

# Globalization and Inequalities

Complexity and Contested Modernities

Sylvia Walby



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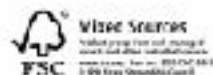
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# 4 Politics

## Introduction

Politics constitute an institutionalized domain, a sedimentation of political forces in a system of centralized institutions that govern the economy, violence, and civil society. The nature of political institutions is the outcome of past political struggles that continue to have implications into the future as a consequence of their embeddedness in institutions. States and politics need to be reconceptualized in order to fully take into account complex inequalities and global processes. Four themes are addressed in this chapter: the reconceptualization of types of politics; the non-saturation of a territory by any one polity, and the implications of their overlaps; rethinking the conceptualization of democracy; the development of democracy.

First, the concept of state is too narrow to capture the range of political institutions that are made visible when complex inequalities are brought into focus. The broader concept of polity is needed so as to encompass not only states but also nations, organized religions, hegemons, and emerging global institutions. Further, the assumption that nation-states were ever common is challenged, not only in a global era. Understanding a globalizing era requires new concepts for politics.

Second, politics overlap and rarely politically saturate any given territory, especially in a global era. This is a challenge to conventional analyses of the state, which assume that a single polity has a monopoly over political authority. In particular it is a challenge to the concept of the nation-state: nations and states rarely completely map onto each other. There is often more than one significant polity in a country, and they compete as well as cooperate.

Third, a modern polity is a democratic polity. The conventional definition of democracy, however, insufficiently captures the varying

depth of democracy that is so important for women and minoritized groups. It is important to identify separately the depth of democracy separately for different regimes of inequality, since these often do not coincide. A ten-point scale is introduced, and distinctions between suffrage-democracy, presence-democracy, and the breadth of democracy.

Fourth, while economic development has traditionally been seen as the most important force behind men's suffrage-democracy, a wider range of forces appear relevant for the suffrage-democracy associated with complex inequalities. In a global era a wider range of forces is potentially relevant, from global waves of democratization to the interventions of global hegemony.

## Reconceptualizing Types of Politics

### Introduction

The concept of state needs to be rethought to address complex inequalities and global processes. As indicated in Chapter 1, while globalizing processes have often been considered to have a tendency to reduce the powers of states (Fukuyama 1992; Cerny 1995, 1996; Ohmae 1995; Castells 1997; Habermas 2001), there is a more diverse range of relationships between globalization and political entities including: resistance to globalization (Castells 1997; Swank 2002); the creation of nation-states by a world society (Meyer and Hannan 1979; Meyer et al. 1997); the constitution of states within a world-system of capitalism (Wallerstein 1974, 1980; Robinson 2001); the development of hegemony (Chase-Dunn et al. 2000); as well as broader global restructuring (Brenner 1999; Held et al. 1999); and the development of multi-level (Ruggie 1998), transnational (Haas 1958, 1964; Habermas 2001), and global (Held 1995; Robinson 2001) forms of governance of the system as a whole. Understanding globalization also necessitates understanding the changing nature of the global landscape in which politics are embedded, as to whether this is becoming de-territorialized (Scholte 2000) or not (Sassen 2001, 2008), more or less regionalized (Hettne et al. 1999), or increasingly regulated by global bodies (Held 1995).

Much analysis of the state, democracy, and globalization has focused on social processes primarily connected with changes in



capitalism and associated class relations. However, this is unduly restrictive, as it excludes other complex inequalities stemming from ethnicity, 'race' (Wilson 1987), nation (Smith 1986; Calhoun 1995; Brubaker 1996), religion (Beyer 1994), and gender (Kenworthy and Malami 1999). When these complex inequalities in addition to class are made visible, then a wider set of politics comes into focus. In particular, religions are prime carriers of ethnic, national, and gender projects into global and regional conflicts. Such conflicts (for instance, that between fundamentalism and 'the West') are hard to understand without the inclusion of interests of gender and ethnicity alongside those of class and economics. It is important to consider the full range of politics and not only the sub-set constituted by states if the politics associated with complex inequalities are to be included in the analysis.

A minimal definition of a polity is an entity which has authority over a specific social group or territory or set of institutions, which in turn has some degree of internal coherence, some degree of centralized control, some rules, the ability to typically enforce sanctions against those members who break its rules, the ability to command deference from other polities in specific arenas over which it claims jurisdiction, and which in turn has authority over a broad and significant range of social institutions and domains. The forms of authority and power, and the means to enforce sanctions, are varied. There are different kinds of power of polities, including coercion, economic, legal, and symbolic power. These can be coordinated in different ways and have varied spatial and temporal reach. The notion of membership is needed to ascertain who is within and who is without a polity, and most have complex rules regarding entry and exit (for example, membership if the parent was a member or if birth was within its territory), with complex processes or rituals mediated by bureaucrats or priests. This definition of polity is wider than that traditionally used, however, it is not intended to capture all forms of governance structures within this definition. There are some forms of governance that do not have the temporal and spatial scale or the institutional range necessary to constitute a polity. Small-scale specialized institutions of governance, such as business firms, labour unions, hospitals and universities, are not within the concept. Not all sets of political institutions constitute polities. There are a number of borderline cases, for instance, national projects that have strong institutions within civil society. If a political collectivity is not able to enforce deference to its rules from its members and from established polities then it falls outside the definition of polity. Only very well developed national projects will meet these criteria, and many embryonic projects will not. Similarly, communities based on criteria of ethnicity or racialization or linguistic commonality may

or may not establish sufficiently developed institutions for them to constitute a polity.

Polities include, in addition to states, nations (if they have well-developed sets of civil society institutions), regional polities (such as the European Union), some organized religions (such as Catholicism and Islam), empires and hegemons. 'Nation' should not be conflated with 'state' (as in 'nation-state') if the greater number of states than nations and conflicts between nations and states are to be explained. Empires should not be conflated with nation-states, because of the political significance of multiple nations subject to a common state. Organized religions should not be excluded from the category of polity, if the ethnic, national, and gender political projects that they carry onto a global stage are to be understood. The European Union is a significant polity, with consequences for gender, ethnicity, and nation, as well as class, but defeats categorization as either a state or a committee of states. Both the USA and the EU are hegemons. In addition there are emergent global political institutions.

## States

States today are usually polities. This is a pared-down concept of state, from which the notion of nation has been stripped out, which does not make the presumption of a congruent civil society and economy. Most contemporary states have sufficient power and authority to command internal governance and external deference, to warrant being conceptualized as polities. However, there are occasional exceptions, such as when a state's institutions of internal governance have suffered serious collapse due to a civil or foreign war, for example, as was the case in Somalia at the turn of the twenty-first century. States are distinguished from most other forms of polities by their use of force to obtain and maintain consent, among other forms of governance. States have relations with other states in an inter-state system.

## Nations

Nations can be a type of polity under certain circumstances. A nation is a social and political group which is perceived to have a common history and destiny (Anderson 1983; Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983), sometimes a common ethnic origin (Smith 1986), although this may not necessarily be so (Gellner 1983), and a set of governing institutions that root such beliefs in the social and political practices. It can be a polity when its institutions are well developed and it is able to demand some external deference. It can be distinguished from a state

(Guibernau 2004) because it does not have a full range of centralized political institutions, such as those that control the majority of the use of force. One example is the Irish nation in the period just before the establishment of the Irish state (Miller 1973; Larkin 1975) while another is contemporary Scotland (McCrone 1992). Nations can be important in carrying ethnic, religious, and gendered projects.

## Nation-states?

Nation-states exist more in myth, as aspirations, than as empirical entities. It is inappropriate to treat nation-states as the main type of contemporary polity for several reasons: there are many more nations than states; several key examples of supposed nation-states were actually empires; and there are diverse and significant polities in addition to states, including the European Union and some organized religions.

