

STATE OF POWER 2017

The role of human behaviour in plutocracies

– Deniz Kellecioglu

(R)EVOLUTION



WILL BE COLLECTIVE

Introduction

'The most potent weapon in the hands of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed',
– Steve Biko

Just as there are mainstream media, mainstream narratives, mainstream academia, and mainstream organizations, so there are also 'mainstream ethics'. These widespread and established ethical strands assert, for example, that humans are naturally egotistical, competitive and nationalistic and prone to sexism and racism and other similar mindsets that result in polarization among non-elites and their submission to elites. By building on the premise that socio-economic outcomes are based on merit, mainstream ethics indirectly view women, non-white people, and other marginalized groups as having lower human value. They are able to do so by disregarding most of the unfair and brutal treatment of such groups at the hands of the currently privileged groups (predominantly white men), which has occurred over centuries and, when it comes to women, millennia.¹ These ethics divide us, make us suspicious of democracy, more prejudiced against people who are different from ourselves, blame ourselves more than we should, delink us from collectivity, and sceptical about the possibilities for structural change – all of which play into the hands of the already powerful. When most people are occupied with competing for jobs, opportunities, social space, and other means to 'make it in life', there is little unity and resistance to elite rule. If, at the same time, people are submissive to elites – for instance, by accepting their perceived superiority and power as outcomes of individual merit – the end result is greater empowerment of elites. These two channels – people's disempowerment and elites' empowerment – lead to further power imbalances in our societies.

These *subjugatory* ethics are widely disseminated as if they are 'normal', 'natural', and not really up for debate. If they are discussed, it is often with the intention to appropriate, disfigure and dismiss any alternatives. They are also normalized because they help to sustain and occasionally strengthen the status quo of power distribution. However, compared to other mainstream forms of power, mainstream ethics are very difficult to pinpoint, illustrate and assess, given their subtle and elusive character. It is also important to note that even sensible, conscious and anti-elite people are, more or less, influenced by such ethics, making them perhaps the most useful instrument in maintaining the state of power, given that 'power is most effective when least observable', according to the power theorist Steven Lukes.

In particular, this ethical dimension of power pre-empts people's grievances by shaping their perceptions and preferences in such a way that they accept their role in the existing order of things, such as by regenerating the belief that 'this is the way of the world'. In this manner, conflicts are prevented from arising in the first place. This kind of power endures 'though control', which generally includes the control or influence of information, diffused through education, politics, culture, media and the process of socialization. Such subjection leads to self-surveillance, self-censorship, compliance with prevailing norms, identity-related domination and other power-accepting behaviour. In this 'natural' order, non-elites depend on the elites, and preferences are generally sought and obtained according to elite considerations. For instance, in the face of economic

[Subjugatory ethics] pre-empts people's grievances by shaping their perceptions and preferences in such a way that they accept their role in the existing order of things, such as by regenerating the belief that 'this is the way of the world'.

troubles, many people obediently wait to cast a vote that is supposed to bring about change; or hope that specific elite meetings will be followed by 'policy solutions'; or strive to adapt their job profile and manners to the 'job market'; or behave in other ways that reinforce the status quo.

Moreover, the more we internalize such ethical tenets, the more submissive and destructive human behaviour becomes. For instance, otherwise reasonable and sensible persons hold it as self-evident that people are strictly egoist, competitive, racist, sexist and elite-oriented. In this manner, people and elite groups may not even be aware that their behaviour generates societies that veer towards plutocracy and totalitarian rule. Apart from relatively few extremes, such outcomes are probably not really part of any group's interests and ideology, but given the current state of power worldwide, this is not such a far-fetched scenario. The outcome of the 2016 US elections is but one obvious example.

Problem–solution orientation

There is a need to acknowledge that such ethical beliefs are to some extent real, at least for contemporary humanity, but that they are far from natural and permanent. Humanity has witnessed a wide range of behaviour and associated ethics. The plasticity of humanity is both a curse and a blessing. It is a curse because we may be swayed to behave in an increasingly destructive or even evil fashion. It is a blessing because we are able to cope with extremely harsh circumstances, but also to build constructive and pleasant behaviour when the opportunity prevails.

