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A DIALECTICAL-RELATIONAL APPROACH TO CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS IN SOCIAL RESEARCH

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CONTENTS

Keywords

dialectical relations, explanatory critique, structures and strategies, political analysis, transdisciplinary research

In this chapter I introduce and illustrate a methodology for using a *dialectical-relational* version of CDA in transdisciplinary social research (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999; Fairclough 2003, 2006). I begin with a theoretical section explaining the dialectical-relational approach, including my view of discourse, of critical analysis and of transdisciplinary research. In the second section I briefly discuss fields of application of this approach, and in the third section I explain the methodology, presenting it as a series of stages and steps, and identify a number of core analytical categories. In the fourth section I present an example, showing the application of this methodology in researching a political topic, and illustrate the approach to political analysis in the fifth section, with respect to particular texts. The sixth section summarizes what can be achieved with this methodology, and discusses possible limitations.

Theory and concepts

First a terminological point. *Discourse* is commonly used in various senses including (a) meaning-making as an element of the social process, (b) the language associated with a particular social field or practice (e.g. 'political discourse'), (c) a way of construing aspects of the world associated with a particular social perspective (e.g. a 'neo-liberal discourse of globalization'). It is easy to confuse them, so to at least partially reduce the scope for confusion I prefer to use *semiosis* for the first, most abstract and general sense (Fairclough et al. 2004), which has the further advantage of suggesting that discourse analysis is concerned with various 'semiotic modalities' of which language is only one (others are visual images and 'body language').

Semiosis is viewed here as an element of the social process which is *dialectically* related to others – hence a 'dialectical-relational' approach. Relations between elements are dialectical in the sense of being different but not 'discrete', i.e. not fully separate. We might say that each 'internalizes' the others without being reducible to them (Harvey 1996) – e.g. social relations, power, institutions, beliefs and cultural values are in part semiotic, they 'internalize' semiosis without being reducible to it. For example, although we should analyse political institutions or business organizations as partly semiotic objects, it would be a mistake to treat them as purely semiotic, because then we could not ask the key question: what is the relationship between semiotic and other elements? CDA focuses not just upon semiosis as such, but on *relations between semiotic and other social elements*. The nature of this relationship varies between institutions and organizations, and according to time and place, and it needs to be established through analysis.

This requires CDA to be integrated within frameworks for *transdisciplinary* research such as the framework I have used in recent publications, 'cultural political economy', which combines elements from three disciplines: a form of economic analysis, a theory of the state and a form of CDA (Fairclough 2006; Jessop 2004). Transdisciplinary research is a particular form of interdisciplinary research (Fairclough 2005). What distinguishes it is that in bringing disciplines and theories together to address research issues, it sees 'dialogue' between them as a source for the theoretical and methodological development of each of them. For example, *recontextualization* was introduced as a concept and category

within CDA through a dialogue with Basil Bernstein's sociology of pedagogy, where it originated (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999).

In what sense is CDA *critical*? Critical social research aims to contribute to addressing the social 'wrongs' of the day (in a broad sense – injustice, inequality, lack of freedom etc.) by analysing their sources and causes, resistance to them and possibilities of overcoming them. We can say that it has both a 'negative' and a 'positive' character. On the one hand it analyses and seeks to explain dialectical relations between semiosis and other social elements to clarify how semiosis figures in the establishment, reproduction and change of unequal power relations (domination, marginalization, exclusion of some people by others) and in ideological processes, and how in more general terms it bears upon human 'well-being'. These relations require analysis because there are no societies whose logic and dynamic, including how semiosis figures within them, is fully transparent to all: the forms in which they appear to people are often partial and in part misleading. On the other hand, critique is oriented to analyzing and explaining, with a focus on these dialectical relations, the many ways in which the dominant logic and dynamic is tested, challenged and disrupted by people, and to identifying possibilities which these suggest for overcoming obstacles to addressing 'wrongs' and improving well-being.

The social process can be seen as the interplay between three levels of social reality: social *structures*, *practices* and *events* (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999). Social practices 'mediate' the relationship between general and abstract social structures and particular and concrete social events; social fields, institutions and organizations are constituted as networks of social practices (see Bourdieu on social practices and fields; Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). In this approach to CDA, analysis is focused on two dialectical relations: between structure (especially social practices as an intermediate level of structuring) and events (or: structure and action, structure and strategy); and, within each, between semiotic and other elements. There are three major ways in which semiosis relates to other elements of social practices and of social events – as a facet of action; in the construal (representation) of aspects of the world; and in the constitution of identities. And there are three semiotic (or: discourse-analytical) categories corresponding to these: genre, discourse and style.

Genres are semiotic ways of acting and interacting, such as news or job interviews, reports or editorials in newspapers, or advertisements on TV or the internet. Part of doing a job, or running a country, is interacting semiotically or communicatively in certain ways, and such activities have distinctive sets of genres associated with them.

Discourses are semiotic ways of construing aspects of the world (physical, social or mental) which can generally be identified with different positions or perspectives of different groups of social actors. For instance, the lives of poor people are not only construed through different discourses associated with different social practices (in politics, medicine, social welfare, academic sociology) but through different discourses in each which correspond to differences of position and perspective. I use 'construe' in preference to 'represent' to emphasize an active and often difficult process of 'grasping' the world from a particular perspective.

Styles are identities, or 'ways of being', in their semiotic aspect – for instance, being a 'manager' in the currently fashionable way in business or in universities is partly a matter of developing the right semiotic style.

The semiotic dimension of (networks of) social practices that constitute social fields, institutions, organizations etc. is *orders of discourse* (Fairclough 1992b); the semiotic dimension of events is *texts*. Orders of discourse are particular configurations of different genres, different discourses and different styles. An order of discourse is a social structuring of semiotic difference, a particular social ordering of relationships between different ways of making meaning – different genres, discourses and styles. So for example the network of social practices that constitutes the field of education, or a particular educational organization such as a university, is constituted semiotically as an order of discourse. Texts are to be understood in an inclusive sense, not only written texts but also, for example, conversations and interviews, as well as the 'multimodal' texts (mixing language and visual images) of television and the internet. Some events consist almost entirely of texts (e.g. a lecture or an interview), in others texts have a relatively small part (e.g. a game of chess).

Discourses that originate in some particular social field or institution (e.g. to anticipate the example, neo-liberal economic discourse, which originated within academic economics and business) may be *recontextualized* in others (e.g. in the political field, or the wider educational field). Recontextualization has an ambivalent character (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999): it can be seen as 'colonization' of one field or institution by another, but also as 'appropriation' of 'external' discourses, often incorporation of discourses into strategies pursued by particular groups of social agents within the recontextualizing field. For example, the 'transition' to a market economy and Western-style democratic government in the formerly socialist countries of Europe (e.g. Poland, Romania) has involved a 'colonizing' recontextualization of discourses (e.g. discourses of 'privatization') which were, however, incorporated differently into the strategies of new entrepreneurs, government officials, managers of state industries etc. (Fairclough 2006).

