Part I

Conceptual and Historical Issues

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For a Post-colonial Geopolitics

'The central point . . . is that human history is made by human beings, and [s]ince the struggle for control over territory is part of that history, so too is the struggle over historical and social meaning. The task for the critical scholar is not to separate one struggle from the other, but to connect them . . . '

– Edward Said (2003: 331–2)

Together with the post-1989 dissolution of the Second World, the accelerating tendencies of globalization and the explosive surfacing of a variety of acute social tensions and conflicts, there has also been a resurgence of interest in the state of North–South relations. Already in the early 1990s, it was suggested that the growing gap between First and Third Worlds was raising some of the most acute moral questions of the modern world and becoming a central issue of our times (see Arrighi 1991 and Hösle 1992). This re-assertion of the significance of North–South relations captures one of the world's geopolitical continuities. Thus, in a world frequently portrayed in terms of flows, speed, turbulence and unpredictability, there is another narrative rooted in historical continuity – the recurring stories of poverty, inequality and exclusion – a 'shock of the old'.

For example, global inequalities in income in the twentieth century have increased by more than anything previously experienced, illustrated by the fact that the distance between the incomes of the richest and poorest country was about 3 to 1 in 1820, 35 to 1 in 1950, 44 to 1 in 1973, and 72 to 1 in 1992 (UNDP 2000: 6). Inequalities are also to be symptomatically encountered in the world of cyberspace, where access to

the internet displays a familiar geographical distribution, with over 90 per cent of all internet hosts being located in developed countries which account for only 16 per cent of the world's population (see Main 2001: 86–7 and also World Bank 1999: 63).

On poverty and exclusion, the UN Human Development Report for 2002 notes that 2.8 billion people still live on less than US$2 a day (UNDP 2002: 2), while a previous Report stated that in Third World countries more than a billion people lack access to safe water, and more than 2.4 billion people lack adequate sanitation (UNDP 2000). Information on hunger, or the degree of malnutrition in the world, can be found in the FAO World Food Survey for the early 1990s, which concluded that a little over 800 million people (approximately one-sixth of the world's population at that time) suffered from undernourishment in 1990–2 (see Sutcliffe 2001: 48), a figure that had risen slightly by 1996 (Diouf 2002).[1]

Also in the 1990s, although the number of people killed in conflicts between countries had fallen sharply from the 1980s, about 3.6 million people died in wars within states, and the number of refugees and internally displaced persons had increased by 50 per cent (UNDP 2002). Equally if not more disturbing, there is evidence of new forms of slavery in the global economy. Bales (1999), for example, estimates that in the 1990s there were 27 million slaves, of which perhaps 15 to 20 million were working as bonded labour in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Nepal; there are more slaves alive today, writes Bales, than all the people stolen from Africa in the time of the transatlantic slave trade.

These figures point to the continuity of inequality, poverty, forms of social and economic exclusion and oppression, and the reality they reflect is frequently discussed in analyses of the North–South divide in an era of globalization. Equally, it needs to be remembered that there have been socio-economic and political improvements as well. For example, whereas in 1900 no country had universal adult suffrage, by the end of the 1990s the majority of the world's countries did; and also, in the last three decades, life expectancy in what the UN refers to as the 'developing countries' increased from 55 years in 1970 to 65 in 1998 (UNDP 2000). On the directly political terrain, and again with the UN's Human Development Report, we are reminded that in the 1980s and 1990s the world made dramatic progress in expanding political freedoms, so that today 140 of the world's nearly 200 countries hold multi-party elections – more than ever before (UNDP 2002: 1).

While it is evident that this kind of description and identification of some basic trends could be taken much further, this is not my intention

here. Rather, I want to pose certain questions concerning the categories that are used to order and classify these varied features of what is often referred to as the North–South divide. Specifically, it is important to consider the ways in which the societies of Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean and the Middle East have been generally represented, and also how the writers and intellectuals of these regions have generated counter-representations of their own realities and also of the relations between North and South or First World and Third World. Many of these aspects will be taken up in more detail in the following chapters, so the purpose of this introductory section is to make an initial exploration of the analytical terrain, and at the same time to clarify my own approach.

Categories in Question

It might be contended that in a fast-moving world, the long-established categories of First World/Third World, West/non-West and more recently North/South are increasingly obsolescent. In global times, they are simply the residual traces of discourses of social change that have been shorn of any effective contemporary meaning. Responding to such an overall orientation, and more specifically to the suggestion that First World/Third World distinctions can be dissolved without any loss of analytical scope, a number of Latin American writers have stressed the need to rethink patterns of global inequality, rather than neglect or deny their continuing significance (see, for example, Hopenhayn 1995 and Richard 1995).[2] While such a response is helpful, it still leaves us with the task of clarifying the meanings, potential relevance and also differentiation of the above categories. First of all, and as a key example, I shall briefly consider the First World/Third World couplet, with particular attention to the latter term.

As is well known, the classification of three worlds of development basically dates from the early 1950s (Pletsch 1981), the dawn of the 'development era' (see chapter 3 below). For Worsley (1979: 102), the Third World was constituted through three interrelated features: non-alignment, poverty and a colonized status. For Jalée (1968), the so-called Third World was no more than the backyard of imperialism, and the countries falling under this rubric were not separate from but very much part of the imperialist system. Further to these initial characterizations, which linked the Third World to non-alignment, poverty, colonialism

and imperial exploitation, how has the term been defined since the 1950s and 1960s, and what do these representations tell us?

One significant interpretation can be found in Hobsbawm's (1994) *Age of Extremes*, where the Third World is defined in terms of 'instability' and 'inflammability', leading on to the idea that, before its gradual decomposition and fission in the era of globalization, the Third World differed from the First World in one fundamental respect – 'it formed a *worldwide zone of revolution* – whether just achieved, impending or possible' (Hobsbawm 1994: 434, emphasis added). Hobsbawm goes on to note that very few Third World states of any size went through the period since 1950 without revolution, military coups to suppress, prevent or advance revolution, or some other form of internal armed conflict. In other words, and in the context of the Cold War and superpower rivalry between the US and the Soviet Union, the Third World was a 'zone of war', reflected in the fact that in the period between 1945 and 1983 over 9 million people were killed in East Asia, 3.5 million in Africa, 2.5 million in South Asia, and somewhat over half a million in the Middle East (ibid.).