But instead of promoting such constructive and emancipatory ethical values, the powerful conveniently promote destructive and subjugatory ethical values, such as by redirecting frustration and blame away from themselves and towards immigrants, minorities, women, and other marginalized groups. In their language and narrative, they claim that there is only one system and that your plight is due to people who are not playing according to the rules, who are creating trouble, who should fix themselves, who should work harder, and so on. This ethical system is built on narratives that put the individual at the centre of success and failure, while broader structures and mechanisms are simply to be submitted and adapted to. In this way, people's struggle with poverty, inequality, social stigma, and sense of powerlessness is largely their own fault. At the same time, again in subtle manner, people are powerful because they are 'that good'. In such ways, the economic, political and ethical systems generate feedback loops that continuously entrench and expand power imbalances in society.

It is unlikely that these developments arise from regular and systematic elite conspiracy. The elite are seldom sufficiently collective, homogeneous or smart. More often than not, they play out because the powerful are driven by similar ethics, but have the position and opportunity to impose their preferences. That is why it is rarely about individuals, but rather about the structures and mechanisms based on major power imbalances among different individuals, groups, nations and organizations. Individual, but often collective, decision-making by powerful elites becomes structural, systematic and pervasive in our societies. Those who control the means of interpretation and communication diffuse their own experience and culture as the norm.

The ethical system is built [by elites] on narratives that put the individual at the centre of success and failure, while broader structures and mechanisms are simply to be submitted and adapted to.

This entails dismissing the perspectives of those who are subordinate, while simultaneously stereotyping and marking people out as 'others'. Moreover, elite connections facilitate the transfer of information and help either to coordinate or to produce appropriate forms of action based on their own shared interests.

There are several ways to categorize people in relation to the most powerful, but I would divide them into four, albeit overlapping, groups: the dominant economic elites, the dominant political semi-elites, the managerial quasi-elites, and the general population. The political semi-elites often share similar values, ideologies and interests with the economic elites, but are lower in the power hierarchy because capital now trumps political positions. The managerial quasi-elites include academia, polity, bureaucracy, the staff of international organizations, transnational corporation managers, and other upper middle-class individuals who do the thinking and drafting according to the directions of the two higher powers.



Sources of Subjugatory and Emancipatory Ethics

Most current subjugatory ethical strands have been popularized via economics. Economic discourses not only carry implicit positions and assumptions about the economy, but also about humanity, the environment and other matters that affect us. Similarly, economic outcomes affect not only the economic sphere but also have an impact on human behaviour, the environment, and other non-economic realms. Economics and economists enjoy high prominence around the world, and the predominant version of economics supports the interests, values and ideologies of the already powerful and those who aspire to power.

This economics has not only been financed by the powerful, but has also been strengthened by other academic disciplines that have adopted its basic approaches and ethics. Its ethical tenets have also been popularised through media, books, music and other forms of cultural expression. For instance, a number of popular books on 'freakonomics' describe how people supposedly behave as calculating egoists in a range of contexts. For example, *Freakonomics: A Rogue Economist Explores the Hidden Side of Everything*, by Steven D. Levitt and Stephen J. Dubner, shows how teachers in the public school system in Chicago cheat by passing more students than they should, since this is how their performance is judged. By providing many similar examples, the authors

conclude that people are driven by selfish incentives. 'Freakonomics' does not consider that this type of selfishness is context-specific, and that other types of 'selfishness' could be generated in other contexts and systems. In the end, especially since neoliberalism assumed dominance in the 1980s, pretty much everyone spoke this type of economic language, based on the same underlying ethics.

The predominant version of economics supports the interests, values and ideologies of the already powerful and those who aspire to power

One of its central ideas is that the economy comprises a collection of rational and selfish individuals, devoted to the maximization of utility and minimization of disutility, both of which are usually defined in material terms. Adam Smith's well-known passage has been exploited extensively to represent this position: 'It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their own interest'.² However, economists and others tend to overlook Smith's second, and equally important book, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, in which he suggests a far more complex human character: 'How Selfish soever man may be supposed, there are evidently some principles in this nature, which interest him in the fortunes of others, and render their happiness necessary to him, though he derives nothing from it, except the pleasure of seeing it'.³

It is not empirically true that human beings are 'rational', especially if this is defined as making calculated selfish choices. Since rationality has a positive connotation, it becomes a prescription rather than a description of reality, but can be defined in various ways – driven by beliefs, habits, mood-swings, and unselfish behaviour – all of which have the perceived objective of maximizing one's own and perhaps others' utility. For instance, you may do things that will make your friend happy, even at the expense of your personal discomfort, but your friend's happiness may outweigh your discomfort in ways that also make you happy. But it is not easy to be 'rational' when our mindsets and preferences are continuously manipulated and distorted through information flows that manufacture illusions and trends.