Discourses may under certain conditions be *operationalized*, 'put into practice', a dialectical process with three aspects: they may be *enacted* as new ways of (inter)acting, they may be *inculcated* as new ways of being (identities), they may be physically *materialized*, for example as new ways of organizing space, such as in architecture. Enactment and inculcation may themselves take semiotic forms: a new management discourse (e.g. the discourse of marketized 'new public management' which has invaded public sector fields such as education and health) may be enacted as management procedures that include new genres of interaction between managers and workers, or it may be inculcated as identities that semiotically include the styles of the new type of managers.

CDA oscillates as I have indicated between a focus on *structures* (especially the intermediate level of structuring of social practices) and a focus on the *strategies* of social agents, i.e. the ways in which they try to achieve outcomes or objectives within existing structures and practices, or to change them in particular ways. This includes a focus on shifts in the structuring of semiotic difference (i.e. shifts in orders of discourse) which constitute a part of social

change, and on how social agents pursue their strategies semiotically in texts. In both perspectives, a central concern is shifting relations between genres, between discourses and between styles: change in social structuring of relations between them which achieves relative permanence and stability in orders of discourse, and the ongoing working and re-working of relations between them which is regarded in this approach to CDA as a normal feature of texts.

The term *interdiscursivity* is reserved for the latter: the interdiscursivity of a text is a part of its intertextuality (Fairclough 1992b), a question of which genres, discourses and styles it draws upon, and how it works them into particular articulations. Textual analysis also includes linguistic analysis, and analysis where appropriate of visual images and 'body language', and these features of texts can be seen as realizing its interdiscursive features.

Fields of application

The dialectical-relational approach addresses the general question: What is the particular significance of semiosis, and of dialectical relations between semiosis and other social elements, in the social processes (issues, problems, changes etc.) which are under investigation? This question is of interest right across the social sciences and humanities, and I would not want to foreclose the range of potentially fruitful fields of application of this approach, nor the range of genres or texts it might be applied to. It is true that certain types of texts would seem to pose particular problems – literary texts, for example – but that is a different matter. In general, I would oppose any view of method that seeks to neatly match methods (methodologies) to fields or text types, or cultivates the view that researchers need to seek the 'right' method for their data and research questions. In short, I would not want to limit in advance the fields of application of the dialectical-relational approach.

The relationship between 'approach' and 'applications' is not a simple one. The dialectical-relational approach in its current form has changed through the process of being 'applied' in various fields. The beginnings of this approach can be seen in my work on discourse and social change in the early 1990s (see especially Fairclough 1992b, 1995a), which itself arose out of earlier work on relations between language, ideology and power (Fairclough 1989/1991). Early applications of that version of CDA included 'marketization' of higher education and the 'enterprise culture' project launched by the Thatcher government, as well as various aspects of political and media discourse (Fairclough 1995b), and 'critical language awareness' in education (Fairclough 1992a). Important theoretical developments arising out of this work were the conceptualization of orders of discourse (a concept used already in Fairclough 1991) as the semiotic dimension of networks of social practices, and development of 'recontextualization' as a CDA category in Chouliaraki's research on classroom discourse (Chouliaraki 1995; Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999), and the foregrounding of the dialectics of discourse. One application at this stage was to the political discourse of New Labour (Fairclough 2000a). Further theoretical developments arose through exploring neglected semiotic issues in 'critical realism' (Fairclough et al. 2004), and the incorporation of the dialectical-relational

approach within 'cultural political economy' (Jessop 2004), which I addressed specifically from a CDA perspective in research on globalization and 'transition' in Central and Eastern Europe[1] (Fairclough 2006).

Methodology

I have referred to a 'methodology' for using a dialectical-relational version of CDA in transdisciplinary social research rather than a 'method' because I see the process as also a theoretical one in which methods are selected according to how the *object of research* (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992) is theoretically constructed. So it is not just a matter of 'applying methods' in the usual sense; we cannot so sharply separate theory and method. This version of CDA is associated with a *general* method, which I discuss below, but the specific methods used for a particular piece of research arise from the theoretical process of constructing its object.

We can identify 'steps' or 'stages' in the methodology only on condition that these are not interpreted in a mechanical way: these are essential parts of the methodology (a matter of its 'theoretical order'), and while it does make partial sense to proceed from one to the next (a matter of the 'procedural order'), the relationship between them in doing research is not simply that of sequential order. For instance, the 'step' I refer to below of constructing the 'object of research' does need to precede subsequent steps, but it also makes sense to 'loop' back to it in the light of subsequent steps, seeing the formulation of the object of research as a preoccupation throughout. It is also helpful to distinguish 'theoretical' and 'procedural' from the 'presentational' order one chooses to follow in, for instance, writing a paper – other generally rhetorical factors will affect the order in which one presents one's analysis.

The methodology can be seen as a variant of Bhaskar's 'explanatory critique' (Bhaskar 1986; Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999), which can be formulated in four 'stages', which can be further elaborated as 'steps'.

Stage 1: Focus upon a social wrong, in its semiotic aspects.

Stage 2: Identify obstacles to addressing the social wrong.

Stage 3: Consider whether the social order 'needs' the social wrong.

Stage 4: Identify possible ways past the obstacles.

Stage 1: Focus upon a social wrong, in its semiotic aspect

CDA is a form of critical social science geared to better understanding of the nature and sources of social wrongs, the obstacles to addressing them and possible ways of overcoming those obstacles. 'Social wrongs' can be understood in broad terms as aspects of social systems, forms or orders which are detrimental to human well-being, which could in principle be ameliorated if not eliminated, though perhaps only through major changes in these systems, forms or orders.

Examples might be poverty, forms of inequality, lack of freedom, or racism. Of course, what constitutes a 'social wrong' is a controversial matter, and CDA is inevitably involved in debates and arguments about this which go on all the time.[2]

We can elaborate Stage 1 in two steps:

Step 1: Select a research topic which relates or points to a social wrong and which can productively be approached in a transdisciplinary way with a particular focus on dialectical relations between semiotic and other 'moments'.

