

# Agonism and its Incompatibility with Global Capitalism and Consumerism

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## **Abstract**

In this thesis, I defend the claim that globalisation, capitalism and consumerism are determining factors in contemporary societies and therefore a normative political theory ought to incorporate an answer to how these factors must be dealt with. I have chosen the democratic theories of James Tully and William Connolly, two contemporary agonists who mention some concerns in regards to globalisation, capitalism and consumerism in a comparable manner, but do not pay enough attention to these determining factors or significantly answer how these factors must be dealt with. They must therefore choose to either revise their agonistic democratic theories, or oppose globalisation, capitalism and consumerism all together.

## Introduction

The integral nature of conflict within society is embraced, theorized and conceptualized by the agonistic democrats. According to agonism, the presence of different cultures within societies allows for democracies to flourish and questioning each other's practices is valued. The presence of different cultures within societies allows for the emergence of different norms and values which can question each other and the existing hegemonic norms and values.<sup>1</sup> Agonistic democracies provide a set of shared rules in which different diverse members can practice diversity whilst following different norms and values. In order to properly question each other's norms and values, critical thinking is also a precondition of agonistic thinking.<sup>2</sup> In short, multiculturalism and critical thinking are preconditions of agonistic democracies whilst simultaneously globalisation, capitalism and its logic of consumption are defining factors for our age and behaviour. I will argue in this thesis that globalisation, capitalism and its logic of consumption erodes differences and homogenizes cultures. Given this fact, it is odd that the homogenizing effects of globalisation, capitalism and consumerism are given so little attention in the agonistic literature. Since globalisation, capitalism and the current logic of consumption is the defining logic of our age and behaviour, agonists must develop a normative political theory which incorporates an answer to how these factors must be dealt with.

In this thesis, I will therefore argue that globalisation, capitalism and its logic of consumption must either be incorporated into the agonistic democratic theories or these factors must be opposed. I have chosen to focus on William Connolly and James Tully since they both express concerns in regards to globalisation, capitalism and consumerism but do not yet significantly provide answers to how these factors must be dealt with. They also have similar agonistic theories in regards to cultural pluralism and critical thinking.

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<sup>1</sup> Connolly, *Political Theory*, pp. 246-250.

<sup>2</sup> Connolly, *Identity Difference*, pp. 211-214.

In Section 1, it will become clear that Connolly is concerned with the fact that the globalisation of capital, labour, and contingency must be shadowed by a corollary globalisation of politics.<sup>3</sup> Connolly argues that globalisation allows for transnational corporations and organisations to arise which are often not democratic and surpass the politics of the nation-state.<sup>4</sup> Tully shares Connolly's concern that globalisation gives rise to institutions which undermine national state sovereignty and do not have rules and norms open for questioning which is essential for agonistic politics.<sup>5</sup> The concern is that the democratic rules are not properly respected by global institutions, but they do not properly take into account how globalisation affects multiculturalism or critical thinking. Connolly explicitly expresses concerns in regards to capitalism and globalisation but concentrates on the rise of religious fundamentalism in conjunction with capitalism and globalisation. He also expresses concern in regards to consumerism, but only from an environmental point of view. Tully expresses similar concerns, which will become clearer in section 1. There appear to be grounds for the claim that Connolly's concern with capitalism has shortcomings and needs to pay more attention to the challenges that we are facing today caused by globalisation, capitalism and its logic of consumption on a global scale. Since they value diversity<sup>6</sup>, the questioning of norms and values, and critical individuals<sup>7</sup> the homogenizing influence of globalisation, capitalism and consumerism on multiculturalism stands as a threat to agonistic values – one that has not yet been properly addressed by agonists.

In Section 2 therefore, I will first demonstrate that globalisation, capitalism and its logic of consumption are defining factors in contemporary societies. I will first discuss 'McDonaldization'<sup>8</sup> as a product of globalisation, capitalism and consumerism and the way in which it influences cultures globally, second the influence that advertising, marketing and mass media has on consumers and third, the consumer ideologies which are spread through popular

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<sup>3</sup> Connolly, *Ethos of Pluralization*, p. 14.

<sup>4</sup> Connolly, *Ethos of Pluralization*, p. 14.

<sup>5</sup> Connolly, *Identity Difference*, pp. 199-200.

<sup>6</sup> Connolly, *Identity Difference*, pp. 199-200.

<sup>7</sup> Connolly, *Identity Difference*, pp. 199-200.

<sup>8</sup> Reyes, 'Investigating Global Culture', p. 31.

culture. It will become clear that McDonaldization, advertising, marketing, mass media and popular culture – all products of globalisation, capitalism and consumerism – therefore endanger cultural pluralism and diversity, which are valued by agonists such as Connolly and Tully. I will also make the claim that consumerism is a threat to critical thinking as consumers' choices are often influenced by Western consumer culture, which influences their ways of thinking. Herbert Marcuse wrote *One-Dimensional-Man* in 1964, where he already addressed a lot of factors regarding capitalism and the logic of consumption and warned consumers for the effect it would have on them and society.<sup>9</sup> Capitalism and its logic of consumption were already seen as a defining factor for societies in 1964 by Herbert Marcuse and in Section 2 it will become clear that these factors are currently more defining than ever. Globalisation, capitalism and its logic of consumption are mentioned as concerns by Connolly and Tully, but they must either revise their theories or provide an answer to how these factors must be dealt with or they must oppose globalisation, capitalism and its logic of consumption all together.

In short, it will become clear in this thesis that globalisation, capitalism and its logic of consumption run counter to the preconditions of agonistic politics and they should become a higher theoretical priority for agonistic thinkers.

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<sup>9</sup> Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man*.

## **1. Agonism and its Explicit Concerns**

In this Section, I will set out the values that Connolly and Tully share, before showing in Section 2 that globalisation, capitalism and its logic of consumption run counter to these values. First, as an introduction to agonism, I will claim that Connolly and Tully present their agonism as an alternative to deliberative democracy. After introducing agonism as an alternative to deliberative democracy, I will argue that in Connolly's and Tully's views, agonism is conditioned by cultural pluralism and diversity. It will also become clear that cultural pluralism and diversity must be composed of critically reflective individuals, who are able to question each other's beliefs and the accepted beliefs of the status quo. Lastly, I will show how and why agonists are concerned with globalisation – namely, because globalisation has allowed for new social movements to arise on a global scale. These transnational movements endanger agonistic politics as they are often not democratic which means that their rules and norms cannot always be questioned or discussed in a proper form. I will claim that for agonists to operate as an efficient alternative to deliberative democracy, they need to develop a global political theory that countenances these movements in a more comprehensive fashion. Having established that, for Connolly and Tully, cultural pluralism and critical thinking are preconditions for agonistic politics, in Section 2, I will argue that the agonists have not thought properly about the ways in which globalisation, capitalism and its logic of consumption impinges on these core values.

## 1.1. Agonism on the Shortcomings of Deliberative Democracy

Whereas deliberative democracy emphasizes the importance of consensus, agonism emphasizes the importance of contestation. Contrary to agonists, deliberative democrats reason that it is important that all involved parties participate in the process of decision making. For example, John Rawls as a deliberative democrat claims that an agreement takes place if, and only if, all participating parties endorse it. As consensus is emphasized, an agreement can be made even if not all parties get the preferred outcome. The best achievable outcome is still obtained, as the best achievable outcome is when all parties are in an agreement.<sup>10</sup> Rawls argues that

participants accede to standards of judgment, not to a given practice; they do not make any specific agreement, or bargain, or adopt a particular strategy. The subject of their acknowledgment is, therefore, very general indeed; it is simply the acknowledgment of certain principles of judgment, fulfilling certain general conditions, to be used in criticizing the arrangement of their common affairs.<sup>11</sup>

Thus, even if not all parties obtain their preferred outcome, it is still the best outcome once an agreement is reached.<sup>12</sup> If all parties who enter the compromise are willing to comply with the agreement, they will affirm the current result and understand that they ultimately all share the same objectives. As all parties affirm the outcome, tension between the prevailing party and other parties is resolved. The reassuring foundation which resolves this tension rests on the fact that all parties understand that consensus is the best achievable outcome.<sup>13</sup>

Another deliberative democrat who emphasizes the importance of reaching agreements is Jürgen Habermas. Habermas claims that deliberative procedures refer to legitimizing rules.<sup>14</sup> By this, he means that in order for political processes to be deliberative, discussion and debate must be made public and all parties who are involved in the matter should have the same

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<sup>10</sup> Rawls, 'Justice as Fairness', p. 176.

<sup>11</sup> Rawls, 'Justice as Fairness', p. 176.

<sup>12</sup> Rawls, 'Justice as Fairness', pp. 175-194.

<sup>13</sup> Rawls, 'Justice as Fairness', pp. 175-194.

<sup>14</sup> Habermas, *Facts and Norms*, pp. 226-254.



opportunities to participate. According to Habermas, deliberative politics must refer to institutionalized discursive procedures of decision making.<sup>15</sup> Habermas argues that deliberative politics consists of a network of debates which are meant to come up with rational solutions to pragmatic, moral and ethical problems.<sup>16</sup> Legitimate rule formation happens only through rational debate, which means that legitimizing rules can only happen if fair discourses can take place. Habermas claims that rationality in this sense is achieved through debate in which reflection and processes of learning are encouraged. The encouragement of such rationality can only happen if the debates in deliberative procedures are protected against factors which could influence the debate, such as power and social influence. These debates must operate on the basis of claims by individuals who can interpret the issue, employ their rationality and converge their opinions in order to forge the aforementioned solutions.<sup>17</sup> These debates operate according to a free and rational way of political life as long as the rules of the debate are in accordance with an agreement. Habermas argues that in order to come to an agreement, participants must engage in a critical discussion to justify the rules which will govern their political life and reasoning must determine the conditions of the possibilities they have of a rational agreement. Furthermore, the process of coming to an agreement on the force of the better argument rests upon distinctive features. These features include social coordination of members which communicate with the aim of reaching an agreement and satisfying the conditions of rationality which are inherent in communication. An ideal speech-act is comprehensible when it is in accordance with the conditions of reaching an agreement, which consists of three criticisable claims of validity as formulated below.<sup>18</sup>

It belongs to the communicative intent of the speaker (a) that he perform a speech act that is right in respect to the given normative context, so that between him and the hearer an intersubjective relation will come about which is recognized as legitimate; (b) that he makes a true statement, so that the hearer

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<sup>15</sup>Habermas, *Facts and Norms*, pp. 226-254.

