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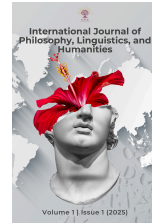
Research Article

Prophetic Witness in the Age of Global Disorder: A Comparative Analysis of Cornel West and Ignacio Ramonet

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Article Info

Abstract

In an era defined by systemic fragility and geopolitical uncertainty, this study undertakes a critical comparative analysis of two influential intellectuals—Cornel West and Ignacio Ramonet—whose distinct traditions of prophetic critique offer divergent yet intersecting responses to global disorder. *Anchored in West's Keeping Faith (1993) and Ramonet's Géopolitique du chaos (1997)*, the paper explores how ethical-theological critique and geopolitical-media analysis respectively diagnose instability and articulate pathways for intellectual engagement. Through a critical comparative methodology, the study examines three thematic axes: (1) deconstructing systemic instability, (2) praxis of witness, and (3) normative horizons and strategies of intervention. The findings reveal both thinkers' shared commitment to justice, moral accountability, and intellectual activism, while highlighting significant differences in their conceptual frameworks, methodologies, and audiences. This paper contributes to critical discourse by offering a cross-traditional reflection on the roles of intellectuals in addressing contemporary crises and proposing more equitable global futures.

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1. Introduction

In an epoch characterized by the erosion of established norms and the proliferation of systemic vulnerabilities, the role of critical intellectual voices in deciphering and responding to the ensuing disorder assumes paramount significance. This study embarks upon a comparative analysis of two such distinct yet potentially complementary voices: Cornel West, a luminary in philosophical theology and critical race theory and Ignacio Ramonet, a perceptive analyst of global geopolitics and media power. Their respective bodies of work, exemplified by Cornel West's *Keeping Faith: Philosophy and Public Theology*[1] (1993), a seminal exploration of prophetic pragmatism and the ethical imperative of radical hope in the face of injustice, and Ignacio Ramonet's incisive *Géopolitique du chaos*[2] (1997), a foundational text dissecting the destabilizing forces of neoliberal globalization and informational asymmetry in the post-Cold War era, offer unique lenses that help to examine the multifaceted crises afflicting the contemporary global landscape.

However, the conspicuous absence of a comprehensive analysis juxtaposing West's and Ramonet's distinct intellectual projects is a glaring gap in contemporary critical studies. This particularized modality of inquiry, which discerns similar and dissimilar vectors within their respective critiques of late capitalism, media hegemonies, systemic inequities, and the genesis of contemporary global disorder, represents a conceptual terrain heretofore unplumbed by extant hermeneutical endeavors. West's analysis, deeply rooted in American social and political realities, provides a potent framework that contributes to understanding the erosion of moral foundations and the imperative for ethical witness. Ramonet's work, with its focus on the international sphere, provides a crucial macro-level comprehension of the systemic drivers of global instability.

The context for this comparative study lies in the persistent and evolving feature of global disorder, manifested in escalating social inequalities, geopolitical instability, the proliferation of misinformation, and a palpable crisis of faith in established institutions. Both West and Ramonet, writing from distinct intellectual and geographical vantage points, grapple with the underlying causes and ramifications of this pervasive instability. West's vision, primarily focused on the American context, resonates with broader global concerns regarding systemic injustice and the erosion of moral foundations, providing a powerful ethical lens to grasp contemporary societal fragmentation. Ramonet's work, with its focus on the international sphere, provides a crucial macro-level understanding of the forces shaping global chaos, forces that invariably impact local and national realities, highlighting the structural dimensions of contemporary disorder. The juxtaposition of their influential perspectives promises to yield a more substantial and more nuanced comprehension of the interconnectedness of local and global disorder and the diverse modalities of highbrow activities it necessitates.