We might, for instance, conclude that such an approach is potentially 'productive' because there are significant semiotic features of the topic which have not been sufficiently attended to in existing social research. A topic might attract our interest because it has been prominent in relevant academic literature, or is a focus of practical attention in the domain or field at issue (in political debate or debates over questions of management or 'leadership', in media commentary, and so forth). Topics are often 'given', and they sometimes virtually select themselves – who could doubt for instance that 'immigration', 'terrorism', 'globalization' or 'security' are important contemporary topics, with significant implications for human well-being, which researchers should attend to? Selecting such topics has the advantage of ensuring that research is relevant to the issues, problems and wrongs of the day, but also the danger that their very obviousness can lead us to take them too much at face value. We cannot assume that such topics are coherent research objects; to 'translate' topics into objects, we need to theorize them:

Step 2: Construct objects of research for initially identified research topics by theorizing them in a transdisciplinary way.

Anticipating the example I shall discuss below, let us assume that the selected research topic is the relationship between national strategies and policies and the 'global economy': strategies and policies that are developed for the global economy, or the adaptation of national strategies and policies for the global economy. We might pin this down by focusing for instance on strategies and policies to enhance 'competitiveness' in particular countries (the example I discuss relates to competitiveness policies in the UK). As a topic for critical research, this seems plausible enough: a preoccupation of contemporary governments is indeed adapting to the 'global economy', and this process does indeed have implications for human well-being (it is widely presented as a way towards greater prosperity and opportunity, but as entailing suffering and insecurity for some people). One – controversial – formulation of the social wrong in this case might be that the well-being (material prosperity, security, political freedom, etc.) of some people – arguably the majority – is being unfairly or unjustly sacrificed for interests of others. I shall focus below on one particular, political, aspect of the social wrong: suppression of political differences in favour of national consensus on strategies and policies.

Constructing an object of research for this topic involves drawing upon relevant bodies of theory in various disciplines to go beyond and beneath the obviousness of the topic, and since the focus is on a specifically semiotic 'point of entry' into researching it, these should include theories of semiosis and

discourse. There are no 'right answers' to the question of which theoretical perspectives to draw upon: it is a matter of researchers' judgements about which perspectives can provide a rich theorization as a basis for defining coherent objects for critical research that can deepen understanding of the processes at issue, their implications for human well-being, and possibilities for improving well-being. One must work in a transdisciplinary way, either in research teams that bring together specialists in relevant disciplines, or by engaging with literature in such disciplines.

What theoretical perspectives might be drawn upon in this case? These might include (political) economic theories which theorize and analyse the 'global economy' and, for instance, take positions on whether and how it constitutes a 'realm of necessity', a fact of life; State and political theory, which probes the character and functioning of the State and of national and international politics in the era of 'globalization'; theories of 'global ethnography', which address how local groups and individuals seek to adapt to but also sometimes to test and challenge the 'global economy' as a realm of necessity. The importance of discourse theory is indicated by this implicit questioning of the 'global economy': a central issue in both the academic literature and practical responses to the 'global economy' in politics, workplaces and everyday life is the relationship between reality and discourse: the reality and the discourses of the 'global economy' and of its impact, implications and ramifications. We can initially identify analysis of the complex relationship between reality and discourse as a general formulation of the object of research for a semiotic 'point of entry' into this topic, but I shall suggest a more specific formulation, linked to the example I shall discuss, in the section below on political discourse analysis.

Stage 2: Identify obstacles to addressing the social wrong

Stage 2 approaches the social wrong in a rather indirect way by asking what it is about the way in which social life is structured and organized that prevents it from being addressed. This requires bringing in analyses of the social order, and one 'point of entry' into this analysis can be semiotic, which entails selecting and analysing relevant 'texts' and addressing dialectical relations between semiosis and other social elements.

Steps 1–3 can be formulated as follows:

Step 1: Analyse dialectical relations between semiosis and other social elements: between orders of discourse and other elements of social practices, between texts and other elements of events.

Step 2: Select texts, and focuses and categories for their analysis, in the light of and appropriate to the constitution of the object of research.

Step 3: Carry out analysis of texts, both interdiscursive analysis, and linguistic/semiotic analysis.

Taken together, these three steps indicate an important feature of this version of CDA: textual analysis is only a part of semiotic analysis (discourse analysis),

and the former must be adequately framed within the latter. The aim is to develop a specifically semiotic 'point of entry' into objects of research that are constituted in a transdisciplinary way, through dialogue between different theories and disciplines. Analysis of texts can effectively contribute to this only in so far as it is located within a wider analysis of the object of research in terms of dialectical relations between semiotic and other elements which comprehends relations between the level of social practices and the level of events (and between orders of discourse and texts).

I shall not elaborate much on the three steps at this stage, because I think they will be clearer when I work through them with the example below.

One point about Step 3, however. I said above that although the particular methods of textual analysis used in a specific case depend upon the object of research, this version of CDA does have a general method of analysis. I alluded to this in the first section: textual analysis includes both linguistic analysis (and, if relevant, analysis of other semiotic forms, such as visual images) and interdiscursive analysis (analysis of which genres, discourses and styles are drawn upon, and how they are articulated together). Moreover, interdiscursive analysis has the crucial effect of constituting a mediating 'interlevel' which connects both linguistic analysis with relevant forms of social analysis, and analysis of the text as part of an event with analysis of social practices – in more general terms, analysis of event (action, strategy) with analysis of structure. Why so? Because interdiscursive analysis compares how genres, discourses and styles are articulated together in a text as part of a specific event and in more stable and durable orders of discourses as part of networks of practices, which (qua *social* practices) are objects of various forms of social analysis.

Stage 3: Consider whether the social order 'needs' the social wrong

It is not all that obvious what this means, and I shall try to clarify it by again anticipating the example. I indicated above that the social wrong I shall focus on when I get to the example is the suppression of political differences over the global economy and national responses to it in favour of seeking to create a national consensus, which is substantively realized in discourse. In what sense might the social order 'need' this? Perhaps in the sense – again anticipating the discussion below – that the internationally dominant strategy for globalizing an economic order based upon neoliberal principles requires that states be able to operate in support of this strategy without being encumbered by the 'old' adversarial politics. Stage 3 leads us to consider whether the social wrong in focus is inherent to the social order, whether it can be addressed within it, or only by changing it. It is a way of linking 'is' to 'ought': if a social order can be shown to inherently give rise to major social wrongs, that is a reason for thinking that perhaps it should be changed. It also connects with questions of ideology: discourse is ideological in so far as it contributes to sustaining particular relations of power and domination.

Stage 4: Identify possible ways past the obstacles

Stage 4 moves the analysis from negative to positive critique: identifying, with a focus on dialectical relations between semiosis and other elements, possibilities within the existing social process for overcoming obstacles to addressing the social wrong in question. This includes developing a semiotic 'point of entry' into research on the ways in which these obstacles are actually tested, challenged and resisted, be it within organized political or social groups or movements, or more informally by people in the course of their ordinary working, social and domestic lives. A specifically semiotic focus would include ways in which dominant discourse is reacted to, contested, criticized and opposed (in its argumentation, its construal of the world, its construal of social identities, and so forth).