There are far more nations than states (Guibernau 1999; Keating 2002; Minahan 2002). It is rare for a territory to have one nation and the whole of that nation, and one state, and the whole of that state. Most nations and national projects do not have a state of their own, instead they often share a state with other nations and national projects. This pattern of cross-cutting nations and states can be a result of migration (forced or voluntary), or of war or conquest. This is not to argue that there are not states, but rather that there are not often stable *nation-states*. For instance, within Britain or the United Kingdom in the post-empire period there are nations of English, Scottish, and Welsh, as well as part of the Irish nation (Nairn 1977; McCrone 1992; Bryant 2006). The struggle over the location of the border between the UK and Ireland is an example of the militarized conflict and terrorism that can be generated when there is a contestation rather than the neat mapping of state and nation. Within Spain and France there is the Basque nation that seeks separation and a state of its own. The break up of the Soviet empire has precipitated many nations and would-be nations into seeking states of their own, with several of these having not achieved their objective despite the multiplicity of new states that have been created. The state of Canada contains not only Canadians but also the French speaking, state-seeking nation of Quebecois. The nation of Germany had two states for half the twentieth century. The boundaries of states can change rapidly, as, for instance, in the case of Germany, established as a state only in the nineteenth century, which has seen the repeated movement of pieces of territory between itself and France, enlargement and contraction during the middle of the twentieth century, partition into two quite

different states in the second half of the twentieth century, followed by a short recent period of reunification of East and West. Europe is riddled with cross-cutting nations, aspiring nations, and states (Therborn 1995; Brubaker 1996; Boje et al. 1999). Minahan (2002) finds 300 developed or emerging national groups. Cohen (1997) estimates that there are around 2000 'nation-peoples', that is, around ten times as many as the states recognized by the United Nations. Nation-states with the whole of one nation and no other and one state and no other polity, which are stable in time and space, are hard to find in Europe and indeed anywhere elsewhere in the world. At most, nation-states exist for short moments in history before being reconstructed yet again.

Many key examples of nation-states were actually empires. Nation-states are often considered to become a common political and social form after the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648. The hey-day, the height, of this form is usually considered to be from the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries until the mid-twentieth century, and its most frequently found location is usually assumed to be Europe (Tilly 1990; Mann 1993a). For instance, Mann, despite his interest in early, pre-1760 empires (Mann 1986), leaves this conceptualization behind in his analysis of the post-1760 period, where he treats Britain and France as if they were nation-states (Mann 1993a). Yet several of the key examples of nation-states (for example, Britain, France, Spain and Portugal) were actually empires during the nineteenth century and not nation-states. It does not make sense to consider people who were subject to such empires to be either members of European nation-states or members of their own local nation-states. At the time of these empires most people were not within an entity that could reasonably be called a nation-state, since those colonized would hardly recognize themselves as part of the colonizing 'nation'. To consider the British and other empires to be nation-states rather than empires is to erase from history the experiences of those many people who were subject to these states. It is also to neglect the use of political and military domination to restructure economies in the interest of the imperial power. It is not appropriate to ignore these empires in accounts of the rise of nation-states, as if those under the rule of empires were of little significance, as if Europe and North America constituted the whole of the world. Empires have states, not nation-states. The nineteenth century was the hey-day of empires, not nation-states.

Nation-states are largely mythical entities, frequently aspired to, but rarely realized in practice. Disaggregating nation and state can be more helpful than conflating them in a spurious unity of nation-state. The tensions that can exist as a result of the usually incomplete and partial mapping of nation onto state are a major cause of

contemporary militarized conflicts and terrorism. The conflation of important distinctions between nation, state, and nation-state thus leaves out-of-focus points of disjuncture between these entities that are important in generating social and political struggle and change. Such disjunctures have important consequences for social and political strife. Different polities often carry different gender and ethnic projects, so the outcome of these conflicts has implications for the form and degree of complex inequalities.

To argue that nation-states are largely mythical does not mean that beliefs about them are unimportant (contra Bruce and Voas 2004). Myths are powerful. Ideas move people to action. Invented traditions have effects (Hobsbawn and Ranger 1983). A myth is a narrative story that is considered to represent a tradition and to provide information about core values and the conduct necessary to achieve them. The myth of the nation-state is that a nation will find full and true expression of its values and will secure its economic well-being only if it has a state of its own in a territory of its own; and that it is possible to achieve this, with the evidence being that there are believed to be many examples of successful nation-states. It is predicated on the assumption that it is possible and desirable to bring into alignment in one place culture, economy, and political representation through a state.

The myth of the nation-state is a very powerful force. It does not depend upon there being any actually existing nation-states, only a belief that there are. Many national movements believe that it is possible as well as desirable to achieve a nation-state. The myth of the nation-state has launched many political movements and militarized conflicts. The nation-state is a powerful myth about purity. It is about a nation having a state of its own so that it can self-regulate its environment in conformity with its values. The nation-state myth is about the close fit of a nation and its own state, with its own politics, economy, and culture mapping onto one another in the same territory.

The desire of a nation, or would-be nation, for a state of its own has been a tremendous force in human history. On the one hand it can be understood in terms of a discourse of self-determination, of community, of democracy, of the realization of a society in conformity with the values of the nation, free from the impositions of invasive, colonialist, exploitative, foreign powers. On the other hand it can also be a terrible force. It can unleash militarism and armed struggle, by regular armies, guerrillas, and terrorists, as nations seek to establish a state of their own in a territory of their own. It can be a force that seeks purity where there is none, driving genocide, ethnic cleansing, communal murders, and pogroms. The nation-state is a powerful and resilient myth. The aspiration of nations for states

of their own is a powerful driving force in contemporary politics. However, nationalists seldom achieve a state just for themselves and usually have to settle for some sort of messy compromise with other nations and polities.

## Organized religions

Organized religions constitute polities in those instances where they have significant powers of governance over significant aspects of people's lives. Religions frequently have authority over the regulation of intimacy, and sometimes economic matters, such as whether it is acceptable to pay interest on loans (usury), though there may be contestation or negotiation with a state for authority over these matters (Inglis 1987; Farrell 1988; Kandiyoti 1991). This can include the regulation of marriage, divorce, non-marital sexuality, clothing, and diet. Organized religions have three main routes to authority: moral authority articulated through religious belief; political pressure on states and other polities; and the power to sanction members of the religious community if they break the rules of a religion. It might be thought that, in the modern world, the powers of organized religion have been reduced to the first two and that only the state has the right to sanction citizens for breaking community rules. However, this is mistaken. This power is still potent in some locations, especially in the regulation of intimacy (that is, in areas of sexuality and family relations such as marriage, divorce, contraception, abortion, and homosexuality). Sanctions can include a religion's refusal to carry out rituals which are considered essential (e.g. communion for those ex-communicated; divorce; church re-marriage for those divorced by the state); exclusion from a religious community with implications for a way of life, condemnation to some kind of hell in a believed-in afterlife, that is, the threat of eternal damnation (e.g. for abortion); a refusal to recognize unions and legitimate offspring with implications for property entitlements as well as moral standing, and various forms of penitence (Smyth 1992; Hardacre 1993; Moghadam 1993; Helie-Lucas 1994).

Religion is sometimes considered as no longer relevant to analyses of modernity (Thompson 1995), largely because of a presumption that modernization produced secularization. While the process of secularization is an important process (Bruce 2002) its extent can be exaggerated, while the significance of its restructuring in relation to secular polities can be under-estimated (Gorski 2000). There are important variations in the secularization process in different countries, with the process much more advanced in Europe than in the USA (Inglehart 1997; Norris and Inglehart 2004).

Organized religions typically have a different range of power resources from those of states. Nevertheless, in certain contexts they may effectively govern important social institutions such as intimacy (sexuality, reproduction, marriage, and divorce). Not all religions take the form of a polity. The concept is restricted to those religions that have regularized structures of governance and a hierarchy of organizational practices. Only salvational religions are likely to develop such governance structures.

Organized religions are important on the global political stage. For example, in international politics Islam constitutes a significant polity that has various effects on the policies of other bodies. Islam can be an actor on the global stage, despite very important internal differences and multiple centres of power. It can constitute a frame of reference within which Islamic individuals perceive themselves to be acting. Jihadists are prepared to die in the pursuit of goals that they perceive as part of Islam. A further example of the presence of both Catholicism and Islam as polities on the global stage was that of the alliance between Islam and Catholicism in opposition to the EU at the fourth UN world conference on women in 1995, on the nature of women's human rights in relation to fertility and sexuality. Catholicism was represented by the Pope's representatives since the Vatican is treated by the UN as if it were a state. The religious coalition sought to restrict the extension of rights to individual women to make their own choices on matters of intimacy, especially abortion, contraception, and sexuality. The EU, by contrast, was a significant advocate of a woman's individual right to choose (Moghadam 1996). The argument here is that the major salvational religions of Catholicism and Islam constitute polities. They govern significant aspects of life, especially intimacy, among significant numbers of people.

## Empires

Empires are an important form of polity in history (Mann 1986), with lasting effects. There have also been various attempts to broaden the usage of the concept to some modern polities (Van Alstyne 1974; Hardt and Negri 2000, 2006).