<sup>16</sup>Habermas, *Facts and Norms*, pp. 226-254.

<sup>17</sup>Habermas, *Facts and Norms*, pp. 226-254.

<sup>18</sup>Habermas, 'Theory of Communicative Action', pp. 271-272.

will accept and share the knowledge of the speaker; and (c) that he express truthfully his beliefs, intentions, feelings, desires and the like, so that the hearer will give credence to what is said.<sup>19</sup>

Habermas argues that the three claims of validity – rightness, truth and sincerity – are related to three world-relations. The rightness claim relates to the world of morality and law, the truth claim relates to the world of science and the sincerity claim relates to the world of art. Habermas argues that the validity claims become valid when they are embedded in these three aspects.<sup>20</sup>

Communicatively achieved agreement is measured against exactly three criticisable validity claims; in coming to an understanding about something with one another and thus making themselves understandable, actors cannot avoid embedding their speech acts in precisely three world-relations and claiming validity for them under these three aspects<sup>21</sup>

To conclude, Habermas' speech-act is ideal when it is in accordance with these conditions and that is how agreements are reached and legitimized by its participants. Furthermore, Habermas is concerned with the deliberative socialization of a constitutional and democratic political system and how certain discourses which are to be found in public spheres are linked to such institutionalized procedures of deliberation.<sup>22</sup> He argues that the legitimacy of democratic procedures is linked to the equal participation of citizens. He claims that if all citizens are participating in the creation of the law they can consequently see themselves as the creators of that law.<sup>23</sup> According to Habermas, the deliberative process of democratic procedures requires inclusiveness of all so that they can all see themselves as creators of the law, and the process is thereby legitimized. Often conflicts of interests are not resolved and the smaller parties have to

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<sup>19</sup> Habermas, 'Theory of Communicative Action', pp. 271-272.

<sup>20</sup> Habermas, 'Theory of Communicative Action', pp. 236-315.

<sup>21</sup> Habermas, 'Theory of Communicative Action', pp. 236-315.

<sup>22</sup> Habermas, *Facts and Norms*, p. 302.

<sup>23</sup> Habermas, *Between Naturalism*, pp. 433-435.

subordinate their interests to those of the majority, which is justified due to the importance of problem solving and decision making.<sup>24</sup>

To conclude, Rawls and Habermas are examples of deliberative democrats who argue that consensus or agreements are important in order to ensure that all parties endorse or legitimize the chosen outcome within democracies. Tully and Connolly offer agonism as an alternative to deliberative democracy which will be discussed in the next section.

### *Tully's critique of Habermas*

Tully formulates a critique against Habermas' ideal-speech act and argues that Habermas' speech-act entails that the customary agreements are rational only if the participants can justify reasons through the three claims of validity which are implicit in their speech-acts. When asked for the reasons that justify the 'rightness, truth or sincerity of their speech-act', the participants move to a 'critically reflective language to justify the customary agreements'.<sup>25</sup> Tully critiques this and argues that contemporary political thought rests upon the mistaken convention that political life only is free and rational if it is based on a form of critical reflection. Tully thus critiques Jürgen Habermas's validation form as formulated in the ideal speech-act in order to free us from customary misunderstandings of critical reflection.<sup>26</sup>

To clarify, Habermas argues that disagreements must be overcome and agreements are brought about through the ideal speech-act and the use of 'democracy' is confirmed in this way. However, Tully argues that if there is no basic agreement, then the participants who either affirm or reject the agreement, will disagree in the course of the free play of questions and answers. The degree of conformity which Habermas requires to get this form of critical reflection going cannot be achieved, according to Tully. Tully argues that 'the very type of

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<sup>24</sup> Habermas, *Facts and Norms*, p. 254.

<sup>25</sup> Tully, 'Wittgenstein Political Philosophy', p. 177.

<sup>26</sup> Tully, 'Wittgenstein Political Philosophy', p. 172.

sedimented practice Habermas claims to oppose cannot achieve the degree of conformity required to get his form of critical reflection going'.<sup>27</sup> Tully does not reject Habermas' validational practice of critical reflection, but argues that it has hegemonic aspirations which must be restored to their proper place in the diverse polity as one form of critical reflection among many. Tully argues that there are many forms of critical reflection outside the validational tradition brought by Habermas. Tully argues that openness is required towards the collections of types of critical reflection available to participants in the complex modern political practice. Habermas' form of thinking is therefore a threat to free and critical thought and actions as it generalizes one conventional type of critical reflection and excludes other forms.<sup>28</sup> Tully argues that if Habermas wants to fix the three validity claims as the independent determinants of the legitimate form of critical reflection, he requires an argument which goes further than the ongoing and changing plurality of practices. Instead of ending critical reflection, he forms a new conception of it as non-foundational in political thought and actions and gives us a clear view of its diverse forms.<sup>29</sup>

To conclude, Tully argues that Habermas is a political thinker who was tempted to promote juridical institutions and forms of thought to a place of sovereignty in political life and exclude other forms of political thought and action. However, we should be able to challenge these practices which are designed to guard our freedom instead of reinforce them.<sup>30</sup> Tully argues that Habermas' theory freezes certain juridical ways of thought and actions at the cost of a critical enquiry into the limitations of these arrangements and we must therefore question and alter the rules as we go along. The conventional boundaries which are temporarily followed in order to reach an agreement must be called into question one conventional boundary at a time and we must seek to go beyond them.<sup>31</sup> In section 1.2, I will give a deeper explanation of Tully's agonism as an alternative to deliberative democracy.

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<sup>27</sup> Tully, 'Wittgenstein Political Philosophy', p. 182.

<sup>28</sup> Tully, 'Wittgenstein Political Philosophy', p. 192.

<sup>29</sup> Tully, 'Wittgenstein Political Philosophy', p. 191.

<sup>30</sup> Tully, 'Wittgenstein Political Philosophy', p. 185.

<sup>31</sup> Tully, 'Wittgenstein Political Philosophy', p. 186.

### *Connolly's Critique of Habermas*

Like Tully, Connolly formulates a critique of the ideal speech-situation and argues that the ideal speech situation sets a restrictive frame within which reasoned discourse can produce truth and which would continue to emerge in any future discourse that meets the specified conditions that Habermas puts forward. Connolly does not reject the ideal speech situation but rather argues that Habermas problematically seeks to found a theory of truth on intersubjective consensus and to parameters of discourse. However, Connolly argues that if the conditions of ideal speech are loosely defined, then there is no assurance that one truth will emerge in each domain of inquiry.

If the conditions are specified closely, it becomes contestable – and thus legitimately part of the discourse itself – whether these conditions are in fact met in a specific discourse or whether they themselves are unduly restrictive. What presents itself as an ideal speech situation from one vantage point may appear as a subtly distorted discourse from another.<sup>32</sup>

Connolly goes on to argue that the ideal discourse presupposes a standard of truth but in a particular time and place, requiring preliminary acceptance of a particular set of prejudices before proceeding with the discourse. Some sets of conditions must be accepted whilst others are called into question. Therefore, unless a set of conditions is accepted there is no significant ground to produce conclusions. If potentially contestable claims should provide the background of an undiscussed discourse there is no guarantee that the outcome is not influenced by prejudice.<sup>33</sup> In other words, in order to produce conclusions an accepted set of conditions is required. However, if this set is influenced by prejudice, then the outcome will also be prejudiced and the question arises if the reasoned discourse produces truth.

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<sup>32</sup> Connolly, McCarthy, 'Critical Theory' p. 409.

<sup>33</sup> Connolly, McCarthy, 'Critical Theory' p. 410.

Connolly also formulates a general critique of deliberative democracy. Connolly argues that democracy means government by public will and hegemony means the predominance of some wills over others in public life. However, according to Connolly the conception of democracy must come to grips with the unavoidable connection between democratic politics and the formation of hegemonic coalitions. Connolly argues that any political coalition with sufficient public presence can give direction to public policy and is therefore likely to face resistance and opposition from participants who feel assaulted by some of the priorities of the coalition.<sup>34</sup>

Democracy is attractive in the sense that it enables all participants to engage in public politics. At the same time, the engagement in public politics by all participants enables these participants to dogmatize conventional identities. By this, Connolly means that if a minority of participants in a society are suffering from effective exclusion from the good life then the minority of participants remain within this dogmatic conventional identity. Connolly argues that access to economic, educational and cultural opportunities are therefore necessary to maintain engagement with the contingency of identities. Agonal democracy as an alternative presupposes a reduction in established economic inequalities and it requires public engagement to promote it.<sup>35</sup> In short, agonists argue that deliberative democracy entails an appreciation of consensus and is therefore not good at representing people's interests when those interests cannot be expressed properly. In the next section, it will become clear how Connolly and Tully define agonism as an alternative to deliberative democracy.

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<sup>34</sup> Connolly, *Identity/Difference*, pp. 211-212.

<sup>35</sup> Connolly, *Identity/Difference*, pp. 211-212.

