly because as a structural impediment, gender inequality is closely linked to many other development issues such as education, employment, food security etc.

Millennium Development Goal number three is to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women. The latest UN Millennium Project (UNMP) task-force report on gender (UNMP, 2005: 3) identifies seven strategic priorities as the "minimum necessary to empower women and alter the historical legacy of female disadvantage that remains in most societies of the world". The seven priorities are intimately linked to macro-economic policy and in particular multilateral trade rules, because "globalisation, trade liberalisation and the emerging coherence between international financial and trade institutions greatly impinge on the policy space at the national level [and yet] there is no policy interaction at the institutional level with regard to gender mainstreaming" (IGTN 2004). Achieving these strategic priorities will require an increased focus from national governments and a significant diversion of funding from other areas, but according to UNCTAD (2004), multilateral trade rules: "can limit the capacity of governments to apply policies in support of gender inequality"; contribute to "maintaining large wage differentials between male workers (mostly skilled) and female workers (mostly unskilled) despite increases in exports"; and contribute to widespread job losses for women via the removal of domestic support to small-scale farmers in countries of the South.

Whilst the UNMP strategic priorities identify important areas of concern in regards to alleviating the feminisation of poverty and gender equality, they do not specifically refer to the structural issues of inequality that are embedded within the practices and policies of the most powerful institutions in the world governing trade and development policy. These institutions "have added gender mainstreaming to their rhetoric, but have not changed their practices or their policies" (AWID, 2004:3). Mariama Williams from the International Gender and Trade Network (IGTN) argues

that within macro-economic policy, gender is relegated to "soft" areas that "must work to complement and offset the necessary adjustment costs of macro planning decisions and outcomes". This means that "hard" areas such as agricultural liberalisation and tariff reductions are deemed gender neutral, whereas food distribution between men and women is analysed from a gender perspective (IGTN, 2004). If we pick just two of these seven priorities and analyse them in terms of their relationship to macro-economic policy, we can see how the global development agenda acts as a significant barrier to achieving them.

*Strategic priority 4* is to guarantee women's and girls property and inheritance rights. Land ownership is deemed important to empowering women both economically and socially, and means that women have access to direct benefits such as the use of crops and rights to their proceeds. There is also evidence to suggest that asset ownership can also protect against domestic violence (UNMP, 2005: 9). The report asserts that there are few statistics on the magnitude of gender asset gaps, but that some reports conducted indicate that women hold a substantially lower amount of land ownership than men in countries throughout Latin America, Sub-Saharan Africa and South and Central Asia.

The right to 'land ownership' is an interesting way to discuss women's relationship with the earth. It is estimated that women grow at least 59 percent of the world's food, with women in Africa producing more than 70 percent of Africa's food (Warren, 1997:8). Clearly, women are key stakeholders in any trade agreements on agricultural products, yet their needs and interests are not taken seriously by the institutions that push for lower trade barriers, greater access for multi-national corporations (MNCs) and cash crop exports. The same could be said for intellectual property agreements. For thousands of years women have been looking after the nutritional needs of their families through subsistence agriculture, as well as the use of natural medicines, and now this indigenous knowledge is being increasingly "discovered" and patented by MNCs. Eco-feminist Vandana Shiva explains:

> "patents and intellectual property rights are supposed to be granted for novel inventions. But patents are being claimed for rice varieties such as the basmati for which the Doon Valley (where I was born) is famous, or pesticides derived from the neem tree which our mothers and grandmothers have been using for

> centuries... The knowledge of the poor is being converted into the property of global corporations, creating a situation where the poor will have to pay for the seeds and medicines that they have cultivated, developed and used to meet their needs for nutrition and health care" (Shiva, 2001: 63).

Under the current neo-liberal agenda, women who produce food for their families are classified as unproductive, with only cash crops counting for productivity within the economy. Simplistic poverty reduction strategies such as export-oriented growth ignore the productive capacity of women in subsistence and community farming, and often destroy women's productivity and self-worth when they are forced to change to cash crops for export, and are unable to provide food from subsistence agriculture for their families. Small autonomous producers are rendered invisible to the global economy when governments are forced to compete with giant agribusiness companies, and shift agricultural production to industrial monocultures (Shiva, 2001: 58-59).

Coupled with increases in production for exports, neo-liberal policy advocates for a reduction of welfare services, higher charges for basic services and lower wages (Henshall Momsen, 2004: 227). In addition to these barriers, there are rising production costs and decreasing commodity prices as a result of cheaper goods flooding the market. The right to land ownership, then, is rendered useless when women and their families are faced with rising costs they are simply unable to meet. Increasingly poor, many families are selling their land to investors, who either use the land for industry, or create large cash crops for export. The right to land ownership also disregards the reality of communal land. In Africa, for example, where communal land tenure is still common, privatisation of this land for cash crops has been a major objective of the World Bank (Federici, 2001: 134), with absolutely no consideration of the historical use of the land by women for subsistence farming.

Many women are forced to find extra employment to meet rising costs, and because they are generally paid less than men, women usually find it easier to gain employment (Henshall Momsen, 2004: 229). This channels them into the informal workforce, where they work as street vendors, domestic workers and in the service industry – perpetuating the gendered division of labour.

*Strategic priority 5* is to eliminate gender inequality in employment. According to the report, women's status in the labour market is inferior to men's in most countries of the world (UNMP, 2005: 11). Women in countries of the global South continue to be found in low-skill, repetitive work in industries such as textiles and electronics and the informal workforce because of the many barriers to training and education that women face as opposed to men (UNMP, 2005: 11; ICFTU, 2004). Job segregation in terms of gender is a major area of concern for the fight against the feminisation of poverty.

Neo-liberal policy such as the removal of trade barriers, privatisation and deregulation is meant to foster a climate for foreign direct investment to jump-start stagnant economies and bring in foreign currency. MNCs are taking advantage of these environments to set up manufacturing and production facilities in countries of the South where there are large pools of cheap labour, flexible labour laws and tax incentives. This can have both positive and negative effects for women. On the positive side, the influx of MNCs entering the labour-intensive sectors of the South, such as textiles, footwear, data processing and service outsourcing has resulted in an increase in levels of employment for women in some countries (UNCTAD, 2004). The UNMDP report asserts (2005: 11), however, that in the last twenty years, "women's overall economic activity rates increased... yet women's status in the labour market remains significantly inferior to that of men's worldwide". Responsibility for this lies within neo-liberal policy convergence, which creates these 'favourable' environments for foreign investment, fails to take into account the different experiences of men and women, and focuses only on economic growth factors as development indicators, rendering gender implications invisible.

This is revealed by looking at Export Processing Zones (EPZs) or Free Trade Zones, which have increased dramatically as a result of neo-liberal policy. Over 40 million people are employed in EPZs around the world, with three quarters of them employed in China (IFCTU, 2004: 5-6). Countries set up EPZs to attract foreign investment by offering financial incentives for companies and in some cases complete exemption from national legislation (ICFTU, 2004: 5-6). In return, the EPZs are supposed to stimulate export-led economic growth, generate employment and facilitate a skills and technology transfer to domestic firms. Some of the biggest problems arising from the increase of EPZs, however, include environmental damage, poor safety and health

standards, and labour rights abuses. The majority of employees in EPZs are women, and despite arguments suggesting that EPZs exist as a route for women to enter the formal employment sector where wages are often higher than in the informal sector, women face sexual harassment and discrimination in hiring, wages and benefits (ICFTU, 2004: 5-6). Of course not all MNCs are guilty of labour abuses, but the climate of free trade zones or EPZs leaves it almost entirely up to the employer as to what regulations and standards they are going to impose. Under these conditions, and with the bottom line of every MNC being profit, labour rights abuses and lowered standards are inevitable.

Labour segregation and the 'race to the bottom' in terms of wages in the workforce is perpetuated, not alleviated, by neo-liberal policy. The WTO Agreement on Textiles and Clothing, for example, which rested on a system of clothing export quotas for countries exporting to the EU, Canada and the US, expired at the end of 2004 and is being phased out in 2005 (ICFTU, 2004). From 2005, all WTO member countries will have unrestricted access to European, Canadian and US markets. Countries who previously had high quota allocations, such as Sri Lanka, will now have to become more competitive in the market. The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) is concerned that an increase in competitiveness across the international textiles and clothing sectors, will result in further violations of labour practices as companies look to invest in countries where labour costs are low and labour laws are weak (ICFTU, 2004). China is already showing signs of competitive advantage in this area of low-cost labour.

So whilst the strategic priorities of the Millennium Development Project are obvious for achieving gender equality and alleviating the feminisation of poverty, they are unrealistic given the structural impediments of neo-liberal policy imposed on countries by the multilateral institutions. No-where in the UNMDP report does it mention embedded, structural inequalities in macro-economic policy, despite the intimate relationship between multilateral institutions and national policies. Gender inequality and the feminisation of poverty is inextricably related to policies and decisions made inside the 'Green Room' of the WTO, and vetoes and conditionalities on lending decisions by the US and other affluent countries within the walls of the World Bank and the IMF. These institutions have no accountability in the area of

gender or human rights, and if this continues, objectives such as the MDGs will be difficult to reach. Millennium Development Goal number three is not the only goal adversely affected by the global development agenda, as other reports demonstrate (see Focus on the Global South, 2003).

It has become an imperative to wrestle back the agenda and investigate alternatives to economic liberalisation and neo-liberal policy convergence. This does not only involve reform of the international institutions that fortify the inequalities we see in the North and the South, but it involves a return to our Socratic right to question truth. Reliance on a system maintenance ideology is thwarting our ability to conceptualise truth and distinguish it from rationality. Problem-solving theories like neo-liberalism use the current structures as the framework for action and reify the existing world order with its accompanying power and wealth inequalities. Frameworks to alleviate poverty and to achieve gender equality are of no use unless they include a serious rethinking of the global development agenda, and at a minimum, this requires an understanding of how power operates to perpetuate it.

### 2.3 Power within the agenda and the role of the United States

In addition to multilateral institutions playing a key role in the imposition of neo-liberal policy and facilitation of global capitalism, the role of the US as well as an examination of how power operates to construct and maintain dominant norms and categories, is critical in the analysis of the global development agenda also. Hardt & Negri's seminal piece *Empire* (2000), asserts that world order has transformed, and that a new form of imperialism has taken hold. This new world order is characterised by a shift from international to global, whereby a new, supranational world power has been constituted (2000: 8). *Empire* transcends previous territorial notions of imperialism because it has no rival to compete against, and is based on 'universal' values that are advocated and fiercely defended by the countries of the North. For the purposes of this paper and despite its critics[4], *Empire* (2000) is an articulate base from which power of the global development agenda can be understood.

[4] Fukiyama (2004:12), for example, argues that *Empire* provides an "imaginary solution to a real problem" and defends hierarchical structures and the power of the nation-state; Similarly, Thomson (2005:75) suggests that Empire is constructed as "over-powered and under-specified".

The concept of Empire that Hardt and Negri propose is based on Foucault's concept of biopower, which is interpreted as "a form of power that regulates social life from its interior, following it, interpreting it, absorbing it and rearticulating it" (Hardt & Negri, 2000: 24). According to Foucault (1978), power functions in terms of the dynamic relations between different groups and institutions that form over time and constitute the system of world order. Power is mobile and contingent and flows from one point to another dependent on changing alliances and circumstances (Danaher et al. 2000: 71). In this sense power is never *held* by anyone, and domination represents an extreme form of power where power relations are fixed in an asymmetrical way (Brigg, 2002: 425).

Biopower developed within the state at the end of the seventeenth century when the state established itself as an institution for the analysis, control, regulation and definition of the human body and its behaviour (Foucault, 1978: 139). Institutions such as schools, courts, prisons, the mental hospital, the military and the family simultaneously defined and reified acceptable behaviours within society and provided a healthy base from which capitalist production could develop. Power basically functioned to mould people into being more serviceable for the state (Danaher et al. 2000: 70). For Foucault, biopower is a general diagram of power over life that has two poles. At one end is 'discipline' which is directed at the individual and carried out by institutions such as courts, prisons etc. At the other end is 'biopolitics', which is directed at the regulation of the population and emerged "in the field of political practices and economic observation, of the problems of birthrate, longevity, public health, housing, and migration" (Foucault 1978: 140). At the end of the seventeenth century then, there was "an explosion of numerous and diverse techniques for achieving the subjugation of bodies and the control of populations, marking the beginning of an era of "biopower"" (Foucault 1978: 140). In this understanding of biopower, world order is constituted and maintained by a "globalised, biopolitical machine" (Hardt & Negri, 2000: 40) that produces and reproduces narratives in the economic, communicative, cultural and industrial realms.

One of the major symptoms of this new Empire is the use of "interventions" (Hardt & Negri, 2000: 35) that validate and celebrate Empire's power. These are structural

phenomenon such as the borderless global financial capital and communications we see with the advent of globalisation, or forceful means that include economic, military, moral and juridical interventions. These types of interventions are part of the "regime aimed at near complete social control" that serves to block new forms of productivity and expression located outside the walls of the neo-liberal and capitalist norm (Hardt & Negri, 2004).

According to Hardt & Negri, when we analyse configurations of global power in terms of various bodies and organisations, a pyramidal structure emerges, and at the pinnacle of this pyramidal structure is the United States (2000: 309). Global constitution is thus centred on maintenance of the status quo rather than transformation, and based upon US exceptionalism or its "ability to dominate the global order" (Hardt & Negri, 2004: 8-9). There is no question in the current world order that the US is a dominant power. US power has continuously been demonstrated since the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the 'victory' of capitalism, and most recently since the September 11, 2001 attacks in New York inciting a new 'war on terrorism' that has no tangible frontier and yet legitimates significant attacks on civil liberties and bodies around the world. Military interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq, teamed with the large share of decision-making power within the multilateral institutions and a strong history of bilateral arrangements in favour of US interests, has aggregated and fixed global power relations with their inherent categories and norms. This biopolitical arrangement of power relations has coopted every aspect of life, hence the prefix *bio,* and has become "an integral, vital function that every individual embraces and reactivates of his or her own accord" (Hardt & Negri, 2000: 24).

Biopower has reached a point where it has reified inequality and war through its structural hierarchies and segregations of the nation-state, gender, race, class, occupation etc. aimed at the population and individual. Racism, for example, appears to have declined, and it could be argued that processes of globalisation have contributed to a diminishing of racist practices. According to Deleuze & Guattari however, racism has simply transformed into a "strategy of differential inclusion" rather than the exclusion of the racial Other, so there is no 'outside', but rather varying levels on the inside with the "White-Man face" as the point of departure (cited in

Hardt & Negri, 2000: 194). Hardt & Negri identify 'imperial racism' which suggests that "biological differences have been replaced by sociological and cultural signifiers as the key representation of racial hatred and fear" (2000: 191). For example, Islam – as a cultural signifier of countries in the Middle East – has acted as a symbol for racial hatred and fear in the wake of the 9/11 attacks, despite governments all over the world denunciating generalist attacks on Muslims. In essence, Empire espouses and adopts an anti-racist position, but at the same time still maintains a "strong principle of social segregation" (2000: 193). At the ontological level within Empire there are also hierarchies. For example, some lives are 'real' and we should mourn their deaths - such as the people who lost their lives in the 9/11 attacks and the recent London bombings - and others are "non-people" that do not need to be mourned such as those in Iraq who are losing their lives to terrorist attacks on a daily basis. Deaths of innocent people from the terrorist bombings in London cannot be justified at any level, and yet the death of an innocent man at the hands of the London police can be justified because the violence was perpetrated by the state for the protection of 'real' people. Within Empire, killing is justified to protect and validate the lives and identities of 'real' people and to protect the category of the 'free world'.