To conclude this section, let me list core analytical categories of this approach to CDA which I have introduced so far:

> Core Analytical Categories
>
> *semiosis* (and other social elements),
>
> *discourse/genre/style, order of discourse* (and *social practices*),
>
> *text* (and *social event*),
>
> *interdiscursivity* (and *interdiscursive analysis*),
>
> *recontextualization,*
>
> *operationalization* (enactment, inculcation, materialization).

An example: Political discourse analysis

The texts I shall discuss below are political texts: the foreword to a government document written by former British Prime Minister Tony Blair, and a critique of Blair's 'New Labour' Government by two former members of the Labour Party. As I have said, how a research topic is constituted as an object of research determines both the selection of texts for analysis and the nature of the analysis. In this section I shall suggest a more specific formulation of the object of research for the research topic anticipated above ('adapting national strategy and policy for the global economy'), which entails some discussion of political theories of the contemporary 'political condition', and the main issues and priorities it suggests for analysis of politics and political discourse. I shall discuss theoretical perspectives on the character of contemporary politics and the State especially in advanced capitalist countries such as the UK, but I should emphasize that this discussion is necessarily partial given the spatial limitations of this chapter. The material in this section will also help with Step 1 of Stage 2 of the methodology when we get to the texts – analysing dialectical relations between semiosis and other elements, especially at the level of social practices and orders of discourse.

Let me begin with a highly condensed summary analysis of the contemporary 'political condition', in the form of four major claims.

- Globalization in its dominant neoliberal form has been associated with changes in the State and national (as well as international) politics (Harvey 2003; Pieterse 2004).
- There is a tendency of the State to become a 'competition state' with the primary objective of securing competitive advantage for capital based within its borders (Jessop 2002).
- There is an associated tendency within mainstream politics for the political division and contestation (e.g. between political parties) characteristic of the previous period to weaken, and for consensus to emerge on the main strategy and policy issues (Rancière 2006).
- This tendency constitutes a fundamental political danger; not only is it a threat to democracy, it also creates a vacuum that can be filled by nationalism and xenophobia (Mouffe 2005; Rancière 1995).

The fourth point is based upon particular views of the general character of (democratic) politics and of politics in modern democracies. I shall refer specifically to Rancière's version. He argues that democracies, both ancient and modern, are mixed forms, as anticipated by Aristotle when he characterized 'a good regime' as a 'mixture of constitutions … there should appear to be elements of both (oligarchy and democracy) yet at the same time of neither … the oligarch sees oligarchy and the democrat democracy' (see Aristotle, *Politics* IV 1294b). This follows from the fact that 'the question of politics begins in every city with the existence of the mass of the *aporoi*, those who have no means, and the small number of the *euporoi*, those who have them' (Rancière 1995: 13). The task of politics is to calm and control the irreducible conflict between rich and poor, which means curbing the excesses of democracy. What we now call 'democracies' are actually oligarchies in which government is exercised by the minority over the majority. What makes them specifically democratic is that the power of oligarchies rests upon the power of the people, most obviously because governments are elected. In democracies, oligarchy and democracy are opposing principles in tension, and any regime is an unstable compromise between them. The public sphere is the sphere of encounters and conflicts between these principles: governments tend to reduce and appropriate the public sphere, relegating non-State actors to the private sphere, democracy is the struggle against this privatization, to enlarge the public sphere and oppose the public/private division imposed by government.

In contemporary democracies, the 'conflictual equilibrium' associated with popular sovereignty is being undermined. The oligarchic system is being combined with a 'consensual vision' on the claim that contemporary reality, the global economy and the prospect of endless 'growth' which it promises, does not leave us with choice. Government is the business of 'managing the local effects of global necessity', which requires consensus and an end to the 'archaic' indulgence of political division. Oligarchies are tempted by the vision of governing without the people, i.e. without the division of the people, which means effectively without politics, rendering popular sovereignty problematic. But the suppressed division inevitably returns, both in the form of mobilization outside the political system (e.g. against the negative effects of neoliberal globalization, or the Iraq war) and in the dangerous form of extreme right nationalism and xenophobia.

A priority for political analysis is consequently contemporary processes of *depoliticization*, which is by no means a new strategy (according to Rancière [1995], it is 'the oldest task of politics') but is now emerging in a particularly profound and threatening form. Depoliticization is the exclusion of issues and/ or of people from processes of political deliberation and decision – placing them outside politics. But *politicization* is equally a priority if we are to analyse the tension between the principles of oligarchy and democracy, the democratic response to depoliticization, and how responses might develop a momentum capable of contesting the push towards depoliticization. Others have also identified depoliticization and politicization as priorities (Hay 2007; Muntigl 2002b; Palonen 1993; Sondermann 1997), but from different theoretical perspectives.

This prioritization provides a basis for questioning the centrality that has been attributed to other problems and issues. Let me briefly mention two. First, the centrality attributed to 'subpolitics' or 'life politics' by theorists of 'reflexive modernity', which is linked to the recent prominence of 'identity politics'. This accords with the perspective above in giving prominence to 'grassroots' political action, but clashes with it in construing such politics as an alternative to adversarial politics centred around the political system. The 'grassroots' politics of politicization is both defined and limited by the opposing logic of depoliticization, which means that State- and government-focused adversarial politics is by no means outdated. Second, the centrality attributed by for instance those influenced by Habermas (1967) to 'deliberative democracy' also tends to be associated with the assumption that adversarial politics can be superseded and to construe political dialogue as a rational process of consensus-formation, rather than a process that allows divisions, differences and conflicts to be contained within a shared political community without the assumption that these are just 'problems' waiting to be 'solved'. In different theoretical terms, we could say: these are contradictions, and although they can be managed they cannot be solved within the parameters of the existing system (Jessop 2002). This does not diminish or ignore cooperation in politics: conflict in political dialogue requires cooperation (only those who are cooperating at a certain level can stage a conflict), and adversarial politics necessarily includes cooperative moments (e.g. the formation of alliances).

We can fruitfully develop a specifically semiotic 'point of entry' into analysing processes of depoliticization and politicization. I shall illustrate this below in my analysis of the texts. This does not exclude other issues and associated categories which have tended to receive more attention in political discourse analysis, and indeed I shall refer to some (legitimation, manipulation, ideology, cooperation and identity). But it does imply a different 'mapping' of relations between categories which may lead to reconceptualizing or changing some of them.