## 1.2. Defining Agonism as an Alternative to Deliberative Democracy

In the process of achieving overlapping consensus, not all individual moral standards and conceptions are represented and sometimes some individuals have to subordinate their interests to that of the majority in order to come to an agreement. Therefore, minority needs and the representation of those needs are at risk of being neglected in the process of achieving consensus. Tully claims that the rules of the government and the procedures of right should maintain their importance, but they should always be subject to change.<sup>36</sup> By emphasizing contestation instead of consensus, oppressed individuals can express their interests whilst rules and procedures are meant to safeguard peace and stability. The participation of citizens and democratic openness are therefore emphasized in discourses in order to ensure cooperation. In doing so, contestation is emphasized without disrupting peace and stability as the discourses are encouraged to be held in respectable manners. The interests of all parties and the plurality of views are safeguarded this way. Binding agreements can still take place, as long as they remain open for questioning. By emphasizing contestation instead of consensus, diverse interests are represented more equally and the tensions between them are maintained. Then, politics become more than just a mere implementation of rules.<sup>37</sup> As the rules of the government are always open for questioning and all have the freedom to do so, diversity is safeguarded without disrupting peace or the possibility of consensus. Thus, consensus is available as long as the established rules remain open for questioning.<sup>38</sup>

Furthermore, as contestation is emphasized as the foundation of politics, disputations should also be valued according to Tully. In order to ensure cooperation between citizens it is important that they exercise democratic participation. By stimulating dialogue between individuals and allowing for dialogical participation, individuals can challenge the practices of

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<sup>36</sup> Tully, *Public Philosophy in New Key*, p. 307.

<sup>37</sup> Tully, *Public Philosophy in New Key*, p. 270.

<sup>38</sup> Tully, *Public Philosophy in New Key*, p. 270.

governance. These democratic dialogues have no set of procedures which can provide resolutions to what counts as the norms, as any type of agreement is imperfect and will always to some extent be based on a reasonable disagreement. Tully argues that mutual recognition involves a dialogue in which similarities and differences between cultures are discussed so that a proper form of constitutional recognition can be shaped. Tully argues that there is not one appropriate form of constitutional recognition of cultural diversity, but if a temporary constitution can be established then at least cultural diversity can be recognized. Then, a constitution can be seen as an activity in which an intercultural dialogue can take place where culturally diverse sovereign citizens of contemporary societies can debate in accordance with the goals of consent and cultural continuity.<sup>39</sup>

Mutual recognition consists in two steps: the acceptance of this form of recognition by both peoples and its public affirmation in the basic institutions (...). When people enter into a relationship they always recognise each other under some description. Recognition is usually habitual and unreflective, part of one's customary cultural understanding of, and attitude towards, self and others. The taken-for-granted form of recognition sets the horizon with which one envisions and relates to oneself and others.<sup>40</sup>

Tully argues that in order to reconcile conflicts over recognition, dialogue must take place and must be recurring in practice and must be inseparable from other conflicts over integration for citizens.<sup>41</sup> Existing powers must always be subjected to uncertainty and open for questioning, so that dialogue between governing powers and minority groups can arise.<sup>42</sup> In short, Tully's conception of agonism places emphasis on mutual recognition of the cultures of citizens and the questioning of the prevailing norms and rules through discussions. These rules can maintain

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<sup>39</sup> Tully, *Public Philosophy in New Key*, p. 230.

<sup>40</sup> Tully, *Public Philosophy in New Key*, p. 230.

<sup>41</sup> Tully, *Public Philosophy in New Key*, p. 310.

<sup>42</sup> Tully, *Public Philosophy in New Key*, p. 310.



their legitimacy, as long as they are consistently up for discussion and their cultural ways are acknowledged and affirmed in the basic institutions of societies.<sup>43</sup> As he argues that

members do not only recognise each other as free and equal, in these contested senses, but also, as the bearers of distinct, or as the Supreme Court puts it, non-discrimination, equity policies, proportional representation, the protection of individual and group identities, languages cultures, self-government and some federal arrangements are often justified in part by the principle diversity or distinctness.<sup>44</sup>

Connolly argues that when negotiations are held between political actors, participants must maintain an 'ethical attitude of respect' towards the interests of the other parties in the discourse. When consensus is emphasized interests of other parties can become neglected, but through the attitude of ethical respect the diversity of life can remain appreciated.<sup>45</sup> Connolly claims that 'agonistic respect' is a fundamental agonistic virtue. Agonistic respect is the expression of respect between political actors when they experience disagreements between their views in the process of their negotiations. By expressing agonistic respect, political actors express their political views in a respectful manner in order for negotiations to remain reasonable when intercultural dialogues take place. By expressing respect, 'a care for others and their opinions is cultivated without outbursts of political violence taking place'.<sup>46</sup> Contestation is to be understood as founded upon the virtue of respect which limits outbursts between individuals when in dialogue. Contestation also ensures that appreciation of the diversity constitutive of life is maintained. Individuals who cultivate this ethic of contestation ensure that they are aware of the interdependence of the different value systems. By cultivating agonistic respect towards democratic politics, the authorities can conceivably be disputed.<sup>47</sup> By disputing these authorities, power can be reconfigured, which is essential in order to change the outlines and forms of the previously established norms and values.<sup>48</sup> Through the discontinuation of the

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<sup>43</sup> Tully, *Public Philosophy in New Key*, p. 197.

<sup>44</sup> Tully, *Public Philosophy in New Key*, p. 197.

<sup>45</sup> Tambakaki, 'Tasks of Agonism', p. 3.

<sup>46</sup> Tambakaki, 'Tasks of Agonism', p. 4.

<sup>47</sup> Connolly, *Identity Difference*, pp. 211-214.

<sup>48</sup> Connolly, *Identity Difference*, pp. 199-200.

authorities and the disruption of previously established norms and values by means of agonistic respect, space is created for new democratic movements to take place. These new democratic movements could be viewed as a threat to the norms and values formed by the previously hegemonic groups. Nonetheless, Connolly encourages these individuals who are possibly feeling threatened to receive the new democratic movement respectfully and to be receptive towards the next set of surprises.<sup>49</sup> Connolly stresses the importance of maintaining tension between the previous establishment and the new democratic movements, so that 'fixed and naturalized' identities and their norms and values can be questioned.<sup>50</sup> The previous establishment should be able to be challenged, contested, discussed and if necessary, altered to prevent naturalized norms and values from settling.

In short, Connolly's concept of agonism emphasizes the cultivation of agonistic respect, by which he means that the diversity of opinions are valued and negotiations remain respectable so that they can take place in a constitutive way in which outbursts are limited. In regards to democratic politics, tension must be maintained between previously established and emergent political movements. Diversity is safeguarded by the constant challenging, contesting, discussing, altering of rules and the questioning of contemporary self-satisfied unities to ensure that these do not become fixed and naturalized.<sup>51</sup> To conclude, Connolly as well as Tully claim that it is important to maintain tension between the previously established parties and new movements, which should be subject to permanent questioning. The possibility of altering the rules of governance should remain open.

Where Connolly refers to the virtue of respect which enables the appreciation of the differences between value systems when dialogue takes place, Tully emphasizes using dialogical participation to question the rules of the government.<sup>52</sup> The problems that Tully and Connolly have with deliberative democracy is that it excludes richer forms of democratic pluralism as it entails appreciation of consensus and is therefore not very good at representing people's

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<sup>49</sup> Connolly, *Political Theory*, p. 239.

<sup>50</sup> Connolly, *Political Theory*, p. 239.

<sup>51</sup> Connolly, *Political Theory*, p. 188-192.

<sup>52</sup> Tully, *Public Philosophy in New Key*, p. 310.

interests when those interests cannot be expressed within the orthodox expression. Agonism as an alternative to deliberative democracy allows for people's interests to be represented as they have the space in a free and open society to publicly question and consider each other's reasoning and to potentially renegotiate.<sup>53</sup>

### 1.3. The Conditioning Values of Agonism

#### 1.3.1. How Agonism is conditioned by Cultural Pluralism

Connolly's conception of agonism places emphasis on cultivating agonistic respect when negotiations take place. In doing so, a tension is maintained in democracies between political governance and the establishment. This tension is essential for democracies and must be maintained because it allows for new democratic movements to resist existing hegemonic movements. By allowing established movements and new movements to constantly be questioned, a dynamic arises in which regularity and difference are permanently being questioned and redefined. This movement can be understood as a movement of plurality.<sup>54</sup> Therefore, pluralism can be defined as the existence of different democratic movements which all consist of different norms and values compared to each other. As the established movements are constantly questioned, individuals are encouraged to challenge the existing norms and values and to consistently create new norms and values.<sup>55</sup> These diverse groups have different cultures compared to each other and can question each other's norms and values by referencing the regularities of their own different cultures.<sup>56</sup>

The ethos of critical responsiveness [...] does not reduce the other to what some 'we' already is. It opens up cultural space through which the other might consolidate itself into something that is unafflicted by negative cultural markings.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Tully, *Public Philosophy in New Key*, p. 310.

<sup>54</sup> Connolly, *Ethos of Pluralization*, pp. 246-250.

<sup>55</sup> Connolly, *Ethos of Pluralization*, pp. 246-250.

<sup>56</sup> Connolly, *Political Theory*, pp. 246-250.

<sup>57</sup> Connolly, *Political Theory*, pp. 41-42.

Connolly argues that the existence of diverse groups is an essential part of democracy and is necessary to contest the established movements to create space for new democratic movements. Cultural pluralism is therefore, according to Connolly, a precondition of agonistic political organisation.<sup>58</sup>

Similar to Connolly, Tully argues that movements of pluralism are an essential part of democracies as they must ensure that cultural homogenization promoted by the establishment does not endanger forms and movements of cultural pluralism.<sup>59</sup> Tully refers to forms of cultural pluralism as new forms of solidarity and argues that in daily life these diverse forms of solidarity have practices which go on below the surface of the dull apparatus of imperial uniformity.<sup>60</sup> Tully goes on to argue that these diverse groups ‘directly act otherwise’ in relation to the dominant groups which is how the norms, values and practices of the established groups and movements are challenged.<sup>61</sup> Diverse groups therefore have the capacity to ‘change the world without taking power’, as they can challenge the establishment and its daily practices without exerting political governance. Tully’s claim that diverse groups are necessary to challenge and alter the manifestations of norms and values of the established groups, has the value of cultural plurality at its core. If the established cultures are to remain legitimate, different norms and values which are present in diverse groups are required to question the established cultures.<sup>62</sup>

Tully suggests that prevailing groups often overlook democratic inclusion which can cause misrepresentation of the diverse groups which are overlooked in these communities. He proposes that invisible forms of democratic inclusion must be rendered visible and given more prominence so that the democratic practices are always open to its diverse members. Tully argues that by participating in everyday discussions, the members of the larger society and the

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<sup>58</sup> Connolly, *Political Theory*, pp. 41-42.

