THE POLITICS OF IDENTITY
IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

———————————— V. SPIKE PETERSON ————————————

In today's world of shifting boundaries and global crises, the question of "who we are" takes on new urgency. Conventional boundaries are no longer "secure." Local developments — whether cultural, economic, medical, military, or ecological — have potentially far-reaching effects and even global consequences. When political identity is militarized — as in nationalist struggles — the commitments constituted by that identity literally have international implications. And in the face of systemic environmental degradation, state-based identities and their accompanying priorities are often inadequate — and as a response to life-threatening developments, may even prove fatal. Our planetary survival appears to require identities that are compatible with global solidarity.

Responding to the question of "who we are" is increasingly complex because conventional categorizations are no longer "self-evident." Technological developments have blurred the binary distinctions between life-death, here-there, and us-them. Theoretical developments have blurred the categorical separation of religion-science, subject-object, and self-other. As a result, relational categories, interactive processes, and multidimensional contexts are favored over time-honored reductions and reifications. For example, in International Relations (IR), the conventional understanding of individuals and nation-states — as unitary, rational actors — has given way to accounts that highlight simultaneous, multiple identities pursuing numerous objectives through diverse strategies.

Because of the urgency, and in spite of the complexity, we must rethink conventional analyses and seek a more adequate account of political identity. At issue is our understanding of how identity constitutes a 'we' that shapes our allegiance and, in turn, how competing claims for political allegiance shape International Relations. While International Relations scholars have traditionally focused on state-based identities — exemplified by nationalism — there are many group identities that in fact shape world affairs. At this historical juncture, political identity plays a major role in determination of state priorities (e.g., competing executive, popular, and military constituencies), in processes of centralization (e.g., the European Community) and decentralization (e.g., sub-

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nationalist movements), in transnational social movements (e.g., fundamental-ism, feminism) and in responses to global crises (e.g., peace and ecological movements). As states appear increasingly vulnerable to internal and external threats, crises of political legitimacy fuel the state's interest in and regulation of these group identities.

We confront a paradox. The interaction of local and global processes suggests a need for global thinking. Yet states continue to monopolize our framework for understanding how people become organized politically, how political identity is defined, and where the boundaries of political community are drawn. Because political identities conventionally assume an exclusionary form (us versus them, insiders versus outsiders, citizens versus foreigners), differences among people are in tension with contemporary requirements for compatible identities and global cooperation. Because nation-state identities — like sub- and trans-national identities — mark the differences between groups, they illustrate the diversity of people's experiences and the power of competing claims to alle-giance and action. Thus, a particular quandary for IR is the difficulty of account-ing for the role of both state and non-state political identities in world affairs.

Mounting interest in how group identification develops and how it affects world politics is evidenced by an explosion of scholarly research in historical studies of state formation, psycho-sociological interpretations of identity for-mation and intergroup dynamics, and critical analyses of contemporary nation-states in relation to cultural, ecological, economic, and military hierarchies. Intersecting these literatures is a now extensive feminist scholarship that "cor-rects" and "revisions" our understanding of political identity, social move-ments, state orders, and global dynamics.

This brief article does not offer a substantive analysis of identity politics or gendered nationalism. Rather, it begins the work of such a project by identifying relevant literatures and suggesting how their respective strengths might be brought to bear on the question of political identity in today's complex world. Gendered divisions of power, violence, labor, and resources are not coincidental to but are central elements of our rapidly changing world.[1] Therefore, feminist analyses are not simply a "women's issue" — they inform our understanding more broadly and deeply. However, these gendered divisions are rendered invisible by the hegemonic discourse of conventional IR. It is therefore necessary to expose the ways in which gender shapes our understanding of national and global politics and how international processes have gender-differentiated con-sequences. By introducing a feminist lens on political identity, I hope to docu-ment the limitations of conventional approaches, demonstrate the relevance of feminist critiques, and suggest how gender plays a fundamental — not periph-eral — role in the study and practice of IR.

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1. V. Spike Peterson and Anne Sisson Runyan. *Global Gender Issues* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1993).