Politicization and depoliticization are high-level strategies or 'macro-strategies'; so are legitimation and delegitimation. Strategies combine goals and means, and these macro-strategies are both means for achieving oligarchic or democratic goals (e.g. governing with minimal interference from political divisions, or pushing political differences into the public sphere), and goals in their own right associated with further strategies as means. We can identify strategies *for* (de)politicization and (de)legitimation, for instance, 'authorization' and 'rationalization' have been suggested as legitimation strategies (van Leeuwen 2007;

van Leeuwen and Wodak 1999). All of these are *political* strategies, not semiotic (or 'discourse') strategies, though they are generally realized semiotically.

I suggested above that the object of research could be broadly formulated as the complex relationship between discourse and reality in adapting national strategy and policy for the global economy. We can now reformulate it more precisely: semiotic realizations of strategies of depoliticization and politicization in national responses to the 'global economy', focusing on competitiveness policy in the UK.

An illustration: Analysing political texts

I come now to the analysis of two sample texts. The one I shall begin with is the foreword written by the former British Prime Minister Tony Blair to the Department of Trade and Industry's White Paper on Competitiveness (DTI 1998, see Appendix 1). I shall organize my comments according to the stages and steps listed in the methodology section, but I have just been effectively discussing aspects of Stage 1 so I shall keep my comments on it brief.

Stage 1: Focus upon a social wrong, in its semiotic aspect

The social wrong I shall focus upon is the suppression or marginalization of political differences over important issues of strategy and policy – how to respond nationally to radical international economic changes (and the prior question of what the changes actually are) – in favour of creating a consensus, which is as I indicated above a social wrong in that it undermines democracy but also poses the danger that dissent which cannot be politically articulated may emerge in nationalist or xenophobic forms. A semiotic point of entry is possible and fruitful, focusing upon semiotic realizations of the macro-strategy of depo-liticization, in accordance with the construction of the object of research which I have discussed above. The second text, an extract from a book (Brown and Coates 1996) written by former members of the Labour Party criticizing Blair's 'New Labour' Government, exemplifies semiotic realizations of the macro-strat-egy of politicization. (Note that both macro-strategies may, however, be at work in the same text.) Blair's text is representative of the dominant tendency of the times towards depoliticization; but this tendency coexists with politicizing responses such as that of the second text, even if the latter often have a relatively marginal effect on government strategy and policy. I have already discussed steps 1 and 2 above, on the construction of an object of research for the research topic, in anticipation of the illustration, so we can move on to Stage 2.

Stage 2: Identify obstacles to addressing the social wrong

I shall discuss Stage 2 by taking each of the three steps it includes in turn.

Step 1: Analysis of dialectical relations between semiosis and other social elements (orders of discourse and elements of social practices, texts and elements of events)

Step 1 also implicitly includes the dialectic between structures (at the intermediate level of social practices) and events (and strategies). I have already in the previous section given an indication of the social practices and orders of discourse at issue here, but let me fill this out a little with respect to 're-structuring' and 're-scaling' (Jessop 2002) tendencies associated with contemporary capitalism, and a brief note on New Labour in Britain.

Re-structuring is changes in structural relations, notably between economic and non-economic fields, which include extensive 'colonization' of the latter (including politics and the State) by the former; re-scaling is changing relations between global, regional, national and local scales of social life, including changes in government and governance. Analysing these tendencies would help contextualize the UK strategies and policies which are in focus, that is, help determine what they are a part of. National governments are increasingly incorporated within larger networks that include not only other governments but also international agencies (e.g. the European Union, the World Bank, the IMF), business networks, and so forth. Governments, according to Castells (1996), are increasingly coming to function as 'nodes' within a transnational network based upon a business–government complex, whose central 'functions' are focused upon creating the conditions (financial, fiscal, legal, 'human capital' etc.) for successful competition in the 'global economy'. If the government strategies and policies in focus here are locked into this powerful network, this in itself constitutes a substantial obstacle to addressing the social wrong.

But these processes of re-structuring and re-scaling have an important semiotic dimension: the networks of social practices which they entail are also orders of discourse which themselves cut across structural and scalar boundaries. For example, the dominant neoliberal discourse of globalization illustrated in the first text is dominant in education as well as politics, and in the European Union, the World Bank, and many other countries apart from the UK. There are also genres and styles which are disseminated structurally and in scale in a similar way (Fairclough 2006). Moreover, the semiotic dimension is fundamen-tal to re-structuring and re-scaling, in the sense that these processes are 'semiotically driven'. They begin as discourses which constitute 'imaginaries' (Jessop 2004, 2008) – imaginary projections – for new relations of structure and scale in economies, government, education and so forth; these may become hegemonic, or dominant, and may be widely recontextualized; in so far as they do become hegemonic, they are 'operationalized' in new structures, practices, relations and institutions; and the operationalization itself has a partly semiotic aspect in the emergence and dissemination of genres and 'genre networks' (see below), which enable the governance of these complex new networks, as well as styles. The semiotic dimension, deeply embedded within and constitutive of the new structural and scalar relations, is itself a part of the obstacles to addressing the social wrong.

With respect to the dialectic between texts and other elements of social events, the general point is that political texts are not some superficial embroi-dery upon political events but a fundamental, constitutive, part of them. In this case, for example, the strategies and policies of the Blair government for build-ing British 'competitiveness' in adapting to the 'global economy' have a clearly textual character. They are formed, disseminated and legitimized within

complex chains and networks of events (committee meetings, reports, parliamentary debates, press statements and press conferences etc.) which are largely chains and networks of texts – i.e. different types of texts which are regularly and systematically linked together. They are linked for instance in accordance with the 'genre networks' I referred to above – systematically linked genres (e.g. discussion, report, debate) which semiotically constitute procedures, in this case procedures of governance (on 'chains' of events, texts and genres, see Fairclough 2003). These strategy and policy processes thus have a largely textual character, and require textual analysis. The illustrative examples are just two small samples from the complex networks of texts involved.

The analysis would need to go into some detail about politics and social change in Britain. I have no space for such detail here, but let me make a couple of points (see further Fairclough 2000a). First, 'New Labour' abandoned the traditional social democracy of the British Labour Party to embrace the neoliberalism of preceding Conservative governments (those of Margaret Thatcher and John Major). The effect was to produce a neoliberal consensus on major policy issues within mainstream politics and a common political discourse – the associated tendency to exclude opposition is precisely the 'social wrong' I am addressing. Second, the infamous preoccupation of New Labour with media 'spin' (close management and manipulation of the presentation of policies and events in the media) indicates the growing importance of semiotic processes (political 'communication') in government. Thus the form of politics which developed with New Labour poses specifically semiotic obstacles to addressing the social wrong at issue.