Existing scholarship offers valuable insights into the individual contributions of West and Ramonet. Cornel West's prophetic thought in *Keeping Faith* has been extensively analyzed in relation to critical race theory, pragmatism, and theology (e.g., Dyson, 1994; Dantley, 2005; Glaude, 2007; Fuchs, 2021; Will, 2023; Ashouri Kisomi, 2023), scrutinizing its enduring relevance to elucidate the ethical dimensions of social justice and the role of the intellectual as moral witness. Similarly, Ignacio Ramonet's approach in *Geopolitics of Chaos* on geopolitics, media studies, and globalization has been the subject of critical examination (e.g., Sassen, 1998; Schiller, 1999; Herman & Chomsky, 2002), underscoring its prescient insights into the dynamics of global power and the manipulative potential of information in shaping contemporary instability.

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[1] For any other references to the book, *Keeping Faith: Philosophy and Public Theology*, we will us *Keeping Faith*.
[2] For any other references to the book, *Géopolitique du chaos* (1997), we will us *Geopolitics of Chaos*.

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Also, while other scholars have engaged with the concept of prophetic intellectualism (e.g., Said, 1996; Dorrien, 2008; Moloi & Phillips, 2023), digital disinformation (e.g., Diaz Ruiz, 2023. Burcă-Voicu *et al.*, 2025), algorithmic propaganda (e.g., Hermida & Hernández-Santaolalla, 2020; Schia, & Gjesvik, 2020), geopolitical issues (McKeil, 2022; Afonso *et al.*, 2024), and the dynamics of global disorder (e.g., Strange, 1996; Wallerstein, 2004), this research distinguishes itself by specifically focusing on the comparative insights offered by West's theological-ethical framework and Ramonet's geopolitical-analytical approach. Cornel West's work provides an essential critical philosophical and theological perspective. Stone (2011) explores his prophetic pragmatism through the lens of Foucauldian methodology; he analyzes power dynamics and the practice of freedom. Doak (2002) deciphers his incisive critique of Catholic theology's avoidance of Black theology's challenges to racial injustice. Jelinski (2014) scrutinizes his diagnosis of nihilism as one of the roots of the crisis of contemporary American democracy. These works underscore his commitment to a deep analysis of power structures and ethical imperatives. Equally, Ignacio Ramonet, meanwhile, is interested in the changing media landscape in the digital age. Borel-Hänni's (2014) analysis of his work highlights his vision of the transformation of journalism in the face of audience fragmentation and the proliferation of digital platforms. His work offers insightful insights into the dynamics of information and power in the context of contemporary digital surveillance. Moreover, Francine Descarries (2006) interrogates Ignacio Ramonet's thought on the threatening scope of publicity. According to her analysis, "a true 'octopus' of consumer society (…), expression, no place is spared, and no gaze is able to escape [sexist advertisement]"[3] (Descarries, 2006, 101; Translation mine). Additionally, examining Ramonet's cognitive vision on contemporary images, Yves Laberge (2022) notes: "I. Ramonet's point lies in denouncing the dictatorship of the image which, in infinitely varied forms and situations, tirelessly reiterates a single message formulated according to a single model"[4] (Laberge, 2022, 251; Translation mine).

Despite the valuable contributions of existing scholarship, several significant dimensions warrant further investigation. Specifically, the potential convergences and divergences in the ethical underpinnings of West's call for keeping faith and Ramonet's implicit normative vision for a more equitable global order, as articulated in their respective analyses of societal ills, require closer scrutiny. Thus, the central problem addressed by this reflection is the critical imperative to grasp the diverse modalities of intellectual witness and critique in an era characterized by pervasive global disorder. This research posits that a comparative analysis of Cornel West's *Keeping Faith* and Ignacio Ramonet's *Geopolitics of Chaos* reveal both distinct and potentially complementary frameworks to diagnose systemic instability and articulate forms of prophetic engagement. This leads to the following research question: How do Cornel West's concept of prophetic witness in *Keeping Faith* and Ignacio Ramonet's analysis of global disorder in *Geopolitics of Chaos* compare and contrast in their diagnoses of systemic instability, their conceptualizations of the intellectual's role, and their implicit or explicit normative visions to address global disorder? The objective of this research is to conduct a comparative analysis of Cornel West's notion of prophetic witness as presented in Keeping Faith and Ignacio Ramonet's examination of global disorder as articulated in *Geopolitics of Chaos*, identifying key convergences and divergences in their intellectual frameworks. This consists of illuminating the distinct yet potentially resonant ways in which those thinkers diagnose the multifaceted nature of contemporary systemic instability and conceptualize the role of the engaged intellectual in responding to it.

