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State Good/Perm Solvency

Hardt and Negri mis-analyze the multitude – global democratic governance can only arise with the participation of the state

**Hale and Slaughter 05** (Thomas N Hale, special assistant to the Dean at the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University, and Anne-Marie Slaughter, dean of the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University, 25 May 2005, “Hardt & Negri's 'Multitude': the worst of both worlds”, http://www.opendemocracy.net/globalization-vision\_reflections/marx\_2549.jsp)

Hardt & Negri see networks behind every tree; they understand the power and distinctive nature of the form; they grasp the vigour and dynamism of networked pluralism. And yet they miss the profound changes that are taking place within the state itself as a result of these trans-governmental networks. Here the binary nature of their Marxist roots betrays them. They cannot escape the dichotomy of the class struggle and hence can only picture the world in an updated version of the proletariat versus the bourgeoisie. In fact, the prospects for democratic global governance will depend on the interactions of at least three distinct sets of networks: corporate, civic, and trans-governmental.

No Alt Solvency

Hardt and Negri’s theorization of global governance is too vague to be usful to policy analysts or activists

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To be fair, Hardt & Negri are careful to caution that they have no specific schemata for the democratic global governance they believe will spring from the multitude. The book is intended as a theoretical “platform,” not a concrete action plan. Nonetheless, they do attempt to sketch the basic contours of their vision, and while they are not sufficiently specific to be of use to policymakers or activists, they do grapple with some of the questions most central to current global governance debates. The discussion of sovereignty merits particular attention. Hardt & Negri argue that all historical and extant forms of governance – monarchy, oligarchy, autocracy, democracy – involve the rule of “the one” over “the many.” Even in democracy, “the people” function as a single social unit, they argue. Sovereignty is the power of the ruler – be it a dictator, a ruling class, or even a people – over the ruled. Thus, the challenge for “true” democrats is to undo the anti-democratic binary of sovereignty and allow the ruled to govern themselves. Readers who suspect that political theorists have already attempted to tackle this problem during the Enlightenment and the political projects it inspired are correct – and Hardt & Negri are happy to associate their project with the architects of the American and French revolutions. They call for a “new science” of democracy that will do for the world today what the United States Constitution and the Declaration of the Rights of Man did for the populations of America and France during the 18th century. Hardt & Negri are right to argue that we need new forms of governance to address contemporary transnational problems democratically. Furthermore, they intelligently argue that such governance cannot spring from “the one” – e.g. a global government elected by a world electorate – but rather must come from a pluralist web of overlapping institutions and actors who, while linked, maintain a fundamental degree of autonomy. The trick, of course, is to figure out exactly how such a web should work. What institutions will be required? How will individuals gain a say over the decisions that affect them? How will their rights be protected? How will public goods be provided? Here Hardt & Negri have less to say, and they are not alone. In recent years scholars have made a compelling case for transnational governance, but have been less able to prescribe what such governance should look like. Much more work is required to develop the mechanisms to make global governance effective and democratic.

Alt Bad

The neg’s unwillingness to engage with more traditional analysis of the state turns the alt – they only lead to failed revolutionary vanguardism

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Perhaps Hardt & Negri would have been able to provide some of these specifics if they had consulted with other writers who are tackling the same problem, but unfortunately their call for a “new science of democracy” largely fails to engage with the relevant literature. This oversight perhaps accounts for the authors’ sense that they are presenting something more novel than they actually are. It is somewhat ironic that two writers as well read as Hardt & Negri would embellish their book with arcane – even outlandish – references, but neglect highly relevant lines of scholarship like cosmopolitanism, deliberative democracy, reflexive law, Habermasian communication, and the study of global civil society. A closer look at these ideas might have allowed the authors to advance the debate significantly further.

Multitude mixes Marxism with postmodern pastiche that produces, in some places, the worst of both worlds. Marxism may be out-dated, oversimplified, and wrong, but it is at least clear. Hardt & Negri’s muddled musings often forsake this clarity for suggestive glimpses of a future they feel but can’t quite describe – except to idealise the unexploited power of the multitude. The greatest danger of this kind of thinking, as demonstrated so often in the purported utopias of the 20th century, is that in the end real decisions get made by the very opposite of the multitude – an “enlightened” revolutionary elite.