An empire is a specific form of polity in which a single main state rules over many other countries using formal political hierarchies supported by military force. Military force is usually necessary to establish the political hierarchies through which routine rule is maintained. Routine rule may be further supported by religious and other ideological forms for cultural domination. The British state ruled many countries around the world, from Ireland to Africa, from

Canada to Australia, as part of the British Empire. Most of Africa was subject to colonial rule from Britain, France, and Portugal. Most of South America was subject to colonial rule from Spain and Portugal until almost the end of the nineteenth century. De-colonization of Africa from the British Empire was not complete until the 1970s (Banks and Muller 1998). Several countries in central Europe did not achieve independence from empires, such as the Hapsburg and Ottoman, until 1918 (Therborn 1995). During the nineteenth and most of the twentieth centuries the Russian empire grew to stretch from East Asia to the middle of Europe, including by the middle of the twentieth century countries in Eastern and Central Europe. Russian de-colonization did not take place until after 1989. A ruling group of people, while clearly distinct from the subordinated people, may deny their separateness (Kumar 2000).

The expansion in military power of the USA, for example in its invasions of Vietnam and Iraq, has led some to consider that it takes the form of an empire (Van Alstyne 1960; Johnson 2000; Mann 2003). However, while significant military power was used, the formal political hierarchies that are a defining feature of empires were never successfully established by the USA. This was partly because public adherence to the notion of respect for national sovereignty meant that such political hierarchies had to be covert rather than overt in order for this public rhetoric to be sustainable, and partly because of a practical assumption that dominance could be maintained without such political mechanisms, resting on military force and economic pressure alone. As Mann (2003) noted, this stance led to incoherence and a lack of sustainability for this US project.

Hardt and Negri (2000) have addressed the new forms of power that are consequent on globalization. They consider that there is now one empire, one sovereign power, which governs the whole world as a consequence of the globalization of economic and cultural exchanges. It does not have a geographical centre, nor territorialized instruments of rule; its nationalities are merged and blended. Hardt and Negri (2006) assert that we are now in a state of global war. This is not an argument that capitalist power is absolute, but one in which there are also a wide-ranging set of oppositions. The multitude is better placed than before to effect a transformation. Hardt and Negri are right to argue that there are new forms of political interconnections in this global era; power is more fluid (cf. Bauman) and interconnected; political configurations take new spatialized forms; boundaries between countries are treated more lightly in some respects. However, their picture of a globalized polity over-states the extent to which deterritorialization of political forms has occurred. Corporate capital still needs concentrated territorial locations for some of its functions (Sassen



2001), while geographical distance is implicated in many forms of capitalist appropriation (Harvey 2003). Powers are still concentrated in specific states and other polities which are in opposition to each other rather than merged into a unity. While they are right to integrate an analysis of the importance of violence into political economy they over-generalize – the USA may be leading a war but not all countries have joined in. The concentrations of power and its alternative configurations are important for understanding the potential for alternative futures. Hardt and Negri (2000) have invented a novel use for the term empire, which traditionally has been used to denote a geographically located dominant state that has power over many peoples outside its home territory through the use of formal political structures supported by military power. While new concepts are needed to grasp the particularities of global organization, it is not useful to use a term that has a clearly established meaning. We need new terms to denote new concepts to capture new forms of global hierarchy.

## Hegemon

Hegemon is a term that more usefully captures the concept of a dominating state that is able to deploy a range of forms of power over many other countries in the contemporary era (Chase-Dunn 1998; Bornschier and Chase-Dunn 1999; Chase-Dunn et al. 2000). Dominance is created through a range of technologies of power, including military, political, economic, and civil societal means. Each of these forms of power is a contingent rather than an essential part of the powers of the hegemon. Following Gramsci, hegemony is achieved through a mix of coercion and manufactured consent; the mix varies over time and place so that at some times coercion is dominant while at others consent is achieved without visible coercion. The concept of hegemony is useful in invoking notions of asymmetry, power, and coercion simultaneously with consent (Gramsci 1971; Anderson 1976/7).

The concept of hegemon captures the new modalities of power in a global era better than the more traditional concepts of empire and militarism. The concept of hegemon, drawing on Gramsci's concept of hegemony, better captures the dynamic mix of coercion and consent. It allows for the various combinations of these forms of power, signalled in Gramsci's notions of wars of position as well as wars of manoeuvre. The concept avoids the notion of overt formal political hierarchy, which is a time-specific form of global power from a previous era. It enables a consideration of the nature of power that avoids some of the simplicities of a 'zero-sum' approach.

This includes a range of issues, including that countries may perceive benefits from acquiescence rather than contestation, that there can be mutual benefits in the avoidance of hostile contestations, and also that in some instances there can be meaningful co-development. Polities are complex adaptive systems that coevolve. The concept of hegemon signals the range of forms of power, as well as their shaping by the economic, political, military, and civil societal environments. Hegemons have societalization projects, which are directed externally as well as internally. These are never complete but always in process, as rival hegemons and other entities compete to set the rules by which all must live. Within the territory of a hegemon there may well be competing projects, for example of organized religions.

Hegemons set the global rules in order that they suit the characteristics of the dominant hegemon, so that while these rules are general to all players nonetheless the hegemon benefits most. The concept is helpful in grasping the setting and implications of the regulations of many economic aspects of the global system, for example, the rules of international trade as set by the World Trade Organization. The power of the concept of hegemon is further advanced if it is juxtaposed to the concept of 'fitness landscape' derived from Kauffman (1993). The US hegemon, by ensuring that its rules are best represented by the WTO, has changed the fitness landscape to its own advantage. It is not just that the hegemon has power over other countries, but also that it has changed the landscape in which they all compete in its own favour. The environment, or fitness landscape (Kauffmann 1995), within which these polities operate is changing as a result of increased global linkages. These increased links are partly the result of new technologies that speed communications both physically and electronically and partly consequent on new political institutions and practices developing at regional and global levels. Changes in the fitness landscape have implications for the construction of political preferences and for an ability to carry these through. Some political actors thrive under one set of conditions but wilt in others. Their capacities for action are the result of their interaction with their environment and not only their intrinsic capacities.

Both the European Union and the United States of America are currently hegemons. Both have economic, cultural, and political powers, though these are differently constituted and deployed. But they do differ critically in relation to military force. The EU does not have significant armed forces of its own (though its Member States do), while the USA hegemon depends on its armed forces.

While the EU meets the definition of a polity, there have been extensive arguments over whether or not the EU meets the conventional

definition of a state. These focus in particular on its lack of armed forces and the question of its degree of autonomy from Member States. Conventional definitions of states (following Weber) include a monopoly of legitimate force in a territory. The EU does not have its own standing army, militia, or police. Early attempts to create a military arm – the European Defence Community in the 1950s – failed (Kapteyn 1996). However, since 2004 there has been the capacity for the EU to engage in a temporary military deployment through the European Union Force (EUFOR) by drawing temporarily on the armed forces of Member States, as it did in Bosnia in 2004, Congo in 2006, and Chad in 2007 (Council of the European Union 2007b). This lack of a standing army either means that the EU is not a state or that the conventional definition of a state needs to be revised so as to encompass such bodies as the EU.

The second reason offered as to why the European Union might not be a state is that it is merely an inter-governmental body, used as a tool by Member States to complete their own domestic agendas (Milward 1992; Moravcsik 1993). This position is based on giving primacy to the consent of Member States through their signature on treaties rather than to the actions of the EU machinery of governance, and considering the Council of Ministers as more important in the internal governance of the EU than the European Commission, the European Parliament, or the European Court of Justice. However, these arguments that the EU is merely an inter-governmental body are not convincing. This is because the EU, through the European Court of Justice and European Commission, has powers not only to coerce recalcitrant Member States to obey its rulings, but also allows EU citizens direct access to EU legal rulings on those matters within its remit (Wallace 1994; Leibfried and Pierson 1995; Kurzer 1997). The EU has sufficient internal coherence, rules of actions, ability to enforce its rules through sanctions, and institutional depth and breadth to constitute a polity even though it is not a conventional state. Its prominence as an actor at a global level means that it is a hegemon and not only a polity. In particular, the EU conducts a distinctive foreign and security policy with global implications despite differences between Member States. It also conducts trade and economic policy for all Member States, including negotiations with the WTO (Smith 2003; Smith 2004).

The USA is a state, polity, and hegemon: it is also close to being a nation and a nation-state. The USA is a hegemon in a different way from the EU. It does not have a queue of countries wanting to join voluntarily. While it is joined by Mexico and Canada in a free trade area (NAFTA), these countries did not change their regulations in order to do so. The USA is more assertive in setting the parameters

of global economic policy than the EU and enforcing its policy preferences. The USA is much more assertive in foreign affairs as a result of its use and threat of use of military force. The USA is currently a more powerful hegemon than the EU.

