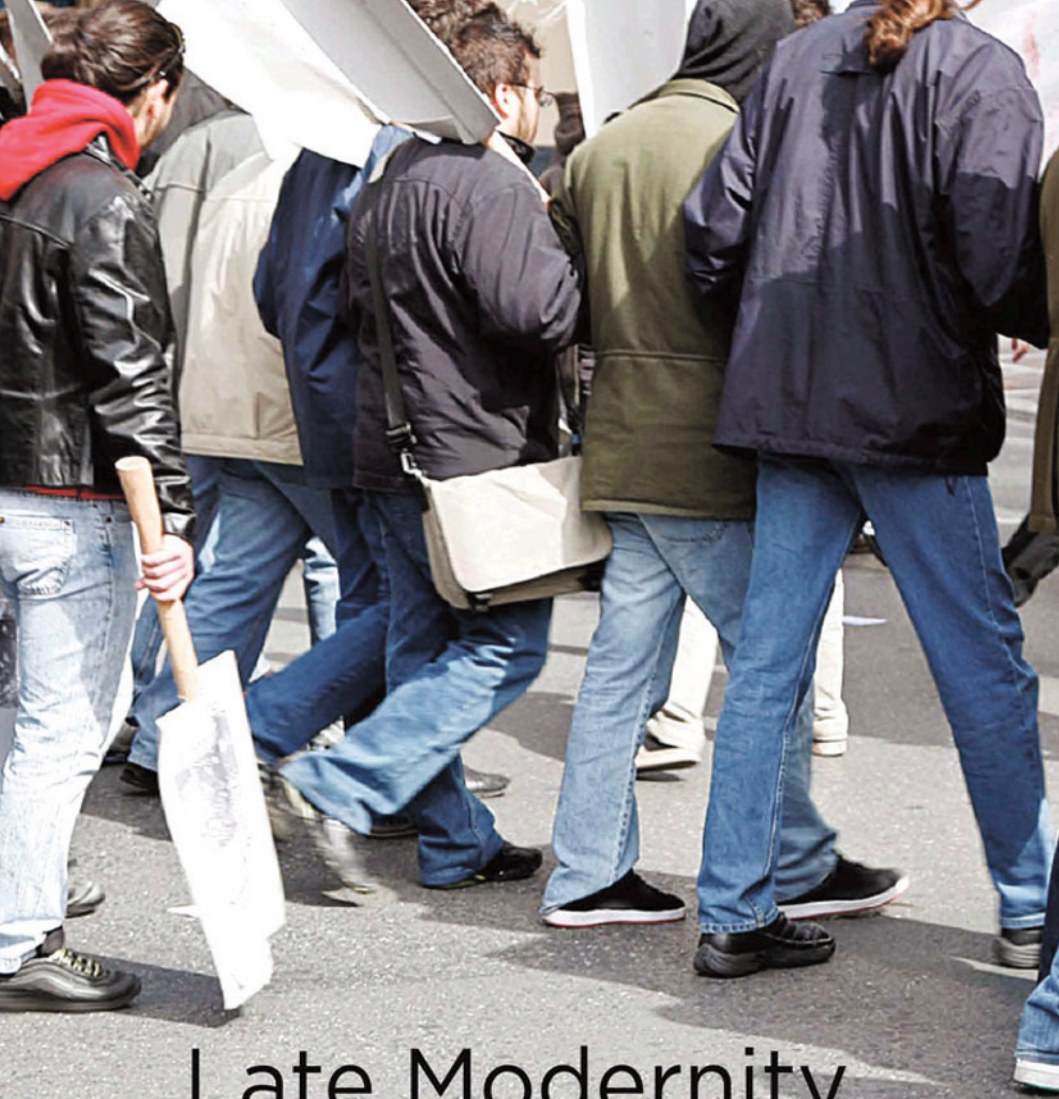

Late Modernity, Individualization and Socialism

An Associational Critique of Neoliberalism

MATT DAWSON

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Introduction

The (In)compatibility of Socialism and Late Modernity

> Is socialism 'a vestige of time gone by'? Were it indeed the case, we should be grateful to the 'time gone by' for leaving us such a vestige, no less than we are grateful to it for the rest of our civilized heritage. But it is not the case. Like the phoenix, socialism is reborn from every pile of ashes left day in, day out, by burned-out human dreams and charred hopes. It will keep on being resurrected as long as the dreams are burnt and the hopes are charred, as long as human life remains short of the dignity it deserves and the nobility it would be able, given a chance, to muster. And if it were the case, I hope I'd die a socialist.
>
> Zygmunt Bauman (Bauman and Tester 2001:155)

This book is an exploration of the compatibility between two concepts that are often taken to be incompatible: late modernity and socialism. This incompatibility is seen to have empirical and normative grounding. The world of socialist theory, with its industrialized working-class, collective organization and the extreme poverty of the proletariat, is seen as irrelevant to an individualized, middle-class and post-scarcity world of consumers which constitutes late modernity. Meanwhile, the normative goals of socialism are seen as either impossible – due to globalized capital and the lack of a 'socialist' constituency – or undesirable. Late modernity is a world which has come to terms with the authoritarian nature of 'actually existing' socialism (Giddens 1999b).

This can supposedly be seen in the electoral politics of Western societies, where the Left seems to be on the retreat. Despite the emergence of a capitalist crisis whose scale is comparable to that of the Great Depression, it seemed initially that the Left was bereft of answers and electoral support. Left-wing governments have remained engaged in large-scale

privatization and shrinking of the welfare state. Elsewhere, most notably in the UK, Spain and Germany, the main left-wing opposition parties are in a desperate search for a charismatic leader to fill the gap which pro-welfare state policies once filled. Even Barack Obama's presidency, once a source of great hope for those on the centre-left, has been placed at the mercy of a hard Right Congress. The hope that was attached to his first presidential campaign has largely dissipated, with his re-election campaign driven by an attack on his opponent rather than any notion of hope. But there were some signs of life in 2012. The election of Francois Hollande in France, with his claim that 'my enemy is the world of finance', was trumpeted as the first step towards the 'end of [neoliberal] austerity', seemingly confirmed by the success of the socialist and anti-neoliberal Greek Syriza party in vaulting over the traditional left Pasok party in two consecutive elections.[1] This result was repeated in the rerun of the election a month later. At this early stage, however, there is little indication that these electoral successes will translate into a true alternative to neoliberalism. Neoliberalism with a more human face seems to be the most plausible outcome at the time of writing.

While there have been multiple protests about this 'age of austerity', including violent clashes in the UK, France, Greece and the US, it would be difficult to make the case that these are protests in the classical 'socialist' model since they involve neither an organized working class nor a clearly defined socialist party. Instead, it could be argued, these protests fit more neatly into ad-hoc allegiances of 'neo-tribes' (Maffesoli 1996). The same can also be said of the Arab Spring, where socialist parties played a marginal role, if at all, in spontaneous movements inspired by the hatred of despotic regimes and the figures who represented them.

It is exactly this pessimistic picture of socialism in late modernity which this book sets out to challenge. Socialism's supposed incompatibility with late modernity is founded on a narrow application of both concepts. Late modernity is a time not only of individualization and the flourishing of life politics, but also of frustrated political claims and continuing forms of collective recognition and inequality. In addition, socialism is not purely the theory of the organized working class but also, in its 'libertarian' form, takes the ability of individuals to realize and express their own political desires as both its analytical base and normative goal. Also, while the emergence of late modernity, in a post-Cold War world, has often been taken to signal the death of socialism (Franklin 1985, Fukuyama 1992, Giddens 1993, Kolko 2006), it is entirely possible to make the opposite argument, namely that the fall of the USSR and the dichotomy within socialism between communism

and social democracy allows for a reassessment of socialism (Gorz 1982, Kitching 1983, Blackburn 1991, Habermas 1991, Hobsbawm 1991a, Miliband 1994, Wright 1996), something that it is hoped this book will contribute towards. The combination of socialism and the political sociology of late modernity helps us understand more fully the politics of late modern societies, most notably their flaws, but it also suggests improved forms of political organization, which I will outline. Such a task is of especial relevance given the frequently claimed, though much less frequently followed, end of neoliberal dominance: as Crouch (2011) puts it, neoliberalism's 'strange non-death'. As we shall see, a credible alternative to such an economic system can be found in libertarian socialism and this is especially useful as a critique of neoliberalism.

The approach of this book is unapologetically sociological, in preference to the political or philosophical context in which arguments concerning the potential of socialism are sometimes made. A result of this is that my argument will always returns to the observable conditions of late modernity, which are reflected through the findings of research studies and the arguments of sociological theory. Any predictions made upon the basis of this will inevitably be tempered by the difficulty (some would say impossibility) of positing sociology as a predictive science. As a sociologist, my concern is with how human activity and recognition are negotiated and ordered in late modern societies. This may mean that some of my suggestions will not be as radical as the reader hopes for, since they are tempered by this sociological view. As I will outline in the Conclusion, the suggestion of alternatives is part of constructing a critical political sociology, including one aimed at late modernity. Therefore this book is an attempt to question the political sociology of late modernity on its own, individualized and neoliberal, terms. It is only by doing this that the 'socialist phoenix' Bauman speaks of can once more be reborn.

Before this rebirth, the rest of this Introduction will be devoted to an extended definition of neoliberalism – returned to throughout the text – and an outline of the structure of the book.

On neoliberalism: A definition

As highlighted above, the virtues of neoliberalism were increasingly questioned by the economic crisis of 2008 onwards, yet – ironically or not – this can still be seen as the economic system advocated by the majority of governments adversely impacted by its crash. This section will outline how neoliberalism will be defined throughout the rest of

the book. Central to this is the distinction between the empirical reality and theoretical claims of neoliberalism. As will be seen, many have highlighted the corrosive nature of the latter while questioning the universality of the former. The connection, or lack thereof, between these two will be a major factor in what follows.

Empirically, neoliberal economies are those which encourage increased marketization by enacting policies favourable to capital. This includes the privatization of productive assets held by the state (utility companies, healthcare, transport, etc.) and the introduction of markets into pre-existing monopolies (for example, electricity supply). As Connell puts it, this is a 'missionary faith' since 'to unbind existing markets was not enough . . . [neoliberalism] seeks to make existing markets wider and to create markets where they did not exist before' (Connell 2010:23). In addition, labour markets are transformed into 'flexible' markets (Sennett 1998) by removing employment laws which hinder the ability of employers to sack workers, alongside the expansion of temporary and part-time work, which do not accrue the same benefits. To ensure that there is a constant supply of such labour market opportunities, business regulation and taxation are lessened to encourage 'entrepreneurship' and economic growth. It is these tasks of privatization, marketization and lessening regulation that are the prime neoliberal roles for the state. States are forced to take such actions since, in a global economy, they must compete for capital by developing an attractive market for investment (Strange 1994, Blair 2005). They become 'neoliberal states . . . whose fundamental mission [is] to facilitate conditions for profitable capital accumulation on the part of both domestic and foreign capital', with a particular emphasis on deregulation and privatization (Harvey 2005:7).

Neoliberal economies can be traced back to military coups in Chile (1973) and Argentina (1976), often cited as the 'experimental' areas for neoliberalism (Harvey 2005, Klein 2007). The results were almost entirely negative, with economic decline and an increased concentration of wealth being combined with extremely oppressive forms of right-wing dictatorship. Such 'shock therapy' has only been implemented since in the 'Tiger economies' of Southeast Asia and the transition states of Eastern Europe (Klein 2007), although there have been recent claims that austerity is a form of Western European shock therapy (Levitas 2012). In more gradual forms, neoliberalism made its entrance into the wider world in the early 1980s, with the election of the Thatcher and Reagan governments, which enacted massive privatizations and/or tax cuts while, notably in Thatcher's case, facing down industrial strife. While these policies built on the actions of earlier administrations,

such as the Nixon government's 1971 dropping of the gold standard, they were part of a wider ideological shift to neoliberalism (see below), making their continuation an article of faith for governments. Since then, neoliberal policies have entered other countries, most notably China, Mexico, Sweden and South Korea. In addition, International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank funding has often come with neoliberal strings attached (for example, the privatization of utilities). Although the neoliberal period has been riddled with crises, each of these, by coming readily equipped with neoliberal solutions, has served to strengthen 'the long march of the Neo-liberal revolution' and consolidate its strength as a hegemonic project (Hall 2011:705). Initially, much of Western Europe remained beyond neoliberal reach with states continuing to favour a more 'collectivist' form of capitalism (Hay 2005). While this categorization continues to contain an element of truth (Becker 2009), the expansion of the Eurozone and the conditions attached for European Finance Stability Facility funds (the Eurozone bailout scheme) have encouraged neoliberal policies. These were enacted by nominally socialist governments in Spain and Greece, continuing the dominance of neoliberal ideas within nominally social democrat parties throughout the 1990s and early 2000s.

Therefore it is possible to identify clear instances of neoliberal policies. Within neoliberal economics is also a strong theoretical conception, utilized as justification:

> A theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private rights, free markets, and free trade. The role of the state is to create and preserve an institutional framework appropriate to such practices. The state has to guarantee, for example the quality and integrity of money. It must also set up those military, defence, police, and legal structures and functions required to secure private property rights and to guarantee, by force if need be, the proper functioning of the markets. Furthermore, if markets do not exist (in areas such as land, water, education, health care, social security, or environmental pollution) then they must be created, by state action if necessary. But beyond these tasks the state should not venture . . . according to this theory, the state cannot possibly possess enough information to second-guess market signals (prices) and because powerful interest groups will inevitably distort and bias state interventions (particularly in democracies) for their own benefit.
>
> (Harvey 2005:2)

This ideology found its first advocates in the immediate post-war period (perhaps most famously Friedrich Hayek and Milton Friedman) before going on to achieve wider popularity in the mid- to late 1970s. In the early 1980s such an ideology became mainstream through the election of the Reagan and Thatcher governments and was institutionalized in its adoption by bodies such as the IMF, forming the famed 'Washington Consensus'. The final step from here was its adoption as 'common sense' (Crouch 2004).

It is the ideology of neoliberalism which is of special concern for this book. The extent to which neoliberal economies 'exist' has been greatly questioned. It is not my claim that neoliberal policies have not been carried out. Indeed, I have highlighted examples of such policies above: neoliberalism is real and is not a 'myth'. It can instead be argued that the conditions said to be essential to neoliberalism, such as flexible markets made up of insecure, part-time work, or mobile capital which has no connection to domestic conditions, are simply not fully borne out by careful study and are only true at the level of generalization (Gilbert 2000, Fevre 2007, Hay 2007:90–152, Doogan 2009). This is not to deny that insecure part-time jobs operating at the whim of global capital exist, but rather that the ideologically based claims of their dominance outstrips the empirical evidence. Instead the strength of neoliberalism is its effect at the individual level: 'Instability is meant to be normal, Schumpeter's entrepreneur served up as an ideal Everyman' (Sennett 1998:31). Differences of class, gender, ethnicity and so forth are supposedly removed, or greatly lessened, from the equation through the equalizing mechanism of the market, which rewards talent and originality rather than entrenched advantages (Bauman 2007c:55 ff.). Such market freedom is a moral value since

> Individual freedom, in its liberal and neoliberal conceptions, is located in the ability to pursue whatever work one wishes, and to sell one's own labour power for a wage that reflects the social value of one's work to the highest bidder in a free labour market.
>
> (Braedley and Luxton 2010:10)

It is partly due to this idea of self-constitution via market exchange and entrepreneurship that individuals are imagined to be rationally and economically driven, rather than being swayed by emotional or social allegiances, which Sennett (1998) terms the 'corrosion of character'.

Consequently, the strength of neoliberalism exists not in its material occurrence but rather in its theoretical take-up and dominance:

> We hear it said, all day long – and this is what gives the dominant [neoliberal] discourse its strength . . . this is as a result of a whole labour of symbolic inculcation in which journalists and ordinary citizens participate passively and, above all, a certain number of intellectuals participate actively.
>
> (Bourdieu 1998:29)

For Fevre (2007) and Doogan (2009), late modern sociologists have become part of the 'neoliberal chorus' (Doogan 2009:11) by seeing neoliberalism as a fully realized reality rather than an ideological project to create such a reality. This is partly due to neoliberalism's narrative strength (cf. Cameron and Palan 2004). It seems to 'fit' with the increasingly individualized and uncertain – ambivalent in Bauman's (1991) terms – conditions of late modernity. However, it is this affinity which needs to be questioned critically rather than accepted as inevitable. This is one of the broader goals of this book, since

> To understand new capitalism, at the end of the day, is to understand an ideological offensive, a mode of domination, as Bourdieu suggests, that seeks to create uncertainty and anxiety and fear on the side of labour in order to guarantee its compliance.
>
> (Doogan 2009:214)

Structure of this book

This book is split into two parts. Part I will provide the 'theoretical background' to the discussion. In Chapter 1, this will involve an outlining of the sociology of late modernity – more specifically, the political sociology of late modernity. Here, the work of Anthony Giddens, Ulrich Beck and Zygmunt Bauman will be discussed. These three were chosen not only because of their significance in the development of a sociology based upon the conception of a new stage, albeit not a new type, of modernity (cf. Outhwaite 2009) but also because each has linked this to a distinctive political sociology with, especially in the case of Beck and Giddens, clearly advocated normative alternatives. Unique about my discussion of these thinkers is that I will place individualization front and centre not only in their general sociology but in their political sociology. This will involve a reconsideration of how we conceive of individualization whereby, making use of the now vast secondary literature, I will make a distinction between a form of 'disembedded' individualization which is, incorrectly, favoured in the

political sociology of Beck and Giddens and an 'embedded' form which resides within Bauman's work. Utilizing this distinction will allow us to see how Beck's and Giddens' thought is problematic not because of their valuing of individualization (as often claimed) but rather due to a faulty conception of it. This chapter will end by highlighting four key themes that a late modern political sociology must account for.

Chapter 2 will provide an historical look at the emergence of the school of libertarian socialism as well as an elaboration of its basic principles. The two representatives of this school for my argument are G.D.H. Cole and Émile Durkheim. This chapter will outline what is distinctive about their socialist critique and normative alternative. I will show that both Cole and Durkheim valued forms of associational politics due to the possibilities for individual and democratic realization they both believed this offered. This chapter will end by highlighting four claims, or tenets, of libertarian socialism.

Part II will be devoted to demonstrating the synthesis between the two concepts of Part I by illustrating the contemporary relevance of libertarian socialism, as both critique of neoliberalism and normative alternative, to late modern political sociology. The four chapters in this section will each highlight one theme of late modern political sociology and one tenet of libertarian socialism, to consider the overlap between them. In Chapter 3, this will involve a discussion of the 'choice agenda' highlighted by Beck, Bauman and Giddens and a major part of neoliberal governmentality. The often neglected work of Henri Lefebvre is highlighted here as a way of more effectively elaborating the link between choice and neoliberalism suggested in Bauman's political sociology. The combination of Bauman and Lefebvre with libertarian socialism allows us to see the limited and, ultimately, forlorn nature of late modern choice. I will show how the libertarian socialist linking of choice to functional democracy is a more effective and convincing strategy which still maintains the possibility for specialized and individualized expression emphasized by embedded individualization.

Chapter 4 will shift the focus to the state. Here I will suggest that two competing roles have been given to the state in late modern literature, either that of a benign entity existing between 'the people' and 'capital' (as in Beck and Giddens), or one that is entirely subservient to the demands of capital (as in Bauman's work). The goal here will be to move beyond this dichotomy and provide an explanation for the late modern state's instigation to privatize. This, I will argue, resides not within the demands of capital or individualized 'life politics', but rather in a mixture of the two. I will argue that the ineffectiveness of this can be

explained by drawing upon the libertarian socialist critique of the state as a body of democratic expression. Both Cole and Durkheim can be categorized as 'state-critical' thinkers who, in their normative alternatives, reduced the role of the state to expressive and/or coordinating functions. I will argue that this is an especially effective strategy for late modern socialism.

Chapter 5 will focus on neoliberalism more narrowly, more specifically on two 'contradictions' of neoliberalism: firstly, that a theory based upon trickle-down economics has created an expansion in poverty; and secondly, that the individual liberty it extols stops at the entrance to work. These are issues of economic inequality and economic democracy. I will outline the solutions, and their benefits, offered by the unique form of 'socialization' identified in libertarian socialism. Also significant here will be Cole's conception of consumer democracy. This highlights the effectiveness of this theory of socialism as a 'counter-culture' of neoliberalism since it has the same values but criticizes both the means by which these are pursued and the results it produces, akin to the way Marxist socialism operated as a counter-culture to liberal capitalism (Bauman 1976a). It is partly this which means that libertarian socialism, at least that advocated by Cole and Durkheim, does not rely on the (problematic) 'transformatory dynamic' (Devine 1988) of creating 'new individuals' but rather builds upon the individualization already present in late modernity.

This will lead into the discussion of Chapter 6, which will bring Part II full circle by discussing how late modern forms of political action highlight some areas of 'libertarian socialist promise'. Political movements in late modernity, most notably those based around 'life' or 'identity' politics, are not contrary to the spirit of libertarian socialism since they inevitably utilize a cultural critique of institutional political forms. This chapter will also consider pre-existing forms of political associations and their democratic effects.

Finally, the Conclusion will discuss how the four tenets of libertarian socialism have been shown to be relevant to the four themes of late modernity. It will also defend the importance of a critical political sociology which is based around a normatively driven alternative. In particular, I will discuss how the argument contained in this book can be seen as akin to the, supposedly hostile, views of Durkheim on the role of the intellectual and Bauman's 'sociology of hermeneutics' (Bauman 1976b, 1978, 1987b, 1989b, 1992a, 2000a, 2010c).

Part I
Theoretical Background

1

The Political Sociology of Late Modernity: Political Individualization

The form of neoliberal capitalism outlined in the Introduction both exists under and gives shape to the condition of late modernity. These two are not intended to be synonyms; late modernity encompasses the logic of social processes while neoliberalism classifies a type of capitalist economy. Since both focus upon claims of globalization and individualism, it may seem plausible that there is an 'elective affinity' between them. However, as this chapter suggests, this relies upon a myopic reading of late modernity. Here I will outline the challenges that the emergence of late modernity has posed for sociology – more specifically, political sociology. The three 'representatives' of this argument will be Zygmunt Bauman, Ulrich Beck and Anthony Giddens. This discussion will discuss the centrality given to individualization by all three in both their analytical theory and their normative alternatives. This has been, in various ways, problematic in each case, so I will also outline a way of rethinking individualization based upon empirical research in the field.

In order to allow for the concept of late modernity to be developed throughout this book, especially to facilitate its application in Part II, this chapter will highlight key themes developed throughout. These relate to four important elements of late modern political sociology: lived everyday experience; the role of the state; political economy; and the nature of political action. As we shall see throughout this chapter, Bauman, Beck and Giddens have seen these four categories as influenced in significant ways by individualization and neoliberalism. Therefore, I will not only provide a rethinking of individualization taking these themes into account but also conclude the chapter by providing four questions related to these themes, which Part II will then attempt to answer utilizing the main claims of libertarian socialism.

The timeline of late modernity is mostly left unelaborated beyond the suggestions that it began to emerge in the second half of the twentieth century (cf. Giddens 1990, Beck 1992, Bauman 2000a). It is useful to think of late modernity as an unfolding process, which first began to appear in the 1950s/1960s, with the emergence of the welfare state. However, late modernity could only be said to be established from the 1980s onwards, since it was then that factors such as individualization and the post-traditional order could first be seen to sprout, which partly helps to account for the concept's inclusion in sociological discourse in the early 1990s. As I will outline below, it is often suggested that some late modern processes (most notably individualization) were partly found in earlier modern societies. The argument here is that late modernity has both quantitatively extended such processes and qualitatively changed their form. Finally, late modernity is claimed to be the common situation of most, if not all, Western societies, but not of countries beyond the West (Giddens 1994a, Bauman 2000a, 2005a:22, Beck and Grande 2010).[1]

Throughout I will provide qualifications and modifications to the theory of the three theorists, but my focus will equally be upon critiquing the understanding of late modernity popular in sociology, of which they are representative. Since all three do not universally use the label 'late modernity' to describe the current social setting, we must first consider what they share to make such a classification both useful and accurate.[2]

On modernity

The best place to start with such a discussion is with the very basis of their thought – that is, their understanding of modernity and modernization. The current phase of late modernity is not a definite break from what came before but rather a direct result and answer to the factors associated with 'simple modernity'.[3] Nevertheless, different terms have been used to categorize this period. Bauman originally spoke of 'postmodernity' (Bauman 1987b) and has since shifted his focus to 'liquid modernity' (Bauman 2000a). Beck has devoted much of his work to a development of the current phase of 'second modernity' as a risk (Beck 1992) or cosmopolitan (Beck 2006) society, and Giddens has given various titles to the stage from 'second' to 'high' (Giddens 1990) or 'late modernity' (Giddens 1991a). Giddens and Beck, however, are bound together by their emphasis on reflexive modernization as the process categorizing this stage (Beck et al. 1994). This re-engagement with the understanding of modernity is central to contemporary sociology since it means the end of the 'Ma(r)x Weber' consensus (Beck 1997:21)

whereby there were many different sociological paradigms but at least a common understanding of what modernity was. With the break in this consensus, all three argue that the goal of sociology is to understand the basic tenets of modernity and how they have influenced our current stage of late modernity. Therefore the problematic of modernity as a process is central to contemporary sociology (Wagner 2012).

It was in fact this concern with the progress from simple to late modernity which differentiated Bauman's 'sociology of postmodernity' (Bauman 1992a) from other writers' approaches. Bauman justified his use of the term postmodernity as a form of diagnosis, not prognosis:

> I thought and wrote of the 'postmodern' as of a new perspective . . . which one may use to turn modernity around and bring into vision what otherwise would remain unseen . . . a shorthand from the 'external observation point'.
>
> (Bauman and Beilharz 1999:339)

Consequently, one of the reasons Bauman stopped using the term postmodernity was that, try as he might, it did wish to signal a different phase from modernity:

> 'Postmodern' was also flawed from the beginning: all disclaimers notwithstanding, it did suggest that modernity was over. Protestations did not help much, even as strong ones as Lyotard's ('one cannot be modern without being first postmodern') – let alone my insistence that 'postmodernity is modernity minus its illusion'. Nothing would help; if words mean anything, then a 'postX' will always mean a state of affairs that has left the 'X' behind.
>
> (Bauman and Yakimova 2002)

This is part of the reason why Bauman changed his use of signifier to liquid modernity (Bauman 2000a). As a result, throughout this book I will treat postmodernity and liquid modernity in Bauman's work as if both were describing the same, late modern, society.[4] While this equation of post and liquid modernity in Bauman's work is not without controversy,[5] I would argue that his frequent and vociferous claims that his 'liquid turn' was brought on by a) associations with theorists such as Baudrillard and Lyotard (Bauman and Beilharz 1999) and b) the suggestion of a 'new' stage are not factors related to what the theory said but rather the way it is read. In short, liquid modernity is a better metaphor – metaphors being central to Bauman's sociological method (Jacobsen and Marshman 2008) – for the form modernity

takes in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, not a new stage after postmodernity.[6] Neither of these terms suggests a new kind of modernity – it is possible to find liquids in solid modernity, and vice versa – but there is a shift in the 'manifest and latent purpose' within these two epochs, from a focus on creating new solid forms of social order, to more liquid and contingent forms (Bauman and Dawes 2011:132–3).

A similar conception of modernity resides within reflexive modernization (Beck et al. 1994), defined as: 'A *radicalisation* of modernity which *breaks up* the premises and contours of industrial society and opens paths to new modernities or counter-modernities' (Beck 1997:17). Reflexive modernization opens up the key concepts and assumptions of modernity, increasing understanding of how these have developed and impacted society. This happens not only at the institutional level, leading to internally reflexive systems (Beck 1992), but also at the micro level, where individuals become reflexive agents (Giddens 1990). Such reflexive agents are especially central to Giddens, whose structuration theory bases many of its assumptions upon their presence (Giddens 1984). The reflexive nature of the modernization project during late modernity is also highlighted by Bauman, since late modernity is 'Fully developed modernity . . . that acknowledged the effects it was producing through its history' (Bauman 1992a:187). Therefore, all three utilize common themes in their conception of a transformation of modernity (Wagner 2012:35) by drawing upon ideas of reflexivity (either individual or systemic); unintended consequences of simple modern processes; and a continuum between stages of modernity (simple and late) rather than a break.

These views link directly to what categorizes modernity as a period: the modernization process and how this has adjusted in late modernity. For example, Bauman argues that modernization was originally classified as the 'melting of solids' for Marx and the dominance of the reality principle over the pleasure principle for Freud. The impetuses behind these processes remain, however their direction changes. Whereas the melting of solids had previously resulted in the production of new solids more fitting to the capitalist order, they are now melted purely to remove obstacles to human choice (Bauman 2000a). This is notable through the expansion of the market principle into areas of social welfare. Such a shift is also due to an adjustment in the process identified by Freud. The reality principle no longer rules over the pleasure principle: instead they become mutually sustaining. The satisfaction of the pleasure principle becomes the very basis of maintaining the

reality principle. This is most significantly a *capitalist* process: whereas previous, simple modern, forms of capitalism were based on delaying gratification in order to maintain the security of the present (most notable in Keynesian policies), the focus is instead upon instant gratification, expressed most prominently via consumerism (Bauman 1982). Once 'the reality and the pleasure principle strike a deal', 'the search for pleasure could become the major (and sufficient) instrument of pattern maintenance' (Bauman 2002:187).[7]

A similar process is identified by Giddens, who refers to modernity as a 'juggernaut' (Giddens 1990). During simple modernity, individuals were effectively 'along for the ride'; the juggernaut knew the route to be taken and the end destination. But the processes of reflexive modernization allow a revaluation of modernization and the ability to choose the direction of this juggernaut (Giddens 1990, 1999a). This is done largely through the interaction with expertise (in Giddens' terms 'expert systems' (1991a:243)) and the re-embedding of expert driven modernity. Beck holds a similar view by seeing engagement with expertise as driven by a critical consideration, at individual and collective level, of side effects (Beck et al. 1994:29), although he argues that it is in fact contested 'non-knowledge' which such reflexivity produces (Beck et al. 1994:177–8, Beck 2009:122). Therefore all three see freedom, in terms of an actor's ability to act, as a central part of late modernity. Whereas for Bauman this freedom is to some extent illusionary, repression has lessened, but this has been replaced by seduction (Bauman 1992a). For Giddens, and to a lesser extent Beck, this is positive freedom allowing for some (albeit slight) influence over modernity via an interaction (fruitful or not) with expertise or supposed expertise. Common instances of the above are said to occur within phenomena such as climate change, where the processes of modernization (industrialization, etc.) produce a condition where individual action, guided by contested knowledge, is said to be the solution (Beck 1995); intimate relationships, where increased equality and emotional disclosure place more emphasis upon 'self-help' mechanisms to maintain the relationship (Giddens 1992); and job hunting, where employees are expected to revel in the possibility of 're-skilling' and taking control of their employment options (Bauman 2002).

The above has outlined a general discussion of how the concept of modernity is dealt with by our three theorists. This will be continued during the course of the book. However, were one to offer an exact definition of modernity common to all three it would be 'disembedding' – that is, the disruption of what already exists (be it

social customs, norms or structures) to be replaced by newer forms. Modernity always aimed to destroy what had come before, whether it be traditional ways of living, belief or sociality. In simple modernity, all three agree that modernity not only had a telos but was justified by a tautology: modernity emerged in order to create modern societies; modernization is modernity's 'mode of being' (Bauman and Beilharz 1999:339). Here they are a direct descendent of the first theorists of modernity who conceived of the modern condition as both a form of critique and a normative project (Wagner 2012:11–63). It is the basis of critique and the normative goal of this disembedding which shifts during late modernity. For Giddens and Beck the re-embedding is not justified by what is to come but instead is justified by what has come, hence its 'reflexive' nature. Bauman on the other hand sees the disembedding occurring without re-embedding, hence the 'liquidification' of modernity, itself a result of a reflexive awareness of the problems caused by previous re-embedding. Such problems include nuclear fallout (Beck 1992); the Holocaust (Bauman 1989a); and structural inequality (Giddens 1982c). All of these are examples of the processes of simple modernity leading to a critique within late modernity. Also notable here is a suggestion of the increased importance of individuals as agents of modernity. This is part of a significant trend of late modern sociology to favour a more, albeit not wholly, microsociological approach (Heaphy 2007). Individuals and their lifeworlds are the main subject matter of this field of sociology. This centrality of the individual has, as we will see in the rest of this chapter, had a profound impact on the four key elements of late modern political sociology highlighted at the start of this chapter and to which I will return in the conclusion. The next section discusses what is considered to be new in this discussion.

The centrality of individualization to late modern life

The starting point for a discussion of what categorizes the microsociology of late modernity must be individualization. While late modernity cannot be reduced to individualization, without it the theory loses any sense of internal coherence. It is at this point that we begin to see a significant difference for Bauman in comparison with Beck and Giddens,[8] namely his focus is on late modern processes as forms of stratification rather than of integration. Individualization is very much a contested concept and most of the proponents of the concept have provided sometimes abstract, or open-ended, definitions (Mills 2007). In the next

section I will discuss in more depth some of the secondary analysis of this concept. For now it is enough to say that for our three theorists, individualization refers to the way in which identity is transformed from a 'given' into a 'task', and that individuals are encouraged to take responsibility for this task (Bauman 2000a:31–2). At the same time, individualization is seen as more than an individual orientation and is also a form of social organization. This involves the dissolving of both collective allegiances and orientations in favour of individuals being given greater responsibility for their own social positioning and activity. In the most radical reading, social reproduction shifts from being structurally to individually generated.

Each theorist is distinct in their approach to individualization, with regard to both causes and effects, despite some shared concerns (Howard 2007a). To expand on these approaches, I will begin with Beck, whose elaboration of individualization has been the most comprehensive. For Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, individualization occurs when 'the individual is removed from traditional commitments and support relationships' (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002:203). Much of the impetus towards this is institutional. Beck and Beck-Gernsheim take as their starting point the emergence of 'institutionalized individualism' (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002:xxi): the centrality of the individual to social institutions, notably governmental bodies. The result of institutionalized individualism is that

> Central institutions of modern society – basic civil, political and social rights . . . are geared to the individual and not to the group. Insofar as basic rights are internalised and everyone wants to or must be economically active to earn their livelihood, the spiral of individualization destroys the given foundations of social coexistence. So – to give a simple definition – 'individualization' means disembedding without reembedding.
>
> (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002:xxi–i)[9]

Modernity has always created individuals. However, the social cohesion of categories such as class and the family helped compensate for the institutional individualism of simple modernity. But for Beck and Beck-Gernsheim their legitimacy was largely based on tradition. Now tradition's influence is passing due to 'detraditionalization' and the resulting 'opening up of the human biography' (Beck 1997:95–7) to other forms of action, thanks to globalization and the structural reflexivity of late modernity. With the removal of any authority these categories

had, the process of individualization becomes complete. Consequently, this has a paradigm shifting effect for the rest of our sociological understanding since it devalues our previous analytical concepts into purely 'zombie categories' (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002), so-called since they are sociologically alive but empirically dead, such as class, gender and the family. It is important to note at this point that for Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, the process of individualization is universal, the genie will not go back into the bottle and, as such, the concern becomes finding new analytical concepts to replace these zombie categories (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002:202–13). The freeing of women from traditional expectations, norms and routines is seen as especially important for Beck (Beck 2000b, Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002),[10] as is the decrease in class identification (2005b, Beck 2007).[11]

Due to these unintended consequences, experts have effectively become as unsure as the lay population, and 'society has become a laboratory where there is absolutely nobody in charge' (Beck 1998:9). Those who generate risks, such as scientists and industry, are initially removed from democratic accountability, leading to what Beck (1998) terms 'organized irresponsibility'. Therefore the question of 'who is responsible' for climate change, inequality or natural disasters is not clearly answered. For Beck the correct response is 'modernity, through its unintended consequences', but since this is not an individual or group, responsibility becomes free-floating and universal – we're *all to blame* for climate change (Beck 1995:58ff.) – creating individualized concerns and responsibilities. This knowledge deficit is largely reflected in daily life since

> All the experts dump their contradictions and conflicts at the feet of the individual and leave him or her with the well intentioned invitation to judge all of this critically on the basis of his or her own notions. With detraditionalization and the creation of global media networks, the biography is increasingly removed from its direct sphere of contact and opened up across the boundaries of countries and experts for a long-distance morality which puts the individual in the position of potentially having to take a continual stand. At the same moment as he or she sinks into insignificance, he or she is elevated to the apparent throne of a world-shaper.
>
> (Beck 1992:137)

Although agents are now free to craft their own reflexive biography, due to the influence of detraditionalization they also have to constantly justify it without recourse to societal expertise and/or precedent, instead

relying on the 'biographical solutions' that Beck pinpoints. This in turn leads to Beck's focus on democratization as part of late modernity itself. These risk-producing areas are increasingly subjected to public scrutiny and encroaching democratic control (Beck 1992, 2009) due to the increased 'risk consciousness' of individuals, who aim to hold risk producers to account.

We see a similar concern with individualization for Giddens, especially its obligation to engage in 'day-to-day decisions on how to live'. These decisions are made at an individual level since this is the only justification that will be accepted for their authenticity (Giddens 1991a:14). Due to the emergence of what Giddens terms the 'post-traditional order', like Beck, largely caused by globalization and reflexivity – this time at an individual level (Giddens 1994b) – these decisions are made in a contemplative and non-traditional manner. Giddens places much more focus on a linear process of biography construction than that found by either Beck or Bauman (Howard 2007a), but generally his discussion chimes with that of Beck. This is especially true when Giddens sees modernity as being a long-term process of individualization, which has now taken on specifically late modern forms (Giddens 1982a, 1990, 1994b). The impact of individualization is even more profound because of its link to the post-traditional order (Giddens 1994b), where societal precedents about how to act no longer carry any weight:

> A post-traditional order, in which the question, 'How shall I live?' has to be answered in day-to-day decisions about how to behave, what to wear and what to eat – and many other things – as well as interpreted within the temporal unfolding of self-identity.
>
> (Giddens 1991a:14)

For Giddens, this is mostly a positive process: it enables actors to take what he terms 'an active orientation to their lives' (Giddens 1998a:33) by reflexively engaging in a process of self-constitution and definition, leading to Giddens' focus upon 'life politics' and emancipatory 'life-chances' (Giddens 1998b). Agents increasingly become empowered to create their own self, identity and, to some extent, lifeworld, removed from societal constraints and/or precedent. This is what Giddens has termed the 'reflexive biography' (Giddens 1991a). As already mentioned, such agents are in fact agents of reflexive modernization, carrying out the opening up and questioning of modernity in a critical manner. Consequently, individualization is often argued to bring with it a change in social reproduction since 'the individual is becoming the

basic unit of social reproduction for the first time in history' (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002:xxii).

Central to the consideration of individualization in this book is that Beck and Giddens both treat it as a universal process. Not only have all become individualized (the objective aspect) but all take reflexive responsibility for their lifeworld (a subjective condition). In an oft-cited section, Giddens points to a poor, single, black mother as being required to be as reflexive and individualized as anyone else (Giddens 1991a:85–6). There is little suggestion that some individuals are more individualized or more reflexive. As Sørenson and Christiansen (2013:48) put it, 'The current, radicalized individualization thus represents a kind of democratization and generalization of individualization: everyone is individualized in the same way and to the same extent, regardless of whether they want to be or not.' To some extent this can be seen as a continuation of the rest of their sociology – for example, the discussions on risk, the importance of which is its universal application (Beck 1992, Giddens 1998a). Inequalities do occur but these don't affect collectives, rather individuals – that is, inequalities are not due to shared social characteristics (such as class) but rather due to individual choices and resources. In a famed claim, Beck argues that 'smog is democratic . . . risks have an equalising effect . . . In this sense risk-societies are not class societies' (Beck 1989:92). It is on this point that I wish to highlight a major divergence between Beck and Giddens on one side and Bauman on the other.

Bauman's discussion of individualization has similarities with that of Beck and Giddens.[12] I have already cited his discussion of how identity becomes an 'individual task', which shares notable features with the view of Giddens, although he sees this as a disjointed task rather than Giddens' more linear narrative (Howard 2007a). Bauman also has strong overlaps with Beck with regard to zombie categories, most notably that of class (Atkinson 2008) and gender (Branaman 2007) – in Bauman's terms, 'echo words . . . reverberating long after the crash that caused them has died down' (Bauman 2008a:62). Moreover, Bauman is in general agreement with the thrust of Beck's argument concerning the supposed lack of expertise, seeing members of society as in the same boat or, in this case, plane:

> Since we hear occasionally that what other people do and what happens to them somehow affect the life we live and the chances of living life the way we would like it to be lived, we guess that we may be travelling, all of us, on board the same superjumbo jet; what we do not know is who – if anybody – is sitting in the pilot's cabin.

> For all we know, the cabin may be empty and the reassuring messages flowing from PA speakers may be messages which have been recorded at an unknown time in places we would never see by people we would never meet. We can hardly put our trust in the impersonal wisdom of automatic pilots, because time and again we hear and watch yet more disturbing news: that people sitting in traffic-control towers have failed to control, and added to the chaos instead of guarding order . . . Last though not least, we have not the slightest idea what people like us, the passengers of a superjumbo jet, can do singly or severally to influence, change or improve all that, especially the course of the aircraft in which we are all locked . . .
>
> (Bauman 2002:48–9)

This apocalyptic message for Bauman shows his two concerns regarding expertise: firstly we don't think there is anyone who is 'expert' – a correct assumption – there is no pilot on the plane; and secondly when there is a replacement for the lack of a human expert (in this case the automatic pilot), we don't trust that because we've heard stories about them 'adding to the chaos instead of guarding order'. Adding to the confusion, late modernity is categorized by 'pointillist time', which is broken up into 'separate morsels, each morsel reduced to a point ever more closely approximating its geometric idea of non-dimensionality' (Bauman 2007b:32). Knowledge claims become akin to fashion statements, since the 'liquidification' of modernity means the continual reassessment of claims in light of new scenarios – for example, the relevance of a particular skill may greatly lessen or increase with shifts in the global economy. Therefore truth claims are purely of the moment, and even then uncertain since time is episodic and disjointed (Lee 2005, Bauman 2007b). Unfortunately for Bauman, although we may experience this insecurity of the jumbo jet together, some will be better insured than others, and some will be first class passengers, or able to get on another plane due to their globalized capital (Bauman 1998a). In short, the responsibility and, through this, the supposed emancipation at the heart of individualization assumes resources both material and mental (knowledge and expertise). At the same time, the conditions of late modernity make it increasingly difficult to hold onto such resources over the long term.

Consequently, for Bauman there is stratification within individualization (Bauman 2001a:17–56) since

> Being an individual *de jure* (by decree of law of by the salt of personal guilt being rubbed into the wound left by socially produced

> impotence) by no means guarantees individuality *de facto*, and many lacked the resources to deploy the rights implied by the first in the struggle for the second.
>
> (Bauman 2007a:58)

While Bauman agrees that individualization opens up new possibilities of self-realization and expression, the ability to partake in these is greatly limited to those who have the resources. Some are more individualized than others. Bauman links this to monetary resources, but it can also include the ability to have one's choice identified as 'legitimate' (Bauman 2005a, 2005b). This means that despite the freedoms offered by individualization, individuals may desire to have their choices verified by 'reference communities' (Bauman 2004b, 2007b). These are groups or, more likely, individuals whose choices are seen as being a guide to what would be the 'correct' choice to make, particularly what goods to buy, such as celebrities, but could also stretch to friends. Those unable to have their choices verified, or to act up their choices, are what Bauman terms 'faulty consumers' (Bauman 1998b, 2005b, 2007b).[13] Therefore Giddens outlines not a process of emancipation but rather a 'redistribution of freedoms' (Bauman 2000b:218), and it goes without saying from what has gone thus far that this is an uneven distribution. Individualization promises new freedoms to some, but a large number do not have the resources to realize this in the way that Giddens and Beck imagine.

In short, individualization is a process which, as a result of the institutionalized individualism of simple modernity, places individuals in a position of choosing their own identity and accepting responsibility for it. This responsibility is then also seen to expand beyond identity to a position of individualized 'problem solving' within the individual's lifeworld. It is these two aspects of individualization – choice in identity and what Bauman terms the 'subsidiarisation'[14] (Bauman 2008a) of social problems to an individual level – which are the main instances of individualization. An example of this for Bauman occurs within consumerism. On the one hand, this is used as a means of self-expression: we are what we buy. On the other hand, it can place increased moral and political responsibility on the individual (Bauman 2007b, 2007c).

Thus, what categorizes late modernity more than any other trend are individuals who are removed from simple modern identities and allegiances, and are free to experiment with multiple forms of identity and lifestyle. Yet this is a tortuous situation. Exactly what passes for expertise

is unclear and, at the same time, individuals have to make decisions within multiple fields which require some level of expertise. These are at the heart political questions, concerning how individual needs and desires are realized in a collective fashion. As a result, we can introduce the concept of 'political individualization'. This has a dual meaning, referring both to the political effects of individualization (how individuals act politically and are included within a political community) and to the political causes of individualization (more specifically, its relation to pre-existing collective forms, such as neoliberalism and the state). For all three, these elements of political individualization are central to the modernization process (Wagner 2012:20). Therefore a nuanced understanding of political individualization allows for a more complete assessment of the political sociology of late modernity. This is found in the following section.

Political individualization: Further empirical assessment

What has come thus far can be termed 'individualization theory', since its assertions have been made primarily via theoretical reasoning. None of the three engages in either empirical research or a systematic review of literature, despite the advocacy of such a strategy by Beck (Beck et al. 2003, Beck and Lau 2005). Unsurprisingly, this has then been a major point of critique (Goldthorpe 2002, Skeggs 2005, Fevre 2007, Atkinson 2010a) and is also seen to have profound, and unintended, political impacts (Doogan 2009). Therefore, to see the value of this concept, we need to turn to how it has been used, and refined, in empirical research.