Political Identity through an IR Lens

The last two decades have witnessed a dramatic revival of interest in, and analyses of, the state and its construction of political identity. Political scientists, anthropologists, geographers, historians and sociologists have all written extensively on the complex and contradictory processes of state-making, which is understood as state formation, consolidation, and reproduction.[2] These studies have examined the various political, economic, technological, and socio-cultural dimensions of state-making. In addition, large-scale historical and comparative studies identify the dynamics of, and situate states in regard to, encompassing political and economic "systems." Significant in this regard are approaches in International Relations that emphasize the role of transnational actors and global capitalism as structuring the location and strategies of particular states.[3]

What is striking in recent work on the state is a marked shift of emphasis. Analyses favoring economic (capitalist-driven) or political (state-driven) determinants are being transformed by attention to socio-cultural dynamics and the interaction of multiple variables.[4] State-making is increasingly understood as an ongoing process, a project of political ordering that meets resistance, requires legitimation, and is never completely "finished." Of particular interest is how the state works to "invent" group identities, new histories, and "imagined communities."[5]

Identity formation is also an ongoing, never "finished" process. According to Richard H. Brown, "Identity is given neither institutionally nor biologically. It evolves as one orders continuities in one's conception of oneself."[6] In other words, it involves the interaction of psychological and socio-cultural variables

2. Charles Tilly, ed. *The Formation of National States in Western Europe* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1975); Charles Tilly, *Coercion, Capital, and European States, AD 990-1990* (Cambridge: Basil Blackwell, 1990); Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power*, Vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986); Michael Mann, *States, War and Capitalism* (New York: Basil Blackwell, 1988); Peter B. Evans, Deitrich Rueschmeyer and Theda Skocpol, eds. *Bringing the State Back In* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985); James A. Caporaso, ed. *The Elusive State* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1989); Perry Anderson, *Passages From Antiquity to Feudalism* (London: Verso NLB, 1974); Perry Anderson, *Lineages of the Absolutist State* (London: New Left Books, 1974).

3. Robert W. Cox, *Production, Power and World Order: Social Forces in the Making of History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987); Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System* (New York, Academic Press, 1974); Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Capitalist World-Economy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979); Christopher Chase-Dunn and Thomas D. Hall, eds. *Core/Periphery Relations in Precapitalist Worlds* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1991).

4. Fred Block, *Revising State Theory: Essays in Politics and Postindustrialism* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987); Philip Corrigan and Derek Sayer, *The Great Arch: English State Formation as Cultural Revolution* (Oxford and New York: Basil Blackwell, 1985).

5. See Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso, 1983); Eric J. Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds. *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983); Anthony Giddens, *The Nation State and Violence.* Vol. 2 of *A Contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism* (Berkeley and L.A.: VC Press, 1987); Anthony Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1991).

6. Richard Brown, "Personal Identity and Political Economy: Western Grammars of the Self in Historical Perspective," *Current Perspectives* Vol. 8 (1987): 123.

in a historically specific context. We have multiple identities — e.g., Canadian, homemaker, Jewish, Hispanic, socialist — that shape our sense of self, our beliefs, expectations, and actions. In political terms, identities define allegiances and conflicting allegiances shape the dynamics of who gets what, when, where and how.

Philip Corrigan and Derek Sayer argue that state formation is a process of cultural revolution as the state creates a new political identity through the manipulation of symbols, rituals, and practices. Nationalism is a collective identity based on a fictive community, ostensibly representing the "integration" of heterogenous individuals. But this process "denies" continued diversity and competing identities:

> "To define 'us' in national terms (as against class, or locality, or ethnic group, or gender, or religion ...) has consequences. Such classifica-tions are means for a project of social integration which is also, inseparably, an active disintegration of other focuses of identity."[7]

Attention to the socio-cultural production of identities and communities has prompted a number of studies focused on the construction of national identity.[8] The shift to socio-cultural dynamics surfaces in global studies as well. Theorists increasingly refer to "globalization": how transnational or world processes, especially cultural ones, transcend the state-society unit and profoundly shape our understandings of local and global reality.[9] Countering this perspective, a variety of social groups and movements contest what they term "control from a distance" and, instead, support local and popular decision-making. The position of these groups overlaps other new global actors: sub- and transna-tional social movements based on commitments such as ecology, antimilitarism, religious fundamentalism, feminism, and ethnicity.[10]

