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WORKING PAPER 6  
THE UNDP AND THE END OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT: A CRITIQUE  
OF THE 2013 HUMAN DEVELOPMENT REPORT

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# **The UNDP and the end of human development: a critique of the *Human Development Report 2013***

## **Abstract**

The 2013 Human Development Report (*The Rise of the South: Human Progress in a Diverse World*, UNDP, New York) promotes and celebrates the global development of capitalism through free trade, equating it with human progress. It is anticipated and exposed by a classical Marxist critique.

## **I – A Working Model of the World Market**

It is not individuals who are set free by free competition; it is, rather, capital which is set free (Marx [1858-9] 1973: 650)

In the mid-1840s, two young radicals sketched out a dystopian vision of a world transformed by then nascent ‘big industry’. The pair, still in their twenties and with a lifetime of theoretical work still ahead of them, described an emerging proletariat ‘more and more enslaved under a power alien to them, .. a power which has become more and more enormous and, in the last instance, turns out to be the world market.’ In due course the propertyless majority might bring about ‘the overthrow of the existing state of society by the communist revolution’, but in the meantime all nations found themselves obliged first to protect their manufactures then to ‘introduce big industry under protective duties’ (Marx and Engels, 1845-6: C7). Big industry ‘universalized competition in spite of these protective measures;’ it ‘established means of communication and the modern world market, subordinated trade to itself, transformed all capital into industrial capital, and thus produced the rapid circulation ... and the centralization of capital’, destroying the former ‘natural exclusiveness of separate nations’ and producing world history ‘for the first time’ (ibid: C7).

More than a decade later, Marx would follow this precocious vision by signalling his intention to ‘examine the system of bourgeois economy in the following order: capital, landed

property, wage labour; the state, foreign trade, world market’ (Marx, [1859] 1970: 19). That project was never completed, but underpinning it was a working model of the modern world, in which foreign trade is the main mechanism through which local industry is faced with competition and forced to modernise, and the productive power of large-scale industry is such that as the world market expands, states are obliged, ‘on pain of extinction’, to promote it within their own economy.

The enlargement of the world market outruns and gives impetus to ‘primitive accumulation’ or proletarianization, as states are impelled not only to adopt temporary protection, but also to establish the power of capital over labour and create an exploitable working class. The trading of commodities across borders confronts societies in which the forces and relations of production are less developed with the products of societies in which they are more developed, obliging the state to respond – hence ‘the state, foreign trade, world market’ identifies the mainspring of world history, or the process through which capitalism becomes global. Marx and Engels would devote themselves to developing the theory to underpin this working model of the modern world. In doing so, they never abandoned the insight that it is only when the productive forces developed by the bourgeois mode of production become universal that they become intolerable. It is only when the world market becomes universal that the law of value takes hold, shaping domestic and international politics alike. This is the basis for

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a distinctively Marxist theory of politics and of the international (Cammack, 2013).

The mainspring of the model, then, is ‘the world market through competition’, itself the creation and reflection of class struggle around production on a global scale. Its development may be characterized as uneven and combined, or over-determined – either way, the precise path of transformation of production and social relations within individual states (or social formations) is unpredictable, depending as it does upon the myriad outcomes of struggle between classes, as well as the choices made by capitalists facing foreign competition, the response of the working classes, and the complexion, orientation and efficacy of the state. Overall, however, and increasingly over time for as long as the system survives, the *global* logic of competitiveness is inexorable, coming fully into force once free competition is established. At this point

The inner laws of capital – which appear merely as tendencies in the preliminary historic stages of its development – are for the first time posited as laws, production founded on capital for the first time posits itself in the forms adequate to it only in so far as and to the extent that free competition develops, for it is the free development of the mode of production founded on capital; the free development of its conditions and of itself as the process which constantly reproduces these conditions (Marx, 1973: 650).

This framework provides us with almost all the elements we need for a critique of the *Human Development Report 2013 (HDR2013)*. In relation to the foregoing, the present moment is one in which the world market, in terms of exchange, is universal in scale, but the transformation of the social relations of production –

proletarianization or the universalization of the ‘capital relation’ – is still far from complete.