The profiling of the Third World in relation to war and political instability lent itself to a notion of the Third World as threat, and specifically as threat to Western security. Discussion of a so-called 'Third World threat' in relation to US foreign policy can be found in the early 1970s (Gardner, LaFeber & McCormick 1973: 476), and in the 1980s Kolko (1988) published a book on US geopolitical strategy since the end of the Second World War, entitled *Confronting the Third World*. More recently, in the post-Cold War era, issues of immigration, combating terrorism, and the traffic in illegal drugs, have led some authors to talk of an 'increasing Third World threat' to American interests (David 1992/3: 156; and for other examples see Furedi 1994: 115–16). My point here is to signal that the representation of the Third World as a threat to First World stability dates back to before the end of the Cold War and the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the Second World. Moreover, as will be seen in the next chapter on US–Latin American relations before the Second World War, notions of danger and disorder were regularly deployed to situate the societies of the Latin South.

The connection between the Third World and instability and disorder is frequently treated as if this were an innate, indigenous feature of the Third World itself, but as can be shown this ignores the history of colonial penetration. For example, in his revealing book on famines and the making of the Third World, Davis (2001) stresses the point

that what is today called the 'Third World' is the outgrowth of income and wealth inequalities that were 'shaped most decisively in the last quarter of the nineteenth century when the great non-European peasantries were initially integrated into the world economy' (2001: 16). Through invasion and war, disorder and poverty were externally induced, a theme to which I shall return in subsequent chapters.

Staying with Davis, I want to say something about another aspect of the way in which the term Third World can be used to characterize a certain reality within the First World itself, exemplifying a kind of conceptual stretching.

In a dialogue concerning new thinking on Los Angeles, Davis (Davis & Sawhney 2002: 30–1) contends that First and Third Worlds have co-existed across generations and in different places, echoing Sawhney's comment that First and Third Worlds share many of the same economic resources, languages and geographical locations, so that it is becoming increasingly difficult to separate them (ibid.). This kind of interpretation can be linked to Rieff's (1991) text on *Los Angeles: The Capital of the Third World*, wherein the term Third World is applied to spaces inhabited by domestic minorities such as 'women of colour' and to 'underprivileged' ethnic and social groups. While one may want to question the metropolitan presumption that lies behind the designation of a US city as the capital of the 'Third World', it does raise an important question concerning the meaning and fluidity of the Third World category.

Similarly, Deleuze and Guattari (1988: 468–9) stretch the original meaning of the Third World and bring it back to the First World. They suggest, for example, that the capitalist states of the centre not only have external Third Worlds but also internal Third Worlds; these are seen as peripheral zones of underdevelopment inside the centre in which 'masses' of the population are abandoned to erratic activities such as work in the underground economy.

In more specific geographic terms, marginalization or exclusion have been defined not as a 'Third Worldization' but as a 'Brazilianization' of the world. This, for Beck (2000: 51), in his book on globalization, would be a division of the world sparked by the exclusion of those 'without purchasing power', perhaps the future majority of mankind. This suggestion is tied into a dystopian vision of the 'Brazilianization' of Europe in which one encounters societal breakdown (ibid.: 161–3).

In relation to these connected deployments of the Third World category, there are four points I would like to make.

1) The way the Third World is defined in the above texts underlines its association with poverty, exclusion, underdevelopment and multicultural identities. What tends to be underplayed, with the exception of Davis, and to some extent in Deleuze and Guattari, is any significant recognition of the asymmetrical relations intrinsic to colonial and imperial power. Thus while the Third World is made part of the First World through its identification with poverty, exclusion and hybridity, this misses out of account another rather crucial dimension of Third World identity, namely the fact that the Third World has never made the First World an object of colonial expansion, never developed an imperial gaze over the societies of Euro-America. This might be seen as being a transparently obvious point, but the omission of a defining feature of Third World political identity constitutes an absence that needs to be analytically recovered, as I will argued later.

2) While poverty and exclusion or war and conflict are certainly key facets of Third World societies, and, more specifically, while Brazil does face acute problems of social polarization, violence and drug wars, is that the full picture? From the innovative and successful introduction of participatory urban planning in Porto Alegre or from the founding of the World Social Forum in Brazil, could we not envisage another more creative and positive 'Brazilianization' of the world? Equally with the Third World, is it not possible to think of enabling forms of 'Third Worldization', through perhaps an emphasis on solidarity, reciprocity and collective engagement?

3) Although it is necessary to be critical of ideas about the overlapping of First and Third Worlds, especially when they are divorced from the history of imperial power relations, at the same time the profiling of new interpenetrations can encourage us to take seriously the imbrication of the inside and the outside, of the domestic and the foreign. Not only is this significant in terms of questions of immigration and the fortification of frontiers, as in the case of US–Mexico relations (Nevins 2002), but also there are other interconnections such as the resurgence of racism against asylum-seekers taken together with the re-assertion of imperial politics (for example, notions of 'Western superiority' and the posited beneficence of Empire).

4) Finally, with the varied problems attached to the term 'Third World', and more concretely with the collapse of the Berlin Wall, the subsequent dissolution of the Soviet Union and the effective ending of the Second World, with the outlying exceptions of Cuba and North Korea, the geopolitical setting in which a Third World could be located has been

fundamentally transformed. And yet the term lives on, as witnessed in publications such as *Third World Quarterly* and *Third World Resurgence*, and continues to be used in the social science literature (Thomas 1999). My own approach is to employ the Third World category in discussing modernization theory and dependency thinking, whereas in later chapters that relate to the post-1989 era I shall predominantly use the North–South couplet, which has a contemporary origin in the Brandt Report on Survival and International Development (1980), and which at least avoids the problems of a tripartite division of the world in a post-Cold War era.

Another binary division that I have already alluded to and which permeates a wide range of texts is that of the West/non-West distinction. This couplet has been deployed in a way that grounds a primary identity for the West, as the self, and a secondary identity for the non-Western other. Traditionally, 'the West' has been constructed as a model and measure of social progress for the world as a whole. It has been and remains much more a driving idea than a fact of geography. For example, in the late 1970s, one member of the Argentinian junta asserted that 'the West today is a state of the soul, no longer tied to geography', while for another, 'the West is for us a process of development more than a geographical location' (Graziano 1992: 123 and 271). From a very different political position, the Indian writer Ashis Nandy (1992: xi), in his text on the psychology of colonialism, linked notions of the West with modern colonialism and its impact in the Third World, and also noted that the modern West was as much a psychological category as a geographical or temporal entity – 'the West is now everywhere,' he wrote, 'within the West and outside; in structures and in minds' (ibid.). What this line of argument points to is the suggestion that Third World societies have been colonized by a Western imagination that frames and represents their meaning as part of a project of rule, and examples of such a framing can be found in both modernization and neo-liberal discourses, as will be indicated in chapters 3 and 4.