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[3] "Véritable 'pieuvre' de la société de consommation (…), aucun lieu n'est épargné, aucun regard ne parvient à échapper à la publicité sexiste" (Descarries, 2006, 101)

[4] "Le propos d'I. Ramonet réside dans la dénonciation de la dictature de l'image qui, sous des formes et des situations variées à l'infini, réitère inlassablement un seul et même message formulé selon un modèle unique" (Laberge, 2022, 251).

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The methodological tool used to carry out this study is a critical comparative analysis. This method involves the systematic application of both deductive and inductive codes to granular textual clues from *Keeping Faith* and *Geopolitics of Chaos*. Deductive codes, derived from the established framework, encompass ethical imperative, media power, spiritual malaise, racial capitalism, and neoliberal globalization. Each concept, therefore, serves as a critical heuristic, contributing to a profound dissection of the systemic pathologies and the corresponding calls to action embedded within the respective intellectual architectures.

The ethical imperative denotes a categorical moral obligation driving specific actions, independent of personal desires. This concept is vital for understanding the prescriptive and teleological dimensions of West's and Ramonet's intellectual projects. For West, this imperative is rooted in the Black prophetic tradition; it advocates justice and human flourishing. As to Ramonet, in spite of lacking theological grounding, a potent ethical imperative drives his critique of systemic injustice and advocacy for alter-globalization, requiring commitment to universal human rights. Juxtaposing those elements reveals convergent normative aspirations, notwithstanding divergent origins.

Media power refers to the pervasive capacity of media institutions to shape public opinion, influence discourse, and construct social realities. This concept is central to comprehending how global disorder is actively constructed and perpetuated. Ramonet's work provides a sharp critique of media's role in manufacturing consent and eroding public debate. West, while focused on American cultural and spiritual decline, similarly critiques the commodification of culture and marginalization of radical perspectives, phenomena demonstrably facilitated by media structures.

Spiritual malaise signifies a profound sense of unease or lack of ultimate purpose, transcending material deprivation to reflect a crisis of the soul. This offers a crucial stratum of analysis beyond purely structural critiques, addressing the internal dimensions of societal fragmentation. West frequently diagnoses a pervasive nihilism and crisis of values linked to consumer capitalism and racial oppression. Ramonet, though primarily socio-political, implicitly points to a kindred spiritual void in descriptions of political apathy and powerlessness stemming from hyper-globalization, which can foster extremist ideologies.

Racial capitalism posits that capitalism is inherently linked to racial hierarchies and exploitation, reproducing racial inequality as a foundational condition for capital accumulation. This concept is vital for scrutinizing the structural underpinnings of disorder, particularly from West's perspective. His analysis consistently demonstrates how racial injustice is fundamental to American capitalism's development. Ramonet, while not explicitly using the term, offers a critique of global neoliberalism and unequal power relations that can be interpreted as implicitly touching upon the racialized dimensions of global economic stratification, especially concerning North-South dynamics and historical colonial legacies.

Neoliberal globalization describes a phase of global integration driven by free markets, minimal state intervention, deregulation, and free capital flow. Its use helps to comprehend the contemporary architecture of global disorder as understood by both thinkers, albeit with different points of emphasis. Ramonet's *Geopolitics of Chaos* stands as a seminal critique of its destabilizing effects on geopolitical order and widening inequality. West's critiques of late capitalism and consumerism, though focused on American societal pathology, are profoundly intertwined with the domestic manifestations of neoliberal policies, which exacerbate spiritual malaise and democratic decline.

The present critical reflection is structured around three main axes: "Deconstructing systemic instability," "the Praxis of Witness," and "normative horizons and strategies of intervention." The first point is a comparative examination of West's analysis of domestic racial and economic injustice as constitutive of

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societal disorder and Ramonet's critique of global geopolitical and informational disorder as drivers of international instability. The second stage is an analysis of West's conception in *Keeping Faith* of the prophetic intellectual, emphasizing ethical commitment and social critique, alongside Ramonet's model in *Geopolitics of Chaos* of the engaged journalist-analyst, focusing on the deconstruction of power dynamics and dominant narratives. As far as the third axis is concerned, it is a comparison of the implicit or explicit ethical and political orientations of West in *Keeping Faith* and Ramonet in *Geopolitics of Chaos*, exploring their respective visions for a more just and stable order and the strategies of intervention they implicitly or explicitly advocate.