While the struggle between classes everywhere revolves around the compulsion bearing down on society and the state to drive the process of proletarianization and capitalist development forward, outcomes are in the balance, and in large parts of the world the ‘real subsumption of labour to capital’ is the exception, rather than the norm, as the majority of workers remain in the informal sector. To the extent that the UNDP or any other international organization with a hand in the regulation of the global political economy promotes the extension of the world market or of capitalist relations of production on a global scale, then, it acts in accordance with the logic of ‘global capital’. And to the extent that it argues for the transformation of informal work in order to extend the ‘capital relation’, it acts to promote it.

But this is not quite all. The passage from the *Grundrisse* cited above continues immediately as follows:

It is not individuals who are set free by free competition; it is, rather, capital which is set free. As long as production resting on capital is the necessary, hence the fittest form for the development of the force of social production, the movement of individuals within the pure conditions of capital appears as their freedom; which is then also again dogmatically propounded as such through constant reflection back on the barriers torn down by free competition (ibid).

Here is the critique of *HDR2013, avant la lettre*. Insofar as the UNDP dogmatically propounds that the freedom of individuals is to be realized through extending the freedom of capital and overcoming barriers to its action, it

is revealed as the most advanced and sophisticated advocate for the inner laws of capital. And it follows that what it offers is less a softening of a harsh ‘neoliberal’ approach than a perfecting of its deepest logic.

### II – Resilient Nations?

So the contention of this critique is that ‘The Voice of Global Capital’ would be a better strapline for the UNDP than its preferred ‘Empowered Lives. Resilient Nations’. In more formal analytic terms, it is that it is a mistake to read the emphases of the report – in particular the endorsement of strong developmental states and the celebration of the rise of the South – as anything other than an endorsement of the logic of the world market and global capital.

The UNDP’s strong support in *HDR2013* for the ‘deepening of the developmental role of states’ (p. 1) may lead careless readers to imagine that the revolt against the Washington Consensus has finally succeeded, and that a frontal challenge is being mounted to neoliberal doctrine. Not so. For a start, the depiction of the international organizations in the early 1990s as hostile to the state is a caricature – witness the insistence on the part of the World Bank in the 1991 *World Development Report*, in the context of the need to get the world’s poor to work, that ‘It is not a question of state or market: each has a large and irreplaceable role’ (World Bank, 1991: 1); the UNDP long ago committed itself to a thoroughly capitalist form of development – as witnessed by its call for the unleashing of entrepreneurship in the run-up to the 2005 World Summit (Cammack, 2006: 2-3); and the ‘emerging economies’ in the G20 have converged on their own strategy of active state promotion of capitalism, one that I term global developmental liberalism (Cammack, 2012a).

This new consensus is not to be understood in terms of a contrast between neoliberalism and

state developmentalism, but in terms of the working model of the world market sketched out by Marx and Engels. It suggests, as set out above, that as the pressures of competition in the world market weigh more heavily, states will seek to promote the logic of capital over other domestic or international priorities (with due regard for what that might mean in the local context). This is what is happening, and the UNDP is egging them on.

In north-east Brazil, for example, relatively productive large enterprises and small family farms are replacing share-cropping and subsistence farming, as a consequence of government investment in infrastructure, and the orientation of production towards global markets and supply chains. At the same time, the Brazilian state has switched from ‘a relatively broad-based developmentalism’ to the recruiting of ‘agricultural firms that could produce higher value horticultural crops for export and to generate foreign exchange’ (Selwyn, 2012: 7). In general, the penetration of northern retail capital across the global south has been met by ‘a response by southern retail capital to these pressures through adopting up-to-date techniques utilised by northern retailers’; and in the specific case of grape production in north-east Brazil, quality standards introduced for export markets are disseminated to ‘high-end’ domestic markets (ibid: 4, 16). State support for small farmers oriented towards helping them to adopt new techniques that enhance their productivity and quality of production, and enabling them to hire wage labour extends the reach of the ‘bourgeois mode of production’. In Korea, foreign capital has been brought into formerly nationally-owned *chaebol* and into the financial sector, and state-led restructuring programmes are ‘designed to prepare the material basis for a market-based economy’. Industrial policy is oriented towards ‘promoting continuous inno-

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vation' and 'the competitiveness of the space' (Pirie, 2012: 370-71, 378). In Taiwan the politics of closer economic integration with the mainland have won out over the maintenance of economic independence (Gray, 2011: 595-6). In general, former developmental states in East Asia have actively repositioned themselves, adopting a focus that '*catalyses* public and private interests in ways that promote new technologies, market development and ultimately economic development' (Yeung, 2013: 22; emphasis original) – and they do so with the active support of the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, just as we should expect (Carroll, 2012, 2014; ADB, 2014). The argument here is that we should also expect it, and we do also find it, in the case of the UNDP.

