Debating global justice with Carr

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Debating global justice with Carr: the crisis of laissez faire and the legitimacy

problem in the twenty-first century

Introduction

'A game of chess between a world champion and a schoolboy' writes E. H. Carr, 'would be so rapidly and so effortlessly won that the innocent onlooker might be pardoned for assuming that little skill was necessary to play chess' (Carr 1984, 103). Indeed, when power's dominance is so great, the violence it inflicts becomes less visible. When the powerful is challenged, not only this violence becomes visible, but the status quo also faces a moral crisis. *The Twenty Years' Crisis* was thus a political as well as a moral crisis: the challenge to British imperial power did not only make its violence visible, but also put to question the moral framework of nineteenth century laissez faire.[1] Carr traces this moral crisis to the progress of the industrial revolution since the eighteenth century. This progress led to the socialisation of the nation: the transformation of the nation's function from the nineteenth century protection of the private property of the ruling classes to the protection of the social and economic interests of the masses in the twentieth century (Carr 1945, 10-19). In light of this change, laissez faire became morally bankrupt – that is to say, it lacked legitimacy among the lesser privileged in the absence of a moral framework of rights and obligations to deliver political rights, as well as economic and social rights in line with the age of the socialised nation.

Building on existing literature that examined the theme of morality in Carr (among others, see Johnston 2007; Kostagiannis 2017; Molloy 2009; Molloy 2014; Pashakhanlou 2018; Rich 2000; Scheuerman 2011), this paper situates Carr's ethics in the context of the rise of the socialised nation – what Carr also refers to as 'social nationalism' – in the twentieth century.[2] It specifically focuses on the link Carr draws between the latter development and the crisis of laissez faire due to its loss of legitimacy among the lesser privileged.[3] The paper asks: how far is this link in Carr's ethics relevant today? There are two interrelated aspects to this relevance – theoretical and empirical – that summarise the contribution of the paper. Theoretically, the paper argues, Carr's analysis is relevant to the statist-cosmopolitan debate on global justice. It highlights the political vacuum in which this debate operates in the absence of a framework of rights and obligations under laissez faire. The consequence of this vacuum is that statist and cosmopolitan arguments on global justice become implicit in their acceptance of the violence committed by the status quo and lack the

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legitimacy Carr deemed necessary for international justice in the age of the socialised nation. The significance of this theoretical critique lies in its empirical relevance in world politics today to which the paper turns next. Recently in this journal, Kamila Stullerova argued that 'the renewed interest in the works of classical realists has not yet produced new research into contemporary international politics which would utilise classical realist theory' (2017, 60). With the aim to produce such research, the paper applies Carr's analysis to the resurgence of nationalism in the twenty-first century. Filtering through Carr's theoretical insights presented in the former part of the paper, it argues that the resurgence of nationalism in world politics presents a narrative that renders the violence committed by the status quo under laissez faire once again visible. It thus shows that the problem of legitimacy is especially pressing today and calls for the debate on global justice to engage more seriously with Carr's analysis of the crisis of laissez faire – specifically the legitimacy problem it raises in the twenty-first century.

The argument develops in three stages. First, the paper presents an overview of Carr's argument on morality and the crisis of laissez faire in the context of the rise of social nationalism in the twentieth century. Second, the paper engages Carr's argument with the statist-cosmopolitan debate on global justice. Finally, the paper applies Carr's theoretical argument to the resurgence of nationalism in the twenty-first century.

Carr, morality and the crisis of laissez faire

From early on, Carr's analysis of morality in world politics has been charged with relativism.[4] Despite this, there is an emerging consensus today that Morgenthau's (1948) famous dismissal of Carr as a 'utopian of power' was simplistic (Haslam 2000, 216; Molloy 2013, 270; Scheuerman 2011, 26). Instead, an important aspect of Carr's morality has been consistently developed: a context specific morality that draws on his analysis of historical change (Germain 2000; Heath 2010; Molloy 2014; Kostagiannis 2017; Williams 2013). As Peter Wilson (2013) argued, Carr's critique of utopianism cannot be understood separately from his analysis of the changing conditions under which the nineteenth century order survived. Thus, 'taking a 'realistic' view ultimately meant taking a view that was in line with prevailing *material conditions*' (Wilson 2013, 49-50 emphasis in original). In his response to Whittle Johnston's (1967) earlier critique of inconsistency in Carr's body of work,

Graham Evans (1975) invoked a similar argument, highlighting Johnston's neglect of 'the basic assumption that pervades most of [Carr's] work, i.e. the conditioned character of thought and responses' (1975, 84). Carr's critique was thus not the harmony of interests *per se,* but its breakdown in the twentieth century given the changing conditions from the nineteenth-century (Evans 1975, 84).[5] Carr's ethics in this case, as Sean Molloy (2014) argued, proceed in pragmatic terms to provide contextual and concrete solutions within these changing conditions.