Geographically, the West, the First World and the North are customarily associated with the countries of Western Europe, North America and Australia and New Zealand, with Japan being classified as both First World and of the North, but clearly more of the East than of the West. What is important to note here is that these binary divisions, particularly First World/Third World and West/non-West, are charged categories (see Bell 1994, for example). They are replete with sedimented meanings, while in contrast the North–South distinction, I would argue, is less

burdened with those deeply rooted associations of Occidental or First World primacy. Given the fact that all these categories can be justifiably put into question, while at the same time continuing to retain a broad usage, it can be useful to borrow a term from Derrida (1976), whereby these terms are seen as 'under erasure'. In other words, they can be approached as if there is a line running through them, cancelling them out in their old form, but still allowing them to be read. With such a partial erasure, we can be encouraged to continue to reproblematize their meaning, validity, applicability, etc. while keeping an open space for the possibility of new categories.

As a way of moving the argument forward I now want to critically consider the phenomenon of Eurocentrism, or more generally Euro-Americanism. This kind of geopolitical categorization of the world carries within it both an affirmation of Western primacy and a portrayal of the non-West, or the 'developing world' or Third World, as a dependent and ostensibly inferior other. It is important to signal the limitations of this mode of representation as a way of clarifying the analytical ground.

Contextualizing Euro-Americanism

It is possible to specify three constituent elements of Euro-Americanism.[3] First, Euro-Americanist interpretations emphasize what is considered to be the leading civilizational role of the West through referring to some *special* or *primary* feature of its inner socio-economic, political and cultural life. Hence, Max Weber asserted that the West was the 'distinctive seat of economic rationalism' (1978: 480), and that outside Europe there was no evidence of the 'path of rationalization' specific to the Occident (1992: 25). In a similar vein, although within the Marxist tradition, Gramsci in his *Prison Notebooks* stated that European culture was the "*only* historically and concretely universal culture" (Gramsci 1971: 416, emphasis added). In contemporary political theory, the West is frequently portrayed as the primary haven of human rights, enlightened thought, reason and democracy (see, for example, Žižek 1998). In a related manner, and in the domain of philosophy, Western culture has been depicted as the only culture capable of self-critique and reflexive evaluation (see, for example, Castoriadis 1998: 94).

Second, the special or primary feature or essential matrix of attributes that is posited as being uniquely possessed by the West is further regarded within a Euro-Americanist frame as being *internal* or *intrinsic* to

European and American development. This set of attributes is envisaged in a way that assumes the existence of an independent logic and dynamism of Euro-American development. There is no sense of such development being the result of a process of cross-cultural encounter. Not only is there a process of *self*-affirmation, but also a denial of a potentially beneficial association with the non-Western other. This sense of self-affirmation is often associated with a posited superiority which has permeated many discourses, from progress and civilization through to modernization and neo-liberal development (see chapters 2, 3 and 4 below), and has helped fuel the drive to expand and colonize other cultures.

Third, the development of the West, as situated within a Euro-Americanist frame, is held to constitute a *universal* step forward for humanity as a whole. Such a standpoint has been captured in both traditional Marxist views of a progressive succession of modes of production, and in the Rostowian notion of the 'stages of economic growth' (Rostow 1960) with the West offering the non-West a mirror for its future development. The assertion of universality has deep roots and for both Marxist and non-Marxist traditions Hegel was a primary source. In the early part of the nineteenth century, for example, he defined Europe as the principle of the modern world, being synonymous with thought and the universal (Hegel 1967: 212). Such a vision was later re-asserted by Husserl who stated that 'philosophy has constantly to exercise through European man its role of leadership for the whole of mankind' (Husserl 1965: 178).[4]

These three elements – the primary or special, the internally independent, and the universal – form the basis of Euro-Americanist representations, and they tend to go together with negative essentializations of the non-Western other. There is an insistent belief in the key historical and geopolitical significance of the West as the essential motor of progress, civilization, modernity and development. This is coupled with a view of the non-West as passive or recalcitrant recipient, not dissimilar to the Hegelian view of those peoples as being at a 'low level of civilization'. Such a perspective is not without contemporary resonance. For example, in the field of development studies, one can encounter passages such as the one below from an OECD (1996: 6) document:

> In the early 1950s, when large-scale development assistance began, most people outside the developed countries lived as they had always lived, scraping by on the edge of subsistence, with little knowledge of and no

> voice in global or national affairs, and little expectation of more than a
> short life of hard work with slight reward.

This image of stagnation, lack of knowledge and political participation, pervasive hardship, and negative sameness contrasts with the vibrant reality of industrialization already under way in many parts of Latin America at that time, especially in Brazil, Argentina and Mexico, of heterogeneous currents of nationalism across Asia, Africa and Latin America and of early, albeit sometimes precarious, forms of democratic government in Latin America, established well before the early 1950s. The above passage, which represents one kind of erasure of history, is not unsymptomatic, and can be related to those interpretations which stigmatize the developing countries or 'impoverished countries' for their own ascribed lack of improvement. Giddens (2000: 129), for example, in his chapter on taking globalization seriously, writes that most of the problems that impede the economic development of the 'impoverished countries' are not to be attributed to the global economy itself, nor should they be linked to the self-seeking behaviour of the richer nations; rather 'they lie mainly in the societies themselves – in authoritarian government, corruption, conflict, over-regulation and the low level of emancipation of women'. While these phenomena are not unknown in developed countries as well, Western narratives will tend to treat the social and political problems of the West as specific and relatively separate. They will not be combined to call into question Western society as a whole (see Lazreg 2002).

Overall, one of the determining features of Euro-Americanism concerns the emphasis given to the universalist power of Western reason, thought and reflection. This underscoring of the thinking, reasoning subject goes together with a general avoidance of the importance of war and violence as a background to this posited Western supremacy. The Argentinian philosopher Enrique Dussel (1998) takes issue with the separation of thought from conquest and reminds the reader that 'I conquer' must be given historical and ontological priority over what is considered to be the founding Cartesian *cogito ergo sum* ('I think, therefore I am').