Step 2: Selection of texts and categories for analysis

With respect to Step 2, the constitution of the object of research indicates the selection of texts in which the macro-strategies of depoliticization and politicization are semiotically realized. My examples here are both written texts, but one would want also to include, for instance, not only discussions, debates and interviews on TV and radio, and websites, but also material from campaigns, protests and demonstrations centred upon 'the global economy' and government strategy and policy oriented towards it, and material representing how people experience and react to the drive for 'competitiveness' in a variety of situated contexts (e.g. conversations and discussions within workplaces). Appropriate focuses and categories for the analysis include semiotic strategies that realize de-politicization, including argumentation and rhetorical strategies, as well semiotic aspects and realizations of legitimation, manipulation, ideology, cooperation and identity. I shall be more specific about some of these in discussing the texts.

Step 3: Analysis of texts

The first text is structured as an argument whose structure we can schematically reconstruct as follows:

Premises: The modern world is changing.

There are opportunities to succeed and prosper in the modern world.

If we want to succeed and prosper, we must compete effectively.

Implicit premise: (We do want to succeed and prosper.)

Conclusion: Therefore, we must compete (more) effectively.

The argumentation realizes semiotically the macro-strategy of legitimation, and specifically the strategy of rationalization: it is an example of the government's attempt to legitimize its political strategy and the policies associated with it as necessary responses to the situation.

The argument is formally valid, but whether it is sound or not (i.e. whether it is a reasonable argument) depends upon the truth of its premises. We can challenge the argument, argue that it is fallacious, by challenging the truth of its premises (Ieţcu 2006). I want to specifically question the premises on the grounds that they (a) predicate possible success of a problematic identity category as subject ('we'), (b) falsely claim that the change attributed to the modern world is simply an inevitable fact of life which 'we' must accept. Both of these flaws in the premises can be associated with the macro-strategy of depoliticization.

With respect to the first flaw, the identity category 'we' is problematic in that it is based upon a false equation between 'we' = 'Britain' and 'we' = all the citizens of Britain: if Britain achieves 'success' or 'prosperity', it does not follow that all of its citizens do. This is the 'fallacy of division', when a general category has properties that are mistakenly attributed to each of its parts. One sentence clearly implies that this *does* follow: 'That is the route to commercial success and prosperity for all'. This fallacy is a banal feature of governmental discourse, but it is fundamental for the macro-strategy of depoliticization, whose basic strategic goal is to dedifferentiate potentially antagonistic identities, the internal division of the political community, into 'Us' and 'Them'. In this sense, identity and the semiotic construal of identities are a major focus in analysis that prioritizes depoliticization.

The issue in semiotic terms is *personal deixis*. There are two personal 'deictic centres', positionings of the author (Blair), with respect to identity: he positions himself within two group identities, 'we' = the government, and 'we' = the country. It is commonplace in the literature on identity that identity entails difference; 'we' entails 'they' (Connolly 1991). We might say that 'we' = the government is implicitly construed in opposition to 'they'= previous governments which pursued strategies that are rejected because they 'did not and cannot work': 'old-fashioned state intervention' and 'naïve reliance on markets'; whereas 'we' = the country is construed in opposition to 'competitors'. But notice that the construal of personal deixis excludes a 'we/they' division both within the political community ('Britain') and within the contemporary political field (political system), where no contemporaneous political 'opposition' is construed. The implication is that there is consensus within both the political community and the political field. This is depoliticization.

Texts semiotically construe identities and simultaneously seek to make these construals persuasive. The fact that we can show fallacies in Blair's argument does not mean that it will be widely perceived as fallacious, and we must consider what might make the argument and construal of identities persuasive. This brings us to the second flaw, in the construal of world change.

Dominant construals of 'the new global order' have certain predictable linguistic characteristics (on the linguistic categories I mention below, see

Fairclough 2003): processes of change are construed without responsible social agents; they are construed in a timeless, ahistorical present; statements about the new economy (which are often very familiar truisms) are construed categorically and authoritatively as unmodalized truths, and there is a movement from the 'is' of the economic to the 'ought' of the political – from what is categorically the case to what 'we' ought to do in response; the new economic reality is construed as indifferent to place; and series of evidences or appearances in the new economy are construed paratactically as lists. I have shown elsewhere (Fairclough 2000b) that these features are sustained through recontextualization, appearing in economic texts (e.g. texts of the World Bank), political texts, educational texts, and so forth, as well as on different scales.

They are also evident in Blair's text, and they can be seen as aspects of the semiotic realization of depoliticization. In the construal of economic change in the 'modern world' there is an absence of responsible social agents. Agents of material processes are abstract or inanimate. In the first paragraph, 'change' is the agent in the first (passive) sentence, and 'new technologies' and 'new markets' are agents in the second – agents, notice, of intransitive verbs ('emerge', 'open up') which construe change as happenings, processes without agents. The third sentence is existential – 'new competitors' and 'new opportunities' are merely claimed to exist, not located within processes of change. Notice also that in the third paragraph the inanimate 'this new world' is the agent of 'challenges', construing change itself as articulating what responses to it are necessary. By contrast, when it comes to national responses to these implacable and impersonal processes of world change, social agents are fully present – business, the government, the DTI, and especially 'we'.

Turning to time, tense and modality, world change is construed in the ahistorical 'timeless' present tense, as indeed are national responses, and, in terms of modality, through authoritative categorical assertions of truisms (e.g. 'The modern world is swept by change', and indeed all five statements in the first paragraph). The only historical reference is to the 'old-fashioned' strategies in paragraph 4. There is a movement from 'is' to 'ought'. 'Ought' is implicit in paragraphs 2 and 3: 'our success depends on how well we exploit our most valuable assets' implies that we should exploit them, 'this new world challenges business to be innovative' and 'government to create' that business and government should do these things. From paragraph 5 onwards 'ought' is explicit and recurrent – the modal verb 'must' occurs six times. The domain of 'is' is world change; the domain of 'ought' is national responses: a divide is textually constructed between economics and politics (there is an 'industrial policy', but focused on enabling the economic process rather than radically shaping it), fact and value, which excludes the former from the latter. This differs from the social democratic tradition from which New Labour has come; earlier Labour governments used political power to change the economy, e.g. by nationalizing private industries, taking them into state control. In contrast with economic processes, political processes do have responsible social agents: the agent in processes modalized with 'must' is in five cases 'we' and in one case 'the government'. Summing up, world change is a process without a history that 'we' must respond to. Moreover, world change is implicitly construed as indifferent to place – there are no place expressions in the first or third paragraphs.