There are further potential or would-be hegemon. Japan has sometimes been considered a third hegemon alongside the USA and the EU, because of its influence over economic development, especially in South East Asia (Hettne et al. 1999). However, a lack of economic growth since the 1990s as well as political and financial difficulties have reduced its capacity for action and influence. Islamic radicals have their own project to counter Western military aggression and secure universal respect for their religious ideals. However, this project does not involve the whole of Islam even if it is done in its name. Despite Huntington's (1998) assertions of the clash of civilizations, Islam is not best currently understood as a singularity, but instead enjoys considerable variations (Kandiyoti 1991) and internal contestations over changes. However, some within the radical Islamic movement do conceive of their project as potentially hegemonic, indeed they proclaim a *jihad* or holy war in order to achieve this. China is likely to become a future hegemon. This is due to its current rapid economic growth which means that in the foreseeable future it will become the world's largest single economy, its relative internal cohesion and an increasing tendency towards involvement in global bodies such as the WTO, influencing diplomacy in international crises, and hosting global events such as the UN conference on women and the 2008 Olympics. However, the speed of this trajectory is not clear and neither is the extent to which China will seek influence outside its borders (Hutton 2003).

The contemporary contestation between two hegemon, the EU and the USA, is key to the emergence of the new economic world order. For example, their battles within the World Trade Organization determine the level of risk allowed in food production through the use of new technologies such as the genetic modification of organisms and the use of antibiotics on farm animals; deciding the tariffs on goods and services that encourage or discourage trade and particular types of economic development. The WTO's rules establish the fitness landscape under which some economies thrive and others suffer. More frequently the USA wins these contests with the EU, as in the case of the WTO adjudication of the riskiness of genetically modified foods (Winickoff et al. 2005), though there are exceptions, such as in the case of data privacy standards where EU regulations do have an effect on the USA, with the WTO protecting the EU from threats of retaliation from the USA (Shaffer 2000). This contestation between the

EU and US hegemony and their varieties of modernity is discussed further in Chapter 11.

## Global political institutions

A series of political institutions have been established at a global level that assist in the governance of global finance, militarism, and human rights. These are best regarded as emergent polities rather than as fully formed.

They include the global financial institutions discussed in Chapter 3 on Economies, including the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, and the World Trade Organization (WTO) that lend money to governments in times of financial crisis and act as regulators of the global economic environment through a series of conventions, groups, and meetings (for example the G20). They are not entirely new – even the nineteenth century had a global financial system, while the Bretton Woods monetary agreement lasted from 1944 to 1971 – but they are increasingly important (Keohane 1989; Hirst and Thompson 1996; Ruggie 1996, 1998; Held et al. 1999).

There has also been the development of international ‘security’ structures, such as the UN Security Council and regional military pacts such as NATO (Held 1995; Ruggie 1996, 1998); and the emergence of global institutions with the ability to compromise the power of states especially over issues of human rights. There are near-global legal institutions, especially in relation to human rights and crimes against humanity, including the United Nations (with its power to declare wars legal and legitimate), and the International War Crimes Tribunal. There have been developments in international law covering legal rights for individuals that are over and above the legitimate powers of states, concerning the implementation of the UN Declaration of Universal Human Rights (Haas 1964; Held 1995; Ruggie 1996, 1998).

The state is only one of several types of polity. Rather than focusing only on the concept of the state, it is important to consider a wider range of polities, including not only the state but also the nation, organized religion, empire, and hegemon. This increase in the range of polities beyond states is needed in order to include the significance of complex inequalities in addition to class for centralized political institutions. Nations and organized religions often carry gender and ethnic projects, as well as class ones. Including these entities within the analysis of polities is important in order to analyse and theorize the significance of complex inequalities in addition to class.

The nation-state is a very powerful myth; its institutional existence is very rare. The recognition of the normal lack of congruency of

nations and states (and also ethnicity and religion) and the strenuous efforts to achieve this elusive alignment are crucial to explaining the extent and nature of group and state violence, which so often takes place along these fractures. Attempts to bring nations and states into alignment are part of the process of societalization, and their frequent failure to complete the process to produce a society that has a full alignment of economy, polity, violence, and civil society is usual.

The concept of hegemon is needed to theorize global processes, since their emergence and relative significance are central to understanding the emerging form of globalization and societalization. The globalizing world is not made up of similar types of polities, of nation-states, but rather a much richer variety of entities. Globalization has not resulted in a single polity or empire, but rather of a contestation between hegemons and the emergence of would-be hegemons.

## **Polities Overlap and do not Politically Saturate a Territory**

In a global era, it becomes especially clear that it is rare for one polity to politically saturate any given territory. In any given territory it is rare that any one polity controls all possible political niches and domains. The concept 'saturate' is introduced in order to address this issue. Polities variously cooperate, compete, fight, and accommodate each other – and they can overlap in the same territory. Different kinds of polities often govern different areas of social life. While some polities that coexist in a given territory may reach an accommodation as to their respective remits, others may continually contest this. Sometimes polities will agree overtly, or accommodate *de facto*, to their division of jurisdiction over different institutions. Such a division means that two different polities can coexist in a given territory, since they will govern different institutions. The notion of a monopoly of political control must give way. The exceptions to the conventional notion of political monopoly constitute the norm, not the exception. It is in the tension between different overlapping polities within the same territory that many important issues are shaped.

For instance, a church and a state that coexist in the same territory may divide between themselves those institutions over which they can claim authority and jurisdiction. The variable boundary between religion and state is an example of these processes. There are significant variations in the institutions over which church and state can claim jurisdiction. Many institutions have been effectively claimed to be within the remit of the church in some times and places and in

others by the state. In most of Europe, various churches have, over recent centuries, been slowly if unevenly ceding to the state (often after a struggle) the authority to regulate many aspects of intimacy or 'personal' life, such as contraception, abortion, marriage, divorce, homosexuality, and sexual practices (Smyth 1992; Snyder 1992; Nelson and Chowdhury 1994). These have often been constructed as 'moral' issues when they have been under religious jurisdiction, but have become more 'political' the more they come under the jurisdiction of a state. This change is related to processes of modernization and to a change in the nature of the gender regime (Walby 1990, 1997). This transfer of remit of this arena is not complete in Europe, but is openly contested in Ireland (Smyth 1992) while it is more settled in the Nordic countries. The location of the boundary between religion and the state in the regulation of intimacy is an important focus in many fundamentalist movements, both Christian and Islamic, from Asia to the USA, which seek to reverse this transfer of authority (Marty and Appleby 1993).

Islam has complex relations with the states with which it coexists. In many though not all Moslem countries, Islamic religious or Sharia law directly governs intimacy while in other matters Islamic principles merely guide the state. In practice, there is a vast variety of relations between Islam and various states, ranging from the formal separation of religion and the state in Turkey and the application of 'personal' religious laws to Muslims only as in Malaysia, to the integration of religion and state in a theocratic state under the Ayatollah in post-1979 Iran (Ibrahim 1980; Kandiyoti 1991; Moghadam 1993; Shamsul 1996; Afshar 1998). The contestation of the remit of the state and Islam has been particularly acute in the area of 'personal laws' regulating marriage, divorce, women's clothing, and whether wife beating is within the remit of secular or religious law. There have been quite different outcomes to this contestation among such Muslim countries as Malaysia, Iran, and Turkey (Sisters in Islam 1991; Hardacre 1993; Moghadam 1993, 1994; Helie-Lucas 1994). There are significant variations in its form, at least partly due to the interactions between Islam and the state, and with the economy of the country as well as the ethnic identity of its location (Moghadam 1993; Shamsul 1996; Afshar 1998). The detailed implications of the Koran for conduct are interpreted by local as well as regional and global Islamic leaders and can vary according to the social and economic environment. For instance, interpretations of the rules surrounding interest on savings and related banking transactions are more conducive to modernization in Malaysia than in Pakistan or Saudi Arabia. In Malaysia there has been a process, albeit contested and uneven, of a reformation of Islam so that it has become more conducive to economic development than is

the case in contemporary Pakistan (Said 1996; *The Economist* 2000). The ethnic composition of the population is a further source of variance, since the form of Islam more typically practised by Arabs can differ from that of other ethnic groups, such as the Malays in Malaysia (Said 1996; Shamsul 1996). Further, the political economy of Islamic countries varies according to whether they possess oil or not.

Polities cut across each other. Nations rarely coincide with states, and still less with ethos and religion, as any analysis of Europe demonstrates (Brubaker 1996; Boje et al. 1999). Many states contain more than one nation, while nations may straddle more than one state. Diaspora may or may not have national aspirations, and always straddle state boundaries (Cohen 1997). Some religions have a global reach (Beyer 1994) and follow rules that are in contest with those of the host state.