Another assumption underlying this economics is that of individual choice. Individuals and their economic circumstances are regarded as the outcomes of their personal choices, and social inequalities are simply the aggregated outcomes of such choices. In reality, choice is always dependent upon the available alternatives, which vary greatly among different groups and individuals. People may also 'choose' to behave in certain ways in order to make their reality more bearable. For instance, a non-white person in a white-dominated society may adapt to the prevailing language, norms and dress code in order to secure a decent, or even successful, living. Or an economist who does not truly share the mainstream ethical tenets and research approaches, nevertheless internalizes them in order 'to make it' in the profession. In both cases, the status quo of power imbalances is maintained.

Competition is another essential ingredient in mainstream economics. According to this view, consumers get the best quality and lowest prices when firms compete. In competing to stay in business and make profit, firms must produce the best possible products that are also priced competitively. In reality, markets involve powerful, manipulative and colluding corporations, where 'competition' is also based on large corporate power imbalances. By extension, individuals, workers, public officials and even countries are encouraged to compete in their own self-interest. For instance, countries compete to attract foreign investment in ways that essentially

give transnational corporations a green light to exploit natural resources, workers, and public administration, for instance by relaxing legal and tax requirements. In the name of protecting national interests, powerful nations subsidize their agricultural production – which, for example, makes it cheaper for West African countries to import rice than to produce, although that region is highly suited to rice production – while at the same time promoting ‘free’ trade policies through the World Trade Organization (WTO).

Finally, mainstream ethics has built-in biases towards maintaining the status quo. This is most evident in the Pareto criterion, which forms the basis for all judgements on socioeconomic outcomes in mainstream economics. In this view, a change is positive only when it makes some people better off without making anyone else worse off. This means that no-one’s utility should be sacrificed in the name of a given goal. In the real world, changes usually harm and benefit different individuals and groups. But the subtle prescription here is to leave things as they are. More recently, the compensation principle holds that it may be acceptable to violate the Pareto criterion if the total gains for the winners are large enough to compensate all the losers and still leave some gains to spare. In reality, the likelihood of compensation or redistribution from winners to losers has proven minimal at best. It is extremely rare, for instance, that large extractive corporations compensate for the environmental degradation, health hazards to which workers are exposed, or lives lost as a result of their activities.

Overall, dominant economics prescribes, in very subtle ways, destructive and subjugatory human behaviour – constantly exploiting humanity’s weaker ethical characteristics. Let us now see how this colonization of the mind is regenerated.

Individuals and their economic circumstances are regarded as the outcomes of their personal choice [but] in reality, choice is always dependent upon the available alternatives, which vary greatly among different groups and individuals.

Regenerating Subjugatory or Emancipatory Ethics

The gap between theory and reality is essential to our concept of mainstream (subjugatory) ethics as power. The more we internalize its theoretical assumptions, the more this gap closes. Indeed, empirical studies find that when people act as if a theory is true, the more it becomes true. Three channels through which theories become normalized (or ‘performative’) are institutional design, social norms and language.

Institutional design involves situations in which people’s tasks and responsibilities are pre-arranged to reinforce the prevailing order. For instance, in a quasi-elite working environment, since the implicit expectation is that a draft research paper should not challenge the status quo, the drafter either meets this expectation, or risks disciplinary measures. This kind of behaviour becomes a reality and norm without anyone taking an explicit decision – and hence the number and size of elephants in the room increases over time.

The second channel involves situations when theories become accepted truths and norms. People feel obliged to act according to norms, because acting differently is perceived as violating descriptive and prescriptive norms. Research shows that when people believe in the norm of selfishness, they tend to conceal a different norm, for instance by avoiding taking up a cause. By the same token,

if you expect someone to behave in a selfish, competitive, conservative fashion, and impose their power, it is easy to act in a more guarded, less pleasant, and perhaps even harmful way, so that the end result will mirror the perceptions. For instance, managers who adopt such worldviews may pit people and organizational units against one another in the belief that competition among self-interested agents produces optimal solutions. In this way, people tend to act accordingly.