These structural and ontological hierarchies are maintained by a permanent "state of exception" Hardt & Negri (2000: 16-17), which refers to the capacity to exclusively define the use of moral, military, communicative or capital interventions – predominately situated within the US, but broadly located in the North. One example of this is the way that the US demands non-nuclear proliferation from other states, and yet has the largest cache of nuclear weapons in the world, and continues research into nuclear weapons. Their "state of exception" gives them the right to demand that North Korea dismantle their nuclear programs, whilst also expecting that no one question theirs. A similar example is how the Bush Administration refuses to be a part of the International Criminal Court. It may agree with the concept of trying war criminals, but only as long as those war criminals are not from the US.

Exploitation within biopower constitutes a "general *non-place* on the imperial terrain" (Hardt & Negri, 2000: 211, emphasis added) because control is exercised through deep-reaching, intrinsic societal elements that have become normalised through institutions and disciplinary procedures. This "non-place" is so because it is

everywhere – it cannot be situated on any particular terrain such as the economic, political or juridical terrains and it cannot be identified in terms of race, class and gender – it is intersectional and pervasive at all levels

Focusing these concepts on the more specific terrain of development, it is useful to turn to Foucault's concept of a *dispositif* to show how development has been 'normalised' and reduced to a "non-place" through a fixing of power relations. Morgan Brigg (2002: 426-7) asserts that development can be likened to that of Foucault's *dispositif* or a "'thoroughly heterogenous ensemble' of discursive and material elements" - such as institutions, discourses, laws, scientific statements, moral propositions etc. – as well as the system of relationships between these elements. The range of discursive and material elements all dedicated to development since the end of World War II corresponds with the nature of a *dispositif*. This "development *dispositif*", according to Brigg, developed into an inclusive framework or social field, with the establishment of the United Nations and the multilateral institutions, reifying the norm of development and measuring others in relation to this norm (Brigg, 2002: 429).

Since the end of the Cold War, these norms and categories have become capitalism and neo-liberalism, demonstrated and advocated by the richest countries in the world such as the US and Great Britain, and increasingly adopted by European countries such as France, Sweden and Germany, with the decline of the welfare state and social-democratic model (Burbach, 2001: 6-8). Even China has now joined the WTO and is engaging in export-led economic policy and capitalism.

Turning to the question of how the global development agenda has been normalised, Brigg suggests that the World Bank, for example, is an "intensely dense node of force relations in the development *dispositif*", normalising and promoting development from the *dispositif* "non-place", rather than acting as a singular powerful force that determines development norms through directives and policies that are independent of the discursive and material elements that already exist.

Already we can see the design of Empire (Hardt & Negri, 2000) reflected in the concept of development here because these discursive and material elements that

comprise the development *dispositif* are the same elements that comprise Empire – capitalism and neo-liberal economic policies, buttressed by the multilateral institutions and maintained through the biopolitical networks of communication, capital, military, juridical and moral norms and categories – all of which are legitimated and policed through US exceptionalism.

### 2.4 Conclusion

This chapter has defined the global development agenda in terms of neo-liberal policy and global capitalism, produced and perpetuated through the multilateral institutions of the World Bank, IMF and WTO. This agenda has gained strength since the end of the Cold War and through processes of globalisation, and tends to subordinate other agendas such as the UN Millennium Development Goals. The strength of the global development agenda is largely due to the predominance of rich countries' interests and their influence on decision-making processes within the multilateral institutions, and a continued focus on economic growth as the bastion of 'development'. Another factor is that the global development agenda is exercised through the same macro economic, political and communication frameworks that reify existing inequalities and do not adequately question the structures themselves.

Power within the global development agenda is constituted and maintained by a "globalised, biopolitical machine" (Hardt & Negri, 2000: 40) that is economic, communicative and industrial, and backed by the US "state of exception". Exploitation constitutes a "general non-place" (Hardt & Negri, 2000: 211) because control is exercised through deep-reaching, intrinsic societal elements that have become normalised through institutions and disciplinary procedures. Norms and categories within 'development' have been constituted over time within a development *dispositif* through institutions, discourses, laws and moral propositions, and since the Cold War these norms and categories manifest as the global development agenda, which is maintained through the biopolitical networks of communication, capital, military, juridical and moral interventions.

The next chapter will delve further into the concept of biopower, and show how the categories and norms of the global development agenda have also produced categories

of abnormality and exclusion. It is within these categories that we can find resistance to the global development agenda, and the potential for transformation.

# CHAPTER III

# TRANSVERSAL RESISTANCE AND POWER

## 1.1 Introduction

In response to *Empire* and the biopolitical power of the global development agenda, new social movements have been rising up in opposition and creating new pathways and alternatives to the status quo. These social movements highlight the role of the world's richest countries in the design and management of the 'development *dispositif*' that has failed millions of people in terms of alleviating poverty, and has in fact exacerbated inequalities between the North and the South.

It is important to understand how power is operating at the level of the global development agenda, within processes of resistance and the system of relationships in between, in order to reveal the potential for a transformation of the global development agenda. This chapter explores the concept of transversal resistance, the system of power relations between resistance and domination and how this power is used to resist and challenge the supranational, normalising power discussed in chapter two, that drives the global development agenda. In this regard, this section provides the important theoretical framework within which the WSF will be later situated and discussed. The first section will introduce transversal resistance and locate it in a dialectic with the global development agenda, using Foucault's notion of biopower as a base. Section two will then work within this dialectical framework to reveal the sites of transformation within transversal resistance – specifically, in the realm of daily activities, spaces and identities – and illustrate its transformative capacity via destabilisation of dominant norms and categories.

## 3.2 Transversal resistance and biopower

Domination and resistance have existed in countless forms and manifestations for thousands of years. Typically we think of armed resistance to a dominant force such as Iraqi soldiers fighting the US military, the Palestinian Intifada against Israeli soldiers, or the types of non-violent resistance we have witnessed in India and the

United States led by Gandhi and the Civil Rights Movements. We might also think of student pro-democracy demonstrators such as in Tiananmen Square in China or the protests in Bolivia against the government's privatisation of water that was mentioned in chapter two. These are overt, visible and celebrated forms of resistance aimed specifically at a tangible, dominant regime or set of laws. As we have seen from chapter two, however, the constitution of world order has changed, and a new, discursive form of domination and biopower that penetrates all aspects of life from a "non-place" (Hardt & Negri, 2000: 211), has developed a necessity for increasing forms of resistance that lie outside typical frameworks of organised and specialised dissent. These types of resistance are not new – but are gaining momentum and greater visibility, given the biopolitical nature of domination and the need for a concurrent biopolitical form of dissent.

It is easy to observe resistance to the global development agenda by focusing on the 'alter-globalisation' protests such as those in Seattle, Prague, Genoa and others. Assuming that popular dissent in the form of mass demonstrations is the most *powerful* form of resistance is shortsighted, however, as Bleiker explains (2000: 183):

> "...commonly perceived instances of popular dissent, such as heroic uprisings and mass demonstrations, are much less influential in triggering social change than their spectacular appearance suggests. The events that deserve our analytical attention are not the moment when overthrowers hurl statues into the mud. Key historical events are more elusive, more inaudible in their appearance. They evolve around the slow transformation of societal values."

Bleiker adopts Foucault's concept of relational power rather than models of consent based on the binary opposition of ruler versus ruled, to argue that "power relations operate in multiple terrains and can be assessed meaningfully only in a specific historical and cultural setting" (2000: 133). Foucault's concept of 'biopower', which was introduced in Chapter two, can explain these multiple terrains of power relations in more depth.

Rather than power being something that is held by someone, according to Foucault, power functions in terms of the dynamic relations between different groups and institutions that form over time and constitute the system of world order (1978). Power is mobile and contingent and flows from one point to another dependent on

changing alliances and circumstances (Danaher et al. 2000: 71). In this regard, domination represents an extreme form of power because power relations are fixed in an asymmetrical way (Brigg, 2002: 425). As explained earlier, this asymmetrical fixing of power relations is currently manifested as a supranational power system or "Empire" (Hardt & Negri, 2000) that consists of an elaborate and complex network of neoliberal policy managed by the global elite and led by the US through multilateral institutions and various "interventions" that are financial, communicative, moral, military and juridical. Exploitation constitutes a "general non-place on the imperial terrain" (Hardt & Negri, 2000: 211) because control is exercised through these deep-reaching, intrinsic societal elements that have become normalised.

Analysing the nature of biopower further opens the door to the concept of resistance to these asymmetrical power relations and the gradual transformation of power into that of a more symmetrical arrangement - in short, the realisation of 'another world'. According to Foucault, biopower can never have complete control because it always produces resistance (1978). The production of norms and categories in the legitimation of institutions and discourses, necessarily produces exclusion because categories of abnormality need to exist in order to create the borders of normality. It is within the categories of abnormality that resistance is found. Hardt & Negri in *Empire* (2000: 26) interpret the potential of biopower as the opening up of alternatives: "not only between obedience and disobedience, or between formal political participation and refusal, but also along the entire range of life and death, wealth and poverty, production and social reproduction, and so forth". For every established category along the "entire range of life and death" there is exclusion, and hence there is a space created for the development of alternatives. This interpretation of power relations has also been adopted by Bleiker (2000).

Bleiker uses David Campbell's concept of "transversal" (cited in Bleiker, 2000:2), because it goes beyond the representation of the "very borders that are currently being questioned…[and] draw[s] attention to the multiple and multi-layered interactions that make up contemporary life" (Bleiker, 2000:2-3). Bleiker's (2000) conceptualisation of "transversal dissent" in his rereadings of the East German revolution and the collapse of the Berlin Wall provide the basis for my discussion of resistance and development of a theoretical framework to discuss the WSF.

Bleiker defines the term 'transversal dissent' as "a political practice that not only transgresses national boundaries, but also questions the spatial logic through which these boundaries have come to constitute and frame the conduct of international relations" (2000: 2). Moving away from fundamental levels of analysis such as the system, the state or the individual, Bleiker's analysis of domination and dissent encapsulates the way that political, social and economic life today is transversal – that is, it transgresses boundaries and intersects at multiple sites, creating more of a complex web of subjectivities rather than neat categories that can be measured objectively.

In keeping with the ideas developed in chapter two about the notion of a biopower that "unifies and envelops within itself every element of social life" (Hardt & Negri, 2000: 25), a link between transversal resistance and the global development agenda can be found. For example, Bleiker asserts that "processes of globalisation... have led to a situation in which ahistoric and spatial modes of representation are no longer able to capture the transversal nature of dissent". If we interpret Bleiker's understanding of *transversal* in this sentence, to be akin to that of *biopolitical,* dissent is then situated in a dialectic with hegemonic power because both are products of biopower.[5]

Explaining this further - the organisation of power over life, or biopower, has transgressed national boundaries despite originating as a means for the subjugation of bodies and the population by the state (Foucault, 1978: 139). The new biopower is *transversal* and no longer works within the "disciplinary modalities of the modern state" (Hardt & Negri, 2000: 344) because forms of rule have changed from sovereign to become deterritorialised and associated with production, consumption, education, culture etc. (Hardt & Negri, 2000: 344). Similarly, discipline by the State has transformed into self-regulation whereby "law operates more and more as a norm" and juridical processes move into the background (Foucault, 1978: 144).

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[5] It is important to note that this dialectical model does not presuppose that one cannot survive without the other. Hardt & Negri (2004: 225) argue that Empire and multitude are not symmetrical because whereas Empire is dependent on the multitude, the multitude "has the capacity to create society on its own".

Resistance to this type of power then, must also be transversal and biopolitical in order to counter and transform it. Resistance today, exemplified by the new social movements, does not seek to overthrow and replicate sovereign rule using existing capitalist and democratic models, but rather acts to transform societal norms that form the basis of our self-regulating, normalised society. The global development agenda, which is based on the dominant 'truth' of neo-liberalism and global capitalism producing peace and prosperity for all, is being resisted by those who desire a different outcome or 'another world', where value exists apart from consumption and money and where dominant narratives of value can be disrupted and reinvented (Osterweil, 2004: 504).

The dialectic then, between the global development agenda and transversal resistance is a result of biopower, which on one side produces and maintains the categories and norms that permeate social life (global development agenda), and on the other side produces exclusion and categories of abnormality and dissent (transversal resistance). Both reveal much about the other because "the process of undermining authority says as much, for instance, about the values and functioning of the existing social and political order as it does about the urge to break out of it" (Bleiker, 2000: 26). A framework is now beginning to emerge that encompasses Bleiker's notion of transversal resistance and the biopolitical power of the global development agenda.

### 3.3 Sites of transformation within transversal resistance

Within transversal resistance are sites where the dominant categories and norms of the global development agenda have the potential to be destabilised and transformed over time. There are many sites of transformation that exist, due to the complex and biopolitical nature of the global development agenda, but I am only able to focus on three: The realm of 'dailiness', the public space, and identity.

**(a) The realm of 'dailiness'**

The importance of Bleiker's analysis when we are examining the dialectic between the global development agenda and transversal resistance, lies in his refusal to adhere to foundational categories when looking at domination and resistance, and specifically how he asserts that transversal resistance "cannot be understood by drawing direct

links between action and outcome" (2000: 211). In order to reveal the existence of transformative agency, he argues, it is not necessary to "assume that agency can be assessed only by establishing links between means and ends. [The analysis] does not assume that every form of agency needs an identifiable agent that causes an identifiable outcome [or that] agency occurs only if it stands in a relationship with a declared intention" (Bleiker, 2000: 40). On the contrary, Bleiker shows in his rereadings of the events leading up to the collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1989 that the dynamics of agency and dissent existed in more complex and discursive forms than simply the population's withdrawal of consent (effect) for a crumbling regime (cause). Bleiker explains how it is in the realm of 'dailiness' (2000: 211) that people constantly reshape their social environments, gradually transforming societal values.

Bleiker delineates the realm of 'dailiness' as "seemingly mundane daily practices by which people constantly shape and reshape their environment... it is in these spheres that societal values are gradually transformed, preparing the ground for more open manifestations of dissent" (2000: 211). Drawing a direct line between the action and the outcome cannot reveal the transformative potential that these daily activities have because this type of resistance is based on tactics rather than strategy. Like a conscious shopper who refuses to buy products from Coca Cola or Nestle because s/he does not want to support large corporations, s/he does not produce the outcome of making global corporations more socially accountable, but such an action has the capacity to "def[y] the spatial logic established by the organising procedures of a particular political or economic system" (Bleiker, 2000: 213). For example, the effects are not just limited to the supermarket, but over a period of time and in concert with other similar actions, globalised practices of production, trade and advertising can also be influenced. The key to understanding the transformative potential of the tactic is the role of temporality, and the number of people engaging in similar acts (Bleiker, 2000: 214).