So we should expect the UNDP to urge states to play an active role in fostering integration into global markets and pursuing social and labour market policies to match, and it does. It presents itself as 'a knowledge broker, and as a convener of partners – governments, civil society and multi-national companies – to share experiences' (iv), delivering a narrative that ostensibly sides with the emerging economies and their attachment to developmental (as opposed to *laissez-faire*) paths to growth. But it is the logic of global capital that actually shapes the narrative. It promises a 'close look at the diverse pathways that successful developing countries have pursued' (11), while ignoring entirely the experience of the country it reports as having the best record of turning growth into human development – Cuba (Table 1.2, p. 27). And in fact, its token gesture towards diversity is soon dropped. The statement that the rise of the South 'spans diverse country experiences, showing that there are multiple ways to achieve and sustain human development' (17) is twisted immediately into the different claim that countries were 'pragmatic in adopting policies suited to their unique circumstances' (a tried

and tested OECD/World Bank discursive move, meaning that they select from a lengthy menu of prescribed policies, to meet what is identified as the most pressing issue in the particular case – be it primary education, labour market reform, product market reform, infrastructural investment, anti-corruption drives or whatever). And even this weak claim is supported, bizarrely, only by the apparently random observation that between 1979 and 1989 'no fewer than 40% of China's national regulations were deemed experimental' – a fact so irrelevant to diversity and pragmatism that one's curiosity is immediately aroused. If one cares to consult the source cited, one finds the following summary:

Large-scale experimentation stimulated policy learning and economic expansion effectively in those sectors *in which political elites could benefit from supporting new types of private and transnational entrepreneurial activity*. Conversely, experimental programs largely failed in generating an effective provision of social goods which would require a combination of active societal supervision and strict central government enforcement to make it work (Heilmann, 2008: 1, emphasis mine).

At stake then was the use of 'experimentation' to create a bourgeoisie, liberalize labour markets, open China to foreign capital and technology, and effect its integration into the world market. Heilmann identifies 'one crucial challenge: how to facilitate institutional change despite massive inertia and opposition that block structural reform and inhibit economic development in many political economies'. He is concerned, in other words, with the means by which barriers to the action of capital can be torn down; and he endorses the model of 'experimentation under hierarchy' (ibid: 2).

'Experimentation,' then, turns out to fit very

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neatly into the working model of the world market and the compulsion it brings to bear on the state, as outlined above. And the UNDP soon sails into the same waters. The brief (less than a page) section on diversity and pragmatic development policies passes immediately at this point to ‘broadly shared common approaches’ – and we are on track with a familiar agenda:

Most fast-developing countries of the South opened up to foreign trade, investment and technologies. But that opening alone did not guarantee success. They also invested in their own human development capabilities, strengthened domestic institutions and built new areas of comparative advantage. The critical combination of external openness with internal preparedness *allowed countries to prosper in the global marketplace*, with positive human development outcomes for the population at large (17, emphasis mine).

Diversity and pragmatism notwithstanding, then, the goal is to prosper in the global market place – and this requires, ‘pragmatically’, active government leadership in relation to conditional cash transfers, rural employment guarantee programmes, and similar means of ‘fostering a more equitable distribution of economic and social opportunities’ (17). In other words, the UNDP advocates exactly what Marx and Engels so presciently critiqued in the mid-1840s. The focus is inclusiveness explicitly geared to *sustainable* bourgeois hegemony and capital accumulation:

Ruling elites are increasingly recognizing that social and economic progress can profoundly influence their own legitimacy. Investments in social welfare and public goods have become building blocks for long-term development. These exemplary initiatives – which combine health,

education and economic policies in a broader agenda of equity, empowerment and participation – highlight the importance of supporting social justice not only on moral grounds, but also as a crucial means of advancing human development (ibid).