The third channel, language, implies how we talk about certain norms. Language influences perspectives, circumstances, decisions, actions, values, and so on. It reproduces and validates the terminology we use to describe perceived reality – the way we talk about reality re-constructs it. A research experiment highlighted this in a concrete manner. Two groups were asked to play exactly the same game, which had two different names. Mutual cooperation was the general norm when the game was called The Community Game, while competition was the general norm when it was called The Wall Street Game.

Through such repetitive outcomes in each of the three channels we are helping to realize the theory, idea and ethical position: our fellow human beings, leaders, organizations, and societies become increasingly trapped in unproductive and harmful cycles of behaviour. At some point, very few people consider defying the accepted norms, so that it becomes increasingly difficult to reinforce alternative behavioural pathways. This also suggests that systemic (r)evolutions are increasingly difficult to imagine, since subjugatory and submissive cognitive frameworks take a greater hold and alternatives fade away. This process is probably part of the pessimism we are observing today. But this is exactly what totalitarians want us to feel, since it leads to passivity.

*Through such repetitive outcomes..
our fellow human beings, leaders,
organizations, and societies become
increasingly trapped in unproductive
and harmful cycles of behaviour.*

Instead, we have to recognize anecdotal and research evidence exhibiting our beautiful inherent, but often latent, ethical tenets. They include non-selfish, cooperative, progressive, collective, anti-racist, anti-sexist, and anti-elitist characteristics – attitudes based on regard for equality. In fact, for more than 90% of our history, when we were hunter-gatherers, the human species was characterized by cooperation and equality. Today's economic inequality dates back to several thousands of years but in evolutionary time it is relatively short. Inequalities and associated competitiveness became entrenched when we began to accumulate surplus food and goods. In times of unequal resources, those surpluses were contested. It should also be noted that inequality between ethnic groups become significant only about 150–200 years ago, following the Industrial Revolution.

An increasing number of research papers (in economics, perhaps best represented by the works of Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis) suggests that we still possess constructive traits. Our real behaviour seems to be characterized by cooperation and 'strong reciprocity'. For instance, research experiments show that individuals often contribute voluntarily to collective goods as long as they believe the majority are willing to do the same. To solve collective-action problems, we often promote trust as an alternative to costly incentive schemes. Explicit penalties and subsidies are seen to worsen rather than solve collective-action problems because they are based on doubting other citizens' willingness to contribute voluntarily to the common good.

These research results confirm that we are still as much a cooperative as a competitive species. We are complex, as our behaviour may be moved by self-interest, cooperation, patriotism, class solidarity, altruism, justice, honesty, ideology, duty, vicariousness, friendship, love, pursuit of beauty, curiosity, or something entirely different. We are also easily swayed by instinct and emotion, as we may make different decisions at different times in reaction to the same scenario. We seem to overreact to new information and under-react to existing information. We tend to operate with an intuitive, shortcut system of thinking, which results in poor logical reasoning, while we are over-confident in our own 'rationality'.

But mainstream economics has not only provided the intellectual backbone to a world economy in which severe economic imbalances are regenerated, but has also promoted an increasingly elite-oriented and subjugated humanity. These imbalances have, in turn, sustained severe power imbalances, mainly through poverty, economic inequality, loss of democracy, and social polarization. The three subjugatory channels (economy, ethics and power) have created societies that, in a vicious cycle of development, veer towards plutocracy, totalitarianism, and even fascism.

But there are plenty of alternative pathways, not only for economics, politics, but also for ethics. Let us now take a look at them.



Emancipation from Subjugatory Ethics

If we are falling for all this nonsense and allowing ourselves to be subjugated, does this mean we are foolish? We should not shy away from this important question. The answer lies in the historical turn of events and normalization processes (partly described above), in which the vast majority of humanity has never really been given a chance to develop reasonably independent intellects, cognitive maps and worldviews. In fact, history suggests that when we have had such chances, we have managed our societies in a more cooperative and egalitarian fashion than we are experiencing today. At present, most of us are born into a world marked by extensive power imbalances. This world involves continuous inferences of overt and covert form, including physical violence, threats, ideological conditioning, and injections of subjugatory ethics. And most elites have inherited or accumulated their wealth through shady businesses and by exploiting their power.