The syntax is paratactic,[3] in relations between both sentences and phrases within sentences. The first paragraph for instance consists of three paratactically related sentences (the second and third contain paratactically related clauses), listing evidences of world change. The same is true of the second paragraph. Notice that the sequencing of these sentences is not significant and is changeable (with minor rewording) without any substantive meaning change. Indeed, what is included in this list of evidences is somewhat arbitrary; for instance the second sentence of the first paragraph might have been 'Huge amounts of money move across the globe in a fraction of a second, and even our family cat, Socks, has his own homepage on the World Wide Web'. The second clause is fanciful only in that Blair did not have a cat called Socks. It was actually included in a very similar list in a book by Bill Clinton. What is significant, rhetorically, is the relentless accumulation of evidences of change – what Clarke and Newman (1998) call 'the cascade of change' – which persuasively (and manipulatively) establishes the new economy as simple fact, what we must live with and respond to.

Summing up, change is authoritatively construed as lists of known appearances (and truisms) in the present which are indifferent to place and whose social agency is effaced, and which must be responded to in certain ways. These features together construe the new economy as simple fact to which there is no alternative. They locate the 'global economy' within the 'realm of necessity', and therefore outside the 'realm of contingency and deliberation', i.e. outside the realm of politics, semiotically realizing the macro-strategy of depoliticization (Hay 2007). We can say that in so far as this sort of discourse achieves significant public acceptance, which it has, it is part of the obstacles to addressing the social wrong.

Let me briefly comment on interdiscursive analysis. One can see Blair's text as recontextualizing analyses of the 'global economy' more fully elaborated in texts produced, for example, within the World Bank, and their particular discourse (construals of, narratives of and arguments about the 'global economy'). Blair's text is not primarily an analytical text but an advocative text, arguing for 'necessary' policies. But it is interdiscursively complex in grounding this advocative argument in the recontextualized analysis, combining analytical and advocative genres (as well as economic and political discourses). This type of recontextualization and interdiscursive hybridity is common as a semiotic realization of a favoured legitimation strategy: legitimizing by appeal to expert knowledge. Notice that the expert discourse is not the same here as it might be in specialist economic texts. For instance, in the first paragraph the construal of change in the global economy is stripped down to three short sentences which furthermore incorporate characteristic features of political rhetoric (the dramatic metaphor 'swept by change', the antithesis of 'new competitors but also great new opportunities'), and which constitute dramatic and potentially persuasive formulations of premises in the argument. Recontextualization involves transformation to suit the new context, which affects forms of interdiscursive hybridity.

In discussing Stage 2, I have identified a number of obstacles to addressing the social wrong at issue, and shown that they are partly semiotic in nature. Let me summarize them: the national and international networks that government

strategies and policies are embedded within; the consensual character of mainstream politics in Britain; an influential political discourse, exemplified in the Blair text, which in various ways contributes to depoliticizing the global economy and national responses to it.

Stage 3: Consider whether the social order 'needs' the social wrong

I anticipated this example in discussing Stage 3 in the methodology section above, where I suggested how the suppression of political differences in favour of consensus might be interpreted as necessary for states to operate effectively within the hegemonic neoliberal strategy. We might add that achieving a broad consensus within the political system depends upon semiotic conditions – achieving semiotic hegemony, broad acceptance of the sort of discourse we have here. And as I noted above, this can be interpreted in terms of ideology as the naturalization of meanings that sustain relations of power and domination. So it seems plausible that the social order does 'need' the social wrong in this case – addressing it might require wider changes in the social order – and that, since the wrong has a partly semiotic character, it also 'needs' certain characteristics of contemporary political discourse.

Stage 4: Identify possible ways past the obstacles

At this point I shall introduce the second text (see Appendix 2), an extract from a book (Brown and Coates 1996) written by two long-standing members of the Labour Party about New Labour's view of what they call 'capitalist globalization'. This will allow some necessarily brief, partial and sketchy comments on the other main macro-strategy, politicization.

I mentioned one adversarial feature in the first text: rejection of the 'old-fashioned state intervention' and 'naïve reliance on markets' of previous governments, while implying there were no contemporaneous divisions on the nature of 'world change' or the national strategies needed to adjust to it. The second text, by contrast, enters into adversarial dialogue with contemporaries, specifically Blairites. The macro-strategy of politicization is semiotically realized in the text's dialogicality. Specifically, there are claims which are denials of claims made 'elsewhere', by New Labour politicians amongst others: 'What has changed is not that capital is more mobile', 'it is not true that national governments – and by extension the European Union – are totally lacking in powers to employ against the arbitrary actions of transnational capital'. In this respect, the strategy is to politicize by construing the nature of 'world change' and government responses as controversial matters, subject to political difference and division.

Text 2 also politicizes by counterposing to the New Labour narrative of collaboration between government and business a narrative of conflict between government and business, capital and labour. Notice that both texts construe the global(ized) economy as a reality that countries need to adjust to, but in radically different ways. In the second but not the first, the construal of the global(ized) economy does include responsible social agents: the companies, whose actions are construed in general and negative terms ('moving internationally from bases...', 'the arbitrary actions of transnational capital', 'divide and conquer'). The text also construes relations between the companies and national governments, contrasting the 'clientelist' relations that tend to exist and which New Labour advocates ('nation-states ... clients of transnational companies') with adversarial relations that could and by implication should exist ('employing' their 'powers ... against the arbitrary actions of transnational capital', 'making or withholding tax concessions', 'bargaining'). The same contrast between what is and what could/should be is construed in relations between the EU and national governments ('reinforcing' the status of nation states as 'clients' of the companies, versus 'offering a lead and challenge to the nation states').

In sum, whereas text 1 depoliticizes by construing a consensus on the global economy as an inevitable fact of life and building national competitiveness as a necessary response, text 2 politicizes by construing the globalized economy as a stake in struggles between governments and transnationals, and capital and labour, and by opposing that construal to the government's consensualist construal. But the mere existence of texts that politicize in this way does not amount to 'ways past the obstacles'. This text offers an imaginary for a different, politicizing strategy in response to a differently conceived global(ized) economy; it shows that different imaginaries are possible and indeed exist, but we would also need to consider how feasible it would be to operationalize this or some other imaginary in a strategy that could actually succeed and be implemented in the face of the sort of obstacles I have begun to indicate. It's not impossible, but it's difficult to see how at present: there are abundant alternative imaginaries, but there is currently no clear counter-hegemonic strategy. A fuller treatment than I have space for would include analysis of attempts to develop oppositional strategies and their semiotic dimensions.