For Dussel, conquest means to take possession of the land and the people of a territory, so that any subsequent formulation of thought and truth must already presume a territorialization based on a self/other split which can only be fully grasped in the frame of conquest. In this context, modernity, for Dussel, began in 1492 with the invasion of

the 'New World', so that the precept 'I conquer' not only preceded but also constituted the practical foundation of 'I think'. It provided a context in which a crucial relation began to emerge between geopolitical power and the territorialization of thought (for a related discussion see Spanos 2000).

Dussel's critique is generally aimed at Eurocentrism, which brings us to the question of the difference that 'America' makes. Why is it necessary to distinguish Euro-Americanism from Eurocentrism? I want to suggest that the term Eurocentrism is often used in a way that implies that America can be incorporated within this category, and that presumably the similarities between Europe and America outweigh the differences. This is a problematic stance since it conceals the specificities of the United States as today's lone superpower, and it also leaves out of account historical and geopolitical differences that are rather crucial to the whole discussion of West/non-West or North–South relations. More-over, since the role played by the United States in impacting on Third World countries is an important theme of my analysis, it is necessary to begin with an analytical outline that places this issue on the agenda.

Along one analytical route, the differences between the United States and Europe have been considered in the context of 'American exception-alism' (Bell 1991).[5] This topic has been widely covered in the literature, in some cases in relation to US foreign policy (Agnew 1983) and more recently in the context of continuing US global power (for example, Guyatt 2000). My concern here is rather to focus on what I consider to be three specificities of the United States which are particularly pertinent to a consideration of the relations between the US and the societies of the global South, and which are important for our understanding of Euro-Americanism.

The first difference that needs to be highlighted concerns the nature of US imperial power. Unlike other Western nations, the imperiality of US power emerged out of post-colonial roots. In other words, in the case of the United States a project of Empire emerged out of an initial anti-colonial struggle for independence from British rule in the late eighteenth century. This gives the United States a paradoxical identity of being a 'post-colonial imperial power' – although as will be argued in chapter 2, the key emphasis needs to fall on the imperial, and moreover the 'post-colonial' element of identity did not preclude the holding of a territorial colony, as with the example of the Philippines or semi-protectorates (such as Cuba from 1903 until 1934). There are two features of this contradictory identity that can be identified.

a) In the first place, and in the context of the geopolitics of US interventionism, one finds juxtaposed an affirmation of the legitimacy of the self-determination of peoples, emanating from its own origin, with a belief in the global destiny of the United States. Historically, the contradiction between a belief in the rights of people to decide their own fate and a belief in the geopolitical predestination of 'America' has been officially 'resolved' through the invocation, especially present since the beginning of the twentieth century, of a democratic mission that brings together the national and international spheres. To transcend the contradiction between an identity based on the self-determination of nations and another rooted in Empire, a horizon is provided for other peoples who are encouraged to choose freedom through the democratic way, thereby integrating their own struggles within an 'American' vision. Such an invocation to embrace the American path to freedom and democracy is still very much with us, as I shall show in later chapters.

b) Secondly, the primacy of self-determination provides a key to explaining the dichotomy frequently present in US interventions where a split is made between the governed (the people) and the governors (the rulers). Given the historic differentiation of the New World from the Old, and the support for anti-colonial struggles, perceived threats to US security have been accompanied by a separation between oppressed people and tyrannical rulers. In the enduring example of US hostility towards the Cuban Revolution, a strong distinction has been made between the Cuban people who are portrayed as being oppressed by their communist rulers and the Castro regime. For instance, the Helms–Burton Act of 1996 specifically argues that measures are needed to restore the values of freedom and democracy and above all the sovereign and national right of self-determination to the Cuban people.[6] The geopolitical representation at work here can be described in terms of the assumed right to be able to designate the political future for a people whose sovereignty is envisaged as being usurped by an ostensibly tyrannical regime. As will be seen in chapter 2, such a mode of imperial representation is anchored in the history of US–Cuban relations; and, as we will see in chapter 7, continues through into the twenty-first century.

The second specificity of the United States that is relevant to our theme, relates to the particular territorial formation of the United States, a formation that was intrinsically grounded in war and the expansion of a 'civilizing' frontier. In this formation there were encounters with three significant others: the indigenous peoples of North America (the

'Indian'), the Hispanic and Indian population of Mexico, confronted in the US–Mexico War of 1846–8, and the African American in the context of slavery and its abolition after the 1860s Civil War. In the founding example of the decimation of the native peoples of the continent, white America's violent encounter with its Indian other came to form a pervasive element of the nation's collective memory. It not only figured in the production of films about how the 'West was won', but also found expression in twentieth-century warfare, so that, for example, during the Vietnam War, US troops described Vietnam as 'Indian country' (Slotkin 1998: 3, and for a similar example in the case of intervention in Bosnia, see Campbell 1999: 237).

Notwithstanding the historical and cultural differences between them, these founding three encounters with internal others were marked by forms of subordinating representation and mechanisms of power that prefigured subsequent US encounters with Third World others. Before the United States became a global power, these encounters provided an original reservoir of imperial experience that was not irrelevant to many of the interventions pursued by the United States in the twentieth century. In comparison to the colonial powers of Western Europe,[7] in the case of the United States, the internal territorial constitution of the nation-state was striated by a series of violent encounters with other peoples that took place on its own soil and intimately moulded its evolving sense of Empire and mission, perhaps nowhere more visibly reflected than in the significance given to notions of 'the frontier', a theme taken up in chapter 2.