What emerges from these accounts is an understanding of state-making as

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7. Corrigan and Sayer, *Great Arch*, 195. (emphasis in the original)

8. William Bloom, *Personal Identity, National Identity and International Relations* (Cambridge: Cam-bridge University Press, 1990); Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983); "Reimagining the Nation," *Millennium* Special Issue Vol. 20, No. 3 (1991); Edward Tiryakian and Neil Nevitte, "Nationalism and Modernity," in *New Nationalism of the Developed West*, eds. Edward Tiryakian and Ronald Rogowski (London: Allen and Unwin, 1985); Anthony D. Smith, *Nationalism in the Twentieth-Century* (New York, New York University Press, 1979); Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986); Eric Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism Since 1780* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

9. Albert Bergesen, ed. *Studies of the Modern World System* (New York: Academic Press 1980); Mike Featherstone, ed. *Global Culture: Nationalism, Globalism and Modernity* (London: Sage Publica-tions, 1990); A.D. King, ed. *Culture, Globalization and the World System: Contemporary Conditions for the Representation of Identity* (Basingstoke: Macmillan in Association with the Department of Art and Art History, State University of New York, Binghampton, 1991).

10. Samir Amin, Giovanni Arrighi, Andre Gunder Frank, and Immanuel Wallerstein, *Transforming the Revolution: Social Movements and the World System* (New York: Academic Press, 1990); R.B.J. Walker, *One World, Many Worlds: Struggles for a Just World Peace* (Boulder, CO: Reinner Publish-ers, 1988); Richard Falk, "The Global Promise of Social Movements," *Alternatives* Vol. 12 (1987): 173-196; Adrienne Harris and Ynestra King, eds. *Rocking the Ship of State: Toward a Feminist Peace Politics* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1989).

an on-going process reflecting the complex interaction of multiple variables, both within and outside of the state's territorial boundaries. To effectively reproduce itself, the state must achieve a level of political centralization, economic accumulation and ideological legitimation that suffices to maintain authority and order internally and preserve sovereignty externally. To the extent that the formation and significance of political identity are addressed in these studies, it is almost exclusively in terms of national identity and nationalism. This is a function of both large-scale and comparative studies that pay little attention to political identity, as well as the prominent role assigned to nationalism in Eurocentric studies.

Because of its breadth and depth, this recent scholarship enables us to identify enduring patterns in state-making: political, economic and military dynamics are reasonably well mapped. Until recently, however, the focus on the individual in individualism typical of liberal-pluralist perspectives and the commitment to structural and economic explanation characterized by marxist approaches have inhibited the study of socio-cultural forces shaping social relations in general, and political identity in particular. The most promising of this research is the recent work[11] examining the interaction between structural and cultural-ideological variables. Even this literature, however, offers few resources to address the challenges posed by today's competing political identities and, in turn, the threats posed by this proliferation of "difference" to global security. Largely retaining a state-centric lens, these accounts tend to reproduce, rather than move beyond, the contradictions of difference, solidarity, and global equity.

Political Identity through a Feminist Lens

In the last two decades, feminist scholarship has reverberated throughout the disciplines, directing attention to gender both as an empirical as well as a theoretical category.[12] Feminists have unique and significant contributions to make in the study of political identity and its dilemma of "difference." Feminists themselves have particularly relevant experience in regard to addressing the tension of respecting diversity while pursuing solidarity. In today's world, feminists confront the challenge of diversity among women (differences of class, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, etc.) while struggling to create a unity of women necessary for political effectiveness. Insights gained from this feminist struggle are relevant to the global struggle of seeking solidarity (a just world order) amid diversity (particular state and trans-state identities). Moreover, because of women's historical exclusion from political activities and states' repudiation of their political identity, feminists have generated an extensive

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11. Corrigan and Sayer, *Great Arch*; Block, *Revising State Theory*; Anderson, *Imagined Communities*; Hobsbawm and Ranger, *Invention of Tradition*; Giddens, *Nation State*; Giddens, *Modernity and Self-Identity*; Bergesen, *Studies*; Featherstone, *Global Culture*; King, *Culture, Globalization and the World System*.