James Scott's (1990) research on resistance provides further insight into the role of daily activities in larger resistance struggles. Scott asserts that in the dialectic between the dominant and subordinate forces of power there exists a "public transcript" and a "hidden transcript", with the former referring to the discourse that subordinates adopt in the direct presence of the dominant power, and the latter term used "to characterise

discourse that takes place "offstage", beyond direct observation by powerholders" (Scott, 1990: 4). Scott goes further to argue that the "social spaces where the hidden transcript grows are themselves an achievement of resistance; they are won and defended in the teeth of power" (1990: 119).

Whilst Scott's analysis does not suggest that daily praxis within the 'hidden transcript' - such as language, gestures, and practices – is *transformative* against dominant power, his interpretation of power relations is important because subordinated groups and individuals are revealed as having significantly more agency than a reading of the public transcript allows. Scott is critical, for example, of the theory of hegemony that asserts that subordinates support hegemonic ideology because dominant power relations have been 'naturalised' and established as inevitable (1990: 72). 'Naturalisation' theory, he argues, assumes that "the absence of actual knowledge of alternative social arrangements produces automatically the naturalisation of the present, however hated that present may be" (Scott, 1990: 80). This is mistaken however, because:

> "while the serf, the slave and the untouchable may have difficulty imagining other arrangements other than serfdom, slavery and the caste system, they will certainly have no trouble imagining a total reversal of the existing distribution of status and rewards... These collective hidden transcripts from the fantasy life of subordinate groups are not merely abstract exercises. They are embedded... in innumerable ritual practices... and they have provided the ideological basis of many revolts." (Scott, 1990: 80).

Naturalisation theories of hegemony, then, provide a crude perspective of domination and resistance and mask relational power beneath the surface within the 'hidden transcript', where individuals are aware of and often deliberately or strategically reifying hegemonic praxis for self-preservation or as part of a set of tactics[6]. In this regard, 'subordinates' to a dominant power are ascribed a level of subversive agency that nurtures the precursor set of values required to overtly resist hegemonic power.

Hardt & Negri (2004: 221) describe this subversive and discursive agency as the "latent and implicit multitude", that requires "a political project to bring it into being".

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[6] Bleiker provides a more comprehensive analysis of Scott's critique of hegemony (2000: 190-193).

The biggest and most important difference between Bleiker's (2000) and Hardt & Negri's (2004) conceptualisation of resistance is that Hardt & Negri see the emancipation of the multitude as a 'potential' requiring a political project, whereas Bleiker sees the multitude as a 'becoming', through the processes of transversal resistance. This is critical to an understanding of what exactly constitutes a political project, but it is also key to understanding what types of transformation(s) is/are taking place because it is the difference between transformation being a possibility and transformation *being*. Transformation in this case is not the direct and measurable result or end-point of a particular action, but rather a continuous and complex process with outcomes on various levels that transgress the structural dimensions of established institutions and reverberate through the biopolitical landscape.

**(b) 'Spaces'**

Bleiker illustrates his discussions on the realm of dailiness with several examples, but the key undercurrent emerging from these examples is the importance of a platform or space for daily praxis and tactics to emerge. In one example he refers specifically to the discursive role of the public sphere, and its importance to resistance movements as a space to share stories and ideas, develop tactics, oppose, propose, organise and grow. With the East German regime working fervently to crush civil society and the public sphere during the Cold War, various spaces, or cracks emerged in the foundations, allowing dissent to sprout roots and mature. The Protestant Church acted as the biggest crack in the Iron Curtain in East Germany, and since 1983 it provided a platform for dissent that was to grow into massive public protests against the regime in 1989 (Bleiker, 2000: 177-179).

Analysing this example further, we can glean that the creation of a public space or platform does not require a specific intent or strategy to establish this space, but rather develops over time, given sufficient 'offstage' space to evolve. In East Germany during the Cold War, the public sphere, which included schools, newspapers, journals, radio and television, were under direct control of the state (Bleiker, 2000: 178). The Protestant Church was the only mass organisation that was not directly subordinated to state control, and so spaces for prayer and discussion eventually evolved into public protests against the regime. It took years for these gatherings to become symbolic mass events, but as Bleiker explains, the space created had "nothing to do with [the

Protestant Church's] religious or political aspirations, but [was] primarily the result of the unusual degree of autonomy that it enjoyed in an otherwise suffocating totalitarian state" (2000: 179).

The significance of 'spaces' for resistance to evolve and occur is obvious, but these spaces are not only physical spaces such as the Protestant Church in East Germany that provided respite from the prying eyes of the state, or the public spaces used by the alter-globalisation movements in Seattle and Genoa, or even the spaces created by NGOs for debate and analysis. They can also be conceptual spaces that emerge from processes of exclusion through the establishment of certain norms and rules in society. The biopolitical nature of power that is maintained and regulated by institutional norms and categories, is simultaneously producing categories of abnormality and exclusion, and therefore is inherently constructed with the cracks and crevices that provide the spaces for dissent to sprout roots and mature. While Scott argues that the "social spaces where the hidden transcript grows are themselves an achievement of resistance; …[and] won and defended in the teeth of power" (1990: 119), these social spaces are also being constructed by the very power that seeks to marginalise them. The spaces themselves are subversive and destabilising because they facilitate the confrontation of dominant norms and categories "in the teeth of power" (Scott, 1990: 119), but also because they are formed by the very power that seeks to marginalise them, simultaneously questioning the legitimacy of these dominant 'truths by demonstrating alternative logics.

So at this point it is fair to ask, "what is so enlightening about change that occurs over time as a result of daily practices"? Well, my answer to that is that there is a need for greater recognition of every-day forms of resistance and the critical role that they play in transformation because in order to widen a resistance movement and appeal to people existing outside the orbit of those already politicised to the 'cause', one must find a way of situating resistance in the every-day. One must show that it is not necessary to be a leader to facilitate change. It is not necessary to attend demonstrations or quit the safety of an office job in order to resist. If it is possible to highlight just how important daily activities are to transformation, then more people will listen because resistance is made more accessible. If it is possible to illustrate how

the smallest, anonymous action can be linked to making a difference on a global scale, then the potential for greater movement building is revealed.

**(c) Identity**

Identity is another key foundation from which to analyse the potential destabilisation of norms because the very constitution of identity creates boundaries and reinforces norms because it has been formed or constructed by elements in society. According to William Connolly:

> "An identity is established in relation to a series of differences that have become socially recognised. These differences are essential to its being. If they did not coexist as differences, it would not exist in its distinctness and solidity. Entrenched in this indispensable relation is a second set of tendencies... to congeal established identities into fixed forms, thought and lived as if their structure expressed the true order of things... Identity requires difference in order to be, and it converts difference into otherness in order to secure its own self-certainty" (2002: xiv).

To Connolly then, the basis of his discussions on identity is the "contingent" nature of identity, or "that which is changeable and particular, in contrast to the certain and constant" (2002: 28). Building on the work of postmodern feminism and Heidegger's ideas, Bleiker concurs that "Being is not only evasive and constructed... it actually is not. It happens. Being is a constant process of renewal" (2000: 197). For Connolly, however, Being is also tied irrevocably to difference. For example, I have formed my identity on the basis of that which I am not, taken from my experiences, my instincts, my relationships with others, and my interpretations. Difference is integral to identity – literally, I am me because I am not you.

The relationship between categories of normalisation and identity is revealed through Connolly's examination of how identity in the present – which he calls late modernity – is "bound up with historically received standards of self-responsibility, self-discipline and freedom" (2002: 20). Like the Foucauldian idea of biopower which developed when the state established itself as an institution and there was "an explosion of numerous and diverse techniques for achieving the subjugation of bodies and the control of populations" through institutions such as courts, schools, prisons,

hospitals, the military etc (Foucault, 1978: 140), identity has been bound to these institutions and linked to the normalising forces of the state. As Connolly contends:

> "Individuals are responsible not merely for particular actions... but for the character they develop, the stability of their mental lives, the careers they nurture, the quality of their love lives, the way their children turn out, the level of income they "earn", the social recognition they attain, and so on...One must now program one's life meticulously to meet a more detailed array of institutional standards of normality and entitlement. If one fails to measure up to one (or more) of these disciplines, one runs a high risk of entrapment in one of the categories of otherness derived from it: one becomes defined through a reciprocal category of delinquency, irresponsibility, dependency, criminality, instability, abnormality, retardation..." (2002: 21).

Hardt & Negri (2000) take Foucault's idea beyond the state when they discuss biopower and Empire and the normalising forces that are now supranational. If our identity then, is bound to historically constituted institutions and norms, which are now global, then identity should also be able to *influence* and even *destabilise* these norms. I will come back to this point, but I will first build on the concept of a contingent or constructed identity that is 'becoming' rather than 'being' by turning to Judith Butler's (1990) and Donna Haraway's (1989) ideas on gender identity.

Feminist and gender studies have provided important insight into the concept of an identity that is never true or fixed, but is constituted over time and contingent on relational aspects within society. Gender as a construct of society is one of the major intellectual contributions in this field, however, the idea of constructed and dynamic entities applies to all disciplines, including the field of science – questioning the differences between 'fact' and fiction. Haraway (1989), for example, revealed a link between primatology and feminism and argued that the intersection between feminism and the study of apes and primates actually destabilises the narratives that gave rise to both fields, "generating the possibility of new stories not strangled by the same logics of appropriation and domination" (1989: 288). According to Haraway, feminism emerged around the same time and for similar reasons as discourses of biology and anthropology. She argues that "the biological organism is a particular cultural form of appropriation-conversation, not the unmediated natural truth of the body... [hence] part of the reconstruction of gender is the remapping of biological sex (1989: 289-90).

If identity is a 'site at which entrenched dispositions encounter socially constructed definitions" through a complex history (Connolly, 2002: 163), then identity is made up of many elements that are being influenced on a daily basis by other elements in society, some of which are in disharmony with each other. In her examination of Jeanne Altmann's career as a primatologist, Haraway writes about the 'fractured' identities that comprise the "strategic site called "woman"" (1989: 311). This 'strategic site' "was a process akin to juggling – keeping several realities in precariously patterned motion and building strength to see the world that way". For Jeanne Altmann, her 'strategic site' included mother, feminist and scientist. Bleiker explains how the feminist authors engaging with the concept of fractured or hyphenated identities are writing about differences *within* women rather than between women:

> "Women (and men) have multiple, fractured and ambivalent subjectivities that move back and forth between such terrains of identity as class, race, gender, nationality, language and sexual preference. People's identities then, cannot be reduced to an essence. They are situated fluidly along such lines, as, for instance, Afro-American-socialist-English-speaking-recently-divorced-father-and-factory-worker-man" (Bleiker, 2000: 198).

Identities in this sense are in a continuous, fluid process of 'becoming', rather than being reducible to an 'essence', and identity itself is fractured depending on how it has been constituted. Judith Butler (1990), taking the concept of constructed and fractured identities further than Haraway, expanded on these ideas on the terrain of gender and argued that sex, or in particular being female, is not a natural fact but rather a cultural performance regulated by the same institutional and cultural norms as Foucault's biopolitics. She argues that a person's "coherence" and "continuity" are socially instituted and maintained norms and that the "persistence and proliferation" of gender identities that exist outside these norms "provide critical opportunities to expose the limits and regulatory aims" of continuous and coherent identities among sex, gender, sexual practice and desire (1990: 17). Butler also reveals, on more concrete ground than Haraway, that a "*strategic* use of hyphenated identities opens up chances for undermining the regulatory norms" (cited in Bleiker, 2000: 1999, emphasis added).

These ideas are not just bound to gender, of course, but to all identities that are regulated by institutional and cultural norms, creating a fractured society. For example, Haraway's description of identity as a 'strategic site' or "a process akin to juggling – keeping several realities in precariously patterned motion and building strength to see the world that way" (1989: 311) recognises the fractured and contingent self and alludes to the recognition of a fractured society. Connolly goes further with this idea and suggests that it is only when we can recognise and accept fractured and contingent identities within ourselves and others that there is the possibility of moving beyond the closure of sets of contending identities within society that exclude and create 'otherness' by vying for hegemony (2002: 172).

According to this view then, society is divided because the abnormal must be contained and disciplined, and because individuals must disassociate themselves from the abnormal lest they be considered one of them. Hence the plan for peace and prosperity for all, whereby the self and society are 'normal' and without fracture can never be. The norms and categories of the global development agenda can never achieve a society without fracture because they will always produce fracture, and they will always produce identities that undermine and destabilise.

We reach a point now where it is pertinent to ask *how* the recognition of contingent and fractured identities opens up the chance to transform regulatory norms and categories such as those present in the global development agenda. Falling back on gender as an example of a contingent identity because it is a much-contested terrain in political discourse, we can see the implications for global politics through Butler's (1990: 148-49) assertion that:

> "deconstruction of identity... establishes as political the very terms through which identity is articulated... If identities were no longer fixed... and politics no longer understood as a set of practices derived from the alleged interests that belong to a set of ready-made subjects, a new configuration of politics would surely emerge from the ruins of the old".

Bleiker provides a more generalist understanding of the transformative potential:

> "By being aware of the arbitrariness and excluding tendencies embedded in identity constructions, such as class, race or gender, subjects become

> empowered and can take part in daily processes that slowly but constantly redraw the political boundaries of identities... potential for human agency is then contained in the transgression of boundaries that has been enabled through an awareness of the flexibility contained in hyphenated identities" (2000: 199-200).

Being alert to the "flexibility" of identity and the myth of a true and 'normal' identity at the level of individual and society, creates the ability to look beyond boundaries and 'difference' and to carve new ways of living and communicating with each other. Looking in to the spaces of exclusion maintained by dominant norms and categories is where we find these new ways of living and communicating in practice.

Identities themselves can be destabilising, particularly when they are celebrated and confront dominant identities and categories. Examples include the category of "the poor", who have celebrated and co-opted their identity as "poor" in some instances by creating new categories and meanings of the word poor. For example, a country in the South may be considered "poor" because they have a low GDP per capita, but a country in the North may be considered "poor" because they have high levels of social and family dislocation, or because they are not culturally "rich". Another example is the category of "Queer", which has also been co-opted and transformed from a derogatory term to an empowering one. Other identities that destabilise dominant norms are migrant workers, indigenous peoples, children and youth, 'hippies', women, religious, ethnic and gender minorities, and peasants or the landless. These identities exist at the margins of dominant identities such as "native citizen", "adult" "heterosexual" "Christian" "man" etc. who have claimed their own 'state of exception' simply because they have been historically bound to constructed institutional norms and categories. These identities destabilise because their choices, practices and beliefs are antagonistic to what is considered 'normal' or 'morally right' in society, and because they challenge dominant values such as those underlying material and capital wealth, nuclear families, hierarchies, desire etc. through their daily practices and beliefs. The next chapter will discuss this is more detail in the context of the WSF.