To do this I will focus on research directly related to political individualization. As highlighted above, this means a focus on the political causes, and expressions of, individualization. Research into this concept can be broken down into three 'streams', which are reflective of wider critiques that have been made of individualization (Dawson, 2012c). These three streams are the modernist, interactionist and discourse critiques, with each offering distinct and complimenting perspectives which lead to refined distinction between 'embedded' and 'disembedded' individualization. I will utilize these distinctions throughout this book.

To begin with the modernist critique, researchers working within this frame aim their criticism at the concept of the political agent contained within individualization theory. It is claimed that this, with its focus on freely constituted, reflexive individuals, 'reproduces the simplistic presuppositions about individualistic action and abstract collective order'

found in modernization theories (Alexander 1996:135). Instead individuals, as political agents, exist within circumscribed conditions which impact both their consciousness and their actions. Most prominent here is the continued role of class (Goldthorpe 2002) to operate as an indicator of both voting patterns (Anderson et al. 2006) and political values (De Beer 2007). This is argued to be inevitable since relations to the means of production, indicated by labour market patterns, have remained relatively stable (Mythen 2005, Fevre 2007), meaning the continuation of a 'standardised' life cycle (Elchardus and Smits 2006). In addition, political movements, whether formal parties or more informal volunteer groups, continue to recruit members based upon key socio-economic indicators, which then tend to indicate the levels of dropout and retention within movements (Gaiser et al. 2010, Hustinx 2010). The aims of these movements combine a concern with self-realization and income distribution, as modern movements always have (Sörbom and Wennerhag 2012). Therefore political institutions and the order of political action are stable and long-standing (Hay 2007), as well as stratified by social indicators, such as class (Van Der Waal et al. 2007).

These conclusions are obtained primarily through the use of large-scale quantitative data sets. Such a choice of method is significant given the focus of individualization theory, namely individually situated and subjectively experienced forms of politics. For Beck (2007), such a method is flawed since the sharing of structural inequalities, life chances and characteristics across groups (such as what can be called 'classes') that they demonstrate will not create a class because there is a profound lack of individual identification and collective subjectivity. Let us for now take Beck's claim at face value: while quantitative measures suggest a continued identification with structural forms of social stratification and identity (cf. Heath et al. 2009), perhaps there is a need for an individually situated understanding of political identification and action in a time of individualization.

Here the interactionist critique is especially useful. Critics from this field are so termed because of a shared focus on how reflexivity and individualization do not happen in a way which removes individuals from 'traditional' categories of political action and beliefs but rather happen within them due to their reproduction through interaction. Therefore interactionists are united in their insistence that

> The individuals of Beck and Giddens' social theories are lonely. They see the reflexive individual as the product of global and system-wide social conditions, rather than linked to more proximate social

> relations around the firm, family, neighbourhood, social network and social class . . . To be sure, these people search out others, for instance as they seek the kinds of 'pure relationships' that Giddens emphasises as a key feature of late modern identity, but such relationships remain contingent.
>
> (Savage 2000:105)

Bourdieu's theory of social practice is a common influence here, particularly the way in which certain fields require the development of a habitus, itself determined by a reflexive identification or disidentification with others and ideas (Bourdieu 1984, Adams 2006). Consequently, reflexivity, as 'an emotional, embodied *and* cognitive process in which social actors have feelings about and try to understand and alter their lives in relation to their social and natural environment and to others' (Holmes 2010:140), is culturally (Adams 2003); temporally (Jackson 2010); morally (Yeatman 2007); and spatially (Adkins 2000) situated within categories of class (Plumridge and Thomson 2003, Nollmann and Strasser 2007); gender (Skelton 2005); and life course (Dickens 1999, Heaphy and Yip 2003).

The effects of this on political individualization are multi-faceted. The fact that this process is always situated within a particular social environment, it is argued, draws attention to inequalities within the field. For example, the experience of women in the workplace during an era of individualization is categorized by the need to reflexively identify with and create a 'male' habitus (Skelton 2005, Brooks 2008) or a 'retraditionalised' version of the female habitus (McNay 1999, Adkins 2000). Such an awareness of the need to reflexively identify with this opens up an awareness of how others do not need to do so, or the need to fit the habitus of 'others' (Adkins 2004). The same process is seen within class where reflexive identification creates distinct challenges for the working class (Jackson 2009) who must identify with the 'morally responsible' group, against 'scroungers' (Savage 2000, Skeggs 2004, 2005). This is individualized in the sense that the responsibility is on the individual to engage in this process (Adkins 2004). Individualized political subjectivity can therefore help to emphasize ideas of working-class subjectivity since they are situated within class categories (Atkinson 2007a). Also, the possibility of having reflexive choices recognized requires the holding and utilization of forms of capital, notably cultural capital (Lewis 2006, Banks and Milestone 2011). This, it is argued, produces an awareness of the inequalities of the possibility of truly 'freely' making reflexive choices: some can but I can't (Nollmann and Strasser 2007).

However, the effects of individualization are not only seen to reside in the awareness of inequality but also argued to have more positively affirmed reactions. Notably, rather than individualization involving the rejection of collective classifications which guide political action and identity, interactionists argue that in fact it can involve a reassertion of their significance. For example, the identification with, and utilization of, class identity can provide a sense of 'ontological security' (Giddens 1984) as part of self-presentation (Krange and Skogen 2007, Boli and Elliott 2008, Lehmann 2009). This can have clear political outcomes, with a class identity involving the perception of one's group having been 'hard done by' (MacKenzie et al. 2006). Here, class operates as a nexus around which the reflexive awareness of inequality, encouraged by individualization, can be expressed. It has also been argued that such knowledge can lead individuals to join social movements (King 2006, Ødegårda and Berglund 2008) as groups which claim individual, reflexive identification with a 'cause' via the mediation of their social environment in the reflexive process. This is, in turn, a reflection of the way in which reflexivity expands the social reference point of political subjectivity (Ellison 1997), reflecting a trend of political individualization being centred on the question of 'the other' (Holmes 2010, Mouzelis 2010, Burkitt 2012). Rather than being based upon a pragmatic or individual-identity level desire, interactionists argue that this can be driven by ideological concerns – most notably in what is, for Beck, the most 'late modern' of social movements: the green movement (Benton and Redfearn 1995, Benton 1999) and ecologically driven choice (Adams and Raisborough 2008, Connolly and Prothero 2008). Here reflexivity utilizes collective political ideologies concerning the environment – and their oppositions – rather than pragmatic life strategies and interaction with (non)expertise.

Therefore the interactionist critique sees political individualization as contextual, unequal, identification-based and potentially ideological. In many ways this critique returns us to the two components of individualization which, while argued in individualization theory to be mutually occurring, are distinct components. While the privatization of decision making is clear in such research, the removal of collective forms of identity is not. Consequently the collective still plays a central role, but this is expressed through the reflexive awareness of the individual. As a result, individualization is situated within these and they still play a role in political activity and identification.

This is, however, only 'one side' of political individualization: political agency. Political structures and ideology are covered more fully by the

discourse critique. Within this critique it is argued that individualization reflects, and unwittingly reproduces, the tenets of neoliberal capitalism. It is in fact 'neoliberalism in action' (Lazzarato 2009). Individualization, with its focus on self-constituting and reflexive individuals, making decisions as consumers and utilizing individual life strategies, is a reflection of neoliberal governmentality (Dean 1999). Individualization may have first emerged as an academic concept. However, it simply reflects the conception of the individual utilized in forms of governmentality which employ a certain conception of the 'social' (for example, in terms such as 'social exclusion') which, as a form of governmentality, 'structures the possible field of action for others' (Foucault 1982:221) by seeing 'failure' and 'success' as caused by the relative merits of individual life strategies and aspirations (Gillies 2005, Brodie 2007). These, in turn, structure the field of action by being linked to an instigation to take 'entrepreneurial' or, in Beck's terms 'experimental' (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002:24) strategies for individual success (Howard 2007b). In short, this 'perverse individualism' (Luxton 2010) suggests that we all have the chance to succeed due to the possibilities opened up by increased marketization (Houston 2010), as long as we take responsibility (Brannen and Nilsen 2005) and practice self-control (Elchardus 2009).

Especially problematic about individualization for the discourse critique is the way in which it becomes implemented in forms of social policy (Gillies 2005, Brodie 2007). This is sometimes argued to be a result of individualization theory 'narrating', rather than critically assessing, the nature of social reality (Doogan 2009). But it is also argued to take a more malevolent form in the union of individualization theorists and the state apparatus, such as in Giddens' role of 'Third Way guru', with its 'empty, anachronistic vocabulary' (Mestrovic 1998:ix), itself a 'displacement and effacement of class' (Skeggs 2004:54), and his links to New Labour:

> One may see the perfect illustration of the cunning of imperialist reason . . . in the dual persona of Tony Blair and Anthony Giddens . . . Giddens has emerged as the globe-trotting apostle of a 'Third Way' which . . . begins by warning that 'the poor today are not the same as the poor of the past' and that 'likewise, the rich are not the same as they used to be' . . . and, finally, 'concerns itself with mechanisms of exclusion at the bottom and the top (sic)', convinced as it is that 'redefining inequality in relation to exclusion at both levels is consistent with a dynamic conception of inequality'. The

> masters of the economy, and the other 'excluded at the top', can sleep in peace: they have found their Pangloss.
>
> (Bourdieu and Wacquant 2001:6)

Via such processes a 'consumer activist model' of political action (Bauman 2007c:68) is institutionalized in governmental processes and the discursive terrain of contemporary politics, defined by individualization (Howard 2007a), equates 'liberty' and 'freedom' with economic freedom since 'freedom other than free enterprise was cast as selfish . . . and placed in ignominious counterpoise to commitment, maturity, discipline, sacrifice, and sobriety' (Brown 1995:9). Therefore, as has been argued elsewhere (Mestrovic 1998, Adams 2008), individualization theorists become representatives of the 'happy consciousness' so readily criticized by Marcuse as 'the belief that the real is rational, and that the established system, in spite of everything, delivers the goods' (Marcuse 1964:82). Consequently, individualization theory harms sociological research since it is 'hoodwinked' by neoliberal discourse and complicit in its political reproduction (Callinicos 1999).

But, for this propagation of such a happy conscious to be effective, it would seem important that not only is it a reflection of what Durkheim terms the 'governing conscious' (Durkheim 1992) but also it becomes part of everyday practice, thus reproducing the discourse as an effective form of neoliberal governmentality. On this point the evidence is mixed. Researchers such as Elchardus (2009), Brodie (2007) and Doogan (2009) point to its successes in the continued predictability and structured nature of human action. However, others, such as Brady (2007), have suggested that the use of governmental policy to further neoliberal governmentality can have the opposite effect, with individuals becoming critical towards these policies, using the tools it has provided and their own conceptions of individuality (Brady 2007:198–205). Neoliberal discourse can through individualization develop 'techniques of the self' which allow for 'an attitude, a mode of behaviour . . . that people reflected upon, developed, perfected and taught' (Foucault 1988:45). These techniques can themselves be subversive and, as Brady suggests, critical towards the subject of their own initial propagation. Evidence for this has been found in welfare recipients' reactions to the idea that they have 'failed', where the response is that the 'system' has failed them (Ferguson 2007) and forms of consumerism, political or not, which allow for forms of collectivity and stability (consumer boycotts or selective purchasing) to be built from this supposedly individualized and insecure activity (Binkley 2008, Pellizzoni 2012). Therefore

we can utilize the suggestion of Binkley (2009) that while neoliberal governmentality may have a certain purpose, once this is placed within the discursive terrain of individualization and the latter becomes part of temporal practice, the constraints of its manifestation are limited. Therefore the political individualization of neoliberal discourse is somewhat Janus-faced. Late modern individualization need not be neoliberal individualism.

Recapitulating the individualization thesis

Having outlined individualization theory and the three critiques thereof, there may be a temptation on the part of the reader to think that one's view of individualization simply boils down to an issue of taking sides or perhaps the mode of investigation we value. However, in this section, I will present a refined understanding of individualization which draws upon these critiques.

As we have seen, individualization theory suggests two components of political individualization. Firstly, the role in political action of categories such as class, gender and ethnicity becomes increasingly marginalized as these evaporate into zombie categories. Secondly, political decision making, in terms of those decisions previously made by the state and other collective bodies, is privatized or subsidiarized to the individual level. As we shall see in the section below, Giddens and Beck unite these two components of political individualization in their respective concepts of life and sub-politics.

In turn, the critique of individualization has aimed itself at the supposed political impact of these two components. Modernists claimed that the supposed extent and 'uniqueness' of both components was exaggerated. Interactionists argued that while many of the modernist claims had an empirical basis, they were too quick to dismiss individualization. The extent of self-responsibility and individualized decision has greatly expanded. Such decision making, employing reflexivity, was bound within, and drew upon, forms of structural differentiation such as class. Finally, discourse theorists highlight the role of individualization theory in unwittingly reproducing neoliberal governmentality due to its acceptance of its two components. While this often means that neoliberal governmentality produces neoliberal subjects, it could also lead individuals to be critical concerning this.

To square this circle, we can conceptualize these two components of individualization as not mutually exclusive but rather distinct, each requiring their own forms of empirical evidence to be accepted as valuable theories. The part of individualization which refers to the ability to create identity in new ways, free from the zombie categories of simple

modernity, categorized by Lash as 'a theory of the ever-increasing powers of social actors, or "agency" in regard to structure' (Lash 1994:111), can be referred to as 'disembedded individualization'. As has been seen in the above discussion, this thesis is greatly flawed, with clear evidence of the limits placed on individual reflexivity and the continued political significance of forms of collective classification. Therefore we can argue that political individualization does not include such components and that political action is still circumscribed by issues of class (Van Der Waal et al. 2007), gender (Brown 1995), ethnicity (Henman 2007) and so on, as well as within existing ideological and policy-based conflicts.[15]

However, it is a different story with what we can call the thesis of 'embedded individualization'. This is well summarized in Connolly and Prothero's work on green consumerism:

> A process that has led to individuals feeling both responsible for and empowered in dealing with risks to both themselves and to the wider environment. [Individuals] felt that they had an obligation to and could act to address global (and local/national) environmental issues. At the same time, they also felt uneasiness about how to act. The feelings of empowerment described are not in opposition to or detached from the accompanying feelings of confusion, ambivalence or uncertainty, but are in fact a result of a feeling of being individually responsible.
>
> (Connolly and Prothero 2008:141)

Here we see the central components of embedded individualization, highlighted well by Bauman. The privatization/subsidiarization of political decisions to a micro level (Bauman 2006:4, 2008a:88) not only concerns our individual activity but also includes a supposed political responsibility for our lifeworld. This means that we are left, in the words of Beck (1992:137), to 'find biographical solutions to systematic contradictions', yet this is impossible or, at the least, very difficult for all but those with the most resources (Bauman 2002). Instead, this privatization is an experience categorized by feelings of ambivalence (Bauman 1991) and *unsicherheit* (Bauman 1999).[16] All the while, such an experience is presented as freedom rather than the insecure, morally ambiguous and resource-stripped process it actually is (Bauman 1992a, Bauman 1998b). Therefore political action is unequally available and problematic without forms of institutionalized support. In short, the pressure to act is not automatically united with the resources – monetary or otherwise – to

do this effectively. Finally, such processes are situated within, (Dickens 1999) rather than displacing, 'traditional' forms of classification and stratification.

Therefore by utilizing a conception of embedded individualization, we can more fully appreciate the political problematic of late modernity, namely the privatization of responsibility and requirement to develop an individual solution to political questions. This also brings forward a clear normative goal of politics as a collective practice, namely to provide the resources to allow for such a process. While all individuals may experience components of embedded individualization, the very nature of it as embedded means some can act out their political desires more fully. For Bauman, such a process relies upon the presence of political institutions which allow for the development of 'universality' and expression of agency (Bauman 1999, Dawson 2012a). Thus the experience of political individualization requires the unison of resource-rich subjective action with institutional forms.

This is a normative goal which is shared by Beck and Giddens and can in fact be seen as part of the key political question of late modernity: linking the individual to the collective. In the following we shall see how all three of the theorists under consideration have attempted to do this. As the conclusion will show in light of our four themes, this normative goal has led to an emphasis on choice as a key component of everyday life; an advocacy of an 'enabling' state; a view of economically inventive citizens; and seeing collective action as driven by individual concerns. The next section will outline how these conclusions have been reached, before summarizing the four key questions to emerge from such claims.

Politics in late modernity

The three theorists under discussion here have written widely on questions of politics, both normative and analytical, for reasons that are clear, given their sociological focus. Therefore in the following section I cannot hope to fully summarize their writings but will instead draw upon the key aspects for this book's discussion. Although there are some shared factors, each of the theorists is distinct, so they will be discussed in turn. This will mean discussing three factors:

1. what each believes categorizes late modern politics;
2. in light of the normative perspective outlined in the next chapter, why they dismiss socialism as part of 1;
3. what alternative they offer.

Anthony Giddens: Marxism, life politics and the Third Way

Giddens has been the most influential of the three in contemporary politics. His understanding of the Third Way (Giddens 1998b, 2000) has been advocated, if not followed, by Tony Blair (Blair 1998), Bill Clinton and (briefly) Gerhard Schroeder (Hombach et al. 2000) among others (cf. Giddens 2001).[17] This makes his work particularly notable since it can be seen as part of mainstream political debate during late modernity.

Although the Third Way attracts the most attention and comment (cf. Callinicos 2001, Leggett 2005), Giddens' political ideas have a long history which, he argues, stretch back into the development of structuration theory (Giddens 1991b). Hence it is key to take a holistic look at his political sociology. When doing this it has been claimed that

> Giddens's work has always embodied a political project characterised by an attempt to combine liberalism with aspects of socialism. In practice the emphasis on renewing liberalism has always overshadowed the residual commitment to any more radical socialist or libertarian project.
>
> (Loyal 2003:4)

Loyal argues that this balance between socialism and liberalism shifts further towards liberalism with the passing of time, partly due to political convenience (Loyal 2003:166) but also because of the false equation of 'actually existing socialism' with all possible forms of socialism (Loyal 2003:140, 166). The fall of the USSR heralds a change in Giddens' political viewpoint and signals the shift from a professed, libertarian socialism to purely liberalism. To discover the roots of this we must return to Giddens' major theoretical work.

For a book with such grand ambitions and scope, *The Constitution of Society*, Giddens' definitive statement on structuration theory (Giddens 1984), gives little space to a discussion of politics. This lack of direct political engagement has led to a teasing out of the political assumptions of structuration theory in the secondary literature, with broadly two positions being taken. The first, best represented by Kilminster (1991), sees structuration as a theory which 'dovetails' with twentieth-century European liberalism, most notably the way it 'seeks to maximise the conditions for rationality so as to minimise, and thus control, the irrational' (Kilminster 1991:79). The second position, a response to Kilminister, is expressed by Stones (2005:195–7), who argues that structuration is 'politically neutral'; elements of liberalism exist

alongside communitarianism and cosmopolitanism. This disagreement is partly due to the fact that the worldview contained in structuration theory is somewhat vague and sometimes contradictory (Bryant and Jary 1991).

The relevance of this argument is that it returns us to the centrality of individualization and the reflexive agent. Whereas Kilminister sees Giddens' reflexive agent as disengaged from the collective, Stones highlights how Giddens' perceives a reflexive engagement with the collective (Giddens 1981a, 1984). This would seem to entail a critical engagement with our political conditions, including recognizing and voicing our desires, as in Giddens' (1982c) critique of Marshall (1950) on citizenship. Indeed, such a conception of a critical reflexive agent is found in Giddens' two-volume *Contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism* (Giddens 1981a, 1985a), where he attempts to 'use Marx against himself' (Giddens 1985b:173).

Giddens' main critique of Marx and Marxism is that it sees agents, especially workers, as 'dupes' of capitalism and modernity (Giddens 1981a:16, 223). These dupes are confronted with processes beyond their control or comprehension, demonstrated by what he believes to be the unnecessary concept of 'false consciousness'. Instead, for Giddens, praxis is not a state to be achieved but rather 'the universal basis of human social life as a whole' (Giddens 1982b:155). He points to workers' movements within capitalism as examples of agents not being dupes of the state but rather seeking their own desires within capitalism (Giddens 1982c). As a result, contra Kilminster, he sees political agents under capitalism as engaging in the confrontation and questioning of power relations – particularly around the nexus of class (Giddens 1981b:118–38) – instead of attempting to remove one's self from these processes.

Adopting such a conception of political action as reflexively driven requires a consideration of towards what this action is directed. Here Giddens is clear: political action is directed towards the state since this is the main 'power container' in society (Giddens 1985a). From here he outlines a specific form of power: that of authoritative resources. These focus on knowledge and the organization of life chances rather than control of capital and/or property, which are termed allocative resources. It is the ability of the state to control these authoritative resources, particularly through the use of surveillance and violence as a last resort, which makes it the power container. Yet when trying to provide concrete examples of authoritative resources, one runs into difficulties, since Giddens is somewhat vague regarding their form. The following is the

definition of authoritative resources from the glossary of *The Constitution of Society*:

> Non-material resources involved in the generation of power, deriving from the capability of harnessing the activities of human beings; authoritative resources result from the dominion of some actors over others.
>
> (Giddens 1984:373)

In this definition, authoritative resources become part of power relations, and their identification with the state seems logical. Indeed, it is these very resources which cause Stewart to suggest that Giddens' theory of power is in fact one of domination (Stewart 2001:14). But, when engaging in concrete discussion of authoritative resources, Giddens sees them as more universally accessible. He cites universal literacy, memory retrieval and the mass media as areas in which they are utilized as a daily basis for self-constitution (Giddens 1984:258–62). So following his theory through to its logical conclusion, in modernity the state becomes the storage container of power through its ability to gather information and knowledge in the form of authoritative resources. At the same time he sees these same resources as being used by reflexive agents on an everyday basis. This relationship is expressed via what Giddens terms 'the dialectic of control', whereby 'the less powerful manages resources in such a way as to exert control over the more powerful in established power relationship' (Giddens 1984:374). This in turn means that power relations are relations of both power and autonomy (Giddens 1981a:50). Thus not only does Giddens' political sociology, both analytically and normatively, aim itself at the individual (Loyal 2003:25), but these individuals in turn orientate themselves towards the state, in relationships where they are both dependent and autonomous.

Such a view immediately runs into problems. Does the state distribute resources to match claims for such resources? In that case, what are the resources used to initially make these claims and have the state recognize them? Or does the state selectively choose which claims to recognize, reintroducing issues of power? In short, Giddens' focus on individualized reflexive political activity would seem to lead towards concerns for the democratization of state apparatus. Indeed, he identifies himself with a form of 'libertarian socialism' (Giddens 1981a:175)[18] and argues that the emancipatory potential of socialism is worth embracing (Giddens et al. 1982:64–5, 72). However, the ways in which this occurs is not discussed and, I would argue, a benign idea of state distribution is posited, albeit undertheorized, here.

The purpose of this diversion into the intricacies of structuration and Giddens' rethinking of Marxism is to highlight the centrality of political individualization and the way this raises issues concerning the connection of individuals to institutionalized political forms. These issues re-emerge in *Beyond Left and Right* and *The Third Way* (Giddens 1994a, 1998b). These are based on a central premise: the connection of life and generative politics signalling the end of socialism as a political project. To begin with the latter point, with an increased awareness of the unintended consequences of simple modernity, Giddens argues that the two main political ideologies of this period (conservative and socialist) have to reassess the impact of their political achievements during simple modernity and adjust their political position accordingly. The result is that 'conservatism becomes radical . . . socialism becomes conservative' (Giddens 1994a:2), reflected in the focus of socialist parties in the late twentieth century to maintain the welfare state, neglecting the need for its reform (Giddens 1994a:17–18). Therefore, at a normative level, Giddens moves personally away from an identification with socialism, rejecting both the practice and the ideals of socialism and looking to the wider 'progressive left' (Giddens 1994a). Although he acknowledges that the welfare state was not originally a project of socialism but rather of social democracy, he suggests that it becomes its 'core concern' (Giddens 1994a:69). As a result, when outlining ten reasons why socialism becomes conservative in late modernity, nine are related to the welfare state (Giddens 1994a:69–77).

If we are to accept that socialism became 'conservative', one major reason was not due to socialist theory but rather because right-wing governments, dominant throughout Europe in the late 1980s/early 1990s, were hoping to remove many of the provisions of the welfare state which socialist parties wanted to defend. This 'conservative' defence of the welfare state was time and space specific (Callinicos 2001). It can also be noted that Giddens places a large amount of blame for this death of socialism on the fall of the USSR, whereas previously he had stated that the kind of socialism he was advocating was different from that practiced in the USSR (Giddens 1981a) since 'socialist thinking in the West has collapsed almost to the same degree as happened in the Soviet Union' (Giddens 1999b:5). Giddens engages with 'philosophical conservatism' faithfully but

> There is also an acute failure by Giddens to engage in a vast literature . . . which argues that such a distinction [between the USSR and other forms of socialist theory] is necessary. Ironically, in his evaluation of Marx in *Capitalism and Modern Social Theory* written

> admittedly in a more sympathetic political climate, Giddens has made exactly this criticism of other writers. Such a *petition principii* is therefore perhaps not merely a logical or semantic failure on his part. On the contrary, such an ideological compression is probably based on a political rationale.
>
> (Loyal 2003:166)

This political rationale was the fall of the USSR – the socialist 'success story' – and the increasing dominance of neoliberalism. Although Loyal emphasizes this element, I would argue that political rationale was not the only cause of Giddens' rejection of the socialism he previously professed, since there was also a theoretical element. This brings us back to his conceptions of life and generative politics, the two key components of late modern politics. Life politics is defined as

> A politics, not of *life chances,* but of *life styles*. It concerns disputes and struggles about how (as individuals and as collective humanity) we should live in a world where what used to be fixed either by nature or tradition is now subject to human decisions.
>
> (Giddens 1994a:15)

This is a natural extension of Giddens' discussion of late modernity as a post-traditional order where decisions about day-to-day activity cannot be justified with a call towards traditional ways of acting but instead rely on individual justification. He suggests as an example the increasing number of female divorcees deciding how to carry out the roles of both 'woman' and 'mother' (Giddens 1994a:91). Life politics is therefore the way in which choices can become the choices of 'agents' – that is, how these choices can be accepted as legitimate paths of action (Giddens 1991a:214–15). As we've already discovered, the opportunity for this to take place lies in the agent's ability to access and utilize resources, which is where we turn to generative politics:

> Generative politics exists in the space that links the state to reflexive mobilisation in the society at large . . . Generative politics is a politics which seeks to allow individuals and groups to *make things happen*, rather than have things happen to them . . . It works through providing material conditions, and organizational frameworks, for the life-political decisions taken by individuals and groups in the wider social order.
>
> (Giddens 1994a:15)

Hence generative politics is the ability and responsibility of the state to provide the resources for life politics to occur. The major way Giddens sees generative politics as being achievable is through welfare, and particularly what he terms 'positive welfare' (Giddens 1994a:151ff.). Examples include reducing the environmental causes of cancer; the prevention of road accidents through policies such as safer cars; lower speed limits and greater public transport; and finding ways to generate more trust within relationships through 'educational, regulative and material components' (Giddens 1994a:154–5).

Once more here we face the issue of the role of the state in allocating such resources. The examples mentioned above suggest, particularly with regard to creating trust within relationships, that agents must be either told the 'correct' way of acting, implying a lack of expertise, or helped to understand it, implying knowledge but lack of the critical consideration that Giddens previously discussed (cf. Giddens 1991a, 1992). Consequently, governments have to decide who should be 'accorded autonomy' and thus find ways to 'generate resources . . . promoting productivity' for these groups (Giddens 1994a:93ff.). This model could perhaps be termed a paternalistic social state, where individuals are not orientated towards it, as in Giddens' discussion of Marxism, but instead are subsumed, and dictated to, by it, albeit with the best of intentions.[19]

This is a reflection of a broader 'downgrading' of agents in Giddens' work in *Beyond Left and Right* and onwards, who are increasingly conceived as solely enabled by the state (cf. Dawson 2010). This continues to be problematic in Giddens' formulation of the Third Way (1998b, 2000, 2001), which, as discussed by Leggett (2005), took for granted many social and political processes as not only existing but also beyond the control of agents (both singly and/or collectively) to change or impact, such as the wide-ranging and welcomed 'transformative' elements of globalization (Giddens 1998b:33). As Bourdieu and Wacquant (2001) suggest, Giddens' argument is that we need to 'come to terms' with, our globalized capitalism, with Giddens 'turning a blind eye' to forms of economic inequality, which, needing more than generative policies, are problematic for his argument (Rustin 1995:21). In turn, 'despite the fact that the gap between the highest paid and lowest paid in the UK is now greater than it has been for the past 50 years, Giddens asserts, rather glibly, that this may change' (Loyal 2003:162). Giddens' shift to a purely governmental outlook greatly hurts his claim to making a politics for late modernity since this, especially with its focus on 'life politics', would seemingly be individually situated and/or generated. Individuals need the resources to engage in this, with any inequality of them surely

limiting their ability to do so. While Giddens' claim is that generative policies are these resources, there seem to be problems regarding a) the state's willingness to administer these and b) the ability of claims for such resources to be expressed. Although at points Giddens returns to discussions of inequality and power as central to life political chances, and makes bold, yet vague, statements concerning the need to 'democratize the market economy' (Diamond and Giddens 2005:116–17), he is quick to say he's not advocating any redistribution of wealth, and that what is needed is to tackle 'social exclusion at the top' by encouraging the rich to see paying their taxes as a worthwhile act of citizenship (Diamond and Giddens 2005:112). Indeed, as we move through Giddens' work, we lose any idea of political individualization and instead the world of politics for Giddens becomes the world of government (cf. Giddens 2007a).

At this point, I would argue, Giddens' work ceases the role it previously performed as a piece of political sociology (Castree 2010), instead becoming a government-led policy programme with little or no recognition of the forms of individually situated, reflexive, political action which he previously saw as central.[20] Somewhat ironically, this can perhaps be traced to his focus on disembedded individualization. This, with its assumption of the self-constituting individual, shifts the focus to a governmental level due to an implicit assumption that at the micro level, individuals can 'get on with' acting politically in a relatively free manner. As he puts it, 'individualism goes hand in hand with pressures towards greater democratization . . . all of us have to live in a more open and reflexive manner than previous generations' (Giddens 1998b:37). Unfortunately, Giddens' political sociology increasingly disregards the fact that 'all of us' may not have the resources to do so.

Let's return to the three points outlined at the start of this section:

1. Giddens argues that late modern politics is categorized by a shift from earlier forms of emancipation, based upon both a classed understanding and material condition, to a form of emancipation 'increasingly centred' upon life political claims (Giddens 1994a:14). Political parties and governments are more and more concerned with distributing generative policies, rather than 'traditional' forms of welfare, to allow these life political claims to be realized and acted out.
2. Socialism is no longer of relevance since it becomes too embedded in the welfare state, with its standardized and material focus, to fully appreciate late modernity. Also, the death of the USSR means that socialism has been tried and failed. We can maintain some of

socialism's end goals (Giddens 1993) but must 'come to terms' with the globalized capitalism of late modernity.

3. Giddens advocates a greater awareness of life political claims, and for states to provide enabling mechanisms, most notably through the provision of 'positive welfare' schemes which hope to distribute authoritative resources. It should be noted that what Giddens says is already happening, at least within countries with centre-left governments, is what he advocates as a normative vision (Giddens 2001).

In short, while Giddens' work is problematic, it also frames the central issue of late modern politics: the way in which embedded individuals can link to collective forms of political organization. This is 'one of the key concerns of the political *problématique* of modernity . . . the balance between individual and collective autonomy' (Wagner 2012:158) expressed within political individualization and a central concern for Beck and Bauman. Giddens' work also brings to front and centre the issues of inequality of political resources, the role of the state and the nature of individualized political action, also found in the work of Beck.

Ulrich Beck: Sub-politics and the cosmopolitan vision

While Beck's writings may not have had the impact outside academia of Giddens' work, but it could be said that they have had a larger academic impact. Beck is 'simply sociologically famous' (Sørenson and Christiansen 2013:xix). Like Giddens, he sees the emergence of late modernity and the process of reflexive modernization as leading to the questioning and subsequent rejection of the political labels used during simple modernity. There are two major factors in this. The first is the change in politics from a discourse of 'either/or' to 'and'; the second is the birth of the risk society. Both help to create sub-politics.

In a similar fashion to Giddens (1999b), Beck argues that politics in simple modernity was categorized by a collection of dichotomies. The most prominent among these was the distinction between Left and Right, at both the national and the international levels. This then manifested itself in the Cold War and the choice between capitalism and communism.[21] However, for Beck these choices are no longer relevant:

> The antagonisms of the political world – liberalism, socialism, nationalism, conservatism – that still dominate people's minds, parties, parliaments and institutions of political education descend from the

> rising industrial age. However, when they speak of global environmental devastation, feminism, the criticism of experts and technology and scientific alternative views, that is to say, the remodernisation of modernity, these political theories are like blind people discussing colours.
>
> (Beck 1997:137)

In many ways, Beck's critique is more radical than that of Giddens: whereas Giddens simply wants to 'move beyond' these dichotomies but maintain some of their essential components, Beck says they are already useless, so there is no need to 'move beyond' them except in the sense of how we speak about them. At no point does Beck suggest that he wishes to maintain aspects of these ideologies – their very simple modern nature means that they must be rejected in totality.[22]

The end of the distinction between Left and Right at the national and international level is just one of the shifts that Beck sees from a politics of 'either/or' towards a politics of 'and' defined by concerns of 'simultaneity, multiplicity, uncertainty, the issue of connections, cohesion, experiments with exchange, the excluded middle, synthesis, ambivalence' (Beck 1997:1). This is linked into a late modern concern with difference, in both its recognition and acceptance, lessening the importance of factors such as xenophobia and homophobia, since 'individualization processes, considered globally, abolish prerequisites for constructing and renewing national oppositions of own-groups and strangers' (Beck 1997:75). As he puts it, there is 'no other any more' (Beck 2012:9).[23] Part of the impetus towards the politics of 'and' for Beck is the inherently global nature of politics in late modernity. This is true at the level of not only political institutions (i.e. the lessening impact of the nation-state, etc.) but also the cosmopolitan awareness of global processes on the part of agents (Beck 2006).

The basis for this transformation of politics is discussed in *Risk Society* (Beck 1992). The political focus of the book is often underplayed. Four of its eight chapters (including all of Part III) are concerned with questions of politics, and Beck is quite clear that he is interested in bringing a 'new political culture' into being which is broadly left-wing or left of centre (Beck 1992:195ff.). Significant for this book's argument is the way in which this, with its focus on sub-politics and risk awareness (Beck 1992:204ff.), draws us back to the question of the individual political subject and the flaws with the conceptualization thereof.

For Beck, much of the concern of late modernity is in finding ways to 'deal' with risks (themselves unintended consequences of simple

modern actions) by making life liveable rather than a constant worry. Examples of such risks for Beck are often environmental – ecological changes via climate change or nuclear fallout – but can also include the constant awareness of terrorist attack or unidentifiable disease (Beck 1992, 2009). These interact in a Kafkaesque manner with individualization, since one can never be sure whether, once the risk becomes a catastrophe,[24] it will happen to one's self or to someone else. This is because Beck sees all the risks of late modernity as 'democratic' – that is, as affecting all equally (Beck 1989, 1992:36): a nuclear fallout has no respect for neighbourhood, and climate change will not stop on the borders of wealthy nations. Individualization is perpetuated by this process since it lessens the role of collective political action. In simple modernity, problems happened to a group, most notably to a class. This group could then collectively protest with a claim of 'we're angry'. Risk society, however, leads to a claim of 'I'm afraid'. Although we may all be afraid, this could be for very different reasons (Beck 1992:49). Beck hints at points that some individuals or nations may be better protected from risks or that climate change also stratifies (Beck 2010c:175), but this is only protection from the results of risks rather than the risks themselves. Ownership of capital and other forms of stratification provide little comfort (Beck 1992:35–6, Beck 2010c). Indeed, for Beck, the universal nature of risk is indicated by it having no relation to income or status but instead being ascribed with citizenship (Beck 1992:100).

As discussed above, Beck argues that much of this risk awareness is already leading to the democratization of many risk-producing areas, such as science and business, as well as the pressure for more (Beck 1989). He identifies a new phenomenon which, as a result of individualization, is helping to bring this about: sub-politics. It has been noted by Giddens that in some ways Beck's concept of sub-politics has overlaps with his own concept of life politics (Giddens 1994a:128). Indeed, they are similar. But Beck's work on sub-politics is more social in its conception. To utilize a definition offered by Lash (1994:115–16), life politics is 'self-reflexivity', while sub-politics is 'structural reflexivity'. Sub-politics, which is defined by citizens forcing issues into the public domain, is to be seen as a direct result of 'politics', in the form of governments, parties and politicians themselves, failing to account for or discuss these factors (Beck 1997:94–109). This then creates what Beck terms the 'individual returning to society' (Beck 1999), where agents through sub-politics inspire democratization across various fields. Sub-political actors are therefore given the responsibility of 'rule-alerting',[25]

in light of governments' 'rule-following'[26] behaviour (Beck 1997:135). The result of this is that

> Those decision-making areas which had been protected by politics in industrial capitalism – the private sector, business, science, towns, everyday life and so on – are caught in the storms of political conflicts in reflexive modernity.
>
> (Beck 1997:99)

Climate change is often provided as an example of this: the actions of individuals force governments to change their behaviour in light of individual, green, demands (cf. Beck 1995, 1997).

However, despite Beck's theoretical aims, such a differentiation poses problems since it equates 'politics' with the government and state, and places it in the dominant position of the dichotomy (sub-politics is only 'successful' when climate change becomes a 'political' issue, for example). Such a dichotomy, in suggesting the seamless passing of issues from one, sub-political, level up to another, political, level doesn't account for the state's ability to reject issues or change their content substantially when making them 'political' (of which climate change itself is the best example). In this sense, despite Beck's claim that sub-politics extends politicization, it reasserts a dichotomy of the political being whatever governments do, and overlooks their ability to distort the demands of an individualized sub-politics. For example, a government can, following sub-political pressure, claim to be 'taking climate change seriously', but the way in which this is done could be counter to the demands of sub-political actors. Once more we encounter the problematic position of forms of political action and the state. Akin to Giddens, Beck sees the state as relatively benignly responding to political claims made by individuals who freely choose these claims and causes from the 'new niches of activity and identity' created by political individualization (Beck 1997:102). This is especially true when those making sub-political claims are problematically defined by 'more knowledge and self-confidence: more and higher education, as well as better jobs and opportunities to make money' (Beck 1997:101).

As a result, Beck assigns sub-politics huge capabilities, seeing it as able to dictate the political agenda totally:

> Sub-politics has won a quite improbable thematic victory. This applies not only to the West, but also to the Eastern part of Europe. There, the citizens' groups – contrary to all the evidence of social

> science – started from zero with no organization, in a system of surveilled conformity, and yet, lacking even photocopiers or telephones, were able to force the ruling group to retreat and collapse just by assembling on the streets.
>
> (Beck 1997:100)

Yet, at other times, sub-politics is seen as so impotent that we can only hope that political parties 'get the message':

> Everyone asks: Where will the opposing forces come from? Presumably it would not be very promising to place a missing ad for the 'revolutionary subject' in the most abstruse publications. Of course, it feels good, and hence is harmless, to appeal to reason with all the means at one's disposal because, viewed realistically, it leaves few traces behind. One could found yet another circle for solving global problems. It is indeed to be hoped that political parties will get the message.
>
> (Beck 2009:43)

I would suggest that this contradiction is due to Beck conceptualizing sub-politics in a way which suggests embedded individualization, but placing it within disembedded examples. When he introduces the concept, he uses examples such as protests by citizens over a new nuclear power plant in Bavaria, or a proposed citizen referendum on recycling in the same area. But the citizens of Bavaria were not bought together because of an individualized concern about nuclear power but because the nuclear power plant was being placed in Bavaria; citizens in Berlin were, most likely, less incensed and driven to action. As a result, Beck's concept of sub-politics becomes very muddled. In the same text as we find the above two examples we also find Beck suggesting that the rulings of judges (on speed limits in Germany and government corruption in the 'clean hands' saga of Italian politics) also qualify as sub-politics (Beck 1997:105–6) – it appears that judges are the revolutionary subject that the ad called for. The inequalities faced by such movements and situated motivations for action are displaced by Beck's new terminology, which is a common feature of his work (Sørenson and Christiansen 2013:138). Consequently, it seems unclear both what exactly sub-politics is (a new form of individual empowerment or a more complex system of checks and balances?) and what makes it significantly late modern: couldn't protest as 'joint action of individuals aimed at achieving their goal or goals by influencing decisions of a

target' (Opp 2009:38) define it? Beck's response to this may be, with a nod to the politics of 'and', that sub-politics can be all of these things, in which case this concept seems so broad as to be useless.

This is not to suggest that a concept akin to sub-politics for late modernity is without purpose, much in the same way as life politics. Both concepts offer a way of seeing the action of late modern citizens as intrinsically political, but both see politics as effectively meaning 'government'. This raises the question of the 'death of socialism' argued by both Beck and Giddens. Because of their 'politics equals government' formula, they develop an institutionalized idea of socialism. As a result of this tautological reasoning, socialism becomes redundant because governments and political parties cease to profess it. Consequently, agents are seen as largely aideological and, to some extent, apolitical since they become concerned only with pragmatic solutions. In this sense the frequent criticisms against Beck and Giddens for outlining a world of 'rational choice' individuals make a valid point (Alexander 1996, Elliott 2002, cf. Beck 1997:128–30). Instead, movements, such as the green movement highlighted by Beck, draw upon critical and ideological claims (Benton 1999). Interestingly, this is the one manifestation of the politics of 'and' missing from Beck's discussion (Beck 1997:8).

This discussion has yet to highlight one of Beck's major contributions: the development of a cosmopolitan perspective (Beck 2005a, 2005c, 2006, 2007, 2009; Beck and Grande 2010). The breath of Beck's writing here, as well as the number of topics covered, makes a detailed assessment of all it has to offer impossible (cf. Martell 2008, Holton 2009:50–6). Of importance for this book is how this theory frames the question of political individualization. This is done in a way which, while reflecting the problems discussed above, also exacerbates them, by marginalizing, in fact often dismissing, any potential of individualized political action.

Cosmopolitanism rests upon a key claim of globalization having greatly lessened the power of the nation-state. This is true not only in the face of the growing power of international capital but also because of the creation of global regimes (international human rights and non-state actors such as Greenpeace being two prominent examples) which undermine the ability of the state to self-rule and claim a monopoly of allegiance from its citizens. This exacerbates the awareness of the mixed cultural components of individuals' lives. As Beck puts it,

> What do we mean, then, by the 'cosmopolitan outlook'? Global sense, a sense of boundarylessness. An everyday, historically

> alert, reflexive awareness of ambivalence in a milieu of blurring differentiations and cultural contradictions. It reveals not just the 'anguish' but also the possibility of shaping one's life and social relations under conditions of cultural mixture.
>
> (Beck 2006:3)

He is clear that what is particularly late modern about cosmopolitanism is not the already present mixing of cultures but rather the awareness of this (Beck 2006:21). Thus 'cosmopolitanism . . . basically means the recognition of difference, both internally and externally' (Beck 2006:57). In a similar fashion to sub-politics, cosmopolitanism is already occurring via the lessening power of the nation-state and to some extent via the orientation of agents. But we currently experience banal cosmopolitanism (where we feel the effects of cosmopolitanism without the appropriate concepts and institutions to realize it). Beck wishes to outline a form of methodological cosmopolitanism, where these cosmopolitan processes are elaborated and discussed fully (Beck 2006). Consequently, cosmopolitanism is linked to individualization since while 'Globalization is something that takes place "out there" . . . [c]osmopolitization, by contrast, happens "within", in the realms of the nation, the local and even one's own biography and identity' (Beck 2010a:68–9).

There are a variety of issues that can be raised with Beck's form of cosmopolitanism. For example, some have questioned his ability or willingness to consider other cultures and instead argue cosmopolitanism privileges from a white, European standpoint (Bhambra 2007). There are two overlooked factors I wish to highlight. The first is that in some ways it is hard to see the advance that cosmopolitanism offers from Beck's original work on late modernity, apart from a change in language (Atkinson 2007c). Indeed, he often conflates the two, thus the risk that society becomes cosmopolitanism (Beck and Grande 2010). Therefore since cosmopolitanism is not being used to describe a new experience but rather to recapitulate something Beck has already discussed, without the concept it becomes a question of what exactly we see cosmopolitanism as. His initial suggestion of there already existing banal cosmopolitanism suggests that it can be seen as almost an entire societal logic along the lines of instrumental rationality. But instead he places it in the lineage of political ideologies, such as socialism, nationalism and neoliberalism, as the next 'big idea' to follow these (Beck 2005a:xvi). Although this quandary is never truly answered, it is fair to say that Beck sees himself as an advocate for cosmopolitanism in the same way as one can be an advocate of socialism, nationalism or neoliberalism (cf. Beck 2006:163–78).

This leads us to the second factor regarding Beck's cosmopolitanism. The above puts him in somewhat of a bind because he places himself in the position of an advocate for an ideology which in some ways runs counter to his sociology of late modernity. He acknowledges that 'globalization is being fashioned by the powerful against the interests of the poor' (Beck 2005a:xvii), which is very much in line with his writings on risk society and the 'staging' of risks (Beck 2009:10–13), and indeed he suggests that he wants to construct cosmopolitanism in such a way as to overcome these problems. Then later in the same text we see him arguing that the processes of cosmopolitanism, most notably human rights and democratic government, are complete, meaning that agents can no longer act contrary to these (Beck 2005a:64).