Arash Pashakhanlou's recent response to charges of relativism can be situated in this pragmatist reading of Carr's ethics. Contra relativist charges, Pashakhanlou argues that 'fairness, defined as a judgment free from self-interest and deception in which the relevant parties are treated in an acceptable way under the given situation, is the ethical concern of Carr' (2018, 2). Carr's concern with fairness and deception can be seen in his redefinition of the concept of peace. Peace to Carr does not simply mean the absence of war, but to also regard the concerns of the lesser privileged in the status quo through economic redistribution and social justice (Rich 2000, 207; Molloy 2009, 99). Without the latter purpose of peace, 'international morality' is 'little more than a convenient weapon for belabouring those who assailed the status quo' (Carr 1984, 147). In other words, peace is not only unfair but also the deceptive plea of the privileged seeking to maintain their privileges in the status quo. But 'unfairness' and 'self-deception' to Carr also became impractical as far as peace was concerned in the context of the twentieth century. Carr's 'fairness' thus entails a pragmatic solution to the changing conditions of the international order from nineteenth century liberalism. In other words, fairness is Carr's moral guide under new conditions where nineteenth century liberalism became morally and politically bankrupt. This of course raises the question: what are the historical changes that morally and politically bankrupted nineteenth century liberalism and necessitated 'fairness' to restore peace by making the status quo legitimate to both the privileged and the lesser privileged?

In a crucial, albeit neglected, passage in *The Twenty Years Crisis*, Carr summarises the most crucial change in world politics since the industrial revolution. 'By curious coincidence' Carr says,

> 'the year which saw the publication of *The Wealth of Nations* was also the year in which Watt invented his steam engine. Thus, at the very moment when laissez-faire theory was receiving its classical exposition, its premises were

undermined by an invention which was destined to call into being immobile, highly specialized, mammoth industries and a large and powerful proletariat more interested in distribution than in production' (1984, 44).

The rise of this 'powerful proletariat' meant 'the class which might be more interested in the equitable distribution of wealth than its maximum production' became significant and influential (Carr 1984, 44). This led to the 'socialisation of the nation' bringing 'for the first time … the economic claims of the masses into the forefront of the nation' (Carr 1945, 19). In the nineteenth century, the demands of the 'socialised nation' were overshadowed by expansionism and empire: 'since fresh marked were constantly becoming available; it postponed the class issue, with its insistence on the primary importance of equitable distribution, by extending to members of the less prosperous classes some share in the general prosperity' (Carr 1984, 44-45). Thus, 'perpetual expansion' became 'the hypothesis on which liberal democracy and laissez faire economics were based' (Carr 1943, 106), and 'under the growing strains of the latter half of the nineteenth century, it was perceived that competition in the economic sphere implied exactly what Darwin proclaimed as the biological law of nature – the survival of the stronger at the expense of the weaker' (Carr 1984, 47). In other words, nineteenth century laissez faire was far from peaceful: 'the whole ethical system was built on the sacrifice of the weaker brother' (Carr 1984, 49). Despite this, under the dominance of British supremacy and with perpetual expansion being the order of the day, its violence against the lesser privileged was less visible.

By the early twentieth century, imperialism reached its limit and British supremacy was challenged. As a result, nineteenth century laissez faire faced both a political and a moral crisis. On the one hand, it became insufficient to maintain peace, and was replaced with 'total wars' between socialised nations seeking to protect the economic and social interests of the masses (Carr 1945, 26). On the other hand, it became illegitimate among the lesser privileged; whose nationalism rendered the violence committed by the status quo against their social and economic interests visible. The rise of social nationalism in the twentieth century was thus not simply a manifestation of irrationality contra a peaceful and rational liberal order. Nor was it simply due to the ubiquity of evil in politics to be tamed with 'the lesser evil' a la Morgenthau (Molloy 2009). Rather, it exposed the moral bankruptcy of the liberal rationalist assumption that 'the highest interest of the individual and the highest

interest of the community naturally coincide' among nations, as among individuals, in the age of the socialised nations (Carr 1984, 42). Carr thus argued that a new 'moral purpose' was required, one which established a framework of rights and obligations in line with the age of the socialised nation – that is to say, which delivered not only political rights, but also economic and social rights 'thus to make democracy once more a reality' (Carr 1943, 119). So far, Carr argued, only war provided this moral framework. Thus war played an important moral function: providing employment and reducing inequality. 'The war of 1914-1918' for example, 'did more than any other event of the past hundred years to mitigate the more glaring forms of economic and social inequality' (Carr 1943, 115). 'It is' therefore, 'useless today to condemn the economic consequences of large-scale war because it is destructive of accumulated wealth … so long as it mitigates the evils of unemployment and inequality' (Carr 1943, 115). To avoid war more is needed than simply condemning it as 'irrational': 'we cannot escape from war until we have found some other moral purpose powerful enough to generate self-sacrifice on the scale requisite to enable civilisation to survive' (Carr 1943, 116).