Stripping away one more level of identity brings us to the role of language. Language is important when analysing processes from a discourse rather than structural

perspective because it "interfere[s] with the mutually constituted and transversal production of power and knowledge" (Bleiker, 2000: 12). Languages, according to Bleiker, "impose sets of assumptions on us, frame our thoughts so subtly that we are mostly unaware of the systems of exclusion that are being entrenched through this process" (2000: 215). More importantly, language "produces the worlds in which we live from our political spaces (domestic or international) to our identities (us or them), and so it shapes who we are, the choices we make, and the lives we lead... it has productive or performative features that make it a political action and expression of power in itself (Lyotard, 1988 cited in Mattern, 2005: 92).

Hardt & Negri argue that despite language constructing and maintaining hierarchical relations, the 'subordinated' are often the "most creative agents of a linguistic community", referring to African American speech within American English as an example (2004: 132). Similarly, Bleiker illustrates the power of language to transform in his discussion of George Orwell's "1984", and explanation of linguistic "dissident strategies" such as the appropriation of meaning of existing concepts, and the creation of new concepts (2000: 229-30). When we focus on language as a formative part of identity and institutional norms, its transformative potential is obvious.

Certain forms of language and communication however, are more dominant than others and create the lived realities in society that we see today, so there is a need for strategies to ensure that other voices are heard. This problem can be partially addressed by focusing on the importance of temporality, and that language transforms very slowly, almost invisibly, over time. One example of this comes from the feminist movement and the use of language to describe the interaction of women and development. The original 'add women and stir' philosophy in development was reflected by the official language used in the UN and other development agencies – Women In Development (WIN). This was eventually changed to Women And Development (WAD) after further lobbying from within feminist movements, and was then changed again to "Gender And Development" (GAD) to reflect the new language of "gender" that feminists had again fought hard to achieve as an analytical category with specific meaning within development discourse. "Gender Mainstreaming" is the latest official terminology adopted to reflect further momentum within feminist movements, and no doubt this will also change in time.

The transformative potential of language also depends on the type(s) of language that the author/speaker chooses to "wield" (Mattern, 2005: 94), such as persuasive speech or argument, and the use and manipulation of raw data or statistics to reflect different outcomes. Importantly, transformation from the use of language is also dependent on the media that is used to convey the message, and the recognition that different types of communication, speech and language are equally as valid as the dominant types we see in society and politics today that rely on established frameworks and hierarchies such as academic and scientific debate, media conglomerates, parliaments, courts etc. Research on horizontal networking is an interesting development in this regard, revealing new forms of communication that use pathways external to institutionalised channels (Escobar, 2004). Cyberspace is another example of horizontal communications networks functioning outside regulatory institutions such as the State, although regulatory mechanisms are increasingly pervading this space over time.

Linguistic tactics that transgress boundaries and undermine norms work alongside other actions such as artistic, musical and cultural tactics, or the example used previously about the careful consumer who refuses to buy brand-name products. People are constantly reshaping their social environments through practices that confront and question dominant norms. The recognition that identities, and hence collective identities, are processes of becoming that contain contingent elements and fracturing within them, counteracts the homgenising closure of 'true' identities that are espoused by dominant narratives.

### 3.4 Conclusion

This chapter has introduced the concept of transversal resistance and illustrated how it forms via processes of exclusion that are inherent to the establishment of societal categories and norms. There is a dialectic between the global development agenda and transversal resistance because they are both products of biopower which on one side produces and maintains the categories and norms that permeate social life (global development agenda), and on the other side produces exclusion and categories of abnormality and dissent (transversal resistance).

There are three sites within transversal resistance that demonstrate transformative potential: The realm of 'dailiness', spaces, and identity. Agency and transformative potential within transversal dissent cannot be understood by drawing a direct line between the action and the outcome. Rather than strategy, daily activities or tactics form the basis of transformation, and it is within this realm of 'dailiness' (Bleiker, 2000: 211) that people constantly reshape their social environments, gradually transforming and destabilising societal norms and categories.

'Spaces' are also necessary sites of transformation, whether they be physical spaces that provide a platform for people to mobilise, public or civil spaces such as those created by NGOs for debate and analysis, or conceptual spaces that emerge from processes of exclusion. These spaces are inherently subversive and destabilising because they facilitate the confrontation of dominant norms and categories, but also because they are formed by the very power that seeks to marginalise them, simultaneously questioning the legitimacy of these dominant 'truths by demonstrating alternative logics.

Identity is a third key foundation from which to analyse transformative potential because the very constitution of identity creates boundaries and reinforces norms. Identities are bound to historically constituted institutions and norms, and so are able to influence and destabilise these norms. By being alert to the contingent nature and flexibility of identity at the level of individual and society, one is able to look beyond boundaries of difference and to carve new ways of living and communicating with each other. These new ways are revealed when we look into the spaces of exclusion maintained by dominant norms and categories.

The next chapter will introduce the World Social Forum as a form of transversal resistance, suggesting that the WSF represents the existence of an emerging, transversal, biopolitical space, which demonstrates the capacity to transform the global development agenda.

# CHAPTER IV

# THE WORLD SOCIAL FORUM

## 4.1 Introduction

There has been a wake of confusion following the new social movements, with the media initially focusing on mass protests in the North such as Seattle, Prague, Quebec and Genoa. Confusion surrounding their tactics, their legitimacy and their aims consistently follows them like a shadow. Recently, since September 11, 2001 acted as a catalyst for the alter-globalisation movement to adopt a different approach, and due to the widespread critique of the neo-liberal policies of the World Bank and the World Trade Organisation as having detrimental effects on the global South, there has been a softening of the media response to the movement. Firstly because the movement has moved out of the media spotlight, being replaced by the "war against terrorism" in Afghanistan and Iraq, and secondly because it has undergone a process of change in order to adapt to the post September 11 climate, some going so far as to suggest that it does not need the media to achieve its goals anymore (Monbiot, 2003). As a response to these changes, it has been argued by the media that the movements have dissolved (The Economist, 2004), and hence many questions remain unanswered about these diverse groupings of people from around the world.

The case study of transversal resistance in this paper is on the World Social Forum (WSF) as a manifestation of the type of global dissent we have witnessed from the new social movements. The World Social Forum is an annual event held in parallel to the World Economic Forum, and has attracted increasing throngs of activists, non-government organisations, intellectuals, social movements and other concerned individuals and groups to the Forums since 2001. With the theme "another world is possible", it acts as a platform from which ideas can be shared, discussed and developed regarding the facilitation of 'another world' in opposition and resistance to dominant neo-liberal policy and top-down power. It also represents the existence of a transversal, biopolitical space

within which non-traditional forms of power are operating. The WSF is an interesting locus of concern when analysing the new social movements because it is both a *product* of resistance against hegemonic forces, and a *mechanism* for resistance. This will be further explained in the next chapter.

In this chapter I will first introduce the WSF, outlining its composition, structure, principles and actors, and distinguish the WSF from other reactions to globalisation in terms of their refusal to accept top-down rationalities on how they should be governed, live, produce and reproduce. The second section will introduce two groups within the WSF that in my opinion provide a window into the plural and diverse nature of the WSF – these being: *Development Alternatives for Women in a New Era* (DAWN), a decentralised, international organisation who form part of the women's rights and feminist movements within the WSF; and *Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra* (MST), or the Brazilian Landless Workers Movement - one of the largest social movements in Latin America organising for land rights and sustainable land use. The final section briefly analyses the WSF in terms of how it reflects upon itself as a functioning and political creature, based upon literature that has emerged from WSF participants and founders, and focusing on the Forum's self-identification as a "space".

### 4.2 WSF: Structure, organisation and nature

There were approximately 155,000 participants from over 150 countries joining together in 2500 events at the last WSF in January 2005 (Becker, 2005; World Social Forum Bulletin, 2005), highlighting the vast diversity and plurality of issues and people that the WSF is host to. Main issue areas are not concrete – that is, they cannot be taken from any WSF mandate or agenda as agreed upon by all participants. Documentation associated with the WSF, however, which includes the WSF *Charter of Principles* and the *Call from Social Movements*, mention and focus on particular issue areas, under which hundreds of organisations and movements are aligned to. Some examples of these concerns include: women's rights/patriarchy; environmental destruction; war/violence; corporate

globalisation; 'free trade' and neo-liberal economics; food security and agriculture; labour rights; and debt cancellation to name a few (WSF India, 2004).

At the beginning of 2000, eight organisations – each with their own agendas – decided to hold an annual meeting of social justice activists – and this became the World Social Forum (Morduchowicz, 2005). The WSF was set up in 2000 as a meeting in the global South – specifically Porto Alegre, Brazil - in opposition to the World Economic Forum (WEF), which is predominately held in the ski resort town of Davos, Switzerland. With the slogan "another world is possible", the original WSF emphasised opposition to the neo-liberal economic current flowing through the global system. Five years later, the WSF continues to emphasise opposition to neo-liberal economics, but has moved away from being simply a parallel 'meeting' to the WEF and has evolved into the "most prominent manifestation of world civil politics" (Keraghel & Sen, 2004: 483) seen today, encompassing opposition to war, patriarchy, racism, religious fundamentalism and environmental destruction, among other issues. The first three Forums were held in Porto Alegre, but it is now no longer limited geographically to Brazil, with the 2004 WSF held in India, and plans for a polycentric Forum in 2006, reflecting broader changes in the Forum's political and cultural characteristics.

In addition to the WSF, there are regional and thematic forums held all over the world, concentrating on more localised issues, but linking with the larger WSF. Focused more on proposition of alternatives through democratic participation, rather than opposition to the status quo, the recent Forums have been described as a "political jam session with people bouncing off each other in harmony and in counterpoint… experimenting with a politics that can cope with uncertainty and is not constantly straining for formal harmony" (Wainwright, 2005: no page no.). They have increased dramatically in size, from 20,000 at the first forum, to over 150,000 people in 2005.

The WSF *Charter of Principles* provides the backbone of the WSF, continuity and a set of guidelines for the International Council (IC). The IC, with no pre-set number of members, is responsible for assuming the political and operational aspects of the WSF,

including strategy formulation, outreach campaigns, and fund-raising (WSF India, 2004). The IC currently comprises over 130 organisations/movements from all over the world. All members of the IC must subscribe to the *Charter* and be committed to the WSF process. The following excerpts from the *Charter* give an indication of some of the parameters that exist (taken from WSF India website, 2005):

> "The WSF is an open meeting place for reflective thinking, democratic debate of ideas, formulation of proposals, free exchange of experiences and interlinking for effective action, by groups and movements of civil society that are opposed to neo-liberalism and to domination of the world by capital and any form of imperialism…"
>
> "The meetings of the WSF do not deliberate on behalf of the WSF as a body. No-one, therefore, will be authorised, on behalf of any of the editions of the Forum, to express positions claiming to be those of all its participants…"
>
> "The WSF is a plural, diversified, non-confessional, non-governmental and non-party context… Neither party representations nor military organisations shall participate in the Forum"

The immensity of the 5th WSF held this year is difficult to fathom: There were 2500 activities over 11 Thematic Terrains, almost 7000 organisations from five continents, 66 indigenous peoples – the largest gathering of indigenous people in the world, and over 200,000 people present at the Opening March. In terms of organising, there were 3100 voluntary workers in translation, culture, logistics and services, 2,300 workers from the public service and 2,500 people from solidarity economy groups to assist with the construction of the Forum. Over 200 different kinds of auditoriums were built, 295 tents, and simultaneous translation was possible into 16 different languages for 450 activities (WSF Bulletin, 2005a). For the first time, the 2005 WSF had radio programs available on the Internet and phone, with 39 programs broadcasting over the six-day period.

Organisation of the WSF is what sets it apart from typical global or international forums. Up until the 2005 Forum, the WSF was organised by groups of local organising committees (either in Brazil or India). The Mumbai WSF, for example, was organised through a framework of the India General Council (IGC), the Indian Working Committee (IWC) and the Organising Committee (IOC). The IGC acted as a "validating forum"

(WSF India website, 2004) responsible for constituting the IWC and the IOC, as well as providing their mandate and legitimacy. The IGC was also responsible for developing the broad policy guidelines that ensured the WSF process was an "open, transparent and inclusive process collective of Organisations, Institutions and Movements subscribing to the Charter of WSF and committed to resisting imperialist globalisation, sectarian violence/ communalism, casteism and patriarchy" (WSF India website, 2004). These organisations had to be willing to contribute to the WSF process both organisationally and financially.

The India Working Committee was the active policy making forum, mandated by the IGC, to make appropriate decisions regarding the program vision, organisational and finance policies. IWC comprised of around 60 organisations, institutions and movements mandated by the IGC and actively contributed to the WSF process and event. The participating organisations in the IWC were responsible for mobilising volunteers, facilitating the WSF process in various states and contributing towards the fund raising.

At the third level, the Indian Organisation Committee was the Executing Body of the WSF 2004, as per the mandate derived from the IGC and IWC. The IOC comprised 25 to 30 persons from various participating organisation in the IWC. IOC had at least one member each from the 8 proposed functional groups and the remaining members nominated by the IWC "from different regions, sectors, political streams and people with specific expertise or ability to contribute, provided such members are willing to commit time and efforts as per the IOC norms". (WSF India website, 2004). Whilst the number of large plenaries were reduced at Mumbai from previous Forums, there was still a sense that organisation of the event was not reflective of the horizontal political space the WSF represents, because some 'official' activities and speeches came specifically under the banner of the 'WSF' and were organised by a minority for a majority.

The 2005 WSF in Porto Alegre incorporated new innovations in the organising process to accommodate a greater global perspective in how the event should be organised. This involved removing the major responsibilities from the local organising committees and

employing a global consultative process that provided the opportunity for anyone participating in the WSF to be involved in its organisation. The official program was eliminated, and past participants of the Forum were asked to propose the main themes, which formed the basis for the 11 thematic terrains. Over 1800 organisations participated in the process of developing the 11 themes (Morduchowicz, 2005). Groups then posted their plans and activities on the WSF website, registering them under these 11 terrains, and a team of facilitators assisted the process of merging and connecting groups that overlapped (Wainwright, 2005). This "self-managed" organising process proved to be rewarding, and reinforced the fact that people were motivated to connect with each other, but Amit Sen Gupta (2005) argues that many noted that "the absence of large, "unifying" events with broad political messages led to the diffusion of the political sharpness that the Forum was able to provide". Behind the scenes of these 'large unifying events', however, are well-known personalities – and the IC deliberately eliminated these lecture-style events to address criticisms of a top-down structure. Part of this was to discontinue the "practice of covering all expenses for famous guest speakers [and to] use the money saved to create a Solidarity Fund to help facilitate the attendance of poor participants from distant places" ((Morduchowicz, 2005).

The WSF forms a part of the new social movements that have emerged in response to *Empire* and the hegemonic power of the global development agenda. It is useful to briefly distinguish the WSF and these new social movements from other reactions to globalisation, in order to understand its nature. Bond (2001, cited in Hae-Young, 2002: 82 & Waterman, 2003: 63) has categorised five different reactions to globalisation since 1997: Global Justice Movements; Third World Nationalism; Post-Washington Consensus; Washington Consensus; and Resurgent Rightwing.