The space for political individualization in such a scheme appears limited. Beck's views have been questioned for having too consensual a view of political processes relating to states (Martell 2008) and human rights (Martell 2009); for neglecting power relations between elites at both a micro and a macro level (Murray 2009); and for ignoring power relations between the genders (Skelton 2005) and classes (Elliott 2002). Moreover, when Beck says that 'the cosmopolitan regime has only *propponents* [sic]' (Beck 2005a:306, 2006:109–19), he is arguing that those who may be prima facie anti-cosmopolitanism and thus try to fight back against it are effectively fighting a losing battle since cosmopolitanism already exists. While it may be possible to identify non/anti-cosmopolitan occurrences, these are bound for extinction, and are therefore further proof of the power of cosmopolitanism. As discussed by Ray (2007b:52–4), this is effectively a 'get-out' clause for Beck to claim consensus and verification when evidence suggests conflict and falsification; a normative vision becomes an analytical reality. Beck has recently tried to clarify this by distinguishing between 'cosmopolitanism' as a normative goal and 'cosmopolitanisation' as a process which is unpredictable and can lead to multiple outcomes (Beck and Grande 2010, Beck 2010c). However, as discussed by Calhoun (2010:607–16), this simply gives a conceptual furnish to a vision of one's analytical vision being borne out by selective use of evidence; cosmopolitanization can only mean that which leads to cosmopolitanism. Therefore differential experiences due to embedded individualization, and its inequalities, are simply ignored. Cosmopolitanism wipes the slate clean since a 'world order collapses' (Beck and Grande 2010:409). The result is, as Bauman (2001c:56–8) argues, that cosmopolitanism is effectively a classed viewpoint on the world.

As a result we can say that not only do the individuals in Beck's late modern world become at the whim of political processes beyond their

control but, to him, any action they take against this (even if it initially appears successful) is simply a further entrenching of cosmopolitanism. Indeed, he argues that denial of the reality of cosmopolitanism, at least in a European context, rests upon a '*clinical* loss of reality' (Beck 2006:117, my emphasis). Therefore the resurgence of far-right parties and figures in Europe, seemingly the most anti-cosmopolitan occurrence there could be, are dismissed since 'the careers and career setbacks of Jean-Marie Le Pen and Jorg Haider, for example, show both how spectacular and how flawed the actions are of the anti-cosmopolitanism movement' (Beck 2005b:136). I don't believe it would be an exaggeration to say that dismissing opponents of cosmopolitanism as deranged, while also claiming that Le Pen's success in getting onto the final ballot for the 2002 French presidential election (not to mention his daughter's continued success as the new head of Front National), while dislodging the pro-cosmopolitan position of Lionel Josplin, is a demonstration of nationalist failure, and cosmopolitan success takes a strong amount of ideological blindness. This is another example of Beck's omnipresent desire to proscribe a normative vision as an analytical reality.

To summarize Beck's argument in light of the three key goals of this section,

1. He argues that late modern politics is marked by two major changes:
    a) The increased risk awareness of the unintended consequences of simple modernity means that the risk society produces increased democratization of risk-producing areas (science, technology, business, etc.). This democratization is then furthered by the rise of sub-politics, which involves individuals coalescing around individualized political claims to 'change the rules of the game'. Many political occurrences, from the fall of communist regimes through to the political awareness of climate change, can be traced to sub-politics.
    b) An increased cosmopolitan awareness of difference and collective responsibility, produced by globalization and the nation-state's corresponding loss of power.
2. Socialism is no longer relevant since it clings to simple modern zombie categories, such as class, which socialists use to claim a relevancy which is no longer justified (Beck 2000d:212). Politics has moved beyond the strict division of perspectives – the politics of 'either/or', in which socialism thrived as a result of its opposition to capitalism,

to a politics of 'and', categorized by the awareness of side effects and multiple orientations

3. Beck advocates two major strategies:

   a) Political institutions as rule-following bodies should become more susceptible to the increased critical reflexivity of late modernity, and open to the rule-altering claims of sub-politics.
   b) States should adopt methodological cosmopolitan strategies, which mean realizing the impossibility of purely national action in a time of cosmopolitan inequalities and democratic international problems. Even more than Giddens, Beck is guilty of claiming that his normative vision is at the same time a discussion of empirical reality.

Importantly, like Giddens, I would suggest that there is the continued, and problematic, presence of disembedded individualization in this political sociology. This can be seen in Beck's contestable claim of the decline of xenophobia (so contestable that he contests it himself); the global awareness of cosmopolitan citizens; the free ability to engage in, and have recognized, sub-politics; and the decline of traditional forms of political expression and organization. Also like Giddens, his increased shift to a governmental, or purely macro-level, focus relies upon the assumption that individuals can freely engage in political activity. Such claims rest upon the conception of the disembedded individualization outlined earlier in this chapter, of agency becoming detached from structure and able to determine the political freely. Again, in this conception, issues of political action, inequality and the role of the state are poorly catered for. Action is conceived of as akin to selecting one of the many 'new niches' of political issues and means; material inequality is largely sidelined; and the state is seen as freely and benignly responding to the demands placed upon it. These common problems of Beck and Giddens' political sociology begin to highlight the key concerns of any alternative late modern political sociology, some of which are highlighted by Bauman.

Zygmunt Bauman: Socialist utopias, freedom in a consumer society and the separation of power and politics

I have highlighted significant overlaps between the political sociologies of Beck and Giddens. Bauman's work is more categorized by its difference from these two. Notably, he is more committed to a socialist critique than either Beck or Giddens (although, as we shall see, this is

a specific form of critique), perhaps reflective of what some have seen as the 'lingering presence' of Marxism within his work (Davis 2008:107; see also Bauman 1987a, Beilharz 2000, Tester 2007). Therefore the attraction of looking at Bauman's work is not only his intellectual impact but also because he represents a 'late modern counterweight' to Beck and Giddens.

Bauman has attracted a great deal of attention in recent years. His 'post/liquid modern' period (beginning with *Legislators and Interpreters*, 1987b) has been a major point of secondary comment and study (Tester 2004, Blackshaw 2005, Elliott 2007, Davis 2008, Jacobsen and Poder 2008). Somewhat curious about this is the relative lack of comment upon his political sociology (although see Carleheden 2008). While Bauman's sociology is seen as inherently normatively driven and therefore as political (Ghetti 2007), his analysis of contemporary politics is less commented upon. This may be due to the assertion that his work on politics is somewhat at a 'dead-end', with poorly developed concepts (Carleheden 2008), no alternatives to offer and 'no comprehensive perspective for understanding politics and society today' (Drake 2010:165). Indeed, Wilde (2004:110) argues that Bauman's political sociology, by lacking a 'concrete analysis of real alternatives', becomes a form of ' "dreaming" utopianism . . . not so much a utopian vision as a surrender to egoism'. Such an assertion is an oversight, since Bauman does indeed offer such a perspective, embedded within a conception of socialism.

Bauman's political sociology first emerges in his work[27] on socialism as an 'active utopia' (Bauman 1976b), itself a companion piece to his attempt to develop a critical sociology (Bauman 1976a). The two complement each other due to a utopian concept of socialism being a consistent part of his sociological perspective (Jacobsen 2008). Socialism for him exists as a utopia because it fulfils four goals: relativizing the present; demonstrating the aspects of culture which operate as manifestations of the present; demonstrating splits in society by who is defending, and who is critiquing, the status quo; and exerting influence on events (Bauman 1976b:13–17). In doing so, socialism takes the shape of the 'counter-culture' of capitalist modernity (Bauman 1987c), questioning the 'commonsense' that this system embodies (Bauman 1976b:65–76).

However, to do this effectively, a specific type of socialism is required, namely a type which moves away from an economist understanding, best found in the Marxism-Leninism of the USSR (Bauman 1976b:87–8). This stream of socialism emerged not by being a counter-culture to

capitalist modernity but by becoming part of the culture of modernity which stands

> for a perception of the world . . . a perception locally grounded in a way that implied its universality and concealed its particularism. It had been the decisive feature of modernity so understood that it relativized its (past and contemporary) adversaries and thereby constituted relativity itself as an adversary; as a spoke in the wheel of progress, a demon to be exorcized, a sickness to be cured.
>
> (Bauman 1992a:12)

The role of intellectuals was to exorcize that demon, to produce order through the construction of blueprints to be carried out. In this they were aided by their alliance with the 'gardening state', a nation-state form which took as its ultimate goal the construction of a perfect society, by removing sources of disorder (Bauman 1991:20). Communism was reconciled to this and became 'socialism's impatient younger brother' who hoped to speed up the process of modernization (Bauman 1992a:166). Groups which promised order had to be identified (the proletariat, organic-intellectuals), and so too groups of disorder (the capitalists, the kulaks), who were then removed. The result of this is that the focus increasingly turns to the emancipation of select groups (for Bauman (1976b:54), at least, partly present in existing socialism) as opposed to the emancipation of the individual. For Bauman, this is in fact the definition of socialism:

> In the last analysis, the attempt to build a socialist society is an effort to emancipate human nature, mutilated and humiliated by class society. In this crucial respect the Soviet experiment conspicuously failed.
>
> (Bauman 1976b:101)

By its very implementation, socialism loses any utopian claim it previously had, the utopian must always remain 'in the realm of the possible' (Bauman 1976b:36) and instead it becomes another formation of commonsense:

> Socialism paid the usual price of a successful utopia; having ceased to inspire imagination . . . it has lost its power of supervising the next stage of the human search for perfection. It has gained a firm grasp of

> reality, it has penetrated commonsense, but in the process it has lost its visionary capacity.
>
> (Bauman 1976b:112)

The success of this utopia was limited since it required the 'simplification' (Bauman 1976b:32) of the utopian theory to the level of a governing, intellectual-led ideology.

This clearly has implications for the possible implementation of socialism since Bauman equates it with the critique of modernity, and communism with its misguided application via the conditions of modernity. Socialism is therefore, for Bauman, a 'stance' which 'means opposing and resisting all those outrages whenever and wherever they occur, in whatever name they are perpetrated and whoever their victims are' (Bauman and Rovirosa-Madrazo 2010:16). As Tester (2004:33) puts it, here we find a form of 'humanist socialism' which 'can never be identical with any party platform, governmental procedures or policy initiatives that are based on a presumption of the inevitability of the actual' (Tester 2004:60). I will return to the validity of this conception. For now the centrality of socialism to Bauman's sociology can be seen in its critique of capitalist modernity, which links to one of the key concepts (for Davis 2008, the key concept) of Bauman's political sociology: freedom.[28]

Freedom or the pursuit thereof has taken two separate forms. The first (simple modern form) can be seen as 'state sanctioned', whereby the state, through recourse to intellectuals, decides the correct amount and/or manifestation of freedom for agents which most likely will manifest itself in the welfare state (Bauman 2008b:140). This is linked to the above discussion of Bauman's gardening state (Bauman 2008b:139). In addition, Bauman suggests that freedom is a question of relation since 'the freedom of some makes the dependence of others both necessary and profitable; while the unfreedom of one part makes the freedom of another possible' (Bauman 1988:19). Within the simple modern model of freedom, my freedom to act is partly a result of the security offered to me by the social position in which I find myself. In turn, this security is due to the limits placed upon the freedom of other actors. For example, to be considered 'rich' is dependent upon others being 'poor'. This condition of exceptional economic freedom was attainable for a select group, but most found themselves lacking it.

The second kind of freedom is that encountered in late modernity, where, following the wider trend for modernity to reject previous forms of security, freedom becomes manifested through the consumer

market and 'the volume of freedom depends solely on the ability to pay' (Bauman 1996:51). Initially the consumer market seems to offer a more immediately realizable and universally available form of freedom since in its easy entrance and multiple forms of choice, 'the consumer market is . . . a place where freedom and certainty are offered and obtained together; freedom comes free of pain, while certainty can be enjoyed without detracting from the conviction of subjective autonomy' (Bauman 1988:66). But, while the promise of the consumer market may be strong, Bauman suggests three criticisms of its ability to deliver on this promise.

The first of these problems concerns the divide between 'perfect' and 'flawed' consumers (Bauman 2002, 2005b, 2007b). Perfect consumers are those with the resources to continually consume, as well as the inclination to 'keep up'. Flawed consumers are those 'short of cash, credit cards and/or shopping enthusiasm, and otherwise immune to the blandishment of marketing' (Bauman 2007b:4). In this sense the market stratifies along material and ideational grounds: those with the money and the consumer mentality have huge advantages. This leads into the second critique. While the consumer market may offer individuality, this is mostly illusionary. Not only does mass production remove such a component but one's success at consumerism becomes measured by comparisons with reference groups. These references need constant updating (Bauman 2007b:84) and come to be the form of security which individuals need in order to be able to act. Having a set point of reference produces the ontological security that one is buying the 'right' product (Bauman 2007a:58). However, these forms of security are temporary at best, and their lack of long-term effectiveness is a reflection of the individualist logic which helped move the realm of freedom to the consumer market (Bauman 1988:38). Indeed, the success of this shift to a consumer mentality is reflected for Bauman in the suggestion that increasingly our intimate relationships are defined by the same consumerist logic (Bauman 2003a). Therefore, to be reproduced, the market must not offer a state of freedom, categorized by satisfaction, but rather a continual search for freedom, categorized by desire: 'It is the *non*-satisfaction of desires, and a firm and perpetual belief that each act to satisfy them leaves much to be desired and can be bettered, that are the fly-wheels of the consumer-targeted economy' (Bauman 2005a:80). The third and final criticism is that the market removes ethical considerations from action – to put it in the language used by Bauman, it 'adiaphorises' (Bauman 1993). The link between what I do as a consumer and the results of my actions are removed from my awareness

due to the individualized focus of the consumer market. This means that 'one cannot desire the prolongation of African famine without hating oneself; but one can rejoice in falling commodity prices' (Bauman 1988:80).

The significance of this discussion to Bauman's political sociology is twofold: one point analytical, the other normative. Firstly, this search for freedom has come to be the main goal of modern political systems. Simple modern systems, be they capitalist or communist, hoped to achieve this through the security and regularization of state-driven activity. This demonstrated that by creating freedom for some, the state had to create unfreedom for others. Capitalist societies had their prisons and poor houses, communist societies the Gulags and the secret police. Late modern systems then reject the security seen to be provided by regularized and standard state-driven freedom in favour of that from the market. Thus the possibilities for, and the type of, freedom in societies relies on the political system that society embraces. The second point is Bauman's discussion of the results of freedom. As noted by Davis (2008), there is a quandary at the heart of Bauman's sociology: while discussing freedom and advocating its realization as the goal of sociology, he doesn't actually see it as a positive state. To be free is to be left purely with one's own counsel and to have full responsibility for one's action. This can be troubling, confusing and perplexing (Bauman 2008a). This is partly due to his conception of freedom and security as opposites, not in a continuum but on a pendulum (Bauman 1997:1–4). As soon as one has complete security, one longs for some freedom, and vice versa. Thus the goal of political systems should be to provide a middle point between these two extremes, to allow for the freedom of individuals by providing security in the form of resources, in the terms of Giddens, both allocative and authoritative, to make this actual. While this doesn't mean that the pendulum will not swing again, it does both reduce the inequality present within the possibilities of freedom and allow for more long-term considerations of what the 'good society' would be, rather than short-term considerations (Bauman 2008d).

However, the political conditions of late modernity have made such considerations impossible, largely due to the dominance of life politics. Although Bauman shares this concept with Giddens, he sees it as a futile attempt to find solutions for the ideology of privatization found within individualization and neoliberal capitalism with the passing of the gardening state (Bauman 2008a). This privatization, at the heart of life politics, lacks the resources to be emancipatory since, in a rebuke of Beck, 'systematic contradictions cannot be *resolved* through individual

life politics' (Bauman 2002:168) and it is this futility which means it is reproduced:

> With joyful abandon, the state sheds its past ambitions and cedes the functions it once jealously guarded against extant or budding competitors. 'Deregulation' is the motto, 'flexibility' (read: no long-term commitments) the catchword, 'cutting public expense' the substance of the state's vocation . . . Biographical solutions to socially gestated troubles are encouraged to be sought and expected to be found. Vacated by state politics, the public stage falls an easy prey to life politics. The new electronically operated public scene serves as a magnifying mirror in which life politics, blown up far beyond its naturally confined proportions, fills the whole frame, leaving the rest of the picture out of sight. The pursuit of happiness and meaningful life has become the major preoccupation of life politics, shifting from the construction of a *better tomorrow* to the feverish chase of *a different today*. A chase never grinding to a halt, lasting as long as the succession of days crying out to be made different.
>
> (Bauman 2002:20–1)

As a result of this forlorn quest abdicated by the state, Bauman compares the public sphere to a TV talk show, willing to listen and condemn/applaud, but not to offer any assistance:

> Among the items most conspicuously missing from the list of offers is the prospect of collective means to be collectively used in handling/solving individual problems. The public – the gathering of other individuals – can only applaud or whistle, praise or condemn, admire or deride, abet or deter, nudge or nag, incite or dampen; it would never promise to do something that the individual could not do herself or himself, to tackle the problem *for* the complaining individual (being but an aggregate of individual agents, the listening/commenting public is not an agency in its own right), to take the responsibility off the individual's shoulders. Individuals come to the talk-shows alone with their troubles and when they leave they are sunk yet deeper in their loneliness.
>
> (Bauman 1999:65–6)

Therefore, for Bauman, Giddens' life politics and Beck's sub-politics are a futile gesture since 'at the heart of life-politics lies a profound and unquenchable desire for security; while acting on that desire rebounds

in more insecurity' (Bauman 1999:23). This is due to life politics' identification with consumerism, which, with its contingent, unequal and uncertain outcomes, is linked to insecurity. As we have seen, the consumer market does not provide security (Bauman 2007c). In turn, individuals tend to find 'substitute targets' for their anger against the inequalities and insecurity caused by a global neoliberal economic system (Bauman 1999:9). These fears are in turn picked up on by politicians and the mass media to produce a cycle of substitute fears (Bauman 2004a:54; 2012a). Without a space in which private concerns and fears can be expressed, socially judged and solved – as we will see below, Bauman sees this as the *agora* space – individuals are left striking out at seemingly 'credible culprits against whom one can wage a sensible defensive (or, better still, offensive) action. One would then perhaps be barking up the wrong tree, but at least one would be barking' (Bauman 1999:18).

At this point, let us summarize Bauman's late modern political sociology. The subsidiarization central to political individualization and neoliberalism has increased the imperative upon individuals to develop and maintain political choices and position, while not creating the resources, most notably political mechanisms, which would allow choices to be effectively made and realized. Bauman's argument is not that politics has been individualized – that is, followed the process of subsidiarization – but rather has been atomized. Here, actors are removed from the institutional and ideational forms needed for politics, a collective activity, to be realized. Therefore effective political agency becomes difficult for all but those with the most resources. Instead, most are left in a perilous state of insecurity, striking out at those in an even more acute state of *unsicherheit*.

It is here that one of Bauman's key political concepts is useful: his focus on the *agora* space. The *agora* is a space neither public nor private, but rather that in which private issues can be discussed and solved as part of the public good (Bauman 1999:4). Therefore it is a fundamentally democratic space. Indeed, 'democracy is the form of life of the *agora*' (Bauman 2011a:10). As part of this democratic role, entry into the *agora* is an encounter with difference but also an encounter of 'universality' found in the 'across-the species ability to communicate and reach mutual understanding' (Bauman 1999:202). Therefore this space allows democracy to occur by reconciling differences and providing resources to individuals who must conduct life in societies categorized by difference. First developed in democratic Greece, for Bauman it could also be found in the public squares and municipal buildings of modern

cities. His concern therefore is with the contemporary lack of such spaces since 'The old style *agoras* have been taken over by enterprising developers and recycled into theme parks, while powerful forces conspire with political apathy to refuse building permits for new ones' (Bauman 1999:4). The lack of such spaces to make way for the ever-expanding need of consumer capitalism for 'grazing pastures' (Bauman and Rovirosa-Madrazo 2010:17) means a lack of spaces for democracy to function and a self-perpetuating turn away from politics by individuals disillusioned with its capabilities (Bauman 2010b).

Given the centrality accorded to the *agora* space in Bauman's work, it is surprising that the exact shape of a possible *agora* space as part of Bauman's possible normative alternative is largely unspoken. This leads Davis (2008:149) to assume that Bauman is advocating a literal definition, akin to the Greek *agora*, which would seem problematic in late modernity as developed by Bauman since public spaces are areas in which one encounters 'strangers' (Bauman 2003b, 2005d). *In Search for Politics* does suggest a mechanism which, while not an *agora* space, may create some of the same conditions. This is Bauman's rarely advocated alternative: the basic income (discussed further in Chapter 5). For him, such a proposal would remove some of the pressures of consumer society by lowering the number of 'flawed consumers' (by lessening levels of poverty). It would also provide some of the basic enabling rights needed to be a citizen – namely, the lessening of *unsicherheit* and exclusion by having basic needs taken care of (Bauman 1999:180–9). Providing these rights should become the main mission of the Left (Bauman 2007d). Although he is enthusiastic in his advocacy of such a policy, Bauman sees it as almost impossible since with the lessening unilateral power of the state he finds himself unable to answer the question of who will enact it. Therefore it is sometimes suggested that his lack of a political alternative makes his description of late modern politics seem even bleaker than it actually is (Christodoulidis 2007, Elliott 2007, Schutz 2007).

But what of socialism? As we have seen, Bauman differs from Giddens and Beck by reasserting his own socialist viewpoint (Bauman and Tester 2001:153–5, Jeffries 2005, Bauman and Rovirosa-Madrazo 2010:16). However, his views on the relevance of socialism for late modernity tend to be general statements along the lines of the following:

> At some point, therefore, the resurgence of the essential core of the socialist 'active utopia' – the principle of collective responsibility and collective insurance against misery and ill fortune – would be

> indispensable, though this time on a global scale, with humanity as a whole as its object.
>
> (Bauman and Rovirosa-Madrazo 2010:69)

Alternatively there are suggestions of following a model closer to the Scandinavian understanding of social democracy (Bauman 2007c, 2007d, 2012a:107–110). The exact form these ideas would take is not thought through. It is possible to suggest that Bauman is reluctant to offer alternatives since, contrary to the state socialists of an alternative era, he sees his role as an interpreter, not a legislator. Nevertheless, he criticizes the unwillingness of late modern intellectuals to engage in critique:

> Standing up to the status quo demands courage, considering the terrifying might of the powers supporting it; courage, however, is a quality which intellectuals, once known for their bravura, or downright heroic fearlessness, have lost in their dash for new roles and 'niches' as experts, academic gurus and media celebrities.
>
> (Bauman 2011b:49–50)

Bauman's sociology of hermeneutics sees sociology as engaging in a 'conversation' with those it describes (Bauman and Welzer 2002). Within such a conversation the validity of the interpretations is determined by the lay actors' ability to relate to them and open up new areas of understanding. Suggesting alternatives can effectively become part of this conversation: participants can reject these alternatives, or alter them through re-embedding in a model similar to Giddens' double hermeneutic (Dawson 2010). Contrary to Bauman's assertion, the same can be said of socialism as a normatively driven critique.

Nevertheless, we can see the value of Bauman's political sociology as one which re-orientates the focus towards not only the inequality within contemporary politics but also the purposes of political systems and how institutional forms separate from the state, such as the *agora*, allowing for individual freedom. Again, here we see a central concern with inequality, political action and the state.

Let's return to our three concerns for this section:

1. Bauman argues that late modern politics is categorized by the passing of the gardening state, which then privatizes social problems and political concerns to an individual level. These individuals are then left looking to the consumer market for possible political solutions –

a search which promises to be incomplete. At the same time the dismissal of any possible alternative means that the many inequalities within this political system are allowed to continue unquestioned.
2. Bauman does not dismiss socialism but his conception of socialism places this as purely a stance on the world, or a utopian vision, rather than something to be achieved.
3. The alternatives suggested to this are rather limited. The basic income is one specific example. Beyond that there are suggestions that some aspects of socialism, such as a collective concern, would be useful as well as a rather general advocacy of the *agora* space.

By being driven by a clearly normative vision as part of sociological critique, which suggests that society doesn't have to be a certain way, but at the same time lacking a suggestion for what this other way may be, Bauman is put in a problematic position. The suggestions of alternatives can be a way of refining this critique. It is in this vein that this book goes on to suggest an alternative political system, to some extent building upon Bauman's critical political sociology. In doing so, I hope to tie Bauman's critical political sociology to a normative project.

Conclusion: Late modern political sociology

This chapter has outlined the theoretical perspective on late modernity adopted by this book, as well as highlighting the centrality of a concept of embedded political individualization to understanding this fully. We have also seen the successes and failures of late modern political sociology to appreciate the changes wrought by these transformations. The theories discussed thus far have failed to fully account for the specific conditions of late modern politics, most notably concerning the impact of political individualization. Giddens conceived life politics as allowing for universal claims of generative politics to be claimed; Beck saw sub-political actors as choosing issues freely which later became 'political' via the state; and Bauman, while recognizing the problems of life politics, did not tie this to a normative alternative. Therefore there is the need for further consideration of these conditions of late modern politics, which is contained in Part II.

Following the common themes identified by all three of the theorists considered here, I would suggest that this discussion leaves us with four central concerns:

1. How is the choice presented by embedded political individualization, seen most prominently in Giddens' claims for life politics, exercised at an everyday level?
2. What is the role of the state in providing, or not providing, resources which allow these choices to be successful?
3. How does neoliberalism influence, and limit, the impact of such choices?
4. How is political action collectively conducted in late modernity?

These concerns with their focus on everyday choice, the state, neoliberalism and social movements form the topics for the four chapters of Part II. Chapter 3 will highlight that choice is increasingly linked to the consumer market drawing on a false conception of a 'consumer activist model' of action. This sidelines the potentially transformative element of everyday embedded choices. In Chapter 4 it will be claimed that in light of the demands of embedded individualization and neoliberalism, the state is left forlornly turning to the same consumer market due to its fundamental flaws as a centralized body of democratic representation. Continuing this theme, Chapter 5 will argue that neoliberalism has both exacerbated economic inequality and seen the individualism it values stop at the entrance to the workplace, making politics essentially unequal. Chapter 6 will argue that collective forms of political action (in both social movements and pre-existing associations) demonstrate that political action is still primarily collective and that it emphasizes both the individualized aspects of life/sub-politics and more fundamentally structural critiques.

However, to be able to appreciate such concerns and develop a normatively driven alternative, it is necessary to turn to a discussion of libertarian socialism, which is contained in the next chapter.

2
Libertarian Socialism: The Genesis of an Idea

Sociology often prides itself on its ability to raise questions; a critical sociology (Bauman 1976a) of emancipation (Boltanski 2011) aims to question what is and to show its specificity across time and space, rather than consider the social world as taken for granted or 'natural'. This is not simply a task of justifying a field of study but is also seen as a greater good since, 'whatever else the "science of society" might do, it ought to be conducted for the benefit of society and not for the applause and self-aggrandisement of other "scientists of society" ' (Bauman and Beilharz 1999:337). To fulfil this task 'the twin roles we, sociologists, are called on to perform . . . are those of the *defamiliarizing the familiar* and *familiarizing* (taming, domesticating) *the unfamiliar*' (Bauman 2011a:171). This can then lead to sociology becoming a normative pursuit; not only is the specificity of the social shown but its unfairness or inequality can then be criticized.

However, as soon as sociology conceives itself as such a discipline, we encounter one of its many classical debates: if we say things do not have to be as they are, how should they be? Or, as Howard Becker once bluntly put it: 'whose side are we on?' (Becker 1967). Often, it has been argued, sociologists were on the side of socialism, given 'that a close connection exists between sociology and socialism is evident' (Bottomore 1984:1; see also Beilharz 2001). Nevertheless, the most critical of sociologists, often also socialists, have sometimes been reluctant to engage in the offering of alternatives, perhaps most famously in Marx's insistence that he was not 'providing recipes for the cookshops of the future'[1] (Marx 1996a: 17, Wyatt 2006). However, others, defined by Bauman as those abandoning critical sociology in order to 'engineer through manipulation' (Bauman 2008c), have been willing and eager to offer their services to prop up what is, rather than to challenge it. In

doing so, some sociologists have become 'men of the state [sic]'[2] who accept the permanence of what is, rather than as 'statesmen' who study what is in order to see what could be (Lefebvre 1964a:55). Such sociologists highlight 'the intrinsically conservative role of sociology as the science of unfreedom' (Bauman 1976a:36) rather than the inherently emancipatory and critical elements of a sociology of freedom (Bauman 1976a:102–12).

We have already seen that the question of alternatives figures large in the three sociologists of late modernity discussed thus far, as well as the tensions which come from such alternatives. Beck and Giddens were bold in their advocacy of such normatively driven ideas (although both also saw their 'alternatives' as crystallizations of pre-existing trends) and, although I have suggested that these are flawed, this does not detract from their impressive efforts to construct such suggestions. Bauman, as we have seen, had a much more strained and problematic relationship with the question of alternatives, despite what can be argued to be a clearer idea of his normative view.

I have provided this outline in order to highlight two factors. Firstly, my own reading of Bauman's critical sociology, with its focus on dialogue, the critique of what is and the need to 'help humanity in life', can contain the suggestion of alternatives when these are not tied to the power of the gardening state (Dawson 2010). Secondly, the two theorists considered in this chapter, G.D.H. Cole and Émile Durkheim, have, in separate and distinct ways, tried to combine a sociological analysis with an advocacy of alternatives, as simultaneously men of the state and statesmen in a way which, while socialist, is distinct in its particular unison of this with sociology. These alternatives both fall under the banner of 'libertarian socialism'. This chapter will highlight the key features of this critique, and the alternative it offers, as well as provide a brief discussion of its historical routes. Since the rest of this book will then be devoted to showing the contemporary relevance of this stream of socialist theory, the focus here will be purely on exposition.

The historical emergence of libertarian socialism

Bauman, when discussing the work of Cole and his interlocutors, gave them the collective name 'British socialism', which 'has been the principal antagonist of Marxist socialism' (Bauman 1972:172). Distinct about this form of socialism was its parentage, with Marx sidelined in favour of John Stuart Mill and others. Significantly, such theorists 'starting from very straightforward liberal, individualistic assumptions . . . ended

up, following the logic of utilitarianism . . . becoming in fact socialist' (Bauman 1992a:218). This was especially notable in the case of Mill, who 'deduced the necessity . . . of the social arrangement of justice . . . from his dedication to individual freedom' (Bauman 1992a:218–19). Such unique parentage leads to a different collection of socialist concerns. British socialism is

> opposed to the revolutionary and totally nonconformist concepts of Marxism. It is far less radical; it is orientated towards the institutions of the existing society and concerned to effect their transformation as quietly and peacefully as possible.
>
> (Bauman 1972:172)

Befitting this rejection of Marxism, such a socialist critique was, for Bauman, born of micro-level transformations in lived experience rather than dialectical theorizing, such as in Cole's concern with family structure (Bauman 1964:537). This was partly due to the unison of British socialism with the earliest forms of sociology, a link which was both broken in its political position and renewed in its institutional form with the emergence of the Third Way (Bauman et al. 2005:94).

Was it not for the fact that this book places Durkheim that most French of thinkers (Collins 2005, Fournier 2005), with Cole in its conception of socialism, the parochial 'British' socialism would have been appropriate for our discussion. However, in the following and throughout, I will refer to libertarian socialism, a classification which has now become commonplace when discussing Cole's work (cf. Schecter 2007; Wyatt 2011; Masquelier 2012) and which can also be applied to Durkheim's work (Dawson 2012b).[3] As we shall see, what categorizes libertarian socialism is a focus on forms of social organization to further the freedom of the individual combined with an advocacy of non-state means for achieving this. From here the conclusions drawn, concerning the nature both of what is and of what could be, utilize uniquely socialist concerns regarding the needs for associations and the problematic nature of the state, both currently and in the possible, socialist, future.

These concerns emerged from a specific historical context, shared, though experienced in different national and temporal epochs, by our two thinkers. In the England of the early twentieth century, as highlighted by Schecter (2007:120–2), Cole was part of a substantial body of opinion which had become disillusioned with the path taken by the – at that point emerging – Labour Party. Reflecting so called Blue Labour arguments made in recent years (cf. Glasman et al. 2011), this

was most prominently a debate over political methods. To be exact, this was a disagreement with the statist and managerial approach which, such critics argued, was expressed most clearly in the Fabian tradition of the Labour Party. As Wright put it, 'Cole's early political outlook and activity was above all else a response to the Fabian tradition of socialist collectivism' (Wright 1979:13).[4] Cole was part of a group that, inspired by earlier British socialists, such as Thomas Carlyle, William Morris and John Ruskin, hoped to revive elements of the medieval craft guilds in order to prioritize worker control and creativity, freed from control of the market and the state. Such views were expressed most forcibly in the journal *New Age* (1907–1920), whose most prominent contributor, besides Cole, was S.G. Hobson, the author of the term 'guild socialism', which Cole would later make his own (Schecter 2007:121). Guild socialism was 'the idea [Cole] found, but did not originate; but having found it, he effectively transformed it into both a theory and method' (Wright 1979:26). This was a transformation which, with Cole's especial interest in Morris, was influenced by a romantic conception of individual creativity, autonomy and fraternity. While these are implicit to socialist critique (Beilharz 1994) they are explicit in Cole's libertarian socialism.

Fin de siècle France provided a similar political setting for Durkheim. The supposed fragility of what would later come to be called modernity (Mestrovic 1991:37–53) and of the Third Republic (Stedman Jones 2001:46) left a generation of French intellectuals publicly engaged and committed, often around proxy battles, such as the Dreyfus affair. The insurgents in this battle were socialists of a Marxist hue, an ideological perspective which Durkheim was always strong in his rejection of (Durkheim 1897, 1899b). As he put it, 'not only is the Marxist hypothesis not proven, but it runs counter to facts that appear to be well established' (Durkheim 1885:135). Yet, despite claims of Durkheim's 'innate' conservatism (cf. Coser 1960), this is an inadequate classification of a political viewpoint which opposed the key tenets of conservative politics (Giddens 1971, 1982d; Gane 1984; Stedman Jones 2001). This left Durkheim in the position of looking for a Third Way (Eldridge 2000; Fournier 2005) which attempted to provide 'an account of the compatibility of individualism with socialism' (Stedman Jones 2001:111). Much like Cole and the *New Age* thinkers, Durkheim looked to the medieval guilds to provide a model for a system which provided the potential of individuality within collective forms (Durkheim 1984:xxxvi–ix; Durkheim 1992:26–9). Thus, both Durkheim and Cole found themselves in a political context which, while hoping to distance itself from

Marxism, still hoped to provide a critique and alternative to the current order which was seen to be categorized by a myriad of problems (Barnes 1920; Hawkins 1994). As we shall see, although Durkheim's relationship to providing such alternatives was more complex than the openly propagandist approach of Cole, the end goals remained largely the same.

The relationship between Durkheim and Cole as political theorists has been highlighted briefly by some (Lukes 1973b:12; Black 1984:222; Fenton 1984:42, 55; Hawkins 1994:474–5). These, however, have generally been characterized by the brevity of such a discussion or by seeing the relationship as one of difference, such as in Barnes' claim that Durkheim's 'general program is an interesting *capitalistic flirtation* with the least dangerous and revolutionary phases of syndicalism and gild (sic) socialism' (Barnes 1920:251, my emphasis). While there are differences between the two, where I differ in this book and elsewhere (Dawson 2012b) is by focusing upon the more substantial similarities between the two.[5] To discuss this further, I will outline the libertarian socialist critique and the alternative offered by both, beginning with Cole.

Cole's libertarian socialism: Multiple representation

Cole's libertarian socialism begins with a Rousseauian point concerning the inevitability and importance of association as both an activity and a source of identification (Cole 1950a). As he put it, 'society is a wider complex of institutions, which resemble one another throughout only as being one and all expressions of man's associative will' (Cole 1914:145). The functional differentiation of modern societies necessitates that although some activities are universal (for Cole we are all producers and consumers), the nature of these activities – for example, our location within the relations of productions and the type of goods we consume – will differ. Despite the mutuality of these roles, forms of political organization have generally favoured one or the other, particularly in socialist thought:

> The Collectivist, or State Socialist, who regards the State as representing the consumer, and the purely 'Co-operative' idealist, who sees in Co-operation a far better consumers' champion, are alike in refusing to recognise the claim of the producer, or service renderer, to self-government in his calling. The pure 'Syndicalist', or the pure 'Industrial Unionist', on the other hand, denies, or at least used to deny, the need of any special representation of the consumers'

> standpoint, and presses for an organization of Society based wholly on production or the rendering of service.
>
> (Cole 1920a:36)

As can be seen in this quote, there is also a third category of universal activity: 'service renderer', which refers to those services we access and groups we become part of within what Cole terms 'civic services . . . whose purpose is, not the satisfaction of economic wants, but the fulfilment of spiritual, mental, and other non-economic needs and desires' (Cole 1920a:96). Examples that Cole provides include education, health, the church and local community organizations (Cole 1920a:96–116, 1920b:172–9). These three areas – producer, consumer and civic service user – categorize the three key realms of public activity for Cole. Each is done in association with others and it is in fact this need for association which calls institutions based upon their satisfaction into being. We can therefore think of each of these as the 'function' of the association, with different associations emerging to fulfil specific functions (Cole 1920b:47–62). We form companies to produce goods; we rely on shops to provide the food we need; and we turn to schools to teach our children. Each association has a specific function but we need all three for societal reproduction.

It is the shared importance of these disparate functions which gives them political import, since

> In treating function as the characteristic, not of an isolated association, but of an association as a factor in a coherent social whole, or at least a social whole capable of coherence, we have introduced a consideration of value which compels us to scrutinise the purpose of each particular association in the light of its communal value in and for the whole.
>
> (Cole 1920b:50–1)

In short, due to the shared social significance of such functional associations, we need political institutions which allow for their contemplation and realization. This is especially important for Cole since it is through functional activity that we achieve our individuality. While the individual for Cole is perceived as 'universal', due to a Durkheimian acceptance claim of individuality as the 'living tradition' of modernity (Cole 1948:155), this individuality is only experienced as individualism, in Cole's terms, 'made particular' by engaging in the functional activity which provides specific interests, ideals and concerns (Cole

1920b:49–50). The universal recognition of individualism, as in Beck's institutionalized individualism, only allows for individualism to be valued. This is then achieved through the specific actions of the person.

Here we find Cole's object of critique. Despite the political importance of functional differentiation, there is little recognition of this in the political institutions of modern society. Sovereignty is equated with the state and, therefore, democracy is restricted to the ability to exercise control at this level. The form this democracy takes – the election of one individual as representative – would be acceptable when 'the purposes of political government are comparatively few and limited' – for example, during the time of the medieval guilds (Cole 1920a:15). However, in an echo of later arguments concerning state expansion (Habermas 1976),with the link of the state and democracy its responsibilities expand to the point where 'the representation which may once . . . have been real, turns into misrepresentation, and the person elected for an indefinitely large number of disparate purposes ceases to have any real representative relation to those who elect him' (Cole 1920a:15). From this critique of liberal democracy, Cole draws out some fundamental characteristics of what democracy should be:

> The essentials of democratic representation, positively stated, are, first, that the represented shall have free choice of, constant contact with, and considerable control over, his representative. The second is that he should be called upon, not to choose someone to represent him as a man or as a citizen in all the aspects of citizenship, but only to choose someone to represent his point of view in relation to some particular purpose or group of purposes, in other words, some particular *function*. All true and democratic representation is therefore *functional* representation . . . Brown, Jones and Robinson must therefore have, not one vote each, but as many different functional votes as there are different questions calling for associative action in which they are interested.
>
> (Cole 1920a:32–3)

Since individuality is expressed through functional activity, itself associational activity, there is the need for a political outlet for this individuality to be expressed. While our individual activity is of a wider social concern (for example, education as a civic service is a wider social 'good'), for Cole, 'the coal industry clearly concerns the miner, and education concerns the teacher, in a way different from that in which they concern the rest of the people' (Cole 1920a:35). Brown, Jones and

Robinson may all want children to be educated well, but if Brown is a teacher, she will have particular knowledge and concerns about how education is conducted which, as part of her individual and functional activity, need a political outlet for expression. This individual realization was always the central normative goal to Cole's work. As he put it, 'my Zeus is man' (Cole 1950b:15).

One distinctively 'socialist' element of this critique is not only Cole's linking of socialism to individualism since 'I regard Socialism, not as an end but as a means to the enlargement of individual capacities and liberties' (Cole 1948:156) but also the perceived result of such shortcomings in the field of political economy. The lack of functional representation means that the state is left to represent pre-existing dominant interests. In a capitalist society, these are the interests of capital. In a discussion of World War I as a time of crisis, Cole (1920a:22–4) prefigures a later Marxist critique of the state from Nicos Poulantzas (1969) by arguing that in a time of 'considerable dislocation' in the awareness of the interests of capital, that state acts to unite and present these interests causing it 'to assume more nakedly and obviously the shape of an instrument of class domination' (Cole 1920a:22).[6] Therefore without functional representation, some interests are represented but these are the interests of the dominant since the state 'enacts special privileges for one class or another, or passes special legislation discriminating against a class. In the extreme case, its political activity assumes the form of a class dictatorship' (Cole 1920b:87–8).

To remove these elements of class dictatorship, and to ensure that individuality is expressed fully, Cole develops his alternative libertarian socialist model. This starts from a fundamental statement of purpose:

> Guildsmen assume that the essential social values are human values, and that Society is to be regarded as a complex of associations held together by the wills of their members, whose well-being is its purpose. They assume further that it is not enough that the forms of government should have the passive or 'implied' consent of the governed, but that the Society will be in health only if it is in the full sense democratic and self-governing, which implies not only that all the citizens should have the 'right' to influence its policy if they so desire, but that the greatest possible opportunity should be afforded for every citizen actually to exercise this right . . . Moreover, and this is perhaps the most vital and significant assumption of all, it regards this democratic principle as applying, not only or mainly to some special sphere of social action known as 'politics', but to any

> and every form of social action, and, in especial, to industrial and economic fully as much as to political affairs.
>
> (Cole 1920a:12)

To achieve this, guilds or associations[7] would be formed in the three areas of production, consumption and civic services (Cole 1920a). In production there would be a national association to 'represent a distinct and coherent service or group of services' (Cole 1920a:47) complimented by associations at regional and local level, with different amounts of devolution needed for different industries. However, the main activity of the association occurs at the level of 'the factory, or place of work' (Cole 1920a:48). Here the members of the association, simultaneously workers and owners, vote for individuals to represent them on issues of procedure as well as related concerns, such as wages, appointment of managers and workplace regulations. Such an associational format recognizes the communal nature of production by removing the power of private capital and placing control in hands of the producers. Cole identifies the trade union as an early forerunner of such associations (Cole 1920a:42–62). The next set of associations concerns consumption. For Cole, consumer representation would again take place at both regional and local levels and take two specific institutional forms: cooperatives to represent specialized consumption (i.e. that of products or services) and collectives to represent collective forms of consumption, such as utilities (Cole 1920a:83). These bodies are then charged with the responsibility of voicing the consumer's demands to the producer bodies and negotiating the realization of these demands. This also involves forums for the producer bodies, themselves also consumers, to negotiate their desires (Cole 1920a:89). These forms of negotiation are effectively Cole's form of economic planning and replace the capitalist form of commodity market with one based on need via negotiation (Cole 1920a:93–4). Finally, there would be associations for users and providers of the civic services. Given the somewhat more disorganized and spontaneous nature of such activities, Cole advocates an even more decentralized set of associations which allow for 'experiments' (Cole 1920a:102) in how such functions are carried out.[8]

It is not the goal of libertarian socialism in Cole's hands to provide a rigid institutional structure which proscribes action but rather institutional forms which allow for the expression of individuality, situated within associational forms. As he puts it, 'heaven forbid that we should be tidily organized down to the last man and the last function' (Cole 1920a:115). The small-scale, functionally specific and internally

democratic nature of the associations is seen to provide the potential for this by providing an institutional sphere of functional representation, without being too prescriptive. This latter point is central to Cole since

> My idea of democracy excludes a regimented society, an indoctrinated society, a society in which men are not allowed to organise freely for all sorts of purposes without any interference by the police, a society in which it is supposed to be a virtue for everybody to think like his neighbours. My idea of democracy excludes too much tidiness, too much order, too much having everything taped. I believe every good democrat is a bit of an anarchist when he's scratched.
>
> (Cole 1950c:98)

The ways in which such a system allows for individuality to be expressed, the associations, return us to the sociological basis of Cole's system. Initially, individuality and association may appear contradictory since the latter is a distinctively collective form of organization. However, for Cole there is a need to make a distinction between a conception of individuality as somehow innate to the person – as he terms it, the 'atomized individual' – and individuality as an expression of 'man in all his complex groupings and relations' (Cole 1950b:15). The latter of these is the true expression of how individuality is achieved since people 'are not isolated individuals, but members one of another in a host of different ways, and behave differently as different loyalties and associations come uppermost' (Cole 1950b:15). Therefore in keeping with socialist conceptions of 'political individualism' (Lukes 1973b:85), the individual is determined by the forms of social action in which they engage. Since social action involves, by its very nature, others, this is inherently associational activity. To be an individual and engage in 'self-development' (Lukes 1973b:67–72) requires the necessity of being – as Cole puts it, 'multi-functional' (Cole 1920b:50) and therefore not tied to particular divisional groups. Less abstractly, this means that the qualities which make up an individual – their unique concerns, activities and thoughts – are a condition of their ability to engage in meaningful social action. Cole's associations are an attempt to realize this by linking the multi-functional element of individual action to political institutions. While these are associational forms, they are so because they are the manifestation of 'well-directed achievement' which constitutes individual action (Cole 1920a:26). This does not mean that the political is the only realm in which individuality is expressed,

rather that the goal of the political is to provide an outlet for such individuality.