Carr's 'moral purpose' translated in practice into a quest for post-national planning: 'multinational social and economic units' as Scheuerman argues, 'to generate social and economic equality *within* as well as *between* and *among* national units' (2011, 76-77 emphasis in original). Furthermore, Carr endorsed Mitrany's functionalism to check the latter's 'potentially dangerous centralising tendencies' (Scheuerman 2010, 261).[6] Despite this endorsement however Carr also, as Kenealy and Kostagiannis argue, rejected Mitrany's depoliticised functionalism that 'saw the possibility of separating the political, economic and social spheres' (2013, 238-239 note 84). Carr thus tied functionalism to 'a collectivist vision in which functional organisations operated alongside traditional socialist-style state economic planning in building the foundations of post-national order' (Scheuerman 2010, 264). This distinction between Carr and Mitrany is important because it highlights a counter-hegemonic critique built in Carr's realism that may for example form the basis for a critique of the political economy of the EU, particularly in times when the latter fails to provide a substitute for the social function of nationalism: redistribution, economic justice, and social solidarity.[7]

The centrality of the social function of nationalism is one of the most enduring themes in Carr's body of work. Writing in 2013, for example, Kenealy and

Kostagiannis argued that 'The public discourse in different states during the current eurozone crisis … demonstrates how the embedded characteristics of the socialised nations are still alive and well in the public consciousness' (2013, 244). With the benefit of hindsight one may add that social nationalism is ever more present today in the public consciousness, reasserting itself where the legitimacy of supranational units and governments in existing federal states are put to question. Thus, although Carr's contextual judgments on appeasement and the USSR are irrelevant today, his theoretical analysis of historical change and its impact on the crisis of laissez faire in the age of the socialised nation remains enduring. As Kenealy and Kostagiannis conclude, 'decades on from the publication of *Nationalism and After*, the challenges posed by the third phase of nationalism remain unanswered' (2013, 244). A key challenge here is to provide a framework of rights and obligations that delivers not only political rights, but also economic and social rights to the lesser privileged in times of peace. In the absence of such a framework, the status quo operates in a political vacuum that perpetuates the violence committed by laissez faire and thus lacks legitimacy among the lesser privileged. This vacuum presents an important challenge to the statist-cosmopolitan debate on global justice today, to which the following section turns.

Debating global justice with Carr

A growing number of scholars today engage with the normative dimension in classical realism (among others, see Behr and Roesch 2012; Karkour 2018; Williams 2004). Contra earlier cosmopolitan critiques of realism (Held 1995; Hayden 2005), Richard Beardsworth (2008) presented the case for the theoretical convergence between cosmopolitanism and classical realism. David Miller recently concluded that 'global political theory would benefit from a dose of realism' (2016, 229). More recently, Pashakhanlou noted that 'Carr's concern with fairness overlaps with the interests of Rawlsians in IR and the conception of justice as fairness' (2018, 12). To the extent that Carr was concerned with the individual and fairness respectively, this paper concurs that there is an affinity between his ethics on the one hand, and cosmopolitans and Rawlsians on the other. There is also, however, an important strand in Carr's theoretical analysis, his counter-hegemonic critique, which may reveal the Achilles heel in statist and cosmopolitan arguments on global justice – specifically, the political vacuum in which such arguments operate in the absence of a

framework of rights and obligations under laissez faire. The consequence of this vacuum is that these arguments become implicit in their acceptance of the violence committed by the status quo and lack the legitimacy Carr deemed necessary for international justice in the age of the socialised nation.

To be sure, the framework of rights and obligations on the international level is not a desired goal among all theorists of global justice. Statists for example reject the framework of rights and obligations that is centered on the individual rather than nations (Nagel 2005; Miller 2007; Walzer 1983) and / or peoples (Rawls 1999; Eckert 2015; Tong 2017). In rejecting this framework, however, statists become implicit in their acceptance of the violence committed by the status quo under laissez faire. Critics for example argued that the defence of national political communities does not address the global structural injustices committed by laissez faire due to, for instance, the exploitative nature of global capitalist markets (Ypi 2010, 550), against individuals in 'lesser privileged' nations (Williams 2014, 208).