12. See V. Spike Peterson, "Transgressing Boundaries: Theories of Knowledge, Gender, and International Relations," *Millennium* Vol. 21, No. 2 (Summer 1992): 183-206.

literature on identity formation and its implications for political agency. Brought to bear on analyses of states and nationalism, this research enriches our understanding of political identity formation. Benefits in both cases are not only theoretical insights but practical, policy-oriented strategies.

More specifically, feminists have generated an extensive literature on the gender dynamics of state-making. For example, examining production and property relations through a gender-sensitive lens suggests how states promote policies and structures, such as the family wage model and sex segregated labor markets, that render women systemically "dependent" — on individual males and/or the patriarchal state. Both gender and class relations are thus illuminated, with implications for public policy as well as social movement strategies. Moreover, examining the gender division of productive and reproductive labor suggests how women's biological and social reproduction is crucial for maintaining the state. As Aristotle understood, "women's work" is not peripheral to, but a necessary condition of men's activities in the public sphere. Today, women's work includes not only bearing and raising children (in conformity with gender norms) and maintaining the household, but caring for dependents generally, transforming resources into need-meeting services, and mediating between public agencies and family demands. When women provide these socially necessary "services," they relieve the state of having to do so. Such gendered analyses draw previously overlooked implications of state-making to the forefront of discourse, thereby augmenting its scope.

Feminist analyses of the state encompass the gender dynamics of early and pre-industrial states[13] as well as modern European, North American, and Third World states.[14] The role of gender in revolutions and the constitution of new "communities" has been a specific focus of research.[15]

The cumulative research of feminist scholars has revealed the inadequacy of

13. Irene Silverblatt, "Women in States," *Annual Review of Anthropology* (1988): 427-60; Varda Burstyn, "Economy, Sexuality, Politics: Engels and the Sexual Division of Labour," in *Socialist Studies* (Manitoba: University of Manitoba Press, 1983); Gerda Lerner, *The Creation of Patriarchy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986); V. Spike Peterson, "An Archeology of Domination: Historicizing Gender and Class in Early Western State Formation," Ph.D. diss., The American University, 1988.

14. Linda Gordon, *Women, the State, and Welfare* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1990); Anne S. Sassoon, ed. *Women and the State* (London: Hutchinson, 1987); Sue Ellen Charlton, Jane Everett, and Kathleen Staudt, eds. *Women, the State and Development* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989); Varda Burstyn, "Masculine Dominance and the State," in *The Socialist Register*, eds. R. Miliband and J. Saville (London: Merlin Press, 1983); Haleh Afshar, ed. *Women, State and Ideology: Studies from Africa and Asia* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1987); Jane L. Parpart and Kathleen A. Staudt, eds. *Women and the State in Africa* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Reinner Publishers, Inc., 1990); Bina Agarwal, ed. *Structures of Patriarchy: State, Community and Household in Modernizing Asia* (London: ZED, 1988); V. Spike Peterson, ed. *Gendered States: Feminist (Re)Visions of International Relations Theory* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Reinner Press, 1992).

15. Maxine Molyneux, "Mobilization Without Emancipation? Women's Interests, the State, and Revolution in Nicaragua," *Feminist Studies* Vol. 11 (Summer 1985): 227-54; Mary Ann Tetreault, "Women and Revolution: A Framework for Analysis," in *Gendered States*, ed. V. Spike Peterson (Boulder, CO: Lynne Reinner Press, 1992); Chandra Talpade Mohanty, Anne Russo, and Lourdes Torres, eds. *Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991).

conventional frameworks for addressing gender dynamics. Repeated attempts to "add women" to traditional categories and accounts exposed the extent to which those accounts take male experience as the norm. Insofar as "adding women" means adding "that which constitutes femininity," it is impossible for women to be included in categories and theories whose definitions presume masculinity (e.g., formal politics, public authority, economic power, freedom). When women are "added" conventional definitions appear to be contradicted, consequently exposing the categories' implicit androcentrism. In Elizabeth Gross's words, it becomes "clear that it is not possible simply to include women in those theories where they had previously been excluded, for this exclusion forms a fundamental structuring principle and key presumption of patriarchal discourse".[16]