In addition to such associations, Cole imagined a reformed state that he termed 'the commune'. The eventual role of the state in libertarian socialism, for both Cole and Durkheim, will be outlined in Chapter 4. For now, however, it is enough to say that for Cole, the central state would have its forms of agency and coercion removed and instead be responsible for coordination between the various bodies. Since the structure of the commune would be made up of representatives from the various associations, this is inevitably 'self-co-ordination' (Cole 1920a:124, 117–60).

As can be seen, Cole's libertarian socialism is largely built up from political theory. However, there is a key sociological point: while the functional differentiation of modern society as part of their 'moral development' (Cole 1950d) makes the resurrection of the traditional guilds impossible, 'we cannot go back to "town economy"' (Cole 1920a:45). It is this very differentiation which, in producing individually specific forms of identification and function, something akin to such guilds. Individuality can be most effectively realized politically through an associational form. This focus on the increased division of labour is, needless to say, also important to Durkheim's libertarian socialism.

Durkheim's libertarian socialism: Morality through association

As mentioned above, Durkheim worked in the specific context of the *fin de siècle*, which 'refers generally to the pessimism, cynicism, and ennui felt by people in the 1880s and 1890s, along with the widespread belief that civilization leads to decadence' (Mestrovic 1991:2). While it is easy to exaggerate the way in which Durkheim fitted naturally into this movement, the general spirit of dissatisfaction with the current order permeated his sociology, leading him to similar conclusions as those of Cole but for different reasons. Needless to say, Durkheim's sociology is very broad and it is beyond the scope of this chapter to cover all the aspects of his political sociology (cf. Giddens 1978, Stedman Jones 2001). Instead, this section will focus on the basis of Durkheim's critique of capitalism and liberal democracy, followed by the outlines of his libertarian socialist alternative.

The fault Durkheim identified with the order confronting him was the presence of, as he termed it, 'malaise' (Durkheim 1959:7, 1984:lv,

1992:96). Such a malaise was 'not rooted in any particular class' but was 'general over the whole of society' (Durkheim 1899a:142–3). He argued that a 'decline in public morality' was responsible for this malaise, itself a result of 'the lack of any economic discipline' (Durkheim 1984:xxxiv), which had moral and political impacts.

More specifically, the lack of economic discipline can be traced to what Durkheim saw as a lack of 'professional ethics'. These are the rules that govern activity, as well as the rights accorded to workers, within each profession (Durkheim 1984, 1992). During times of mechanical solidarity, these had been strong, due to a low division of labour and strong guild-based governance. However, they have not maintained pace with the increase in specialization and the division of labour, meaning that there is a lack of moral guidance and recognition of rights in individuals' activity (Durkheim 1952:211–13, 1992:26). Much like Cole, Durkheim thought these guidelines needed to be developed at the level of the profession since the concerns 'of the industrialist are quite different from those of the soldier, those of the soldier from those of the priest, and so on' (Durkheim 1992:5). With this lack of professional ethics there is instead another instigation which guides professional activity: the profit imperative or, as Durkheim terms it, 'the amoral character of economic life' (Durkheim 1992:12).

Durkheim's concern with the morality, or rather the lack thereof, within capitalism is most profound in his discussion of economic anomie (Durkheim 1952:207–19). For him, humans are distinct in their possibility of having insatiable appetites, which is especially profound in the economic realm. Gaining wealth simply begets the desire for more wealth since 'the more one has, the more one wants, since satisfactions received only stimulate instead of filling needs' (Durkheim 1952:209). Economic anomie, itself 'chronic' (Durkheim 1952:215), occurs when these insatiable human appetites are not tempered by a regulative moral force since, once they are freed from moral regulation, they cannot be justly recognized; there is never enough wealth or goods for everyone to feel they are getting their just desserts in conditions of economic anomie (Durkheim 1952:214). Economic rationality and profit accumulation therefore amount to a 'public danger' (Durkheim 1992:12), which needs to be tempered by – in this case non-existent – professional ethics.

Such economic anomie has effects beyond the feeling of injustice since it exacerbates pre-existing economic inequalities, themselves 'the very negation of liberty' (Durkheim 1984:321). The lack of moral regulation in the economic field is self-perpetuating since the state of economic anomie individualizes perceptions of economic activity,

thereby it 'deceives us into believing that we depend on ourselves only' (Durkheim 1952:214). The equation of liberty with individual economic strength sees all attempts to reintroduce moral regulation, and create a more just distribution of rewards, as 'hateful in itself' and 'intolerable' (Durkheim 1952:217). Such a view ignores, and exacerbates, the difference in material circumstances manifest for Durkheim in the labour contract. These are worth quoting at length:

> If, for instance, the one contracts to obtain something to live on, and the other only to obtain something to live better on, it is clear that the force of resistance of the latter will far exceed that of the former, by the fact that he can drop the idea of contracting if he fails to get the terms he wants. The other cannot do this . . . inheritance as an institution results in men being born either rich or poor; that is to say, there are two main classes in society, linked by all sorts of intermediate classes: the one which in order to live has to make its services acceptable to the other at whatever the cost; the other class which can do without these services . . . Therefore as long as such sharp class differences exists in society, fairly effective palliatives may lessen the injustice of contracts; but in principle, the system operates in conditions which do not allow of justice . . . It is in opposition to this inequitable assessment and to a whole state of society that allows it to happen, that we get the growing revolt of men's conscience. It is true that over the centuries, the injustice could be accepted without revolt because the demand for inequality was less. To-day, however, it conflicts only too obviously with the attitude which is found underlying our morality.
>
> (Durkheim 1992:213–14)

The final sentence echoes Durkheim's claim that organic solidarity favours the development of 'just' contracts, categorized by services and goods being exchanged at 'true' value, while also being free from coercion (Durkheim 1992:211). Since this is impossible when the contracting parties occupy unequal positions, and the economic anomie of the dominant leads them to believe that they are dependent only on their own activity, we are left with 'ever-recurring' conflicts between labour and capital until the subordinated get their 'longed-for day of revenge' (Durkheim 1992:11). In the meantime the power of the dominant is reproduced without moral confrontation. Therefore a careful reading of *The Rules* reveals that the inheritance of private property, itself 'contrary to the spirit of individualism' (Durkheim 1992:217) and

part of a wider lack of economic regulation, is pathological (Durkheim 1982:95).[9]

Thus far I have highlighted the moral and economic aspects of the malaise identified by Durkheim. The former concerns the lack of professional ethics to guide productive activity. In their absence the amoral character of economic life guides such activity. This results in the flowering of economic anomie which, when desires outstrip resources, does not allow for a distribution of resources. The economic aspects flow from this since as economic anomie leads the dominant economic class to believe that their success is due purely to their own industry, they feel justified in withholding labour opportunities until they can get the contractual conditions they favour. The result is that the economically dominant have the power to maintain and further economic inequality, unencumbered by moral regulation. This only exacerbates the inequalities built into capitalism due to the pathological continuing of inheritance prohibiting just contracts. As we can see, both aspects of the malaise are united in their insistence that the imperatives of capital accumulation, freed from moral regulation, cannot result in justice. Importantly, Durkheim links this to incipient forms of class conflict. The lack of justice in contracts is not only an objective criterion but also a subjective experience: workers feel they are not getting their just desserts, therefore the 'greater good fortunes [of the rich] arouses all sorts of jealousy below and about it' (Durkheim 1952:214). Since economic anomie is not restricted to the dominant class, the desires expand across the social hierarchy, meaning that competition and struggle 'grow more violent and painful' (Durkheim 1952:214). Since this is a competition where one side has an in-built advantage, 'the stronger succeed in crushing the not so strong or at any rate in reducing them to a state of subjection' (Durkheim 1992:11). While occasional 'peace treaties' (such as union negotiation and pay rises) may ward off open conflict, they 'do not bring peace to men's minds' and the current state is only accepted with the expectation that the poor will get their revenge (Durkheim 1992:11). Consequently, the moral and economic aspects of the malaise are seen to result not just in disillusionment but also, eventually, in open conflict.[10]

The final component of the malaise – political – has two forms. It concerns the nature and role of the state, and the problems of liberal democracy and economic power. Although, as mentioned above, in Chapter 4 I will discuss the role of the state in libertarian socialism more fully, the following will touch upon these issues to allow for an appreciation of Durkheim's political sociology.

Durkheim saw politics as an activity primarily being carried out within what he termed 'political society', the two components of which are suggested in the following:

> We should then define the political society as one formed by the coming together of a rather large number of secondary social groups, subject to the same one authority which is not itself subject to any other superior authority duly constituted.
>
> (Durkheim 1992:45)

As we can see, a political society is made up of secondary social groups (which Durkheim defines broadly to include occupational groups, but also religious groupings, castes, local government agencies and ministries), which themselves are subject to the same authority, in this case the state. However, this should not be taken to mean that the state 'rules' over these bodies since its authority is restricted to a moral one, namely the construction of 'civic morals' which are moral guidelines broad enough to encompass the whole of society and are based within the religious nature of contemporary individualism (Durkheim 1992:65–72). Indeed, the state 'does not execute anything' (Durkheim 1992:51): the execution – or governing – is conducted by these bodies of political society whose presence allows for the formation, and maintenance, of a political community since 'no secondary groups, no political authority' (Durkheim 1992:45). It is the quotidian and permanent character of political society, especially the occupational groupings, which allows for such authority (Durkheim 1952:346).

Therefore there is a political balancing act for Durkheim between a state which has its authority constituted broadly enough and recognized for civic morals to be created and spread, but which does not consequently stifle and suffocate the potential for professional ethics to be formed and recognized in their special realms of interest. It is democracy which allows for this. Such a link is due to the specific definition that Durkheim provides for democracy, which is not 'the political form of a society governing itself' (Durkheim 1992:96). Instead:

> The closer communication becomes between the government consciousness and the rest of society, and the more this consciousness expands and the more things it takes in, the more democratic the character of the society will be. The concept of democracy is best

> seen in the extension of this consciousness to its maximum and it is this process that determines the communication.
>
> (Durkheim 1992:84)

Such a communication between the state and political society ensures that 'all that happens in the *milieux* called political is observed and checked by every one' (Durkheim 1992:82). Therefore democracy is characterized not by the institutional forms of the political – with the exception of the need for a state and a political society – but rather by the extent of the communication between these two.

It is here that Durkheim finds his next object of critique, namely the way in which, similar to Cole, the unison of liberal democracy and the state, as currently constituted, makes democracy marginal or even impossible. The unison of the perceived act of democracy – voting for a representative – with the state removes the specific and expressive nature of political society (Durkheim 1992:98–109). Instead, being forced to elect one representative for all issues means that the 'incompetence of the deputy only reflects that of the elector' (Durkheim 1992:104). There is no conceivable way in which we are able to consider at the same time all of the questions that our representative will need to confront on our behalf, nor is it possible for them to have clear, and compatible, views on them all. As Cole suggested, it's more likely that the elector agrees with one person on one issue and another on a different issue. In light of this, democratic action occurs at a base level since 'it is almost impossible for such votes to be inspired by anything except personal and egoistic motives: these will predominate, at any rate, and an individualistic particularism will lie at the base of the whole structure' (Durkheim 1992:105). Therefore liberal democracy reduces the collective act of politics to the egoistic individualism of the individual vote.

However, this egoistic individualism does not spring from the well of liberal democracy but is rather part of the aforementioned economic anomie of *laissez faire* capitalism. As we have seen, this was 'general' over the whole of society so it is not only the preserve of the voters but also of the representatives. Just as it is unreasonable to expect voters to have knowledge of all of the issues, so it is unreasonable to expect this of the representatives who are themselves subservient to the amoral character of economic life. When the representative sees their role as representing their constituents on all of the issues, some constituents – the economically 'strong' – are able to have their views heard more clearly and, since the dominant imperative is capital

accumulation, the state's action abides by this (Durkheim 1992:100). Consequently,

> government, instead of regulating economic life, has become its tool and servant. The most opposite schools, orthodox economists and extreme socialists, unite to reduce government to the role of a more or less passive intermediary among the various social functions. The former wish to make it simply the guardian of individual contracts; the latter leave it the task of doing the collective bookkeeping, that is, of recording the demands of consumers, transmitting them to producers, inventorying the total revenue and distributing it according to a fixed formulae. But both refuse it any power to subordinate social organs to itself and to make them converge towards one dominant aim. On both sides nations are declared to have the single or chief purpose of achieving industrial prosperity; such is the implication of the dogma of economic materialism, the basis of both apparently opposed systems. And as these theories merely express the state of opinion, industry, instead of being still regarded as a means to an end transcending itself, has become the supreme end of individuals and societies alike. Thereupon the appetites thus excited have become freed of any limiting authority. By sanctifying them, so to speak, this apotheosis of well-being has placed them above all human law . . . this liberation of desires has been made worse by the very development of industry and the almost infinite extension of the market.
>
> (Durkheim 1952:216)

Thus the imperatives of capital come to dominate the sphere of the political and the previous goals of individual realization, moral regulation and communication are replaced by the neglect of the 'weak' by the 'strong', the dominance of economic growth, the blunting of the secondary groups and latent conflict. The state becomes the instrument of, and servant to, the demands of capital accumulation, and the occupational groupings of political society are too marginalized to challenge this. While the state 'should not do everything', it has failed in its mission to 'not let everything be done' by accepting, and extending, the universalization of economic rationality (Durkheim 1885:90).

From here, Durkheim's solution revolves around an alternative political society and the transferring of property. For the first, much like Cole, he advocated 'corporations'[11] or associations made up of 'all those working in the same industry, assembled together and organized

in a single body' (Durkheim 1984:xxxv). These would be responsible for the development of professional ethics, the creation and advocacy of worker rights and the setting of wage rates/prices (Durkheim 1952:201–19, 1984). The occupational focus on these associations is valued by Durkheim not on ideational grounds (for example, of the value of human realization through labour) but rather on what we may call 'pragmatic' grounds (Durkheim 1897). The declining importance of traditional forms of identification (the family, church-based religion) in unison with the division of labour means that:

> Identity of origin, culture and occupation makes occupational activity the richest sort of material for a common life . . . Its influence on individuals is not intermittent . . . but it is always in contact with them by the constant exercise of the function of which it is the organ and in which they collaborate.
>
> (Durkheim 1952:346)

Much like Cole, Durkheim saw the increase in the division in labour to result in an increased identification with productive activity. While this increase means that the classic guilds cannot, and should not, be recreated, it is the importance of such activity which requires a modern body akin to the guilds (Durkheim 1992:29–37). Therefore although elected representatives will continue to operate in the associations, the day-to-day connection of representative and represented ensures not only that is there the possibility for democratic communication but also that individuals are able to knowingly hold their individualized representatives to account.[12] Such benefits lead Durkheim to argue that, ideally,

> Society, instead of remaining what it is today – a conglomerate of land masses juxtaposed together – would become a vast system of national corporations. The demand is raised in various quarters for electoral colleges to be constituted by professions and not by territorial constituencies. Certainly in this way political assemblies would more accurately reflect the diversity of social interests and their interconnections. They would more exactly epitomise social life as a whole. Yet if we state that the country, in order to become conscious of itself, should be grouped by professions, is not this to acknowledge that the organized profession of the corporation should become the essential organ of public life?
>
> (Durkheim 1984:liii–iv)

Importantly, this should not be done for economic purposes:

> For if we deem it indispensable it is not because of the services it might render the economy, but on account of the moral influence it could exercise. What we particularly see in the professional grouping is a moral force capable of cubing individual egoism, nurturing among workers a more envigorated (sic) feeling of their common solidarity, and preventing the law of the strongest from being applied too brutally in industrial and commercial relationships.
>
> (Durkheim 1984:xxxix)

Here we can see one of the key normative principles driving Durkheim's libertarian socialism: the need for mechanisms for developing morality which emerge from individual activity. They help to 'introduce a higher morality' and provide 'greater justice in social relationships' (Durkheim 1893:119), goals central to organic solidarity (Durkheim 1909). Thus, like Cole, there is a central focus on associational forms of political control allowing for individual realization and activity. While this is a common claim of associational forms of democracy (Warren 2001:70–7), distinct to both of their approaches is the argument that without this the imperatives of capital, the amoral character of economic life, becomes dominant and all other concerns are sacrificed at the altar of capital accumulation.

Therefore Cole and Durkheim share a key sociological claim: while societal and political institutions may legitimately claim individualism as a key justification – for Cole the individual is universal and for Durkheim it is part of civic morals as a 'religion of which man is, at the same time, both believer and god' (Durkheim 1898:81) – individuality is only empirically realized, and therefore should be politically valued, through the particular form of specialized action in which that individual engages. For Durkheim the sentiments which make up these civic morals are individualized as elements of our 'personality' shaped by the forms of associations we enter (Durkheim 1978:161). Therefore, as it is for Cole, the political role of associations is to provide political institutions for that individualism which already exists in the act of association but not recognized by political institutions: 'the social body must die in order to be reborn' (Durkheim 1959:132).

Durkheim also advocated changes to the laws concerning property. He was never in favour of the socialization of property, productive or not, since individual ownership presupposed a collective claim of ownership to land (Durkheim 1992:168). However, he did favour the immediate

ending of inheritance 'by will or otherwise' since as 'the distribution of things amongst individuals can be just only if it be made relative to the social deserts of each one', then 'a distribution of property on this pattern is closely in line with the interests of the society' (Durkheim 1992:214, 217). Property should be given to the individual's association for redistribution upon their death. By removing the in-built advantage of the economically strong, this increases the possibility of just contracts and thereby lessens class conflict.

It may be asked, however, why, as the above seems to suggest, associations combined with the eradication of inheritance will value non-economic justifications and forms of action. Wouldn't the amoral character of economic life, as a form of self-interest, still be present in the alternatives as advocated by Durkheim and Cole? In light of this it should be pointed out that neither suggests an equation of the two. Indeed, Durkheim sees self-interest based upon 'sensations and sensory tendencies' to be an inevitable half of human being (Durkheim 1978:151). However, the other social half of humans will, for Durkheim, play an increasing role in encouraging the individual to 'resist himself' (Durkheim 1978:163). The associations are therefore bodies intended not to replace one morality with another but rather to provide a space in which other, non-economic considerations are given equal weight to become the 'indispensible ally of moral activity' (Durkheim 1978:159). In short, 'Socialists are under no illusion that men are angels' but rather that with the lessening demands of the amoral character of economic life, 'mankind will succeed at last in putting the economic problem in its place, and setting free much more human energy for the pursuit of happiness and the good life' (Cole 1938:248).

A libertarian socialist synthesis

As we have seen, Durkheim shared with Cole many of the concerns which made up his socialist critique and an advocacy of similar solutions to such concerns. I will take from both the centrality of associational forms for the development of political individuality and assess their claims in an era of political individualization. This is not to downplay some of the differences already highlighted, most notably Cole's extension of the associations to consumption and the civic services, and Durkheim's focus on associations as bodies of morality. However, these differences are not insurmountable. Cole's claim that associational bodies are needed in these fields since they are matters of 'function' is an extension of Durkheim's principle of using the occupation as

the 'identity of origin'.[13] Additionally, the latter's focus on the moral purpose of the associations is a reflection of a more comprehensive sociological framework supporting his libertarian socialist theorizing. The only major incompatible element of Durkheim's and Cole's work returns us to where this chapter started: the role of the sociologist in offering alternatives.

Cole was open in his allegiance to the Labour Party, providing guidance to its leaders and producing reports for its research unit (cf. Wright 1979:105–280). He even went as far as to openly refer to the need for guild socialist 'propaganda' in his major theoretical statement (Cole 1920a:179) and was unashamed in his claim that sociological theory is 'an essentially normative study, of which the purpose is to tell people how to be socially good, and to aim at social goods and avoid social evils' (Cole 1950b:10). This involved detailed planning of the alternative society in order to create 'the best chance of human well-being in getting these aspects of life put firmly and properly in their right place' (Cole 1920a:26). These are all principles which Durkheim would abhor. He was consistently strong in his claim that sociologists should not become involved in party political matters (Lukes 1973a:332). While certain political events call for their intervention, the one example from Durkheim's life, the Dreyfus affair, was an intervention driven by a sociological conviction in individualism and based upon 'moral principle' (Fournier 2005:53). In addition, while, as we have seen, Durkheim was a greater producer of blueprints than he often claimed, he was adamant that plans 'need not anticipate everything' (Durkheim 1952:359). This incompatibility, one of the role of sociology, will be revisited in the Conclusion. For now I will suggest that despite the seeming chasm, both can be seen to be exercising the critical sociology, with its concern for defamiliarizing the familiar, outlined by Bauman. The links between Durkheim's and Bauman's critical sociologies will be a major topic of the Conclusion.

Therefore throughout what follows, each will be treated as having contributed to a share development of a libertarian socialist theory which is relevant to a period of late modernity. Central to this theory are the four following claims or 'tenets' of libertarian socialism:

1. Democracy relies upon pluralized, everyday outlets.
2. The state will find it difficult solely to recognize the pluralized claims of modern society.
3. The inequalities of capitalist society make justice (in Durkheim's terms) impossible.

4. Individualism can only flourish through collective political organization.

These four tenets are the central claims of an associational, libertarian socialist, critique of neoliberalism in an era of late modernity. As will be discussed in Part II, they can help us more effectively develop answers to the four key claims of late modern political sociology highlighted in Chapter 1. Therefore each tenet matches the late modern concern with everyday political action as consumers; the state; neoliberalism; and social movements, respectively. The first provides an alternative to consumer-based choice in linking everyday political action to an institutional sphere. The second tenet recognizes that the state is not able to provide effectively for such individual and embedded concerns in a pluralized society, hence the associations. The third claims that the exacerbation of economic inequalities and lack of democracy central to neoliberalism will inevitably create the injustice and animosity between groups so feared by Durkheim. Finally, the fourth tenet provides a way of understanding how collective political action in a time of embedded individualism can emphasize both individually generated and structurally experienced political concerns. The next four chapters will consider, one by one, these links between the four themes and tenets that I have highlighted in chapters 1 and 2.

Part II

Reconciling Late Modernity and Libertarian Socialism

3

No Choice but to Choose: The Increased Politicization of Everyday Life

This chapter picks up on the first theme of late modernity – namely, the significance of choice within embedded political individualization – and considers its overlap with the first tenet of libertarian socialism: that democracy relies upon pluralized, everyday, outlets. To consider the link between these two I will argue that while theories of late modernity have been relatively explicit concerning the increased political nature of everyday life – notable in Giddens' definition of life politics (Giddens 1991a:214–17) – the ways in which this occurs and is experienced is not fully elaborated. Bauman is an exception to this by seeing such politicization as a result of the state moving problems 'downward' to mask its own supposed impotence in the face of global capital – for example, by placing the emphasis on individuals to re-skill in order to 'compete' in a global labour market. Whatever the process by which it occurs for such authors, late modernity becomes a time with an increased politicization of everyday life. This becomes an increased politicization in a quantitative sense (simple modern everyday life was political, late modern is more political), which takes on a new qualitative form as part of this increase (as we will see, there is a greater focus on choice). To discuss this I will make use of Henri Lefebvre's classic work on everyday life (1971, 1991, 2002, 2005) before turning to the potential alternative of libertarian socialism.

There are two contributions this chapter hopes to make. The first is to provide a more comprehensive discussion than that currently provided of the politicization of everyday life in late modernity and its wider significance. The second is to combine the literature on late modernity, specifically the work of Bauman, with that of Lefebvre, in order to fulfil this goal. The absence of Lefebvre from the sociology of late modernity is somewhat puzzling considering the explicitly 'everyday' nature of the

field. This perhaps can be explained by Lefebvre's overtly Marxist stance, a theoretical perspective with few defenders and even fewer adherents within the field.[1] It could also be due to a trend already noted in this book: the desire on the part of some theorists of late modernity to 'wipe the slate clean' and assume that everything must be reconsidered and entirely new theories created. I have rejected this idea of a radical separation from simple modernity.

For the purpose of this chapter, everyday life is defined as the areas of an 'ordinary'[2] individual's lifeworld (defined as their unique experience of the world around them) in which things both routine and non-routine are experienced. This classification is, however, limited to the areas in which an individual's ability 'to do otherwise', in the words of Giddens (1984:156), is possible. Thus everyday life is that part of the individual's unique experience of which they could, theoretically, if all the appropriate resources were available, personalize. This definition owes much to the definition of everyday life implicit in the work of Giddens (1984:73). Also, for Lefebvre, the possibility of uniqueness within the everyday is appealed to for the reproduction of capitalism (Lefebvre 1991:138–75). Finally, this definition has partly been chosen because it echoes one of the major themes of the study of everyday life within late modernity: choice (Bauman 2008a).

Late modernity and everyday life: The importance of choice

As shown in Chapter 1, the key to everyday life for the sociology of late modernity is that it becomes a realm of increased choice, where questions of self-identity, lifestyle and preferences must be decided; as Giddens puts it: 'political decisions flowing from freedom of choice' (Giddens 1991a:215). At the same time this sphere is destabilized. Whereas previously tradition provided a guide for choice, the post-traditional order removes such options and individuals are left with only their own counsel with which to make such decisions, and then to justify them (Giddens 1994b). Meanwhile, having to deal with this constant supply of choices is the only factor in late modernity which is not itself a choice but instead is an inevitability: 'Being an individual (that is, being responsible for your choice of life, your choice among choices, and the consequences of the choices you chose) is not itself a *matter of choice*, but rather a *decree of fate*' (Bauman 2008a:53).

To be more specific, it is argued that at an everyday level, not only do people have more choices but also these choices have particular, and expanded, political outcomes. We can see examples of this ranging

from the mundane to the more profound. For instance, buying coffee from the supermarket as an act can include the juggling of competing political and moral questions. Should one buy 'fair trade' or 'rainforest alliance'? Is my moral obligation to the people who produced the beans (who, after all, have a 'face', making moral recognition possible, cf. Bauman 1990a) or is it to our shared planet (Connolly and Prothero 2008)? These questions are then stratified: the ability to be able to afford the 'greenest', most 'moral' coffee relies on the economic and cultural capital through which embedded individualization is expressed, more exactly being able to judge the competing 'green' claims and afford the 'greenest' product. The lack of either of these does not, however, remove the recognition that one should buy the 'green' option; rather it gives recognition that I cannot do so (Adams and Raisborough 2008). Giving to charities faces equally challenging questions. The increased 'specialisation' of charities, as well as greater awareness of global problems which require our assistance (Bauman 2001d), moves the responsibility of deciding who to fund to an increasingly everyday and individual level. The increased focus on 'transparency' of charities, seemingly in order to help this choice, also complicates it. In this field we can see the continued relevance of the inequalities of embedded individualization, since members of a 'lower' class continue to contribute more proportionally to charity than their more well-off counterparts (Piff et al. 2010). These are two examples of increased political individualization since they rely upon an expansion of choice and increasingly political connotations to such choices, which can also be seen in choices of work and at work (Nollmann and Strasser 2007), public sector employee choices (Hoggett et al. 2007), childcare (Brady 2007), joining or leaving social movements (King 2006, Ødegårda and Berglund 2008) and relationship choices (Smart and Shipman 2004). All of these areas, as part of everyday life, demonstrate this increased politicization and the juggling of political and moral questions, and they reflect how individualization is a 'process by which a moral notion of individualism increases in social significance' (Houtman et al. 2011:2). Most notably, the requirement to be a chooser and act them out becomes a moral imperative (Bauman 2008a:93–124). It is this ability and desire to choose which defines an individual.

From this perspective, everyday life is taken as an object of transformation. The processes of late modernity have drastically altered how everyday life is conducted, and the result is everyday activity progressively defined via political individualization as an act of choosing. The supposedly liberatory potential of choice advocated by neoliberal theory

goes some way towards universalizing the idea of the possibility of choosing, which may not be aligned with material circumstances which allow for such a choice (Gillies 2005).

There is also another idea in the literature which reverses this relationship. This is the suggestion from Beck (1997) regarding sub-politics. As shown in Chapter 1, sub-politics is generated from within the individual's reflexive biography and then finds its expression in individualized action. In this sense, everyday life, or, to be more exact, the expression of political choice within everyday life, is not only transformed but also transformative. Indeed, this chimes with the claims of the consumer activist model of political action (Bauman 2007c:68)[3] whereby making certain choices influences wider political processes. If I buy fair trade coffee I encourage the principle that producers should be fairly paid, and if I give to 'transparent' charities, more charities will become transparent in their bid to obtain my donation. In Beck's theory, through choosing sub-political actions and allegiances, actors can alter institutionalized ways of doing politics, or the topics considered political.

In both models, a reliance on the model of disembedded individualization posits late modern political action as achievable by all, while also marginalizing the role of choice as a means of capital reproduction and accumulation. Nevertheless, the relationship between everyday choice as transformed and/or transformative is of central import to the discussion to come in this chapter.

Giving the discussion in Chapter 2, the reader will most likely be able to take an educated guess concerning the libertarian socialist critique of such a process. Firstly, for choices to be truly 'political', there is a need for not only the idea of political expression but a functionally specifically democratic outlet for choices to be expressed. Without this the undifferentiated institutional sphere of the political will not allow for such choices to be fully recognized (without me saying I want coffee producers to be paid 'x' amount, and having access to knowledge of how fair trade works, my consumption patterns can be taken to endorse questionable practices, or simply be an indication of approving of the taste/packaging/price of the coffee). Here we have the contribution of Cole's fully differentiated political sphere, as well as recognition of the ability of capital to 'decide the undecidables' since 'politico-hegemonic articulation actually retroactively create[s] the interests they claim to represent' (Laclau and Mouffe 2005:xi). Secondly, and leading on from this, the dominance of the profit imperative marginalizes non-economic justification for action and, as we saw Durkheim argue in Chapter 2, previously moral concerns become economic concerns.

Charities become judged on their success in conforming to the 'systemic imperative' of efficiency and auditing, meaning that the 'practice of everyday life is one-sidedly rationalised into a utilitarian life-style' (Habermas 1987:325). In short, via everyday life becoming increasingly politicized, it has also become less democratic and more driven by economic imperatives.

Therefore the key concerns for late modern politics are where the possibility for choice is seen to reside; from whence it came; and its role in political transformation. I will discuss these in the following section.

Henri Lefebvre's (and Bauman's) critique of everyday life

Given the centrality of a microsociology of choice within the late modern literature, it would seem fruitful to refer to a prime sociological commentator on choice and everyday life, the French Marxist Henri Lefebvre. During his lifetime, Lefebvre produced four texts concerning everyday life: his three-volume *Critique of Everyday Life* (1991 [1947], 2002 [1961], 2005 [1981]) and the more concise *Everyday Life in the Modern World* (1971). These discuss many aspects of the topic of the everyday,[4] therefore I will not provide an overview of the texts but instead draw out the relevant aspects for my discussion. Especially relevant here is Lefebvre's argument concerning the ways in which everyday life can become a form of critique itself while also being the 'base' of a consumer society.

It is important to note that, for Lefebvre, the everyday is, and always will be, political. There are two reasons for this. The first is that it is the realm in which political processes, with their 'aura of technicality which makes them appear totally concrete (questions of law, finance, budget, etc.)', have their impact, which tends to be class-specific (Lefebvre 1991:89). Hence what we generally call the 'political', made up of parties, leaders, parliament and so on, only has such a name because it is able to impact, and change, the everyday. The second point leads on from this: due to the unequal political impacts on everyday life, we have what Lefebvre terms 'uneven development' where 'small farmers would continue to work the land by hand and go hungry while an "elite" of technicians and managers would be exploring outer space' (Lefebvre 2002:316). Importantly for Lefebvre, those affected are aware of such uneven development. This awareness comes through the increased presence of 'signals' and social texts in modernity which require the individual to 'read, decipher and explain' the social world around them (Lefebvre 2002:297–307). There is also an increased representation of

such unequal development via technological media (Lefebvre 2002:89). Clear late modern examples of this would include the representation of fully 'individualised' individuals (celebrities, professionals, etc.) on forms of media such as TV (Elliott and Lemert 2009:43–78).[5] Thus the inequality mediating the affects of politics is most profound at the everyday, individual, level since it is at this level that the inequality is realized. Due to this he suggests: '*the critique of everyday life involves a critique of political life, in that everyday life already contains and constitutes such a critique*: in that it *is* that critique' (Lefebvre 1991:92). He therefore sees the lived experience of this politicization, and the unequal nature of this, as the basis for a critique regarding the causes of such inequality.

The source of such a critique is crucial. Lefebvre suggests in the third volume of *Critique* that 'daily life'[6] becomes externalized and detached from the actual experience of everyday life. It is the increased disconnection between these two which allows for new forms of critique between what is promised and what is delivered in everyday life (Lefebvre 2005:4, 10–11). Therefore his central concern is the presence of an emerging reflexivity and the representation of an ideal – classed – lived experience of this. In effect, Lefebvre's political observations are, by placing individual everyday activity front and centre, beginning to anticipate some of the concerns of late modern sociology. If life and sub-politics do occur, they emerge in the gap between the experience of everyday life and the expectation of daily life. Clear examples of this can be seen in the techniques of the self highlighted by the discourse critique of individualization (Brady 2007, Pellizzoni 2012).

We have established the basis of everyday critique but Lefebvre also provides an awareness of causality. While some of the inequalities experienced within everyday life concern fundamental human need (i.e. the above quote about the farmer unable to eat), many are what Lefebvre terms 'social needs' based on desire (Lefebvre 1991:9). While he argues that individuals inevitably have a large collection of needs, in a 'consumer society . . . the manufacturers of consumer goods do all they can to manufacture consumers. To a large extent they succeed' (Lefebvre 2002:10). Hence the processes of everyday life identified by Beck and Giddens, regarding choice and a pluralization of interests, are not entirely new to late modernity but instead, with their focus upon choice, are the realization of the attempt by capitalism to model itself around the manufactured needs, presented as autonomous choices, that individuals hold. It is because of this that Lefebvre gives this consumer society the somewhat unwieldy title of 'the bureaucratic society of controlled capitalism' (Lefebvre 1971) since an increasingly bureaucratized

capitalism (cf. Abercrombie et al. 1986) aims to reproduce itself through the control of desire and 'social needs'. In this process the state plays a central role by expanding its power over the economy (Lefebvre 1979). These social needs are relational, determined by 'one-upmanship' or through fashion, and base themselves around choice, akin to the way individualized consumer choices are decided with allusion to reference groups (Bauman 2007a, Houtman et al. 2011:25–32). This involves imperatives of capital accumulation moving themselves, via the manufacture of such needs, into everyday life. The idea of the individual becomes based around an economic 'user' as opposed to a 'citizen' (Lefebvre 2002:78). Everyday life is thereby defined by alienation from the basic human needs and the standardization of social needs through consumer capitalism, meaning that 'individualism ends up as the impersonality of the individual' (Lefebvre 1991:237). Thus the emergence of the everyday as a realm of choice coincides with (and is partly brought about by) the extension of consumer capitalism. Durkheim's amoral character of economic life takes everyday life as its object of transformation and, as a result, is blunting the possibility for individual realization in the way predicted by Cole.

Because of this, everyday life is not only innately political but increasingly so for Lefebvre, since it is the realization of increasing forms of economic domination. Capitalism is directly causal in this account, but for Lefebvre the processes it engenders (increased choice, unequal development, etc.) are presented as results of modern development or technological process. In the last volume of his *Critique*, Lefebvre argues that modern technologies (most significantly, IT) allow the 'programming' of consumer society in an efficient and rational way (Henman 2007). Such technologies are also presented in a non-ideological fashion – their presence is seen as a reflection of 'the end of ideology' – while they are still very much embedded in capitalist power relations (Lefebvre 2005:50, 136–53). Hence capitalism, and the liberal democratic state, has, despite its inequalities, reached a level of stability and self-justification which only a revolutionary situation would disturb (Lefebvre 2005:172).[7]

So for Lefebvre, everyday life is transformed by the changes to capitalism, but he also wishes to appeal to its transformative potential. Contained in the disconnect between daily and everyday life is, as Lefebvre puts it, 'the critique everyday life makes of itself, the critique of the real by the possible and of one aspect of life by another' (Lefebvre 1991:9). Everyday life becomes the meeting ground of macropolitical processes (Lefebvre 2002:118–25) and, as a result of the expansion of

signals, the field becomes more complex and those within it more sophisticated and politically aware – everyone develops 'his [sic[critique' of everyday life (Lefebvre 1991:29). Additionally, more activity gets drawn into the, previously restricted, political field and as a result the personal becomes increasingly political. While feminist movements have a hand in this, for Lefebvre it is mostly a result of the political having to 'justify itself' in more fields (Lefebvre 2005:24). For example, in an echo of Habermas' (1976) legitimation crisis, governments provide services in more social fields through the welfare state so they require increased legitimacy. Here we have a link to Beck in his discussion of how the everyday form of sub-politics can carry a 'rule-altering' agenda. But what we gain from Lefebvre is a link between the transformation of everyday life and how it can become, and to a lesser extent already is, transformative at a 'higher' level, shorn of Beck's questionable examples. Lefebvre's analysis is effectively one which discusses how the everyday is linked to the other levels of society in relationships of interdependence, meaning that action within one realm can potentially have profound and counter-factual impacts in another by developing critiques. This is very much an unintended consequence, akin to what the discourse critics have to say about late modern individualization. Nevertheless, Lefebvre saw little potential in these transformative mechanisms within everyday life (IT, consumerism), hence his focus on the stability and the need for revolution.

Therefore I would suggest that there is clear potential in applying Lefebvre's discussion of everyday life to late modernity. In particular, his discussion gives a historical dimension which, while realizing the inevitably political nature of everyday life, also highlights the particular nature and form of this consumer-based, politicization in late modernity. This recognizes, like the interactionists, not only the social nature of these choices but also, like the discourse critics, the way in which this opens up possible forms of critique between what is promised and what is delivered (cf. Boltanski 2011). However, while Lefebvre's view is useful as a basis for the discussion of the politicization of everyday life, there is a major qualification we can make to it. Lefebvre's finishing point of the *Critique* came on the cusp of the emergence of neoliberalism, thus he did not fully take account of changes in everyday forms to account for this shift, nor of the processes of late modernity outlined thus far. Lefebvre, in common with other contemporary writers, such as Abercrombie et al. (1986:191), viewed the contemporary form of 'programmed' capitalism they confronted as having reached a 'post-ideological' stage. Such a view becomes more difficult to hold in

late modernity, partly because of the emergence of neoliberalism as a distinct ideological form of capitalism. Hence whereas Lefebvre assigns causality to capitalism in the processes he observed in simple modernity, Bauman gives it to the state responding to global capitalism – in a process of privatization (Bauman 1999, 2002, 2008a).

To outline this perspective, Bauman argues that the nation-state has lost a large amount of power due to 'negative' globalization, the globalization of capital without the globalization of means to control it (cf. Bauman 2006, 2007a, 2008b). The financial elite become 'absentee landlords' (Bauman 1998a) who, in claiming no allegiance to particular locales, set themselves up against the state as new 'imagined communities' which aim to dictate to the state. Their perceived influence is enough to impact the actions of state in a favourable fashion; they don't need direct, face-to-face, interference (Bauman 2002:10). The idea that a policy is 'not in the interests of business' is enough of a death-knell without proof that it is indeed anti the interests of capital. As a result the state's previous claims to sovereignty become implausible and much of the economic resources it would previously have placed its claims for power upon are beyond its control; instead, 'sovereignty walks on crutches' (Bauman 1999:40). For Bauman the state could respond to these changes in two ways. The first is to admit its lack of power and look for ways to regain it in order to, in Bauman's words, 'reconnect power and politics' (Bauman 2009, 2012a:95–9). This would be a difficult task which, in the first instance at least, would involve the state giving up power to transnational bodies while also confronting many of the same interests to which governing parties owe their position. In addition to this, it would involve admitting impotence, something governing parties are not eager to do; therefore they pursue their second option. This is categorized by giving up responsibility to the market (Bauman 2002). The state's responsibility for Marshall's famed 'social rights' – education, health, housing and many other social services – is transferred to the market (Bauman 2007c:69). Such state action is then justified with the suggestion that 'there is no alternative' to this path of action (Bauman 1999:98), often with explicit reference to the new 'global society' in which we live. And, even if there were an alternative, this deregulation is presented as liberating, the chance for the consumer to be an active shaper of their own lifeworld, to engage in true life politics, free from restrictions (Bauman 2002:170–2).

This means that politicization is manifested in the increased prevalence of market-based choice. This becomes valorized since the ability to consume is seen as the very ability to be free and secure (Bauman

1988:66, 1996). In this sense the political individualization propagated through the state's institutionalized individualism is equated with economic action. Bauman is sceptical of the emancipatory potential of such processes. As he puts it, 'expropriation came in the disguise of endowment. The break-in occurred while wearing the mask of emancipation' (Bauman 1999:64). To put this into the language of this book, a consumer model of political action, in an argument shared with Lefebvre, argues that disembedded individualization is a reality thus there are no collective concerns and instead the government should aim to increase the personalization and choice of each individual's lifeworld. This ignores, and exacerbates, the collective concerns present in embedded individualization since this strategy of consumer choice contains its own inequalities. Bauman points to the Thatcher government as the starting point for many of these processes (Bauman 1999:68–72) which were continued by the Blair (Bauman 2007c) and Cameron governments (Ramesh 2010).

I propose that to understand the politicization of everyday life within late modernity, a confluence of the theories of Bauman and Lefebvre is useful. While they do complement each other in some ways, their differences improve each theory, and make them sociologically relevant in late modernity. This combined perspective argues that the politicization of everyday life has a long history and can be traced back to the growth of a 'consumer society' in the post-war period. This began to place the focus upon choice, but also began to show the inequalities within such a process. In this sense the causal link is traced to capitalism. Within late modernity this process takes on an added component. Due to the perceived pressures from global capital, the state begins to shed some of its functions and increase the choice aspect of everyday life. This process is then presented as either a pragmatic or an inevitable process which can't be questioned, and why would one wish to question it when it provides such emancipation? The politics of everyday life, with the focus on choice and personalization, is then expanded at the expense of collective forms of politics, resulting in life politics but not 'Politics with a capital *P*' (Bauman 2008b:147). In this stage, capitalism is determinative, if not in material process then instead in the consideration of 'what would be good for the economy' – the amoral character of economic life – but it is not causal. This causal role is adopted by the state, but it doesn't start with a blank slate but instead builds upon and enhances the processes inherent in simple modernity. This not only accounts for the centrality given by Beck to institutionalized individualism as a state-created spur towards individualization, but also for the

oft-overlooked discussion by Poulantzas of individualization as a state-based strategy for capital accumulation (Poulantzas 1978:63–75). The everyday is the staging ground for a distinctively late modern form of political individualization.

For the purpose of the discussion in this book, what we can also see here is how the link between the first theme of late modernity, the increased prevalence of choice, is critiqued by the first major tenet of libertarian socialism. The latter's focus on pluralized and everyday forms of democracy is intended not only to provide the outlets for individual realization currently placed in the flawed realm of the consumer market but also to allow for a way of communicating forms of individual concerns and choices within an institutionalized political sphere. It was precisely the everyday nature of such associations which so appealed to Durkheim and Cole. I will discuss this further in the final section of this chapter.

It is on this point that we see the only irreconcilable difference between Bauman and Lefebvre: the question of alternatives. If everyday life faces increased politicization, and this is a case of 'uneven development' which creates the potential for critique, what is the normative project tied to such a critique?

Alternative forms of everyday politics

For Lefebvre the goal of the critique of everyday life is changing the world through revolution since his 'critique of everyday life is part of an overall revolutionary socialist programme' (Maycroft 2001:136). This requires critical thought 'to traverse daily life under the lightning flash of tragic knowledge' (Lefebvre 2005:171) and help create actors engaging in 'total praxis', which 'is nothing other than the idea of *revolution*' (Lefebvre 2002:241). While Lefebvre's ideas of what form this revolution would take are sketchy at best, there is a strong focus on emancipation not only through labour but also through the realm of the 'fabulous' – which Lefebvre identifies with the unique and creative – whether this involves sexuality, art or leisure (Lefebvre 1991:40–58, 2005:53–8). Such a revolution 'cannot just change the political personnel or institutions; it must change *la vie quotidienne*, which has already been literally colonized by capitalism' (Lefebvre 1988:80). Given Lefebvre's profession of Leninist creeds (Lefebvre 1964b) and his status as a 'Communist "of the old school" ' (Trebitsch 1991:xiii), it would seem plausible to suggest that he would profess a broadly Leninist understanding of such revolution. The end result of such a revolution, Lefebvre's 'project for society', would involve a 'slow but profound modification

of the everyday . . . more enhanced forms of democracy . . . definition of a new citizenship, decentralization; participatory self-management (*autogestion*); and so on' (Lefebvre 1988:86). The exact justification of such policies is somewhat unelaborated in Lefebvre's work. However, in this case he argues that such a project would 'change life' by removing forms of alienation (Lefebvre 1988:75).