The implicit acceptance of the violence committed by the status quo under laissez faire can also be seen in the statist argument centered on the Rawlsian 'peoples' (Rawls 1999; Eckert 2015; Tong 2017). Thomas Doyle (2015) argues that under certain conditions of intense securitization, for example, in the case of nuclear deterrence or the US war on Iraq (2003), Rawls' liberal peoples can turn into outlaw states. What is significant here is what Doyle's critique reveals: that Rawls' liberal / outlaw categories are not only unstable but can also overlap. This does not only reveal the violence liberal peoples commit in particular contexts, but also the violence Rawls' categories allow more generally. The latter is further exemplified in Charles Beitz's critique of the *Law of Peoples*. Beitz argues that Rawls' primary concern is international stability: 'liberal and decent peoples do not tolerate states that violate human rights (''outlaw states'') because such states ''are aggressive and dangerous'' ' (2000, 685). As Beitz argues however, 'it is not hard to think of regimes which are oppressive domestically but whose international conduct is not ''aggressive and dangerous'' ' (2000, 685). Beitz here reveals that human rights violations that persons endure due, for example, the suppression of democratic rights is omitted from Rawls' human rights list for the category of 'decent hierarchical' people. By blurring the line between tyrannical and hierarchical states (Hayden 2003, 313), this category once again allows for human wrongs to be committed, which are incompatible with the age of the socialised nation where governments must heed to their people's political rights

and where these rights are extended to the economic and social realms (Carr 1945, 18-19).

The statist response is that international justice requires a measure of respect for cultures, which are not liberal. The socialised nation however is not a 'Western' or 'liberal' phenomenon. It was the *raison d'etre* of anti-colonial movements, for example pan-Arab nationalism led by Nasser and spread across the Arab world in the 1950s and 1960s. While Carr did not have anti-colonial movements in mind when theorising the socialised nation, he linked his analysis of the 'social revolution' in Europe to the 'colonial revolution' in Asia and Africa (1951, 94). Thus Carr suggested, 'capital investment, technical aid, planned national economies, planned international trade' so that economies in former colonies are not 'placed at the mercy of a fluctuating and unprotected international market' (1951, 97).[8]

At this stage Carr's realism seems closer to cosmopolitan theories than to statitsts (Linklater 1997; Scheuerman 2011). Indeed, while there is pluralism within cosmopolitanism,[9] cosmopolitan theorists concur with Carr that 'the driving force behind any future international order must be a belief, however expressed, in the value of individual human beings irrespective of national affinities or allegiance and in a common and mutual obligation to promote their well-being' (Carr 1945, 44). Thus cosmopolitan theorists castigate Rawls for substituting the equality between Peoples for the rights of individuals (Beitz 2000; Buchanan 2000; Caney 2002; Hayden 2005; Held 1995; Kuper 2000). Despite this, cosmopolitans are challenged to provide a substitute for the social function of nationalism. When this challenge is not met, Carr's counter-hegemonic critique firstly reveals that in the absence of a framework of rights and obligations under laissez faire cosmopolitan theories are 'utopian' in their failure to translate liberal ideals from theory to practice. Secondly, it reveals that in this failure cosmopolitan theories become implicit in their acceptance of the violence committed by the status quo and lack legitimacy among the lesser privileged. This critique applies across the various strands in cosmopolitanism, to which the discussion now turns.

According to Thomas Pogge's institutional cosmopolitanism, 'the fulfillment of human rights importantly depends on the structure of our global institutional order' (Pogge 2000, 56). Here is an acknowledgement that the global institutional order commits avoidable violence in the form of global poverty (Hayden 2010, 461). To say that this violence is avoidable and to represent an institutional theory to avoid it is not

the same as explaining the conditions under which there is a political will to follow the dictates of such theory. One challenge Carr raised in his work was that no such will existed in times of peace. Recent history shows that this is challenge has not been met. This can be seen, for example, in the context of the post-Cold War era, where in the absence of major war and / or the Soviet threat laissez faire turned the epoch into one with the largest economic inequality and social injustice since the early twentieth century (Piketty 2014). Carr's insight that only war provides a common moral purpose that advances institutional reform for the benefit of both the rich and the poor thus remains enduring. Short of war, the liberal economic order does not only increase the gap between the rich and the poor in times of peace, but also renders invisible the violence caused against the poor in the form of economic hardship, unemployment and the related increasing levels of stress, depression and anxiety that follow such living conditions (Pickett and Wilkinson 2018).