Summary

The theoretical claim that relations between semiosis and other social elements are dialectical in character, and the methodological focus on these relations rather than on semiosis as such, mean that this approach to CDA is particularly attuned to transdisciplinary research, to working with the grain of various bodies of social theory and research, but at the same time bringing to them an enhancement of their capacity to address often neglected semiotic dimensions of their research objects, as well as taking from them perspectives and research logics that can contribute to the further development of the dialectical-relational approach itself.

As with any approach, there are things about which the dialectical-relational approach has little to say. We should distinguish, however, between issues and problems it has not got around to because others seemed more pressing or more interesting or simply because life is short, and issues and problems that fall outside its remit and are thus not issues and problems *for it* (though they

may be for other approaches). An example of the former is a relative emphasis on the workings of power rather than the workings of reception, reaction and resistance to power – I stress relative because the latter have not been entirely neglected (see for instance Fairclough 2006). Critics might reasonably say that I have 'done it again' in this paper, spending more time on depoliticization than politicization. This has been a bias in my work, perhaps partly because of the sort of left-wing politics I was involved with in the 1970s, but it is not in my opinion a limitation of the approach as such. An example of the latter is lack of attention to psychological and cognitive matters. I would agree that cognitively oriented research on discourse can complement the dialectical-relational approach, but I would not accept that absence of attention to cognitive issues is a 'blindspot' in the approach, still less that it in some sense invalidates the approach.

Chilton, for example, has suggested that a proper understanding of the cognitive capacities of humans may lead to the conclusion that CDA is trying to teach people what they already know. 'Put bluntly, if people have a natural ability to treat verbal input critically, in what sense can CDA either reveal in discourse what people can ... already detect for themselves or educate them to detect it for themselves?' (Chilton 2005). Yet the closing sentences of Chilton (2004) note that 'if people are indeed political animals ... then they are also in principle *capable* of doing their own political critique. The important question is whether they are free to do so.' I agree. Chilton (2005) argues that although there are various conditions under which people are not free, 'it is doubtful that any of them can be elucidated by purely linguistic or discourse-analytical means. For they would seem to have to do with economic forces or socio-political institutions.' The main problem with this argument is indicated by the contrast between 'purely' linguistic or discourse-analytical factors and economic forces or socio-political institutions. From a dialectical-relational perspective, economic forces and socio-political institutions *are* in part semiotic, and analysis has to be in part semiotic analysis. The fact that people have cognitive capacities which make them in principle capable of seeing through manipulative intentions and even doing their own political critique (which CDA, far from discounting, presupposes) does not mean that they are generally capable in practice of seeing through the complex dialectical relations between semiotic and non-semiotic elements which constitute the social, political and economic conditions of their lives.

Further reading

Chouliaraki, L. and Fairclough, N. (1999) *Discourse in Late Modernity*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
This book shows relationships of an earlier version of this approach to various sources and influences in social theory and research.

Fairclough, N. (2000) *New Labour, New Language?* London: Routledge.
A popular introduction to analysis of political discourse, based upon a simplified version of this approach to CDA.

Fairclough, N. (2003) *Analysing Discourse: Textual Analysis for Social Research*. London: Routledge.
This book focuses on using textual analysis in social research within the dialectical-relational approach, with many examples of possible applications.

Fairclough, N. (2006) *Language and Globalization*. London: Routledge.
This text exemplifies the application of the dialectical-relational approach in transdisciplinary research on globalization.

Appendix 1

Building the knowledge-driven economy

Foreword by the Prime Minister

The modern world is swept by change. New technologies emerge constantly; new markets are opening up. There are new competitors but also great new opportunities.

Our success depends on how well we exploit our most valuable assets: our knowledge, skills, and creativity. These are the key to designing high-value goods and services and advanced business practices. They are at the heart of a modern, knowledge driven economy.

This new world challenges business to be innovative and creative, to improve performance continuously, to build new alliances and ventures. But it also challenges government: to create and execute a new approach to industrial policy.

This is the purpose of this White Paper. Old-fashioned state intervention did not and cannot work. But neither does naïve reliance on markets.

The government must promote competition, stimulating enterprise, flexibility and innovation by opening markets. But we must also invest in British capabilities when companies alone cannot: in education, in science, and in the creation of a culture of enterprise. And we must promote creative partnerships which help companies: to collaborate for competitive advantage; to promote a long-term vision in a world of short-term pressures; to benchmark their performance against the best in the world; and to forge alliances with other businesses and employees. All this is the DTI's role.

We will not meet our objectives overnight. The White Paper creates a policy framework for the next ten years. We must compete effectively in today's tough markets if we are to prosper in the markets of tomorrow.

In government, in business, in our universities and throughout society we must do much more to foster an entrepreneurial spirit: equipping ourselves for the long term, prepared to seize opportunities, committed to constant innovation and enhanced performance. That is the route to commercial success and prosperity for all. We must put the future on Britain's side.

The Rt Hon. Tony Blair MP, Prime Minister

Appendix 2

Excerpt from Brown and Coates (1996)

Capital has always been global, moving internationally from bases in the industrialized countries. What has changed is not that capital is more mobile ... but that the national bases are less important as markets and production centres. In other words the big transnational companies are not only bigger but more free-standing ... The European Union, far from offering a lead and a challenge to the nation-states of Europe, reinforces their status as clients of the transnational companies. Indeed, this clientism applies not only to companies based in Europe ... While it is true that a national capitalism is no longer possible in a globalized economy, it is not true that national governments – and by extension the European Union – are totally lacking in powers to employ against the arbitrary actions of transnational capital. There is much that governments can do in bargaining – in making or withholding tax concessions for example ... But such bargaining has to have an international dimension or the transnational companies can simply continue to divide and conquer ... New Labour appears to have abandoned what remained of Labour's internationalist traditions ... Yet the ICTFU, the European TUC and the Geneva trade groups all offer potential allies for strengthening the response of British labour to international capital. (Brown and Coates 1996: 172–4)

Notes

1 *Critical realism* is a realist philosophy of science and social science which has been developed especially in the work of Roy Bhaskar (1986). *Cultural political economy* is a version of political economy which claims that economic processes and systems are culturally and semiotically conditioned and embedded, as well as politically.

2 In the first edition of this book and in other publications, I referred to social 'problems' rather than 'wrongs'. I have changed this because I think that construing all wrongs as 'problems' which need 'solutions' that can in principle be provided even if they have not been so far in practice is part of the self-justifying (and one might say ideological) discourse of contemporary social systems in countries like Britain. The objection to it is that some wrongs are produced by systems and are not resolvable within them.

3 *Paratactic* syntactic relations are relations between sentences, clauses or phrases which are grammatically equal, and are *co-ordinated*; they contrast with *hypotactic* relations, where there is one *main* sentence, clause or phrase, and others are *subordinated*.