2. Deconstructing Systemic Instability

This axis delves into the core diagnoses of systemic instability articulated by Cornel West in *Keeping Faith* (1993) and Ignacio Ramonet in *Geopolitics of Chaos* (1997). While both thinkers engage with the pervasive sense of disorder characterizing the contemporary world, their analytical frameworks, focal points, and the very nature of the instability they identify exhibit both significant convergences and crucial divergences. This reflects their distinct intellectual traditions and primary areas of concern. West, rooted in a tradition of prophetic pragmatism and deeply concerned with the ethical and moral dimensions of social life, primarily dissects the domestic landscape of the United States, identifying racial injustice, economic inequality, and a spiritual malaise as fundamental sources of societal disorder. According to West's analysis,

> My own kind of pragmatism – what I call prophetic pragmatism – is closely akin to the philosophy of praxis put forward by Antonio Gramsci. The major difference is that my attitude toward Marxism as a grand theory is heuristic rather than dogmatic. Furthermore, my focus on the theoretical development in emerging forms of oppositional thought – feminist theory, antiracist theory, gay and lesbian theory – leads me to posit or look for not an overarching synthesis but rather an articulated assemblage of analytical outlooks, to further more morally principled and politically effective forms of action to ameliorate the plight of the wretched of the earth. (West, 1993, 104)

Ramonet, on the other hand, operates from a critical geopolitical and media studies perspective; he casts his gaze across the global stage, looking into the destabilizing effects of neoliberal globalization, the rise of a multipolar world, and the manipulative power of information in fostering a state of perpetual chaos. One significant point of convergence lies in their shared recognition of the interconnectedness of various forms of disorder. West, while focusing on the American context, does not isolate domestic injustices from broader global dynamics. He understands the legacy of colonialism and imperialism as deeply intertwined with contemporary racial and economic disparities within the United States. This opinion is apparent in the passage below:

> Needless to say, this European control included brutal enslavement, institutional terrorism and cultural degradation of black diasporan people. The death of roughly seventy-five million Africans during the centuries-long translatic slave trade is but one reminder, among others, of the assault on black community. The black diaspora condition of New World servitude. (West, 1993, 14)

Similarly, Ramonet, while primarily concerned with macro-level geopolitical shifts, acknowledges the profound impact of these shifts on local and national contexts, recognizing that the "chaos" he describes manifests in diverse forms of social and political unrest within individual nations. Examining some of the global upheavals, he writes:

> In the name of progress and development, mankind has been systematically destroying natural environments since the industrial revolution. Soil, water, vegetation and the Earth's atmosphere have been subjected to a succession of predatory and destructive acts. Pollution produces effects - climate warming,

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food depletion - that threaten the future of our planet. Excessive productivism is the main culprit, but so is the demographic explosion in the South and urban pollution. The extent of ecological disasters and the problems they raise are of concern to all citizens of the planet. The disappearance of numerous species of flora and fauna is creating worrying imbalances.[5] (Ramonet, 1997, 11; Translation mine)

Both thinkers, therefore, implicitly or explicitly reject a compartmentalized understanding of disorder. They recognize the complex interplay between local and global forces. However, a crucial divergence emerges in their primary analytical lenses. West's diagnosis is fundamentally ethical and philosophical. He frames societal disorder as a profound moral crisis that stems from a failure to uphold principles of justice, equality, and compassion. His concept of "keeping faith" is not merely a religious notion but a broader ethical stance that demands unwavering commitment to these principles in the face of systemic oppression and despair. He draws upon a rich tradition of prophetic thought, both religious and secular, to critique the moral bankruptcy that underpins social and political instability. Displaying the features of his prophetic criticism, West maintains,