Also, if we are foolish, we are all foolish – it is simply that elites are allowed to be so but with more power, and so better placed to accumulate wealth, knowledge, skills and other forms of power. And even if we are ‘stupid’, we are obviously capable of being less so, and of generating less destructive and happier societies. It is also obvious that we can all help each other to promote emancipatory knowledge, expand our perspectives, deepen our ethics, and thereby empower ourselves, while working to disempower the powerful. It may very well be that we are generally both stupid and intelligent, but that our intelligence is so suppressed that we rarely use or express it in emancipatory ways.

Most of us are born into a world marked by .. physical violence, threats, ideological conditioning, and injections of subjugatory ethics.

Of course, it does not help that we are continuously faced with extreme complexity and confusion, often coming from the constant flow of news, information, disinformation, misinformation, social media, knowledge and personal experience. In addition, most of us simply lack the time and energy to engage, participate and take action to challenge the powers that be, especially if we are marginalized. It is also very difficult for the billions of people who are juggling multiple jobs, or facing under- or unemployment (as part of the global precarity) and struggling with everything from social stigma to hunger, among many other problems. By contrast, elite groups work and live in ways that, by design and construction, help to sustain the status quo, which includes everything from ‘development assistance’ to luxury consumption, abusive production lines, to mass murder through war.

There may, however, be two positive aspects arising from these terrible circumstances. One in which totalitarian rule becomes more visible, which makes attacking it relatively easy (or at least less difficult). The second in which there is a greater scope for unity of purpose, as few would be interested in fascism, or the risk of fascism. The activist opposition to Apartheid South Africa is a good example of both. The racist government was a clear, visible and present enemy, against which there was great unity of purpose from people around the world. But South Africa is now also an example of how we should be beware of elite appropriation and subjugatory ethics in the aftermath of (r)evolutions. In other words, it is not sufficient to change the political order, even the economic order, without also changing the behavioural order.

It is not sufficient to change the political order, even the economic order, without also changing the behavioural order.

It is possible to achieve this by two (difficult) processes. The first involves efforts to raise the awareness of peoples and elites of the real existence of the constructive and emancipatory aspects of our minds. The second involves efforts to raise and empower these aspects, while suppressing and disempowering the destructive and subjugatory (mainstream) sides. After all, ethical power is always focused on particular domains and is never more than partially effective. There are clearly many who are to some extent aware of this kind of ethical dichotomy – who consent to power, but resent, resist, or rebel against it at the same time.

In fact, we seem to possess, more or less, dual and contradictory mindsets. About a century ago, Du Bois, famously posited that black people had to be in a state of ‘double consciousness’, with a ‘sense of always looking at one’s self through the eyes of others, of measuring one’s soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity’.⁴ In this way, ethical injections

are never wholly effective because the dominated never fully internalize ways of interpreting the world that devalue and stereotype them.

A second duality is about transforming power itself. It is usually assumed that power works against others' interests, but it can also be used in a positive manner. Such an exercise of power could be benevolent, transformative and empowering, by, for instance, increasing others' resources, capabilities, effectiveness and abilities to act. Ordinary examples include apprenticeships, teaching, parenting and therapy. In other words, power can be emancipatory. Elites that genuinely respect non-elites are few and far between, but they may support the push for policies that evoke, cultivate, and empower transformative behaviour. They could also support policies that reduce economic inequality, since this is one of the greatest obstacles to further cooperation. They may also push for policies toward genuine democracy, which would also help to re-balance the state of power.

It is more likely that such 'emancipatory power' will be realized by mass mobilization and pressure, but it can be complemented by collaboration with semi-elites, quasi-elites, and people who are currently elite-oriented. In order to realize such solidarity, it is essential, to transcend our subjugatory worldviews in favour of the positive potential of humanity. This means that we should be strategic and reconsider strong positions that are perhaps counterproductive to the greater goal of halting and reversing the trend towards fascism. Elites will not learn to care on their own. We have to make them care.

Elites' greatest strength may also be their greatest weakness: their ever-more-concentrated capital and power, and also their small numbers.

The third and final duality to reconcile is about the balance of power: disempowerment of plutocracy and people's empowerment. This is, of course, the most difficult challenge of the (r)evolutionary project, as elites have generated a form of capitalism in which capital is almost entirely equal to power. The disempowerment process needs to involve dispossession and blockage of both their material and non-material forces that shape, influence and subjugate our minds. This type of re-balancing should be important for all agents of transformation, be they radical, progressive or liberal, since they all want to avoid the risk of totalitarian rule. This is not an impossible task since elites' greatest strength may also be their greatest weakness: their ever-more-concentrated capital and power, and also their small numbers. As their extreme concentration of wealth, and the relative poverty and unhappiness of the masses become more visible, it will be more difficult to conclude that this is a 'natural' and deserving order.