<sup>59</sup> Tully, *Public Philosophy in New Key*, p. 313.

<sup>60</sup> Tully, *Strange Multiplicity*, pp. 58-98.

<sup>61</sup> Tully, *Strange Multiplicity*, pp. 58-98.

<sup>62</sup> Tully, *Public Philosophy in New Key*, p. 305.

minorities develop ‘a sense of belonging’ and identify with the democracy where they ‘have a say over its constitutional forms of recognition.’<sup>63</sup>

Thus, to conclude, according to agonists, cultural plurality – also referred to as the existence of diverse political groups – is an essential part of democratic politics. Different individuals and groups hold different norms, values and practices compared to the established groups and are required to challenge and possibly alter the established norms, values and practices. As Connolly’s and Tully’s concepts of agonism emphasize, the contestation and change which can be offered by diverse groups and their different norms and values, are conditioned by cultural pluralism.

There is a lot more to be said about what cultural plurality exactly entails, but the main point to be made is that diversity must be foregrounded within agonistic democratic politics and, therefore, that agonism is conditioned by cultural pluralism. In the following section, I will claim that besides being conditioned by cultural pluralism, Connolly and Tully show agonism to be likewise conditioned by critical thinking.

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<sup>63</sup> Tully, *Public Philosophy in New Key*, p. 211.

### 1.3.2. The Necessity of Individual Critical Thinking

Connolly's and Tully's concepts of agonism are conditioned by cultural pluralism, because in order to question the established norms, values and practices, diverse groups are necessary to critically reflect on these norms, values and practices. Connolly argues that diverse groups are required to define themselves in relation to the establishment and the relation to each other, to understand what the regularities and the differences are between their norms, values and practices. Their collective identity is therefore shaped in relation to each other and in relation to established groups. As a result of these processes, a constitutive outside arises.<sup>64</sup> In order for collective identities to define their differences, they must recognize what is different and what is regular as collective identities are established by recognition of what is different and what is regular, constitutive to their collective identity.<sup>65</sup> This concept of identity is shaped in a social context, since it is only in a social context that differences become visible between the different views that groups and people share in relation to one another. By having a sense of identity and recognizing the difference between oneself and the other, one defines oneself.<sup>66</sup> For individuals, having a sense of identity is important, in order to establish the boundaries available to the self and other groups. This helps in the process of questioning the established identities, as one can recognize the difference between their regularities and their own differences. In order to develop a strong sense of identity, individuals must have a strong relationship with their own inherent consciousness. This can be developed by practicing self-discipline and self-regulation.<sup>67</sup>

An identity is established in relation to a series of differences that have become socially recognized. These differences are essential to its being. If they did not coexist as differences, it would not exist in its distinctness and solidity. Entrenched in this indispensable relation is a second set of tendencies ... to congeal established identities

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<sup>64</sup> Connolly, *Identity Difference*, p. 67.

<sup>65</sup> Connolly, *Identity Difference*, p. 64.

<sup>66</sup> Connolly, *Identity Difference*, p. 64.

<sup>67</sup> Connolly, *Identity Difference*, pp. 86-88.

into fixed forms, thought and lived as if their structure expressed the true order of things. Identity requires difference in order to be, and it converts difference into otherness in order to secure its own self-certainty.<sup>68</sup>

In short, Connolly argues that through self-discipline and self-regulation one develops a relationship with one's own inherent consciousness which can be used to question the norms, values and practices of one's surroundings and to define oneself and the collective in a social context. Critical individuals with a strong sense of identity can define the distinction between the established norms, values and practices and can maintain a tension between their own diverse groups and the established groups.<sup>69</sup> Tully argues that the understanding of 'who we are, the partners with whom we are constrained to cooperate, and hence the acceptable norms of mutual recognition change in the course of the dialogue.'<sup>70</sup> If one can free oneself from the conceptions and conventions which are governing the thoughts and actions of other individuals, then one is in a position to modify these surroundings through one's own thoughts and actions. Tully goes on to argue that through on-going conflict, negotiation and discussion, individuals can identify the thoughts and actions of their surroundings, so that they can question and if necessary modify them. Through discussing and negotiating with groups and individuals who have different understandings, one is able to change one's own opinion, thoughts and actions. In this sense, the self is subject to change and so are other groups, as long as they can negotiate and discuss. Critical reflection of the self and of others and groups is therefore an essential part of political life. Tully therefore criticizes any conventions that have not been questioned and argues that the only way that political life is rational is if it is the product of reflection.<sup>71</sup> In short, Tully claims that conventions must always be questioned and critical individuals are required to constantly do so. The self and others should therefore always be subject to change, which happens through ongoing negotiation and discussion. Agreements can be reached, but they must constantly be criticized and questioned.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Connolly, *Identity Difference*, p. 64.

<sup>69</sup> Connolly, *Identity Difference*, p. 93.

<sup>70</sup> Tully, *Public Philosophy in New Key*, p. 303.

<sup>71</sup> Tully, *Strange Multiplicity*, p. 38.

<sup>72</sup> Tully, *Strange Multiplicity*, p. 38.

As argued, there is a lot more to say about how Connolly's and Tully's concepts of agonism require critical individuals to define themselves, their surroundings and to question themselves and their surroundings accordingly. However, I will leave this aside, since for our purposes it is only necessary to make clear that their conceptions of agonism requires critical individuals. In the previous section, I demonstrated that Connolly's and Tully's conceptions of agonism are conditioned by cultural pluralism. We can now see that Connolly's and Tully's vision of agonistic society also requires the prevailing existence of critical individuals who question the norms, values and practices that are constantly being established, thereby ensuring that regularities do not become fixed and that there is space for differences to arise and for identities to be shaped and defined. The final point that I want to make before moving to Section 2 is that Connolly and Tully are concerned with globalisation, capitalism and consumerism in a way that, as we will see in subsequent sections, further shows that they should be more concerned with the problem of globalisation, capitalism and its logic of consumption.

#### **1.4. Agonism's Concern with Globalisation, Capitalism and Consumerism**

Before claiming that globalisation, capitalism and consumerism run counter to agonistic values, I will briefly discuss the concerns that Connolly and Tully already express in regards to globalisation, capitalism and consumerism. My reason for doing so, is that I do not want to give the impression that they *completely* ignore the problem of globalisation, capitalism and consumerism, only that they do not properly acknowledge the way that it undermines cultural pluralism and critical reflection, which they figure as preconditions of agonistic politics.



#### 1.4.1. Globalisation

Connolly argues that globalisation is associated with the reproduction of social processes, which is evident in

‘the acceleration of population flows accompanying the globalisation of economic life ... the acceleration of speed in military delivery systems, cultural communications, civilian transportation, disease transmission, ecological change and political mobilisation’.<sup>73</sup>

According to Connolly, globalisation provides opportunities to form new social movements on a global scale. He gives the example of the transnational movement against apartheid in South Africa in the 1980’s, but argues that transnational movements as such will not develop into forms of authority on a global scale and the future of these movements in regards to democratic politics is uncertain. Thus, he argues that ‘today the world is composed of multiple systems – social, cultural, ideological, as well as natural – periodically colliding, colluding, and comingling<sup>74</sup>, and therefore a theory is needed ‘that draws attention to the complex interactions between systems in various degrees of disequilibrium’.<sup>75</sup> Connolly claims that a theory is required to draw attention to these complex interactions, because these ‘movements’ go beyond the politics of the nations from which they originate. By operating on a global level, the norms, values and practices of these groups surpass the politics of their own nations. Therefore, Connolly claims that globalisation of these groups needs to be accompanied by an analogous globalisation of politics.<sup>76</sup> What is needed is a global model which can ensure that a tension is maintained between established norms, values and practices and the norms, values and the practices of minorities and diverse groups. This is important, because as argued in the previous section, it is a precondition of agonistic politics that conventions can be questioned. This questioning and negotiating must take place on a national level, but as globalisation is allowing

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<sup>73</sup> Connolly, *Ethos of Pluralization*, p. 14.

<sup>74</sup> Connolly, *Capitalism and Christianity*, p. 69.

<sup>75</sup> Connolly, *Capitalism and Christianity*, p. 87.

<sup>76</sup> Connolly, *Political Theory*, p. 125.

for groups to move globally, it must also take place at a global level.<sup>77</sup> Thus, the concern that Connolly has in regards to globalisation is that there is not yet an existing appropriate political theory which can draw attention to these global movements and which can ensure that such negotiation and questioning takes place on a global level.

Similar to Connolly, Tully is concerned that globalisation raises concerns about global governance and citizenship, as formulated:

When global citizenship is enquired, a complex field of contested languages, activities, institutions, processes appears. The conjunction of globalisation and citizenship is where the problem of global citizenship lies, because the activities, institutions, processes and languages have come together under the term 'global citizenship' and here a problem is formulated in regards to research, policy and theory.<sup>78</sup>

Due to globalisation, activities, institutions, processes and languages have come together under the term 'global citizenship' in regards to research, policies and theories.<sup>79</sup> The problem of the conjunction of globalisation and citizenship can be seen in the following example that Tully gives. Tully argues that if citizens are enabled by global institutions to perform certain forms of activities and disabled to perform other forms of activity, the question arises what kind of activities are enabled or disabled and for what goods. He argues that for citizens to be free and for institutions to be just, those who are subject to these institutions must be able to test these institutions in the course of their activities within them, to raise questions and modify or transform them if necessary. Through the testing of these institutions by citizens, degrees of democratizations are brought to the institutionalization of their societies.<sup>80</sup> However, global institutions do not provide citizens the opportunities to question them properly, as Tully argues that national democratic institutions are being undermined by these global institutions. Examples are the United Nations, World Trade Organisations, Non-Governmental Organisations and transnational corporations which operate through bureaucracy and market

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<sup>77</sup> Connolly, *Political Theory*, p. 125.

<sup>78</sup> Tully, *Global Citizenship: Replies*, p. 4.