While this concept of *autogestion*, defined as forms of devolved control, comes close to the forms of devolved associations advocated by libertarian socialism (cf. Lefebvre 1966), its link with the concept of revolution seems problematic. Indeed, Lefebvre comes close to arguing that politics is only achievable by rejecting the everyday, by removing one's self from the political realm in order to either delve into the fabulous of artistic creativity or engage in revolution. The problem here is that, as noted by Lefebvre himself (1991:40), the idea of stepping beyond the everyday, the choices and forms of 'ordinary' expression found in late modern life, is impossible since this would inevitably rely upon the same techniques made available within everyday life; we cannot step 'outside' society. Also, as noted by Bauman, the rejection of the formal political sphere is misguided and could only provide some short-term satisfaction, if that:

> The emancipation of the political sphere (in its institutionalised orthodox meaning) is self-propelling, as the loss of relevance of the successive segments of national politics rebounds in the erosion of the citizens' interest in institutionalised politics, and in the widespread tendency to replacing it with the drive to experiment with 'free floating', electronically mediated quasi- or inchoate/incipient politics – eminent for its expeditiousness, but also for its ad hocness, short-termism, one-issueness, fragility and staunch resistance, or perhaps even immunity, to institutionalization (all those qualities mutually dependent and reinforcing).
>
> (Bauman 2010b:204)

Examples of such shortcomings can be seen in internet-based protests since these, with their ad-hoc and issue-based form, 'can only achieve the replacement of unpolitics with an illusion of politics' (Bauman and Mazzeo 2012:85), demonstrated by the fact that 'Wall Street took little note of "being occupied" by the offline visitors from the online world' (Bauman and Lyon 2013:51). Thus the concern becomes one of reformulating politics and its role in everyday life to help achieve democratization to match the increased politicization. For Bauman this

would involve the reinstitution of the *agora* space. While this serves a practical policy end, it also has a moral and critical end:

> Under conditions which they did not choose, but in which they found themselves at the end of Blair's rule, 'individuals' must first reintegrate themselves as 'people' before they earnestly set out to renegotiate and change, 'the main structuring principle of the form within which they live' . . . There is more than one response to the pressures of globalization and globalised competition. The excuse that 'there is no alternative' was the biggest and most odious political lie of the late twentieth century. It depends on the post-Blair generation whether or not the twenty-first century will go down as the time of calling its bluff.
>
> (Bauman 2007c:73)[8]

Therefore it is this linking of choice and expression where a possible role for libertarian socialism can be found, which the rest of this chapter considers.

Libertarian socialism as the politics of everyday life

At this point let us recapitulate the argument presented above. We have seen that everyday life in late modernity is increasingly politicized. This is both a quantitative increase and a qualitative shift which focuses on the valorization of choice as liberation. This politicization was initially linked to the processes of capitalism within a consumer society but was later exacerbated by the state covering up its own supposed impotence by acting in the interests of the market and engaging in a process of privatization. This was a negative outcome for politics in two ways: firstly, it created inequalities of access to the political by equating it with the market; secondly, it removed the potential for realizing the collective nature of individual concerns inherent within late modernity. Therefore any political model which claims an improvement upon the political potential within everyday life would have to overcome these two criticisms while also avoiding a complete retreat from a formal political sphere. In what follows I will expand on my claim that libertarian socialism is a useful alternative.

Here we return to Bauman's claim of the need for an *agora* space to convert individually experienced private issues into collectively shared, public ones. Bauman alights on the *agora* space since it allows for individual expression as part of a collective sharing of problems. These may

be experienced individually but are solved socially. As we have seen, the sociological basis of this is that the individualized choices of late modernity occur within a specific social setting and are decided both by orientation to others, and with a recognition of the moral and political connotations of such choices (Bauman 1995:1–4, 2008a). Therefore the previously mentioned shift from individuality *de jure* to *de facto* would require social resources to be effectively realized. Although Bauman does, at points, link the *agora* to a concept of civil society (Bauman 1999:107), as we saw in Chapter 1, its predominant use is in the classic, Greek sense, of a physical space. Here, some rethinking of the purpose of the *agora* may be beneficial.

The sociological basis of libertarian socialism is useful for this since, as we saw in Chapter 2, it argues that individual association is both functional and individual. To be more specific, individuals associate because of a shared social purpose, which is at the same time, to use the language of Cole, particular to their everyday activity. It is these particular and associational elements of activity which determine the development of interests that people hold as well as, for Durkheim, highlighting the quotidian connection to such interests. In fact this everyday and individual connection, in an echo of the definition of everyday used in this chapter, is the spur towards the idea of specialization in such activity. In recognizing this and that specialization within an activity involves a collective component in which this is realized, we can rethink Bauman's advocacy of the *agora*. This was conceived of as one space for a whole political community and thus exists in theory as a space between the individual and the state, or public and private in Bauman's terminology. As such it conceives of the political as a unified sphere, with the *agora* as its entry point. Instead, as we have seen thus far, the political sphere can be seen to have what we might term 'multiple points of entry'. Indeed, Cole argued that, without recognition of these multiple points, social issues appear too remote and problematic for individuals to solve, meaning that they turn to movements such as Oswald's Mosley's Blackshirts, which offer an immediate source of action and everyday 'comradeship' (Cole 1950c). This is echoed in Bauman's claim that dereliction of an *agora* space leaves individuals attacking 'substitute targets' such as immigrants for their political concerns (Bauman 1999, 2004a).

It is not simply the division of labour or specialized identities which drove Durkheim and Cole to favour an associational form; rather it is the identification which comes with this specialization, as Durkheim put it, these groups become those 'for which [the individual] has the strongest

attachment' (Durkheim 1992:96). This was due to the functionally specific questions such activity raised and the resulting adoption of positions and concerns based upon these, therefore the potential space for multiple *agoras*. The expansion of choice within everyday life is the empirical justification for multiple *agoras* to represent the different spheres of activity in which choice is based. This expansion of choice expands the areas in which, as Cole puts it, we develop 'interests' (Cole 1920a:33) and, as Durkheim argues, increasingly identify (Durkheim 1952:356–8). Consequently, each *agora* would represent a distinct space of action, as in Cole's outlining of productive, consuming and civic service spaces.

Such a tripartite classification may initially seem outdated. For example, the allure of the productive realm as a democratic space for Durkheim was not only its quotidian nature but also its permanence: once in a profession we remain, thus each professional grouping 'does not experience any such interruptions: it is as continuous as life itself' (Durkheim 1984:xlv). While the supposed objective 'precarity' of employment has been challenged (cf. Fevre 2007, Doogan 2009), the subjective experience of precariousness may seem to question the relevance of this professional link, including the supposed, and contested, growth of a 'precariat' class (Standing 2011, Bauman 2011c). Consequently, contemporary interpretations of Cole's work have attempted to expand the spaces for association. For instance, Paul Hirst's (1994) model of associative democracy argues that since the normative goal of associationalism is individual realization, the model should allow for a greater differentiation of associations. A hypothetical example of this would be that rather than having one association for the civic service of schooling, there would also be associations for Christian schools, as well as other denominations (1994:65–73). This would seem a worthwhile principle to pursue and in effect adds another consideration to Cole and Durkheim's concern with function: 'identification'. If individual realization is to be a central normative goal of libertarian socialism, it is not enough to restrict the associative principle to public activity narrowly constituted; it must also take some account of the personal identifications of its members, especially in light of the interactionist work on individualization and the social components of late modern individualization (cf. Houtman et al. 2011 amongst others). In this sense, libertarian socialism builds upon choice in everyday life as part of its transformative appeal.

The immediate response to this may be that placing an emphasis on identification is likely to lead to conflict and, therefore, inequality

between the groups that form as a result of this. This, however, implies a fixed and solitary nature of such forms of identification. More precisely, it suggests that individuals have only one form of identification which is stable and solid throughout their life, when in fact multiple forms of identification are more likely (Cooper 2004). The principle here is akin to what Lefebvre (1990:252) terms 'the right to identity within difference (and equality)' that not only is there a right to multiple forms of identification but also no one identity is either considered *a priori* to be a) most dominant and/or b) 'less equal' than any other. This is where the value of pluralism is so central since the recognition of identification aims to reconcile the socialist perspective at the heart of the project with the advances in associative democracy theory, which see the value in such theories being expressions of plurality (Cohen and Rogers 1995a). As Warren (2001:16) puts it, 'the pluralism of discrete associations . . . tends to be matched by individuals with complex identities'. This is especially significant at the everyday level since here, as I have already noted, the realm of choice has itself becomes pluralized and choices are expressed socially, therefore there is a need for this to be recognized.

However, especially significant here is how an associative mechanism of democracy can be better-rounded than market exchange. By not relying purely on the amoral character of economic life there is the chance to reassert moral considerations within choices. To return to my previous example, if I decide to give to a charity and can also join an association which democratically governs this, my decisions about what to give and to whom can be driven not by the systemic imperatives of efficiency and economic concerns but by wider, moral concerns. As we saw Durkheim argue in Chapter 2, it is this moral purpose of associations which separates them from other forms of organization. Since 'the individual can take in no more than a small stretch of the social horizon' (Durkheim 1992:16) associations, for Durkheim and Cole, as well as other advocates of associative democracy (Cohen and Rogers 1995b:248), operate to introduce this collective and moral concern. These multiple *agoras* allow for the moral concern implicit in social action within embedded individualization to be expressed. Thus everyday political activity via choice links the transformed and transformative aspects of this via the provision of multiple *agoras* as points of access to political society.

To give some shape to this largely theoretical exposition, I would argue that internally democratic associations could be set up in all

areas of everyday political choice. This clearly includes the areas of consumption discussed by Cole, and more thought will be given to the specificities of this in late modernity in Chapter 5. However, as I have argued above, these should also be seen as internally segmented by identification. To expand upon a previous example, let us return to the civic service of education. While it may be considered desirable for different associations for separate schools (as in the religious schools example above), it may also be useful for these schools to have some internal recognition of differing levels of identification. For example, the association can include representatives for differing groups who use this civic service, thus allowing for the quotidian connection and implicit critique to be expressed. It is not my goal to proscribe what groups these should be, rather to highlight the possibility of such differentiation. Once again, here we see the value of quotidian forms of democracy, especially in the ability to, as Cole says, 'experiment' (Cole 1920a:102) with different formations, procedures (direct democracy may be more useful for some associations than others) and priorities. Moreover, this lessens the power of economic imperatives by judging decisions upon democratic considerations.

However, what would be shared by such associations, and is highlighted in the above, is the way in which they aim to link the increased politicization of everyday life to forms of democracy, with the latter being expanded to match the former. The multiple *agora* spaces this would form recognizes Bauman's original claim for their need (by converting individually private troubles into shared social issues); the plurality and speciality of embedded individualization (by being differentiated by function and identification both externally and internally); and the normative goals of libertarian socialism (by marginalizing economic imperatives and providing forms of quotidian democracy). Consequently, choice is matched with bodies for the distribution of political resources. As this discussion has shown, there is some synergy between the first theme of late modernity (the politicization of everyday life through expanded choice) and the first tenet of libertarian socialism (a fully functional democracy needs multiple, everyday democratic outlets to ensure individuality). In this discussion, recognizing the need for effective choice becomes a socialist imperative without relying on the consumer market. As Beilharz (2005:32) puts it, 'socialism ought to be understood neither as a systemic imperative nor as a vital impulse: its ethical value – choice – is an indicator rather of autonomy'.

Conclusion

This chapter has considered the role of everyday life in late modern political sociology, best expressed in Giddens and Beck's focus on life/sub-politics. We have seen how everyday life was taken as an objective of transformation but also seemed to have the potential to be transformative, although the formation of this by Beck was problematic. Instead, by combining the work of Bauman and Lefebvre, we were able to see how the expansion of choice which categorizes late modern everyday life was both a long-term process and the result of the expansion of consumer capitalism, and the supposed declining of the nation-state's powers. For both, the expansion of the political at an everyday level was greatly problematic, and it simply exacerbated existing inequalities and removed a clear institutional base for political action to occur. However, the alternatives offered were problematic in their theoretical and practical base (Lefebvre's 'total revolution'), or were too limited (Bauman's single *agora*). Therefore it was argued that libertarian socialism offers a more promising alternative based upon the concept of multiple *agoras*. These recognized the theme of increased everyday politicization in combination with the differentiated and specialized everyday politics valued by Cole and Durkheim. It was also argued that such an institutional form could help to marginalize economic imperatives and instead prioritize forms of moral and political expression.

This discussion has, in effect, revolved around the value of linking political and democratic spaces. This is in line with the normative basis of libertarian socialism. Hovering in the background through this discussion, though, have been two obstacles to such a possible political alternative: the state and neoliberalism. Since the critique of libertarian socialism often aims itself at these above all, I will now discuss why these two interconnected factors would have to be radically transformed to realize this promise.

4
Privatization without Pluralism: The Late Modern State

Chapter 3 began to discuss the relevance of libertarian socialism in late modernity, in this case the increased politicization of everyday life. More specifically, such relevance can be identified in the continuing collective component within individualization, realized via associationalism, and as a counter to the unequal access of the consumer activist model of political action (Bauman 2007c). This discussion involved considering the link between the first theme of late modernity (that political choice is exercised at an everyday level) and the first tenet of libertarian socialism (that democracy relies on pluralized, everyday, outlets). I categorized this as the requirement for multiple, everyday, *agoras*. The intermediary forms of political organization offered by libertarian socialist theory – the associations – seemed to hold some promise as such *agora* spaces in late modernity. Chapters 5 and 6 expand upon the practical form that such a system could take. Here, attention is directed towards the state. In the next chapter the focus is economic activity and neoliberalism. These two are discussed separately partly because I reject, for reasons discussed below, the idea of the state being purely a 'neoliberal state' (Harvey 2005).

As we saw in Chapter 1, the second major theme of late modern political sociology concerned the role of the state in encouraging or creating the choices which are part of political individualization and the way in which this links to neoliberalism. Such a relationship is, it was argued, poorly accounted for in the political sociology of Beck and Giddens. Therefore the goal in this chapter is to 'link' the discussion of everyday life to the macro level, as Lefebvre encouraged. This is central to the second theme of late modernity: the role of the state in providing (or not providing) resources for political action. To make the link, I begin by outlining the shape of the libertarian socialist state as imagined by Cole

and Durkheim, before using this to critique the way the late modern state was imagined by Beck, Bauman and Giddens. Finally, this discussion will conclude by outlining the relevance of the conceptual form of the libertarian socialist state.

Before discussing this further, it is important to note that this chapter does not attempt to provide simply a critique of a 'big' liberal/social democratic state or an advocacy of a 'small' libertarian socialist state in its place. Instead, following Cole's advocacy for a 'reconstruction' of the state (Wyatt 2006), this discussion is primarily concerned with utilizing the distinction offered by Durkheim between the state and political society. This was discussed in Chapter 2 and will be returned to below. In brief, Durkheim imagines the state to be the 'social brain' which, while providing collective representations of the nation and considering long term priorities, 'does not execute anything' (Durkheim 1992:53, 51). The actual governing of society takes place within political society, defined as the secondary associations. As we shall see, although this means that the state becomes 'smaller' in its governing functions, it could be argued that it becomes 'bigger' in its moral roles (Dawson 2013:91). The purpose of a libertarian socialist critique influenced by Durkheim, such as the perspective being adopted in this book, is not to reject the state but rather to achieve the balancing act which Durkheim advocated between the state and political society. To understand this further, let us turn to the role of the state in libertarian socialist theory.

The state in libertarian socialist theory

It would perhaps not be a stretch to say that, unlike other socialist theories, what unites Cole and Durkheim is not the critique of capitalist political economy (although this is key for both) but rather a critique of the state. For each the liberal democratic state is problematic since, as the second tenet of libertarian socialism argued, the state does not, and cannot, recognize the pluralized claims of modern society. Due to this, it becomes instead an instrument of capital accumulation. To discuss this in more depth I will outline Cole and Durkheim's views on the state in turn. My focus will fall especially on the alternative state form which each sketch out.

As we have already seen, Cole's central concern with the state was the linking of this body with sole sovereignty and governance (Cole 1920a). All too often for Cole, such an equation has been based on a false dichotomy in political theory, between those favouring the supposed rejection by Rousseau of representative government and a Comte-esque

belief in the state as the ultimate body of representation held by the other side (Cole 1950a). The former was Cole's main point of emphasis since his engagement with Rousseau, whom he credited as a 'great influence on my own thought' (Cole 1950a:113), was lifelong. Of particular interest for Cole was Rousseau's conception of the general will (Cole 1914, 1926, 1955a) since this is 'the key to any rational social theory' (Cole 1914:149).[1] Cole rejects the idea that the general will can be recognized in a centralized state and rather sees it as 'essentially ethical: it is a principle of moral conduct applied to political behaviour' (Cole 1955a:xxx). Therefore this operates as moral principles which individuals follow in political action. Significantly, such principles emerge from the 'loyalties' we hold to particular groups rather than a loyalty to nation and/or state (Cole 1926). Consequently, in following the general will for Cole, political action not only requires the functional differentiation of associations highlighted in this book but also calls for a radical reconsideration of the state as a representative or, in this case, unrepresentative, body. The realization of Cole's understanding of the general will necessitate new social and political forms (Lamb 2005:296) since 'The General Will, then, is the application of human freedom to political institutions' (Cole 1955a:xxxi). This, for Cole, can be recognized via representative institutions, despite Rousseau's supposed rejection of them, as long as they match the tenets of libertarian socialism.

Therefore Cole's distinct sociological claim, building upon his individually situated and loyalties-focused understanding of the general will, is that the state is erroneously taken by so-called 'Roussean' as well as Comtian theories to be the sole empirical (if not normative) representative due to the shared identities of those it governs, thus it is given the responsibility of representation. This, however, overlooks the differentiation of identity and the needs of coordination by function and, in my terms, identification (Cole 1920b:81–102). For Cole, Rousseau's critique was not with representative government but representative sovereignty, the misunderstanding being due to the fact that the exercise of sovereignty occurred in a historical conjuncture where representative government was complicit since it was a 'mockery' tied to the state (Cole 1955a:xxiii). Consequently, Cole takes his reading of Rousseau's general will as the basis of his state critique, removing Rousseau from his historically specific claims (Cole 1950a:120). This involves claiming that orthodox conceptions of the state overlook that while functional associations involve an act of joining, the state, as a compulsory association, does not (Cole 1926). This coercive and aforementioned capitalistic nature to the state means that it

is 'definitely an organ of class domination' (Cole 1920a:121). In short, the state does not abide by the principles of association found in functional democracy since it is not actively joined and has no function- or identification-based claims of legitimacy. The loyalties of the individuals are overlooked since the general will, as a moral imperative, has not been fully applied to the political sphere, which remains tied to representative sovereignty via the nation-state (Cole 1926, 1955a).

However, differentiating himself from anarchist or syndicalist theories (Cole 1920a:36–7), Cole accepts both the possibility and the desirability of a centralized form of political organization, which he terms the 'commune'. The shape of this is important since

> Democracy can work in the great States . . . only if each State is made up of a host of little democracies, and rests finally, not on isolated individuals, but on groups small enough to express the spirit of neighbourhood and personal acquaintance.
>
> (Cole 1941:95)[2]

Cole also accepts that there is no purpose in simply 'wiping the slate clean' since some functions already within the hands of the state are likely to be key roles for the commune (Cole 1920b:82), although this would not be directly 'continuous' (Cole 1920a:121). Instead the commune for Cole should be seen as having five distinct tasks:

1. allocation of capital gained via taxation;
2. arbitration between associations when differences emerge;
3. 'constitutional' questions, notably demarcating the responsibilities of associations;
4. external relations;
5. what Cole terms 'coercive' functions, such as the police force (Cole 1920a:139–40).

Although this list may seem intimidating, many of the functions (e.g. 1. and 5.) would largely be devolved to locally based forms of organization (such as regional communes). The central commune – the reformulated state – is left with 'no other task than that of co-ordinating the activity of the various functional bodies in society' (Cole 1920a:120–1), meaning that it is 'not an administrative but a co-ordinating body' (Cole 1920a:127).

Since Cole does advocate a largely devolved structure to the commune (at town, ward and regional level), many of the responsibilities

of the central commune are seen as 'last resort' powers, such as those of arbitration, reflecting Durkheim's claim of the state creating civic morals which become the basis of arbitration (see below). The only truly active roles that the body has are some limited capital allocation and external relations, since Cole advocated moving most redistributive roles to the association level (Cole 1920a:72–3). Needless to say for Cole, the central commune would be democratically elected, with representatives elected from each group of associations (Cole 1920a). Such a centralized commune is said to remove the class and capital domination of the state by a) redefining the role of the state away from collective representation to coordination of already existing associational groups; and b) removing the role of the state as an expression of capital accumulation, since the producer associations govern these functions. To achieve this, Cole advocates a system of 'encroaching control' whereby functions currently in the hands of the state and/or capital are progressively transferred to the associations – that is, run according to the demands of the general will (Cole 1920a:196–7). The idea of the state being separated from processes of capital accumulation is also central to Durkheim's consideration of the state.

It has often been suggested that Durkheim imagined the state as the 'sacred' figure of modernity, of that which individuals plead allegiance to and that which maintained modern forms of social order (Giddens 1978, Bauman 1993:138, 2005c). Therefore Durkheim, it is argued, is not critical enough about the state; he sees it as the ultimate body which makes a society modern and functional (Giddens 1971). It is this which makes his theory flawed for a pluralist conception of associative democracy/libertarian socialism (Hirst 1995), especially since he doesn't consider how the state may become complicit in capital accumulation (Giddens 1971, 1982d). As a result, Durkheim is a representative of the false 'container theory' of sociology, whereby the nation-state represents society (Beck 2000a, although see Inglis and Robertson 2008).

There is an element of truth in this reading; to pick an example of Durkheim's view on the state,

> The more societies develop, the more the State develops . . . Progress towards centralization runs parallel to the progress of civilization . . . the State has in fact rather been the liberator of the individual . . . . In history individualism has advanced hand in hand with Statism.
>
> (Durkheim 1899a:144)

Yet to see Durkheim as wedded to a strong nation-state is a limited reading. For him the state had two historical roles: external and internal (Durkheim 1958). The external role was the first to form and concerned military acts, before categorizing foreign affairs more generally. This has become increasingly less significant to the state's role with the permanency of national borders (Durkheim 1958:48). The internal role initially concerned the above liberation of the individual since 'it is the State which sets him free' (Durkheim 1958:50) by lessening the oppressive nature of the local community and 'collective particularities' (Durkheim 1992:62). The internal role remains significant for Durkheim but increasingly changes in focus by aiming to liberate the individual not *tout court* but rather from specific forms of injustice, most notably those caused by inequalities such as class and unfair contracts, since injustice 'of necessity ensue from them' (Durkheim 1958:49). To do this the state does not take a direct governing role – this is the responsibility of political society – but rather acts as a 'reflective' body which through its representation of collective civic morals is the 'social brain' (Durkheim 1992:45–53). These civic morals exist separate from, and above, the professional ethics developed by the associations and take the development of individualism as their focus since 'the progress of justice is measured by the degree of respect accorded to the rights of the individual' (Durkheim 1958:48–9). Therefore such morals set guidelines concerning the level and type of inequalities which are permissible. As noted in the introduction to this chapter, on this issue Durkheim's state is 'big'.

The only reason that the state can fulfil this role is due to the acceptance of its citizens, since they must be part of its operation: 'Society is an association, a kind of joint-stock company in which all concerned should be consulted concerning the managing of the undertaking' (Durkheim 1885:90).[3] It was then the very impossibility of the state to solely fulfil this role of association which led Durkheim to the enhanced associational form of political society (1984, 1992:39–40). The state relies on a functionally differentiated political society for its own legitimacy. Thus it rests upon, rather than conjuring up from thin air, the customs and values upon which its allegiance depends (Durkheim 1992:83). Therefore, for Durkheim, democracy is a balancing act between the functions of the associations and the state. The role of the latter remains providing collective representations and, through this, developing ideas of justice and combating forms of inequality, which, as we saw earlier, are caused by the expansion of the amoral character of economic life. Therefore Durkheim did imagine a permanency

to, and central role for, the state. However, this had to a) be built upon associational forms of political organization; b) provide the 'collective representations' for society as a whole; and c) not be corrupted by economic concerns.[4] These three roles allow for a greater balance between the state and political society.

It could be claimed that Durkheim is guilty of taking a normative view of the world and presenting it as an empirical reality (Turner 2010:119–49), and his work on the state is no exception. His aforementioned claim that the state 'executes nothing' relies on his, perhaps questionable, reasoning that currently the state is restricted to parliament and government (Durkheim 1958:45). Therefore I suggest that the above exposition of the state should be taken as Durkheim's vision of the ideal state – his commune. Although Hirst (1995:113) may be correct in his claim that Durkheim has a more statist view than other libertarian socialists, such as Cole, this can easily be exaggerated. Importantly, the state is not, and cannot be, the holder or expresser of the collective conscious. This is 'diffused' beyond the state, while it will draw upon such a conception when it thinks – naturally given the fact that the collective conscious gives shape to the state – it can only hear the 'faintest echo' of such a conscious (Durkheim 1992:50). The civic morals that the state produces can be, and hopefully are, a reflection of the ideas of justice expressed in the collective conscious, but civic morals do not create such ideas of justice. Indeed, it is when the state attempts to play such a creative role by universalizing what Durkheim calls the governing conscious that it becomes 'tyrannical' (Durkheim 1992:55–64). The prime instance of this in contemporary times was the attempt to universalize the amoral character of economic life as a collective conscious (Durkheim 1952:216). Therefore many of the claims concerning Durkheim as an apologist for the state, in Lefebvre's (1964a) terminology a 'man of the state', rely on some exaggeration of its role in his political sociology (cf. Dawson 2012b, 2013).

This combined conception of the role of the state from Cole and Durkheim will be the basis of my critique of the state in late modernity, to which I now turn.

The late modern state form

My focus in analysing the late modern state is twofold. Firstly, how does/can the state fulfil the roles given to it by Beck and Giddens? These were emancipatory roles in nature since they concerned providing the generative politics which Giddens argues was central to late modern

emancipation (Giddens 1994a:14–15) or making sub-political issues 'political' and thereby expanding the democratic sphere. As I argued in Chapter 1, it is not the normative goal behind these ideas which is problematic but rather the way they were imagined to occur. More specifically, such ideas relied upon an equation of government with the state and the (falsely conceived) free individuals of disembedded individualization. Secondly, what might libertarian socialist theory say about these concepts? To answer these questions I will separate out the distinctively libertarian and socialist components of the critique before drawing them together. However, both lines of argument lead towards the same conclusion: the current late modern state form not only doesn't fulfil the tasks assigned to it within late modern politics but also is not able to do so.

Libertarian – As we have seen, the central concern of Cole and Durkheim when it comes to the state is the possibility of individual realization. This was the central reason for Cole's long-held antipathy, and sometimes downright hostility (Cole 1941, Wright 1979:32–49), to the state as a democratic forum.[5] This focus on democratic forum to express 'human personality' (Cole 1920a:25) has, as we have seen, become even more complex with political individualization and the multiple points of entry to the political this engenders. Therefore there is a need to reassess the role of the late modern state in allowing for such entry. To do so it is useful to return to an implicit critique of the state from Giddens. This is contained in his *Contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism* (1981a) and has been sorely overlooked by Giddens himself and those who have drawn inspiration from his political sociology. It is based in his claim that the state is the main power container of authoritative resources[6] (Giddens 1981a:92).

Giddens' *Contemporary Critique* takes a rather materialist view of the modern state's development. Here he argues that authoritative resources are the 'fundamental lever of change' in pre-capitalist societies (Giddens 1981a:92–4). However, the emergence of capitalism shifts the focus towards allocative resources, most notably the ownership of natural resources, land and capital. Giddens asserts that the nation-state emerges alongside capitalism and that the latter is 'inherently involved with' (Giddens 1981a:210) the emergence of the former, as the most effective way for it to develop as an economic system (Giddens 1981a:182–202, 209–10). The emergence of the state involves it becoming the main power container for both forms of resource, a role it assumes fully with the decline of the city (Giddens 1981a:129–81). Therefore it is Giddens' argument that the modern state emerges since

it is the most effective way for allocative resources to be held and distributed in order to perpetuate class power and capital reproduction. It is the continuing ability of the state to do so which ensures its dominance. The state also holds authoritative resources but, beyond the development of literacy, Giddens considers these to be less significant in simple modernity. The distribution of these, defined more widely than in their earlier pre-modern period of dominance, is instead key to late modern political emancipation (Giddens 1994a).

Surprisingly, Giddens himself is never entirely clear what exactly we can identify as authoritative resources, beyond statements such as 'constitution of chances of self-development and self-expression' (Giddens 1981a:52). This poses problems of empirical application but also demonstrates some 'sloppiness' of definition, common to Giddens' sociology (Gregson 1989, Craib 1992, Adams 2008), therefore a more concrete definition is required for late modern usage. A useful political distinction is that authoritative resources are mainly defined by the parts of governance which concern the ability of self-organization, most notably in the form of laws which concern a specific group or people (e.g. laws concerning the amount of time during which an individual can claim a certain benefit) or the provision of a certain service (how that individual accesses that welfare, or the forms of healthcare available within a certain area). They can also be seen as the ability of the individual to access forms of expression (e.g. having the vote, a forum in which to express concerns) or of communication (including such a forum, but stretching beyond this to the basis of communication, such as literacy). Although broad, such a definition maintains the basis of Giddens' work while providing a more concrete form. More specifically, authoritative resources are defined by both the role and the opportunities the individual has in governance. In this sense they constitute some of the resources which both Cole and Durkheim saw as residing within the associations, and formed the backbone of their advocacy.

Such resources are distinct from economic resources and involve the ability of the individual to act as they wish in the public realm, regardless of their economic strength. In this sense they are instruments of citizenship (Giddens 1982c). Consequently it is surprising that Giddens didn't question the role of the state as the prime holder of these resources. Instead, as already discussed, he seemed to imagine the state as responding in a benevolent and omnipotent way to all life political claims, instead of questioning whether a body defined by its holding of such resources would not be more selective and perhaps prejudiced in its distribution of them. Such reasoning is contrary to his

earlier, convincing, claim regarding the state's role in the unequal distribution of allocative resources. This is especially true when Giddens argues that authoritative resources are defined not only as resources for the individual who holds them to act upon but also as resources which allow individuals/institutions to control the behaviour of others (Giddens 1984:373). So holding authoritative resources allows one not just to be political but also to exclude others. Thus centralization of resources is the concern. One of the things which makes a state totalitarian is its ability to direct individual activity through the centralization of authoritative resources (e.g. through surveillance (Giddens 1985a)).

Therefore Giddens faces a contradiction between an awareness of the problematic role of the state in resource distribution and a benign 'wishing away' of such problems (Rustin 1995:21). The issues that this oversight causes concern access and allocation. More specifically, access to the state is limited. Returning to the earlier libertarian critique of the state, one of the main aspects of the state form is a tendency to treat all citizens as being equal in their citizenship (Cole 1920a). The lack of multiple points of entry removes not only the ability of functional representation but also access to, and involvement within, political institutions. As Durkheim puts it, the state becomes 'removed' from political concerns (Durkheim 1992:63). Consequently, some individuals will be more able to access state assistance than others. This can be due to levels of social capital, power accorded by economic resources, or membership of an interest group more amiable to the state's policies. For example, states have shown themselves to be more willing to bail out large and profitable banks without return rather than provide basic levels of welfare. For Cole, the lack of functional differentiation also limits any possibility of active citizenship. Therefore if a particular group, or individual, wishes to access authoritative resources by having a hand in a law which will affect them, or by increasing service allocation, their ability to do so will be greatly hampered by the amount of authoritative resource already at their disposal, as well as their ability to access activity-specific political forms. This is the natural conclusion of Giddens' sociology of the state which he neglected in the rush to see life politics as inherently liberatory.

If authoritative resources are to assume the role so often given to them in late modern sociology,[7] then the inequality of access to these resources, in turn a result of an initial unequal distribution, must be confronted. As we have seen, political individualization is a two-sided process, reflecting not only the micro-level lived experience but also the macro-level processes which give shape to this. Here the state is central

not only by engaging in privatization (see below) but also by providing the solitary, insufficient, formal sphere for linking the individual and the collective. This means that authoritative resources – much like allocative resources – remain unequally distributed, with little possibility of equalizing such a distribution. Therefore the emancipatory promise said to be contained in the concepts of life/sub-politics, if not their normative goals, seem questionable, both at the micro level (as in the consumer activist model of political action) and at the macro level, since the state's role of equal distributor is highly problematic given its, as Durkheim puts it, removed status from everyday political decision making. Libertarian socialist strategies, on the other hand, would suggest a 'decrowning' of the state. This will be expanded upon below but for now it is enough to say that the state is stripped of its ability to distribute authoritative resources and instead these are functionally differentiated, as in Cole and Durkheim's imagined roles for the associations. Instead the state fulfils the role of initially distributing authoritative resources, while also ensuring a constitutional system is put in place to ensure that their initially equal distribution is not overcome by factional strategies. The state, as the body of civic morals, not only develops this constitutional system but is concerned with its enforcement as part of its 'big' moral role. This is not to say that the representative democracy of the state is replaced by the direct democracy of the associations. As we saw in Chapter 2, both Cole and Durkheim advocated representative democracy in the associations. Rather, the functionally specific nature of associations allows for a more specialized point of entry, and a greater exercise of the monitoring aspects of representative democracy on behalf of the represented.

Before expanding on this alternative, I turn to the other side of the critique: to what extent is the late modern state an instrument of neoliberalism?

Socialist – Here we confront the role of the late modern state as a 'neoliberal' state (cf. Harvey 2005). This is a state which is predominantly committed to capital accumulation through the application of neoliberal theory. Therefore it takes the spreading of the amoral character of economic life as its very *raison d'être*. This involves lessening labour regulations; lowering taxes; cutting social spending; breaking down trade barriers; and pursuing any other 'pro-business' regulations. This can most notably be seen in the privatization of previously state-run services, from energy through to the health service and welfare provision (Crouch 2004). Such privatization exists with the goal of introducing competition into multiple sectors, which, for Durkheim

(1952:216), allows particular interests – making money – to exist above social interests. In the conception of Harvey (2005), this can also take a rather authoritarian nature – contradictory to neoliberalism's proclaimed hatred of the state (Hall 2011) – since the state is used to suppress any discontent that may emerge as a result of these policies. In this sense, befitting the hegemony of neoliberal ideology, the state is used as both a social and an economic instrument with the goal of enhancing capital accumulation and lessening labour rights.

For a state to be neoliberal it would also seem necessary for the very form it takes, not solely its policies, to be determined by neoliberalism, in much the same way as theorists such as Lefebvre (1964a, 1979), Poulantzas (1969, 1978), Jessop (2002) and Crouch (2004) argue regarding the varying state types that they identified. Indeed, it is possible to identify such forms. I have already highlighted the privatization of state forms as a way in which the state begins to adopt the 'global firm' model (Crouch 2004). Also, we could point to the increased switching of employment between the private sector and the civil service. This has a long history in the capitalist world where governments take opportunities to import those with a background in business into government, either as part of the government (e.g. the business background of US Treasury secretaries; the emergence of 'technocrat' governments in Italy and Greece in 2011–12 made up of people from the world of business; British businessmen elevated to the House of Lords) or to conduct reviews over which they seem to have little knowledge or ability beyond the fact they are 'businessmen' (e.g. the 2010 review of funding of higher education in England by the former head of BP, Lord (John) Browne, which led to a trebling of tuition fees). This is often accompanied by the claim that such an appointment will bring all the principles of the private sector into government, and that this is unquestionably to be welcomed. The opposite shift, from government to the public sector, is just as notable (e.g. the appointment to Morgan Stanley of former British Prime Minister Tony Blair and his chief of staff, Jonathan Powell; former German chancellor Gerhard Schroeder's work in the private energy sector). Hence the late modern state could be seen as neoliberal since it not only adopts the principles of business in its own operation but also provides a clear connection of employment between the private and public sector, a central part of a 'post-democratic' world (Crouch 2004:70–7).

Therefore there are clearly ways in which we can identify the late modern state as a neoliberal state,[8] and this is a common assumption in late modern political sociology, such as in the work of Bauman. For him the state has always taken what is in the 'interests of the economy'

as its primary focus (Bauman and Rovirosa-Madrazo 2010:37). However, in a consumer – and neoliberal – society, these interests are defined less by capital accumulation and more by credit accumulation. Therefore 'the state is "capitalist" in as far as it assures the continuous availability of credit and the continuous ability of consumers to obtain it' (Bauman and Rovirosa-Madrazo 2010:24). Thus, for Bauman, the state moves from acting in a purely 'capitalist' manner, to acting in both a capitalist and a 'consumerist' manner, since this ensures continuing capitalist profit. This finds its inevitable manifestation in the credit crunch of late 2008 (Bauman and Rovirosa-Madrazo 2010:20). Thus while the end goals of profit and capital accumulation do not differ, the role of the state – to ensure a continuous flow of credit – does. I do not wish to dismiss such a view, which is convincing, but instead to build upon it. To do this I will now turn to a factor noted as being both part of the role of the neoliberal state and a major part of embedded individualization: privatization.

'Privatization' has a dual meaning here. In the first sense it refers to an aforementioned economic process of transferring assets from public to private hands. Its second sense concerns the way in which previously collective concerns are moved to an individual level as part of political individualization: subsidiarization. While these two meanings often occur in unison (cf. Calhoun 2006), they are analytically distinct: one does not require the other, nor is either caused purely by the existence of the other (although the first may encourage the second). Bauman identifies the state as complicit due to its role in the first form of privatization, and by giving up any attempt to develop a collective 'good' in order to become a 'recommodifier of the market' (Bauman 1987a, 1999). While he is correct to lay much of the blame at the state, this is not purely a 'marketizing' activity; instead it is also a question of political individualization.

If the state helped to develop individualization in simple modernity (Poulantzas 1978:63–75) then, in its expanded late modern form, this process has gone beyond what was in effect the development of citizenship. As Beck and Beck-Gernsheim put it, individualization shifts from a 'linear' to a 'non-linear' process (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002:xxii). As a result the state is in a position of responding to, as well as creating, political individualization. In such a scenario, state institutions have only one mechanism to turn to which rests upon, and claims to provide, personalization: the market or, more specifically, market-based choice. To take one example, when the state aims to personalize service provision in line with the claims of political individualization, such as in

healthcare, the idea of choice, in line with disembedded individualization reasoning, seems to hold logical, if not empirical, promise. The only way choice can be currently exercised is via the consumer market, itself a limited choice. Individuality *de jure* but not *de facto* is assured here. The result of this is that deciding on the 'correct' kind of healthcare, what course of treatment to be followed, where to have the treatment and so on is removed from the state. Instead it is largely and progressively privatized towards the individual without providing the choice which is dependent on holding certain resources. This enhances the processes of embedded individualization already mentioned while also increasing the marketization of services. As a result the state works in unison with the market, but this does not mean there is a purely pro-market agenda on behalf of state actors or the institutions themselves. While in some cases there may well be, the transformation of the state from a provider to a contractor of services can also be traced to the processes of late modernity. To be more exact, it is not just an economic response, privatization emerges partly as a response to late modern political individualization. In short, the politicization of everyday life has created a depoliticization of the state's moves towards privatization. One is used to justify the other, furthering the elective affinity of late modernity and neoliberalism.

It is in this sense that a set of policies which it may be incorrect to see as purely 'neoliberal', such as Giddens' Third Way, can appear neoliberal when they are either mapped out or implemented in some form, since they aim to emphasize choice as part of their appeal.[9] To paraphrase Giddens, while the Third Way may not be a form of 'weak' neoliberalism, in the sense that its author does not intend to further a neoliberal project, it can be accused of being 'strong' neoliberalism since its implementation can have this outcome (cf. Giddens 1976:710–1). As outlined previously, the inevitably selective nature of the state's provision of authoritative resources can be exacerbated by their place within neoliberal economies. When the state is seen as the main distributor of authoritative resources, it increasingly turns to the market, or market mechanisms within state provision, in order to distribute them. This doesn't mean that states and governments do not actively choose to follow the definitions of privatization as joint strategies but that, even in instances where this desire is not present, the lack of alternatives means that the emergence of embedded individualization can encourage economic privatization. The state furthers capital accumulation since no other forum is seen as possible for individualized political concerns. This was a concern for the discourse critique: individualization currently only

occurs within the discursive field of neoliberalism (Howard 2007a) and thus the elective affinity of late modernity and neoliberalism is strengthened. As we have seen, libertarian socialist theory moves the focus away from economic imperatives being determinative as such and, instead, in Durkheim's view, such motives provide the restrictions in which the state will act. In this case the pre-existing conditions of neoliberal and disembedded individualization discourse do not allow for personalization outside the market, since the dogma of economic materialism has invoked the expansion of the market as the sole discursive field of the choice within political individualization.

Therefore without consideration of the inequalities within late modern societies and the 'bads' (cf. Giddens 1994a:100–1) emerging from the expert system of neoliberal capitalism and the consumer market, late modern sociology furthers neoliberal governance by letting the state 'off the hook'. The state is either benign (Giddens and Beck) or entirely capitalist (Bauman), without considering the pressures placed upon it. As already suggested, most notable of these is the pressure to extend the sphere of the economic as, to use a term beloved by Giddens and Beck, an 'unintended consequence' of its need to distribute authoritative resources without considering other ways in which this could be done.

In light of this it becomes essential to reconsider the state form as a means of allowing effective political action. Is it possible to provide an alternative forum for specialization or is it inevitable that the differentiated demands of late modernity lead to economic privatization? It is this question to which the rest of this chapter is devoted.

Summary: Libertarian socialism and the state

The above has been an attempt to critique the conception of the late modern state, using libertarian socialist theory. This has had three, interlinked, points. Firstly, the late modern state seemingly does not allow for functional political expression due to the unequal initial distribution of authoritative resources, as well as the problematic nature of their later distribution by it. Secondly, when the state does try to distribute such resources, its possible mechanisms for doing so are largely limited due to the dominance of the amoral character of economic life and the lack of other political mechanisms. And finally, as a result the state exercises such distribution within the discursive field of neoliberalism, where distribution equals marketization and profit accumulation above all else. Therefore the libertarian and socialist elements of the theory are mutually occurring and reinforcing. Here we have a demonstration of how

the second tenet of libertarian socialism (the inability of the state to recognize pluralized political spheres), coincides with a key theme of late modern sociology (the state's failed attempt to do so by engaging in increased privatization) As highlighted by libertarian socialist critiques and others (Dahl 1982, Hirst 1997), this removes the possibility for pluralism. The market may claim to provide the pluralism that the state cannot but, as we have seen, its role as a form of political expression was questionable at best. The imperatives of capital become determinative and limit the *de facto* exercising of political individualization. Consequently the state is complicit in the concerns of the discourse critique.

To return to the questions posed at the start of this section. The state can only fulfil the roles given to it by Beck and Giddens by forgoing its current means of authoritative resources distribution as well as existing within a conjuncture where the amoral character of economic is not, and cannot, become dominant. The libertarian socialist response to this is that such a means of distribution relies on the multiple *agora* spaces of the associations in political society, as well as a reconstitution of the state towards its reflective roles as the social brain. Therefore the final section of this chapter expands on how exactly this libertarian socialist alternative state form can be seen as promising. Following the second tenet of libertarian socialism outlined in Chapter 2, this will revolve around the possibility for such a state form to recognize the pluralized claims of late modernity. To do this I will begin with a contemporary attempt to reformulate the state: the UK's government's Big Society policy. This policy claimed to remove responsibilities from the state and pass them to voluntary organizations and community groups, but also allowed for them to be moved to the private sector (Dawson 2013). The idea of the Big Society, defined in opposition to the Big State, was the central pillar of the now governing Conservative party's election manifesto in 2010 and is personally associated with their leader, and current British prime minster, David Cameron (Kisby 2010). My justification for focusing on the Big Society is twofold: firstly, to indicate how libertarian socialism differs from ideas already present within contemporary political debate; and secondly, to argue that although many libertarian socialist ideas may appear implausible and do differ from those already present, they are at the same time an extension of pre-existing ideas and trends. Although the Big Society is a key idea of the Conservative-led UK coalition government, its claims are not limited to the UK since, in its insistence on the excessive growth of the state/government, supposedly excessive welfare benefits and the need for greater morality and

devolution, it shares many themes with classical and contemporary conservativism across the world (Ellison 2011:56), notably the American Tea Party movement (Williamson et al. 2011, Thompson 2012).

For the purpose of our discussion, the Big Society rests on four key claims. Firstly, the expansion of the welfare state, primarily by left-of-centre governments but also by their conservative counterparts, has created what Durkheim termed 'egoistic individualism' or, more colloquially, a 'something for nothing culture' (Norman 2010:1–12, Cameron 2012). Secondly, and linked to the above, it sees local forms of organization as the most desirable since action is locally based (Cameron 2011) and our sense of morality comes from our local 'situation' (Jordan 2010:129–47). Thirdly, and leading on from the second point, it is at this local, or 'nano', level that social solidarity is formed and maintained (Blond 2010). Finally, pursuing policies which favour the above is compatible with, and indeed encourages, economic growth (Cameron 2010). Here neoliberalism aids the goals of the Big Society since 'free enterprise promotes morality' (Cameron 2012). Practical forms taken by Big Society policies include a 'Big Society bank' to invest in community charities; 'free schools' set up by parents in a local area; and an increased focus, stated if not fully practised, on co-operatives (the latter of which was inspired by the free schools movement in Sweden). It is not my goal to discuss fully the problems which may occur with such a framework.[10] Instead, in what follows, I will draw comparisons with the Big Society approach and the libertarian socialist strategy of 'decrowning' the state.