In this endeavour, as ethical power is difficult to concretize, it is essential to establish a critical juncture. A crisis is generally a fertile ground for change, although not necessarily positive. The many crises worldwide are all more or less linked, forming one massive, overarching crisis or one global critical juncture to remedy, such as the risk of fascism.

A critical juncture may mean little, however, if it is not combined with alternatives that are perceived as appealing and feasible. (R)evolutionary alternatives should not be only about economic policy and political institutions, but also about ethics. In fact, given the current realities, we are perhaps in a better position to invest efforts to empower our ethical base than the other two spheres. This would include efforts to release humanity's inherent potential for emancipatory behaviour. In the short run, some would be more receptive than others, but by building pockets of like-minded

people we could form a worldwide network of emancipatory resistance. A gradual transition would continuously expand the network's quantity and quality, so that we are better positioned to encroach on the economic and political spheres of the powerful.

This is not to say such efforts are not being made, but this suggestion involves two complementary proposals. First both our organization and accumulation of power should take place in subtle ways, given that power is most efficient when least observable. Second, the process should include more efforts to change human behaviour by raising both our consciousness and our sub-consciousness.

Another humanity is possible.

About the author

Deniz Kellecioglu is an Economic Affairs Officer at the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA). His 2016 PhD dissertation was entitled What is required for (r)evolutions? – the case of economics. Since 1999, he has been an activist in various capacities and countries, making many presentations on global development issues, publishing opinion pieces, blogs, booklets, book chapters and journal articles.

Disclaimer: The United Nations, including its various entities and staff members, are not responsible for and do not necessarily endorse the contents of this essay.

Bibliography

- Adams, H. (2008) 'Against plutocracies: Fighting political corruption', *Constellations* 15(1): 126-147.
- Biko, S. (1987) [1978] *I write what I like*. Oxford: ProQuest LLC African Writers Series.
- Bowles, S. (1974) 'Economists as servants of power', *The American Economic Review* 64(2): 129-132.
- Bowles, S. and Gintis, H. (1978) 'The invisible fist: Have capitalism and democracy reached a parting of the ways?', *American Economic Review* 68(2): 358-363.
- Bowles, S. (2008) 'Policies designed for self-interested citizens may undermine "the moral sentiments": evidence from economic experiments', *Science* 320(5883): 1605-1609.
- Branco, C. (2012) 'Economics against democracy', *Review of Radical Political Economics* 44(1): 23-39.
- Carrick-Hagenbarth, J. and Epstein, G.A. (2012) 'Dangerous interconnectedness: economists' conflicts of interest, ideology and financial crisis', *Cambridge Journal of Economics* 36(1): 43-63.
- Chang, H.-J. (2014) *Economics – A User's Guide*. London: Pelican.
- Citigroup (2005) 'Equity Strategy: plutonomy – buying luxury, explaining global imbalances', *Citigroup Industry Note*, 16 October (retrieved 7 November 2013).
- Colander, D. (1989) 'Money and the spread of ideas'. In *The Spread of Economic Ideas*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Ferraro, F., Pfeffer, J. and Sutton, R.I. (2005) 'Economics language and assumptions: how theories can become self-fulfilling', *Academy of Management Review* 30(1): 8-24.
- George, S. (2014) 'State of corporations – the rise of illegitimate power and the threat to democracy', in *State of Power 2014 – Exposing the Davos Class*. Amsterdam: Transnational Institute.
- Gilens, M. and Page, B.P. (2014) 'Testing theories of American politics: elites, interest groups, and average citizens', *Perspectives on Politics* 12(3): 564-581.
- Gintis, H., Bowles, S., Boy, R. and Fehr, E. (2005) *Moral Sentiments and Material Interests*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Hartmann, M. (2007) *The Sociology of Elites*. London & New York: Routledge.
- Jones, O. (2014) *The Establishment: And How They Get Away With It*. London: Penguin Random House.
- Kellecioglu, D. (2010) 'Why some countries are poor and some rich – a non-Eurocentric view', *Real-World Economics Review* 52: 40-53. Available at: <http://paecon.net/PAERreview/issue52/Kellecioglu52.pdf>
- Kellecioglu, D. (2012) 'Global economic inequality: the billionaires vs the penniless', *Real-World Economics Review Blog*. Available at: <http://rwer.wordpress.com/denizkellecioglu>
- Khan, S.R. (2012) 'The sociology of elites', *Annual Review of Sociology* 38(1): 361-377.
- Kincaid, H., Dupré, J. and Wylie, A. (2007) *Value-free Science?: Ideals and Illusions*. New York: Oxford University Press.