<sup>79</sup> Tully, *Global Citizenship: Replies*, p. 4.

<sup>80</sup> Tully, *Global Citizenship: Replies*, p. 327.

mechanisms instead of following democratic procedures. Consequentially, state sovereignty is compromised because these global institutions cannot be questioned through national democratic institutions. The problem of global citizenship is therefore that global institutions are not open for questioning through democratic procedures. As a result, individuals lose interest in democratic participation as their democratic institutions are compromised.<sup>81</sup>

Mark Wenman clearly formulates Tully's claim in regards to global communication and argues that according to Tully, due to new technology, rapid means of global communication have become available which allow participants of the technological network to affect social and economic processes on a global scale. By technological networks operating on a global scale, the traditional democratic decision-making procedures which usually apply to communication processes are neglected.<sup>82</sup> Tully refers to the global technological networks as non-democratic spaces which represent unequal forms of communication, because each participant in the network is treated as a free player and can communicate creatively and interactively and impact the rules as they go along.<sup>83</sup> Through the available means of global communication, the participants establish partnerships with each other without confronting and negotiating with governors to change regulations and without questioning 'the capitalist foreground modes of production'.<sup>84</sup> To clarify what is meant by this claim, Tully gives examples of the partnerships established on technological networks which resulted from these global forms of solidarity such as 'not-for-profit organisations, urban communes, the World Social Forum, the Zapatistas' and so on.<sup>85</sup> As Tully claims that these partnerships do not negotiate with governors in order to change regulations, the aspect of contesting, challenging and altering regulations is neglected by these technological partnerships. Since these global technological networks continue to practice unconventional modes of citizenship by not questioning supra-states and transnational

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<sup>81</sup> Tully, *Global Citizenship: Replies*, p. 15.

<sup>82</sup> Wenman, *Agonistic Democracy*, p. 175.

<sup>83</sup> Wenman, *Agonistic Democracy*, p. 175.

<sup>84</sup> Wenman, *Agonistic Democracy*, p. 175.

<sup>85</sup> Wenman, *Agonistic Democracy*, p. 175.

corporations, an appropriate theory is required to confront the decisions that supra-states and transnational corporations make.<sup>86</sup>

Thus, like Connolly, Tully is concerned with globalisation because an appropriate political theory is needed in order to confront global institutions such as supra-states and transnational corporations, namely, because they currently undermine democratic institutions and implement policies without prior questioning. As argued, contesting, challenging and altering regulations before they are implemented is an essential component of agonistic politics. We can therefore conclude this section with the claim that agonists are concerned with globalisation because it allows for global communication to take place between citizens a) without them questioning and critically reflecting on the dominant global-capitalist modes of production and b) without them forming an analogous form of global democratic politics. In the next subsequent section, I will discuss Connolly's and Tully's concerns in regards to capitalism and consumerism.

#### 1.4.2. Capitalism and Consumerism

Connolly does express a concern with regards to capitalism but argues that it is not capitalism alone that he is concerned with, but rather capitalism in conjunction with the theocratic ambition of the militant section of Christianity and argues that this conjunction poses a threat to democracy in the United States.<sup>87</sup> Connolly argues that in the United States, the capitalist-evangelical complex endangers economic security, the reduction of inequality and the fostering of multidimensional pluralism. Connolly argues that the following actions can prevent this endangerment from becoming a reality: 'Local political involvement, countrywide social movements, direct pressure on corporate structures, participation in national party politics, and cross-state citizen networks.'<sup>88</sup> Political involvement, social movements, pressures on corporate

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<sup>86</sup> Wenman, *Agonistic Democracy*, p. 166.

<sup>87</sup> Connolly, 'The Evangelical-Capitalist', p. 870.

<sup>88</sup> Connolly, 'The Evangelical-Capitalist', p. 870.

structures, national party policies and citizen-networks must take action to challenge the state. Connolly thus sees capitalism as a threat to democracy and expresses concern in regards to the democracy being endangered. However, he refers to capitalism in conjunction with Christianity, but does not express his concern in regards to capitalism without this conjunction.<sup>89</sup> I will first discuss Connolly's understanding of the conjunction between capitalism and Christianity followed by his concern expressed in regards to consumerism.

Wenman also clearly explains Connolly's central concerns for this theory of agonistic democracy from his encounter with Augustine. The Augustinian imperative is manifested in 'the insistence that there is an intrinsic moral order' – the doctrine of the one true God – which is 'susceptible to authoritative representation'.<sup>90</sup> Augustine explains evil through original sin which stems from the teachings of Adam and Eve who manifest a division within the will itself and give rise to a morality of resentment.<sup>91</sup> This resentment 'is linked to an obligatory pursuit; the quest to move closer to one's truest self by exploring its inner geography and rooting out those inner monstrosities that appear to break with the moral design'.<sup>92</sup> Connolly argues that Augustine sought to secure the identity of the Christian Church and doctrine by defining the propagators of other truths as carriers of 'evil'.<sup>93</sup> Connolly argues that the moral imperative has become entrenched in Western civilisation and in order to cope with life, individuals search for another individual 'who is responsible for their suffering and who can become the repository of resentment'.<sup>94</sup> Thus, Connolly identifies the origins of religious fundamentalism as manifest in the mobilisation of the Christian Right in the United States which tends to 'project fundamentalism solely onto the other and fail to recognise its strains in themselves'.<sup>95</sup> Connolly argues that due to enhanced global awareness, believers discover that Christianity is a minority religion in the world as a whole. This brings uncertainty which drives believers to want revenge

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<sup>89</sup> Connolly, 'The Evangelical-Capitalist', p. 873.

<sup>90</sup> Wenman, *Agonistic Democracy*, p. 102.

<sup>91</sup> Wenman, *Agonistic Democracy*, p. 103.

<sup>92</sup> Wenman, *Agonistic Democracy*, p. 103.

<sup>93</sup> Wenman, *Agonistic Democracy*, p. 103.

<sup>94</sup> Wenman, *Agonistic Democracy*, p. 103.

<sup>95</sup> Wenman, *Agonistic Democracy*, p. 104.

against those who deny that Christ is the son of God.<sup>96</sup> Connolly argues that any evidence of theological uncertainty potentially acts as a cause for revenge against economic egalitarians, pluralists and nonbelievers.<sup>97</sup> Connolly argues that there is a will to revenge which energizes the evangelical-capitalist machine which echoes back and forth between leaders and followers. Resentment against cultural diversity, economic egalitarianism and the future are rotating within the evangelical-capitalist machine. Connolly explains that individuals in this machine seek similar targets of hatred, such as gay marriage advocates or devotees of Islamic faith.<sup>98</sup>

He suggests however that this will to revenge could be solved if individuals in this machine could understand that a God which expands its care for the diversity of being can decide that

homosexuality is not a sin, that the world's resources are not infinite, that women are not ordained to be subordinate, that morality does not always take the shape of a command, and that neoliberalism is no more necessary to economic life as such than an omnipotent God is to religion as such.<sup>99</sup>

In order for this understanding to emerge, a series of painful debates must take place within churches and outside of churches and even between those outside of the evangelical movement. Connolly argues that although these debates might be painful, they are an essential part of politics and 'to remain outside those debates and domains today is to withdraw from the passion of politics'.<sup>100</sup>

In regards to consumerism, Connolly expresses the concern that consumerism is having a negative impact on the climate and argues that action is required in order to change the current ecological system. He argues that today it seems important to attend to the relation between 'the need for structural change and the need to identify multiple sites of potential

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<sup>96</sup> Connolly, 'The Evangelical-Capitalist', p. 875.

<sup>97</sup> Connolly, 'The Evangelical-Capitalist', p. 876.

<sup>98</sup> Connolly, 'The Evangelical-Capitalist', p. 879

<sup>99</sup> Connolly, 'The Evangelical-Capitalist', p. 883.

<sup>100</sup> Connolly, 'The Evangelical-Capitalist', p. 883.

action'.<sup>101</sup> He then puts forward sites of action that he argues may be pertinent in regards to the dangers the climate may be currently facing. Amongst the sites of action he suggests, one site of action is that consumption patterns need to be reconstituted by

a combination of direct citizen actions in consumption choices, publicity of such actions and social movements to reconstitute the state/market supported infrastructure of consumption.<sup>102</sup>

The infrastructure of consumption must be changed by citizens, through the publicity of actions and through social movements. The goal of reconstituting consumption patterns would be to minimize 'the deadly future' created by current consumption patterns and to reduce inequality. Achieving this goal would involve substantial changes in consumption patterns, corporate policies, state law and the priorities of interstate organisations. Furthermore, Connolly argues that although the democratic state is incapable of reconstituting the ethos of consumption, it must still play a role with respect to 'the climate, weather, resource use, ocean currents, tectonic instability, glacier flows, species diversity, work, local life, consumption, and investment', as the democratic state can pressure the creation of new consumption habits. Connolly predicts that a new democratic Left will move past the disapproval of the idea of the state and at the same time continue to stay alert towards the hazards it can pose.<sup>103</sup>

Tully also mentions the damaging effects which the capitalist economy has on the planet's ecology and discusses several ways in which the damage could be reduced. Tully argues that the capitalist economy requires a ecological ethics, including local democratic activity in order to make local practices more ecological and 'economically self-reliant'. However, Tully argues that regulating the environment through a global agency tends to be ineffective and anti-democratic, as the capitalist economy is 'a complex network, or constellation of networks, of overlapping and criss-crossing heterogeneous'.<sup>104</sup> Tully argues that in order to implement an effective change, citizen's routine acting must be changed simultaneously with changing what

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<sup>101</sup> Connolly, 'Steps Towards an Ecology', p. 10.

<sup>102</sup> Connolly, 'Steps Towards an Ecology', p. 10.

<sup>103</sup> Connolly, 'Steps Towards an Ecology', p. 11.