The EU is not in a monopoly position in the area that it covers, nor does it not saturate all the political arenas within its territory. Rather there are other polities with which it overlaps on the same territory. Not only are there Member States, there are also other polities including the Catholic Church and nations without states. Most of the time there is a clear division as to which institutions are governed by the EU, which are by Member States, and which are by other polities, though this is occasionally contested. Initially the remit of the EU was restricted to a specific range of economic matters that focused on the creation of a single, fair, and competitive market for products, services, and labour. However, its remit has grown in recent years especially following the Treaty of Amsterdam, although many policy matters are currently still outside its remit and belong to Member States.

Power relations are not always zero-sum. While the relations between polities may be one of contestation, there may also be relations of cooperation where each helps the other to fulfil their goals. For example, while the EU is legally superior to Member States on those areas within its remit, this superiority is not best conceptualized as always being a zero-sum game between these polities. Instead, sometimes, the EU enables Member States to carry out domestic agendas more successfully than if they were not part of the EU (Milward 1992; Moravcsik 1993). In particular, the development of the Single European Market has made it more possible for some Member States to have successful domestic economies in a global era. For some Member States the EU has increased their discretion in policy making, though this may not be the case for all. In another example, the Church in Ireland had complex relations with the developing national project and establishing state. Sometimes they were in conflict over their spheres of action, as over the development of state welfare provision (Whyte 1971), and at other times they provided



mutual support (Larkin 1975; Inglis 1987). Politics coexisting in the same space may sometimes be rivals and sometimes not.

Politics do not usually exist in nested hierarchies, although these do exist within a federal polity. For example, there are nested hierarchies within federal polities of the USA and Germany, where clearly demarcated powers are devolved to more local levels. However, most of the relations between the polities under discussion here are not nested. Political relations within the USA are not an appropriate template for understanding the relations between polities elsewhere. Rather, there is a range of types of relations between polities, including cooperation, symbiosis, conflict, and accommodation.

Instead of a nested hierarchy, the relations between polities are conceptualized, as noted in Chapters 1 and 2, as the mutual adaptation of complex systems operating in a changing fitness landscape. The mutual adaptation involves changes to interacting polities rather than simple impacts. These mutual adaptations change the environment for other political systems. The changing political environment in which these interactions between polities take place affects the nature of the polities and their interactions. For example, the increase in global linkages changes the environment for polities, while the development of the European Union changes the environment for states in Europe.

Politics do not have exclusive authority over a given territory, nor are their powers limited to a specific territory. This is not a new phenomenon, as is sometimes suggested in accounts of the ostensibly restricted power of the nation-state in the era of globalization (Brenner 1999). Several religions, including Islam and Catholicism, have always straddled state boundaries and have often been accommodated by a state, dividing authority over different areas of social life (Kandiyoti 1991). Politics such as the EU share legitimate authority with their Member States within negotiated and agreed arenas (Leibfried and Pierson 1995; Walby 1999a, 1999b). Even states have rarely exercised the monopoly of legitimate violence in a given territory, given the extent to which they have condoned, and thus accepted as legitimate, the use of violence by husbands against wives within the home (Dobash and Dobash 1980; Walby 1990). Further, the power of some states extends way beyond their borders as a result of their exercise of military or economic power. There are overlapping polities with differing remits over differing areas of social life; the boundaries between these different remits themselves variously contested and accommodated.

The extent to which polities are constituted in and through space is variable. Mid-twentieth century states were more intensely

territorialized than many other entities. Early empires did not have the technologies of power necessary to have such an intense hold on their territories, such as bureaucracies with sophisticated means of surveillance (Mann 1986). Religions are less intensely territorialized, in the sense that members of religious groups often retain their affiliations whether or not they are in the heartland of their religion, although they are stronger when they have at least the amount of proximity needed for groups to meet in churches and temples. Ethnic groups likewise usually retain their sense of belonging whether they like it or not, even when they are a minority. The retention of such ethnic and religious identities constitutes the basis of the phenomenon of diaspora (Cohen 1997); religions and ethnic groups may strongly maintain group boundaries without a dependence on territorial boundaries.

By contrast, the dominant conception of the contemporary state usually includes a territorial element, locating this entity in a spatialized location. This lies behind the conception of a 'Westphalian' state that has sovereignty over its territory within its physical borders. This concept is used widely in social science and not only in international relations (Waltz 1979). Weber (1948) defined the modern state as that body that had a monopoly of legitimate coercion in a given territory. However, this spatialized conception of a state serves us badly when we come to try to understand globalization. This is because there are many exceptions to a state having that monopoly of legitimate coercion in a given territory, and indeed to many other forms of monopoly authority (Krasner 1995). The temptation is then to declare these exceptions to the idealized notion of the Westphalian state as new and indeed as a consequence of globalization. However, deterritorialization is not entirely new. The extent to which polities and other social entities have been constituted in and through space has always been variable and constantly subject to change. This is despite accounts of globalization in which enhanced mobility and communications are seen newly to undermine societies. There have rarely if ever been states that politically or otherwise saturated their territories. There have always been overlapping powers, other entities that claimed authority over specific domains, even the authority to use coercion. The conventional notion of space and authority is one in which space has traditionally been conceptualized as a solid that could be under one authority or another. This needs to be replaced with a notion of space that is more of a porous sponge than a solid, as a location where many fluid entities can overlap and coexist as well as sometimes competing.

Polities can be fluid and polities are created: over 100 new states have emerged since the formation of the United Nations in 1945

(Inter-Parliamentary Union 1995). Politics can also disappear, subsumed involuntarily within other states or empires (McNeill 1963; Mann 1986); and politics can change, voluntarily forming alliances such as that of the European Union which entail the loss of sovereignty (Leibfried and Pierson 1995); their borders can change, losing and gaining territory, such as Russia/Soviet Union and Germany (West, East, and now united). Stability is unusual, even though more social theory is written about polities that have a long history than those which do not (Moore 1966; Skocpol 1979).

In any one country there is likely to be more than one polity often, but not always, governing different aspects of social relations according to different practices with a different spatial and temporal reach. Each is likely to constitute a focus for a project of societalization in which other domains are brought into alignment with its priorities and principles of social organization. As the relations between the polities change with the changing fitness landscape, then their implications for different sets of complex inequalities will also change.

It is necessary here to have an understanding of the global political system. This wider framework has been variously understood to be a determining system (Wallerstein 1974), an influential regime (Krasner 1983), or merely a background global arena. There are epistemological and ontological issues here as to whether individuals, polities, or the system in which they are embedded are seen as the prime mover in the analysis (Cerny 1990; Ruggie 1998). There are ontological debates as to whether the focus should be on the polity or system, as well as substantive debates as to whether time-space compression alters the relationship between the polity and the global. This analysis has ranged from realist international relations theory in which states are understood to be the prime movers (Waltz 1979) to Marxist accounts which see the world system as the prime mover and in which states are merely nodes (Wallerstein 1974).

The conventional understanding of the relations between states suggests that they follow their own interests in international settings. However, states can adjust to, shape, or otherwise co-evolve with the global fitness landscape. However, there is a question as to how these perceptions of their own interests are formed and indeed the content of these interests (Ruggie 1998). Rather than treating the interests of states as self-evident, as in the realist international relations tradition, it is important to see these as socially constructed (Ruggie 1998). This is not a denial of the notion of state self-interest, but rather that the pursuit of this self-interest may take several different routes, and that these cannot be simply read off from the balance of power (Ruggie 1996). Such strategizing will involve both the particular and the contingent in the interaction

of regime and polity. Ruggie (1996, 1998) develops the notion of multi-lateralism, which sits in between the notion of a polity-led or a system-led analysis. Rather, it is states that jointly construct new sets of expectations and understandings and build these into new institutions. This implies a notion of an international regime that significantly conditions the actions of other states (Krasner 1983).

The argument here is that at least both the levels of politics and global system are needed for the analysis and that it is inappropriate to consider only one to be inherently primary. Some levels of the system are emergent from others, and it is important to develop a multi-level analysis of interacting complex systems in a changing fitness landscape. The changing global fitness landscape facilitates the emergence of new polities as well as the restructuring of their powers and capacities.

While military and economic power are pre-eminent in the global fitness landscape, there is also some power in argumentation. Risse (1999), inspired by Habermas, locks onto the space between knowledge and power where knowledge and power do not quite equate to the other, arguing that argumentation is an important part of the political process in relation to the application of international norms, especially those concerning human rights which are diffusing, via a process of the socialization of states. 'Human rights are embedded in a whole variety of international regimes and organizations and thus form part of the normative setting of international society. They increasingly define what constitutes a "civilized state" as a member of the international community in "good standing"' (Risse 1999: 529–30). Risse suggests there are three types of process: the forced imposition of norms, strategic bargaining, and instrumental adaptation; processes of institutionalization and habitualization; and processes of moral consciousness raising, argumentation, dialogue, and persuasion.