> Prophetic criticism rests on what I understand to be the best of European-American modernity –the existential imperative to institutionalize critiques of illegitimate authority and arbitrary uses of power; a bestow of dignity, grander and tragedy on the ordinary lives of everyday people; and an experimental form of life that highlights curiosity, wonder, contingency, adventure, danger and, most importantly, improvisation. (West, 1993, xi)

In contrast, Ramonet's approach is primarily geopolitical and economic. He attributes global disorder to the structural dynamics of the post-Cold War world, particularly the unfettered expansion of neoliberal capitalism, the ensuing economic inequalities, and the power struggles between emerging and established global actors. Through his retrospective approach to the aftermath of the Cold War, he reveals,

> After the fall of the Berlin Wall, the second Gulf War and the implosion of the Soviet Union, optimism is over. The citizen's gaze scans the future, panicking as he sees the forces of disorganization and anomie rising everywhere. The planetary age on whose threshold we stand appears full of unknowns, perils and threats.[6] (Ramonet, 1997, 18; Translation mine)

While not entirely devoid of ethical considerations, his focus remains on the material and political forces that shape global instability. Likewise, West's and Ramonet's specific diagnoses of disorder differ significantly. West identifies racial injustice as a foundational and persistent source of American societal disorder. He argues that the historical legacy of slavery and segregation continues to manifest in contemporary forms of systemic racism, undermining the very possibility of a just and stable society. This thesis is noticeable in the ensuing excerpt,

> The modern black diasporan problematic of invisibility and namelessness can be understood as the condition of relative lack of power to respect themselves to themselves and others as complex human beings, and thereby to contest the bombardment of negative, degrading stereotypes put forward by

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[5] "Au nom du progress et du développement, l'homme a entrepris, depuis la révolution industrielle, la destruction systématique des milieux naturels. Les prédations et les saccages en tous genres se succèdent, infligés aux sols, aux eaux, à la vegetation et à l'atmophère de Terre. La pollution produit des effets –réchauffement du climat, appauvrissement alimentaire –qui mettent en péril l'avenir de notre planète. Le productivisme à outrance est le premier responsable de l'actuelle mise à sac, mais aussi l'explosion démographique du Sud et la pollution urbaine. L'étendue des désastres écologiques et des problems qu'ils soulèvent préoccupe tous les citoyens de la planète. La disparition de nombreuses espèces de la faune et la flore crée d'inquiétants déséquilibres." (Ramonet, 1997, 11)
[6] "Après la chute du mur de Berlin, après la seconde guerre du Golfe et l'implosion de l'union soviétique, l'optimisme est terminé. Le regard du citoyen scrute l'avenir et panique en voyant partout monter les forces de la désorganisation et l'anomie. L'âge planétaire au seuil duquel nous nous trouvons apparaît plein d'inconnues, de perils et de menaces." (Ramonet, 1997, 18)

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> white-supremacist ideologies. The initial black response to being caught in this whirlwind of Europeanization was to resist the misrepresentation and caricature of the terms set by self-representation and caricature of the terms set by uncontested nonblack norms and models and to fight self-representation and recognition. Every modern black person, especially cultural disseminators, encounters this problematic of invisibility and namelessness. (West, 1993, 15)

Clearly, economic inequality, exacerbated by neoliberal policies, further fuels this disorder by creating deep social divisions and eroding the social fabric. Finally, West points to a spiritual malaise, a loss of meaning and purpose, as a contributing factor to societal fragmentation and instability. The following textual clues underpin his viewpoint: "Demystification tries to disclose options and alternatives for transformative praxis; it also attempts to grasp the way in which representational strategies are creative responses to novel circumstances and conditions" (West, 1993, 21). Contrariwise, Ramonet emphasizes the geopolitical dimensions of chaos. He analyzes the rise of new global powers, the resurgence of nationalism, the proliferation of regional conflicts, and the destabilizing effects of informational warfare as key elements of global disorder. Ramonet presents the chaotic state of the world as follows,