<sup>104</sup> Tully, *Public Philosophy in New Key*, pp. 89-90.

causes citizen's to reproduce these actions. What must be considered by changing these acts are the ecological movements which question these practices, the institutions and procedures of conflict resolution in regards to the environment and the monitoring of implementing the environmental agreements. Nevertheless, Tully argues that 'the risk of being determined by processes beyond our control remains'. Thus, Tully discusses the global capitalist system and also argues that a change is required in routine actions but the core of the argument seems to be that the reason we must do this is to develop an ecological ethics in order to reduce damage to the climate.<sup>105</sup>

Tully also discusses, in his words, 'different trends of global juridification that are accompanying the economic processes of the globalisation of capital'.<sup>106</sup> Tully argues that there are global constitutions which lay down the conditions for the expansion of global capitalism and have the ability to 'free the economy from the democratic control of existing nation-states' by surpassing the local domestic constitutions. Tully argues that new 'global representative democratic institutions' are required in order to 'provide constitutional underpinning'.<sup>107</sup> As argued previously, current global regulations are often non-democratic. Tully argues that it has never been the case that market relations are not confronted with representative democratisation, until recently. For example, Tully argues that the European Union does not provide representative democratisation over the 'emerging rights regimes'. As a result, political networks are relatively weak in relation to transnational corporations and they are unable to significantly challenge these corporations.<sup>108</sup>

In the poorest and weakest states even the basic democratic rights of assembly, association and free speech are curtailed and sweat-shop work conditions imposed.

These political associations are unable to enforce the local self-determination, survival

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<sup>105</sup> Tully, *Public Philosophy in New Key*, p. 89-90.

<sup>106</sup> Tully, 'Unfreedom and Constitutional Democracy', p. 211

<sup>107</sup> Tully, 'Unfreedom and Constitutional Democracy', p. 212

<sup>108</sup> Tully, 'Unfreedom and Constitutional Democracy', p. 212.



of linguistic and cultural diversity, economic self-reliance, self-determination or environmental safeguards they were set up to protect and promote.<sup>109</sup>

Thus, Tully argues that global juridification is supported instead of challenged and its' legitimacy must be questioned. Tully argues that democratic freedoms and the formal democratic freedoms for the worst-off must be established and exercised. However, currently it is difficult to exercise these freedoms as the global institutions often surpass democratic freedoms, which causes inequalities to be undermined and to neglect 'diet, health, knowledge and organisation' which are required to exercise democratic freedom. Tully argues that according to the democratic principle these inequalities have the right to speak up, which in the current situation they do not as their condition is a 'direct effect of a global constitutional system of property rights'.<sup>110</sup>

Tully also addresses capitalism when he offers a re-interpretation of John Locke's *Second Treatise of Government*. Tully reinterprets different points made by Locke, such as Locke's claims about the master-servant relationship and the division of labour, amongst other points. Tully argues that the master-servant relation is not the same as the wage relationship of capitalism. Locke's master-servant relation is, according to Tully, a free man who makes himself a servant to another by selling himself and the services he will undertake for a certain period of time in exchange for a wage. This gives the master a temporary power over the servant which is contained in a contract between the two. The master-servant relation is a voluntary relation in the civil society, because if a freeman who agrees to the agreement in which it is presupposed that a free man can also choose not to become a servant. As the master-servant relation is a voluntary relation, it cannot arise if there is no alternative for the servant since he is not free in such a case. Tully argues that this remarkable condition makes it impossible for the capitalist to coherently appear in Locke's theory, because if a man is driven by necessity to work for another and not on a voluntary basis, then the relationship is based on force.

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<sup>109</sup> Tully, 'Unfreedom and Constitutional Democracy', p. 213.

<sup>110</sup> Tully, 'Unfreedom and Constitutional Democracy', p. 214.

Thus, the master-servant relation cannot appear in a capitalist society. When a person is driven by necessity to work for another, then the master must feed him instead of letting him work for him. Tully argues that the capitalist emerges in a condition where the appropriation of all land forces a labourer to work for another. Furthermore, Tully argues that Locke explicitly denies that landholders can force labourers to work under these forced conditions. A labourer can work for himself or for another but only if they have an alternative option.<sup>111</sup> The pre-capitalist labourer is replaced by a new capitalist division of labour, where the worker performs a single disintegrated job in the production of the whole commodity, whilst being under the strictest control of the capitalist. In the capitalist society a freeman is turned into a slave.<sup>112</sup> To draw a comparison between the master-servant relationship and the capitalist society is obsolete, according to Tully.

In short, Connolly expresses concern in regards to capitalism in conjunction with Christianity in the United States<sup>113</sup> and towards consumerism from an environmental point of view.<sup>114</sup> Tully mentions capitalism in his discussion of Locke's master-servant relationship and argues that in capitalist society a freeman is turned into a slave.<sup>115</sup> Tully also expresses concern in regards to the damaging effects that the capitalist economy has and is concerned with global constitutions and the expansion of global capitalism which currently undermine democratic freedoms and in Tully's words are a 'direct effect of a global constitutional system of property rights'.<sup>116</sup> They have therefore not completely ignored the problem of globalisation, capitalism and its strain of consumerism, but there is even more to be said about the way that it specifically undermines pluralism and critical reflection, which they figure as preconditions of agonistic politics. This will become clearer in Section 2.

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<sup>111</sup> Tully, *Discourse on Property*, pp. 137-142.

<sup>112</sup> Tully, *Discourse on Property*, pp. 137-142.

<sup>113</sup> Connolly, 'The Evangelical-Capitalist', p. 875.

<sup>114</sup> Connolly, 'Steps Towards an Ecology', p. 9.

<sup>115</sup> Tully, *Discourse on Property*, pp. 137-142.

<sup>116</sup> Tully, 'Unfreedom and Constitutional Democracy', p. 214.

## 2. Globalisation, Capitalism and Consumerism

In this Section, I will first define consumerism and its relation to globalisation and capitalism and then shortly address the claim that we might be led into thinking that consumerism allows individuals to express their identity through the commodified self. I will then make the claim that, if this is indeed the case, consumerism would be a smaller threat to agonistic values as it would leave room for cultural pluralism and individual critical reflection. However, I will counter these claims and conclude that consumerism does in fact lead to cultural uniformity and uncritical individuals. Lastly, I will discuss different factors in contemporary societies that contribute to cultural uniformity and uncritical individuals.

### 2.1. Defining Consumerism and its Relation to Globalisation and Capitalism

In the previous section, I have argued that Connolly associates globalisation with different systems or movements, such as the globalisation of ‘economic life’, ‘cultural communications’, ‘political mobilisation’ and ‘ecological change’ which are all global social reproduction processes.<sup>117</sup> These movements operate globally and surpass the politics of their own nations. Tully associates globalisation with global governance and citizenship and argues that ‘the activities, institutions, processes and languages have come together under the term global citizenship’.<sup>118</sup> Thus, when referring to globalisation the concept is used to describe the globalisation of multiple systems that operate on a global scale, ranging from the flow of populations, the flow of capital, the globalisation of institutions, and so on.

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<sup>117</sup> Connolly, *Global Citizenship: Replies*, p. 4.

<sup>118</sup> Connolly, *Global Citizenship: Replies*, p. 4.

Consumerism as a concept derives from the act of consumption and refers to the fixation on the acquisition of consumer goods. The English Oxford Dictionary defines consumerism as ‘the preoccupation of society with the acquisition of consumer goods’.<sup>119</sup> Henceforth, when I refer to consumerism, I am referring to the fixation of societies and individuals within these societies on the acquisition of consumer goods. Capitalism is the logic of economic growth, which therefore goes hand in hand with consumerism as it requires companies to sell as many goods as possible to consumers. The selling of goods to consumers is encouraged through different factors, as will become clear in the following paragraphs.

## 2.2. Capitalism, Consumerism and Uncritical Individuals

Herbert Marcuse already argued in 1960 that consumerism would have negative consequences for societies. Marcuse argued that consumers are influenced into purchasing commodities and argued that it turned them into ‘one-dimensional-men’, meaning that people’s way of thinking slowly became homogenized.<sup>120</sup> It seems as if Marcuse already expressed valid concerns towards consumerism which are still very much present within current societies on a global scale.

Marcuse argues that individuals are not just *influenced* by mechanisms such as advertising, marketing and mass media but are oppressed by them. According to Marcuse, current capitalist societies streamline systems of oppression through the process of advertising, marketing and mass media. Marcuse argues that not only do these mechanisms propagate the ideology of consumption, but they also indoctrinate and manipulate consumers. This indoctrination takes place by sending out messages that bind the consumers to the producers who create habits, intellectual and emotional reactions.

‘It’s productivity and efficiency, its capacity to increase and spread comforts to turn waste into need, and destruction into construction, the extent to which civilization

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<sup>119</sup> *English Oxford Dictionary*

<sup>120</sup> Marcuse, *One-Dimensional-Man*, ch. 1.

transforms the object world into an extension of man's mind and body which makes the very notion of alienation questionable. People recognize themselves in their commodities; they find their soul in their automobile, hi-fi set, split-level home, kitchen equipment. The very mechanism which ties the individual to his society has changed, and social control is anchored in the new needs which it has produced'.<sup>121</sup>

Marcuse claims that this process creates 'false consciousness', as these habits, and intellectual and emotional reactions are not created by individuals' own consciousness but by the output of these mechanisms. By binding consumers to the output of the mechanisms, they become blind. Enterprises working for profit give people the illusion that they can purchase happiness when they are purchasing commodities. The constant fixation on the acquisition of new goods leads to the constant disposal of old goods. As a result, the capitalist system is characterized by exhausting labour and environmental waste. Marcuse argues that

for the vast majority of the population, the scope and mode of satisfaction are determined by their own labour; but their labour is work for an apparatus which they do not control, which operates as an independent power to which individuals must submit if they want to live.<sup>122</sup>

Marcuse refers to this process of working unnecessary hours as the 'performance principle', of which he argues that for the majority of people means condemnation to alienated and inhuman labour in order to satisfy their endless unnecessary needs. He calls this process the pure form of servitude, as the false ideology of consumption stimulates people to work more hours for these enterprises whilst people are not getting happy from it themselves. People are only valued by these enterprises in terms of the work they produce and not in terms of who they are as individuals.<sup>123</sup>

Marcuse also argues that commodities are not true means of self-expression and people merely hold the illusion that they are self-expressed within their commodities. In reality, the

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<sup>121</sup> Marcuse, *One-Dimensional-Man*, p.11.