There are coalitions of countries in global fora which can be significant for outcomes of global negotiations although they do not constitute a polity. The 'Group of 77' at the United Nations, established in 1964 and with 130 members in 2007, is the largest inter-governmental organization of developing states at the UN (Group of 77 2007). This group is important in global trade negotiations, and has sometimes thwarted the ambitions of countries of the North in negotiations over trade liberalization in the WTO.

There is usually more than one polity in any geographical area as any one polity does not saturate any given territory. Politics coevolve, unevenly, in a changing global fitness landscape. They overlap. They contest and cooperate in the same territory, sometimes in different spheres of governance. Some are more dominant than others: the most powerful are global hegemon, with a disproportionate

influence on the rules through which the globe is governed on matters from trade to human rights. A key difference between polities is the extent to which they are governed democratically.

## Democracy

Democracy is treated here as a key indicator of both modernity and 'progress', despite dissenting voices. Democratic governance is a key component of good governance, which also involves the rule of law, the protection of minorities, human rights, and those institutions sufficiently developed to deliver democratic intent. The conventional definition of democracy is too narrow: in order to address complex inequalities it needs to be broadened to include, in addition to suffrage and elections, the presence of women and minorities within the institutions of governance. Here a ten-point scale is proposed to capture three levels of the depth of democracy: suffrage-democracy, presence democracy, and broad democracy. Conceptualizing democracy in a global era is also a challenge. The depth of democracy is linked to the development of neoliberalism or social democracy. The analysis of the development of democracy is challenged when complex inequalities are included since it arrives in stages and not all at once. Further global as well as country-specific processes are involved.

## Democracy and modernity

Democracy today is a major hallmark of modernity while polities that are not democratic are premodern. Democracy is often framed as progress, as a universal value. It is valued in North and South, USA and EU, and enshrined in many UN statements. However, there are exceptions to this framing of democracy as progress and modernity, in particular from the perspective of multiple modernities.

In the discourse of 'Asian values' democracy is not seen as part of modernity or progress because of the priority given to the collectivity over the individual, of a combination of consensus and hierarchy (Thompson 2000; Barr 2002), but this view is widely contested as being merely self-serving for elites in some Asian countries (Sen 1997). Another challenge to the valuation of democracy is the communist prioritization of socialist economic development over individual rights, as in the former Soviet Union and in China today (Woodiwiss 1998). Similar issues concerning individuation are discussed in Chapter 6 on civil societies.

The absence of democracy is here understood as a lack of completion of the project of modernity. The comprehensiveness of access to political power through democratic procedures and the depth of that democratic power are here taken as indicators of modernity and progress.

## Redefining democracy

The conventional definition of democracy is too narrow. In order to include procedures that are necessary for effective access to political power for women and minoritized ethnic groups, it is necessary to reconsider this definition of democracy. Polities that allow access to political power for some groups but not others are not fully democratic. Democracy can vary in its depth (Fung and Wright 2001; Beetham et al. 2002). While the oft-stated goal of democracy is to provide equal access to political decision making for all citizens and to ensure the accountability of government, in practice the conventional definition is primarily procedural, involving universal suffrage and free, fair, and competitive elections that elect representatives of the population to parliament in the context of freedom of speech and association (Dahl 1971; Held 1995; Potter et al. 1997; Freedom House 2008). These are indeed important, but not sufficient to capture the depth of democracy.

The focus here is on the full range of procedures that are needed to achieve democracy. The timing of democracy is often different for different social groups, with implications for the depth of the democracy of the polity as a whole. Ten indicators of the depth of democracy in a country are:

1. no hereditary or unelected positions, including a monarch and members in either chamber of parliament;
2. no colonies (i.e. no governance of territories that do not also meet these criteria);
3. no powers of governance held by an additional non-democratic polity (e.g. organized religion);
4. universal suffrage, *de facto* as well as *de jure*;
5. elections, especially those that are free, fair, and competitive, in a context of free speech and free association and developed civil society associations;
6. a low cost for electioneering, either by law or by custom;
7. an electoral system with proportional representation;
8. an electoral system with quotas for under-represented groups such as women;

9. a proportionate presence in parliament of women and minorities;
10. a range of institutions (e.g. welfare services) that are governed by the democratic polity.

These ten points are grouped into three forms of democracy each of a different depth. The shallowest is that of 'suffrage-democracy' (involving points 1–5) which concerns the absence of hereditary, military, and religious governance together with universal suffrage and free, fair, and competitive elections in the context of a free civil society. A deeper form of democracy is that of 'presence democracy' (additionally including points 6–9) and the presence of all groups in the governing institutions. The deepest form is 'broad democracy' (which includes point 10), concerning the application of democratic principles of governance across a broad rather than a narrow range of institutions.

First, the absence of a hereditary principle is a basic precondition for democracy. Surprisingly it is often passed over as if it is of no account that hereditary monarchs still exist (e.g. in the UK and Sweden), and that in some (e.g. the UK) they still have constitutional duties, even if these are severely circumscribed – indeed the UK in 2009 still had 92 hereditary peers in the upper chamber of its parliament. Democracy entails elections to all governing institutions. Once again there are some curious exceptions here, such as appointments to the upper house (the majority method of selection in 15 out of the 58 countries with a second chamber), including those by the government in both Ireland (11 out of 60 members) (Russell 1999) and the UK (in the second chamber most are appointed for life; short-term appointments include top judges and religious leaders; no one is elected).

Second, there is an absence of colonies. Colonies in an Empire are not democratically governed. Hence any country that is an empire is directly responsible for the absence of democracy in those territories that it colonizes. Several European empires, such as the British, French, and Portuguese empires, did not break up until the last half of the twentieth century. Former colonies typically had universal suffrage on their day of independence but not before. There are perhaps a surprising number of 'territories' that continue to be ruled by some countries which are not geographically contiguous and have attained only partial integration into the full set of democratic processes of the main state. The USA has several of these, including Guantanamo Bay.

Third, is an absence of governance by non-elected religious bodies. A key set of polities that are not democratic are organized religions. While these do not govern all aspects of social life, in some cases they are important in the governance of intimacy, including marriage, divorce, contraception, abortion, and sexual practices. Organized

religions have significantly different modes of governance than states, confining access to decision making to small groups of anointed rather than democratically elected leaders which usually excludes women. The more important organized religion is in the governance of personal life, the less democratically governed that area of life will be. Countries in which an organized religion governs intimacy compromise democracy.

Fourth, is universal suffrage. Universal suffrage might seem an obvious essential for democracy but some analysts have settled for male suffrage or even majority male suffrage as the indicator of democracy, for example, Rueschemeyer et al. (1992) take suffrage for 60 per cent of men as their indicator of democracy. This is a mistake, as the omission of women and minority ethnic groups from the franchise precludes the designation of a country as democratic. Women and ethnic minorities have often gained the right to vote later than men in the dominant ethnic group. When fully universal suffrage without exceptions for women and ethnic minorities is taken as an essential benchmark for democracy, the timing of the democratic transition traditionally used by scholars is put back by several decades for most countries in the North (Therborn 1977; Paxton 2000; Paxton et al. 2003), though less frequently for those in the South where universal suffrage will often have been won at independence. Suffrage requires the de facto right to vote, not only its de jure existence. In the USA, the disenfranchisement of African-American slaves in the southern states by 'Jim Crow' laws until the civil rights movement appeared, means that the claim that the USA became democratic before the late 1960s is compromised.

Fifth, free, fair, and competitive elections in the context of free speech and free association are an important part of democratic procedure. This is well recognized and captured, for example, in the Freedom House (2008) indicators of political rights and civil liberties, which rank all countries of the world on a 1–7 scale for each of these: most Western countries were awarded full marks.

Sixth, is access to the democratic process through the low cost of electioneering. Several detailed procedural matters have a significant impact on the differential access of less and more advantaged citizens to political power. Levels of expenditure can have a significant effect on the outcome of an election, especially for challengers (rather than incumbents) (Jacobson 1978). Some countries, such as the UK and Ireland, have implemented a cap that limits the amount of money that can be spent on elections in an attempt to ensure that those without rich supporters can still effectively stand for election (Walecki 2007). In the USA candidates can spend very large sums of money contesting elections: for example, the cost of



running for election for the President of the USA in 2004 was \$367m for the winner (Bush), and \$328m for the loser (Kerry) (Rooney 2007), while the amount for the 2008 election contest between Obama and McCain rose to around \$1 billion.