The third relevant specificity of the United States relates to the way its leading political figures have portrayed their country as the original haven of a 'New World'. From the Monroe Doctrine of 1823 and Thomas Jefferson's twin notion of 'America' having a 'hemisphere to itself' while being an 'Empire for Liberty', through to the Roosevelt Corollary of 1904 and the Rio Pact of 1947, the United States has staked out for itself an original heartland separate from the 'Old World' of Europe. This demarcation of geopolitical domains, or the establishment in the western hemisphere of a 'grand area' of geostrategy, constituted what can be referred to as the first phase of a US strategy of containment. This first phase, which will be discussed in the second chapter, was characterized by a strategy for the establishment of US hegemony in the Americas, and the setting of limits for European influence. The second phase of containment, which began with the Cold War and the rivalry between the superpowers, saw the United States, as a global power, developing a strategy of containment for what was perceived to

be the Soviet-led communist threat to the 'free world' of the Western nations. This classic phase of containment was played out on the global stage from the late 1940s to 1989, and is considered in chapter 3. The final phase of containment, which began in the early 1990s, relates to the specific targeting of what are defined as 'rogue states' such as North Korea and Iraq – states which are considered to either harbour terrorist groups or possess weapons of mass destruction or both. With the invasion of Iraq in 2003, this 1990s phase of containment has been replaced by a strategy of pre-emptive attack, and a much more aggressive geopolitical doctrine for re-asserting and spreading US power, a topic to which I shall return in chapter 7. Overall, the evolution of these three interconnected phases of containment thus provides the third specificity of the United States within the West.

In sum, the three specificities outlined above constitute key differences between the United States and the rest of the West. They are vital to a fuller appreciation of the particularities of the projection of US power, and especially in the context of US–Third World relations. Furthermore, in any discussion of the difference between Eurocentrism and Euro-Americanism, these three factors provide one possible basis for understanding the contrasts as well as the commonalities within the West. There is one further important difference within the West that needs to be mentioned, a difference that also has had implications for the coloniality of power.

Frequently, in the way the West is designated – especially, for example, in relation to questions of modernity and globalization – there is a tendency to equate the West and more specifically Western Europe with the countries of Britain, France and Germany. In this often implicit specification, what is sometimes missing is an appreciation of the historical differentiation of Western colonialism, and in particular the specificity of the earlier examples of Spanish and Portuguese colonialism in Latin America. The critique of 'occidentalism', as initiated by Coronil (1996) and Mignolo (1995), has created a highly relevant opening in this regard, since their point of departure is the colonial relation as it emerged and evolved in South and Meso-America. They both argue against an occidentalism that separates the world into bounded units, that disaggregates the relational histories of colonizer and colonized, turns differences into a hierarchy of self and other and helps reproduce asymmetrical power relations. In addition, they usefully underscore an important difference of the post-colonial, namely the earlier Independence of the Spanish and Portuguese colonies of the Americas, so that the Latin

American post-colonial as an historical periodization has its own specificity *vis-à-vis* that of Africa and Asia.

How, then, might we approach the post-colonial in a context of geopolitical representation, and how might we conceptually locate power relations which are intrinsic to the questions at hand?

Power, Geopolitics and the Post-colonial

Let us begin with an argument outlined by one of today's most innovative social theorists. Bauman (1999), in a discussion of power, politics and the territorial, makes a strong case for separating power from politics. He maintains that a key characteristic of our times is the fact that true power, which is able to determine the extent of practical choices, flows, and because of its ever less constrained mobility it is exterritorial. For Bauman, all existing political institutions remain strongly local; and, crucially, the heart of the contemporary crisis of the political process is the absence of an agency effective enough to legitimate and promote a cohesive agenda of choices. Today the principal agenda-setters are 'market pressures' which are replacing political legislation, and while geographical space remains the home of politics, capital and information inhabit cyberspace in which physical space is cancelled or neutralized (Bauman 1999: 120). Power, in this reading, *was* territorial. The era of space was the time when borders could be made impermeable; land was a shelter and a hideout, and the powers-that-be from which one wished to escape stopped at the borders. Now, for Bauman, post-September 11, this is all over, for no one can cut themselves off from the rest of the world. Places no longer protect, and strength and weakness, threat and security have become '*extraterritorial* (and diffuse) *issues that evade territorial* (and focused) *solutions*' (Bauman 2002: 88–9, emphasis in the original).

There are a number of points here which are suggestive for and germane to the analytical pathway I seek to explore.

First, one might remind ourselves of the Foucauldian-based distinction between the 'power-over' and the 'power-to'. The former is more associ-ated with a state of domination, whereby, for example, an agent is able to exert an impinging and moulding influence over another agent, whereas the 'power-to' can be associated with the ability to resist the influence of another, and can be seen in the emergence of collective actions and the impact of social movements. In both kinds of power, there is surely no

reason to exclude *a priori* any domain or space of effects. With power-over, the forces of globalization (for example, the role of transnational corporations) may be seen as part of the space of flows that Bauman emphasizes, but that kind of power-over requires a connection with state power, so that it can be more effectively internalized and is in that sense both territorial and extraterritorial in Bauman's terminology. Equally, historically and presently, state structures in many parts of the world continue to deploy their own rooted capacity to influence, sometimes through coercion, sometimes through persuasion, the actions of their territorialized subjects.

What I am arguing therefore is that while in the era of globalization, power may well be seen to flow more than in earlier periods due to the increased effectiveness of communication networks and a generalized global interconnectedness, this need not lead us into ignoring the persistence of older forms of the power-over which exist within the territorial ambits of nation-states (considered in chapter 4). Also, power-to, expressed in the form of collective mobilizations, has found two different although interrelated instances of expression. First, within the boundaries of nation-states, as for example with a range of indigenous movements in Latin America, including the Zapatistas in Mexico, struggles have emerged which, while developing transnational links, are essentially rooted in demands to secure new rights and recognition within specific territories. And, second, in the context of, for example, the World Social Forum founded in Porto Alegre in Brazil, movements have come together across national spaces to forge new kinds of associative power which are both transnational and national (both examples will be examined in chapter 8). Similarly, in the global protests against the war on Iraq, a power of refusal and opposition is also a part of an alternative 'flow of power', especially linked through cyberspace and the globality of the televised image, but also anchored within national spaces. In this sense then 'power-to' cannot be justifiably contained at the extraterritorial level; it flows both within and across national boundaries.

Second, in this complex field of analysis, it is worth recalling an observation made by Foucault, who suggested that power is constructed and functions on the basis of particular powers and a myriad of issues that stretch from the macro-structures of the economy through the domain of the state to social institutions such as the school, the hospital and the asylum (Foucault 1980a: 188). A whole history of spaces remains to be written, Foucault argues in a well-known passage; and this would

also be the history of powers, from the 'great strategies of geo-politics to the little tactics of the habitat' (Foucault 1980a: 149). It is exactly this sense of openness and plurality to the analysis of power that I would like to positively underline, in contrast to a possible analytical separation of power from territoriality and politics.