<sup>122</sup> Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization*, p. 45.

<sup>123</sup> Marcuse, *Eros and Civilization*, p. 45.

ownership of these commodities and the idea that people are expressed within these commodities are both the result of processes of manipulation and indoctrination by the systems of oppression. The output of these oppression systems causes consumers to identify themselves in the commodities distributed by companies, causing consumers to always want to buy more, and thereby maintaining false needs. Consequentially, people start to recognize themselves and others in the commodities they own, like the type of homes, cars and clothes. As a result, people obtain a false consciousness, thinking that the choices they make originate from themselves, when in reality these choices are being manipulated.<sup>124</sup>

However, Marcuse claims that it is possible to escape the systems of oppression by freeing people from the work which is demanded by those controlling the capitalist system. If the people can free themselves from the work which is demanded by those controlling the capitalist system, a work relationship within societies can develop which is able to provide goods that are necessary for existence. The unnecessary working hours to satisfy unnecessary needs then become obsolete. Consequently, the constant disposal of old products would cease to occur. However, Marcuse argues that the people who benefit from the state of affairs take measures in order to prevent people from freeing themselves from the system.<sup>125</sup> He argues that the media purposefully reflects and expresses government interests to those of the capitalist establishment and people are manipulated and brainwashed into maintaining the current state of affairs, thinking that it makes them happy.<sup>126</sup> He argues that the reality of pluralism is ideological and deceptive, because there are no different positions present within society anymore and there are no opposing positions posing a significant threat. The reality of pluralism becomes ideological and deceptive.<sup>127</sup> Marcuse goes on to argue 'that the web of domination has become the web of reason itself, and society is fatally entangled in it'.<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> Marcuse, *One-Dimensional-Man*, ch.1.

<sup>125</sup> Marcuse, *One-Dimensional-Man*, pp. 17-19.

<sup>126</sup> Marcuse, *One-Dimensional-Man*, pp. 17-19.

<sup>127</sup> Marcuse, *One-Dimensional-Man*, p. 54.

<sup>128</sup> Marcuse, *One-Dimensional-Man*, p. 172.

To conclude, Marcuse argues that the enterprises working for profit dominate consumers by brainwashing and manipulating people into believing that the current state of affairs will make them happy. As people are manipulated into believing that they are happy in the current state of affairs, they will not pose a threat to these enterprises as they do not see them as the oppressors.<sup>129</sup> This results in a society composed of uncritical individuals, who are unable to think for themselves as they are being brainwashed into believing the ideology of consumption. The idea of expressing the self through commodities is a false belief, because consumers are being manipulated into buying these products and their choices to purchase these products are influenced, or in Marcuse's words, 'oppressed' by these influencing mechanisms.<sup>130</sup>

From another perspective, consumer societies can leave room for critical reflection and self-identity. As an example, Ian Woodward discusses material culture studies and gives a brief overview of what it entails. Material culture studies is the 'inquiry into the uses and meanings of objects' and consumer societies are filled with 'mass-produced consumer objects'.<sup>131</sup> According to material culture studies, these objects can

signify sub-cultural affinity, occupation, participation in leisure activity, or social status. Furthermore, objects become incorporated into, and represent, wider social discourses related to extensively held norms and values enshrined in norms and social institutions. In a complimentary fashion, objects also carry personal and emotional meanings, they can facilitate interpersonal interactions and assist a person to act upon him or herself.<sup>132</sup>

Material culture studies therefore assume that objects within consumer societies can contribute to self-identity and categorize between different social groups or classes.<sup>133</sup> Thus, from this perspective, consumption allows for different social groups or classes to exist and contributes to self-identity. This leaves room for cultural pluralism and critical individuals.

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<sup>129</sup> Marcuse, *One-Dimensional-Man*, pp. 7-8.

<sup>130</sup> Marcuse, *One-Dimensional-Man*, pp. 7-8.

<sup>131</sup> Woodward, *Understanding Material Culture*, p. 3.

<sup>132</sup> Woodward, *Understanding Material Culture*, p. 4.

<sup>133</sup> Woodward, *Understanding Material Culture*, p. 4.

In Section 1, I have argued that cultural pluralism requires that individuals express their beliefs and opinions and must have an ongoing discussion with each other. To safeguard cultural pluralism, it is important that a tension is maintained between diverse groups in which they feel free to question and alter each other's norms, values and practices. In regards to the effects of consumerism and capitalism on cultural pluralism, in the first instance one might think that consumer societies can encourage individuals to express themselves and their identities through their choice of products. Through encouraging people to express themselves within person-object relations and relationships with each other, discussions are stimulated. From this perspective consumerism – which originates from the capitalist logic of growth - appears to be a fruitful development for agonistic values, as it allows individuals to purchase a large range of objects in which they can define themselves and question others. We might be led into thinking that it thus allows for cultural pluralism and stimulates individuals to be critical.

However, there are other factors which can lead to different implications about the consequences of globalisation, capitalism and consumerism as a development for agonistic values. For example, marketing strategies, advertising and mass media are all means that companies use to influence which product an individual chooses to buy. If an individual chooses a product because they were influenced to purchase that product, then the individual's true expression of their norms, values and practices is compromised. Furthermore, if many individuals are influenced by the same mechanisms, then they will all be influenced to purchase similar products. When people's identities are influenced by the same norms and values that are inherent in products and individuals are influenced to purchase the same products, consequently identities are shaped in a similar way. Therefore, I argue that these mechanisms constitute a threat to the diversity of norms, values and practices and how these are expressed through the commodified self. As consumer societies have these mechanisms influencing individuals to purchase certain products which are often from Western origin, most individuals



are likely to shape their identity through Western influences.<sup>134</sup> In the next paragraph, I will go into further detail on the claim that individuals are shaped by Western influences.

## **2.3. Capitalism, Consumerism and Cultural Pluralism**

### **2.3.1. McDonaldization and Glocalization**

There are currently over 34,000 McDonald's restaurants located throughout 118 countries. In 2011, 63 percent (303/480) of the top ten films in 48 countries originated in the United States, and if we include movies that are joint-us in origin (82/480), this number rises to 80 percent (385/480). Patterns of global student transfers, social networking sites and users, book publishing, brand awareness, and cultural world heritage sites similarly reflect the dominance and the increasing centrality of a handful of countries.<sup>135</sup>

McDonaldization, a term first used by George Ritzer, refers to the process of McDonalds and other American fast-food restaurants becoming more dominant within societies and gradually across the globe. This process affects more than just restaurant businesses, but many other parts of societies. The central role of American businesses is increasing within countries which causes cultures to become more hegemonic on a global basis.<sup>136</sup> McDonaldization happens as companies establish themselves globally and distribute goods globally, causing countries to obtain the same type of shops, restaurants and even school systems. Since Ritzer, the term McDonaldization has been used more often to refer to the process of Western businesses becoming more dominant in other parts of the world. For example, according to Victoria Reyes, a fast-food chain such as McDonalds has its own principles in regards to 'bathroom cleanliness, efficiency, standards of food production and demarcating of responsibilities into tasks'.<sup>137</sup> As international companies such as McDonalds have the ability to influence the

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<sup>134</sup> Reyes, 'Investigating Global Culture', p. 32.

<sup>135</sup> Reyes, 'Investigating Global Culture', p. 23.

<sup>136</sup> Ritzer, *Explorations in Social Theory*, p. 198

<sup>137</sup> Reyes, 'Investigating Global Culture', p. 30.

cultural meanings of local societies, often originating from Western cultures, the danger of homogenization of cultures arises.

However, Reyes also argues that globalization processes are adapted in diverse ways to local circumstances. She refers to this process as 'glocalization'. Reyes argues that international companies can 'adapt menus to locals' tastes as well as changing norms'.<sup>138</sup> McDonalds' restaurant menu for example is slightly different depending on which country it is established in. Nonetheless, Reyes argues that although national branding efforts are often purposefully used, a difficulty exists in maintaining local authenticity. Local adaptations and understandings of national branding in a global sense are central in the issue of glocalization.<sup>139</sup>

Furthermore, Reyes argues that global companies do not only have the ability to influence consumption patterns, but can also influence sports, advertising, religion and law.<sup>140</sup> Reyes argues that 'McDonaldization focuses on the structural aspects of global cultures and how Western influences permeate other countries'.<sup>141</sup> For example, sanitation standards may differ globally, but as McDonalds sanitation standards are the same in every country this substantially influences countries across the globe including reconstituted households. Reyes also gives the example of the idea that globalization has caused the English language to become dominant in the book publishing market.<sup>142</sup> The point is that the McDonaldization does not only have an impact on consumption patterns but can also influence societies on a larger scale. In short, global companies can influence the flow of 'cultural practices, meanings, skills, repertoires and knowledges'<sup>143</sup> and although it is possible that cultures can maintain some form of authenticity, it nevertheless remains inevitable that cultures are affected and influenced by globalisation, capitalism and its logic of consumption.

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<sup>138</sup> Reyes, 'Investigating Global Culture', p. 31.

<sup>139</sup> Reyes, 'Investigating Global Culture', p. 33.

<sup>140</sup> Reyes, 'Investigating Global Culture', p. 32.

<sup>141</sup> Reyes, 'Investigating Global Culture', p. 30.

<sup>142</sup> Reyes, 'Investigating Global Culture', p. 30.

<sup>143</sup> Reyes, 'Investigating Global Culture', p. 25.

Thus, when people express themselves through commodities, the processes which take place in consumer societies encouraging people to purchase certain objects are often influenced by Western companies endangering the diversity of cultures and the practices of people within these cultures to become homogenous. In the next paragraph, I will discuss in further detail the processes used by companies to influence people to purchase their commodities, such as marketing strategies, advertising and mass media.