Decrowning the state

As highlighted at the start of this chapter, decrowning does not mean, contrary to the equation drawn by the Big Society, an advocacy of a 'small' against a 'big' state of late modernity; rather, it is a reconsideration of the centrality of the state to political processes centring on authoritative resources. The basic outline of decrowning can be found in Cole's central commune. Although Cole can be seen as an advocate for a small state, his commune is, as we have seen, given 'considerable constitutional powers', notably its roles in arbitration, and demarcation of borders and foreign affairs (Wyatt 2006:104). This means that the state does not wither away but something akin to it remains. However, what remains is left to conduct the tasks for which it is most suited while also ensuring that those things which can be done at a more specialized level are done. The state becomes small in its governing functions which are the preserve of political society. Much as Durkheim argues, the state

exists for considerations on which there is a pre-existing association and to provide collective representations of such a grouping, hence the roles of foreign affairs and arbitration. Hence the decrowning of the state is a strategy which aims to increase political agency and participation by extending the democratic sphere through the associations in political society. Although sometimes seen as a pluralization of the state itself (Dahl 1982, Cohen and Rogers 1995a, Hirst 1995) or an enhancement of 'civil society' (Warren 2001, Roßteutscher 2005a), this is in fact a pluralization of the political outlets within political society.[11]

This would involve the state helping to strengthen political society as a realm for personalization currently claimed to reside in the market: the associations. The state would engage in an active process of transferring not just responsibility for (taking the example of industry and civic services) providing a service but also the power to decide how that service is provided to relevant associations. Here we see an expansion of the Big Society goals which, while willing to privatize responsibility, were not concerned with devolution of power, partly due to their attempt to enact a certain form of neoliberal governmentality found in 'nudge' economics, which attempts to change behaviour by providing economic incentives for certain paths of action (Kisby 2010, Ellison 2011). Alternatively, in libertarian socialism, this means that the right to legislate on these areas, as well as the administration of them, is no longer within the purview of the state and, in effect, it gives up sole sovereignty over these areas, and representative government remains, but representative sovereignty is pluralized (Cole 1950a). By moving this responsibility downwards, the state ceases to be the major distributer of authoritative resources. The ability to engage in the political process, via the democratic setup of the association, and the allocation of resources in response to claims – which both make up authoritative resources – are specialized. The association can decide how and when services are provided, as well as providing the specialized ability for individuals to engage in governance. The role of the state here is agentic without being one of agency, namely creating the situation in which a realm of personalization is possible separate from the market. Here again, while the principle may be similar to that found in the Big Society, it moves away from a focus, also found in the Tea Party movement, to equate non-state action directly with the market. Instead a more appropriate 'balance' between the state and political society is the goal.

At this point the reader may be wondering whether these associations are going to be conjured up out of thin air, or whether the state would have to create these associations. Instead it is possible to see

pre-existing associations built around shared activities (functions) and forms of identification. These have a long lifeline – the role of associations in governance has been identified in groups such as trade unions, regulatory boards and neighbourhood associations which are used to maintain, and strengthen, social order alongside the state, market and community (Streeck and Schmitter 1985). These have often occurred within what Wilson and Butler (1985) term a 'functional role', whereby there has been a recognition that certain things that the state cannot do, or that other groups already do well, will be run by an association, although without a transfer of sovereignty. To date it is only when things begin to break down, or the state is under pressure, that it will intervene in these areas (Hughes 1985). Recent evidence suggests that these findings, from the 1980s, are still a faithful reflection of the relation between private interest government and the state (Crouch and Keune 2005, Hay 2005, Streeck and Thelen 2005, Roßteutscher 2005b; see also Chapter 6 for further discussion of such associations). The prominence of such associations within a more restricted conception of civil society is one of the main claims for neo-pluralist theories of the state (Dahl 1982).

The important principle to take from such discussions for libertarian socialism is the recognition that such associations are not subservient to the state but rather exist in an equal balance with the state as part of political society. This is achieved by giving the associations within political society governing functions and ensuring that the constitutional and moral roles of the state are in balance with these. It is only through doing this that, as we have seen, the pluralism such an arrangement aims at can be effectively realized through the multiple *agora* spaces. It is not only the placing of such associations within political society, achieved by giving them governing functions, which distinguishes them from the Big Society but also a lessening reliance on localism, again shared by the Tea Party (Thompson 2012). This focus on localism is problematic given its lack of consideration for the functional and identificational principles identified thus far and instead relies upon a claim for 'local patriotism' (Durkheim 1952:357) which cannot be claimed in late modern societies (Dawson 2013:86–88). Moving the focus away from localism places the focus upon functional differentiation and the professional ethics of these spheres. Once again, this also means an increased element of pluralism rather than an expression of egoistic individualism.

Therefore the implementation of more associational forms of politics is not something enforced from above but rather a recognition that states already have to negotiate the desires of such groups (Rustin 1985,

Schmitter 1993), and that this inevitably involves the formation of associations for the individualism of their members to 'progress towards making a reality of the famous precept: to each according to his works' (Durkheim 1898:83). This move away from a purely local focus is also beneficial in linking the individual into political society and is thus within a collective form expressed via their functional or identity-based activity. This is counter to the possibility for the expression of egoistic individualism which was clear in the Big Society programme. It was for this reason that Durkheim rejected the localized focus since it would not exist as part of a morally recognized political society but would rather be a space for areas already under the control of the economically strong (Durkheim 1952:357–8).

Nevertheless, it would be naïve to overlook some of the issues which could occur with these associations – the state would still need to arbitrate between some claims and, much as Cole suggested, might need to be the final court of appeal for disputes between them. There is also a role here for the redistribution of economic resources in order to ensure equality and liberty, much as Cole envisaged (Cole 1920a:146–7) and in line with Durkheim's idea of the 'internal' role of the state containing a concern with inequality (Durkheim 1958; see also Chapter 5). However, as both argue, these roles can be more effectively fulfilled by associations that can take account of individual circumstances more effectively.

In light of the above, it should also be noted that the state is not to be seen as an 'objective' adjudicator. As Durkheim argues, part of the state's role is to think for society, to produce collective representations (Durkheim 1992:51, ff.) which, in a libertarian socialist society, would require a conception of the 'common good' upon which arbitrations would be judged. This would focus upon the potential for individuals to associate and have their views recognized. It was the guarantee of this which, as we saw, provided the basis for Durkheim's claim that the state was the body concerned with justice (Durkheim 1958). Such a role ensures a more 'democratic' society by allowing the particular sentiments of the associations to become more aligned with the collective concerns of political society (Durkheim 1992:42–110). To put this in the language of Cole, functional democracy fills the space of political society, with the commune taking on the reflective and justice-orientated roles. Therefore the state has a role not only in adjudication but also of justice and, via this, equality. The communicative mechanisms engendered by the multiple associations and their need to communicate (Devine 1988, Cohen and Rogers 1995a) also aligns with the goals of democratic communication, linking the state and political

society emphasized by Durkheim (1992:76–84). Here the big moral role of the state is kept in check via its communicative link with political society.

The state and inequality

Perhaps the greatest prima facie hurdle to this is inequality which is, in light of my discussion of Giddens earlier, central to the perceived role of the state. There are two forms of inequality which interest us here: the first concerns economic inequality and the second inequality of access. Indeed, it has been claimed that these issues of inequalities are ones which are overlooked by the Big Society (cf. Ellison 2011:57–60, Dawson 2013:90–1). Economic inequality, central to this role of justice (Durkheim 1984:316–22), will be discussed in more depth in Chapter 5. For now we can say that the lessening of the inequality of authoritative resources can go some way towards lessening the inequality in their allocative counterpart by allowing, via the multiple *agoras*, the opportunity for these needs to be expressed in areas of activity where they become significant. In fact, among the central roles of associations highlighted by Warren are the possibilities of recognition of difference, along with commonality as well as subsidiarity and greater democratic legitimacy due to this specialized focus (Warren 2001:79–93).

However, inequality of access is not solely dependent on capital, and there are generally two criticisms of an associative democracy on this point. The first is what Dahl (1982) terms 'stabilising political inequalities' and 'distorting the public agenda'. These terms suggest that groups which form associations will already occupy a position of privilege, whether this be via economic advantage, education or ability to organize. The associations will be able to ensure that only their concerns are deliberated and their alternatives considered. The result is that current inequalities will be reinforced and perhaps exacerbated as the only alternatives considered will be those which harm those who don't have the opportunity of organizing – a central concern with the Big Society. The second consideration of inequality is contained in what Cohen and Rogers (1995a) term 'the problem of faction'. They agree with Dahl that the initial formation of associations may well reflect current forms of inequality, but also through such a system, factional interests may come to override general interest and new forms of inequality could be produced.[12]

This is, of course, a damaging criticism for any potential political system, but particularly for one which claims to be socialist, and thus takes increased equality as one of its main normative goals. There are two

responses I would offer to the question of inequality, one concerning the associations themselves and the other concerning the role of the state. With regard to associations, there are various steps that could be taken to ensure that forms of inequality do not distort the system before it has the chance to work. Here, Hirst's associative democracy system has had some of the best recommendations (1994:44–73). Central to this is the claim that within the associations there should be the power to 'exit' (Cohen and Rogers 1995a). The ability to enter and leave an association is a central way of ensuring that the association does not operate in an unequal manner, therefore we should not allow for associational monopolies. This ability is also, it is claimed, one of the ways in which a system influenced by Cole's work can defend against Michels' 'iron law of oligarchy', by giving members the ultimate right to leave the association in such numbers that it can no longer operate (Wyatt 2004). However, since this principle then opens the door to Dahl's concern with stabilizing political inequalities, there should also be a role for the state in not only enforcing some kind of constitutional form for associations but also allocating the resources it gains through taxation to reflect the membership of such groups, since this reflects a civic moral concern with allowing for equal expression of political action. All this requires for Hirst is 'individuation and a degree of rationality' on behalf of individuals to leave and join groups which are just or unjust, rather than a complex awareness of constitutional issues (Hirst 1994:47). Much as Durkheim argues, here the state is there to set the principles of equality, to be carried out by political society. As Hirst warns, however, placing the principle and the enforcement solely in the state will, inevitably, lead to the state favouring certain types of association, hence the separation of these two (Hirst 1995). The principle of exit is partly a way to lessen this by allowing individuals to express their disappointment with associations, if relevant. While Hirst sees such awareness as already present in pre-existing associations, as Warren (2001:70–5) points out, further exposure to associations is likely to increase such awareness. Therefore the awareness of inequality is aided here by a mechanism for escaping it, but yet still existing within political society. The 'big' moral role of the state also means that it can be used as a 'last case' enforcer.

All of these steps, however, will not remove competition between associations fully. The only way this could be done would be to greatly limit associations to a few monopolies. Such a setup would hardly seem to be useful for answering the multiple life political claims of individuals. This returns us to the concern with recognizing pluralized areas

of function and identification. Much as Hirst argues in his model of associative democracy, allowing this principle must, as a result, allow for differences to emerge in intent and concerns. This is to be accepted as an inevitable part of the formation of a political community unless one relies on a transformatory dynamic as part of socialist politics. As Hirst argues, the possibility of such conflicts being expressed does not differ from current forms of political organization, but the associational form gives the benefit of conflicts being 'parcelized' within what would become smaller issues. Depending upon the situation, these could then be the responsibility of political society rather than the broad civic morals of the state (Hirst 1994:67).

This point returns us to Durkheim's claim regarding associations as the means of generating professional ethics. Befitting Durkheim's wider sociological concerns, it was his argument that rules in and of themselves are never enough to generate moral concern for another. The specialized nature of the associations means that they 'communicates itself to the moral discipline it establishes and this, it follows, is respected to the same degree' (Durkheim 1992:8). Thus functional democracy, via its concern with the everyday activities of individuals, can go beyond the use of rules to establish forms of moral and personal connections to the others who make it up. These, existing within an interdependent division of labour, reassert the role of the other, one of Bauman's justifications for the *agora* while also a major aspect of the interactionist critique of individualization (Yeatman 2007, Jackson 2010). This in many ways fits in with the focus on 'personal communities' within late modernity (Spencer and Pahl 2006), whereby individuals create multiple political communities based upon shared interests and activities rather than structural obligation (Riley et al. 2010). These in turn are not exclusive but rather overlapping groupings due to individual's multiple fields of activity. Such personal connections mean that social solidarism can exercise a more immediate influence upon the individual (Durkheim 1952:358). 'Parcelized' conflicts could be more easily dealt with in the specific context of their contestation, influenced by professional ethics and civic morals rather than in national-based mechanisms. Here we return to one of the focuses of late modern political sociology, to recognize the multiple subjective allegiances in individuals' lifeworlds with forms of democratic expression (Beck 1997:100). The model of libertarian socialism here argues that political society itself needs to be further pluralized rather than, as in life/sub-politics, simply attempt to 'recognize' plurality via the state. This holds potential by not, as Bauman feared, rejecting formal political structures and thereby exacerbating

political disillusionment. Instead these structures are pluralized and reinvigorated within everyday activity.

Therefore libertarian socialism can overcome inequality of access by providing a clear means of access via the multiple *agora* spaces and linking funding to associative civic morals. While this means allowing for differences and conflict, the moral and communicative nature of associations lessen such conflict. As we shall see in Chapter 6, based upon evidence from pre-existing associations, this is seen to already occur at the individual, public sphere and institutional levels (Warren 2001). Therefore libertarian socialism would not involve creating a world from scratch but rather would be building upon pre-existing trends

Conclusion: The libertarian socialist state in late modernity

This chapter has outlined both the critique of the late modern state offered by libertarian socialism and the principles upon which an alternative can be based. As we have seen, libertarian socialism begins with a critique of the late modern state form as falling short on both the libertarian (multiple points of entry in a pluralized political sphere) and the socialist (privatization as equalling marketization) principles. From here the libertarian socialist principle of decrowning the state was taken as the operating principle for an alternative state form. This would, in effect, go through four separate tasks: providing resources for forming associations; acting as an adjudicator between these; propagating and recognizing ideals of justice; and existing in a constitutional role to oversee these. As we have seen, such roles remove many areas of executive agency from the state and instead transfer them over to political society. In this sense the state becomes small. Since the state is currently responsible for the privatization central to political individualization, here it uses similar means towards a different normative end, in line with the second tenet of libertarian socialism concerning the need for a pluralized political society. When it comes to inequality, as we can see, the role of the state is twofold: firstly, to provide the civic morals to ensure that the stranglehold of the associations is not reached; and secondly, to ensure principles of equality and justice which then govern such associations. In effect, the state takes over a constitutional role, implicit in Cole's analysis (Wyatt 2006), and in its moral and redistributive roles becomes big.

Therefore, to conclude, the alternative libertarian state form has three characteristics:

1. It exists above, but is not dominant over, the multiple *agoras* of political society.
2. It exists to represent a certain ideal of justice which is distinct from the amoral character of economic life that it currently propagates. While this does not mean the creation of the collective conscious, it is influenced by it.
3. It achieves the balance that Durkheim aimed for with political society by presenting the justice ideals as civic morals to be implemented by political society.

Chapter 5 will advance this concern with justice by looking in more depth at the role of economic democracy and inequality in libertarian socialism.

5

Responsibility without Power: Neoliberalism and Economic Democracy

> The material argument for socialism has been weakened
> (Hobsbawm 1991b:320)

> Without material security there can be no political freedom
> (Beck 2000b:14)

These quotes reflect the conflicting position of economic democracy and inequality as a late modern political concern within academia. On the one hand, Eric Hobsbawm, in his defence of socialism 'after the fall', acknowledges that the extreme poverty and inequality of life circumstances which made up part of the original basis for socialism no longer have as strong a hold; Engels would not recognize modern-day Manchester. While he does not argue that socialism should simply forget economic inequality, he suggests that it needs to focus its appeal on other factors, such as ecology, the gap between rich and poor countries and the subordination of individuals to the market. On the other hand, there's Beck, whose animosity towards socialism knows few limits, arguing for the centrality of the economic to political sociology. While this has the feel of a throwaway comment in part of a book-long discussion about forms of work,[1] it does suggest the inability to entirely leave the economic behind for late modern political sociology. This issue is central to our discussion of libertarian socialism in late modernity. The question of how neoliberalism impacts political individualization, in terms of both its propagation and the limits placed upon it, was the third key theme of late modern political sociology. We have seen in chapters 3 and 4 how neoliberalism and privatization have greatly blunted the potential for political action in late modernity and created an unequal form of market-based consumer action. These link to the third tenet

of libertarian socialism, that the inequalities of capitalist society, here conceived in terms of both allocative and authoritative resources, make justice impossible, a fundamentally Durkheimian point.

This has only been exacerbated by the growing inequality of neoliberal society. Such inequality, 'unparalleled both historically and compared with the changes taking place at the same time in most other developed countries' (Brewer et al. 2009:2), is an increasingly important issue for late modern sociology. The consolidation of neoliberal ideology and the crash of the economic system which this ideology shaped have not only led to an increasingly unequal economic order but also brought the recognition of such inequality front and centre in contemporary political life throughout the world. The bailouts of banks, car manufacturers and other business with the corresponding cuts to public spending mean that the widening gap between rich and poor is no longer a truth revealed only through careful analysis of statistical evidence but is instead confronted on a daily basis by unemployment figures and the latest cuts. These events have seen such movements as the *Indignados* in Spain, student protests in Chile, street protests in Greece and the worldwide Occupy movement achieve a large degree of fame and support. As noted by the interactionists, this occurs alongside the increased recognition of particularly classed explanations of inequality (Savage 2000, Skeggs 2004, 2005, MacKenzie et al. 2006, Krange and Skogen 2007, Boli and Elliott 2008, Lehmann 2009). As we have seen in this book, it was the claim of Lefebvre and political individualization that the expansion of political issues and effects into the everyday increases the potential for critique and enhances the push towards political action. The movements listed above are all examples of this process and the latest example of collectivized movements focused on economic inequality (Sörbom and Wennerhag 2012).

Based upon this, we can argue that not only would greater equality be a desirable normative goal for libertarian socialism, for reasons that will follow, but also it is increasingly demanded. But, it may be asked, why be concerned with equality? Wouldn't it be more effective and fair to ensure that poverty is removed? What the highest earners earn is none of our concern, as long as the poorest can fulfil their basic concerns. In short, be New Labour, but better (Giddens 2002). This returns us to Durkheim's conception of anomie. Allowing inequality to grow, even with the poorest taken care of, decreases the 'collective forces' holding these groups together, and the relationship becomes one of antagonism as the desires of one group are radically outstripped by the achievements of another. Two opposing forms of civic morals begin to

form, as in the differing value systems attached to appropriateness of pay given to the '1 per cent'. As we saw in Chapter 2, Durkheim also sees such inequalities as problematic by producing in the economically dominant a myth of self-dependency whereby their socially produced wealth is seen as theirs alone. Therefore the lack of wealth of others is due to their inadequacies and problems. This is a central claim of the neoliberal discourse on welfare, whereby reform, even when posing as a principled attack on poverty, is an attempt to reformulate individuals perceived as failing (Wiggan 2012). Consequently, it is more often than not the anomie-ridden conflict caused by inequality, as much as the actual material inequality itself, which stands behind Durkheim's long-held, though rarely commented upon, belief that inequalities simply did not allow for justice (1958:49, 1959:1–8, 1984:316–22, 1992:214). Durkheim also comments that the growth in inequality is directly linked to the expansion of contracts, and thus the freedom of the economically dominant is dependent upon the lack thereof on behalf of the economically dominated (Durkheim 1992:208–20).

Therefore:

> the chief role of corporations . . . would be to govern social functions, especially economic functions, and thus to extricate them from their present state of disorganization. Whenever excited appetites tended to exceed all limits, the corporations would have to decide the share that should equitably revert to each of its cooperative parts . . . by recalling both to the sense of their reciprocal duties and the general interests, and by regulating production in certain cases so it does not degenerate into a morbid fever, it would moderate one set of passions by another, and permit their appeasement by assigning them limits. Thus, a new sort of moral discipline would be established, without which all the scientific discovering and economic progress in the world could produce only malcontents.
>
> (Durkheim 1952:350)

In short, a lack of economic equality increases the possibility of anomic forms of social order, creating divisions and resentment. Justice for Durkheim becomes impossible in such a system, the dominant and the dominated view each other with mutual suspicion due to the differing values places on economic action, and the stronger 'succeed in crushing the not so strong' (Durkheim 1992:11). Therefore the eradication of, or at least great reduction in, economic inequality is not an added bonus of libertarian socialism but rather central to its goal of

individual realization. The role of the corporations is not purely a way of achieving professional and civic morals but also, through the democratic mechanisms provided, one of ensuring that economic resources are equitably distributed by voting on wages, distributing welfare and allocating inherited property (Durkheim 1984). In Giddensian language, it is about using the distribution of authoritative resources to allow for a further distribution of allocative resources.

In short, for Durkheim, the means of production must be socialized in order to achieve a more just distribution of wealth. As we shall see, this is much more radical than the corporatist system based upon recognition and co-ordination between capital and labour that Durkheim is often claimed to advocate (Black 1984, Pearce 1989, Muller 1993); rather it is the submitting of the former to the latter. Befitting later theories of economic democracy (cf. Dahl 1985) and the central claim of Marxism (Marx 1992:345–52), this is due to the fact that the production of wealth is an inherently social activity, which economic anomie leads the dominant to forget. Therefore the control and organization of economic functions is central to our functional activity and identification. Of course, the exact shape that 'socialization' would or should take has long been a concern of socialist theory and therefore will be discussed next.

Late modernity and socialization

Following the central claims of libertarian socialism, socialization is defined here as submitting privately run organizations to the concerns of their users as well as wider interested parties,[2] rather than leaving them to operate according to the interests of their owners. Here we follow the principle that democracy is functional and based with individual activity, productive or otherwise. The focus on democracy as a mechanism for socializing economic institutions has been a notable aspect of post-communist socialist theory. To list just a few examples, Nove (1983), Rustin (1985), Cunningham (1987) and Bobbio (1987) all utilize a conception of internal workplace democracy as a way of differentiating their ideas from those of the USSR and other communist states. This has often been linked to an advocacy for the extension of democracy to be the main rallying cry of the Left (Hindess 1990, Hirst 1997).

While socialization may seem detached and irrelevant to the political sociology of late modernity, given its focus on life politics and choice, it is central. As already highlighted, the concept of life politics, with its

concern of linking individual activity to political activity, was not problematic in its normative goal; rather, its problems were in its analytical conception. Part of such problems was that political individualization includes the expansion of the identification of an Other; position taking; awareness of inequality; and decision making emphasized by both the interactionist and the discourse critiques. This happens in wide areas of everyday life. However, the sociology of late modernity, as seen in the concept of life politics, often makes a curious choice by seeing such processes as stopping 'at the factory gates', despite the fact that a large amount of research identified the workplace as an area of the privatization and position taking central to political individualization (Adkins 2000, MacKenzie et al. 2006, Banks and Millstone 2011, Brooks 2008, Brennan 2009, Skelton 2005, Braedley 2010). Life and sub-politics have, consciously or not, considered this out of bounds for discussion. If we accept the principle of political individualization, it would seem useful, given the evidence, for the workplace to be part of it. Hence the concern is with providing a forum within the activity of work for these private decisions to have public expression and implementation, a workplace *agora* as one of the multiple points of entry.

Such a principle is overlooked in Beck's work, where increased insecurity instead creates a possibility for the personalization of work via 'civil labour' (2000b). This is forms of community service which are then 'paid for' via other community services (such as free childcare). Beck also emphasizes the normative ends of such a project by claiming that the extension of civil labour is the mechanism for further democratization of society (Beck 2000c). The implication of this is that subjectivity and individualization are not seen to exist within the activity of work but are purely a concern of the choice of job and remuneration for civil labour. This is not only another indication of the classed nature of Beck's disembedded individualization – after all, how many people can 'choose' their job? – but also a somewhat myopic view of social action as that which exists outside economic action, which is conceptualized as a more rational sphere, when the two are inevitably intertwined (Zelizer 2007). Therefore the natural conclusion of political individualization would seem to include some form of workplace democracy.

Socialization also concerns identity formation and specialization. I have introduced the concept of identification to libertarian socialism to overcome the dependence on the workplace as the dominant sphere of activity found in both Durkheim's and Cole's productive theories. However, this does not mean that we should ignore the continued importance of functional activity in late modern identity formation.

Work not only continues to take up a large amount of the individual's time but may also involve increased investment in an era of late modernity due to the need for re-training and 're-skilling'. Indeed, it is possible to find a continued identification with one's job as a form of self-definition (see Savage 2000, Mackenzie et al. 2006, Atkinson 2010b). While these identities are partial and need some reassertion or 'recovering' (Standing 2011:158–9), as Cole reminds us, the engagement in work as the central part of activity inevitably leads to the development of 'interests' in it (Cole 1917, 1920a:33). This would seem especially true when the evidence suggests, contrary to the claims of researchers such as Standing, that levels of long-term employment remain stable and the 'precarity' of work is exaggerated (Fevre 2007, Doogan 2009, 2011). Nevertheless, even if changing a job is less frequent than often claimed, the shifting of responsibilities and location within a job may create what Standing terms a lack of 'job security' – a lack of stability in role and responsibilities – while the individual remains employed (Standing 2011:10). Therefore, in late modern language, a job comprises a 'fateful moment', or is itself a collection of fateful moments, during which the individual has to reorient their reflexive biography towards new circumstances (Giddens 1991a:142–3). This is especially significant when these fateful moments are numerous (Sennett 1998, Bauman 2002, Skelton 2005, Warrington 2008). Therefore the work-based components of Cole's and Durkheim's theories, although requiring supplementing, still have useful points for a late modern world, and the workplace maintains its functional significance. While recognizing the complexity of late modern life and its multiple *agoras*, we should not neglect the original one. Claims for less work-based forms of socialist politics in favour of a more varied and leisure-based 'politics of paradise', after all, rely on the democratic control of the workplace in order to create the conditions for such leisure (Standing 2011:161–70). Such control is necessary to allow for the democratic distribution of resources and work hours favoured by Standing.

This returns us to our concern with economic inequality. The political sociologies of Beck and Giddens tend to take a supportive attitude towards politics as currently formed – liberal democracy is good, we just need more of it (i.e. life politics), an echo of Marcuse's aforementioned happy conscious. The unspoken factor behind this has been the increasingly unequal nature of late modern societies due to the neoliberal economics which are conducted in many of them. Sometimes this has been simply wished away, such as in Giddens' suggestion that we should focus on the 'goods' of modernity (surplus production)

and not the 'bads' (inequality) (Giddens 1994a:100–1). Beck, as we have seen, does take economic inequality a bit more seriously. But generally, when inequality is discussed, it involves the possibility of eradicating new forms of inequality, such as social exclusion 'at the top' (Giddens 1994a, 1998b, Diamond and Giddens 2005) and cosmopolitan inequalities (Beck 2005b, 2007). Bauman, as always, is distinct from this since inequality – especially poverty, a 'meta-humiliation . . . a soil on which all-round indignity thrives, a trampoline from which "multiple humiliation" is launched' (Bauman and Tester 2001:154) – figures large in his account of late modernity. On the other hand, his supposed assertion that class is no longer a central term (Bauman 1982)[3] means that some have argued that his sociology can fit quite easily into the middle-class claims of Giddens and Beck, with its focus on disembedded individualization (Atkinson 2008). This often overlooks the continuing role of class in Bauman's work – for example, his claim that late modern society continues to be a 'class society' (Bauman 2012a:17) and that the inequalities that this produces are a *'collateral casualty* of profit-driven, uncoordinated and uncontrolled globalization' (Bauman 2011a:4). Despite Bauman's protestations, a reluctance to acknowledge economic inequality has often been the first, and most effective, criticism thrown at the sociology of late modernity, especially since the emergence of a post-scarcity order is taken as one of the bases for Giddens' normative claims (Giddens 1994a:12). Thus there is a need for some kind of mechanism to control the distribution of wealth since, if we take the current system to be undesirable, it seems that the market alone is not able to achieve this. Such an inequitable distribution is a reflection of the global distribution of wealth under neoliberalism (Bourdieu and Wacquant 2001, Harvey 2005, Hall 2011) where economic inequality forms part of a common 'neoliberal trajectory' (Baccaro and Howell 2011). Consequently, one role of the associations would be, following Durkheim's claims, that of deciding wages and distributing wealth/income to achieve a more equitable division.

To summarize, the empirical claim here involves recognizing the continued role of economic activity to individuals' activity and, in turn, its continually social nature. As a result, the ability to take part in the political opportunities brought about by late modernity can be hampered by one's economic position. Bauman's individuality *de facto* requires resources to be effective. This leads to a normative claim that, as Durkheim highlights, the role of socialization is to bring the distribution of resources within democratic consideration. This means socialization being conceptualized as the submitting of currently purely privately

held capital to subjectivity exercised democratic forms. I would suggest that the exact policies of control adopted by the associations would be decided via these associations rather than prior to this. To paraphrase Marx, this means supplying possible recipes to the cookshop of the future, but not what it would choose to cook.

At this point the preceding discussion of socialization may seem somewhat hypothetical to the reader and could appear unattainable. There are three points I would like to make concerning the relevance and plausibility of what has been mentioned above.

Continuing of current trends – While, as I have argued in this book, the market increasingly takes over decision making, each economic system is, as Wright (2010) puts it, a 'hybrid', where there is some mix of market, state and social power. For a system to be 'capitalist', it would mean that this market element is dominant despite forms of 'countervailing power' which limit the ability of the market to act independently (Wright 2010:165). Here there are two relevant forms of countervailing power found within social power (defined by Wright as akin to civil society) which I would like to highlight: 'high pay' and corporate responsibility. By high pay I mean the contemporary concern with the salary of the highest-paid executives within government and other public sector corporations. In the US we have seen protests concerning the pay of the heads of 'bailed out' companies which resulted in their pay being capped at $500,000. In the UK, Will Hutton's high pay commission made recommendations towards limiting the pay of public executives, using the prime minister's salary as a benchmark to judge others against. And in France, one of the first policies of Francois Hollande's presidency was introducing a scale whereby no public official could earn more than 20 times the pay of the lowest official. These three examples, as part of a wider trend, are significant since they show how perceived excessive pay levels are being dealt with by governments of centrist, right-of-centre and left-of-centre colours, respectively. While the expansion of austerity plays some role in this, the principle behind it is part of a wider consideration, highlighted by Dahl (1985:82–3), that capital is social and therefore open to social control. While the above instances have almost wholly concerned public sector companies and employees, comparable countervailing tendencies, such as corporate responsibility, also occur for private companies. Here, private capital is seen as obligated to a wider community and therefore needing to exercise its responsibilities in a moral fashion. Such an obligation operates as a countervailing tendency to amoral character of economic life. It

is not my claim that pay caps or corporate responsibility are synonymous with socialized capital, rather that the tendencies they draw upon are also shared with socialization. The claim that capital is social is, via such a tendency, not solely a rallying cry of Marxists and neo-pluralists such as Dahl.

Lack of dominance for global capital – The reader may consider the above somewhat naïve due to a neglect of the supposedly inherently global nature of capital, a key factor in Bauman's claim of the separation of power and politics (Bauman 2009). However, this is one area where Bauman, as well as Beck and Giddens, have been criticized, most prominently by Doogan (2009) and others (Rosenberg 2000, Cameron and Palan 2004, Bisley 2007, Fevre 2007, Hirst et al. 2009). For all of these researchers, discussions of the global economy have exaggerated the mobility of capital. It is very difficult, expensive and, often, unattractive for companies to move due to 'sunk costs' (i.e. pre-existing investments), and their dependence of their native economy with outward investment and mobility occurring only in conditions of domestic boom (Doogan 2009:68). As pointed out by Hay (2007:144–8), despite claims of capital chasing the lowest common denominator foreign direct investment, and the profit return from this, is directly correlated with the amount of state spending on key social services, such as education, health and roads. Indeed, beyond some basic knowledge of levels of inflation, investors tend to know very little about the economic policies of the country in which they invest, beyond profit return. This is demonstrated in the lack of mobility indicated by the data. Instead, claims of mobility are, as Doogan (2009:214) puts it, part of an 'ideological offensive' on the part of capital to make unions and workers more compliant to accepting lower wages and less market regulation at home. Although some forms of global and mobile capital do exist in certain fields, the widespread acceptance of claims of absolute capital mobility by various sociologists of late modernity, mostly due to a lack of consideration of data and an ahistorical approach to the economy, means that they join in 'the neoliberal chorus' (Doogan 2009:11). As Mosley (2005) argues, the state still has 'room to move' within global capital; the key is recognizing where this room exists – which can be in different places for different states – and capitalizing upon it. Consequently, following the findings of these researchers, there is a case for 'calling capitalism's bluff' and recognizing the reliance of capital upon the opulence, labour and institutions of domestic economies. While this may seem a risky proposition, it is less so when we consider the third factor.

The crisis – The essential link between the domestic and the global economy, namely the reliance of the latter upon a strong former, was demonstrated during the economic crisis, whereby companies which survived (most notably in banking, insurance and automobile manufacture; bridging the 'old' and 'new' economies) did so on the basis of large government bailouts, with the richest states (the example of the US and its car manufacturing sector being the most prominent) able to afford generous bailouts which kept otherwise doomed companies profitable. This not only is a clear indication of the reliance of capital upon the generosity of the taxpayers in tough times but also has led to governments worldwide owning significant stock in banks. This could be used to create favourable conditions for companies that embrace the tenets of associational control. Following Cole's concept of encroaching control, this would involve a progressive removal of ownership from private hands, similar to the policy attempted in Sweden but ultimately dropped in the face of pressure from capital and a lack of political will (Wright 2010:223–4). As argued in the last chapter, the reconceived role of the libertarian socialist state reassesses this link and places the emphasis on limiting the amoral character of economic life, itself central to the occurrence, and continuation of, recession. The above does not assume that capital will simply roll over and accept socialization, rather that there are tendencies in favour of extended social control at the moment. Once these are realized there is a possibility of further expansion.

The three points thus far have concerned the conditions under which capital operates in the early twenty-first century, post-credit crunch. They highlight the social pressure of 'countervailing trends'; a lack of dominant global capital; and the role of the government in the economy. Chapter 6 considers pre-existing forms of associational control that are also relevant to this discussion.

In short, then, the argument for socialization continues to have a place in late modernity. To reflect the late modern concern of developing political activity within a collective form, it would seem worthwhile to see socialization not as nationalization but rather as the utilization of democratic forms within the organization, as an association. This leaves the question of how socialized allocative resources are to be distributed in order to lessen economic inequality. It would seem clear that with the decisions of economic bodies removed from private ownership, there would be the possibility of socializing either some, or all, of the profit made by them. As Durkheim argues, here the association form

is useful since it can decide directly the key needs for its occupation – that is, whether profit should be reinvested; paid in equal or unequal dividends; or distributed to a wider community upon which the association depends (Durkheim 1984:li–v). While the discussion of profit may seem counter-factual to socialist goals, we can follow the principles laid down by Nove (1983:210–1) where profit itself is not objectionable from a socialist viewpoint but rather the private appropriation of it. Instead, we can think of profit from that which can be used to achieve socialist ends away from the remuneration of labour. The way in which this is distributed is, as I have highlighted, something to be associationally decided. However, this does not stop us considering the benefits of possible schemes.

The basic income and libertarian socialism

One possible way of distributing allocative resources socially is the basic income. This is a policy whereby all citizens receive a minimum income, irrespective of work done or services sold. This concept has a long pedigree and has received support from across the political spectrum, Right to Left, with slight changes depending on the advocate and audience (cf. Fitzpatrick 1999). It is especially relevant for this book due to its support from many of the writers discussed to this point. Cole advocated the basic income, distributed by the associations (Cole 1920a:146), since 'a well-organized society would distribute as private incomes to its members just enough to buy the entire current supply of individually consumable goods and services' (Cole 1935:253) – a long-term goal rather than an immediate policy (Cole 1929:187–9). It has also seen support from late modern political sociology (Beck 1992:149, Bauman 1999:180–9), forms of associative democracy (Hirst 1994, Cohen and Rogers 1995a), Marxist researchers (Gorz 1982, Devine 1988, Wright 2004, Standing 2011), those hoping to revive social democracy post-New Labour (Jordan 2010, Lawson 2010) and those of more liberal/radical democracy positions (Dahl 1982, Van Parijs 1995, Pateman 2004). In light of this it is not surprising for Fitzpatrick to suggest that it is a policy 'whose time has come' with late modernity (Fitzpatrick 1999:35). Although the basic income has not had a full-scale pilot, beyond a brief experiment in Nambia (Wright 2010:5), the more generous welfare states have inched close to the scheme. An exception, it is argued, is the UK, where the Conservative–Lib Dem coalition's welfare policies have set up the path towards a basic income (Jordan 2012).[4]

The appeal of such a policy is clear – as Standing puts it, 'thinking of universal basic security is to shift the mind away from pity to social solidarity and compassion' (Standing 2011:174). By releasing time it may be able to give individuals more chance to engage in their associations' democratic activity. It also seems to provide the individual freedom to be political actors by curing the major collective ills: inequality and poverty. As a result, it is claimed, the basic income provides a certain amount of stakeholding in the social activities, rather than simply a concern with economic activity to survive (Wright 2010:220). Nevertheless, there is a notable problem in this policy: its resource-heavy nature (Levine 1995). Some, including Wright, who devotes a lot of discussion to the basic income (Wright 2004, 2010:217–22), leave its value unannounced. When levels are discussed, Fitzpatrick highlights how the main disagreements emerge once we go beyond the 'minimal model' (say £5 a week) to an income which is large enough to make a difference but not enough to be unaffordable. Fitzpatrick suggests, given current conditions, that once all the savings that would be made from combining the various forms of welfare are taken into account, the income would vary between £45 and £61 a week (Fitzpatrick 1999:39). Taking the higher estimate leaves us at half the £6,000 level suggested by Hirst as most effective (1994:179). It could be argued that this is based on a low tax base; and an increase in taxation levels, to those suggested of 65–80 per cent, could make the policy more achievable (Fitzpatrick 1999:40 ff.). This, however, causes an additional problem: even if the means of production were socialized and centrally directed, the sheer amount of capital required to finance the policy, before even considering the state's other obligations (e.g. what if people spend their basic income and have greater needs? (White 2004)) would mean that the generation of profit would be central to the state's activities. Thus it may adopt an 'ends justify the means' approach, so the search for efficiencies would perhaps be as brutal as currently experienced. Thus although the results of such a policy would be desirable, the impact of its implementation might open up issues of the relation between the state and capital (here social rather than private). We go from a 'capitalist' state (Miliband 1969) to a 'social capital' state. And, importantly for our discussion, the amoral character of profit accumulation continues.

So the basic income may raise problems which make its realization problematic. A more achievable and useful measure could be the adoption of a 'partial basic income', whereby those in need are guaranteed an income (Fitzpatrick 1999:39–40) to aid their individuality *de facto* (Bauman 2007a). Therefore I would argue that the reliance on the basic

income as an immediate political alternative for late modernity needs some reconsideration. If it is to be taken as a normative desire, or utopian orientation point (Levitas 2001) – for which, taking Bauman's conception of individualization, it seems to be worthwhile – this should, much like Cole's original advocacy, be seen in gradualist terms. The most plausible of basic income schemes may be worthwhile normatively and upon moral principle, but it could be claimed that they do not match the emphasis upon democratic control valued here.

Therefore, to return to a central theme of this chapter, the goal of achieving justice by lessening economic inequality would rely not on a basic income but rather on a partial basic income. The distribution of this via an association might help with one of the critiques of the basic income raised by White (2004) – differential demands. A healthy, single individual may have fewer demands on their money than someone with children or who has particular disabilities. Here we return to recognizing identification along with function in an associational form, so that differential consideration can be given to what resources an individual requires to achieve a state of economic equality which allows for an equality of spending opportunities and resources. As already discussed, the state can also be a guarantor not only of what these standards should be as part of civic morals but also that they are universally met. Such redistribution creates what is in effect a minimum guaranteed salary, although not a basic income, paid for by the appropriation of profit and inherited property. In combination with the associational deciding of wages, this can reduce the inequality found in neoliberal societies.

The importance of the basic income can also be overstated as an elixir when we give further consideration to Bauman's work. For him, this *de facto* individuality is not purely about having allocative resources but rather about their utilization as consumers (Bauman 2005b, 2007b). Thus the allocation of allocative resources is only a first, albeit essential, step towards the democratization of economic activity. To discuss this second step, let us now turn to an area where individual economic and political activity is seen to be increasingly carried out in late modernity: the consumer market.

Consumerism

In a discussion of economic democracy, the workplace and income distribution are only half the topic; the other half is a consideration of economic activity as consumers. This section considers to what extent this central late modern economic and social role can also be given

political representation and institutionalization. In this sense it builds upon the earlier discussion of everyday life consumption as a form of political action. Towards this end it is important to flag up a distinction that Bauman makes between 'consumerism' as a central process of late modernity, based upon false or, as Lefebvre terms them, social, needs and 'consumption' as a human inevitability (Bauman 2007b:25–6).

Bauman's criticisms of the limited nature of freedom within consumerism have already been covered (Bauman 2007b; see Chapter 1). Most notably, its existence outside an institutionalized political structure offers little opportunity for political expression:

> Consumerism promises something it can't deliver. It actually promises universality of happiness. Everybody is free to choose, and, if everybody is let into the shop, then everybody is equally happy. That is one duplicity. Another duplicity is the limitation of its pretence that you resolve the issue of freedom completely once you offer a consumer freedom. So it is a reduction of freedom to consumerism. That is the other duplicity. People are led into forgetting that there could also be other ways of self-assertion than simply buying a better outfit.
>
> (Bauman 1992a:225)

It is here that libertarian socialism can be useful due to Cole's work on consumption (Cole 1920a:78–95). Via such a scheme it could be possible to build upon the role of self-determination within late modern consumerism and tie it to an effective form of political expression and individual political agency – in short, to recognize the centrality of consumption without falling into the trap of consumerism while also lessening inequality of access to consumer goods.

As we saw in Chapter 2, Cole imagines consumer representation to occur at both the local and the regional level. This is then divided into collectives to represent universal forms of consumption (such as the utilities) and co-operatives to represent more specialized forms of consumption. The negotiation between these and the producing bodies creates a market based upon need and desire, rather than ability to pay (Cole 1920a:76–95). These forms of negotiation are effectively Cole's form of economic planning, without centralized control (Cole 1920a:93–4). Such a use of associations is indicative of their use in other forms of socialist theory, most prominently that of Devine, as a form of 'participatory planning' (2002). Nevertheless, its central import is as an indication of the value of representation of consumers within political

individualization. Behind this, of course, lies the universal nature of consumption, which makes it into a functional activity.

It is possible to imagine the direct application of the model of the collective as outlined by Cole; this could be based within a local area and focus upon specific utilities (say a forum for water consumption, another for electricity and so on). Such a principle not only reflects the centrality of this form of consumption to all but also, by affirming this, acts as a form of resistance to the economic privatization of neoliberalism, without denying the privatization of political individualization. However, it is these factors which make the implementation of the collectives model relatively straightforward to imagine. It would seem a more complex issue when it comes to implementing the co-operatives in late modernity.

Initially this may seem a puzzling statement since co-operatives have become increasingly popular in political discourse. The UK government's Big Society initiative mentioned Chapter 4 relied heavily on the supposed values and prevalence of co-operatives (Norman 2010:161–78). Co-operatives have also been a significant part of US history, representing the 'will to associate' highlighted by DeTocqueville (Warren 2001:29–31). Perhaps the most famous example of co-operative success, however, is Mondragón, a collection of co-operatives, located mostly in the Basque region of Spain, which have been providing multiple services, products and support since 1956, with a high level of success both economically and socially (Wright 2010:240–6). While recent market pressures have pushed the number of worker-owners and the level of democratic participation down (Cheney 1999), it can be said that Mondragón, although far from being free of critics from both the Left and the Right, has maintained the key components of its democratic ethos (Wright 2010:242–3). However, here we are considering something more far-reaching, from highlighting specific examples of co-operatives to imagining what Wright (2010:139–40) terms a 'co-operative market economy' where co-operatives not only are the dominant form of economic organization but also are expected to co-ordinate with one another.

There are three clear logistical problems here. Firstly, consumerism has become not only part of political individualization but also more specialized. The sheer number and diversity of consumer goods available, especially those which we could term 'non-essential', is unmatched by the society which Cole confronted.[5] This poses problems concerning the amount of consumer representation, and how specialized it should be. Secondly, and partly due to this specialization, certain

forms of consumerism may be more regular than others in individual's lives. For example, the buying of clothes would be relatively regular and even more so when compared with the consumption of something irregular, such as furniture. This then raises questions of how we understand exactly what 'the consumer' is at certain points, since this group of people would seemingly change at different times. In this sense, consumerism is akin to other late modern trends: it is privatized and, while maintaining some form of regularity, due to its individualized nature it has a certain specialized and differentiated nature. Finally, the extent to which consumer representation displaces (and removes the need for) markets needs to be addressed. In Cole's scheme they remove the consumer market, since the collectives and the guilds engage in a process of negotiation via the commune. A similar process occurs in Devine's (1988) aforementioned scheme of negotiated co-ordination where market exchange remains but 'market forces', which are defined by their self-interested and 'coercive' nature, are removed (Devine 1988:5–24). In the suggested implementation of Devine's scheme, the large number of 'negotiated coordination bodies', concerned with the production and consumption of goods, introduce a sizeable element of planning, albeit democratic planning (Devine 1988:235–58). Other forms of associative democracy without socialist aspirations, such as those outlined by Hirst, and by Cohen and Rogers, imagine forms of consumer representation existing alongside some markets. The central concern here becomes the potential for the market, or market forces, to override the democratic decisions of the association.

To solve this quandary it is possible to draw a distinction between two roles and purposes for forms of consumer political organization: one is representation, the other planning. Each of these can involve the other but is not restricted to it. Consumer representation is the principle that consumers, as economic actors, should have some forum for voicing their desires and being capable of political action. This includes the recognition that consumption, as a moral and political act, should be brought into the wider political and moral considerations of political society. This is the founding premise of Cole's work, where consumption is a function and thus requires representation, within or not within a market economy. Given the inevitability of consumption, the principle of consumer representation – within associational forms – especially given consumerism's continued importance as a form of identity and activity, is a desirable normative principle to develop in late modernity. Consumer planning, on the other hand, extends and

enhances this representation to argue that it replaces the market in order to co-ordinate economic activity, the principle behind Devine's scheme. The combining of these two seems plausible in the case of the collective, utilities-based, forms of consumerism. However, in the more specialized forms of consumption, the combining of representation and planning could lead to undemocratic ends, since the transitory and episodic nature of specialized consumption could mean that decisions are made based upon the negotiation of a select group who do not represent the desire of all consumers of the product at that point in time. The alternative would be either to require membership of a collective before becoming a consumer, which seems time-consuming, over-bureaucratic and unlibertarian, or to organize economic activity into large bodies which provide everything an individual could need – kinds of libertarian socialist supermarket (admittedly hard to conceive). Needless to say the limited capability for specialization in the latter form makes the scheme undesirable.