> From a geopolitical point of view, the world presents a situation where, on the one hand, regional economic unions are multiplying (...); on the other, nationalisms are reborn, fundamentalisms are on the rise, and states and minorities are demanding their independence. (...) Most of the conflicts at the end of this century (...) are internal, intra-state conflicts, pitting a central power against a fraction of its own population.[7] (Ramonet, 1997, 8; Translation mine)

He also discloses the role of financial speculation and economic crises in exacerbating geopolitical tensions and creating a climate of uncertainty. The role of information and media also constitutes a significant point of divergence in their analyses. While West acknowledges the ideological functions of dominant narratives in perpetuating injustice, his primary focus remains on the ethical and material realities of oppression. Ramonet, however, places a much greater emphasis on the role of media and information in shaping perceptions and contributing to global chaos. According to Ramonet, the media certainly play an important role in today's society, but they are significantly responsible for the unprecedented global disorder that threatens the lives of the world's citizens. The excerpt below describes some of the aspects of his criticism against media,

> The marriage of information technology, telecommunications and television is bringing about a veritable revolution, made possible by digital technologies. This means more ways of communicating (as shown by the current boom in cell phones and the Internet) and the development of new uses.[8] (Ramonet, 1997, 14; Translation mine)

He critiques the concentration of media power, the spread of misinformation, and the manipulation of public opinion as key tools in maintaining and exacerbating global instability. His analysis resonates with contemporary concerns regarding the impact of social media and the erosion of trust in traditional sources of information. To scrutinize the preceding convergences and divergences, we let us consider the work of other contemporary thinkers. For instance, Manuel Castells's analysis of the "network society" (2000) provides a framework that can contribute to understanding the informational dimension of global disorder.

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[7] "Du point de vue géopolitique, le monde présente l'aspect d'un côté, multiplication des unions économiques régionales (…); de l'autre, renaissance des nationalismes, montée des intégrismes, États, minorités réclamant leur indépendance. (…) La plupart des conflits en cette fin de siècle (…) sont des conflits internes, intraétatiques, qui opposent un pouvoir central à une fraction de sa propre population." (Ramonet, 1997, 8)

[8] "Le mariage de l'informatique, des télécommunications et de la télévision provoque une véritable révolution que rendent possible les technologies numériques. Cela signifie advantage de moyens de communiquer (comme le montre le boom actuel des téléphones mobiles ou celui d'Internet) et le développement de nouveaux usages." (Ramonet, 1997, 14)

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Castells's concept of the network society posits that contemporary global structures are increasingly organized around decentered, interconnected flows of information, capital, and technology, fundamentally reshaping socio-economic and political landscapes. His thought contributes to grasping the very architecture of the global disorder dissected by both West and Ramonet. It shows how power operates through these diffuse networks, transcending traditional state-centric or localized forms. For Ramonet, Castells's perception directly underpins the pervasive influence of media power and the deterritorialized nature of neoliberal globalization, while for West, it helps to contextualize the systemic reach of racial capitalism and the spiritual malaise engendered by a hyper-connected yet often dislocating world. Consequently, integrating the network society provides an essential analytical lens to decipher the intricate mechanisms of instability and the challenges inherent in formulating a coherent prophetic witness against a backdrop of fluid, interconnected global systems. Indeed, delving into the influence of media, Ramonet asserts,

> The spectacular development of information and communication technologies is triggering a worldwide civilizational transformation: the industrial age and the 'consumer society' are gradually giving way to what is known as the 'information society.' Some even argue that the social, economic and cultural consequences will be far more far-reaching than those caused by the industrial revolution in the mid-19th century.[9] (Ramonet, 1997, 14; Translation mine)

Similarly, Nancy Fraser's work on social justice (2009) provides a critical framework that helps to examine injustice not merely as a matter of economic redistribution but also of cultural recognition and political representation. It emphasizes the multi-dimensional nature of systemic oppression. Her critical thought helps to elucidate the multifaceted nature of the global disorder diagnosed by West and Ramonet. It shows how both thinkers prioritize or interrelate economic, racial, and political pathologies. For West, Fraser's lens illuminates the deep intersectionality of racial capitalism and the political marginalization that undergirds American decay. Correspondingly, for Ramonet, it contextualizes how neoliberal globalization and manipulative media power coalesce to foster global inequality across these dimensions. Using Fraser's approach therefore allows for a more nuanced comparative analysis of their respective strategies for justice, revealing whether their prophetic witness targets economic restructuring, cultural transformation, political empowerment, or a synthetic approach to these interwoven struggles.

