Alain Touraine: *After the Crisis*. (Cambridge: Polity, 2014. Pp vii, 173.)

Zygmunt Bauman and Carlo Bordoni: *State of Crisis*. (Cambridge: Polity, 2014. Pp vii, 164.)

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The financial crisis of 2008 began with a severe downturn in the US housing market, spread to other asset markets, and became a full-blown economic crisis first in the United States and then globally. While countries experienced the effects of the crisis differently, almost no part of the world was spared. In the wake of the crisis came much questioning of assumptions about neoliberal market policies, deregulation, and the future relationship of states and markets in a globalized economy. Alain Touraine's *After the Crisis* and Zygmunt Bauman and Carlo Bordoni's *State of Crisis* attempt to address the crisis with sociological and political analysis that goes far beyond assessing policies that led to or were implemented to address the crisis. While both books offer compelling insights, Bauman and Bordoni's book succeeds where Touraine's falls short.

Touraine's book is divided into two sections. The first is an analysis of the crisis and the second purports to offer some hopeful prescriptions and sober discussion of other, more regressive, possibilities. However, the themes and foci of the two sections are very similar, both sections introduce analysis and prescription, and the reader will frequently wonder if they have read a passage before. Obviously Touraine was aiming for some symmetry between the two but a more precise presentation and analysis and prescription would have made the two halves hold together much better.

The analysis of the first section will be familiar to those acquainted with Touraine's previous work and his conceptualization of postindustrial society. Here Touraine convincingly argues that old assumptions about the distribution of resources and the institutions that mediated these conflicts over resources (the state, political parties, unions) are no longer viable, if they ever were. In this section Touraine also describes the way the financialization of the economy, globalization, and changing patterns of production and consumption have furthered the atomization of human beings within society, and our "need to understand how actors are increasingly operating in isolation from the system" (21).

The second section of the book is a more systematic discussion of ideas introduced in the first part, particularly the need to respond to the "crisis" of postindustrial society with an Arendtian conception of human beings who, as social actors, are "no longer motivated by their social and economic interests but instead by their desire to defend their *rights*, in other words, to base their desire for freedom and justice on their awareness of the human subject carried within themselves" (112, emphasis in original). Touraine appears at times to be arguing this transformation is already under way and will, in

due course, become a universal norm, while at other times suggesting that it is a "search for new principles of legitimacy defined in terms of rights" (97).

One can certainly find merit in the hoped-for universalism of this new form of human connection, but it is still unclear precisely how human beings are to overcome so many of the obstacles presented to them by the postindustrial, globalized economy. Looking to the state offers little help as Touraine consistently makes contradictory claims about the state, its role, and relative power. At times the state is seen as relatively powerless (often contrasted with the, in Touraine's view, more effective and neutral state of the Keynesian golden era). Yet at other times Touraine makes claims that suggest at least some states are powerful entities: "since we must start by examining the economic situation of the United States, how can we avoid acknowledging that, in this domain, the policies of this country are largely in the hands of President Barack Obama?" (12). This might be welcome news for President Obama, especially when Touraine informs us that "the two main objectives of the state are … to reduce inequality and to provide maximum security to the workforce" (38). Perhaps it is here where we most clearly see the problem. Sometimes Touraine is describing a state as he thinks it used to be, sometimes he is describing a state as he hopes it could be, and sometimes he is describing a state that he thinks exists today. None of these conceptions receives a proper discussion or acknowledgment of what Touraine is describing.

Bauman and Bordoni's *State of Crisis* offers a clearer depiction of the "state of the state" after the crisis. Their book is presented as a sort of dialogue, with each person offering their thoughts on particular themes while only occasionally referring to the other's contribution. The book is divided into three chapters: "Crisis of the State," "Modernity in Crisis," and "Democracy in Crisis." The chapter on the crisis of the state is perhaps the most rewarding of the book as it does a masterful job of presenting the crux of the crisis as "first and foremost a *crisis of agency* … though ultimately it is a *crisis of territorial sovereignty*" (22, emphasis in original). Both authors provide many interesting examples of challenges presented to states by a world of mobile capital and fixed territory and citizens. One example is the "double bind" of democratic states needing both to address their citizens' well-being and to create a business environment attractive to capital. These states "are obliged to look simultaneously in two opposite directions, reckoning with both though having little hope of earning the approval of either of them for their own middle-path, wishy-washy resolutions" (18). Both authors are attuned to the manner in which globalization, austerity, the enhanced power of capital, and the hollowing out of state power have produced a "precariat" that can be distracted by consumerism but has little hope of fundamentally addressing their precarious existence through traditional means.