The point need not be dwelt upon further. Human development and the development of capitalism on a global scale have become synonymous. The programme advanced is exactly that which has been perfected at the World Bank over the last two decades (Cammack, 2002, 2012b). In it, the term ‘resilient’ has a particular connotation – resilient in the face of the risks posed by financial, economic or environmental crisis, and hence resilient *for* capitalist development (HDR2013: 22, 59, 64).

### III – Working the world market

The logic of the policies that are advocated, then, is the logic of competition and competitiveness in the world market. After a review of the state of human development to which I shall return in the conclusion, the second chapter details the ‘more global South’, and the third investigates the policies that have brought about its rise. From the start, we are firmly on the terrain sketched out by Marx and Engels, and in celebratory mode:

New trade routes are flourishing: countries as diverse as Morocco, South Africa, Thailand, Turkey and Viet Nam each have substantial export and import relationships with more than 100 economies. New and improved technologies, adapted to local conditions, are boosting people’s productivity and enabling production to be shared across borders (43).

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The UNDP goes on to tell a now familiar story: trade accounts for nearly 60 per cent of global output, compared to 25 per cent in 1960; Asia accounts for 45 per cent of world output and 47 per cent of world trade; and sharply rising South-South trade accounts for 26.7 per cent of the total (44-5). FDI is following the same trend, with 50 per cent now destined for the South, outward investment from the South growing fast, and one in four transnationals now based in the South (47). As these trends continue, governments in the South are 'pragmatically' adopting sound macro-economic policies, engaging in industrial policy, promoting entrepreneurship, education, skill formation and technology upgrading, and creating finance and credit facilities for small and medium-size enterprises (52). All are facing rising competitive pressures, but

there are instances where competitive jolts have been followed by industrial revival. Ethiopia's footwear industry, for example, was initially displaced by cheap East Asian imports, resulting in large-scale layoffs and business closures, especially in the lower end of the market traditionally catered to by Ethiopian micro-enterprises. But the industry soon rebounded, even finding its way into the international market. One survey found that 78 of the 96 Ethiopian firms that reported in 2006 being hit hard by import competition had adjusted and become competitive within a few years. Nigeria's plastics industry experienced a similar revival (52-3).

This precise description of the scenario foreseen in the 'working model of the world market' is reinforced by a *Box* entitled 'Decent work in a competitive world':

The availability of decent, well paying jobs

is economically empowering, especially for women. Yet today's competitive global environment pressures workers to do more in less time for a lower wage. From both a human development and a business perspective, competitiveness is best achieved by raising labour productivity. Competitiveness squeezed out through lower wages and longer working hours is not sustainable. Labour flexibility should not mean adhering to practices that compromise decent working conditions. ... Labour laws on minimum wage, employment protection, working hours, social security and forms of contracts all aim to reduce inequality, insecurity and social conflict; they also provide incentives for businesses to pursue high-road management strategies (Box 2.5, p. 53).

The UNDP uncritically endorses the extraction of relative surplus value in a globally competitive economy, and identifies, in doing so, two mechanisms available to states seeking to compete: pressure on wages, and regulations which provide 'incentives for businesses to pursue high-end management strategies'. These are precisely the processes by which workers are more and more enslaved under a power alien to them, which in the last instance turns out to be the world market.<sup>1</sup>

Developing the argument further, the UNDP outlines again the precise mechanism at the

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<sup>1</sup> It is a power that the UNDP is happy to celebrate uncritically: 'Consider this incident from mid-2007, when Apple hastily redesigned the glass for the iPhone's screen. The first delivery of a new load of strengthened, scratch-free glass arrived at a Foxconn plant in the middle of the night, and work started immediately. Within three months, Apple had sold a million iPhones. It took 15 days to hire 8,700 industrial engineers to oversee the 200,000 assembly-line workers eventually involved in manufacturing iPhones. Apple's internal estimate was that a similar feat in the United States would have taken nine months'(54).