A substantial literature has emerged to document the idea that "all of social life is gendered."[17] This suggests first, that gender is socially constructed (not biologically determined), producing subjective identities through which we see and know the world. Second, the world is pervasively shaped by intersubjectively shared meanings, practices, institutions, and systems that are gendered. As a consequence, gender shapes not only who we are, how we live, play, and work, and what we have but also how we think, how we order reality, how we claim to know what is true, and, therefore, how we understand and explain the social world. We fail to understand our world "accurately" (realistically) if we fail to appreciate how gendered categories and frameworks filter our thought as well as how social practices and institutions have gender-differentiated effects.[18]

Women historically have been denied political identity and agency. Feminists have explored the implications of this exclusion from a variety of perspectives. An extensive literature on the formation of gender identity is now available for explicating other forms of identity formation,[19] and a growing literature on "identity politics" informs feminist analyses of various socio-cultural, political, and economic dynamics.[20]

Today's multicultural societies confront the daunting challenge of accommodating ethnic pluralism, labor migration, residency rules, and access to benefits. Global economic patterns exacerbate this situation. Because citizens make de-

16. Elizabeth Gross, "Conclusion," in *Feminist Challenges: Social and Political Theory*, eds. Carole Pateman and Elizabeth Gross (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1986), 191-92.
17. Barbara J. Nelson, "Women and Knowledge in Political Science," *Women and Politics* Vol. 9, No. 2 (1989): 4. See also Sandra Harding, *The Science Question in Feminism* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1986); Sandra Harding, *Whose Science? Whose Knowledge?* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1991).
18. Peterson and Runyan, *Global Gender Issues*.
19. Nancy Chodorow, *The Reproduction of Mothering* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978); Evelyn Fox Keller, *Reflections on Gender and Science* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1985).
20. Valentine M. Moghadam, ed. *Identity Politics and Women: Cross-National Perspectives* (Oxford: Oxford University Press/Clarendon, forthcoming); Shane Phelan, *Identity Politics* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1989); Mary Margaret Pignone, "Global Citizenship," Ph.D. diss., The American University, 1992; Mohanty et al., *Third World Women*; Gloria Anzaldua, ed. *Making Face, Making Soul/Hacienda Caras: Creative and Critical Perspectives by Women of Color* (San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 1990).

mands on the state, Bryan Turner argues that the "analysis of citizenship has in recent years become a pressing theoretical issue, given the problems which face the welfare state."[21]

Citizenship involves not only political representation but also legal rights, employment, and access to social and economic benefits. Women's historical exclusion from the identity of citizen and political actor has shaped their experience of political representation. Through marriage and property laws that favor men, women have been excluded from certain legal rights. And women's subordinate position in labor markets is linked to their greater dependence on the welfare services of the state. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that a focus of feminist studies is political identity as it has been historically and is currently framed in the concept of "citizen."[22]

At the same time, and with less Eurocentrism, feminists have examined the manipulation of gender in nationalist struggles.[23] This includes the manipulation of gendered symbolism (e.g., woman as "mother of the nation" and the bearer of cultural authenticity), gender divisions of labor (e.g., men "at the front" politically and militarily, women as silent supporters of their men and bearers of the nation's future soldiers), and gendered consequences of war (e.g., men's "heroic" deaths and women's "tragic" victimization — rape, homelessness, loss of protection).

Of special note in regard to this paper, the profound boundary changes taking place in Europe have intensified feminist interest in the gender-differentiated consequences of citizenship and nationalism. Propelled by recent events, a mix of case studies and synthesizing work sheds new light on identity dynamics in the immediate context of Europe's political and economic transformations.[24]