Contra this background, Seyla Benhabib argues that 'many of the international human rights covenants contain … provisions against the exploitative spread of market freedoms' (2009a, 694). While this may be true in theory, in practice human rights proved to be 'perfectly compatible with inequality, even radical inequality' (Moyn 2018, 30). 'The tragedy of human rights' thus Samuel Moyn continues, 'is that they have occupied the global imagination but so far contributed little of note, merely nipping at the heels of the neo-liberal giant whose path goes unaltered and un-resisted' (2018, 31). In other words, the human rights regime operates within the framework of laissez faire and thus lacks a common framework of rights and obligations – so necessary as Onora O'Neil (2005) forcefully argued – to address material inequality in the absence of the extreme political necessity of war. Thus the challenge Carr's work poses remains intact, namely that the problem of inequality 'can be solved in time of war because war provides an aim deemed worthy of self-sacrifice' and that 'it cannot be solved in time of peace because modern civilisation recognises no peace-time aim for which people are prepared to sacrifice themselves in the same way' (1943, 101). And Catherine Lu is right to conclude that it is 'not the lack of resources that makes the eradication of global poverty, or the reduction global inequalities, unrealistic' but the lack of 'moral vision' (2005, 407-408). Except that one needs to add the caveat that this 'moral vision' needs not only to develop in theory, but also translate into a common moral purpose in practice. It needs, as Nicholas Rengger argues, 'to get those in the world or practice to pay attention …

since their interests might well dictate they should act otherwise' (2005, 368).

One response here is that theories of global justice are not concerned with Carr's concern, which is a failure of politics to conform to morality in practice. Indeed, in a footnote in *Law of Peoples*, John Rawls distinguishes his realistic utopia from Carr's analysis of utopia and realism. 'In contradistinction to Carr' Rawls writes, 'my idea of a realistic utopia … sets limits to the reasonable exercise of power' (1999, 6). In other words, whereas Carr's concern is the compromise between morality and power in practice, Rawls' task is to devise the moral limits of power in theory. The problem with Rawls' stance here, shared across the various strands in cosmopolitanism is, as Matt Sleat argues, that 'politics' to these theories, 'is only attended at the second stage of applying the moral theory of cosmopolitanism in practice' (2016, 174). Thus, it 'does not enter the picture at the initial stage of deciding the grounds, scope and content of those principles themselves' (2016, 174). This problem becomes especially acute when, as a result of practical failure, these 'principles' do not remain principles but become representative of special interests. For example, when those in the world practice act, as they do, according to their interests as Rengger argues, the notion of 'citizens of the world' (Archibugi 1995, 449; Benhabib 2009b, 41), and the cosmopolitan agents, be 'democratic states' (Held 1995, 232; Pogge 2000), or 'responsible cosmopolitan states' (Garrett-Brown 2011), either become representatives of class interests – a meritocratic, well educated, mobile, class (Goodhart 2017), or the interests of powerful nations (Chandler 2003; Sleat 2016), or both. In either case, cosmopolitan theories become implicit in their acceptance of the violence committed by the status quo under laissez faire to protect such elite and/or state interests and lack legitimacy among the lesser privileged. Under these circumstances, Carr's realism becomes a corrective 'weapon' (Dunne 2000), a counter-hegemonic force (Wilson 2009, 22-23), against the stagnant waters of the status quo.

None of this means that only negative goals in global justice can be legitimated in practice (Sleat 2016, 181). Rather, the point is that when practice fails to conform, cosmopolitan arguments do not stand still: they join the ranks of the statists in their acceptance of the violence within the status quo and thus lack the legitimacy Carr deemed necessary for international justice in the age of the socialised nation. The following section argues that this critique is not simply matter of theoretical exercise, but with empirical consequences. Specifically, the loss of

legitimacy is a pressing issue today with consequences for the resurgence of nationalism in world politics and the narrative the latter presents, which renders the violence committed by the status quo under laissez faire once again visible.

Nationalism in the twenty-first century

This is of course not the first attempt to apply Carr's work to a contemporary analysis of world politics. In 1998 *Review of International Studies* published a special issue on the 'eighty years' crisis' applying 'Carr's critique of liberal illusions' to the liberal triumphalism of the 1990s (Dunne et al 1998, vi). Scholars later examined the relevance of Carr's analysis to the post-Cold War liberal order (Cox 2010; Johnston 2007; Kostagiannis 2018), and the debate on sovereignty (Karp 2008). Carr's take on global reform (Barrinha 2016; Scheuerman 2011), and relevance to European integration (Kenealy and Kostagiannis 2013), were also examined in recent years. This section extends the application of Carr's analysis to the recent resurgence of nationalism in the twenty-first century. The cases chosen to this end are Brexit and Trump. Brexit and Trump are particularly relevant to Carr's analysis because they are in line with his argument that nationalist backlashes are not simply characteristic of illiberal societies or societies in transition to democracy, but intrinsic to the liberal order.