What also needs to be taken into account, and this is my third point from the Bauman passage, is the linkage between the relations of power and the modes of knowledge that give power its potential for effectivity. As Foucault (1979: 27) expressed the point, there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge. Knowledge and power are intertwined, and the way knowledges are represented and deployed is crucial to that interrelation.

Furthermore, and very much linked to issues of representation, a post-colonial perspective would question the geographies of reference for self and other, and their interrelation or intersubjectivity. What is missing in both Bauman and Foucault is a sense of the difference that colonialism or Empire makes to the ways in which power, politics and knowledge combine and work out their effects on the landscape of social change. Spivak (1999), in her work on the post-colonial, which includes a critique of Foucault and Deleuze, has reminded us of the 'sanctioned ignorance' and occlusion of the colonial and imperial moment in Western post-structuralist thinking. The ways in which non-Western others have been and continue to be represented is reflected in a range of subordinating forms of classification, surveillance, negation, appropriation and debasement, as contrasted to a positive self-affirmation of Western identity (Spurr 1993).[8] These forms of representation, incisively analysed by Said (1978 and 1993), find expression within the frame of North–South relations post-1989, as Doty (1996) has shown, and their production is crucial to the sustainability of particular relations of power and subordination.

As has been outlined above, Euro-Americanism exemplifies many of the problems associated with the depiction and representation of non-Western societies, and the elements I mentioned in that section could be considered in a geopolitical setting as having three interwoven components – representations of:

a) the other, e.g. the Third World;
b) the self, e.g. the First World and,
c) the interrelations between self and other, e.g. First World/Third World relations.

Frequently critiques of the geopolitics of representation focus on (a) and (c) so that in the example of dependency perspectives (discussed in chapter 5) the critical assessment of modernization theory focused on the inadequate portrayal of Third World reality (a) and the overly sanguine depiction of First World–Third World relations (c), whereas the image drawn of the First World self was subjected to much less critical scrutiny, even though, it might be suggested, that representation was quite vital to the functioning of the theory, as also is the case with the neo-liberal discourse of development (see chapter 4). These three inter-secting components need to be borne in mind in the development of any critique of the state of North–South relations and they can be seen as an important part of any post-colonial perspective. How might such a perspective be initially specified? I want to outline five elements, to which I shall return in chapter 6.

1. As an analytical mode, as distinct from a historical periodization, the post-colonial seeks to question Western discourses of, for example, progress, civilization, modernization, development and democracy, by making connections with the continuing relevance of *invasive* colonial and imperial power that these discourses tend to evade.

2. The post-colonial can be employed to highlight the mutually constitutive role played by colonizer and colonized, or globalizers and globalized.

3. The post-colonial as a critical mode of enquiry can be used to pose a series of questions concerning the location and differential impact of the *agents* of knowledge. Not only does a post-colonial perspective consider the thematic silences present in influential Western discourses, it also challenges the pervasive tendency to ignore the contributions of African, Asian and Latin American intellectuals and their *counter*-representations of West/non-West relations.

4. Fourth, as a mode of analysis, the post-colonial seeks to give key attention to the 'centrality of the periphery', to foreground the peripheral case since, as the Uruguayan writer Eduardo Galeano (1983: 184) once put it, it is 'in the outskirts of the world . . . that the system reveals its true face'.

5. Fifth, the post-colonial in terms of the way I interpret it in this text carries with it an ethico-political positionality that seeks to oppose the coloniality and imperiality of power and re-assert the salience of

autonomy and popular resistance to Western penetrations. This is an issue to which I shall return in subsequent chapters.

As part of any development of critical thought, a post-colonial perspective needs to be open to a range of conceptual and thematic routes. In my own case I shall pursue an analytical pathway that seeks to combine a post-colonial perspective with a post-structuralist mode of analysis in which questions of difference, representation and agency are foregrounded in a way which is much more post-Marxist than ex-Marxist. In contrast to Robert Young (2001: 6–7), who in his book on post-colonialism contends that the historical role of Marxism provides a fundamental framework for post-colonial thinking, and with Spivak (1999), who tends to reduce Marxist thought to the economic, I shall take up ideas from a more Gramscian-based Marxism, which, as I suggest in chapter 6, provides a range of concepts such as hegemony and collective wills which still have a vital contemporary relevance.

Hegemony in a Gramscian sense goes beyond domination and is defined as the combination of consent and coercion whereby powers of persuasion and moral and cultural leadership are integral to the concept. With the concept of collective wills, mobilizations and collective actions are not predicated on class belonging but are more part of a fluid movement of opposition to the given disposition of power relations, a movement that transcends class boundaries, even though in the 'last instance' Gramsci himself did not abandon the centrality of class. This notion of a collective will can be compared to Foucault's (1980b: 96) suggestion that in the field of power relations there are always points of resistance (the Gramscian collective will) which are spread over time and space at varying densities, at times mobilizing groups or individuals in specific ways. Clearly these sorts of concepts need to be continually rethought – as Laclau and Mouffe (2001) have done in their own work which breaks away from the centrality of class analysis so characteristic of traditional Marxist thinking.

One way of pursuing the link between politics, representation and power is to focus on projects of hegemony, as with neo-liberalism, discussed in chapter 4, and counter-hegemony, as illustrated in the emergence and development of collective wills, exemplified in the new struggles or points of resistance against neo-liberal globalization and more recently against the re-assertion of US imperialism. (See chapters 7 and 8.) Above all, what needs to be transcended are those kinds of analysis that either (a) treat Marxist categories as 'terminal abstractions'

never to be reproblematized or replaced, or (b) summarily dismiss Marxist thought in its entirety as being obsolescent, the expression of a faded utopia. My opening position is that Marxist thought, especially in its Gramscian variant, still has relevance today, but that relevance has to be continually rethought in a critical manner, as part of a wider body of social and political theory. Clearly there are many issues here that require more elaboration, and I shall return to these in chapter 6.

Finally in this chapter I need to clarify my approach to geopolitics.