The principle instead should be one of supplementing market entry by creating another point of entry. This can in turn build upon already present trends within late modernity. As we have seen, consumerism is one field in which people try to express political (Adams and Raisborough 2008, Pleyers 2010:240–42) and ethical (Hoggett et al. 2007, Connolly and Prothero 2008) agency. This is also reflected in the success of companies that advertise themselves as 'ethical', such as co-operatives (Co-operative Bank 2008, Co-operative Group 2010). Often missing is the ability, and the forum, for individuals to test these claims, and to determine how the political agency of the companies should be exercised. Therefore an expansion of the principles behind the co-operative schema, with an enlarged democratic *agora* space, would be a useful principle to follow. If we accept Cole's principle that consumer activity requires representation with late modern adjustments, we can see links to what has been outlined already concerning political individualization. Concretely, this means that producing companies should have a form of association for their consumers, as well as their producers. In effect, each productive association has a consumer co-operative element, since consumers also express a democratic voice. Such a co-operative association would then be able to hold the company to account in its activities and express the desires of the company's consumers. Unlike pre-existing consumer groups, these would be part of the associational make-up of the company, existing within political society, giving them access to the information that the company holds and the ability to have a direct influence on its policies. This is in contrast with

the indirect influence of consumer boycotts and protests which have varying levels of success.

To return to the initial premise of this chapter, this asked how the expansion of the multiple points of entry into consumption would allow for greater justice. Primarily the goal is to use consumer representation as a way of redistributing authoritative resources in addition to the distribution of allocative resources allowed via socialization and the partial basic income. This allows for us to move beyond a system whereby consumption choices are decided by economic imperatives and where the imperative to consume can take place independently of the ability to pay. This is aided by the partial basic income and, potentially, subsidized subscriptions to consumer associations for the most essential goods when needed. As Durkheim puts it, the current expansion of the market allows the economically strong to determine economic decisions. By making any market separate from the democratic bodies of the associations, the goal is to remove such an inequitable power balance.

Markets and consumer associations

The implication of this, however, is that markets remain. The presence of markets may lead the reader to believe that I am following a trend notable in late twentieth-century socialist theory towards market socialism (Miller 1989, Bardhan and Roemer 1993, Ollman 1998). It is beyond the scope of this thesis to outline the detail of and arguments both for and against market socialism (cf. Pierson 1995).[6] Instead I suggest that libertarian socialism, as imagined here, would not be a form of market socialism since I am not advocating the use of the market as a means of achieving socialist goals, which lie with the associations. It would be more accurate to term this a form of 'socialism with markets' (Tomlinson 1990). In this system, it is suggested, markets operate alongside associations as a means for individuals to obtain goods that (a) are not available via their association or (b) would require joining an association that the individual does not wish to join. Their continuing role is recognition of the previously mentioned need for what Cohen and Rogers (1995a) call an exit. Libertarian socialism is aiming to give collective consumer decisions an area for expression – an *agora* space. This recognizes that individuals may still wish to remain outside an associational form, to forego their political agency, with the exception of voting in the occasional national or local election, much as we have now. Therefore associational membership should not be seen as compulsory[7] but rather as an option that individuals have for political expression. To

make this a worthwhile option, individuals should have the possibility of going about their basic lives without associational membership, including the buying of goods, which necessitates a market for those not part of a consumer association. Those within the associations would receive their goods directly from the company rather than venturing onto the market. Also, as market consumption is a significant form of self-identification, it would seem arrogant and authoritarian to wish it to be removed totally, rather than to supplement and improve it. We return here to the expansion of the co-operative model. The consumer activist model of political action covered in this book has this as a natural conclusion. Once political action is linked to consumption, the goal becomes a forum for expression, hence my concern with an *agora* for consumption able to influence the choice of productive associations.

However, this leaves us with the second point, concerning the problem of faction. With regard to consumerism, it could be argued that members would use their associations simply to express individualized demands, without concern for the more collective consideration of other members of the association, and other associations. In addition, those associations whose members have high levels of economic capital will, in the short term, be able to achieve their consumerist desires in a way unavailable to those without. Here the Durkheimian focus on associations as allowing for individual expression may be seen to backfire in giving *too much* individuality. To respond to this I would return to the claims of embedded individualization, particularly those of the interactionist critique. Here we saw how the realization of individuality has gone hand in hand with the realization of moral responsibility that this brings (Bauman 1993, 2008a). The concern can often be discerning the collective concern: how I, as an individual, 'fit' into the social network. Therefore the associations may help to bring into view the 'social interests' of the individual which are currently 'dimly perceived . . . because they are exterior to himself (sic)' and thus the association, as an *agora* can help 'bring them to mind' (Durkheim 1992:14). In this sense, solidarism exists *within* individual activity. I should also make it clear that I am not arguing that a libertarian socialist system will create a change in the orientation of individuals, to a more collective form. Instead I am arguing that such a system could give 'face' (Bauman 1990a) to the currently unknown, but exercised, moral considerations of individuals. This includes a recognition of economic inequality, rather than perceiving those in need as 'scroungers', inevitable under conditions of economic anomie (Dawson 2012b), thereby increasing the plausibility of the partial basic income. Here, one of the components of justice is

to shift the prerogative for determining the productive processes from economic imperatives which may pay little attention to the Other onto social interests which come from the democratic associations. For example, decisions about whether to purchase fair trade goods can be made independently of the ability to pay. In addition, particular economic needs of individuals can be accounted for in the association, helping to see that the economically 'weak' do not remain so (Durkheim 1952:354).

The above comments still, prima facie, seem to leave my model open to critique from Wright, namely that the intervention of the consumer market is likely to lead to the decline of co-operatives since these cannot survive competitively unless they exist within the aforementioned co-operative market economy (Wright 2010:139). As we have seen, due to the civic morals laid down by a libertarian socialist state, it would be expected that productive bodies would be progressively internally democratic and therefore, in effect, forms of co-operatives. This was the principle sketched out earlier in this chapter concerning the centrality of life politics to the workplace. However, this universality would not apply to the role of consumer where an exit is available in the form of a consumer market. Therefore it could be claimed, in accordance with Wright's argument, that as a form of consumer representation, co-operatives may appear irrelevant to individual needs and thus be neglected. Here pre-existing research on co-operatives can be of help. As discussed by Warren (2001:147), forms of consumer representation currently exist in conditions where the possibility of exit is high and the benefits somewhat low (given both their limited number and the dominance of the non-co-operative consumer market). But it is precisely because of these factors that co-operatives maintain a high level of retention since they must be internally democratic and orientated towards member's desires. Once more we see how Cole's framework hopes to guard against Michels' 'iron law of oligarchy' (Wyatt 2011:143–52), especially if, as covered in the last chapter and suggested by Hirst (1994), the division of allocative resources by the state to associations is linked to the retention of members. Therefore the socialism with markets suggested here does not argue that markets are democratic, rather that the presence of markets allows for the exit which keeps the associational form democratic.

Let us summarize the discussion of consumer representation outlined here. While Cole's model of the collective can be applied relatively simply to late modernity, the model of the co-operative is more complex due to the differentiated and specialized nature of late modern consumption. Therefore it was suggested that while the popularity and

success of the co-operative model means that its expansion may be worthwhile, there would need to remain some form of exit, in the form of continued consumption via a non-co-operative consumer market, to allow for such consumption and to ensure that the associations remain internally democratic. As we have seen, the advocacy of this form of consumer representation is the natural result of the consumer activist model which was part of political individualization. While it could be feared that this would lead to increased egoistic individualism, as we have seen as part of embedded individualization (especially the interactionist critique), it is instead a formal recognition of the presence of the Other in consumption. This was also part of Durkheim's advocacy of the individual and collective nature of consumption. It is precisely the expanded nature of consumerism which makes the model of libertarian socialism, especially that offered by Cole, even more significant in late modernity.

In this model of consumer representation without planning there are three key principles which, in the Durkheimian tradition, would allow for justice in the realm of consumption. Firstly, it removes consumption from consumerism, meaning that the human need to consume is independent of the social needs of consumerism. This releases the pressure to 'keep up with the Joneses' that is implicit in consumerism. Secondly, the consumption that does occur can take place within the co-operatives and independently of a market based upon the ability to pay. This means that the ability to pay does not determine the ability to access goods, lessening the concerns Durkheim highlighted regarding the animosity between classes' life circumstances. And thirdly, the entry point of the consumption *agora* removes the ability of the economically strong to decide what is available via consumption and the preceding productive process. While this redistribution of authoritative resources cannot be fully realized without the aforementioned distribution of allocative resources, both become essential to achieving democracy (Outhwaite and Ray 2005:8). This is especially the case when we consider economic democracy in an era of political individualization where the ability to pay is only half (albeit an essential half) in the political acts found within consumer representation as identified by Cole.

Conclusion

This chapter has considered the two forms of economic democracy valued by libertarian socialism, as producers and consumers. As we have seen, both of these areas, although the natural conclusions of the late

modern concepts of life/sub-politics and the consumer activist model of political action, have been somewhat bereft of attention from the political sociology of late modernity. Since this book has argued that these areas of increased politicization lack formal outlets and *agora* spaces, this discussion has partly been an attempt to link this increased politicization to forms of democratization. This would involve socialization via democracy in the realm of production and the implementation of collectives and co-operatives, alongside a limited market, for consumption. Although the way in which these associations would operate is, of course, open to democratic consideration, I considered a prominent example of economic redistribution, the basic income, which, while normatively desirable, seems flawed given the focus of democracy central to this book. The goal of the forms of libertarian socialist economic democracy is not to replace the market directly with central planning but rather to make the productive process and consumption more democratic via consumer representation. In effect, it has been an attempt to highlight the extreme limits placed upon political individualization by neoliberalism (the role of the market is beyond question) and to suggest ways in which this is problematic. This was the third theme of late modernity.

This leads us back to the starting point of this chapter – the third tenet of libertarian socialism – that capitalism as currently constituted does not allow for justice, which can be best achieved via the associative model of libertarian socialism. This for Durkheim was a profoundly moral challenge since 'greater economic poverty' was a result of 'an alarming poverty of morality' (Durkheim 1952:354). I would like to conclude this discussion by suggesting the four ways in which this model allows for greater economic justice.

Firstly, one of Durkheim's major concerns was that without a democratic outlet via the associations, the amoral character of economic life allowed for the economically strong to dominate the economically weak. The desires of the former came to stand in for social desires and action was directed as such. The goal here is that, by making productive mechanisms democratic, this dominance is removed and instead economic activity is directed according to democratic decision making. Secondly, Durkheim's other concern was that the difference in material conditions between the economically strong and weak created forms of mutual antagonism and ensured that conflict was ever occurring. There are two important changes highlighted in this chapter. The first is the democratic control of productive associations, which extends to deciding the salaries of the managers and executives of organizations, an

extension of the current policy of shareholders approving pay packages, simply moved over to the side of the workers within the organization. The second is the implementation of a partial basic income to lessen the forms of economic inequality which it is unlikely that democratically decided pay packages will fully remove. The eradication of inheritance, along the lines that Durkheim suggests, would also help here. Thirdly, a form of injustice which has been highlighted in this book is the limited political possibility of consumerism. Here the expansion of the co-operatives is seen to open this up to more people by removing the importance of buying power as the sole form of consumer voice. Finally, this model reflects a common theme highlighted in this book: to lessen forms of injustice there needs to be democratic forums in which inequalities and social issues can be recognized, discussed and solved. For this to be effective, such *agora* spaces need to be functionally specific with consideration of identification. The above has allowed the expansion of this principle into economic action – a further instance of how an area of increased late modern politicization can be met with democratization.

At various points I have also highlighted how libertarian socialism would be a continuation of pre-existing trends. The next, and final, chapter considers this in more depth by discussing the role of social movements and current areas of associational practice and their links to libertarian socialism

6
Signs of the Alternative: Late Modern Activism and Associationalism

Chapters 3–5 have considered the relevance of libertarian socialism in late modernity for questions of everyday life, the state and economic activity. It has been my argument not only that libertarian socialist theory makes a worthwhile contribution to late modern political sociology but also that the institutional forms it advocates can offer theoretically coherent and valid alternatives. As we have seen, such forms do seem to have a relevance to an era of embedded individualization, with the factors of other-orientated choice and political privatization highlighted by the interactionist and discourse critiques. This chapter aims to expand upon the link of libertarian socialist forms to instances of late modern political action. As the title makes clear, here we are searching for signs, although not carbon copies, of the alternative.

In doing so I will be expanding upon the fourth theme of late modern political sociology (how political action is organized in late modernity) thereafter considering the links between this and the fourth tenet of libertarian socialism (that individualism can best be realized via collectivized forums of democracy). When considering this link there are two relevant factors: social movements and pre-existing associations. While I hope that the relevance of pre-existing associations is clear, the relevance of social movements may be less so. There are two factors which make these important to our discussion. Firstly, when political action does occur, it is likely to do so via some form of social movement. This was true not only historically where the emergence of a modern state, and its impact on everyday life, brought about its contestation by social movements (Johnston 2011) but also in late modernity where, as the interactionist critique highlighted, political subjectivity can be the spur to (King 2006, Ødegårda and Berglund 2008), and be furthered by (Benton 1999), participation in a social movement. Secondly, social

movements themselves are examples of political collectivities which, via their interactions with other movements and/or the state, are linked to other collectivities (Della Porta and Diani 2006:14). While this does not mean that social movements are synonymous with the types of association favoured in this book, especially given that the former are often defined by an ad hoc and informal organization, it does mean that a study of social movements is important to see how libertarian socialist critique chimes with collective political action in late modernity. In light of this I will begin my discussion with social movements.

Social movements in late modernity

One of the starting points for understanding late modern social movements is the split, highlighted by Boltanski (2002), between a 'social' and 'artistic' critique. The former was the predominant critique utilized by the social movements of the simple modern Left which:

> makes [the social] the target of its critique when it turns away from the struggles against traditional society, breaks in some way its alliance with capitalism and, by means of a work of interpretation, identifies all the traits that characterise modern society as a factor of dehumanisation and reassembles them by associating them with capitalism
>
> (Boltanski 2002:5)

In doing so the social critique 'emphasises inequalities, poverty, exploitation and the egoism of a world that encourages individualism as opposed to solidarity' (Boltanski 2002:6). This critique was then tied to the picture of a possible alternative in the form of a 'total revolution'. It was this which gave the social movements of the Left their unique form and distinguished them from the Right. However, the social critique has been increasingly sidelined by the artistic critique. While present through modernity, this critique – which 'stands . . . for the uniqueness of genius . . . and becomes exasperated with all which standardises, uniformises and massifies' (Boltanski 2002:6) – becomes the dominant form of expression for late modern social movements, fundamentally changing their form. Most prominently, the idea of total revolution is sidelined and instead

> the new social movements are concerned only with democracy, rights and citizenship. They demand the existing rights to be respected and,

> although in rather discreet terms, the recognition of new rights – often presented as derivative of human rights – but do not put the existing institutions as a whole in question.
>
> (Boltanski 2002:12)

Therefore social movements and, as a result, the aims of collective political action in late modernity have undergone a notable change from a less revolutionary and materially based critique to one which emphasizes rights and accommodation within, rather than in negation of, capitalism. Again we find the echo of Marcuse's happy conscious (Marcuse 1964:82).

This also echoes Giddens' focus on the shift from emancipatory to life politics. Indeed, he links late modern social movements with self-help groups since both are, it is claimed, tied together in 'the heightened reflexivity of local and global life' (1994a:120; see also Giddens 1989:278). In addition, Boltanski's separation of the two forms of critique chimes with other claims concerning new social movements, such as in Scott's (1990:15) definition of the central aims of such movements as being concerned with issues of lifestyle; aiming to defend the autonomy of civil society against the state; and attempting to change values and present alternative ways of living. A prime example of this for Scott, as well for Beck, is the ecology movement, which aims to transform practice based upon a reorientation of values away from material dependency and economic growth to sustainable growth (Beck 2010b).

The artistic critique is said to take an especially cultural form since it is this – the ways in which humans live together – which is the supposed object of transformation for such movements. Rather than change the institutional forms (capitalism, the state, etc.) in which we live, such movements focus instead on the cultural forms which guide this living together. However, as Bauman (1973:43) highlights, culture implies two conditions: dependency and creativity. Culture is dependency in the sense that, for Bauman, it forms the 'necessary laws' we need to allow for human interaction and development away from the natural world. Therefore, for some semblance of order, we are dependent on the emergence, and continuation, of culture. But, importantly for social movements, this dependency does not for Bauman imply the dependency on one form of culture currently, or potentially, present. Instead, by providing the forms of creativity needed to structure and to be structured, culture ensures that an individual 'endowed with the capacity of culture, is doomed to explore, to be dissatisfied with his world, to destroy and to create' (Bauman 1973:43). Culture, therefore, as well as

being that which limits human action can also, by providing resources for 'turning chaos into order' (Bauman 1973:96), be used to transform the current order (cf. Dawson 2012a:557–8). Consequently, this transformatory potential is one of expression but can also involve the structural forms in which we live. This is explained by Bauman via an early version of structuration theory since structure is seen as 'governing simultaneously the mental and practical activity of the human individual viewed as an epistemic being, and the range of possibilities in which this activity can operate' (Bauman 1973:61; see also Bauman and Haugaard 2008:115–18). Engaging in activity aimed at cultural expression is, via the mechanisms of culture, potentially transformatory.

Bauman's view of culture as dependency and creativity, and the resulting providing of resources for structuring, is useful for our discussion. Indeed, this view of culture as a transformatory political resource is central to Goldfarb's (2012) theorization of movements as embodying the 'power of culture' (i.e. the meanings and symbols utilized by a movement or a group of movements) to question the 'culture of power' (the institutional order embodying a certain cultural conception). Here movements are able to use their differing conceptions of cultural value and lifestyle in order not to seek concessions within the current order but rather to seek to change it. The key here is that such changes occur not through an organized revolutionary movement as such but instead via lived forms of cultural (in the Bauman sense) expression. A prominent example of this for Goldfarb (2012:41–70) occurred in the former USSR where, from 1968, small groups, such as artists and academics, were allowed to organize and, in some cases, publish. What was significant about these groups for Goldfarb was their lack of political ideology; they were neither Leninist nor anti-Leninist. Rather, their grievances lay at the more everyday level and revolved around everyday rights, in turn expressed using particular forms of cultural expression (art or *samizdat*). Despite these movements lacking forms of political ideology it was the small-scale nature of their grievances which, for Goldfarb, were the first, but necessary, part of the end of Soviet hegemony (Goldfarb 2012:67–8). Such movements were not themselves the alternative, or even had an idea of what the alternative was, but rather were the first indicators that an alternative was possible.

Culture and late modern movements

The reason for this extended discussion of culture and social movements is to highlight two things. Firstly, such movements are a form of individual realization. In the above example of Soviet cultural groups, as

well as other relevant movements such as those based upon sexuality,[1] the focus is on allowing for individual expression and freedom of self-realization which, as I have noted, is a key focus of libertarian socialism. Much like the associations valued by the latter, forms of 'identity' or lifestyle-based movements become collective due to a shared realization of identity, the expression of such being the key reason why individuals initially seek to join the movement (Della Porta and Diani 2006:100–5). Secondly, movements are not limited to this but suggest the plausibility of alternatives via cultural activity.

To see to what extent these conditions apply, let us turn to a prominent recent example of such a social movement: Slutwalk. Formed as a response to a comment by Michael Sanguinetti, a Toronto policeman, on 24 January 2011 that in order to avoid sexual victimization, 'women should avoid dressing like sluts', this started out as a protest through Toronto on 3 April that year in which roughly 3,000 people marched. The purpose of Slutwalk was to make a stand against the blaming of the victim in cases of sexual assault, and also to 'reappropriate' the word 'slut' by stating once more that certain forms of dress are not synonymous with sexual consent[2] (Slutwalk 2012a). After this initial march, Slutwalk achieved a certain level of global fame, being exported to the US, the UK, India and Australia.

One may question how exactly Slutwalk fits the artistic critique and its cultural components. There are two factors here. Firstly, the focus of the event remains on individual lifestyle and freedom – in this case the freedom to dress as you wish and act as you wish, without sexual victimization. This is reflected in the language used in Slutwalk's main statement of its goals:

> No matter what I wear
> No matter what I look like
> No matter what my gender expression is
> No matter how much, how little or what kind of sex I have
> No matter what I've done before
> No matter where I come from
> No matter how my body has been 'devalued' by others
> No matter what I've been called
> **MY BODY IS NOT AN INSULT.**
>
> (Slutwalk 2012b)

These goals rely upon the exclusive use of the first person singular pronoun. This is reflected in a movement which sees as its goal the

individual freedom of its members. Secondly, the focus of the movement is one of consciousness raising through the use of cultural symbols (i.e. dress). Moreover, the key demands of the movement focus upon better police training and awareness, acknowledging that some police officers already deal with sexual assault in the appropriate manner. As a result there is no claim that the police, or other bodies, are instinctively patriarchal or that change cannot be achieved solely via conscious raising (Slutwalk 2012c). These echo the key elements of Boltanski's artistic critique.

To return the focus to libertarian socialism, it may seem that such movements are unpromising. This is not to belittle the aims of an admirable movement but rather to highlight that libertarian socialism focuses not only on individual realization, such as that found in Slutwalk, but also on forms of structural transformation, on both the aforementioned artistic and social critiques developed by Boltanski (2002). This initial reading relies on a somewhat reductionist view of Slutwalk, which marginalizes culture. To expand on this point, another example often cited as a demonstration of the artistic critique – the green movement – is useful. As we saw in Chapter 1, on the one hand the green movement is an excellent example of a politics based upon everyday 'life political' choices, such as consumption (Connolly and Prothero 2008). On the other hand, the questions raised by the ecological critique can be more fundamental to capitalism, such as relations between humanity and nature, and the future role of the nation-state (Benton 2002). Indeed, it is often immersion in the green movement which leads individuals to pose such questions (Benton 1999). Something similar can be said of Slutwalk where, although that particular group may focus on an artistic critique, there are elements of the feminist movement which focus on the social, and participation in the former is no bar from participation in the latter. As Walby (2011:52–79) notes, the feminist movement as a whole reaches a level of complexity whereby both pillars of Boltanski's critique can be realized within the same group, or by groups in combination. Therefore Slutwalk inevitably becomes part of a social critique when, in unison with other movements, it engages in a discussion of the purpose of police training and the means by which this is achieved, similar to what Walby categorizes as feminism engaging with and within the state (Walby 2011:55–61). In addition, much like Goldfarb's cultural groups, movements such as Slutwalk can relativize the present – question the happy conscious – through an artistic critique utilizing culture. Therefore the consequences of a movement cannot be reduced solely to whether the dominant critique is social or artistic.

It is this dialectic between the two critiques which categorizes social movements, especially late modern ones, with the expansion of the artistic critique, which does not exclude the social critique. Each draws upon cultural mechanisms but differs in its dominant form of critique. Therefore, in addition to Slutwalk and others, we still see large-scale movements which emphasize the social critique. A prominent example of this is what Walton and Seddon (1994) term 'austerity protest':

> We shall define *austerity protest* as large-scale collective actions including political demonstrations, general strikes, and riots, which are animated by grievances over state policies of economic liberalization implemented in response to the debt crisis and market reforms urged by international agencies.
>
> (Walton and Seddon 1994:39)

The authors, writing in 1994, saw austerity riots as predominantly based in Third World nations which have been forced to restructure their economy.[3] Such measures are especially prone to protest since they affect both the working class (who are pushed below an already close poverty line) and the middle class (who, being disproportionately state employees, lose their relative advantages). While the initial protest may be somewhat unorganized, these movements quickly form into organized social movements, partly because being based within city centres makes organization easier. There no longer seems any purpose in limiting the concept to the Third World, since protests in Greece and Spain against 'troika' imposed cuts and market liberalization fit this pattern well. Here, initial protests of anger became organized social movements, such as the Indignados in Spain and party-based (especially the Communist and Syriza parties) in Greece. Since Walton and Seddon (1994:37–50) argue that austerity protests need not fully articulate their desire to stop austerity, since this operates as a backdrop for cross-class indignation and allegiances, it may be possible to also argue that seemingly 'directionless' events, such as the English Riots of 2011, were in fact manifestations of austerity protests (Bauman 2012b).

Such movements place the social critique, with its focus on inequality and social institutions, within late modern conditions as a response to neoliberalism and the amoral character of economic life. But, in doing so, they also demonstrate the unclear dividing line between the artistic and social critique since, for example, the Indignados aim their focus at Boltanki's pillars of the artistic critique: 'democracy, rights and citizenship' (Arditi 2012:2–3). Here we can see a movement using cultural resources, notably in its ability to question 'the self-appointed wisdom,

serenity and authority of the Real' (Bauman 1973:139), to combine an artistic critique about democracy and a social critique in the form of austerity protest. Both of these help to demonstrate the power of culture to critique the culture of power and placing differing values on the political agenda. Consequently such movements are drawn together in larger groups, such as Occupy Wall Street, since 'it is important to address the concepts and practises of networks and coalitions [of movements] in order to avoid being consumed by the "doxa of difference" ' (Walby 2011:62).

Therefore linking identity politics to the artistic critique and class-based or revolutionary movements to the social critique, as Giddens (1994a:2–3) and Beck (1997:41–2) do, underplays the radicalness of the identity politics movements utilizing the artistic critique. Many of these movements are not concerned simply with attaining generative policies but rather invoke a radical critique of the state either solely or in networks with other movements (Brown 1995, 2001, Cooper 2004). Treating these groups, as Beck and Giddens explicitly and Boltanski implicitly do, as concerned with the politics of recognition goes some way towards blunting their critique and their radical potential, since this

> renders radical art, radical social movements, and various fringe populations as if they were not potentially subversive, representing a significant political challenge to the norms of the regime, but rather were benign entities and populations entirely appropriate for the state to equally protect, fund and promote.
>
> (Brown 2001:36)

Therefore not only do the social and artistic critique exist simultaneously but they can also combine (Sörbom and Wennerhag 2012), an example of which is Pleyers' (2010) work on the alter-globalization movement. For Pleyers, this movement is internally divided into a 'way of subjectivity' whose participants 'struggle to defend their subjectivity, their creativity and the specificity of their lived experience against the hold of a global, consumer culture and the hyper-utilitarianism of global markets' (Pleyers 2010:12), and a 'way of reason' made up of 'actors in the global world relying on knowledge and expertise' (Pleyers 2010:12). Each way brings with it its own strategies and tensions – which, in some cases, such as the 2004 meeting of the European Social Forum in London (Pleyers 2010:188–91), cause conflict between the ways. However, the relationship between the ways is often one of 'combination' where although the way of reason often holds the upper hand due to

its ability to organize, cross-fertilization is possible and, in cases such as the 2005 World Social Forum meeting in Porto Alegre, it can lead to the movement's greatest successes (Pleyers 2010:193–200), often drawing upon broadly libertarian forms of critique (Pleyers 2010:75–6).

Let us summarize what has been discussed in this section. Despite Boltanki's claim, shared by Giddens and Beck, that social movements in late modernity increasingly emphasize the artistic over the social critique, instead, movements combine these two forms of critique. This is done by drawing upon the political resources opened up by culture which 'constantly brings into relief the discord between the ideal and the real, [and] makes reality meaningful by exposing its limitations and imperfections' (Bauman 1973:136). In so doing, such movements offer a structural critique which is based within, and emerges from, a situated form of lived experience. We have seen how these occur in feminist, green and alter-globalization movements as well as austerity riots. This echoes some of the key points of libertarian socialism emphasized in this book.

Late modern social movements and libertarian socialism

At this point we can turn to the connections between the movements I have been discussing thus far and the theory of libertarian socialism. In short, following Pleyers' discussion, libertarian socialist critique not only focuses upon the connection of the situationally specific critique and structural forms offered by social movements but also has a normative goal of allowing for both ways in an institutional form, via a collective body. All of the groups discussed thus far, in different ways, emerge through (to put in the terms of Giddens and Beck) the reflexive awareness and construction of identity (Young 1995). Indeed, the associational nature of late modern political action is implicit in Beck's very conception of sub-politics, but is mostly submerged amid his claims that this is individualized activity (Beck 1997:98). In this section I will be considering how late modern social movements relate to the governmental forms of associations favoured by libertarian socialism. In the following section the discussion will then turn to how successful associations have been up to this point as forms of government. Before this, there are three key points to make concerning the relevance of libertarian socialism to late modern social movements.

Movements and Political Individualization – Being focused upon the fourth theme of late modernity, the organization of political action,

the movements discussed above reflect some of the key components of political individualization highlighted in this book. At the heart of this is the claim that subsidiarization, the privatization of collective political issues to an individual level (Armstrong 2010), increases the issues upon which movements arise. As the breadth of political decision making expands, we can also see an expansion of movements (Johnston 2011). This can be explained via the interactionist critique of individualization as a result of privatization requiring a greater consideration and awareness of the Other and the 'right' course of action. As we have seen, this process increases the need for individuals to make political decisions with reference to others (cf. Dickens 1999, Mendez L 2008). Here subsidiarization, as an individualizing process, can also, indirectly, be a collectivizing process. This connection between individual political decision making and the urge to join a movement was noted by Sörbom and Wennerhag (2012) in reference to the alter-globalization movement where members joined such groups based upon individual political positions developed vis-à-vis globalization. This is a demonstration of how political individualization already inspires the formation of multiple collectivities via political position taking. Therefore such movements can be seen as part of the same internal logic, multiple points of entry to a political sphere, used to justify libertarian socialism throughout this text.

However, it is not only the interactionist critique which is worthwhile here. The discourse critique would argue that such movements are attempts to use the techniques of late modernity to subvert neoliberal claims. For example, within the way of reason, one of the key goals of the alter-globalization movement is to use economic critique against global capitalism. This means that

> by putting neoliberalism to the test of its outcomes on its own criteria, alter-globalization activists attack the core legitimacy of the neoliberal ideology, which rests on the assertion of the scientific nature of the policies advocated and on the promise of results.
>
> (Pleyers 2010:162)

The prominence within the movement of 'exiles' from neoliberalism, such as Joseph Stiglitz, is a good demonstration of this. We can also identify more micro-level instances of such processes. For example, the expansion of 'petition' web sites, such as Avaaz.org, MoveOn.org and Change.org. These sites claim, in the words of Change.org, to be 'building momentum for social change globally', which 'means

empowering citizen activists locally' (Change.org 2012). Through such techniques there is a focus on using the mechanisms of late modern governmentality – for example, online petitions run by the UK Cabinet Office – as forms of critique.

Whether it be Change.org, the World Social Forum or more ecologically focused movements such as 38Degrees.org, all of these reflect the lack elsewhere of an entry to the political sphere which is functionally and identificationally specific and purposeful. Put otherwise, they come to act as *agora* spaces in the light of the lack of institutionalized forms. While they have achieved some level of success, they remain sporadic and eventually – much like life and sub-politics – at the state's uncertain bequest. Therefore a formalization of such mechanisms of social movements, as collective political bodies, within associations may hold late modern promise.

New associations – The reader may be wondering whether an 'institutionalization' of the movements would be counter-productive. After all, it could be claimed that such movements are successful and popular precisely because they exist outside formalized institutions. As Szasz (1995) argues, their power is to cause 'mischief' for governments and not to be 'well behaved' organs of associative democracy. Indeed, this is one of the main values of associatively based forms of political action: to bring new issues and considerations to the forefront. This is why I have argued that we should conceive of associations as not subservient to the state but instead part of political society. While this does give such associations government functions, it also disperses such functions and removes the possibility, as currently happens, for political society to be dictated to by the state.

To repeat the statement by Cole, the goal of libertarian socialism is not to have a completely 'organized' society. By seeing political society as emerging from functionally and identity-specific forms of action and providing ways of linking micropolitical action to macro-level institutions, associations fulfil a similar role to social movements (Opp 2009). Consequently, movements, including both those which do or do not become associations, 'ought to be allowed to develop freely' (Hirst 1994:44). New and emerging movements may aspire to governing roles within political society while others, the artistic critique of the future, may wish to remain outside (cf. Riley et al. 2010). Both goals can be assisted by not making political society static. By developing the mechanism of 'exit' highlighted in Chapter 5 and, contrary to suggestions from Cole, not making membership of specific associations compulsory, any compulsion to join certain associations is removed. Due to this, the

space for opposition to bodies of political society, inevitably a space for new movements (Johnston 2011) will remain.

Differing values – The movements I have highlighted thus far are all, in different ways, devoted to differing conceptions of social togetherness than currently constituted, hence their cultural focus. This is indeed one of the key roles of social movements as carriers of alternative forms of action (Della Porta and Diani 2006; Riley et al. 2010). This is part of the implicit potential of political individualization highlighted by Bauman (2001d, 2008a) and the discourse critique. Here libertarian socialism, by, in Durkheim's view, connecting these alternative forms of being to a collective and contemplative form, opens up new considerations and the ability to reflect on their worth for both the individual and others. As he puts it, 'If ideas or sentiments are to be modified, they must first be brought into view and grasped as clearly as possible and their nature realized'. This means that individuals would be 'more accessible . . . to change' (Durkheim 1992:87). The associational form both allows for the institutionalized consideration of alternatives – a key goal of the *agora* in an era of late modernity which has ceased to question itself (Bauman 1999:8) – in a way which recognizes their worth to each association, and allows them to pursue them, while also judging these according to collective concerns via the communicative mechanisms of democracy between political society and the state. Therefore the increased democratization achieved by seeing these movements as *agora* spaces is also an expansion of pluralism (Dahl 1982).

To summarize, the value of the libertarian socialist critique utilized in this book is its emphasis on allowing for the self-government of associations with the recognition of forms of identification. In this sense it seeks to allow for critique and diversity to have a form of institutional expression, without also reducing this to the coercive power of the state to 'recognize' (or not) certain groups' demands. This can go some way towards allowing these 'counter-normative practices' to 'strengthen and amplify their capacity to dig into mainstream institutional and everyday life' without also blunting their radical nature (Cooper 2004:207). The possibility of allowing movements formalized and governmental points of entry to the political sphere, without having to rely on influence via protest, while also allowing a space for further movements seems more promising than the current neoliberal order for their practice and continuation. In short, social movements not only, in their focus on combining the artistic and social critique – sometimes via neoliberal techniques of the self – suggest the possible

appeal of libertarian socialism but also, in their current role for political individualized action, chime with the key normative goals and the formations of the theory.

Let us return to the fourth tenet of libertarian socialism outlined in Chapter 2. The relevance of late modern social movements for individual realization is twofold. Firstly, much like the associations valued by Cole, they emerge out of function- and identity-based forms of political action. While deciding to join a social movement is, of course, a complex process with many different justifications, it would seem fair to say that the decision is based upon one or a combination of the following: identity-based politics, functionally specific interest and personal ideology (Della Porta and Diani 2006:100–5). These motivations link to the areas of individual specialization and activity which Cole emphasized as central to functional democracy. Secondly, by treating these individually situated expressions as part of political society, the goal is, for Durkheim, to place them within the socially recognized and valued forms of individualism. This means the ability to make individualism effective or, in Durkheim's terms, 'to put the means of action into our hands' (Durkheim 1898:82), by allowing for political expression and realization. Therefore the nature of political action in late modernity, individually situated in an artistic critique leading to an associational form based upon a social critique, seems relevant to the key components of libertarian socialism.

What has come thus far has only referred to what might be called 'insurgent' forms of associations – that is, those which question current forms of organization via a collective form. As we have seen, libertarian socialism may turn this insurgent, as a functionally and identification-based form of political expression, into a rightful form of governance. Therefore this discussion can be aided by considering what role associations, as forms of government, have played to this point. Consequently I will now turn to considering the current role of associations in governance.

Pre-existing associations

As highlighted at the start of the previous section, there is a history of associations already playing a role in government. Assessing this history can be useful in understanding the role they are imagined to play in libertarian socialism. It has been argued elsewhere that such associations currently exist as forms of 'private interest government' which act

> As an alternative to direct state intervention and regulation, the public use of private organized interests takes the form of the establishment, under state licence and assistance, of 'private interest governments' with devolved public responsibilities – of agencies of 'regulated self-regulation' of social groups with special interests which are made subservient to general interests by appropriately designed institutions.
>
> (Streeck and Schmitter 1985:16)

This means that so far such bodies have been used as a way of harnessing private interest to a shared interest, halfway between the market and the community (Streeck and Schmitter 1985). While such claims of a link between the micro and macro via political society are, of course, central to the advocacy of associations already discussed in this book, pre-existing associations have often been seen as akin to a form of corporatism which, as argued in Chapter 2, is not an accurate conception of Cole or Durkheim's normative goal. Therefore there are two questions to answer here:

1. Would the experience of associations thus far be too corporatist (i.e. based upon state-led negotiation) to be relevant?
2. Would the emergence of neoliberalism, as a market-based system, have put paid to the role of associations?

To answer these questions I will discuss associations as economic and political bodies.

Whereas in the previous section a large part of the focus was on Pleyers' way of subjectivity, when it comes to pre-existing associations, the way of reason is much more prominent. This is due not only to the economic roles of many of the associations but also, as already mentioned, to their role as state-approved bodies. Unfortunately, it is sometimes argued that the 'common neoliberal trajectory' (Baccaro and Howell 2011) involves a rejection and destruction of associations. While this claim of their decline with the emergence of individually focused neoliberalism may make some rhetorical sense, a closer empirical look suggests not. Instead it is not that neoliberal governments reduced the number of associations but that they simply ignored them as part of their analysis of individual's orientations for action (Crouch and Streeck 1997), as we have noted as part of the interactionist and discourse critique of individualization. Instead, it may be possible to make the argument that the type of association, in an unannounced move, shifted.

As highlighted by Schmitter (1979), there are two forms of corporatism: societal (autonomous bodies which are internally democratic and with different ideological positions) and state (bodies created by, and subservient to, the state). The emergence of associations was, for him, inevitable, since the expansion of the areas in which the state intervened required some form of system to be put into place to allow for their continual control. This meant a form of corporation was required. While initially state corporatism was utilized, this often proved too expensive and ineffective, resulting in a shift to forms of societal corporatism, most notably the expansion of semi-autonomous groups. Examples of these include conciliation boards; labour-management agreements; wage boards; industry and service regulation bodies; and councils for directing research (Schmitter 1979:29). While some of these functions have been ceded to the market – wage determination being a particularly pertinent example – others have in fact been returned to the state. Rather than regulation of industry by autonomous boards, this is now the responsibility of the state via legislation; rather than autonomous research councils, the state increasingly directs research[4]; and instead of labour-management agreements, the state regulation of trade unions increases. In short, reflecting wider neoliberal practice, the state's powers over associations increase under neoliberalism (Harvey 2005).

However, this does not mean that associations have disappeared; rather, some of them have been subservient to the state and others have lost their roles to the market but a number remain (cf. Roßteutscher 2005b). This is partly due to the fact that convergence towards a pure 'neoliberal' institutional economic model has been exaggerated (Hay 2005, Becker 2009). Specialized occupational regulation groups, the successors of the guilds which so inspired Cole and Durkheim, such as the British Medical Association (BMA), the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO), the Confederation of British Industry and the British Association of Social Workers, are all examples of societal corporatism which continue to have economic and/or governmental role. Therefore it can be argued that neoliberalism discounts the way in which economic action is associationally, rather than individually, determined (cf. Zelizer 2007). This is especially notable in the UK, where Graham (1997) suggests that the economic failures of the 1979–1997 Conservative government were due to its ignorance of how people may act associationally. Institutions and associations, be they trade unions or other forms of interest group, exist within the increased liberalization of the economy rather than being removed by it (Hollingsworth and Boyer 1997, Streeck and Thelen 2005). These associations maintain an

importance concerning both individual activity and orientation. In fact, one would expect them to because, following Giddens, the associational activity of individuals is re-embedded as part of their daily activity (Crouch and Keune 2005). Being a member of such an association develops the 'interests' that Cole (1917, 1920a:33) highlighted and, thereby, the impetus to maintain the association. Following the principle laid out by Durkheim, professional economic activity continues to operate as a spur to associational membership within that profession and is still an important means of identification.

This can also be seen in another pre-existing type of association: the trade union. While the evidence does point to an overall decline in trade union membership (cf. Heath et al. 2009), the impetus for those who join is not antithetical to individualization. Returning to the interactionist critique, being active within a certain field can lead to the realization that a person's interests reconcile with others – in short, that the individual's concerns can best be considered as part of a collective organization, such as a trade union (Madsen 1997). For Healy, Bradley and Mukherjee (2004), this reflects a shift towards 'instrumental collective' justifications for joining a union where, although the initial impetus to join may be due to individually directed motives, these are based within, and develop according to, a collectivity. Individualization does not spell the end of trade unions; rather, 'collective orientations are never given, but must be developed, fought for and sustained by individuals' (Healy et al. 2004:464). Despite the many claims about the decline of unionized power, these groups, especially when acting collectively, could exercise more power (Doogan 2009). The unwillingness of them to do so is, for Doogan, a result of neoliberal success in influencing the views of union members and the wider public. Therefore not only has the continuing influence of unions perhaps been underplayed but so have the ways in which membership of these unions can (partly) be justified by political individualization.

As the above demonstrates, associations continue to play a role in economic activity, from professional associations through to pressure groups and trade unions. As also highlighted in passing, some of these associations have political roles of self-regulation (e.g. the BMA in deciding whether to 'strike off' negligent doctors). In short, much as was the basis of Cole's original critique, individuals still turn to associational groupings, whether these be unions, professional (regulatory) associations, protest groups or online groupings, to 'get things done' politically (Schmitter 1993; see also Cohen and Rogers 1995b), without at the same time subsuming their individuality within the groups. Indeed, the

nature of a neoliberal state makes this essential since, as already noted, individual entry points are greatly limited, making associations a political inevitability for those seeking to become late modern political actors. The other-orientated aspects of reflexivity only encourage this (Mouzelis 2010). The forms of associations discussed here hope to supplement a single point of political entry – that via the state – with multiple points of entry. These forms of entry are not based within a separate, public realm as citizens but emerge from within the individual's everyday experiences of function and/or identification. In late modern terms, from their reflexive biography. As a result, the sites of identity construction also become sites of governance. This was largely the aim of late modern political sociology as conceptualized by Beck and Giddens, to reconcile subjectivity with institutional political expression which was problematically constructed in such theories (cf. Beck 1997:97 ff.).

The relevance of pre-existing associations

This brings us to questions of relevance of these pre-existing associations to libertarian socialism. As has been highlighted thus far, the roles of such associations have been mildly corporatist and, as Durkheim fears, it is possible that such forms of private interest government are not social in character but factional, pushing for their own self-interest above a social interest (Durkheim 1908). This was part of the reason why Durkheim wanted to afford associations more autonomy, in order to encourage positions to be taken not in an adversarial role versus the state or capital but rather as part of political society (Durkheim 1984). It is here that extrapolating from these pre-existing associations can be problematic since they are, by the nature of the pre-existing form of organization, not entirely synonymous with the associations advocated by libertarian socialism. Also, as discussed by Schmitter (1993), away from their economic functions, associations have often been treated as poor cousins to an individual conception of citizenship. States have been reluctant to accord them political and social rights for fear of being seen as kowtowing to 'special interests'. Nevertheless, as we have seen in this chapter, many associations do form in order to try to pursue economic and political goals.

Therefore the lesson to take from these is not perhaps how an organization such as the BMA or ACPO would exist under libertarian socialism but, more in keeping with Durkheim's concerns, the democratic effects of associations and the possible consequences of them being accorded more autonomy as he encouraged. Here we are on much surer footing and, as outlined by Warren (2001:70–93), based upon the evidence from

pre-existing associations, we can say that they have positive outcomes at three levels.

Individual effects – Being a member of an association, especially being a member of multiple associations, can, in the words of Warren, 'cultivate individual autonomy' (Warren 2001:70) in five ways. Although not all associations will encourage all five elements, the chances are that the majority will do so with some of them. These are efficacy (the possibility that one could change their world and have an outlet to do so); information (more information becomes available, especially with the possibility of utilizing field-specific experts); political skills (debating and discussing points); civic virtues (more difficult to cultivate but they can include trust and recognition); and critical skills (the mental skills needed to engage in all of the above, i.e. to develop your point of view and argue it in a convincing manner).

It can be somewhat dangerous to suggest how political institutions will change individuals. Warren's discussion here is based upon sound sociological reasoning based on observing the pre-existing impacts of associations. However, the history of socialism is, tragically, full of proclamations concerning the future state of the 'new man' created by the transformatory mechanism of socialism. Such proclamations of the new man have, even more tragically, sometimes been used as the basis for eradicating 'old' men, women and children from socialist states. Perhaps understandably, I would suggest the need not to take Warren's description as a portrayal of what would happen under libertarian socialism. That being said, I would also emphasize that some of the benefits of pre-existing associations at an individual level chime with many of the key tenets of political individualization. Efficacy and information were two of the key elements for the claim for multiple *agoras* since they allow specialized mechanisms for impacting the political lifeworld. Also, the skills, political and critical, which associations cultivate were also highlighted as part of the interactionist and discourse critiques of individualization. Therefore, while we should be careful of drawing laws along the line of 'x change = y individual', we can say that the pre-existing impacts of association chime with both the normative claims of libertarian socialism and the analytical findings concerning political individualization. Seemingly, as Durkheim suggests, membership of associations does not take a factional form but rather the associations do 'bear social ideas and sentiments' (Durkheim 1952:346).

Public sphere effects – Associations can also have impacts upon 'political autonomy' or the relative strength and diversity of the public sphere and civil society (Warren 2001:77–8). This can be seen in three ways:

firstly, public communication and deliberation (associations open up the space for communication by extending information); secondly, representations of difference (the possibility of multiple voices and groups being heard in the public sphere); and thirdly, representations of commonality (associations can emphasize elements of a 'common humanity'; Warren's (2001:82) example is advocacy groups for the eradication of child poverty).