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heart of the Marxist working model, but sounds a final note of concern:

Given current trends, African consumers will continue to benefit from increased imports of affordable products. Flourishing local markets are likely to breed local entrepreneurs and attract more investment in extractive industries as well as in infrastructure, telecommunications, finance, tourism and manufacturing—particularly light manufacturing industries in which African countries have latent comparative advantage. *In this scenario, which has already begun to play out in the past decade and in other regions, host economies undergo structural change, and indigenous industry responds to competitive pressure from imports and investment inflows by upgrading production. But the process is proving difficult in countries where technological capabilities and infrastructure are less well developed* (56, emphasis mine).

This is where the UNDFP comes in, following on the coat tails of the OECD, the World Bank and the regional multilateral development banks, as a knowledge-broker and convenor of partners to share experiences. It is keen to recognize Brazil, China and India in particular as development partners, to promote regional integration, and to secure the mobilization of foreign exchange reserves in the South in order to fund global development (56-8). With global prospects uncertain, it argues that with ‘the right reforms, .. including a shift in policy orientation, the promise of sustained human progress is stronger as a result of the shift within the world economy brought about by the rise of the South’ (61).

Against this background, the approved policy model revolves around three ‘drivers of development transformation’: a proactive

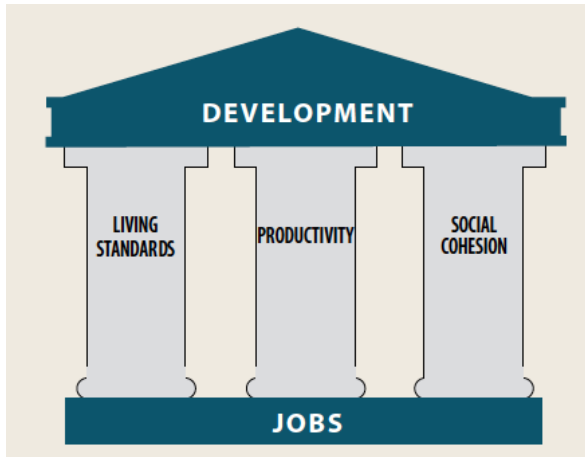
developmental state, tapping of global markets, and determined social policy innovation. The underlying logic stems from the way these three drivers are connected, while the discursive or ideological thrust of the document stems from the way they are presented as comprising a new approach:

These drivers are not derived from abstract conceptions of how development should work; rather, they are demonstrated by the transformational development experiences of many countries in the South. Indeed, they challenge preconceived and prescriptive approaches: on the one hand, they set aside a number of collectivist, centrally managed precepts; on the other hand, they diverge from the unfettered liberalization espoused by the Washington Consensus. These drivers suggest an evolution towards *a new approach, in which the state is a necessary catalyst that pragmatically adjusts its policies and actions in line with new realities and the challenges of global markets*. This new perspective recognizes that development does not happen automatically and that transformation cannot be left to markets alone. Instead, the state needs to mobilize society through policies and institutions that advance economic and social development (65-6; emphasis mine).

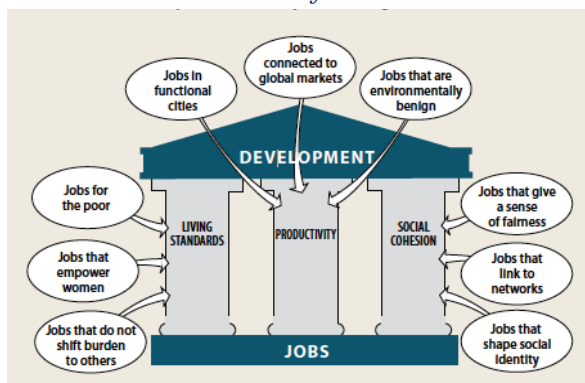
The prescience of the ‘working model of the world market’ is emphatically confirmed here. The state is assigned a central role, precisely as the agent charged with adjusting the society over which it presides to the realities and challenges of global markets. The substantive content of its proactive developmental character and its social policy innovation both flow from and are defined in its terms. In substance, these turn out to be familiar, reflecting in particular the approach of the World Bank’s current