The first category, according to Bond, is against globalisation of capital (not people) and for a people-centred development or globalisation from below. It includes the new social movements, radical activist networks, indigenous peoples, some left-wing think tanks and environmental advocacy groups. The second category includes various self-selecting national regimes supporting increased but fairer integration into the world market, such as

India, Malaysia and China, and includes Islamic nationalism. The third category encompasses those who are advocating reform of the current system, fixing imperfect markets and incorporating sustainable development. This includes many United Nations agencies, some international NGOs such as Oxfam and Care, and some governments such as Germany and Japan. The fourth category consists of proponents of neo-liberalism with slight provisions for more transparency and regulation. The US government, World Bank, IMF and WTO are included in this group. The final group advocates for US isolationism and petro-military imperialism, and includes the populist and libertarian wings of the US Republican party and some right-wing think tanks. Using Bond's useful categorisations, it is clearly evident that the WSF is included within the Global Justice Movements.

Waterman (2003: 56) also classifies what he calls the "Global Justice & Solidarity Movement" in terms of what it is not: "It is *not* an international labour or socialist movement… it is *not* a 'transnational advocacy network'… it is *not* a reincarnation of the international protest wave following 1968…it is *not* an anarchist movement…[and] it is *not* a nationalist or thirdworldist movement". Waterman asserts instead, that the movement includes elements of *all* these groupings.

Highlighting the heterogenous nature of the new social movements, Hae-Young (2002: 84) has identified three main approaches within the Global Justice Movements: International reformism; globalisation from below; and delinking. Others have similarly identified differing "modes" or "archetypes" within it (Starr & Adams, cited in Waterman 2003: 59), which are concurrently reflected in the WSF.

It is necessary to now focus briefly on how the values of the WSF came into being in terms of a common refusal to accept top-down rationalities on how peoples should be governed, live, produce and reproduce. As Hardt & Negri have articulated, a new form of pervasive capitalist and imperialist power requires new forms of dissent (2004: 137). In the current period that some have called "late modernity" (Connolly, 2002: 20), this dissent is increasingly set against institutionalised standards that are either established 'democratically' or imposed from above. The WSF has emerged in a time when "one can

either treat one's life as a project, negotiating a path through a finely grained network of institutionally imposed disciplines and requirements, or one can struggle against those disciplines by refusing to treat one's life as a project" (Connolly, 2002: 21). Control is the key element, with the modern, democratic nation-state as the master who is able to control the environment, the population and the individual through a series of rationales, rules and procedures established through biopower. There is a gap, however, that exists between the achievement of mastery and the project to achieve mastery, and according to Connolly, as long as this gap remains to be seen as simply something that the drive of modern states can rectify, it will be a "danger to global survival" (2002: 24). In a globalised world, the project of mastery has extended into the realm of the global economy, but at many levels, people recognise, or are beginning to recognise the myth of the modern state's or the multilateral institutions' capacity for absolute mastery. This is particularly resonating amongst those who are excluded or shuffled to the margins in the globalisation project. Global issues such as climate change, war and resource scarcity are joined by increasing divisions between the rich and the poor – both between countries and within countries – and more and more people have begun to question rationales of governance, life and production that have been constituted within frameworks that contain inherent flaws such as patriarchy, racism, divisions of labour etc. The values that exist within the WSF have fomented through resistance to life as a 'project', and through a recognition that mastery over life and the earth is a perilous aim.

What makes the WSF and the new social movements different from other social movements of the past is that they include subjects such as peasants and the poor, who have been traditionally marginalised from political action. Their participation in transversal resistance is "dangerous" because "their mobility and their commonality is constantly a threat to destabilise the global hierarchies and divisions on which global capitalist power depends. They slide across the barriers and burrow connecting tunnels that undermine the walls"(Hardt & Negri, 2004: 137).

### 4.3 WSF Actors: internal diversities and commonalities

As the Charter stipulates, participants in the WSF are from civil society, meaning that political parties and military organisations are not permitted to take part. The IC's role is to ensure that there is a reasonable geographical and sectoral balance from non-government organisations, social movements, trade unions and others, reflecting the global diversity of cultures, ethnicities and genders. I have chosen two organisations that I believe provide a window into the plural and diverse nature of the WSF – these being: *Development Alternatives for Women in a New Era* (DAWN), a decentralised, international organisation who form part of the women's rights and feminist movements within the WSF; and *Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra* (MST), or the Brazilian Landless Workers Movement, one of the largest social movements in Latin America organising for land rights and agrarian reform.

It is not my intention to present these organisations/movements, who are members of the International Council, as major representative groups that exist at the WSF, because they only represent their *own* organisational aims. It is imperative to recognise that within the global environmental movement, for example, there are organisations that will have little in common with each other and that will probably never interact. To claim that any organisation within the WSF is representative of a larger movement who all share the same concerns and objectives is inappropriate. It is plausible, however, to analyse the network structure of these organisations and differences and commonalities that exist between them, as a microcosm of the WSF itself. Women's rights and agricultural reform are just two examples of prominent concerns within the WSF, and it would be equally as relevant to choose other organisations from the labour, environmental or anti-war sectors, which are also members of the International Council[7].

[7] Creating divisions and sub-divisions of issues within the WSF, and attributing certain organisations to these issues is inherently problematic due to the multi-layered interlinkages that exist between issues and actors. It is implied here only for ease of reference, and does not in any way insinuate that such divisions can realistically be made.

Development Alternatives with Women in a New Era (DAWN) is an international network of women activists, researchers and scholars from the South, who developed as part of a 'third world' feminist perspective at the end of the UN Decade for Women in 1984 (DAWN 2005; O'Brien et al. 2000: 36). DAWN's focus in particular was a feminist critique of development in the decades preceding the 1980s, and they were successful in placing economics on the feminist agenda, with feminist critiques of economics emerging from this point forward (O'Brien et al. 2000: 36). The DAWN network today covers Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean and the Pacific. They work at both a regional and global level, connecting with the priorities of women's and civil society organisations, and helping to strengthen women's capacity to deal with issues arising from the impacts of globalisation. To quote the DAWN website:

> "Much of DAWN's global advocacy work involves working in partnership with other organisations and networks to reform international institutions, ensure that governments live up to the commitments they made in the conferences, and mainstream gender in NGO advocacy initiatives." (DAWN, 2005)

DAWN's group of Regional Coordinators are responsible for linking with women's organisations and development NGOs in each region, within DAWN's key theme areas: Political economy of globalisation; sexual and reproductive health and rights; political restructuring and social transformation; sustainable livelihoods; and the Millennium Development Goals. In order to do this, DAWN relies on already established networks and organisations in each region. Their global advocacy consists of "producing and disseminating new analyses, engaging in key global processes and meetings, participating in selected institutional reform initiatives, working in partnership with like-minded feminist and development organisations and networks, and engaging with global civil society and social movements" (DAWN, 2005).

DAWN is active at UN conferences and within the WSF. DAWN, in collaboration with the Feminist Articulation of the Marcosur, successfully lobbied the Brazilian Organising Committee of the first WSF to include feminist panelists in the official WSF panels, and has attended every WSF since 2001. A large part of their attendance at the WSF has been through the Feminist Dialogues – a feminist event held at the WSF in 2003-2005 - which

was established as a space for feminist organizing and discussion in recognition that the Forum itself was dominated by men (Jones, 2005). Their visibility within and association with the WSF means that DAWN is one of the pivotal feminist organisations involved in the Forums.

In contrast to the international structure of DAWN, Brazil's Landless Workers Movement, or in Portuguese: Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra (MST), is the largest social movement in Latin America with an estimated 1.5 million landless members organized in 23 out 27 states in Brazil[8]. The MST has organised against one of the most asymmetrical land ownership systems in the world, where a tiny three percent of the population owns more than two-thirds of arable farmland in Brazil (Friends of MST, 2005). The MST survives by moving from place to place and setting up cooperative encampments. Their campaigns focus on the peaceful occupation of land in Brazil to protest against such gross imbalances in land ownership and to advocate for agrarian reform and the right to grow their own food. According to the Friends of the MST – a US based solidarity organisation, "the MST's success lies in its ability to organize and educate. Members have not only managed to secure land, therefore food security for their families, but also continue to develop a sustainable socio-economic model that offers a concrete alternative to today's globalization that puts profits before people and humanity" (Friends of MST, 2005).

The MST has a long history with the WSF – being one of the original eight organisations who formed the WSF in 2000 and one of the main reasons that Porto Alegre was chosen as the WSF's original site. The MST had a representation of around 450 people at the 2005 WSF, which according to Dirceu Luiz Dresch, provides the movement with the chance to have their voices heard and to express dissent for the situation of the millions of landless families the delegation represents (cited in Saadadi, 2005), and raise awareness of the brutal opposition they have encountered from landowners in Brazil who have assassinated union leaders (Stedile, 2004: 33).

[8] There were approximately four million landless in Brazil as of 2004 (Stedile 2004: 26).

With vastly different composition and objectives to DAWN, MST is a social movement of poor, landless people as opposed to a well-resourced international organisation of women scholars/activists such as DAWN. The differences between the two are apparent. DAWN campaigns internationally for gender equality and women's rights, whereas MST advocates for land rights for peasants and agrarian reform in Brazil. DAWN is funded by international donors such as the Ford Foundation and the United Nations Development Fund whereas MST is funded primarily by its constituents – poor landless workers – who contribute two percent of their production to the movement from each encampment set up (Social Movements International Network, 2005).

What brings both DAWN and the MST to the WSF is the chance to extend the reach of their campaigns and advocacy, raise awareness, and express common resistance to the current system. DAWN's organisational objectives flow effortlessly into the broader anti-neoliberal sentiment of the WSF and a large part of their global advocacy includes collaboration with other women's and development organisations for multilateral institutional reform. One example is the 'Women's eyes on the Bank' campaign against the World Bank, encompassing four specific demands, which was signed by 900 activists (O'Brien et al. 2000: 40-41). DAWN also conducts specific Gender and Trade campaigns against the WTO in South East Asia and the Caribbean (DAWN, 2005).

The MST as well, ties in to resistance against the global development agenda, although at first glance these links to the global arena are not as visible as those within DAWN. What links DAWN and the MST together is the fact that their fates are ultimately tied through macro-economic policy and Empire, despite their obvious differences in goals and objectives and the diversity of their constituents. MST local movements have attracted regional and global attention – particularly the large-scale occupations in the late 1970s and early 1980s that were politicised by military interventions, and more recently the March to Brasilia in 1997 where approximately 1500 people marched 1500 kilometres – an event that was captured in the photography of Sebastiao Salgado (Stedile, 2004: 22 & 34). This global recognition – and with it, international assistance and solidarity (see Friends of MST 2005) - has only supplemented an already fermented anti-neoliberalist

current that runs through the MST, largely because Brazil has been going through its own economic and political crisis from the dictates of the international system, despite Lula's presence, but also because forces of globalisation have enabled MST to network globally.

MST is part of the global network of the *Via Campesina* (see www.viacampesina.org), which comprises "rural women, peasants, small farmers, rural workers, indigenous people and afro-descendants, from Asia, Europe, America and Africa" (Social Movements International Network, 2005). The Via Campesina's have positioned themselves against neo-liberal policy in response to the existence of threats against peasant culture and way of life from globalising forces. Recently, they have been particularly active against bilateral trade agreements, large agribusiness corporations and genetically modified organisms (GMOs), as illustrated by the Declaration emerging from their Fourth World Conference held in Sao Paulo in June 2004 (Social Movements International Network, 2005). Via Campesina had a strong delegation at both the Mumbai WSF in 2004 and the 2005 Forum, and is a member of the IC. They were also involved in a thematic Forum on Agrarian Reform called "Pascual Carrión" or the World Forum on Agrarian Reform (FMRA) advocating for global food security, access to land and resistance to neo-liberal economic policy that supports large agribusiness corporations. The MST were part of the international organising committee for the FMRA, which took place in November 2004 in Spain, highlighting the advanced global networking structure that exists between localised peasant movements, and revealing the common threads that are interwoven between organisations and movements who may be spatially distant, but have transcended spatial boundaries to form part of a dialectic with biopolitical hegemonic power.

### 4.4 WSF as a "space"

As mentioned previously, organisers of the first WSF originally wanted the Forum to be a counterweight to the WEF, and a starting point for going beyond the mass "alter-globalisation" demonstrations against the vehicles of neo-liberal economics, or the World Bank, IMF and WTO (Hammond, 2005: 32). After 2003, however, questions began to arise concerning the aims of the WSF, and indeed whether it *should* have any aims. Chico

Whittaker, one of the "founding fathers" of the WSF, is one of those who are adamant that the WSF remains true to its Charter of Principles as simply a space:

> "No-one can speak in the name of the forum or seek to represent it, since it is neither a movement nor an entity. It is simply a meeting place, in which different civil society organisations may reach beyond the barriers dividing them, to help each other, to learn, to build new alliances and launch new initiatives. No WSF ever ends with concluding documents that pretentiously (and falsely) claim to shepherd everyone under the same banner. Each organisation or set of organisations can propose measures which are binding on them, however." (Whittaker, 2005b: 27).

Whittaker pictures the WSF as a market square (2005a) that provides the space for people to conduct their own affairs and interact with each other on their own terms. Similarly, intellectual Susan George is also against any centralization of the WSF to attempt to create one voice for such a multiplicity, asserting that it would be a "disaster" (Open Democracy, 2004). Irene Santiago from the women's movement in the Philippines also contends that "the *defence* of that open, non-threatening space must continue to be a prime objective. In that open space will come the words that we all need to define that "another world"" (Santiago, 2004).

Others believe that the WSF should be something more, however. Nineteen members of the International Council at the 2005 WSF for example, launched a 'Porto Alegre Manifesto', calling for "agreement among WSF participants on a clear set of goals for world economic reform" (cited in Patomaki, 2005). Trevor Ngwane has also raised an interesting point about the reinforcement of current inequalities within the WSF, asserting that the "International Council and secretariat are unwittingly allowing the marginalisation and eclipse of social movements by their hands-off, laissez faire approach to the organisation of events and activities in the WSF space" and arguing that Oxfam's Global Call Against Poverty (GCAP) campaign was able to "steal the show" due to their abundant resources (Ngwane, 2005).

Furthermore, Alex Callinicos and Chris Nineham (2005) have critiqued the 2005 WSF process of "fragmentation" into different thematic terrains, and contend that the "dynamic

was greatly weakened... all the more so because there were no generalizing events to compare with the magical opening ceremony at Mumbai, when 100,000 sat listening to speakers like Arundhati Roy, Chico Whittaker, and Jeremy Corbyn against the velvet backdrop of an Indian night".