Before the paper proceeds with the empirical analysis, the method requires further justification. Specifically, do changes in world politics since Carr's writing preclude any attempt to understand the present using Carr's analysis? On the liberal order, for example, Paul Hirst (1998, 142) argued that its social and political context has changed since Carr's writing, with the rise of trading blocs such as the EU and NAFTA, which 'are not aimed at promoting closure like the old autarkic blocs' and institutions such as the IMF, WB and WTO regulating the world economy and fostering multilateralism. There is no question that, as Hirst and others (for example, Ikenberry 2009) argued, the liberal order progressed since 1945, with the world economy becoming more institutionalised and multilateral under US leadership. Despite this, since the 1970s laissez faire saw a 'remarkable revival … in the form of market economics, the privatization of state-owned industries and the trimming of welfare benefits by liberal democracies' (Jahn 2018, 56). The demise of the USSR removed a further obstacle in the advancement of laissez faire. In light of these changes, the current crisis of liberalism is more than simply a 'crisis of authority'

(Ikenberry 2015, 451). Rather, it is linked to the revival of laissez faire, which disembodied the economy and 'put market liberalism squarely at odds with another part of liberalism: democratic theory and its notions of distributive justice' (Kratochwil 1998, 214). For liberal institutions, as Scheuerman argued, have 'insufficiently contributed to countering material inequalities which not only breed injustice and disorder but also impede progress towards an integrated supranational society' (2011, 166). In other words, the revival of laissez faire meant that the liberal order created a tension between liberalism and democracy, internationalism and nationalism, at the heart of the violence implicit in the post-Cold War status quo. The Brexit and Trump campaigns in this case presented a narrative that made this violence once again visible, highlighting Carr's legitimacy problem in the twenty-first century.

Brexit and Trump

The crisis of laissez faire is due to its failure to bring about a framework of rights and obligations that delivers not only political rights but also social and economic rights in line with the age of the socialised nation. This failure can take place even as there is material progress in society. For the loss the lesser privileged endure is not extreme poverty but economic and socio-political exclusion. Due to this exclusion, the lesser privileged become 'vulnerable and marginalized enough to be superfluous' (Hayden 2010, 464). So how did the lesser privileged become 'superfluous' in the context of post-Cold War British and American politics?

In British politics, although the process of exclusion can be traced to the rise of market fundamentalism during the Thatcher years, it is in the Blair years and the rise of the Blair/Cameron consensus that it became a *fait accomplit*. Blair's embrace of globalisation in the famous Chicago speech and subsequent open door policy towards the EU resulted in low skilled immigration that intensified the labour competition in the British market. Thus, '1 per cent increase in the share of migrants … produced a 0.6 percent decline in the wages of the 5 percent lowest-paid workers' meanwhile, 'immigration was associated with an increase in the wages of higher-paid workers' further widening overall social inequality (Clarke et al 2017, 113). Given that these changes took place under a new *labour* government, the crisis became twofold: not only social but also political. The economic interests of the low skilled workers were not only threatened, but also excluded from the mainstream democratic process. This exclusion became visible in the demographic changes of the Labour

vote, which saw a significant decrease of working class vote from the political mainstream. Thus, 'in the 2010 election [the Labour party's] middle class vote of 4.4 million just outstripped its working class vote of 4.2 million for the first time'. Whereas, in '1997 the working class Labour vote of 8 million comfortably outstripped the middle class vote of 5.5 million' (Goodhart 2017, 75). This move towards *Diploma Democracy* (Bovens and Wille 2017), where those lacking a diploma are visibly absent from the democratic process became a key characteristic of the era of the 'Blair-Cameron consensus'. So much, in fact, that the *Economist* noted: 'thanks to Brexit and the collapse of the Blair-Cameron consensus, the forgotten citizen is finally being remembered' (Economist 2018a, 30).

A similar process of exclusion took place in American politics, where 'the annual real minimum wage (in 2015 US dollars) fell from 19,237 in 1975 to 13,000 in 2005' (Mazzuccato 2018, 129). 'Financial firms and major corporations' thus Jeff Colgan and Robert Keohane argue, 'enjoyed privileged status within the order's institutions, which paid little attention to the interests of workers' (2017, 39). As with British foreign policy under Blair, this was complemented with a military adventurism that had little relation to the social and economic interests of the US worker. 'This position' Colgan and Keohane continue, 'is reminiscent of the way that eighteenth century French aristocrats refused to pay taxes while indulging in expensive foreign military adventures' (2017, 39).

It is in this context that the lesser privileged became 'superfluous' in post-Cold War British and American politics. To the superfluous, the liberal order was only peaceful at the surface, for economically, socially and politically speaking the status quo was violent and exclusionary. The Brexit and Trump campaigns in this case presented a narrative that highlighted this violence implicit in the status quo undergoing a crisis of democracy. Thus, for example, in his speech on Brexit, Boris Johnson explained the fate of democracy at stake in a speech on 26 May 2016,

> 'We cannot control the numbers. We cannot control the terms on which people come and how we remove those who abuse our hospitality … it is terrible for our democracy. People have watched Prime Minister after Prime Minister make promises on immigration that cannot be met because of the EU and this has deeply damaged faith in our democratic system' (Johnson 2016).