21. Bryan S. Turner, "Outline of a Theory of Citizenship," *Sociology* Vol. 24, No. 2 (May 1990): 212.

22. Mary G. Dietz, "Context is All: Feminism and Theories of Citizenship," in *Learning About Women*, eds. Jill K. Conway, Susan C. Bourque, and Joan W. Scott (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1987); Mary G. Deitz, "Citizenship With a Feminist Face," *Political Theory* Vol. 13 (1985): 19-37; Kathleen Jones, "Citizenship in a Woman-Friendly Polity," *Signs* Vol. 15 (1990): 718-812; Kathleen Jones and Anna Jonasdottir, *The Political Interests of Gender* (London: Sage Publications, 1988); Anna Yeatman, "Despotism and Civil Society: The Limits of Patriarchal Citizenship," in *Women's Views of the Political World of Men*, ed. Judith H. Steihm (Dobbs Ferry, NY: Transnational Publishers, Inc. 1984); Carole Pateman, *The Sexual Contract* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1988); Nira Yuval-Davis, "The Citizenship Debate: Women, Ethnic Processes and the State," *Feminist Review* Vol. 39 (Winter 1991): 58-68.

23. Kumari Jayawardena, *Feminism and Nationalism in the Third World* (London: ZED Books, 1986); Nira Yuval-Davis and Floya Anthias, eds. *Woman-Nation-State* (London: Macmillan Press, 1989); Sylvia Walby, "Women and Nation," *International Journal of Comparative Sociology* Vol. 32, No. 1/2 (January-April 1992): 81-100; George L. Mosse, *Nationalism and Sexuality: Respectability and Abnormal Sexuality in Modern Europe* (New York: Howard Fertiz, 1985); Andrew Parker, Mary Russo, Doris Sommer, and Patricia Yaeger, eds. *Nationalism and Sexualities* (New York: Routledge, 1991); Deniz Kandiyoti, ed. *Women, Islam and the State* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1991); Anne McClintock, "No Longer in a Future Heaven: Women and Nationalism in South Africa," *Transition* Vol. 51 (1991): 104-23; Jan Jindy Pettman, "Women, Nationalism and the State: Towards an International Feminist Perspective," *Occasional Paper in Gender and Development Studies*, (Bangkok, Thailand: Asian Institute of Technology, 1992); Roberta Hamilton and Michele Barrett, eds. *The Politics of Diversity: Feminism, Marxism, and Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1986).

24. European Network for Women's Studies, *Seminar Report: Women's Studies and the Social Position*

In a more theoretical direction, feminists have been at the forefront of developments in regard to the meaning and politics of "difference." Conventionally, "woman" has been construed as the eternal "Other" — marked in androcentric accounts as essentially and ahistorically different from "man" as the norm and the privileged. Given the socio-cultural, economic, and political effects of defining woman as a function of "difference," it is not surprising that feminists are vocal in contemporary discourses that focus on the relation between universal and particular or identity and difference.[25]

There are also bodies of literature which address gender, states, and identities within the framework of today's global dynamics. In the present context, the most important studies address security, political economy, and ecological issues. For example, the meaning of security — within and among states — has been critically explored[26] as well as the gender hierarchy reproduced in local and global divisions of labor.[27] Finally, feminists have been at the forefront of ecological movements with global implications.[28]

A survey of the literature that addresses the politics of identity and its related

of Women in Eastern and Western Europe (Zoetermeer, Netherlands: Ministry of Education and Science, 1991); European Network for Women's Studies, *Conference Report: Building a Europe Without Frontiers: The Role of Women* (Zoetermeer, Netherlands: Ministry of Education and Science, 1992); Valentine M. Moghadam, ed. *Privatization and Democratization in Central and Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union: The Gender Dimension* (Helsinki: World Institute for Development Economics Research (WIDER), United Nations University, 1992); Barbara E. Clements, Barbara A. Engel, and Christine D. Worobec, eds. *Russia's Women: Accommodation, Resistance, Transformation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991); "Special Issue: Women in Europe," *Women's Studies International Forum* Vol. 15, No. 1 (1992); "Special Issue: Feminism and Europe," *Feminist Review* Vol. 39 (Winter 1991).

25. "Symposium on the Politics of Difference," *Political Theory Newsletter* Vol. 4, No. 1 (April 1992); Linda Alcoff, "Cultural Feminism versus Post-Structuralism," *Signs* Vol. 13 (1988): 405-36; Donna Haraway, "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective," *Feminist Studies* Vol. 14 (1988): 575-99; Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1990); Micheline R. Malson, Jean F. O'Barr, Sarah Westphal-Wihl, and Mary Wyer, eds. *Feminist Theory in Practice and Process* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1989); Linda Nicholson, ed. *Feminism/Postmodernism* (New York: Routledge, 1990); Iris Marion Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990).