As argued above, neither Castells nor Fraser explicitly adopts the prophetic or geopolitical lenses that are central to West's and Ramonet's analyses, respectively. While both thinkers offer convincing diagnoses of the widespread disorder characterizing the contemporary world, their approaches are shaped by distinct intellectual traditions and focal points. West uses an ethical and philosophical lens that primarily examines the domestic sources of American societal disorder. He emphasizes racial injustice, economic inequality, and spiritual malaise. As far as Ramonet is concerned, he uses a geopolitical and media studies perspective that focuses on the macro-level forces of neoliberal globalization, multipolarity, and informational manipulation that contribute to global chaos. According to Ramonet's approach to the causes of global,

A world powerfully shaken by formidable technological mutations, persistent economic disorder and rising ecological perils. Those three bundles of troubles are reflected, in particular, in social disarray, the explosion of inequalities, the appearance of new forms of poverty and exclusion, the crisis of work-value, the profound malaise of

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[9] "Le spectaculaire développement des technologies de l'information et de la communication déclenche, à l'échelle de la planète, un phénomène de transformation civilisationnelle: l'ère industrielle et la 'société de consommation' laissent peu à peu la place à ce qu'on appelle 'la société d'information.' Certains soutiennent même que les conséquences sociales, économique et culturelle seront beaucoup plus profondes que celles qu'avait provoquées, vers le milieu du XIXe siècle, la révolution industrielle." (Ramonet, 1997, 14)

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power, mass unemployment, the progression of irrationality, the proliferation of nationalism, fundamentalism and xenophobia, and simultaneously, in a very strong demand for morality and a rise in ethical concerns.[10] (Ramonet, 1997, 99; Translation mine)

Despite their different concerns, both thinkers recognize the interconnectedness of various forms of disorder. Grasping those convergences and divergences is crucial for appreciating the multifaceted nature of global instability and the diverse intellectual resources available for its analysis. After digging into the distinct yet interconnected diagnoses of systemic instability offered by West and Ramonet, the ensuing axis of this critical reflection is interested in their respective conceptualizations of the praxis of witness.

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[10] "Un monde puissamment bousculé par de formidables mutations technologiques, par la persistence des désordres économiques et par la montée des perils écologiques. Ces trois faisceaux de troubles se traduisent, notamment, par le désarroi social, l'explosion des inégalités, l'apparition de nouvelles formes de pauvreté et d'exclusion, la crise de la valeur-travail, le profond malaise du pouvoir, le chômage de masse, la progression de l'irrationnel, la proliferation des nationalismes, des intégrismes, de la xénophobie, et simultanément, par une très forte demande de morale et un essor des préoccupations éthiques." (Ramonet, 1997, 226)

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3. Praxis of Witness

This section is composed of two sub-sections. The first stage explores West's and Ramonet's convergent and divergent intellectual commitments. As to the second axis, it recaps both articulations. West, imbued with the spirit of prophetic critique, envisions the intellectual as a moral beacon, an unwavering voice speaking truth to power and embodying a radical hope amidst despair. West sees interpretation or intellectual critique as a wholesome logic,

> Demystification is the most illuminating mode of theoretical inquiry for those who promote the new cultural politics of difference. Social structural analyses of empire, exterminism, class, race, gender, nature, age, sexual orientation, nation and region are the springboards –though not landing grounds –for the most desirable forms of critical practice that take history (and her story) seriously. (West, 1993, 21)