Clearly the WSF has increasingly become a site of reflection about its very own nature. Christophe Aguiton from ATTAC in France, has identified three "poles" within the wider global justice movement that provide some insight into the challenges and possibilities that are facing the WSF. According to Aguiton, the first pole, 'radical internationalist' looks beyond capitalism and the nation-state, the second 'nationalist' pole comes predominately from the South, and the third pole is 'neo-reformist' or based on a model of global governance (cited in Waterman, 2004: 59). Forgiving the crude nature of these categorisations, all three could be present within the WSF, indicating three very different visions for the future, and correspondingly the possibility of three different fault lines within the WSF.

The question remains, then, as to what kind of 'space' the WSF is. How does the WSF function? According to some, the WSF is a complex, horizontal network (Hardt, 2004: 235; Anheier & Katz 2004:214) that sidesteps ideological opposition and is "infinitely expanding" (Hardt, 2004: 235). Hardt explains why ideological opposition is limited (2004: 235-36):

> "One of the basic characteristics of the network form is that no two nodes face each other in contradiction; rather they are always triangulated by a third, and then a fourth and then by an indefinite number of others in the web".

The WSF fits well into the network model precisely because of its decentralised structure and fluidity, but as opposed to highly organised, hierarchical network structures that have a degree of centralised control and particular rules and objectives, the WSF fits more into the "meshwork" model, which is based on "self-organisation, heterogeneity and diversity" (Escobar, 2004: 352). Anheier and Katz (2004: 214) conducted an interesting study of the 35 self-organised events during the Mumbai WSF in January 2004, using

various network models to determine if there were any patterns emerging in the level of connectivity between issue areas and actors. Their modelling revealed that the network of 35 self-organised events or "hyper-network" was highly complex, consisting of smaller networks that "vary considerably in terms of the issues they link, and [with] no obvious pattern... except for the relative salience of 'trade' as an issue in the network". They concluded from their network analysis programmes that global civil society discourse is still quite fragmented and disconnected, even though smaller networks were present at the same place and at the same time (Anheier and Katz, 2005: 216). The absence of any coherent pattern emerging from self-organised events, however, is more a reflection of the concept of self-organisation itself. Nonetheless, the issue of interconnectedness and the over-predominance of well-funded NGOs was one of the major reasons that the decision was made at the 2005 Forum to decentralise and create more local and regional Forums in 2006.

The network nature of the WSF – and of the Global Justice Movement – has been described as "the Internet come to life", with an infinite number of nodes interconnecting in both clusters and disparate forms, and with no centralised form of power or decision-making; rather a self-organised, continuous flow (Klein 2000, cited in Keraghel & Sen, 2004: 491). Escobar suggests that there are many similarities between the new social movements and cyberspace because they are both based on 'interactivity' and argues that cyberspace in fact could be seen as "embodying a new model of life and world-making" that is relational and where "all receivers are also potential emitters" (2004: 350).

Escobar (2004) has also made some interesting connections between the scientific study of *emergence* and the principle of self-organisation within social movements that also helps to explain how the 'space' of the WSF functions:

> "Ants, swarming moulds, cities, and certain markets are among the entities that show what scientists call 'complex adaptive behaviour.' These examples evince the existence of bottom-up processes in which simple beginnings lead to complex entities, without there being any master plan or central intelligence planning it... Scientists now have a new word for this discovery, *emergence*, when the actions of multiple agents interacting dynamically and following local rules rather than

> top-down commands result in some kind of visible macro-behaviour or structure." (Escobar, 2004: 351).

According to Escobar, cyberspace is a good example of complex adaptive behaviour grounded in a network of decentralised decision-making, self-organisation, heterogeneity and diversity (2004: 352). He contends that within cyberspace and the concept of emergence lies a "potentially meaningful" model of social life, suggesting that the "anti-globalisation movements... may be fostering a sort of 'emergence' in their attempt to counter the deadening, hierarchy-laden systems of neo-liberal globalisation" (2004: 353).

In any case, one is not going to find an instruction manual for the WSF that will enable you to deconstruct it and put it back together again with a label attached. The actors are found in all corners, wearing all sorts of different clothes, and engaged in a cacophony of praxis. When describing people's reactions to the global development agenda, Esteva & Prakash (1998: 13) capture the non-essence of the WSF:

> "For the most part... the main actors of the unfolding epic remain unknown to the world created by modern media...Their informal condition as the unnamed and the unidentified is an important aspect of their politics, often offering them the camouflage essential to their survival; as is their "failure" to adopt any "institutional structure".

Capturing the essence of how the WSF operates is indeed a fruitless endeavour because it is constantly becoming something else. Like a David Lynch film, the moment you think you can grasp on to a linear pathway and tangible plot, it dissolves like a chocolate in your mouth and all that is left is a raised eyebrow and a smile. The WSF is a space, a network and a site of *emergence* all at once. It is perhaps so unique in politics that it does not fit into any particular mould. But this does not mean that it does not exist as a site of power and that it does not transform. De Sousa Santos (2004: 338) asserts that any evaluation of the WSF "must be carried out according to the epistemology of the WSF itself". Its geo-political unit, for example, is "trans-scale" rather than national, and time moves forward on multiple planes, rather than being reduced to a state's action in linear time. Because of this, argues De Sousa Santos, "its efficaciousness cannot be assessed exclusively in terms of global changes. It has to be assessed as well in terms of local and

national changes" (2004: 339). These insights have important implications for an analysis of its transformative capacity.

### 4.5 Conclusion

The WSF – as a manifestation of the type of global dissent we have witnessed from the new social movements – is a unique event experimenting with a form of politics that does not rely on any formal harmony. Organisation of the WSF sets it apart from others because it is self-organised, horizontal and decentralised. The WSF is against neo-liberal policy and the globalisation of capitalism, and includes elements of many different types of movements, such as women, labour, anarchy and nationalist, to name but a few. It has evolved as a result of late modernity's drive to achieve mastery over life via a series of institutionalised rationales, and instead refuses to accept top-down rationalities on how peoples should be governed, live, produce and reproduce.

The actors involved in the WSF are diverse, with scores of different agendas – as exemplified by the examples of DAWN and the MST – but are linked together via a common fate, and their resistance to the global development agenda and globalisation from above.

As a 'space' the WSF has increasingly become a site of reflection about its very own nature. Likened to that of cyberspace, the WSF is a complex network and site of emergence where no overarching patterns or aims can be gleaned. This does not rule out the possibility of it being a site of transformation, however, and the next chapter brings us back to subversive power within transversal resistance, outlining how the WSF has the potential to undermine the walls of the global development agenda.

# CHAPTER V

# WSF – CHALLENGING THE GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

## 5.1 Introduction

It is important before entering into a discussion of how the WSF is challenging the global development agenda, to first recognise that if what people are asking for is change, or something that is new – why would they embark on this project within the very political and economic frameworks that form the heart of the problem? Criticisms aimed at the WSF and the Global Justice Movement often highlight the lack of structure, the lack of a universal agenda that appeals to all, the lack of coherent organisation, the focus on culture rather than politics etc. What they fail to do is question whether or not it is structure, coherence and universality that actually replicate the problems. What they fail to ask is whether culture could actually be inherently political. This is the point of departure that I am taking in the discussions that follow about the WSF and its transformative capacity. Transformation of the global development agenda is not exclusively predicated on cause and effect models and it is not based on the assumption that in order to answer to global power one should muster a counter-offensive to overthrow and replace it within its existing framework. As Haraway has explained, substitution methods "do not destabilise; they replicate… but if unsettled conditions can be produced in a discursive field… then fundamental change – transformation in the generative field – is just possible" (1989: 310).

As I have already established in Chapter four, the WSF is a manifestation of the type of global dissent we have witnessed from the new social movements. It is a space, a network and site of *emergence* all at once, transcending levels of analysis to incorporate all of them – local, national and global – and move back and forth between them. The WSF includes groups of people who have historically been excluded from 'international' social movements of the past, for example, the poor and peasants. It is also changing, evolving and adapting over time, with greater weight being given to local and regional Forums as demonstrated by the plan to decentralise the WSF in 2006. In this regard, the WSF exemplifies transversal dissent defined by

Bleiker as "a political practice that not only transgresses national boundaries, but also questions the spatial logic through which these boundaries have come to constitute and frame the conduct of international relations" (2000: 2).

As a response to the biopolitics of the global development agenda maintaining the categories and norms of social life, the WSF operates outside these constructed categories and identities, where dissent has evolved in the spaces of exclusion and abnormality. The WSF then, demonstrates the potential to open up alternatives "not only between obedience and disobedience, or between formal political participation and refusal, but also along the entire range of life and death, wealth and poverty, production and social reproduction" (Hardt & Negri, 2000: 26).

Within this frame of reference, I will now examine how transformative agency exists within the WSF, using the theoretical framework outlined in Chapter three.

### 5.2 Sites of transformation in the WSF

Values and norms play an important role in perpetuating the global development agenda, and hence the destabilisation of these categories and norms is one of the most important aims of transformation. Joseph Stiglitz, for example, who spent three years at the World Bank as Chief Economist and Senior Vice President, has argued that commercial and financial interests have had a dominant role at institutions such as the IMF and WTO, with little concern for the interests of the poor. However, beneath the surface, he reveals how it is values that play a major role in maintenance of the status quo:

> "While the [multilateral] institutions seem to pursue commercial and financial interests above all else, they do not see matters that way. They genuinely believe the agenda that they are pursuing is in the *general interest*. In spite of the evidence to the contrary, many trade and finance ministers, and even some political leaders, believe that everyone will eventually benefit from trade and capital market liberalisation. Many believe this so strongly that they support forcing countries to accept these "reforms", through whatever means they can, even if there is little popular support for such measures" (Stiglitz, 2002: 216, emphasis original).

From this perspective, we can see that transformation can be targeted by emphasising a focus on values, beliefs and culture, rather than specific policy change that may just simply patch up one hole in a leaking boat. Stiglitz (2002: 216) says it clearly, in that the "greatest challenge is not just in the institutions themselves but in mind-sets". He proposes that it is a particular *view* of economics that has been pushed over everything else that is the problem, rather than economics itself (2002: 220-21). So if values developed over time are a key problem, we can see the difficulties associated with basing 'measurement' of transformation on a set of well-defined indicators because value change is complex and subjective, and not defined to particular levels of analysis and cause and effect models.

The WSF has emerged in 'late modernity' when "one can either treat one's life as a project, negotiating a path through a finely grained network of institutionally imposed disciplines and requirements, or one can struggle against those disciplines by refusing to treat one's life as a project" (Connolly, 2002: 21). Control has been the key characteristic of late modernity, with the modern, democratic nation-state as the master who is able to control the environment, the population and the individual through a series of rationales, rules and procedures established and maintained through biopower. This project of 'mastery' has extended into the realm of the global economy, but at many levels, people recognise the myth of the modern state's or the global economy's capacity for absolute mastery, and the WSF is an example of this recognition. Peoples are questioning rationales of governance, life and production that have been constituted within frameworks that contain inherent flaws such as patriarchy, racism, divisions of labour etc. and the values that exist within the WSF have fomented through resistance to dominant values that treat life as a 'project', and through a recognition that mastery over life and the earth is a perilous aim.

In Chapter three I showed how dynamics of resistance exist in more complex and discursive forms than simple cause and effect models that draw a line between action and outcome. Rather than strategy being the basis for transformation of dominant values and norms, Bleiker explains how it is in the realm of 'dailiness' (2000: 211) that people constantly reshape their social environments, gradually transforming societal values. Tactics within a temporal framework form an important basis of transformation and change. When we think about every-day activities, we are also

compelled to imagine the culture(s) that are formed by this realm of 'dailiness', or rather the 'cultures of politics' (Keraghel & Sen, 2004). These tactics and cultures are embedded into the spaces from which ideas can be developed, discussed and practiced, and are also embedded within the diverse individual and collective identities that comprise the WSF. The following section will outline the sites of transformation within the WSF – the cultures, tactics, spaces and identities that have the capacity to transform the global development agenda.

**(a) The realm of 'dailiness' in the WSF: Culture(s) and tactics**

Nobel Peace Prize recipient, Adolfo Perez Esquivel, has stated that "the first victory achieved by empires is usually in the cultural realm" (cited in Morduchowicz, 2005), and so perhaps it is within this realm that we will see a reclamation of subordinated practices and beliefs. The 'culture' of the WSF itself is often described in terms of "the power of open, free, horizontal structures" (Whittaker, 2004, cited in Osterweil, 2004: 496), with diversity and subjectivity being its point of departure. Pleyers (2004: 509), describes the WSF as having a "political culture of inclusiveness... [that] relies above all on open dialogue and discussion, as it is practiced daily by activists and associations". Whether the WSF can be described as having a particular 'culture' is beyond the scope of this analysis. It is evident, however, that culture plays a central role in the processes and events within the WSF, as well as in any discussions about the WSF – whether they are in the form of critiques or praise. Many critics have described the forum as being based too heavily on culture and communication, rather than politics and action, and questions have been raised about the 'effectiveness' of the WSF and whether the WSF model can actually 'intervene' in politics. But it is necessary to question these critiques in regards to what actually constitutes a political act, and to question whether traditional definitions of 'political' are actually limiting our understanding of political change.

The WSF's unique form of politics, based upon horizontal networking, diversity and self-organisation, is similar to that of cyberspace (Klein, 2000, cited in Keraghel & Sen, 2004 and Escobar, 2004) with ever-expanding nodes transcending traditional forms of communication. As Keraghel & Sen (2004: 486) have asked, however: "Is/are the political culture(s) of the WSF merely the sum of the various political

cultures of the social and political movements that make it up? Or is the political culture of the WSF the result of another logic of interaction *between* those various actors?" In other words, do the every-day *tactics* (activities/proposals/interactions) emerging from the WSF constitute a new 'culture of politics' that transcend traditional conceptions of 'political culture'?

Osterweil (2004) argues that they do. By exploring beyond the idea that culture is "subservient to "real politics""(2004: 501), Osterweil suggests that culture itself is a key site for transformative political struggle (2004: 499), rather than focusing on political institutions and governance bodies as logical and necessary sites for political action:

> "...successful strategies of resistance must confront not only the political-institutional and economic manifestations of neo-liberal capitalist globalisation, but also, and at the same time, the foundational cultural logics and the quotidian practices and social relations that both constitute, produce, and make the dominance of these systems possible" (Osterweil, 2004: 498-99).

This reveals the need to go beyond "either/or logics" that situate the WSF as either 'cultural/communicational' or 'political' and shows how the WSF is actually both at the same time. By confronting "foundational cultural logics", practices and relations that are present within the global development agenda, the WSF is constantly engaged in political action. Recognising culture as a political site is useful when analysing how the WSF has the capacity to transform the global development agenda because it opens up the field of inquiry beyond the multilateral institutions and governance bodies that are traditional sites of 'political' action.

Culture is an obvious site of analysis when we recognise the biopolitical nature of the global development agenda. Hardt & Negri (2004: 221) argue that the "latent and implicit multitude" requires "a political project to bring it into being". Bleiker, however, sees the multitude as a 'becoming', through the processes of transversal resistance. Culture is a site of this 'becoming', as Osterweil has revealed, and the predominance of and focus on culture(s) within the WSF are a welcome respite from problem-solving approaches that seek to transform only within the already established 'political' frameworks. Osterweil suggests that the WSF is in fact a site "where the

struggle to assert the centrality of culture in politics is itself being played out" (2004: 497).