26. Rebecca Grant, "The Quagmire of Gender and International Security," in *Gendered States*, ed. V. Spike Peterson (Boulder, CO: Lynne Reinner Press, 1992); J. Ann Tickner, *Gender in International Relations: Feminist Perspectives on Achieving Global Security* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992); V. Spike Peterson, "Security and Sovereign States: What is at Stake in Taking Feminism Seriously?" in *Gendered States: Feminist (Re)Visions of International Relations Theory*, ed. V. Spike Peterson (Boulder, CO: Lynne Reinner Publishers, 1992).

27. Maria Mies, *Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale: Women and the International Division of Labour* (London: Zed Books, 1986); Maria Mies, Veronika Bennholdt-Tomsen, and Claudia von Werlhof, *Women: The Last Colony* (London: Zed Books, 1988); Gita Sen and Caren Grown, eds. *Development, Crises, and Alternative Visions: Third World Women's Perspectives* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1987); Joan Smith, Immanuel Wallerstein, and Hans Dieter-Evers, eds. *Households and the World Economy* (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1984); June Nash and Maria Fernandez-Kelly, eds. *Women, Men, and the International Division of Labor* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1983).

28. Vandana Shiva, *Staying Alive: Women, Ecology and Development* (India: Kali for Women, and London: Zed Press, 1988); Irene Diamond and Gloria Feman Orenstein, eds. *Reweaving the World: The Emergence of Ecofeminism* (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1990); "Special Issue: Ecological Feminism," *Hypatia* Vol. 6, No. 1 (Spring 1991).

fields raises several important issues. We have well developed and reasonably global accounts of state-making. Recent studies have gone beyond earlier political and economic analyses by focusing on socio-cultural dynamics, illuminating the contested and provisional nature of political identity understood in nationalist terms. This literature thus enables a more complex understanding of states and the collective identities which they attempt to institutionalize. However, political identity narrowly understood — i.e., nationalism—promotes particular allegiances which are typically at odds with a universal or global sense of political solidarity. Thus, while our historical and structural understanding of state-making and nationalist identity is substantial, this scholarship has not advanced the project of moving beyond state-based allegiance — including the limitations of state-centric decision-making in the face of economic, security, and ecological crises of global proportion.

Feminist scholarship amends and expands these accounts by exposing and analyzing the significance of gender in all dimensions of state-making. It speaks directly to issues of identity and allegiance. Feminists cannot avoid or trivialize "difference" — whether understood as differences among women or between women and men. These scholars have attempted instead to acknowledge and theorize the particularity of difference without abandoning the project of collective, even global, solidarity. This literature thus enables a complex understanding of how gender shapes our world(s) — including the limitations of knowledge claims and political projects that take one particular experience — in this case, the male experience — as the norm. However, attention to feminist practice also facilitates an understanding of difference that permits solidarity and equity while respecting diversity. Given their respective strengths, an integration of literature on feminism, state-making, and political identity formation offers significant promise for addressing concerns at the center of IR inquiry.

Conclusion

Feminists argue that we do not accurately understand our world(s), nor can we effectively transform them, when we ignore how gender shapes our thinking and practice and how global processes have gender-differentiated consequences. For example, feminist analyses of the state inform our understanding of structural change in world order and the potential for a just world order in two important ways. As a result of the state's centrality to world ordering, examining the state through a feminist lens enriches our general understanding of structural change and international politics. Neglected in conventional accounts, the gender dynamics of states and state ordering reveal structural divisions of identity, labor, resources, and power that are salient for comprehending our world(s) and addressing global crises.

Moreover, a feminist lens on the state enriches our particular understanding of gender and states by exposing the depth and breadth of gender effects. It thus substantiates the feminist claim that gender is not simply an attribute of indi-

viduals but an institutionalized feature of social life and thus cannot be ignored in our theory, practice, or normative vision. Because systematic critique always prefigures alternatives, feminist analyses offer more than improved accuracy and critical understanding: they suggest alternative ways of being and knowing that can inform our quest for a just world order. My conclusion, therefore will offer some guidelines for the study of political identity through a gender-sensitive lens.