Seventh, there are electoral systems with proportional representation; eighth, there are electoral systems with quotas for under-represented groups such as women; and ninth, the proportionate presence in parliament and governing institutions of women and minoritized groups. Suffrage, free elections, and free association are not sufficient to deliver democracy if the concept is interpreted as the procedures necessary to facilitate the equal involvement of all social groups in political decision making – a presence in parliament is also required. The presence or absence of women in parliament makes a difference to political priorities and policy outcomes; there is evidence of this from a range of countries including the UK (Norris 1996a), the USA (Thomas 1991), and Sweden (Wängnerud 2000).

On average, elected women are more likely to support policies that directly or indirectly support gender equality. In Sweden, Wängnerud (2000) finds that the presence of women in the Swedish parliament (*Riksdag*) makes a difference in that women in the *Riksdag* are more likely than men to hold to the notion that gender equality is a good thing. In the UK, Norris (1996a) finds that the increase in women politicians in Westminster makes a difference to support for gender equality issues and other social democratic matters. Women MPs and candidates to be MPs are more likely than men to support women's rights on abortion, criminalizing rape in marriage and domestic violence, and promoting equal opportunities, as well as on some other important issues including, nationalization/privatization, trade union power, equal opportunities for ethnic minorities, use of the death penalty, nuclear weapons, and defence spending. In a comparison of states within the USA, Thomas (1991) finds that women do make a difference. Women in states with the highest percentages of female representatives introduce and pass more priority bills dealing with issues about women, children, and families than men in the same states and more than female representatives in legislatures where they are low in number. She also suggests that women can diffuse their policy priorities in two ways: through high percentages of women in office, or through the presence of a formal women's legislative caucus.

Drawing on Kanter (1977), she argues that relative numbers are critical in shaping interaction dynamics: a critical mass of women makes a difference as well as women's caucuses in the legislature. In a 'skewed' group that has 15 per cent or less of the total its members are seen as token, continuously responding to their status. In

'tilted' groupings minority members form 15–40 per cent. Where there is 'balance' – a 60/40 split – members of the minority are less often perceived as aberrant. This is highly relevant in a context where few countries can match Sweden's 47 per cent of women in parliament in 2007. Indeed the USA has only 16 per cent of women in its legislature and Ireland 13 per cent (Inter-Parliamentary Union 2007), the proportion where they may only be seen as not much more than token. However, even in the USA, the increase in women in parliament is associated with significant changes in gender policy since 1945, with a movement away from separate spheres gender policies towards equal opportunities in areas of violence, employment, maternity leave, and childcare (Burstein et al. 1995).

The significance of women in parliament for policies requires a rethinking of the conventional operationalization of the notion of 'representation' and the relationship between 'descriptive representation', where representation reflects the identified groups, and 'substantive representation' where the presumption is the representation of the interests of the group (Pitkin 1967, 2004; Norris and Lovenduski 1995; Phillips 1995; Squires 1999). The relative lack of presence of women and minority ethnic groups in parliament has been shown to reduce their prospect of influencing governmental decision making; while they are formally represented via the electoral system, the representation of their views is less established. Presence matters. A proportionate presence in parliament should be included in the operationalization of the concept of democracy. However, while the presence of women is necessary for the representation of women's interests it is still not sufficient (Jones and Jónasdóttir 1988; Jónasdóttir 1991).

A series of procedures exist that are more likely to lead to the less unequal presence of women. These include: voting systems that involve proportional representation rather than 'first past the post'; multi- rather than single-member constituencies (Norris 1985; Kenworthy and Malami 1999); and the use of quotas (Dahlerup 1998). Proportional representation makes a difference in the representation of minoritized ethnic groups as well as of women. In the UK in 2007 using 'first past the post', 2 per cent of elected MPs were from minority ethnic groups as compared with 6 per cent of UK representatives to the European Parliament who were elected using proportional representation (*Economist* 2007).

Tenth, there is the application of the democratic principle to a broad range of institutions. This is revealed in 'democratic audits' that consider a wider range of institutions (Beetham et al. 2002) and a concern for the depth of democratic practice, particularly the

deliberative or empowered participatory governance involving citizens more directly in decision making (Fung and Wright 2001). Three types of institutions in particular vary in the extent to which they are governed by democratic practices: welfare institutions, employment, and the military. First, education, care, and health services, and the criminal justice system are under democratic control and directly provided by the state in some countries, while in others (to varying degrees) they are organized through the market. This tends to align with the difference between social democratic and neoliberal forms of governance. The move towards neoliberalism is often accompanied by the privatization of previously public services (Hedlund 1998; Harvey 2005). This shift is facilitated by the (much disputed) WTO directive on the liberalization of public services. Privatization of public services is an example of the shrinking of the remit of the democratic polity. This is often represented as if it were a reduction in the state and bureaucratic control of services, but if the state is democratic then it is also a reduction in democratic control. Second, the governance of the workplace and employment may be at the discretion of employers or can be subject to regulation by the polity and sometimes by the participation of worker representatives, usually unions. Third, is the extent to which military institutions are controlled by a democratic polity or have significant autonomy (Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces 2008). This varies as a result of different forms of state reconstruction through war – the extent to which organized economic interests are entwined with the military in a military-industrial complex, including the privatization of security operations (Mills 1956; Harris 2005). All three types of institutions (welfare, employment, and military) are subject to greater democratic control in social democratic as compared with neoliberal forms of development.

Bringing into focus gender and other complex inequalities thus requires revisions to the conventional definition of democracy. The depth of democracy does matter: it is necessary to distinguish between suffrage-democracy that is limited to suffrage and free elections, presence-democracy that includes the procedures to ensure the presence of women and minorities in governing institutions, and broad democracy in which democratic practices are extended to a wide rather than narrow range of institutions. When these distinctions are drawn, inequalities in access to democratic power between social groups are made more visible. This increased visibility enables the differentiation of the time at which different levels of democracy are accessed by different groups, typically later for women and minority ethnic groups than for men of the dominant ethnicity. The depth of democracy is linked to the extent to which a country is neoliberal or social democratic.

## The development of democracy

Does economic development drive the creation of democracy, as is conventionally argued, or are processes in civil society and violence also important? Are processes within countries the most important, or are global processes also significant? Democracy does not arrive all at once for all people, instead it occurs at varying levels and times for different regimes of inequality. Do the same processes in the development of democracy apply to gender and ethnic regimes of inequality as that of class, or do they differ? To what extent do political processes create negative or positive feedback loops in the development of democracy and modernity?

There is a robust correlation between democracy and economic development when it is limited to male suffrage-democracy (Lipset 1959; Diamond 1992; Muller 1995a). There are several ways in which economic development facilitates the development of suffrage-democracy. One is through the growth of a larger middle class and the development of education, which reduces the grounds for extremist politics and promotes tolerance and the legitimacy of democratic values (Lipset 1959). However, higher levels of inequality tend to reduce the prospects for, and stability of, democracy such as in Latin America during the 1980s (Muller 1995a), probably because it increases the resistance of the powerful to sharing power (Rueschemeyer et al. 1992; Muller 1995b). The second way in which economic development feeds the development of democracy is by increasing the resources available for the struggles of the disadvantaged. Economic development is associated with an increased independence of free wage labour and the resources to build organizations for a robust civil society and political struggle. This increases the efficacy of the struggle of the working class by facilitating growth in the economic and organizational resources that the under-represented groups need in order to struggle effectively for access to political power, thereby translating economic power into political power (Rueschemeyer et al. 1992). But it is not reducible to economic development, opening up the possibility of divergent paths of development to democracy (Moore 1966).

Presence-democracy for working-class men and parties representing their interests in parliament was not simultaneous with male suffrage but came later. It depended on the development of civil society organizations, especially trade unions, to form the organizational strength to have both a presence in parliament and to introduce a labour agenda within parliament. This occurred most readily in those countries where there developed strong trade unions with high rates of membership and a centralization of activities as well as the development of a labourist or

socialist party. This trade union and party pattern became common in Nordic countries such as Sweden, moderately so in the UK, but was much less developed in the USA and Ireland. The development of social democracy was strongest in those countries with the strongest development of trade unions (Kitschelt 1994; Callaghan 2000).

The development of democracy is not only the outcome of processes at the country-level, but is also affected by global and regional processes of various forms. Military intervention in the aftermath of the Second World War led to the reconstruction of authoritarian states as democratic ones in Germany and Japan. The 1920s and 30s in Europe saw divergent waves of fascism in the south and social democracy in the north, with the former attacking embryonic forms of democracy and the latter enhancing them. During the mid- and late-twentieth century a wave of decolonization was associated with democratization as nationalist movements world wide adopted a democratic agenda.