If we were to stick to narrow and traditional conceptions of 'political', which encompass the "set[s] of governing institutions and policies" (Osterweil, 2004: 502) contained within the state, multinational institutions and political accords, according to Osterweil (2004: 502), the aims of the WSF and the new social movements would be to successfully reform these institutions or to counter-balance their power through existing channels at national and international levels. This kind of approach, however, obstructs the biopolitical nature of the global development agenda that is *transversal* and no longer works within the "disciplinary modalities of the modern state" (Hardt & Negri, 2000: 344). Forms of rule have changed from sovereign to become deterritorialised and associated with production, consumption, education and culture etc. (Hardt & Negri, 2000: 344), which means that politics is present and active along all of these lines. Osterweil reflects this essence of Empire in his explanations of why traditional conceptions of 'political' are not enough:

> "Neo-liberal capitalist globalisation... far exceeds any identifiable institutions or policies, and both pervades and helps produce every aspect of human life – from our very conceptions of individuality, to our beliefs in progress and rationality. As such, no campaign or easily identifiable set of demands or objectives can constitute a sufficient or effective political approach. Resistance must be far more ambitious and variegated" (Osterweil, 2004: 503).

One of the political projects of the WSF, then, is to find and articulate ways to produce and disseminate other systems of meanings outside traditional understandings of politics and dominant narratives and norms. Culture is a useful starting point because the global development agenda, and in particular, capitalism, works through both political and economic power, but also by "claiming monopoly on all that is real and true" (Osterweil, 2004: 504). Focusing on culture and demonstrating new narratives of value, destabilises the legitimacy of capitalism and neo-liberalism as 'truths'.

Intimately tied to cultures and norms are daily activities. If cultures are key sites of transformation, as Osterweil (2004) has demonstrated, then the daily activities that comprise them are the tactics used to confront and reinvent dominant narratives and

norms, as well as producing and disseminating other systems of meanings. Within the WSF, there are thousands of groups and individuals employing a myriad of tactics that have the capacity to facilitate change and transformation. The WSF is both a product of and a mechanism for resistance to the global development agenda. With regard to the former, it is a space that has evolved from resistance struggles around the world and that acts as manifestation of transversal dissent. Concurrently, what happens *within* this space and what emerges from this space are tactics, proposals, ideas and collaborations that would not exist were it not *for* the WSF. In this sense it acts as a mechanism.

The 2005 WSF, for example, employed the use of 'billboards' where proposals from events, meetings and activities could be posted in order to document the different tactical formulations that came to fruition as a result of action within the WSF space. A new website is currently under construction where all of these proposals will be stationed for public access and discussion (www.memoria-viva.org), and for documentation of the tangible plans for "another world" that have resulted from the WSF. This Website, the collaborative efforts that created the proposals, and the proposals themselves indicate that vast numbers of people are increasingly demonstrating agency against the global development agenda and translating dissent into praxis in their daily lives. Constant action and dialogue are taking place across multiple fields, and many of the Regional, Local and Thematic Forums, for example, have been born from informal meetings and conversations at the WSF. The idea for the Belgian Social Forum was crystallised on the terrace of a café in Porto Alegre (Pleyers, 2004: 512), and the Feminist Dialogues were born from a casual meeting under a tree at the 2002 WSF (Jones, 2005). The coordinated mass demonstrations against the war in Iraq on 15 February 2003 were born from within the WSF, and the Social Movement Assembly on the final day of the 2005 WSF was a showcase of proposals for action against the global development agenda where representatives from different organisations and movements "came to the microphone one after the other to announce agreed action plans negotiated across different seminars and campaign sessions during the Forum" (Wainright, 2005).

Whilst a direct line between action and outcome in the fuzzy dialectic between the WSF and the global development agenda is at first glance absent, many lines can be

drawn on local, national and global levels that are biopolitical and reverberate within society, challenging individual values, family and community practices and norms, national policies and legislation, and macro-economic and political policy. One of the most important platforms for these types of actions to take place is communication and collaboration between peoples.

Over a period of time, and in concert with other similar actions, the MST, for example, have succeeded in placing their interests of land reform, and sustainable and subsistence agriculture on the tables of elite Brazilian farmers, on the agendas of the Brazilian government and in the pages of Northern-based websites and magazines. Given a space such as the WSF to further articulate their desires and laments, the MST were able to collaborate with people conducting similar campaigns around the world through the Via Campesina movement, who held their own thematic forum in November 2004 and participated in the 2005 WSF with nearly a thousand people from 40 countries and four continents (Friends of MST, 2005).

The November 2004 Thematic Forum on Agrarian Reform called "Pascual Carrión" or the World Forum on Agrarian Reform (FMRA) had the participation of 210 delegates from 76 countries, representing millions of peasant families (Social Movements International Network, 2005). The Forum – which was a direct result of the interaction of global communities at the WSF - advocated for global food security, access to land and resistance to neo-liberal economic policy that supports large agribusiness corporations. One of the concrete proposals that came out of this Forum included a commitment to draft an International Peasant's Rights Charter, which builds on the Human Right to food and the need for sustainable land and resource management. Such a Charter, if adopted and formalized within the UN, has the potential to transform governance and business practices within the global development agenda in terms of land ownership and use. Drafting of the International Peasant's Rights Charter forms part of the process to shift the momentum from mass monoculture production regulated and owned by large agribusiness corporations, to a respect and scope for small farmers and local production. Since the FMRA was a direct result of collaborations at the WSF, and forms part of the WSF processes as a Thematic Forum, direct links can be made between these developments at an international level, and the WSF.

Communication and collaboration with others are key daily practices of resistance that form alliances, distill campaign strategies, and act as mechanisms to undermine global forces. An Argenitine piquetero for example, who struggles for urban worker justice, shared his appreciation of the WSF as an invaluable space for interaction on "gaining a deeper understanding of each other's needs and methods, to attack the enemy from all angles" (cited in Morduchowicz, 2005). He was sharing his living quarters with Chilean Mapuche Indians and Brazilian MST members in a local sports stadium during the 2005 WSF.

Other, more "inaudible" (Bleiker, 2000: 180) examples of practices that challenge the norms and categories of the global development agenda are of networks who have been stimulated by the WSF to use its language - 'another world is possible' to articulate their ideas for and facilitate change. For example, the Next GENDERation Network, who were present at the European Social Forum, have focused their efforts on the democratisation of university education. Specifically:

> "... we don't buy into the current neo-liberal ideals of higher education as a training place in function of the needs of the labour market. We are invested in a vision of the university as a place for the production of critical and socially relevant knowledge, and want to work towards that ideal in our specific historical time and space. Another university is possible!" (cited in Waterman, 2003: 159).

Tactics or 'dissident strategies' come in an unlimited number of shapes and forms. These can be tangible, such as a proposal for a participatory budget model to be incorporated into national policy, or a proposal for the inclusion of a paragraph into the Charter of the World Summit for the Information Society (WSIS). But as Bleiker has already showed us, tactics can be intangible also, such as a poem, the creation of a new term or concept in an informal meeting at the WSF that permeates linguistic lexis over time, or a well-articulated argument that makes strategic use of information in order to persuade.

With simply thousands more of these kinds of efforts coming out of the Forums, the infiltration of a subversive discourse over time can contribute to creating a gap between the official political culture and political culture(s) in society. In his study of

peasant resistance, James Scott (1985: 35) provides articulate arguments in regards to techniques of daily resistance used within the peasantry that are similar to techniques in the WSF and the new social movements:

> "... this is a social movement with no formal organisation, no formal leaders, no manifestoes, no dues, no name, and no banner. By virtue of their institutional invisibility, activities on anything less than a massive scale are, if they are noticed at all, rarely accorded any social significance. Multiplied many thousandfold, such petty acts of resistance by peasants may in the end make an utter shambles of the policies dreamed up by their would-be superiors..."

Demonstrations, such as the millions of people who came out of their homes and workplaces to protest against the war in Iraq in February 2003, are activities on a massive scale, which are covered by global media and overtly challenge power on a specific platform. 'Petty' acts such as two or three organisations at the WSF agreeing on a campaign strategy to more effectively target corporations, for example (see CorpWatch, 2002), are like the activities of the slaves and peasants who intentionally performed their work carelessly and inefficiently for their masters (Scott, 1985: 33). They illustrate the complexity of the dialectic between dissident and hegemonic power, and show how daily activities over time contribute greatly to the reshaping of societal norms and values in the global development agenda.

**(b) 'Spaces'**

In Chapter four, the WSF was discussed in terms of it being a 'space' or a "a meeting place, in which different civil society organisations may reach beyond the barriers dividing them, to help each other, to learn, to build new alliances and launch new initiatives" (Whittaker, 2005b: 27). This space provides a platform outside the realm of institutional control, where individuals, groups and movements can share stories and ideas, develop tactics, oppose, propose, organise and grow. The physical space created by the WSF is unique because it has "no structure, no mediation, no control, no centre, no margins and no exclusions" (Keraghel & Sen, 2004: 489). The nature of the WSF as a self-organised network with no centralised control is unique, and reflects a common desire for new ways of working and associating that do not replicate the current institutional and governance bodies that form part of the global development agenda.

Waterman argues that the WSF and the social movements and other actors that comprise it, display new characteristics in terms of their spatial relations that distinguish them from international social movements in the past (2004: 61-62). This distinguishing feature is the interconnectedness of movements - especially the indigenous, oppressed and the poor – who are able to transcend boundaries and mobilise through horizontal networks. The much-used phrase by the Zapatistas, describes this spatial arrangement as "a world where many worlds fit" (cited in Waterman, 2004: 61).

Escobar's analogy of a 'swarm' and his discussions of the principle of self organisation and *emergence* – or complex adaptive behaviour – show how it is possible for a 'space' that allows "actions of multiple agents interacting dynamically and following local rules rather than top-down commands [to] result in some kind of visible macro-behaviour or structure" (Escobar, 2004: 351). Translating these ideas to the WSF, the complex network structure of the WSF, as exemplified by the research conducted by Anheier and Katz (2005), shows how many actors are connected through 'hub' organisations and smaller networks, and that in contrast to hierarchical network systems, the self-organised nature of the WSF means that they "develop through their encounter with their environments" (Escobar, 2004: 352), like the Internet and cyberspace. This model, according to Escobar, is an "entirely different" approach to the production and transformation of all aspects of life – social, economic and biological – and hence corresponds with the biopolitical nature of the global development agenda. The WSF then, when seen from this perspective, demonstrates a credible capacity to destabilise and transform the traditional spaces and hierarchies within the global development agenda because the nature of the WSF 'space' makes it possible to travel back and forth between the spaces of biopolitical control.

Women constitute a large movement within the WSF who are destabilising delineated categories and norms such as "carer" "beautiful" "mother" etc. and mobilising against these categories that imbue whole systems of control around their bodies and behaviour. Reproductive rights and sexuality are examples of areas that women are fighting to gain control of, and the Feminist Dialogues (FD) at the WSF have created a critical space for women to assert their differences and commonalities and work

together on common issues. As participant Lydia Alpizar noted from the 2005 Feminist Dialogues: "... the FD is a process where feminist movements and organisations are trying to create their own strategic space, and I think the fact that the dialogue takes place and provides such a rich opportunity for women from all over the globe to talk to each other and think together about how to better tackle and respond to current challenges, is an outcome in itself (cited in Jones, 2005).

Scott argues that the "social spaces where the hidden transcript grows are themselves an achievement of resistance; they are won and defended in the teeth of power" (1990: 119). This point is relevant to the WSF because it is not only a space for resistance, but an achievement of resistance. The WSF processes are a direct result of the processes of exclusion that have been established through the global development agenda. The terms and categories of neo-liberalism and global capitalism have been built with their inherent cracks and crevices of exclusion where the "hidden transcript" of dissent grows. The bigger these spaces become, the greater a threat they are to the normalising forces of the global development agenda. The fact that the WSF even exists is testament to the battles that have already been won offstage.

The WSF, then, is not just a physical space for action – like the market-place analogy that Chico Whittaker has used (2005a) - but a manifestation of the growing cracks and crevices within the global development agenda that have been constituted by the establishment of its categories and norms. For example, one of the most pervasive and established categories of the global development agenda is global capitalism and it's alleged capacity to facilitate prosperity and peace. Within this category are infinite numbers of other terms and categories that have become normalised in capitalist discourse such as the concept of private ownership, for example. People who have been negatively affected by elements of capitalism – such as societies based on communal land tenure in Africa who have been the target of private ownership campaigns by the World Bank (Federici, 2001: 134) – are automatically excluded from these dominant 'norms' and form part of a different space, or the 'abnormal' space. It is within this 'abnormal' space that their own terms and categories are solidified through resistance, which *always* exists in the hidden transcript, regardless of the nature and strength of subordinating power. Remember the serf, the slave and the untouchable, who "may have difficulty imagining other arrangements other than

serfdom, slavery and the caste system, [but] will certainly have no trouble imagining a total reversal of the existing distribution of status and rewards..." (Scott, 1990: 80).

The MST in Brazil are another example of peoples who are excluded by the terms and categories of capitalism because established rules and laws favour land-ownership, mass production and profit over communal and subsistence livelihoods. The MST have formed in the cracks and crevices of dominant forces of power and within the WSF they have found a space to join together with other landless workers and peasants, whose resistance has also formed in other cracks and crevices of dominant power. The convening of their own Thematic Forum on agricultural reform has enabled them to celebrate their own cultures and practices and to confront dominant forces of power within the global development agenda and their associated terms and categories, such as the large agribusiness corporations and the concept of mass monoculture production.

Indigenous peoples from all over the world have for hundreds of years been marginalised by Western-centric terms and categories associated with the nation state, representative democracies and patriarchy and are now also marginalised by the terms and categories of the global development agenda such as trade liberalisation, intellectual property rights and genetically modified organisms. The 2005 WSF was the largest representation of indigenous peoples to date (World Social Forum, 2005a), with 66 different indigenous groups converging on the WSF space to celebrate their cultures, identities and livelihoods, and express their resistance against the global development agenda that patents thousand-year-old knowledge, and subordinates their agricultural practices to cash crop exports.

The WSF is a manifestation of all the spaces of exclusion and abnormality that have been produced through biopower, and a physical space for the articulation and affirmation of these terms and categories, practices and relations that have been relegated to the status of 'underdeveloped' 'peasant' 'backward' 'queer' 'hippie' etc. In addition, the Forum's use of cyberspace is an important site of transformation that should not be overlooked. In fact, just as the Protestant Church in East Germany was autonomous enough from state control to become a key platform for the fall of the

Berlin Wall (Bleiker, 2000: 177-179), cyberspace could be interpreted as the new social movements' 'Protestant Church' against the global development agenda.