As Goodwin and Milazzo (2017) recently argued, therefore, Brexit was not simply the result of hostility towards migrants, of 'closed' versus 'open' politics, but the ability to regain control over democracy. In other words, the Brexit campaign presented a narrative where the liberal status quo committed violence against the British workers, now excluded from democratic political processes and substituted for 'experts'. Nigel Farage was not alone in presenting this narrative. Michael Gove for example famously said 'I think people in this country have had enough of experts' (cited in Wilson 2017, 544). What distinguishes Farage is his populist *style* of political communication (Bosssetta 2017). This style is built on the sharp opposition between the liberal protagonist: the 'multinationals', 'big merchant banks', 'big politics', and democracy the 'ordinary people'. In his victory speech, for example, Farage declared 'a victory for ordinary people. A victory for decent people' who 'have fought against the multinationals … the big merchant banks … big politics' (Farage 2016). Carr already anticipated the success of this style of politics in the age of the socialised nation when he prophesised that 'the new faith' in any future order 'will make its appeal predominantly to the ''little man'' ' and will thus, 'proclaim its independence … of big business, of trade unions and of the great political parties – and aim at the emancipation of society from the vested interests which they have come to represent' (1943, 118-119). By pointing out the British government's failure to take into account the interest of 'little man', Farage's narrative made the violence implicit in the post-Cold War British status quo visible and highlighted the legitimacy problem the latter raised in the context of British politics.

The Trump campaign likewise highlighted the violence implicit in the liberal status quo due its exclusionary consequences and substitution for donors, lobbyists and special interests (Lake 2018, 14). Trump associated the latter interests with his opponent, Hilary Clinton, and for himself he declared: 'I'm using my own money. I'm not using the lobbyists. I'm not using donors. I don't care. I'm really rich' (Trump 2016a). On various issues, from unemployment to social inequality to foreign policy, Trump consistently framed his narrative in terms of two conflicting interests: elites and masses, big business and the 'little man'. On social inequality, for example, Trump announced that the system is 'rigged by big donors who want to keep down wages. It is rigged by big businesses who want to leave our country … it is rigged against you, the American people' (Trump 2016b). Trump's narrative then promised to speak on behalf of the little man: 'I am running for President to end this unfairness

and to put you, the American worker, first' (Trump 2016b). These remarks, as well as the reference to 'unfairness', make sense in the context of an important development theorised by Carr: the advent of the socialised nation and thus, the expectation that 'the primary aim of national policy' is 'to minister to the welfare of members of the nation and to enable them to earn their living' (Carr 1945, 19). By pointing out the American government's failure in this aim, the Trump campaign's narrative made the violence implicit in the post-Cold War American status quo visible and highlighted the legitimacy problem the latter raised in the context of American politics.

A crucial insight to be gained from the analysis of Brexit and Trump through the prism of Carr is that social nationalism remains enduring. Thus, to dismiss Carr's analysis of the tension between the haves and the have-nots' as a source of instability in the post-Cold War era as irrelevant is premature (Johnston 2007, 174). Furthermore, Carr's adherence to socialism and the cause of the lesser privileged is far from 'uncritical' (Johnston 2007, 158). Rather, it is, as Molloy (2014) argues, a pragmatic response to real world problems that recent events have shown to be enduring and in need of concrete solutions. This is not to say that there has been no change in world politics since Carr's writing. Since the 1970s technological change and the globalisation of the workforce have been key contributors in the revival of laissez faire (Colgan and Keohane 2017; Jahn 2018), and resurgence of nationalism (Pettman 1998).[10] None of this however discounts Carr's analysis of social nationalism. It rather means that the social and colonial revolutions have become more closely interlinked today than in Carr's time, calling for post-national social and economic planning on a wider scale. Thus Carr's ethical response to the 'little man', which, by contrast to Trump and Farage today, meant transcending the nationalist solution, is more relevant than ever. For while the peculiar conditions of the 1930s are not necessarily present today for nationalism to culminate in war, the disruptive force of social nationalism has not faded either, putting to question the 'harmony of interests' in the twenty-first century liberal order.

The Trump case adds two further insights. First, government, though necessary (Scheuerman 2011), is insufficient to resolve the legitimacy problem that arises with social nationalism. Second, the legitimacy problem transcends the tension between states, whether in terms of conflict between intergovernmentalism and supranationalism (Kenealy and Kostagiannis 2013, 245), or power transition between rising and dominant powers (Kostagiannis 2018). The legitimacy problem rather

pertains to a broader question: the current moral and political crisis due to the revival of laissez faire and the violence committed by the status quo against the lesser privileged between *as well as within* states. By rendering this violence visible, Brexit and Trump also highlighted the legitimacy problem in the twenty-first century liberal order.