### 2.3.2. Influencing Mechanisms

In line with the concept of McDonaldization, the journal of marketing researches the complex dialectical relationships between marketers and consumers. In this journal, Lisa Peñaloza and Mary C. Gilly suggest that companies have certain cultural values and norms that are passed on through words and deeds onto consumers by means of advertising and marketing. They argue that

marketers have a culture with values including initiative, consummating exchanges, competing, making money, financial accountability and a willingness to serve that are evident in their words and deeds. Although influenced by consumers, marketer culture is tempered by its own ethnic and organizational cultures, as well as that of the larger marketplace and market systems in the nation in which marketers do business [...]. As change agents, marketers pass their cultural values onto consumers through market transactions [...].<sup>144</sup>

Thus, through the use of marketing and advertising companies pass on their own culture in the nations where they do business. This culture is passed onto consumers through market transactions.<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>144</sup> Peñaloza & Gilly, 'Marketer Acculturation', p. 101.

<sup>145</sup> Peñaloza & Gilly, 'Marketer Acculturation', p. 101.

Güliz Ger and Russel W. Belk argue that popular culture also imposes norms and values onto consumers. They claim that European, Asian and American television shows and films are accessible around the world, which leads to the globalization of mass media and the export of other forms of popular culture.<sup>146</sup> Films and shows have their own ideologies that can be passed on worldwide, and television and the content of media are often dominated by consumption ideologies, in which consumption symbols play a large role. Through media and television, the consumer ideology is spread across the globe, implying that meaning is attached and communicated through commodities. Ger and Belk also argue that the consumer ideology is predominantly Western, as it is mostly Western companies dominating the world.<sup>147</sup> However, they also argue that

although there is a power imbalance that favours the greater influence of affluent Western cultures, the processes of change are not unidirectional and the consequences are not simple adoption of new Western values.<sup>148</sup>

Nonetheless, even if the consequences are not ‘simple adaptation of new Western values’, global consumer culture is still shaped by Western themes and values and the driving factor behind spreading the consumer ideology is that it is part of the process of selling goods and services.<sup>149</sup> In many eyes, ‘some see this change as involving a global homogenization with an increasingly global consumption ethos that is generally labelled consumer culture’.<sup>150</sup>

In short, themes and values are spread globally through the process of selling goods and services distributed by Western companies and cultural values are passed onto consumers through market transactions and mass media.<sup>151</sup> Consumerism is fixated on acquiring goods<sup>152</sup> and, if companies need to sell their products, they will have to influence consumers to purchase

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<sup>146</sup> Ger & Belk, ‘Buy the World’, pp. 271-304.

<sup>147</sup> Ger & Belk, ‘Buy the World’, pp. 271-304.

<sup>148</sup> Ger & Belk, ‘Buy the World’, pp. 271.

<sup>149</sup> Ger & Belk, ‘Buy the World’, pp. 271-304.

<sup>150</sup> Ger & Belk, ‘Buy the World’, pp. 273.

<sup>151</sup> Peñaloza & Gilly, ‘Marketer Acculturation’, p. 101.

<sup>152</sup> *English Oxford Dictionary*

these goods.<sup>153</sup> Therefore, the diversity of norms and values is endangered, as the norms and values gradually become more homogeneous as a result of these influences.

Marcuse argued in 1960 that within consumer societies, people seek happiness in commodities and eventually start to recognize themselves in their commodities. This fixation on commodities leads to constant unfulfilled needs which consume the mind so much that little attention is left for other matters.<sup>154</sup> Therefore, the desire to consume is a result of those controlling the capitalist system who use organized methods of manipulation to affect people's needs and desires which leads to uncritical individuals. If he is right and individuals only recognize themselves in their commodities<sup>155</sup>, then consumer society originating from the capitalist logic of growth leaves no room for diverse identities and opinions to develop.

Furthermore, even if consumers are not oppressed by the mechanisms of the controlling capitalist system but merely influenced by it, it would still affect the diversity within societies as it originates from Western values. As argued by Reyes, global companies can influence the flow of 'cultural practices, meanings, skills, repertoires and knowledges'<sup>156</sup> and although cultures can maintain some form of authenticity, it nevertheless remains inevitable that cultures are affected and influenced by globalisation, capitalism and its logic of consumption.

As argued, according to agonistic values it is essential within democracies to maintain a tension between a diversity of groups and to have critical individuals to question and modify each other's beliefs and opinions. Thus, it becomes clear why globalisation, capitalism and consumerism run counter to agonistic values, namely, because it endangers the ability of individuals to express themselves and individuals being manipulated into a lot of their choices by consumer ideologies. Cultural pluralism becomes endangered and a threat is posed to the ability of individuals to think critically.

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<sup>153</sup> Peñaloza & Gilly, 'Marketer Acculturation', p. 101.

<sup>154</sup> Marcuse, *One-Dimensional-Man*, p.11.

<sup>155</sup> Marcuse, *One-Dimensional-Man*, p.11.

<sup>156</sup> Reyes, 'Investigating Global Culture', p. 25.

### 3. Conclusion

This thesis started with the claim that the homogenizing influence of globalisation, capitalism and its logic of consumption on multiculturalism stands as a threat to agonistic values – one that has not yet been properly addressed by agonists. I have argued that agonists have not properly appreciated the significance of the themes discussed in this thesis for the foundations of agonistic politics. To develop a coherent and viable theory of agonistic democracy, one needs to take globalisation, capitalism and consumerism into account and develop ways to fit its logic of acquiring goods into the logic of safeguarding cultural pluralism and critical individuality or one must oppose its logic all together if they are not able to do so.

Agonistic democracy is presented as an alternative to deliberative democracy, where conflict and contestation are valued over consensus. I have considered the theory of the agonistic thinkers Connolly and Tully, since they both hold views which were representative of the claims that I sought to address. Most importantly, both value diversity,<sup>157</sup> which requires the questioning of norms and values by critical individuals; moreover, both are concerned with globalisation.<sup>158</sup> In Section 1, I argued that they value contestation because they believe that rules must be constantly questioned in order to ensure that politics does not just become the mere implementation of rules. Agonism is conditioned by cultural pluralism insofar as it allows for diversity of different opinions and beliefs which enables the proper questioning and altering of policies if required. Critical individuals are valuable for agonistic politics as they are able to reflect and think critically in regards to whether they think these rules should be altered. Lastly, I argued that agonists are concerned with globalisation insofar as it gives rise to transnational corporations which are led by bureaucracy and market mechanisms and undermine democratic institutions.

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<sup>157</sup> Connolly, *Identity/Difference*, pp. 199-200.

<sup>158</sup> Connolly, *Identity/Difference*, pp. 199-200.

Tully and Connolly express concern in regards to capitalism and consumption patterns, as argued in this thesis; but Connolly's concern is mainly towards the environmental impact consumerism has and in regards to capitalism, that is in conjunction with Christianity in the US, and not towards capitalism and the logic of consumption which is prevalent in the current world as a whole. Tully mentions capitalism when he re-interprets Locke and argues that capitalist societies turn freemen into slaves. He also mentions the global capitalist system and argues that a change is required in routine actions, mainly because an ecological ethics is required to reduce damage to the climate.<sup>159</sup> Lastly, Tully argues that global constitutions lay down the conditions for the expansion of global capitalism, which have the ability to 'free the economy from the democratic control of existing nation-states' by surpassing the local domestic constitutions. Thus, Connolly and Tully express concerns in regards to globalisation, capitalism and consumerism but have not provided answers to how these factors must be dealt with in regards to the homogenizing effects that globalisation, capitalism and consumerism have on cultural plurality and critical individuals. Despite their treatment of consumerism, globalisation and capitalism, I have therefore argued that agonists must pay more attention to the significance of globalisation, capitalism and the logic of consumption for the foundations of agonistic politics.

I want to clarify that I am not arguing that Marxist or socialist societies are necessarily more coherent with agonistic values than consumerist capitalist societies. Societies consisting of consumer culture are a result of industrialization, which has allowed for working classes to develop into middle and consuming classes and eventually allowed global prosperity to increase. However, I just want to point out that even though these are all prosperous outcomes, globalisation, capitalism and consumerism have flaws and need to be re-evaluated. We must now develop a theory which takes into account the ways globalisation, capitalism and consumerism run counter to agonistic values and we need to seriously consider how to solve such matters. We need a theory in which agonistic values are safeguarded *along with* the prosperous outcomes that globalisation, capitalism and its logic consumerism have generated.

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<sup>159</sup> Tully, *Public Philosophy in New Key*, pp. 89-90.

In Section 2, I argued that globalisation, capitalism and its logic of consumption run counter to agonistic commitments, because influencing mechanisms within consumer cultures influence individuals to purchase certain products. As consumer societies mostly consist of corporations needing to sell products, they are dependent on sales and need marketing and mass media mechanisms to influence consumers to purchase goods. Since these goods are often distributed on a global scale, the cultures of the countries in which the companies face the danger of losing their authenticity and becoming homogenous. As argued by Reyes, ‘others have shown how World Heritage sites are purposefully used for national branding efforts, but also have difficulty to maintain their local authenticity’<sup>160</sup>. If there are alternatives in which individuals are not influenced to purchase products, therefore keeping the authenticity of their culture and allowing individuals to think critically, perhaps the outcome would be different and it would be possible to maintain the diversity of cultures and critical individuality within these societies. What I will leave open here, therefore, is whether globalisation, capitalism and its logic of consumption would still run counter to agonistic values if these influencing mechanisms were removed.

Thus, the question that demands further research is whether a consumer society is possible in which there are no mechanisms influencing individuals to purchase products and where a suitable agonistic democratic theory for limiting the influence transnational corporations could be put into practice. Can advertising, marketing and mass media be altered in such a way that individuals are less affected by these mechanisms and can remain critical? Can we shift focus within consumer societies to the development of critical individuals and put less focus on profit maximization? In other words, can globalisation, capitalism and consumerism be rendered compatible with agonistic democratic theory? Or should agonistic democratic theory oppose these factors all together? Answering this question would require further empirical research into how global political institutions might be developed in order to counter the homogenization that we have seen is promoted by globalisation, capitalism and its logic of consumption.

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<sup>160</sup> Reyes, ‘Investigating Global Culture’, p. 33.



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