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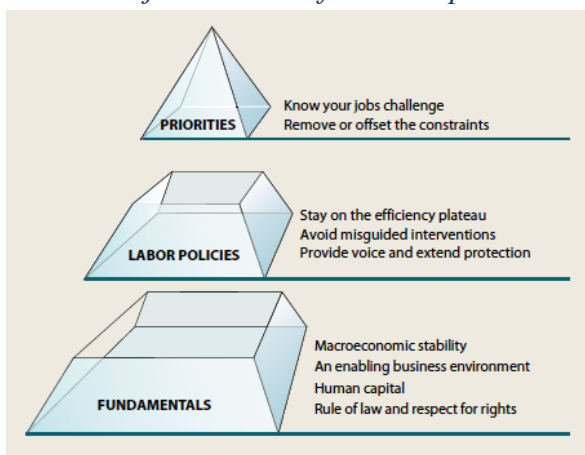
*World Development Report*, succinctly entitled *Jobs* (World Bank, 2012). As the *Report* portrays its argument:



*Jobs are transformational*



*Some jobs do more for development*



*Three distinct layers of policies are needed*

Source: World Bank, 2012, pp. 4, 17, 23.

In short, then, everything revolves around productivity, which is to be secured by creating the ‘right kind’ of jobs, connected to global markets. These are legitimized as ‘jobs for the

poor,’ ‘jobs that empower women,’ and so on, but the hard core of the approach is given by the guiding priorities – to recognize and work within the constraints of the global market (‘know your jobs challenge’), and to ‘remove or offset the constraints’ (to the free development of the mode of production founded upon capital).

The UNDP version begins with the caveat that this is not a ‘universal prescription,’ as the way the three elements are translated into policies ‘is context-specific, depending on country characteristics, government capacities and relationships with the rest of the world’ – a formulation that reflects, albeit anaemically, Marx’s more precise formula: ‘capital, landed property, wage labour; the state, foreign trade, world market’. It then unfolds in a predictable manner. Country ownership is essential; the key is the gradual removal of ‘binding constraints to progress,’ in which the state has a critical role, which involves ‘initiating and monitoring transformations in people’s lives’ (66); social services should be geared towards ‘investing in people’s capabilities – through health, education and other public services’ (69). Governments ‘can encourage a market-disciplined private sector by adopting a dynamic view of comparative advantage’ (70); they should prioritize the creation of ‘secure and remunerative jobs’, ‘investing in young people’s education and training, but also improving infrastructure aimed at economic diversification and removing obstacles to private entrepreneurship, such as lack of finance and onerous regulations’ (71); but they should also remember that ‘patterns of growth are rarely pro-poor over consecutive decades .. because developmental transformation is synonymous with the change in the structure of production and sectors differ in their capacities to create jobs’ (72).

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Above all

Effective leadership aligns the long-term goals of policymakers and enables constituencies to appreciate the state's work in fostering individual capabilities and social integration for human development. This requires a balanced approach to development and an ability to convert crises into opportunities for introducing broad-based economic reforms (73).

All of this enables states to 'tap global markets' by means of a 'gradual and sequenced integration with the world economy, according to national circumstances, and accompanied by investment in people, institutions and infrastructure' (74). Investment in people, reasserted as the key after a series of country examples, is glossed as follows:

the lesson is that development cannot be sustained without adequate investment in people's skills to constantly upgrade the quality of products and production techniques. The countries discussed here began from diverse initial conditions and have become adept at tailoring nurtured domestic strengths to reap external opportunities presented by world markets (77).

The section on 'determined social policy innovation' follows immediately, and runs through the current consensus (Cammack, 2009): education, especially for girls; health care; poverty reduction; inclusion, especially in labour markets; and generally, 'public services that contribute to a healthy, educated workforce' (78). Then, in a passage that replicates the latest World Bank thinking (Cammack, 2012b), the UNDB kindly nails its colours to the mast, and makes my case for me:

More effective social protection systems are also needed to help individuals and communities manage risks to their welfare. Globalization has contributed to the dismantling of some aspects of social protection and social insurance, especially for systems relying on universal coverage and large government expenditures. At the same time, it has increased the need for social protection, as fluctuations in economic activity become more frequent. Thus, social policies become as important as economic policies in advancing human development. *In fact, social and economic policies can hardly be disentangled because their goals and instruments are analogous* (82-3).