Again, here we see how associations have had impacts which echo the claims of Durkheim, not only representing, and allowing for, forms of difference and particular forms of moral expression but also, through this, recognizing elements of common humanity. Also, elements recognized at the individual level as central to political individualization (e.g. the need for further information) then have public impacts on the expansion of deliberation. This can also be found in Porto Alegre, which, in its experiment in 'municipal participatory budgeting' via local neighbourhood associations, has furthered public consultation and debate on the value of certain forms of expenditure (Wright 2010:155–60).

Institutional effects – This final group concerns the question of what associations 'contribute to the functioning of institutions such as legislatures, administrative units, federal structures, partnerships, and other rule-based means of decision making and organization' (Warren 2001:83). Again, this has five elements: representation (allowing for groups, especially minority/marginal groups, to have forms of voice and representation); resistance (allowing for the organization of opposition and thus lessening the potential for authoritarianism); subsidiarity (making it possible for problems to be tackled at a 'lower' level); co-ordination and co-operation (associations potentially allow for groups to operate in concert and negotiate with each other); and democratic legitimation (associations can give the state an extra layer of democratic legitimacy and allow policies to be more directly relevant).

With this final set we can see how the impacts of political individualization can achieve a certain institutional form. The mechanisms of life and sub-politics were, as I've noted, not flawed in the normative and analytical goal of linking the individual to the collective but rather with the practical mechanisms in which this was said to happen. As Warren highlights, associations act as an effective mechanism for linking the demands of political individualization to an institutional form. Much as Cole and Durkheim imagined, democratic deliberation within associations takes a communicative and socially minded form. While divisions and egoistic individualism are not unknown to associations as currently formed they are not the dominant themes as suggested by

their critics (cf. Schmitter 1993). Therefore, much as we saw with social movements, pre-existing associations chime with the fourth tenet of libertarian socialism by seeing their associative and collective political action as not antithetical to individualism.

Let us return to the two questions which began our discussion of pre-existing associations. Firstly, it is true that most associations have operated (and continue to do so) according to broadly corporatist mechanisms (although the type of corporatism may have changed). Therefore the governmental and identity-based elements of these are sometimes sidelined. However, this does not seem to have negatively affected the impact of the associations which, as Warren outlined, seem to fit many of the claims of Cole and Durkheim concerning their value. Secondly, in some ways neoliberalism has lessened the role of associations. However, as we have seen, despite claims of the decline of economic and political associations during a period of neoliberalism, they maintain a presence. Professional organizations still provide professional ethics, trade unions are still a significant factor in the economy and lobbying groups still aim to get their particular issues onto the particular agenda. Some of these may have declined in some form (professional groups are increasingly dictated to by the state and market, as Durkheim feared, and trade unions have lost members and face greater legislation of their activity); others have increased (some professional lobbying organizations, especially those focused on business, have gained a greater voice). Nevertheless, their centrality as bodies in which individuals develop interests remain. Associations not only retain an importance to everyday activity but also, in the effects listed by Warren (2001), play a central role in allowing for political subjectivity and action at an individual level and providing a link between this, political society and the state. Therefore, while the exact relation between these may not be exactly as imagined by libertarian socialism, it seems that pre-existing associations perform the role imagined of them. Again here, the value of these is to suggest the plausibility of the libertarian socialist critique as that which hopes to expand upon the already present, and significant, roles of associations in political action.

Conclusion: Movements and pre-existing associations as signs of the alternative

Noteworthy among Warren's claims regarding associations is the way in which they can operate as vehicles of, to use my earlier phrase, differing values. In other words, associations emphasize the non-economic

elements of human action and can, as Durkheim argues, act as a barrier to the amoral character of economic life. As highlighted in the Introduction and then throughout this book, part of the success of neoliberalism has not been its, somewhat patchy and differentiated, material impact but rather the strength of its ideology as not only a normative goal but also as an analytical claim, since 'the new capitalist thesis greatly overstates societal transformation' (Doogan 2011:130). Therefore any opposing claim would need to offer the counter-hegemonic project which, for Laclau and Mouffe (2005), is so central to any plausible alternative. This is also central to Wright's advocacy of real utopias as

> utopian ideals that are grounded in the real potentials of humanity, utopian destinations that have accessible waystations, utopian designs of institutions that can inform our practical tasks of navigating a world of imperfect conditions for social change.
>
> (Wright 2010:6)

As we have seen, much of the appeal of libertarian socialism exists within forms of organization, such as the aforementioned associations which currently have no directly 'socialist' function unless, as Wright does, we think of democracy and socialism as inherently connected (2010:121). Therefore the goal here is not to argue that pre-existing social movements are a revolutionary agent, or that the BMA is a libertarian socialist constituency, but rather to identify the countervailing tendencies of these associations.

Movements highlighted above such as the Indignados and Occupy Wall Street are examples of a wider trend, also including demonstrations and strikes which emerged as a response to government-imposed cuts. The relevance of such movements to this section is that a central demand, bridging the social and artistic critique, was a Durkheimian one: governments should place social considerations above market considerations (cf. Jordan 2010). If cuts had to occur, these were to be judged by non-economic considerations, such as fairness or justice. This opens up a space for differing conceptions of value and role of economic and market considerations in the post-recession period, a space for pluralism. As we have seen throughout this book, neoliberalism is in fact opposed to such considerations and places the amoral character of life above all else. This marginalizes issues of access and knowledge of the consumer market central to its normative claim. In addition, the associational nature of individualism, particularly the way in which individual activity is other-centred, is ignored. Moreover, the political structures which

exist alongside, and partly conditioned by, neoliberal demands do not allow for the multiple *agora* spaces which this form of individualism demands. Instead, as we have seen, and as Warren argues based upon their pre-existing forms, associations allow for this, hence why they are sought out either in the form of social movements or as more formalized groups. Thus, while it is true that any project which goes against neoliberalism will need to have a strong ideological claim as part of this competition, libertarian socialism is useful here not only because it offers the basis of such a claim but also since some of these claims align with the countervailing tendencies already present within late modernity which are frustrated by neoliberalism.

This tension is perhaps reflected in the fact that despite claims that elections have become national, presidential contests (Foley 1993, 2000) decided by 'valence politics' (Stokes 1992) due to dealignment (Sarlvik and Crewe 1983), personal identification with left-wing positions has remained relatively steady (British Social Attitudes Survey 2009, European Commission 2009) and the contextual circumstances of class position continue to impact voter choices (Anderson et al. 2006; Johnston and Pattie 2006; Van Der Waal et al. 2007). In fact, the most notable shift is that those who hold left-wing positions will increasingly identify with the libertarian aspects of left-wing ideology (Kitschelt 1994). Thus the countervailing tendencies are not getting a form of political expression. A socialist perspective is useful here for exactly the reason that Bauman argues that the socialist critique will always be present: that it is the 'counter-culture' of capitalism and modernity (Bauman 1976b, 1987c). As I hope I have shown, libertarian socialism itself becomes a counter-culture in its attempt to recognize the principles similar to those held by the individualism of neoliberalism, yet rejects both the conception of this as autonomized individuals and the means in which it is achieved.

This chapter has considered the ways in which political action is conducted in late modernity. As we have seen, despite the supposed supremacy of an artistic critique over the social critique, in fact both kinds were present in the innately cultural critique offered by social movements. This is especially true at a time when 'austerity protests' have been seen spreading throughout the world. The prevalence of such social movements, and the radicalness of those otherwise dismissed as mere identity politics, was taken as a demonstration of a relevance of an associationally based critique of neoliberalism. In addition, I highlighted the forms of pre-existing associations which operate in the economic and political spheres. Although these could initially be seen

as corporatist and marginalized by the expansion of neoliberalism, in fact they maintain a central importance to everyday activity and are a focal point of political action. Finally, I have demonstrated how these plausible alternatives exist as countervailing tendencies.

This chapter has therefore attempted to demonstrate that late modern forms of political action align with the fourth tenet of libertarian socialism: that individualism can best be pursued in collective forms. I cannot claim to have done more than lay out the basis of such a claim in this book; its full construction would inevitably involve a process of discovery and adaptation. As I suggested earlier, the goal here has been to supply some possible recipes in the cookshop of the future, but not what it may actually choose to cook. These recipes may seem appealing, in whole or in part, or another recipe may appear to be more enticing. As I outline in the conclusion, this has been not an exercise in drawing a sociological blueprint but one in sociology as hermeneutics. So perhaps the question to ask at the end of this is: Where now for the political sociology of late modernity? The Conclusion to this book will recap the argument made and then consider the answer.

Conclusion

Political Sociology, Critique and Alternatives in Late Modernity

One goal of this book has been to question the normative claims of late modern social theorists on the basis of their sociological observations – to question late modernity on its own terms. This has led to an elaboration of an alternative sociological critique and normative project influenced by the theory of libertarian socialism. This concluding section recaps exactly why this is relevant to late modernity. This will be achieved by returning to the four tenets of libertarian socialism and their overlaps with the four themes of late modernity.

This Conclusion also asks a bigger question concerning the worth of this book when sociology is conceptualized as, to use Bauman's terms, an interpretative, rather than legislative, science. It will be argued that, as suggested during the Introduction, in outlining an alternative political form my argument doesn't fall into the modernist legislative mode, but rather allows for an amplification of the hermeneutical project of critique found within Bauman's interpretative sociology. I conclude by asking, in Bauman's terms: What is the next point on the hermeneutical circle?

The links between the four themes of late modernity and the four tenets of libertarian socialism

Chapter 1 detailed four key themes of late modernity which any late modern political sociology would need to account for, while Chapter 2 concluded by highlighting the four key normative claims, or tenets, of libertarian socialism. Part II of the book then devoted one chapter each to considering the overlap between each theme and tenet. Therefore, to recap the argument as a whole, I will provide a brief summary of these overlaps.

How is choice exercised at an everyday level and *democracy relies upon pluralized, everyday, outlets* – The common component here was the nature of choice and its centrality to everyday activity. As we saw, in late modernity the politicization of everyday life is seen to reside in the expansion of choice (for Bauman a 'decree of fate'). The mechanisms of politics favoured by Beck and Giddens, sub-politics and life politics, respectively, rest upon such claims of choice and its potentially emancipatory nature. Utilizing a critique from Lefebvre, I argued that while it is true to say that choice at the everyday level opened up potential paths of critique, this is problematically tied to a consumer activist model of political action and overlooks the role of capital reproduction. Therefore while accepting the transformed nature of everyday life, to appeal to its transformative potential a formalization of democratic spheres within political society is needed. These are the pluralized outlets favoured by libertarian socialism which, with their links to forms of identity and expression, maintain a link with everyday choices and allow individualism to be expressed in functional and identity-based social action. Here the expansion of political choice is matched with the mechanisms of democracy.

What is the role of the state in providing, or not providing, resources for choices and *the state will find it difficult solely to recognize the pluralized choices of modern society* – Here I argued against a conception of a purely neoliberal state by instead claiming that while the late modern state may often act in a neoliberal manner, it cannot be categorized solely by this and instead the privatization it engages in is often a response to the demands of political individualization. The libertarian socialist critique was used to highlight two problems of such distribution. Firstly, from the libertarian standpoint, it was argued that the ability of the state to distribute Giddens' authoritative resources was problematized by its own position within relations of power and the (un)willingness to recognize all claims for such resources. Secondly, from the socialist standpoint, it was suggested that the ineffectiveness of pre-existing forms of privatization as a distribution of resources relied upon the market, with its own inequalities and ineffectiveness. These points were united in the libertarian socialist recognition of the proper role of the state being one of arbitration and moral reflection rather than the direct governance of political society. It was argued that this amounted to a 'decrowning' of the state whereby executive functions are moved downwards. This was compared with the policy of the Big Society to highlight that while current political discourse has accepted some of the claims of the libertarian socialist critique of the state, a full realization of this would involve a

greater distribution of authoritative resources and a reduced reliance on localism. The combination of these measures can lessen the strength of the amoral character of economic life, currently aligned with the state's action, and the power of the economically strong.

How does neoliberalism influence, and limit, the impact of such choices and *the inequalities of capitalist society make justice impossible* – The starting point of this discussion was the increase in economic inequality under neoliberalism, largely 'wished away' by Beck and Giddens, and the willingness of such theorists to see late modern political processes as stopping at the factory gates. It was argued that inequality should be recognized as, in and of itself, antithetical to the achievement of justice due to its tendency to create opposing conceptions of morality and inequitable labour contracts. Also, the centrality of the workplace as a form of identification and political action, central to libertarian socialism, should not be dismissed with claims of the emergence of the precariat. As a result of this it was argued that socialization, via the extension of democratic control, is a worthwhile principal to pursue in late modernity. This could also be a useful mechanism to facilitate a redistribution of wealth; while the basic income was rejected due to concerns of its capital heavy nature, a partial basic income was considered beneficial. These measures were seen to decrease the injustice caused by capitalism by placing the economic question of the distribution of wealth within socially controlled, democratic hands. In addition, given the recognition by libertarian socialism that economic action is not limited to production, a system of consumer representation was outlined which, building upon Cole's system, envisions an expanded role for co-operatives. These were seen to allow for greater justice by removing economic imperatives from the essential function of consumption. Meanwhile the maintenance of a limited market as a form of 'exit' from such associations was advocated on the basis of ensuring that associations would not become all encompassing.

How is political action collectively conducted in late modernity and *individualism can only flourish through collective political outlets* – This final connection centred upon social movements and pre-existing associations. With regard to the former it was shown that although supposedly focused on an artistic rather than social critique, movements combined both elements in an attempt to allow for individual expression, in an institutionalized form of collective, political association. This was often achieved through the use of a cultural critique. Moreover, pre-existing associations demonstrated that despite the claims of neoliberalism, these groups continue to maintain a central role in political and

economic life. Evidence demonstrated that they do provide mechanisms for individual realization, without also becoming bodies purely devoted to the extension of egoistic individualism. Therefore the libertarian socialist goal of formalizing and extending the role of such collective bodies seems worthwhile normatively and relevant empirically.

As a result of these four discussions I hope I have shown the relevance and importance of a libertarian socialist critique and normative alternative in late modernity. As suggested in Chapter 1, a component of this advocacy has been an attempt to build a normative critique upon the basis of Bauman's political sociology. In doing so I have taken Bauman's central political advocacy, the *agora* space, and extended this as part of an argument for multiple *agora* spaces within a Durkheimian political society. This link between Bauman and a normative project raises further questions, which I will spend the final section of the book discussing.

Bauman, Durkheim, hermeneutics and the question of political sociology

During the Introduction I laid claim to this book being sociological. Nevertheless it would be true to say it has been a certain type of political sociology, not just in the sense that the analysis has focused upon contemporary political structures and the ways in which political action occurs, but also in the sense that it has been guided by a normative vision and has set out an alternative political project. The fact that much of the basis of this alternative project has relied upon the sociology of Bauman would seem to open it up to criticism: Doesn't Bauman's very sociological view rest upon the unattractiveness of the role of the legislator? While this doesn't mean the end of normative sociology in late modernity, it may well mean the end of normative sociology tied to a political project, hence Bauman's own reluctance to suggest alternatives. It could be argued that in spite of this I have actually done quite a bit of legislating in this book – suggesting alternatives and outlining some of their institutional form. There are two reasons why I believe such a reading of Bauman's sociology, and the suggestion that I have adopted the role of the legislator, is false.

Firstly, the suggestion that it is only with the shift to late modernity that the role of the legislator becomes inappropriate – and consequently that being an interpreter is also time-specific – rests upon a limited reading of Bauman's sociology pre-*Legislators and Interpreters*. In *Hermeneutics and Social Science* (1978) he outlines a view of sociology in which the impossibility of objective truth claims about the social world is seen

not as an obstacle but as an opportunity to embrace – one which sees sociology as occupying a privileged position. This position is one which aims to reintegrate understanding and communal life (Bauman 1978:246). This occurs through the presentation of interpretations, which are then re-interpreted and represented through conversations with the objects of sociological analysis, unique in that they are both objects and subjects (Bauman 1978:36). It is this process which Bauman terms the 'method of sociological hermeneutics' (Bauman 1978:246, see also Bauman 1992b:10–11). He traces this conception of the social sciences back to, at the earliest, Marx, while also noting its role in the work of thinkers such as Weber, Husserl and Heidegger. Simply put, the hermeneutical approach, with the sociologist as an interpreter, is the only one open to a sociology which recognizes the subjectivity of its objects and aims at human emancipation. This is the only way in which sociology can create an interpretation and conversation about freedom. All other approaches for Bauman, in describing social reproduction by technical language, not only reduce the unique and valued role of sociology in favour of making it a lesser cousin of the natural sciences but also have a closed political ending. Their discussion 'helps as much as a painstaking description of the technology of making nooses helps the convict to overcome his fear of the gallows' (Bauman 1978:193).[1]

This then leads on to the second point. If we accept Bauman's view of the inevitably hermeneutical and interpretative nature of sociology, we must reject what he terms 'engineering-via-manipulation' (i.e. legislating), but this leaves the path open for what he calls 'engineering-via-rationalisation' (Bauman 2007c:237). His terminology here is unusually sloppy. Engineering-via-rationalization suggests a sinister process of subtle manipulation, mostly because of the use of the word 'engineering'. If we were to rephrase this to 'persuasion-via-rationalisation', it is much easier to depict Bauman's intention. The goal here is to help sociology to fulfil its unique goal of furthering human freedom by presenting interpretations as part of an ongoing conversation:

> I came to believe that the stories sociologists tell . . . are bound to be and to forever remain stages of the on-going communication unlikely ever to grind to a halt; successive links in an unfinished and unfinishable string of exchanges. Each story is a response and a new opening; each one ends, explicitly or tacitly, with the 'to be continued' formula; each one is a standing invitation to comment, to argue, to modify, to contradict or to oppose. That dialogue neither knows of nor admits a division into blunderers and people-in-the-know,

> ignoramuses and experts, learners and teacher. Both sides enter the conversation poorer than they will in its course become and it is on their mutual respect and the seriousness with which they treat each other's voices that the volume of riches they would eventually collect and store depends.
>
> (Bauman 2007c:235–6)

In this conversation, part of the goal of sociology remains the discussion of 'unfreedom' (Bauman 1976a): the differences between what is and what could be (Bauman 1978, 1989b, 1999, Bauman and Gane 2004). In this process, alternatives, particularly a socialist alternative, serve the role of relativizing, and questioning, the present (Bauman 1976a, 1987c). Indeed, this is part of the very nature of the discipline:

> By doing its job – re-presenting human condition as the product of human actions – sociology was and is to me a critique of extant social reality. Sociology is meant to expose the relativity of what is, to open the possibility of alternative social arrangements and ways of life, to militate against the TINA ('There is No Alternative') ideologies and life philosophies. As an interpretation of human experience laying bare its invisible, hidden or covered-up links, the mission of sociology, as I understood it all along, was to keep other options alive.
>
> (Bauman 2007c:238)

Like most critiques, they rest upon the human ability to doubt and question (Bauman 1978:116), which in turn is manifested in the use of the word 'no' as a form of rebellion (Bauman 1998b:17) and the impossibility of living without hope (Bauman and Lyon 2013:143).

Here Bauman and Durkheim share a similar view. Bauman has been vociferous in his rejection of Durkheim's work, not only in questions of morality (cf. Bauman 1993:133–5) but also more generally as a basis for sociological theory (Bauman 2005c). For him the crux of this disagreement concerns the possibility for critique since

> A statement 'this is a bad society' is inexpressible within Durkheimian logic . . . society cannot be bad; how could it be, if it is the only foundation, measure, and authority behind morality, the knowledge of good and evil . . . Social conformity and humanity conflate.
>
> (Bauman 1976a:16)

Such a sociological view is problematic for a theorist such as Bauman since 'there persists around Durkheim's work an aroma of conformism enough to make even the mildest mannered libertarian twitch' (Beilharz 2000:102). Such views rely upon a limited reading of Durkheim's work[2] and the possibility of critique. For Durkheim we can say that a society is 'bad' by recognizing that it does not realize its own normative promises or, more exactly, that the forms of its social facts are pathological since

> The normality of a phenomenon can be explained only through it being bound up with the conditions of existence in the species under consideration, either as the mechanically essential effect of these conditions or as a means allowing the organism to adapt to these conditions.
>
> (Durkheim 1982:94)

This does not mean blind acceptance of the value of these ends since 'in order to act in full knowledge of the facts, it not sufficient to know what we should want, but why we should want it' (Durkheim 1982:94). By doing this we hope to question society on the basis of its own principals as '*The function of a social fact must always be sought in the relationship that it bears to some social end*' (Durkheim 1982:134). In doing so we may discover that while some social facts, such as crime, are 'normal . . . it does not follow that we should not abhor it' (Durkheim 1982:107). As we have seen, Durkheim's libertarian socialist critique is based upon exactly this method: that capitalism and politics as currently constituted did not allow for the justice they proclaimed as their central value, which libertarian socialism potentially does (Durkheim 1992). When doing this, sociology raises 'practical' questions as a 'constant preoccupation' of the discipline (Durkheim 1982:160), which means 'providing solutions, although incomplete', which 'must consist precisely in liberating us from all parties' (Durkheim 1982:161). When recognizing a disconnect between the actual and the normative – proving 'the existence of evil' – the actual role of sociologists is 'not to draw up in advance a plan anticipating everything, but rather to set resolutely to work' (Durkheim 1958:359).[3]

Therefore, for Durkheim, critique is a central part of sociology and the form this should take is echoed in Boltanski's idea of sociological critique as that which is needed 'to expose the discrepancy between the social world as it is and as it should be in order to satisfy people's moral expectations' (Boltanski 2011:30). This critique is always dependent on the normative claims and empirical forms of society as currently

constituted. As Bauman puts it, the moral situations we confront as part of social existence and the difficulty of their realization force 'us to know without wishing it, that things may be different from what they are' (Bauman 1998b:17). In effect, Bauman and Durkheim are united in their shared claim that sociology is innately critical and orientated towards alternatives based upon the normative and moral concerns of that particular social conjuncture.

But, as Durkheim puts it, 'the sociologist's task is not that of the statesman' (Durkheim 1984:l). Sociology offers alternatives based upon these moral claims, not with the assumption that these should be treated as directly applicable systems of organization but rather as ways of amplifying the common understanding achievable through the hermeneutical circle of conversation. In doing so this critique highlights the potential within pre-existing social forms. The most effective way of questioning what is, is to say no and suggest what could be (Bauman 1973, 1990a, 1998b). It is our ability to say no – to choose – which means that it is impossible to live with the belief that 'all is lost' (Bauman and Lyon 2013:143) since

> You and I as everyone else around, from the most distant past and on to eternity, was, is and will remain *homo eligens* – a choosing human being, making history as she or he is made by it . . . And because I am convinced of all that, I believe simultaneously in the possibility and inevitability of morality.
>
> (Bauman and Lyon 2013:154)

As a result, critique, a feeling of unhappiness with what currently exists and the realization that 'it doesn't have to be this way', is always present.

A similar process has occurred in this book; the alternatives I have offered are not in the form of a blueprint to be followed but rather as a way of critiquing society as we find it. Any traction that such alternatives have will only be through their re-interpretation by the objects/subjects of sociological analysis or via conversation with other sociologists. The reaction of the former group is unknown. The position within the hermeneutical circle of the latter is my finishing point.

Late modernity and normative critique

My argument has effectively placed itself within the hermeneutical circle of late modernity. This was started with an assessment of the sociology of late modernity, notably its political ends and the arguments

concerning its key component of individualization. The argument in Part II of the book built upon, and elaborated, these key elements of late modern politics. The attempt here has been to question late modernity on its own political basis. Much of the sociological critique of late modernity to this point has largely focused on the 'newness' of the claims made on behalf of the term or on more specific factors, such as the critiques of individualization. While these are worthwhile avenues of critique, they have largely ceded the political ground to theorists such as Beck and Giddens who have used late modernity as the basis for their own political project. Beck has claimed that his critics are backwards looking – left longing nostalgically for a simple modernity of clear dividing lines between the two classes and socialism vs. capitalism. In his pithy dismissal, sociology is in danger of becoming a museum piece (Beck 2005c). If this acceptance of one political story of late modernity continues, sociology will be much worse off. The world of life/sub-politics sounds enticing, but without radical political and economic change, critics are right to claim that it remains a middle-class, white, male experience, and even then a limited one. The role of political sociology is surely to question the claims of its universality, of the picture painted of a late modernity in which we as sociologists are left purely to kneel at the altar of neoliberal capitalism, cosmopolitanism and free individuals. This is especially important when it is argued that political sociology currently faces a 'liminal' stage, as an era of certainty is progressively replaced by one of 'complexity' (Taylor 2010).

In effect, the political sociology of late modernity remains in its infancy. Such early days are dominated by the 'fathers' of the perspective. However, there comes a point at which the infant must become a rebellious teenager and question the very foundations of knowledge upon which its existence has been based. It is at this point that the fathers' claims that late modernity is a time of individualized, internally driven politics which lends itself to the consumer market and capitalism with Third Way qualifications – that there is no alternative to the alternative – should face extreme questioning. However, this questioning may not lead to total rejection, much as the mature adult sometimes reflects that although they don't agree with everything their parents have to say, they can now identify with some of it, the political sociology of late modernity can take the emancipatory principle at the heart of the discipline, and tie it to a political project able to realize it. In the words of one of the fathers,

> Sociology is one voice among a cacophony of other voices, and its audibility is not assured. Most of the time, sociology is a voice crying out in the wilderness. What sets it apart, however, from many other voices that share this fate is that it speaks of the ways in which the wilderness turns wild and the ways in which it sheds the wildest of its qualities, so that, hopefully, no human voices need cry in the wilderness . . .
>
> (Bauman and Gane 2004:44)

A goal of late modern sociology is an attempt to make a contribution towards ways in which these wild qualities may be shed. This book has been but one small contribution to such a project.

Notes

Introduction

1. Although much focus after the first election was on the strong showing of the neo-Nazi Golden Dawn party, with almost 7 per cent of the vote – and a continued presence in Greek society – the combined forces of the Left did well. Not only did Syriza (16.78 per cent) and Pasok (13.18 per cent) come second and third behind the conservative New Democrats (18.85 per cent) but the communist KKE (8.48 per cent) and socialist Dimar (6.10 per cent) parties were also among the seven parties to enter parliament on a largely 'anti-austerity' ticket.

1 The Political Sociology of Late Modernity: Political Individualization

1. There have been some recent attempts to combine the concepts of 'multiple' and 'late' modernity by suggesting that 'non-Western' parts of the world are experiencing 'varieties of second modernity' (Beck and Grande 2010, Maharaj 2010). These include East Asia (Han and Shim 2010); China (Yan 2010); Japan (Suzuki et al. 2010); South Korea (Kyung-Sup and Min-Young 2010); and Argentina (Levy 2010). Such attempts have been accused of some naïve historicity and ignoring differences (Calhoun 2010, Gilroy 2010).
2. My choice of the term 'late modernity' comes as a result of two considerations. Firstly, many other terms used to categorize societies of the late twentieth/early twenty-first century can misleadingly suggest a radical break with what came before (such as 'post' or 'second' modernity), whereas I argue that late modernity emerges from an earlier form of modernity, and in some ways is its very realization. Secondly, 'late' modernity has come to be established in the literature as the term used by those who do not use a postmodern framework (see Adkins 2002, Heaphy 2007, Young 2007 and Atkinson 2010a among others), whereas terms such as 'liquid', 'high' or 'second' modernity are generally used to refer to the thought of a specific theorist.
3. Here I borrow the term from Giddens (1990) to refer to what is more generally termed simply 'modernity' (Wagner 2012:3–10). This covers a time period from roughly the early nineteenth century through to the mid-twentieth. The obvious term to contrast with late modernity, 'early' modernity was not used because it could suggest a misleading periodization of modernity. It should be noted that since many of the processes of late modernity are realizations of those found in simple modernity, it is possible to identify simple and late modern processes existing alongside each other (Bauman and Dawes 2011). For example, a society could have strong

forms of collective welfare provision alongside the privatization of identity which is part of late modernity. Germany would be a good example of such a society (Mills 2007).

4. Bauman has argued recently that his use of 'liquid modernity' is akin to the way others use 'late modernity'. The differences between the two concern not the underlying conditions they wish to describe but rather 'the choice of the name' (Bauman 2011b:11–12).
5. Tester (2004:169–82), for example, argues that liquid modernity is a micro-theory, used to discuss life politics, rather than the macro-theory of postmodernity, whose role is filled by the concept of globalization. Elliott (2007) and Heaphy (2007) also treat the two separately.
6. This is a more widely taken view on Bauman's work, discussed by Davis (2008) approvingly and Ray (2007a) in a more critical manner (see also Jay 2010).
7. It could be said that this argument outlines a world before the credit crunch of late 2007 and the ensuing recession. However, Bauman argues that the focus on 'getting banks lending again' is an indication of how the reality principle continues to rule, even after clear demonstrations of its shortcomings (Bauman and Rovirosa-Madrazo 2010).
8. While it is true that Giddens talks only rarely of individualization directly (Atkinson 2007b, 2010a), unless prompted (cf. Giddens and Pierson 1998:118 ff.), his work clearly contains a theory of individualization, which is why he is given so much attention in secondary discussions (Howard 2007b, Elchardus 2009).
9. Here we see the centrality of the disembedding of modernity mentioned above. This is not only a definition of modernity itself but also the responsibility of the institutions of modernity (cf. Bauman 2000a).
10. Which ensured Beck's elaboration of individualization would come in for criticism from feminist authors, discussed below.
11. It is class identification which is significant here. For Beck we may be able to identify a group that share disadvantages because of their social position, but this same group won't identify as members of the same class. Therefore class as a concept is not sociologically useful (Beck 2005b, 2007:681–7).
12. The English translation of Beck and Beck-Gernsheim's *Individualization* contains a preface by Bauman (Bauman 2001b).
13. Bauman has linked the English Riots of 2012 to these faulty or 'defective' consumers, arguing that 'this was not a rebellion or an uprising of famished and impoverished people or an oppressed ethnic or religious minority, but a mutiny of defective and disqualified consumers, people offended and humiliated by the display of riches to which they had been denied access . . . The city riots in Britain are best understood as a revolt of frustrated consumers' (Bauman 2012b:11).
14. A process whereby previously collective decisions are increasingly decided by individual consideration and choice.
15. This is not to marginalize the significance of the disembedded thesis as a narration of late modern beliefs. As I have argued elsewhere (Dawson 2012c:314), disembedded individualization can be seen as late modernity's 'common vocabulary of motives' (Mills 1940).
16. A combination of uncertainty, insecurity and 'unsafety' (Bauman 1999:5–6).

17. It is important to note that Giddens' understanding of the Third Way has notable differences from that advocated by 'professional' politicians, with Blair being no exception (cf. Driver and Martell 2000, Leggett 2002, 2005), although Giddens suggests New Labour were broadly faithful to his understanding of the term (Giddens 2004).
18. This is different from the form of libertarian socialism outlined in this book. The latter focuses on individual realization via collective forms. Giddens' understanding drew upon a more traditionally liberal ideal of removing constraints from individuals.
19. Here Giddens also overlooks the feminist critique of the welfare state, which criticizes exactly this paternalistic tendency as a reflection of patriarchal power and women's dependence upon it (cf. Brown 1995:166–96).
20. It could be argued that Giddens leaves behind any kind of critical sociological perspective in the embrace of governmental power (Callinicos 1999). This is best shown by his defence of Muammar Gaddafi as a leader who could have created a 'Norway of North Africa' and who presided over a state which was 'not especially repressive' (Giddens 2007b).
21. Such a duality is open to question, Hobsbawm (1991b) suggests that the competition was not between capitalism and socialism but rather between liberal democracy and democratic centralism.
22. The one exception to this is Beck's (2008) suggestion that climate change and globalization could lead to a 'new social democratic era'. Significantly, however, this should not be concerned with 'restoring past glories' (Beck 2008:80).
23. This is undoubtedly controversial, and with Beck's lack of evidence becomes even more so. Indeed, Beck can contradict himself, since two pages after offering the above comment he also says: 'resentment against the "Other" in the affluent regions is on the increase. Hostility towards foreigners is spreading' (Beck 2012:11).
24. The term favoured by Beck for a risk which becomes a reality (cf. Beck 2009:76–7).
25. Defined as creative attempts to change the 'rules of the game' (Beck 1997:134).
26. Which can be creative 'but it operates *within* the rule system of industrial and welfare state society in the nation-state' (Beck 1997:133–4).
27. It should be noted that the following, and the book as a whole, only refers to Bauman's English language works.
28. The centrality of freedom to Bauman's work can be seen in the fact that his introductory text, *Thinking Sociologically*, discusses how adopting a sociological approach 'would also contribute to our freedom' (Bauman 1990b:17).

2 Libertarian Socialism: The Genesis of an Idea

1. Sometimes translated as 'receipts' rather than recipes.
2. Since this chapter supplies a large number of quotes which rely excessively on the masculine pronoun, in order to maintain some semblance of neatness the use of 'sic' should be taken as read throughout what follows.

3. Other terms used to refer to the stream of socialism associated with Cole include 'associational socialism' (Martell 1992); 'qualitative socialism' (Ellison 1994); in an adjusted form, 'associational democracy' (Hirst 1994); and Cole's original 'guild socialism' (Cole 1920a). The terms used to describe Durkheim's theory are varied not only due to semantics but also due to differing interpretations of his work (cf. Dawson 2012b:2). For anarchist- and Marxist-inspired perspectives on libertarian socialism, see Prichard et al. (2012) and Screpanti (2007).
4. Although 'Cole was never a Fabian, for he held an essentially un-Fabian view of life under socialism' (Wright 1979:20), he began and ended his political life as, at least formally, a member of this group. I direct the reader to Wright for an explanation of the reasons, largely of domestic politics rather than ideology, which impacted Cole's relationship with the Fabians. This book is instead devoted primarily to Cole's 'guild' period, running roughly from 1913 until the late 1920s, reaching its pinnacle in his two 1920 texts, *Guild Socialism Re-stated* and *Social Theory*, and his 1950 edited collection, *Essays in Social Theory*.
5. It is not the goal of this book to enter into discussions about whether Durkheim was personally a socialist, which has been discussed fully by others (cf. Dawson 2012b:2). Rather, this book is concerned with Durkheim's normative theory.
6. This was a common concern throughout Cole's career, such as in his insistence that the post-war welfare state had largely been crafted in order to improve the living standards of middle-class 'professional and managerial groups', such as doctors and small business owners (cf. Cole 1955b:98).
7. As already mentioned, Cole used the term 'guild' throughout his work; I will replace this with 'association'. As has been noted by others, Cole's use of the term 'guild' was not an indicator of the make-up of such bodies but rather a historically specific term (Wyatt 2006).
8. This focus on the expansion of democracy meant that although Cole maintained a close relationship with the Labour Party throughout his life, his ideas never attracted many followers in a party which historically favours 'weak democracy' (Barrow and Bullock 1996) and which argues 'elect the socialists and let us work' (Thompson 1960). Indeed, when Clement Attlee, while leader of the Labour Party, had Cole to visit, he would welcome him by saying 'give me a pair of starry eyes, Douglas, and I will do what you say' (Foot 1968:53).
9. In this section of the *Rules*, Durkheim states that 'to know whether the present economic state . . . with the lack of organization that categorizes it, is normal or not, we must investigate what in the past gave rise to it', while citing in a footnote an earlier book review where he claimed:

> Far from being a retrograde step, *socialism as we have defined it* really appears part and parcel of the very nature of higher societies. Indeed we know that the more history advances the more social functions that were originally dispersed become organized and "socialized" . . . There seems to be no privileged position for economic functions that would make them solely capable of successfully resisting this movement'.
>
> (Durkheim 1893:120)

The *Rules* further state that this lack of organization categorizes 'segmentary' societies which, due to their localized focus, are linked to mechanical solidarity in *The Division of Labour* (Durkheim 1984:242). From here it seems plausible to deduce that Durkheim is arguing inheritance and a lack of economic organization is indeed pathological.

10. This is not transformational conflict in the Marxist sense. To be more exact, Durkheim is not arguing that there is a day of revolution coming. The conflict is expressed via movements which act as a 'a cry of grief, sometimes of anger, uttered by men who feel most keenly our collective *malaise*' (Durkheim 1959:7), of which Marxist socialism was an example from Durkheim's day, and Occupy an example from the current day (Dawson 2012b:3, 12–14).
11. Durkheim's equivalent of Cole's 'guild', which I will also replace with 'association'. The use of this particular term is perhaps one of the reasons for the frequent claim that Durkheim had a corporatist view of the world (Muller 1993). As I have argued elsewhere (Dawson 2012b, 2013), this is a problematic classification given Durkheim's focus on the state needing to curtail economic growth and his antipathy towards unions (Durkheim 1908).
12. Marx seemingly held a similar view of small-scale associational forms, since in his discussion of the Paris Commune he argued:

> universal suffrage was to serve the people, constituted in Communes, as individual suffrage serves every other employer in the search for the workmen and managers in his business. And it is well known that companies, like individuals, in matters of real business generally know how to put the right man in the right place, and, if they for once make a mistake, to redress it promptly.
>
> (Marx 1996b:185)

13. Durkheim also considered, and advocated, the use of associations for the civic services, such as education, drama performances, recreation and intellectual pursuits (Durkheim 1984:liii).

3 No Choice but to Choose: The Increased Politicization of Everyday Life

1. Giddens' association through disassociation with Marx in his *Contemporary Critique* is the best example of this relationship (see Chapter 1), as is Bauman's limited defence of the Marxist approach (Bauman 1987a).
2. Following Bennett and Watson (2002:x), this term refers to what we might also call the non-elite, the general public, or may have been termed in the past 'the masses' – that is, the large majority of the population who do not hold positions of domination.
3. A model that Bauman accuses Giddens of 'obliquely opting for' (Bauman 2007c:68).
4. Within the four texts there are discussions of the position of women, technology, the press, material production, thinking, post-war France, the USSR, the US, literature and leisure, among many others.

5. There is a strong overlap here between Lefebvre's discussion of how the 'globalization' of media creates a 'private man (sic)' who 'witnesses the world without having a hold over it . . . he becomes globalized, but as an eye, purely and simply' (Lefebvre 2002:89) and Bauman's discussion of the 'synopticon' (Bauman 1998a). Both suggest that the large majority of individuals are not part of a cultural elite but rather 'left with the network of satellite or cable television with not as much as a pretention to symmetry between the two sides of the screed – pure and unalloyed watching is their lot' (Bauman 1998a:53). As a result 'the many watch the few. The few who are watched are celebrities . . . simultaneously inaccessible and within sight, lofty and mundane, infinitely superior yet setting a shining example for all the inferiors to follow or to dream of following' (Bauman 1998a:53–4).
6. This is seen as separate from everyday life. The latter is defined as lived experience, while daily life is seen as 'above/or below it', as a representation of what everyday life is supposedly like for the large majority of people.
7. Lefebvre had become notably negative in retrospect about the impact of the events of 1968, in which he had been a favoured theorist, claiming that they had 'rapidly lapsed into vulgarity' (Lefebvre 2005:76–8).
8. The final sentence is part of a notable trend in Bauman's recent work; while he is still reluctant to suggest concrete alternatives (beyond those noted thus far), he often shifts the burden to do so onto younger generations. Specifically the group he terms 'generation y' are those younger than 28 during the financial crisis (Bauman and Rovirosa-Madrazo 2010:168–71, Bauman 2010a:46–50).

4 Privatization without Pluralism: The Late Modern State

1. Indeed Cole's interest in Rousseau has seen him placed within the school of 'General Will Theory' (Lamb 2005).
2. The use of 'neighbourhood' here reflects a shift in Cole's language towards using localized rather than associative language, although these can be taken as synonymous. As with many changes in Cole's work in the 1930s and 1940s, this was partly a reflection of changing political considerations, in this case the 'united front' against fascism (Wright 1979:243–50).
3. Durkheim argues that the relative failure of the pre-revolutionary Russian state was due to the fact that, unlike the more 'successful' nation states of Western Europe, it attempted to create the citizens who would accept it, as well as the social and moral forces which would allow for this, rather than resting upon them (Durkheim 1902). Using a Durkheimian analysis it could be argued that the 'success' of the Soviet state (to be exact its longevity and stability) was due to its clear claim of representation, in this case of the proletariat. It should be noted that Durkheim is not claiming that the nation states of Western Europe are more 'advanced' than the Russian state, since the morality on which each rest is dependent upon time and place, instead of one being more 'rational' than the other (Durkheim 1909).
4. Durkheim did also imagine a role for the state in the delivery of a 'humanist education' (Durkheim 1922). Such discussions of education are beyond the scope of this book.

5. Although Cole was sometimes ready to give the state immense, even dictatorial, powers during the transition to socialism (Wright 1979:139–75). Wright puts this down to immediate short-term political considerations rather than a long-held theoretical creed.
6. These were discussed in Chapter 1. To recap, authoritative resources concern the organization of life chances and are linked directly to life politics (1991a). Allocative resources are instead material components, such as capital. For Giddens the redistribution of these are more indicative of an earlier form of simple modern emancipatory politics (1994a).
7. While I have mostly discussed Giddens in the above, and indeed he is the only one to use such a term, a similar relationship can also be seen in Beck's discussion of sub-politics as a distinctively late modern form of political action. Bauman's *agora* space could also be seen as a mechanism for the distribution of such resources.
8. Indeed, sometimes these motives can be incredibly blatant. A contemporary example is the UK government's policy, since its election in 2010, of turning ambassadors into roving salesman for 'UK PLC' (Black and Norton-Taylor 2010). Such an idea is also manifested in the concept of the 'competition state' or Jessop's (2002) 'Schumpeterian workfare post national regime' state. Links between the former and the policies of David Cameron have been drawn elsewhere (Evans 2009).
9. A similar point, in a different context, has been made by Fraser (2009). She argues that while second-wave feminism was, clearly, distinct from neoliberalism, it was easily subsumed within the latter by being presented as a politics of recognition and choice.
10. See Dawson (2013), Ellison (2011), as well as Kerr et al. (2011) for such a discussion. It has been argued that with its focus on individual responsibility and action, the Big Society 'shares notable parallels with New Labour's "third way" project' (Gillies 2012:91).
11. Political society differs from civil society since the latter is, befitting its parentage in the Eastern Bloc, seen as an area of political expression (Roßteutscher 2005a) whereas political society is an area of political expression and governance.
12. A Big Society example of which would be the inequality which exists within the provision of 'free schools' (Dawson 2013:87).

5 Responsibility without Power: Neoliberalism and Economic Democracy

1. This could also be a reflection of Beck's tendency to see conflict and inequality at the local level but consensus and equality at the global (Martell 2008).
2. By this I mean groups which may be central to the function, without being those which allow it to function. For example, those living close to a nuclear power plant are not essential to having it run, but given the results of having such a plant close, are certainly an interested party in it.
3. I use the term 'supposed' since, although *Memories of Class* is frequently cited as Bauman's rejection of class, it is actually an argument that the corporatist conception of class, based upon a Keynesian form of social control, is no

longer relevant, since 'The consumer orientation, first developed as a by-product, and an outlet, of the industrial pattern of control, has been finally prised from the original stem and transformed into a self-sustained and self-perpetuating pattern of life' (Bauman 1982:179).

4. The implementation of a 'universal credit' for welfare payments which underpins this claim has occurred alongside significant levels of welfare cuts. It is not Jordan's claim that the welfare state has become more generous, rather that the mechanism of payment could introduce something akin to the basic income 'by the back door' (Jordan 2012:1).
5. Cole did consider different preferences of consumption, but this was mostly different preferences of the same product rather than of different non-essential products, as in the following: 'One housewife prefers a "Ewbank" and another a "Star Vacuum Cleaner": one smoker fancies cut plug and another John Cotton; and these differences are matters of taste and opinion as much as of price' (Cole 1920a:81).
6. For a discussion of how libertarian socialism, especially Cole's formation of it, differs from market socialism, see Wyatt (2004:71–4).
7. The compulsory nature of the associations under libertarian socialism is somewhat problematic. It seemed that Cole imagined that the associations would be compulsory due to the inevitable actions of producing and consuming (1920a). Durkheim confronts the issue more directly by arguing that it is unimportant whether the associations are made compulsory or not since, 'once constituted, a collective force draws into its orbit those who are unattached: any who remain outside are unable to hold their ground' (Durkheim 1992:39).

6 Signs of the Alternative: Late Modern Activism and Associationalism

1. A key focus for Boltanski. See Plummer (2003:67–84) for further discussion of LGBT movements in this light as forms of intimate citizenship.
2. To emphasize this point, female marchers were encouraged to dress, to paraphrase Sanguinetti, 'like sluts'.
3. Walton and Seddon argue that these could be called 'IMF Riots' but worry that this removes any blame from the nation-state enacting austerity measures.
4. While this can be seen as a result of the need for 'competition states' to sell themselves effectively as homes of R&D it can also take non-economic forms. For example, the UK's Arts and Humanities Research Council developed a research programme on the Big Society in response to government pressure.

Conclusion

1. Guilty of such an approach in Bauman's view are the sociologies of Comte, Shutz and the, broadly defined, school of ethnomethodology (Bauman 1978:15, 172–93).
2. I am not the first to make such a claim. For Ray (2007a), Bauman's liquid modern work is characterized by a constant underappreciation of the classics and

for Mestrovic (1991, 1998), a misunderstanding of Durkheim is a common facet of late modern sociology.

3. In his claim that a goal of sociology is to realize the positive normative principles of a particular society, Durkheim echoes Marx's view on the role of proletarian revolution as 'to set free the elements of the new society with which old collapsing bourgeois society itself is pregnant' (Marx 1996b:188).

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