The second chapter is focused on the question of "modernity" and whether, in light of the crisis discussion that precedes, the promise of modernity is dead, deferred, still vibrant, or has been subsumed by something else. While Bordoni is more pessimistic about our current state, Bauman holds

out hope for the promises of modernity. Both authors express an admirable humility in recognizing the difficulty in identifying epochal changes while living them, and both confess to struggling with terminology. Bauman's preferred term is "liquid modernity" to capture the dynamism and flux of economics, politics, and culture—a theme he has explored elsewhere. In an interesting portion of the chapter discussing trade-offs between freedom and security, Bauman speculates on the how that question is answered by citizens living a precarious existence while elites speak in a language foreign to the vast majority of citizens. "Are we nearing, for the second time in recent history, a condition ripe to be exploited by demagogues who are sufficiently inane, self-deluded or arrogant to promise a short-cut to happiness and blaze a trail right back to the lost paradise of security on condition that we surrender the liberties that are already abhorred by, and intensely unwelcome to, their possessors, and so also our right to self-determination and self-assertion?" (66). This question is particularly salient now in the United States and Europe given the improving electoral fortunes of demagogues and nationalists of various stripes.

The final chapter is the shortest and most speculative. Given the strong claims made about the separation of politics and power in previous chapters, it is no surprise that neither author holds out great hope for democracy. However, the chapter is certainly worth reading for the discussion of the evolution of democracy and the recognition that democracy has always been a dynamic and deeply flawed form of social organization. Bauman discusses Generation Y, and while recognizing their "connectedness" and networked characteristics, he also makes the interesting claim that this generation does not suffer from any illusions about fulfilling their hopes and dreams through stable employment. Indeed, for Bauman this generation fully recognizes their precarious state in a way that previous generations struggle to do. Bauman does not tell us where this will lead, but it does suggest that new forms of agitation against this existence could be in store. Bordoni, also in this chapter, argues that the global protests seen in Occupy Wall Street, the Indignados, and the Arab Spring (contra Manuel Castells) are not signs of a global resistance springing forth from the internet but instead a "tangible sign that the system is no longer able to take the strain and new social balances need to be found—whether they are produced by revolutions, reforms, or new elections has little importance" (147). This is much more optimistic than Bordoni's call, earlier in the text, for a "global state" so that the state can "return to carrying out its full institutional function" (33).

Both of these texts are worth reading given that they provide contemporary insights into the postcrisis moment as well as attempt to place the crisis and the postcrisis moment in historical context. However, those insights are hard won in Touraine's *After the Crisis* given the often confusing and contradictory prose. Bauman and Bordoni's *State of Crisis* is much more rewarding given the range of topics covered, their engagement with a large number of sociological and political scholars (contemporary and historical), and the generally more

accessible writing style. There is also a humility in the face of these challenges, particularly from Bauman, that makes the reader feel they are part of an exploration of difficult problems that none of us have easy answers for.

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George Rupp: *Beyond Individualism: The Challenge of Inclusive Communities*. (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015. Pp. 205.)

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Beyond Individualism addresses a central problem of contemporary political theory and practice, namely, that of building sustainable and just communities in a world marked by religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity and confronted with serious threats to its ecological integrity, peace, and security. The author's thesis is that "the modern Western individualism so many of us … know and love has led us into a global dead end" (9), a stand-off between the individualist values we readily associate with Western democracies and the values of traditional communities, such as religious integrity and obedience to the laws of God. According to Rupp, a just and sustainable global order must find a way of reconciling humanitarian and rights-based creeds with a variety of nonindividualist values and traditions, whether secular or religious in character.

One of this book's singular merits is its discussions of contemporary social problems, from global warming and migration to terrorism and war, which not only have a grounding in the experiences of real historical communities but are also based on the author's personal experiences, in particular in his roles as president of Rice and Columbia Universities and as an active member of global philanthropic foundations such as the Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs and the International Rescue Committee. In contrast to some discussions of global justice, such as Peter Singer's and Thomas Pogge's, which heavily emphasize the transfer of resources from the well-off to the needy, Rupp argues that the only way to make the needy better-off is to "build local capacity on a global scale" (130). This is far more complex than transferring paychecks from the wealthy to the poor, but acknowledging this complexity is a good start to addressing the problem of poverty and inequality at its root.

While Rupp does not offer any quick-fix solutions, he does provide a survey of challenges facing communities, at both the local and the global