What difference does taking complex inequalities in addition to class into consideration make to this analysis? Does the correlation between economic development and democracy apply to complex inequalities other than class? And does it apply equally to suffrage, parliamentary presence, and a range of potentially democratically governed institutions?

Access to democracy often occurs at different times for different social groups. Women have often achieved suffrage later than men in the North, though more often at the same time during decolonization in the South. Minoritized ethnic groups are sometimes excluded from access to suffrage and other democratic procedures. There may be de facto exclusions, such as those of the 'Jim Crow' practices in the southern states of the USA, which excluded African-Americans, the former slaves, from voting (Potter et al. 1997), including acts of violence (Shapiro 1988). African-Americans in the south of the USA only obtained the vote after the efforts of a strong civil rights movement (Tilly 1978; McAdam 1999). There may also be formal legal barriers to political citizenship, as in the case of in-migrants who may work and live in a country without political entitlements. In some countries a second generation acquires political citizenship at birth (e.g. the UK); in others citizenship can only be inherited from parents. In cases where the in-migration was not legally approved, political citizenship cannot be acquired. Increased global migration for economic reasons can thus sometimes entail political disenfranchisement.

Unlike the case for men, the winning of female suffrage does not correlate with either economic development (Therborn 1977) or women's employment. In North-West Europe and North America, most countries granted women the vote around 1918–1920, with a second wave in

southern and eastern Europe around 1945. This challenges a simple link of economic development and democracy for women. Rather there was a global, or perhaps better, a regional wave of female suffrage. While Ramirez et al. (1997) link women's suffrage to the development of world society, in which each country adopts similar practices concerning citizenship as a result of a global diffusion of cultural and political practices rather than economic development, this misses the specificity of female suffrage and the intense and highly contested feminist struggles for the vote in the period up to 1918, which is not best captured by the rather gentle notion of a process of diffusion. In the UK the process involved women from all classes, from those organized in unions in the cotton textile mills of northern England to middle-class ladies, with their actions ranging from mass property damage (e.g. smashing windows in fashionable shopping streets, setting fire to post boxes, and burning 'votes for women' into golf courses) with consequent imprisonment, hunger strikes, and force feeding, to petitions, lobbying, and mass demonstrations (Evans 1977; Liddington and Norris 1978; Purvis and Joannou 1998). Suffrage-democracy for women is not as driven by economic development as for men, but instead is more associated with global and regional civil societal waves.

Presence-democracy for women, in which women are elected as representatives in parliament and are present in executives and other governing bodies, does however correlate with economic development (Matland 1998), more especially women's free wage labour (Rule 1981, 1987; Matland 1998; Paxton and Kunovitch 2003), the presence of women in higher level jobs (Kenworthy and Malami 1999; Knutsen 2001), and women's education (Rule 1981, 1987). Thus, while economic development is not clearly linked to suffrage-democracy for women, it is linked to presence-democracy. This is in addition to its association with the use of proportional representation rather than majoritarian voting systems, multi-member rather than single-member constituencies (Rule 1981, 1987, 1994; Norris 1985; Darcy et al. 1994; Kenworthy and Malami 1999). Thus, a combination of economic development, which includes women's free wage labour and education, and specific electoral forms drives the development of presence-democracy for women.

A further global aspect of presence-democracy for women has been the development of quotas to address the shortage of women in parliament (Dahlerup 1998; Karam 1998). In 1995 only three countries (Bangladesh, Eritrea, and Tanzania) had statutory quotas, but by 2003 there were 40 countries which had a constitutional or statutory quota and 62 had a political party quota, so that overall 83 countries had some form of quota system (some had more than one kind) (Inter-Parliamentary Union 1995; IDEA 2005). While in some cases the process of the introduction of quotas may have a

predominantly national focus, in others development is as a result of local activists drawing on a near global feminist movement and learning from ideas and practices in other countries to push for change in their own (Dahlerup and Freidenvall 2005).

Presence-democracy also deepens as a result of the increasing organization of women in civil society organizations. While the highly visible aspects of women's movements have declined somewhat (Taylor 1989; Bagguley 2002), there has been substantial growth in the organization of women in civil society, including trade unions, professional associations, and many NGOs. Contrary to Fraser (1997), much of this is associated not with cultural issues but rather with economic and political issues. In many countries the proportion of women who are members of trade unions has been growing strongly and in several (including Sweden and the UK) it is now around 50 per cent of trade union membership (Hicks and Palmer 2004). Alongside this change, the proportion of women in leadership positions in trade unions has grown (Ledwith and Colgan 2000), there is a developing equalities agenda within trade union bargaining strategies (Ellis and Ferns 2000), and there is a new representation of women's interests in workplace bargaining as a result of these changes in trade unions together with women's increased presence in the labour market (Gagnon and Ledwith 2000).

Most Western countries now have established national feminist organizations that coordinate activity across a variety of fronts. The European Union actively encourages this development through its funding of the European Women's Lobby, with representatives coming from each Member State's 'peak' feminist organization (European Women's Lobby). At a global level feminist coalitions seek and find international spaces, especially in the interstices of the United Nations, to develop shared platforms for action, as for example in Beijing in 1995 (UN 1995). These have implications for the development of positions put forward at a national level, from suggestions for the reform of democratic procedures, such as quotas (Dahlerup 1998), and the development of state institutional machinery to take forward gender equality issues at a national level (Mazur 2002), to shared feminist programmes.

The development of democracy, the modernization of the polity, is not simply driven by economic development, but a consequence of the complex interaction of economy, polity, violence, and civil society. Democracy for women and minoritized ethnic groups is often but not always later than for men of the dominant ethnicity. It is important to note the varying depth of democracy and to go beyond the traditionally narrow focus on suffrage-democracy, to include presence-democracy and broad democracy.

## Conclusions

Making visible complex inequalities and global processes requires the deconstruction and rebuilding of the conceptualization and theorization of politics and democracy. It also requires the use of the broader concept of polity rather than the narrower one of state, the rejection of the misleading concept of nation-state, and the understanding that politics overlap and do not saturate their territory. It demands differentiation of the depth of democracy so as to capture variations in the access to political power of different groups at different times.

The concept of state is too narrow and should be replaced by the broader concept of polity, which encompasses a variety of forms including states, nations, organized religions, empires, and hegemony in order to facilitate the visualization of conflicts between political projects involving complex inequalities such as ethnicity and gender more fully. Any one polity rarely saturates its territory. Instead nations, states, religions, and hegemony overlap, contesting and accommodating in the same geographical space. Different politics carry differently gendered, classed, and ethnicized projects, so the contestation between these politics has implications for the nature of gender and ethnic relations as well as that of class. The concept of the nation-state with its purported settlement of one nation and one state misleads since this is rarely fully achieved. It is preferable to disaggregate the different politics to be able to examine the implications of their lack of mapping onto each other, such as the militarized conflict associated with nation-state projects when a nation, state, and religion do not map onto each other. The myth of purity associated with the nation-state project is a terrible driving force in history when combined with the low likelihood of its achievement. Global processes will create new fitness landscapes within which competing politics variously thrive or decline. Emerging and contesting global hegemony are key to setting up the rules of such global landscapes.

The concept and operationalization of democracy are revised so as to include issues related to complex inequalities. Ten indicators of the depth of democracy are identified: no hereditary or unelected positions, including a monarch and members in either chamber of parliament; no colonies, that is, no governance of territories that do not also meet these criteria; no powers of governance held by additional non-democratic polity, for example organized religion; universal suffrage, *de facto* as well as *de jure*; elections, especially those that are free, fair, and competitive; a context of free speech and free association and developed civil society associations; a low cost for electioneering, either by law or by custom; an electoral system with



proportional representation; an electoral system with quotas for under-represented groups such as women; a proportionate presence in parliament for women and minorities; a range of institutions (e.g. welfare services) governed by the democratic polity. Democracy may be shallow or deep: suffrage-democracy though conventionally equated with democracy is its most shallow variant; presence-democracy in which women and minorities are present in governing institutions is a deeper form; the deepest of all is broad-democracy, where a broad range of institutions (welfare, employment, military) is governed by democratic practices. Neoliberalism typically has no more than suffrage-democracy, while social democracy has both presence-democracy and broad-democracy.

The development of democracy rarely happens all at one point in time for all social groups, despite the convention of dating democracy from the year of men's suffrage. Even suffrage-democracy was usually at different times for men and women in the North, though more often simultaneous during the decolonization of the South. Presence-democracy is still rather uncommon, found in few countries other than the Nordic ones. Broad-democracy is confined to social democratic countries. While suffrage-democracy for men is often linked to economic development, suffrage-democracy for women is not, although presence-democracy is.