Cyberspace or the Internet is an invaluable space for the WSF. The 2005 WSF relied on the Internet for the participation of the over 1800 organisations that helped to develop the 11 thematic terrains, and also for the facilitation of event organising under the umbrella of these terrains. The networks of cyberspace enable the communication and collaboration of organisations and individuals before, during and after the events. The Billboard of Proposals is Internet based, and the WSF Bulletin is distributed to IC members and other subscribers through email, linking Regional and Thematic Forums to the WSF, disseminating calls to action, and reporting on the latest news regarding upcoming Forums all over the world. Aside from this, the participants of the WSF are also using cyberspace for their own ends, building on ideas conceived at the WSF, communicating with people they met in person at the WSF, and co-ordinating campaigns and activities across borders. It is obvious that without cyberspace, the WSF would not exist on the global scale that it currently does.

The cyber-networks that are facilitated by the WSF are what Escobar (1999: 240) describes as "cybercultures that resist, transform, or present alternatives to the dominant virtual and real worlds". These cybercultures tack back and forth between cyberspace politics and "place politics", or the 'real-world' interactions that take place in physical spaces. It is important to recognise the magnitude of place politics in transformation, given that our problems are 'real world' rather than virtual, and the WSF embodies this recognition in its sheer physical presence. But cyberspace is a network that is also transversal – giving it special relevance to the new social movements engaged in transversal resistance against the transversal biopolitics of the global development agenda. Whilst it is beyond the scope of this paper to engage in a comprehensive discussion of how cyberspace contributes to transformation – it is necessary to point to its significance as a space in the landscape of transversal resistance.

**(c) Identity**

The WSF displays a new style of politics whereby hierarchies are redundant, differences are respected and encouraged, consensus is not desired, norms are not categorised, and human agency is given a space to transgress boundaries so that local praxis and everyday forms of opposition and proposition can enter other political spheres and dismember the 'fixed' bodies of grand narratives. Identity also plays a key role in the WSF and its capacity to transform the global development agenda.

It has been argued that the alter-globalisation movement differs from past 'international' social movements because it expresses 'interest' rather than 'identity', which was asserted during the seventies and eighties by the women's movement and sexual minorities, for example (Waterman, 2004: 58). As we have seen from Chapter three, however, identity is a key foundation of the boundaries, norms and categories that reinforce the global development agenda. There is an intrinsic relationship between categories of normalisation and identity because identities are bound to established institutions and maintained through their regulatory mechanisms (Connolly, 2002: 20-21). In this sense, they are also key tools for the destabilisation of these categories through a recognition of the contingent and fractured nature of self and society. Being aware of the flexibility of identity at the level of individual and community, creates a window to look through difference and carve new ways of living and communicating. The WSF creates awareness of the excluding tendencies of identity constructions by *embodying* the calm and incongruence of fractured and hyphenated identity and by symbolising the exclusions that have been created through normalisation.

The WSF embodies the incongruence of fractured identities because it is constituted by a multiplicity of identities that exist together in the same space and are incongruent and sometimes in opposition to each other. Like my fractured identity as wife and feminist, these two subjectivities intersect in tension at some points, but don't result in a breakdown of self. Women's rights and peasant culture such as that which is expressed within the Via Campesina movement, also inevitably intersect in tension at some points, but do not interfere in the WSF as a space for transformative agency. On the contrary, they provide the opportunity to "travel across various discursive fields of power and gain the critical insight necessary to escape at least some aspect of the

prevailing order" (Bleiker, 2001: 207). They symbolise exclusions because they comprise those who *are* excluded and those who empathise with the excluded, and their common platform is the desire for this exclusion to be recognised and transgressed. By illustrating that categories of identity can be escaped, the WSF concurrently illustrates that established identities and categories are not 'normal', but rather are 'not'. Stability of so-called norms are inherently called into question when their foundations are revealed to be shaky.

The way they do this is via a melange of tactics that are local, national, international and global, and that sit in the margins of 'normalised' political and economic practices embedded within the historically constituted institutions that our identities are bound to. Simply 'being' or celebrating identity can be destabilising, for example, such as the category of the 'poor' and the category of 'queer' discussed in Chapter three. Within the WSF there are many examples of identity categorisations that are labelled as marginal or 'abnormal' by the global development agenda. The assimilationist thrust of global capitalism, for example, has attempted to bring everyone under the umbrella of consumerism and profit, transforming almost everything on the earth into a commodity – including global commons such as water and culture, and even bodies and financial speculations - ascribing the identity of 'consumer' onto the terrain of 'normal'. Many people reject this identity, however, such as the Solidarity Economy groups who are active participants in the WSF processes (see Quintela, 2003; Economic Solidarity Group of Quebec, 2003). These groups are determined to transform economic practices into serving communities rather than capital returns, and have constructed networks around the world to promote and practice the ideals of solidarity economies, and to celebrate identities that fall outside that of 'consumer'.

One of the unique aspects of the WSF is that it is in opposition to the global development agenda as well as being enmeshed within it – demonstrating and embracing the paradox between individual and collective identity (Connolly, 1991: 200), and potentially "disturbing the closure of self-identity" that has been facilitated through the binding of identity to established norms.

For example, the WSF represents a reconceptualisation of collective freedom because it transcends state-bound notions of individual and collective identity. Collective

freedom in this new conceptualisation then, is not adverse to individual identities that might "jeopardise [the state's] claim to be an effective vehicle of freedom" (Connolly, 2002: 199). Connolly suggests, for example, that if public identifications with my identity are negative and I am marginalized and excluded, and if these identifications are important to the integrity of collective identity, then I am a threat to that collective freedom and so the negative definitions applied to me are upheld. The fact that the WSF embraces difference and diversity without imposing norms, means that my identity as such does not threaten the collective freedom within the WSF, and does not, therefore, need to be suppressed. The lack of central authority means that the concept of collectivity is never fixed and therefore limits exclusion. The implications of this are that identities are free to be and become at any point in time, and are not bound to any particular definitions or categorisations imposed by a central authority. This is an affirmative process for marginalized identities, but also simultaneously contributes to de-individualisation and the opening up of closed identities that have been formed through power, to flexibility and change[9]. This capacity for a simultaneous affirmation of oppressed identities and yet an identity dismantling process of dominant identities contributes to a process of reconstituting and transforming identities over time.

Language and alternative forms of communication in the WSF also have the capacity to contribute to the destabilisation of established norms and identities. Forms of 'democratic' communication that currently exist are inexplicably tied to and legitimated by institutions. Working outside these categories, co-opting concepts and presenting them in a different manner represents one way that the validity of these categories and norms can be challenged. The proposals and strategies from the 2005 'mural of proposals' are still not available on the Forum Social Mundial website, but many of these proposals will find their footing in a local context, and many others have already been launched from the thematic and regional Forums. At one of the spaces created by the European Social Forum (ESF), for example, a new 'organisation' called "The Laboratory of Insurrectionary Imagination" (LII) was born.

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[9] There are exceptions to this within the WSF, because the WSF Charter of Principles stipulates that the use of violence is unacceptable, and that military associations and political parties are not permitted to take part in the Forum processes. Some have suggested that this restriction is problematic for the WSF's proclamation as an open space (Callinicos & Nineham, 2005; Keraghel & Sen, 2004: 487-88) but I would argue that the Forum places these restrictions on participants in order to put into practice what it is that many Forum participants desire – new methods of change and power relations that do not include the use of force or centralized and competitive party politics.

Consisting of a network of people involved in innovative resistance and education strategies, the LII combines art, culture and politics to express their resistance to the current system:

> "We believe that playful forms of cultural intervention in everyday life and the development of convivial spaces that enable participants to cultivate full confidence in their own creative capacity are fundamental tools for social change." (LII, 2005)

Types of "cultural intervention in everyday life" include street theatre, trainings, and actions that disrupt and disobey rules and 'norms' of every day life. These interventions took place in the streets of London during the ESF, and also in events leading up to the G8 Summit in Scotland. Each action or intervention is carefully planned and executed, and designed to attract attention to and satirise everyday activities that have become normalised in Western society. Some examples include prostrating in front of perfume counters to satirise consumerism, and the organisation of a 'clown army' working for 'Operation H.A.H.A.H.A.A' to satirise military strategic planning (LII, 2005) during the G8. One of their tactics was a "War and Strategic Planning Room" at the Centre for Contemporary Arts in Glasgow, depicting a strategic map of the Gleneagles Hotel in the centre of the room with "converted" army figurines surrounding the compound. Their co-opting of military procedure and the use of 'converted' plastic soldier figurines surrounding a summit of world leaders is an example of how 'normalised' activities within the current institutional framework can be challenged through the clever use of comedy and language.

Returning now to the overall transformative potential of the WSF, Connolly argues that late modernity has produced a dominant state of "dependent uncertainty" where there is dependence upon institutional standards and disciplines, yet uncertainty about the stability of these established rules over time (2002: 22). For Connolly, this partly explains the many social ills we see today, such as suicide, violence, greed etc., and how there exists a level of resentment between those negotiating the project of life and those enmeshed within the system who "complain" such as many participants of the WSF. For example:

> "What gives these "others" the right to complain when many struggling to measure up to the demands of life as a project already face as much self-discipline, dependency, and uncertainty as they can handle?" (Connolly, 2002: 23).

Perhaps what the WSF does then, is to not only engage in a continuous process of challenging dominant norms and categories associated with the global development agenda, but to directly call to the state of 'dependent uncertainty' that exists at a societal and individual level regarding our dependence on institutional standards, and yet our uncertainty of the fractured nature of ourselves and society. This call asks us to embrace our uncertainty of 'normal', to question the certainty of our own historically constituted identities, and to recognise and affirm those who exist in the spaces of exclusion and marginalisation. In doing so the WSF stands at the centre of two sides. On one side stands the continuing project for mastery over life, and for life without fracture. On the other side stands the recognition that life is diverse and messy with elements of "recalcitrance to human projects, resistance to any model of normal individuality and harmonious community" (Connolly, 2002: 31). Some might call this side 'anarchy', but I would rather refer to it as 'ambiguity'. Peace & Conflict studies is a recent academic example in which this kind of ambiguity is recognised to a certain extent, as it contends that conflict in society is inevitable, it's just that we humans haven't yet figured out how to create room for conflict without resorting to aggression. The WSF is also an example of ambiguity, because it creates room for difference and conflict without attempting to control it. What levels of transformation that occur within the global development agenda are impossible to predict at this stage. It is safe to assume, however, that transversal resistance and challenges to dominant discourse will continue.

## 5.4 Conclusion

This chapter has situated the WSF within the theoretical framework outlined in Chapter three, articulating how the cultures, tactics, spaces and identities within the WSF are challenging the norms and categories of the global development agenda. Values and norms play an important role in perpetuating dominant power, and the WSF demonstrates a unique capacity to destabilise values and norms because the transversal resistance that is taking place within it travels back and forth between the spaces of biopolitical control.

As a site of culture and tactics, the WSF creates and affirms new logics of meaning and practice that fall outside dominant categories and norms, and challenge their legitimacy. As a space, the WSF provides a platform for new forms of communication and for the joining together of people to collaborate, share, strategise, learn and move forward on concrete issues such as agricultural reform and women's rights. As an embodiment of fractured identity at the level of the individual and society, the WSF creates awareness of the contingent nature of identity and the excluding tendencies of identity construction and creates a reconceptualisation of collective freedom and contributes to a process of reconstituting and transforming identities.

# CHAPTER VI

# CONCLUSION

This paper has attempted to reveal post-structuralist challenges to the global development agenda, using the World Social Forum as a case study, and a theoretical framework of transversal resistance and biopower. Returning to the original objectives of the research will show how this research has indeed met the proposed objectives:

## 6.1 Objective 1: Analyse power and resistance as exercised by and within the WSF.

Analysing power and resistance as exercised by and within the WSF required an analysis of how power operates within the global development agenda. Chapter two defined and discussed the global development agenda in terms of its nature and actors, and then analysed how power operates to maintain and perpetuate it as a dominant force. Foucault's notion of biopower was used to explain how the global development agenda is maintained by a globalised, biopolitical machine that is economic, communicative, cultural and industrial. Biopower has reified inequality and war through structural segregations and hierarchies such as the nation-state, gender, race and class – aimed at both the individual and the population. Control is therefore exercised through deep reaching, intrinsic societal elements that have become normalised through institutions and disciplinary procedures.

Biopower, however, always produces resistance, which is found in the categories of abnormality and exclusion that are produced through biopower. The production of norms and categories in the legitimation of institutions and discourses over time necessarily produces exclusion and resistance because categories of abnormality need to exist in order to create the borders of normality. Resistance within the WSF, then, has emerged as a result of processes of exclusion from the global development agenda, and this resistance is situated in a dialectic with the global development agenda because both are products of biopower.

### 6.2 Objective 2: Describe the nature of transversal resistance in the WSF

Resistance to the global development agenda was discussed in detail in Chapters three and four. Based on Bleiker's notion of transversal dissent, resistance in the WSF is 'transversal' because it goes beyond borders and questions the logic through which these boundaries have been constituted. In this sense it corresponds with the biopolitical nature of the global development agenda, and is in a unique position to challenge it.

Resistance to the type of power emerging from the global development agenda must be transversal and biopolitical in order to counter and transform it. Resistance today, as exemplified by the WSF, does not seek to overthrow and replicate rule using existing capitalist and democratic models, but rather seeks to challenge and subvert societal norms that form the basis of our self-regulating, normalised society. The global development agenda, which is based on the dominant 'truth' of neo-liberalism and global capitalism producing peace and prosperity for all, is being resisted by those who desire a different outcome or 'another world', where value exists apart from consumption and money and where dominant narratives of value can be disrupted and reinvented.

Comprised of a multitude of social movements, organisations and individuals with their own agendas, the nature of transversal resistance within the WSF is resistance to neo-liberal policy, and a refusal to accept top-down rationalities on how peoples should be governed, live, produce and reproduce. It is based on the principles of decentralisation, horizontality and diversity, and represents a new model of political and social action, outside of institutional control. It has been shown as both a product of resistance and a mechanism for resistance.

Three sites have been revealed within transversal resistance that demonstrate transformative potential: the realm of 'dailiness'; spaces; and identity. The methods of transversal resistance in the WSF were hence revealed through an analysis of the WSF in terms of these three sites. Through every-day praxis, the creation of subversive spaces and the existence and affirmation of oppressed and marginalised identities, the

WSF has been shown to be a continuous site of political action where dominant norms and categories within the global development agenda are being challenged.

### 6.3 Objective 3: Discuss the transformative capacity of transversal resistance within the WSF

The transformative capacity of the WSF as a result of transversal resistance was discussed throughout the paper, but particularly in Chapter five – which concentrated on how the WSF challenges the norms and categories of the global development agenda. Transformation was established in Chapter three as being more complex than the direct and measurable end-point of a particular action, and was shown to be a continuous process with outcomes on various levels that transgress the structural dimensions of established institutions and reverberate through the biopolitical landscape. Since values and norms play an important role in perpetuating the global development agenda, the destabilisation of these norms and categories is one of the most important aims for transformation. Chapter five outlined in detail how the WSF demonstrates the capacity to transform dominant norms and categories because it is a unique site for culture(s) and tactics, a physical and conceptual space for collaboration, and a process of affirming marginalised identities whilst at the same time reconstituting dominant identities.

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