Conclusion

During the years of liberal triumphalism – that is to say, prior to the 9/11, the 2003 Iraq War and 2008 global economic crisis, many scholars dismissed Carr's analysis of the crisis of laissez faire as irrelevant to the contemporary world. R W. Davies for example argued that Carr was mistaken in his interpretation of the direction of history and the collapse of the USSR 'would have appalled' him (2000, 107). Paul Rich noted that Carr 'failed to detect the intellectual rejuvenation in western liberalism in the years after Hayek published *The Road to Serfdom* in 1944' (2000, 212). To Fred Halliday the collapse of the USSR meant that Carr's 'work on revolution has, to a considerable degree, failed' the test of time (2000, 276). The first decade of the twenty-first century presented a turning point in favour of Carr. As the *Economist* recently put it, following the 2008 financial crisis 'the idea that markets, left to their own devices, will efficiently and fairly allocate resources' has no more appeal among the public (Economist 2018b, 68). Nor does 'the idea that trade makes everyone better off in the long run' (Economist 2018b, 68). It is significant that these remarks come from the *Economist*, a champion of liberalism. For they echo Carr's critique of laissez faire, and put a case for the relevance of his analysis beyond the collapse of the USSR. Indeed, the core aim of this paper was to demonstrate the twofold and interrelated theoretical and empirical relevance of the link Carr draws between the rise of the socialised nation and the crisis of laissez faire due to its loss of legitimacy among the lesser privileged.

Specifically, the paper first argued that Carr's analysis presents a theoretical challenge to the debate on global justice, namely that this debate operates in a political vacuum and that, as a result of this vacuum, statist and cosmopolitan arguments are implicit in their acceptance of the violence committed by the status quo and lack the legitimacy Carr deemed necessary for international justice in the age of the socialised nation. The paper then argued that this challenge is empirically significant today, as the problem of legitimacy became pressing in the context of

Brexit and Trump. The paper thus calls for the statist-cosmopolitan debate on global justice to engage more seriously with Carr's analysis of the crisis of laissez faire and the legitimacy problem it raises in the twenty-first century.

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[1] Laissez faire in this paper is defined in Carr's terms: in a broad sense, as the economic system that seeks to protect private property, free trade and market. Like Carr, the paper uses the notion interchangeably with liberal order and neo-liberal project (to be further justified in section 3).

[2] Ethics and morality are used interchangeably in this paper.

[3] The focus of the paper, therefore, is on the normative dimension in Carr. Keith Smith (2017) contrasts this normative / progressive Carr with a later empirical / Rankean-influenced Carr, as exemplified in his history of the USSR.

[4] For a review of early critics see Wilson 2000 and Haslam 1999, p. 202-217. For a recent charge see Elshtain 2008, 154-5.

[5] For the influence of Dostoyevsky on Carr's dissatisfaction with nineteenth century liberal rationalism see Nishimura 2011.

[6] On this link see also Ashworth 2017.

[7] For this critique, see Babik (2013, 510)'s response to Linklater (1997).

[8] This neglected aspect in Carr's work presents a response to critics who view Carr's work as Eurocentric (Barkawi and Laffey 2006; Hobson 2012; Howe 1994, 297; Miller 1991, 70; Smith 1992). For to Carr the changing conditions from nineteenth century laissez faire meant that 'former backward peoples are no longer passive objects of policy, but its driving forces' (1951, 96). And nor were the former colonies neglected in the *Twenty Years' Crisis*, since the role their exploitation played in enduring laissez faire was central to the critique of the 'harmony of interests'. It is thus unclear why to post-colonial critics realism offers a Eurocentric account that take[s] the colonies 'more or less for granted' (Barkawi and Laffey 2006, 346), or a 'subliminal Eurocentrism', which 'banishes from view' the 'non-Western world' (Hobson 2012, chapter 3). And while Smith (1992, 65) is correct to argue that Carr did not 'allow for the possibility of a wave of anti-colonial nationalism' in *Nationalism and After*, Carr incorporated this in his analysis of the colonial revolution, of which Nasser's social nationalism is a case example.

[9] As Nicholas Rengger argues, 'understandings of what a cosmopolitan theory is and what follows from it, differ from one thinker to another' (2005, 365).

[10] Nor is the context of the social and colonial movements unchanging either. For example, anti-colonial Nasserite pan-Arab nationalism has been politically defeated in the Arab world since the 1970s. Thus, after Sadat's 'open door' policy and peace with Israel, Islamists dominated the discourse on social justice and anti-colonialism. In the context of Brexit and Trump, it was the success of liberalism abroad that undermined it at home, thus leading to social movements that sought democracy defined in terms of re-imposing the national and international distinction (Jahn 2018). I would like to thank one of my anonymous reviewers for drawing my attention to this contextual elaboration.

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