- Lawson, T. (2013) 'What is this 'school' called neoclassical economics?', *Cambridge Journal of Economics* 37(5): 947-983.
- Lukes, S. (2005) *Power: A Radical View*. 2nd edn. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Lukes, S. (2008) *Moral Relativism*. New York: Picador.
- Madrack, J. (2011) *Age of Greed: The Triumph of Finance and the Decline of America, 1970 to the Present*. New York: Knopf Publishing Group.
- Mirowski, P. (2013) *Never Let a Serious Crisis Go to Waste – How Neoliberalism Survived the Financial Meltdown*. London & New York: Verso.
- Morgan, M.S. (2001) 'The formation of 'Modern' Economics: Engineering and ideology'. Working Paper no. 62/01. London: London School of Economics.
- Näring, H. and Douglas, N. (2012) *Economists and the Powerful: Convenient Theories, Distorted Facts, Ample Rewards*. London & New York: Anthem Press.
- Oxfam GB (2015) *Wealth: Having It All and Wanting More*. Oxford: Oxfam GB.
- Palley, T.I. (2013) 'Gattopardo Economics: The Crisis and the Mainstream Response of Change that Keeps Things the Same'. Working Paper 112. Düsseldorf: Macroeconomic Policy Institute, Hans-Böckler-Stiftung.
- Pennisi, H. (2014) 'Our egalitarian Eden', *Science* 344(6186): 822-825.
- Reati, A. (2011) 'Power relations and economic paradigms, or why Post-Keynesian theory is not dominant', *Review of Radical Political Economics* 43(3): 361-372.
- Ross, D. (2012) 'Economic theory, anti-economics, and political ideology, in Mäki, U. (ed.) *Handbook of the Philosophy of Science. Volume 13: Philosophy of Economics*. Oxford: Elsevier.
- Santos, A.C. (2011) 'Behavioural and experimental economics: are they really transforming economics?', *Cambridge Journal of Economics* 35: 705-728.
- Schutz, E. (2011) *Inequality and Power: The Economics of Class*. New York: Routledge.
- Skidelsky, R. (2013) 'Ideas versus power in economics: The case of Keynes and Marx'. Proceedings of INET conference, 6 April, Hong Kong. Available from: Institute for New Economic Thinking (INET) [26 April 2014]
- Solow, R. (2014) 'The one percent', *The Journal of Economic Perspectives* 28(1): 243-247.
- Streeck, W. (2011) 'The crises of democratic capitalism', *New Left Review* 71: 5-29.
- Street, P. (2014) *They Rule: The 1% vs Democracy*. Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers.
- Quiggin, J.Q. (2010) *Zombie Economics: How Dead Ideas Still Walk Among Us*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Zinn, H. (2005) *A People's History of the United States: 1492 – Present*. New York: Harper Perennial.

Endnotes

1. See Kellecioglu, D. (2010) 'Why some countries are poor and some rich – a non-Eurocentric view', which is basically a short descriptive analysis on the globalization of colour-coded economic inequality.
2. Quotation from page 30 in Smith, A (1776) *An Inquiry Into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* ElecBooks Classics
3. Quotation from page 3 Gintis, H., Bowles, S., Boy, R. and Fehr, E. (2005) *Moral Sentiments and Material Interests*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
4. Quotation from page 8 in Du Bois, W (2007) [1903] *The Souls Of Black Folk* Oxford: Oxford University Press

This essay appears in TNI's sixth annual State of Power report. This year, it examines the cultural processes that are used by corporations, military and privileged elites to make their power seem 'natural' and 'irreversible'. It also explores how social movements can harness creativity, art and cultural forces to resist and to build lasting social and ecological transformation. Visit **www.tni.org/stateofpower2017** to read all the essays and contributions.



The Transnational Institute (TNI) is an international research and advocacy institute committed to building a just, democratic and sustainable planet. For more than 40 years, TNI has served as a unique nexus between social movements, engaged scholars and policy makers.

www.TNI.org