An initial line of argument would be that any theoretical take on geopolitics needs to be explicitly informed by some specification of what is meant by politics. As I have indicated above, in my brief comments on Bauman and Foucault, it would seem helpful to examine politics and power relations as mutually constitutive. In this context, conflict, division and antagonism are part and parcel of the unfolding of power relations and political processes. Mouffe (1995 and 2000) has explained this argument by suggesting a useful distinction between 'the political' and politics. For Mouffe, 'the political' relates to the antagonistic dimension that is inherent in all human society; an antagonism can take many different forms and can be located in diverse social relations, whereas, in contrast, 'politics' can be taken to refer to the ensemble of practices, discourses and institutions that seek to establish a certain order and to organize social life in conditions that are always potentially subject to conflict because they are affected by the dimension of 'the political'. In this vein, politics can be seen as the attempted pacification of the political, or the installation of order in a given society. Depoliticization is, as writers such as Honig (1993) and Rancière (1995) have eloquently argued, the most established task of politics.

The reference to the political does not entail a marginalization of the formal sphere of politics; rather it calls for a distinction between two spheres that implicate and involve each other. Politics has its own public space – it is a field of exchanges between political parties, of governmental affairs, of elections and representations, and in general of the types of activity, practices and procedures that take place in the institutionalized arena of the political system. The political, in contrast, can be more effectively regarded as a type of conflictual relation that can develop in any area of the social; it is a living movement, a kind of 'magma of conflicting wills', as Arditi (1994: 21) puts it. It is mobile and ubiquitous, going beyond but also subverting the institutional settings and moorings of politics. Politics can be thought of as the institutionalization of an

order that is designed to overcome or at least confine the threatening conflicts of the political. But 'order' or 'governance' are always a series of regulative and sedimented procedures, practices, codes and categories that can never be absolutely maintained, since the political – the possibilities of subversion, questioning, opposition, refusal and resistance – can never be fully overcome or vanquished. The interventions that constitute a reactivation of the instability that 'order' seeks to pacify, reflect the inseparability of politics and the political. The political is always that irremovable inner periphery at the heart of politics.

One question that needs to be posed at this juncture concerns the potential relevance of the spatial for any delineation of politics and the political. What difference, for example, does the prefix 'geo-' make to the above argument? One possible answer involves an examination of the relations between nation-states, located in a global structure of such units, which have been traditionally regarded as the building blocks of geopolitics, or as 'containers' that now seem to be increasingly perforated with their powers already subject to significant corrosion (see Agnew 1999, Held 1995 and Taylor 1995). What this issue also raises is the need to distinguish the different spatial levels or spheres within which and across which politics and the political take on their varied meanings. It is possible to suggest the existence of six such spheres ranging from the global and the supra-national through the national to the regional, local and communal levels, the last three being contained within the sphere of the nation-state. My own argument would be to regard the nation-state as a geopolitical pivot, subject to pressures from above and below.

Thus, it can be argued that whereas within the frame of global politics there is more interdependence, the pace of cultural communication, military delivery, disease transmission and so on have accelerated, and that while global issues of refugees, ecology, arms control, organized crime and terrorism have become more intense, *nevertheless* the territorial state remains the most visible and organized site of political action in the world (Connolly 2001). It is a crucial *crossroads* for politics, the political and the spatial. But are all nation-states geopolitically positioned in the same way? Clearly they are not; and what needs stressing in the context of a post-colonial perspective on North–South relations is the difference that both coloniality and imperiality have made. Making this connection is also part of the geopolitical. How?

Customarily, the analysis of the relations between politics and the political is worked out within the conceptual confines of an implicitly

Western territorial state. There is an assumption of a pre-given territorial integrity and impermeability.[9] But in the situation of peripheral polities, the historical realities of external power and its effects within those polities are much more difficult to ignore. What this contrast points to is the lack of equality in the full recognition of the territorial integrity of nation-states. For the societies of Latin America, Africa and Asia, the principles governing the constitution of their mode of political being were deeply structured by external penetration, by the invasiveness of foreign powers. The framing of time and the ordering of space followed an externally imposed logic, the effects of which still resonate in the post-colonial period. The struggles to recover an autochthonous narrative of time, to counter a colonialist rule of memory, and to rediscover an indigenous amalgam of meanings for the territory of the nation have formed a primary part of post-Independence politics. In what were referred to as 'wars of national liberation', the struggle to breathe new life into the time–space nexus of independence lay at the core of the anti-imperialist movement. This then is one modality of the geopolitical, of a transformative rupture, where anti-colonial movements were the disrupting and destabilizing currents able to challenge and eventually bring to an end the colonial appropriation of national space.

But within the bounded territories of nation-states there is another modality of the geopolitical. Across a broad array of societies of the South, movements have emerged which challenge the established territorial orderings of the state. In some instances, such social movements have been rooted in ethnic identities, as has been the case in the post-1994 Zapatista uprising in the Chiapas region of Mexico, while in other cases as in Bolivia, Colombia and Peru, the geopolitical has been partly associated with ethnic-regional mobilizations but also with broader coalitions to restructure and decentralize centralized state power. Here the challenge to the territorial ordering of the central state has assumed a close connection with the notion of extending the territoriality of democratic politics through a decentralization of the state (Slater 2002). In this example, the geopolitical as I have defined it could be also thought of as a *counter*-geopolitics, where an alternative indigenous memory of territory is deployed as part of the ideological struggle against a centralized and mono-cultural state. This is clearly to be seen in the case of the Zapatista uprising in Mexico, discussed in chapter 8.

There are many themes that could be taken up for further consideration. However, at this stage, I want to simply indicate how both

geopolitics and its counter, the geopolitical, are best approached as inhabiting a variety of spheres, both international and national, both inside and outside. The 'geo-' in politics and the political needs to be set free from any pre-given anchorage in any spatial level. At the same time, as Bonura (1998) has suggested, critical geopolitical analysis can be made more effective if questions of cultural representation are connected to the power of spatial politics. In my own approach I want to include some suggestions on what it might mean to think critically, in a geopolitical context. There is already an excellent literature in the area of 'critical geopolitics',[10] and in my own case, and as already noted in the preface, I shall develop a perspective that revolves around rethinking the geopolitics of North–South relations in historical perspective, and with specific regard to the relations between the United States and the societies of the South, especially, although not exclusively, the societies of Latin America. But how might we think the 'critical' in critical geographical analysis or more generally the critical in critical thought itself?

On Thinking Critically

The relevance of a critique can be seen in terms of the challenging of what is. It can be envisaged as stressing the importance of investigating the clash of ideas and the durability of difference. It also connects to the impossibility of a political world without adversaries, the myth of a world settled around a ruling consensus. The political does not have a terminal point and, equally, with the critique of what is and what has been, it is necessary to search for what might be. Here I want to propose six possible elements of thinking critically.