Logical, of course, and inevitable, given the journey on which the organization is embarked, but at the same time fatal to the pretence that human development means anything more to the UNDP now than the forced development of the inner laws of capital. What follows, in terms of conditional cash transfers, incomes earned through decent work, easier access to credit for the poor, community-level setting of budget priorities and the like, is mere detail. The upshot, though, is clear. As the following chapter details, as it scans the more distant horizon, 'policymakers in developing countries will need to follow an ambitious agenda,' addressing their own urgent policy priorities in the context of difficult global conditions (87).

The agenda set out certainly is ambitious, primarily because it requires that the governments should submit their populations to the inner laws of capital and simultaneously enhance equity, enable voice and participation, confront environmental pressures, and manage demographic change. This entails a delicate and contradictory counterpoint between discipline

and emancipation, of exactly the kind attempted by the World Bank over the years (Cammack, 2002: ft. 9; 204, 203-206) – specifically, one which dogmatically propounds that freedom for capital and freedom for the individual are one and the same.

#### IV Empowered Lives?

The plain truth is that with *HDR2013* the UNDP has abandoned any conception of human development other than that posited by the logic of capital. There was a perceptible distance in 1990, when the first *Human Development Report* was published, between the UNDP and the World Bank, whose *World Development Report 1990: Poverty* called for the creation of a global proletariat and inaugurated a series of *Reports* that set out a step-by-step programme over more than a decade for the development and legitimization of capitalism on a global scale (World Bank, 1990; Cammack, 2002). The gap between them has since been closed, in part because the World Bank has learned to present its message in terms of the creation of opportunities and the empowerment of individuals, but mostly because the UNDP itself has been thoroughly colonized by its sister institution – key moments being the move of Mark Malloch Brown from his position as Vice-President and Director of External Relations at the World Bank to head the organization in 1999 (Cammack, 2006: 11), and the subsequent transfer of Khalid Malik's predecessor Jeni Klugman from the World Bank Poverty Reduction Strategy Team to the position of Director of the Human Development Report Office.

It is not all that surprising, therefore, that my critique can be rephrased in terms which directly paraphrase an earlier critique of the World Bank itself: while the UNDP's commitment to human freedom is real, within

limits, it is conditional upon, and secondary to, a broader goal. Its principal objective is the systematic transformation of social relations and institutions in the developing world, in order to generalise and facilitate proletarianisation and capitalist accumulation on a global scale, and build specifically capitalist hegemony through the promotion of legitimating schemes of community participation and country ownership.<sup>2</sup>

The fact that *HDR2013* equates global capitalism with the realization of human freedom is not a cause for moral outrage, but for dispassionate, even scientific analysis. Equally, it does not matter much whether its authors believe their repeated references to expanding people's choices, opportunities, freedom, and the like, although I am happy to assume that they do. Their emphasis upon human development and progress is not an independent stance that creates a space between itself and the logic of global capital, for all that this may have been a conscious aspiration when the series was launched in 1990. It is, rather, evidence of its perfect identification with and celebration of 'production resting on capital' as the 'fittest form for the development of the force of social production'. We should expect to find every specific element of policy advice framed in accordance with it, and we do.

At the same time, a spectre hangs over the *Report* – the spectre, one might say, of Europe. For while *HDR2013* documents in passing the travails of capitalism in the advanced

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<sup>2</sup> 'while the Bank's commitment to poverty reduction is real, within limits, it is conditional upon, and secondary to, a broader goal. Its principal objective is the systematic transformation of social relations and institutions in the developing world, in order to generalise and facilitate proletarianisation and capitalist accumulation on a global scale, and build specifically capitalist hegemony through the promotion of legitimating schemes of community participation and country ownership' (Cammack, 2004: 190).

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economies, as a backdrop to the policy challenges facing developing states, it does not comment on the implications for its embrace of global capitalism as a realm of freedom of the circumstances and the policies currently adopted – equally pragmatically, one assumes – in the heartlands of advanced capitalism: ‘governments are introducing harsh austerity measures that reduce the government’s welfare

role and cut back on spending and public services, leading to hardship and exacerbating economic contractions’, while unemployment is ‘at its highest level in years, and a large share of the workforce has had no significant increase in real wages over the last few decades, while the richest deciles have seen a substantial increase in income’ (21-22). De vobis fabula narratur?

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