First, feminist scholarship and activism add to and transform traditional and contemporary critiques of the state. Specifically, feminists provide additional insights on the exploitative dynamics and legitimating ideologies of state orders and how they constitute, perpetuate, and 'naturalize' systemic insecurities associated with structural violence. Historically, early state formation marked the effective centralization of political authority and accumulation processes, the institutionalization of gender and class/race exploitation, and the ideological legitimation of these transformations. The codification of man as 'master' and woman as 'matter' has powerfully naturalized and de-politicized man's exploitation of women, of other men, and of nature. Thus, in our world(s) women's labor and bodies, the earth, and indigenous peoples are treated as 'objects' under the control, possession, and sometimes 'protection' of scientific, governmental, economic, and military elites.[29] Studies of state-making and the political identities they foster are enriched by attention to the gendering of us-them, subject-object, citizen-foreigner.

Second, feminist scholarship exposes the constraints and contradictions of state-based political identity. Historically, nationalism has been tremendously problematic for women and minorities. While often an important vehicle for opposing external rule, nationalism has particular costs to those internally who share least in elite privilege and political representation. The elevation of a particular national identity — backed by the military, economic, and political power of the state — has historically been at the expense of sub-national (and transnational) identities that presumably favor different socio-cultural, economic, and political priorities. Externally, there is obvious tension between nationalist identities and global solidarity. Feminist scholarship, with its critical, interdisciplinary, and historical theories of identity formation, offers many insights on how we 'become' who we are, how this shapes our experience and choices, how personal and collective identities are interwoven, and how identities can be transformed. It thus offers valuable insights on the contemporary dilemma of competing particular identities — e.g., nationalism — in the face of our need for global cooperation.

Third, feminist research demonstrates the importance of historical and contextual understanding. Effectively rethinking the intersubjective meanings and conventional 'givens' of political discourse — the state, politics, power, gender, order, anarchy, sovereignty, security, reason, nature — requires that we examine not only the development of the modern world system, but also the much earlier

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29. Peterson, "Archeology of Domination;" Peterson, *Security and Sovereign States;* Mies, *Patriarchy and Accumulation.*

development of monotheism and legitimations of centralized state power.[30] It is at this juncture that elites gain power over symbols, signifying practices, and language use, and it is this power that enables historically specific and contingent meanings to be established as natural and therefore not political. The long-term and systemic effects of such control remain largely unexplored, even as these effects continue to discipline our ways of knowing and being. It is necessary to historicize language and "naturalizing ideologies" if we are to understand — so that we can then transform — exploitative relations.

Finally, most contemporary analysts argue that there are no value-free or power-free frameworks, practices, or institutions. The pervasiveness of normative commitments and power relations means, of course, that there are no easy paths to a just world order: strategies for seeking justice may be complementary, conflicting, or contradictory. Feminist experience confirms that universalizing or transhistorical categories and frameworks are themselves suspect and ought to be avoided. The complex nature of social interaction and multiple oppositions preclude simple or universal strategies: allegiances are often cross-cutting and resistance to oppression is never "pure." Yet this acknowledgement of ambiguity and complexity does not entail despair or political paralysis.[31] On the contrary, it forces us to acknowledge the power dynamics of all interventions (and non-interventions) and take responsibility for the rules we impose — through governmental power as well as academic practices — and the politics they effect. It suggests that we must be relentlessly self-critical of our assumptions and how we are situated in relation to diverse others. From a feminist perspective, it compels us to reflect on the politics of identities, practices, and institutions that engender world politics.

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30. Ali Mazrui, "From the Semites to the Anglo-Saxons," *Alternatives* Vol. 10 (January 1986): 3-44; Shivaz Dossa, "Political Philosophy and Orientalism: The Classical Origins of a Discourse," *Alternatives* Vol. 12, No. 3 (July 1987): 343-57.

31. Peterson, "Transgressing Boundaries."