1. Analysing presence and absence

This element can be seen in relation to both the themes and concepts of analysis and the agents of knowledge. For example, as part of an appraisal of Western theories of modernization and neo-liberalism, identifying the relative absence of a critical consideration of the history of Western societies and specifically the role therein of colonialism and Empire can form part of the development of critical knowledge. By specifying and analysing the significance of the absence or silence, an alternative vision can be developed. Crucial to this absence is the failure

to appreciate the pivotal significance of Western *invasiveness*, *penetration* and *intervention*. The coloniality and imperiality of power are rooted in the will and capacity to invade and penetrate – the imperial, as contrasted to the colonial, not necessarily requiring the possession of territory. Also, the coloniality and imperiality of power can be used to raise the issue of the imbrication of inside and outside in the sense of tracing the domestic and foreign implications of the colonial and imperial moments. Clearly, Empire, for example, is not a phenomenon that only resides in the international domain; it also affects the domestic terrain, as will be seen in subsequent chapters.

In a similar vein, but in relation to the subjects or agents of knowledge, pointing to the absence of other voices of analysis based in the South constitutes a part of the same critical project of opening up a different kind of interpretive agenda. The exclusion or subordinating inclusion of the intellectual other can be seen as part of the overall politics of occidental privilege. Signalling such an absence and indicating its significance does not have to lead into implicitly underwriting an uncritical reading of the intellectual South. Rather, it is both to question those texts that make the intellectual South invisible and to open up and amplify the analytical terrain – making the absence critically present.[11] Absence, in the way I define it here, therefore, has a duality; it is thematic and conceptual, and also present in relation to the differential exclusion and inclusion of the agents of knowledge.

2. Representing theoretical perspectives

Being critical must also connect to the way different theoretical interpretations are viewed and represented; to what extent, for example, are the *differences* and *commonalities* within given systems of thought such as Marxism identified? The difference for instance between Marx and Gramsci (alluded to above) is significant for the way politics and the political are envisaged, and this difference should alert us to the disadvantage of essentializing a given theoretical tradition. Similarly with post-modernism, it is important to be aware of the different currents within it, as also with post-colonial perspectives (chapter 6). Also with neo-liberalism, while the main signifiers of the perspective need to be specified, equally (as I show in chapter 4) there are important conceptual shifts within the neo-liberal frame which relate to changing geopolitical circumstances.

3. Power/knowledge relations

As was noted above, it is not advisable to separate power from know-
ledge, nor power from the politics of discursive representation, including
the varied salience of cultural imaginations. Specifically, in the setting of
this study, I want to underscore the relevance of connecting the power
of a shifting geopolitical landscape, most obviously seen in relation to
watershed events such as the collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1989 or the
attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001, with the dynamic of
conceptual and thematic interpretation. Being critical means not only
to be prepared to pursue these connections but also and essentially to
challenge the official discourse of world politics, both in relation to the
meaning of specific events such as September 11 but also in terms of the
underlying markers of interpretation and the geopolitics of strategic
action. Furthermore, even though this might be thought to be already
understood, social processes in general need to be subjected to critique
through the identification of winners and losers, of costs and benefits, so
processes such as globalization or modernization are not implicitly en-
visaged as being beneficial to all concerned. In addition, and with refer-
ence to the difference that agents of knowledge make, the counter-
representations of these processes which have been developed in the
global South need to be critically included as part of the broadening of
our global understanding.

4. Openness to difference and the dynamics of thought

This is an element that is not always easy to pin down, but it relates to
being willing to consider different visions while not abandoning a given
set of analytical principles which give any perspective its potential ex-
planatory coherence, and protect it from a vapid eclecticism. It means
being open to learn from opposed interpretations and accepting both the
reality of the continuing diversity of knowledge, and the dynamic and
contradictions that affect the individual trajectories of specific authors.
In the case of Marx, for example, it is clear that there are important shifts
of thinking in relation to the way he interpreted non-Western societies, so
that in later years his writing on colonialism in India had a closer
association with twentieth-century writing on dependency than did his
earlier writing, a point that was sometimes passed over.[12] Also, as

another rather different example, in the domain of post-modern thinking, Baudrillard's framing of the Third World oscillates from negative essentialization to critical engagement, and taking one text would not do justice to his representation of the Third World (see chapter 6). We always need to leave space open for ambiguity, contradiction, change, complexity and that ever-present precariousness of thought.

5. Deconstruction and reconstruction

Critiques constitute interventions that challenge and renovate the way we think. They are also part of a 'genealogy of knowledge', seen in part as the recovery of hidden interpretations. Critique in the form of genealogy is both rupture and renovation; it foregrounds the embryonic elements of other ways of thinking and is a counter to the cynical reason of one persuasion of post-modern thought where political passivity and feigned omniscience hinder the development of an oppositional consciousness. The questioning of statements and texts through, for instance, tracing the persistence of absences and the repetition of presences can lead to the emergence of alternative readings, of reconstructions that lend us new visions and conceptual pathways. This is also germane to the rereading of intellectual currents that have become less fashionable. Hence, for example, a rereading of dependency perspectives can help in the recovery of ideas that still retain a current applicability.

6. Reflexivity and the geopolitics of knowledge

Finally, a key part of thinking critically involves the situatedness of knowledge, the geographies of reference and the positionality of the writer. From the earliest feminist critiques of political theory, it was suggested that the individual in analyses of political thought was always implicitly a male individual and that masculinity was taken as the norm. The invisibility of women was made visible by feminist writers and the question of who is speaking and whose voice is being heard was situated in a specifically gendered way. Similarly a post-colonial intervention would question an enquiry into a Third World issue where the Third World intellectual is made invisible. The geopolitics of knowledge can help us raise questions that go beyond the thematic and conceptual contours of writing and focus more on the spatial contextualization of

analysis itself. This contextualization has frequently been tied to a Euro-Americanist frame, and generalizations have been made which are rooted in the implicit universality of the West. In this text I shall question such implicit universality.

Having outlined six elements of what critical thinking can be about, we are in a position to move on in our consideration of the connections that exist between and through power, politics, representation and space. These connections will be pursued in the following chapters, both historically and geopolitically, being one possible chronicle of the changing state of North–South relations.