His conception of the prophetic intellectual, deeply rooted in theological and philosophical traditions, emphasizes ethical commitment, empathetic understanding of suffering, and a relentless pursuit of social justice. Conversely, Ramonet operates within the realm of critical journalism and geopolitical analysis. He positions the intellectual as a scrutineer of power dynamics, a demystifier of dominant narratives, and a purveyor of lucid comprehension in a world increasingly saturated with misinformation and strategic obfuscation. While both West and Ramonet acknowledge the exigency of intellectual intervention, their prescribed roles, methodologies, and the very nature of their "witness" reveal both noteworthy convergences and salient divergences. A discernible consonance resides in their shared conviction regarding the imperative of intellectual engagement. Both West and Ramonet eschew the notion of the detached academic or the quiescent observer. They firmly believe in the ethical obligation of intellectuals to actively participate in public discourse, to decipher the root causes of societal ills, and to offer critical perspectives that challenge prevailing orthodoxies. Indeed, Ramonet believes,

> The main bottlenecks are unquestionably cultural. The real problem, in a society traumatized by the pace of innovation, is to unblock socio-economic intelligence, i.e. cultural problems in the broadest sense. In order to do this, we need to take a critical look at the construction of the main cultural parameters, and reconsider the construction of modernity in Europe.[11] (Ramonet, 1997, 195-196; Translation mine)

West's entire *oeuvre* is predicated on the idea that philosophy and theology must be brought to bear on the concrete realities of human suffering and injustice. According to West, both values consciousness-raisers,

> By cultural capital (Pierre Bourdieu's term), I mean not only the high-quality skills required to engage in critical practices but, more important, the self-confidence, discipline and perseverance necessary for success without an undue resilience on the mainstream for approval and acceptance. This challenge holds for all prophetic critics, yet it is especially different for those of color. The widespread, modern, European denial of the intelligence, ability, beauty and character of people of color puts a tremendous burden on critics and artists of color to "prove" themselves in light of norms and models set by white elites whose own heritage devalued and dehumanized them. (West, 1993, 22)

Similarly, Ramonet's journalistic endeavors are driven by a commitment to unveiling the hidden mechanisms of power and providing citizens with the intellectual tools necessary to navigate a complex

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[11] "Les principaux blocages sont indiscutablement culturels. Le vrai problème est d'opérer, dans une société traumatise par le rythme de l'innovation, le déblocage de l'intelligence socio-économique, c'est-à-dire des problèmes culturels au sens large. Or, pour amorcer ce 'déblocage,' il faut sans doute reprendre, avec un regard critique, le fil de la construction des principaux paramètres culturels, et reconsidérer l'édification de la modernité en Europe." (Ramonet, 1997, 195-196)

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and often deceptive global landscape. By disclosing the hidden aspects of Western society, Ramonet helps Western citizens, as well as other individuals, calibrate their struggles:

> Here we are at the heart of a crossroads. We have arrived at one of those crossroads where the fundamental cultural rules that give rhythm to human life and thought change, and are modified. Everything is turned upside down. We have to question our certainties, revisit our practices, understand the new parameters of the present times. European societies continue to navigate their way through modernity, without a clear goal or vision of their future.[12] (Ramonet, 1997, 192; Translation mine)

This shared commitment to intellectual activism forms a fundamental bridge between their seemingly disparate approaches. Nevertheless, the modalities through which they enact this engagement diverge significantly. West's "prophetic intellectual" operates primarily through moral suasion and ethical critique. Drawing upon a rich tapestry of philosophical and theological thought, he seeks to awaken the moral conscience of individuals and society, urging a fundamental transformation of values and a radical commitment to justice. West's arguments expose the scope of the new cultural politics of difference,

> The most significant theme of the new cultural politics of difference is the agency, capacity and ability of human beings who have been culturally degraded, politically oppressed and economically exploited by bourgeois liberal and communist illiberal status quos. This theme neither romanticizes nor idealizes marginalized peoples. Rather it accentuates their humanity and tries to attenuate the institutional constraints on their life-chances for surviving and thriving. (West, 1993, 26)

His mode of witness often involves a passionate and rhetorically charged articulation of ethical imperatives, aiming to inspire moral outrage and galvanize action. In contradistinction, Ramonet's "engaged journalist-analyst" operates through rigorous investigation, critical analysis of power structures, and the dissemination of information. His primary mode of witness involves the meticulous deconstruction of dominant narratives, the exposure of hidden agendas, and the provision of alternative perspectives grounded in geopolitical and economic realities. While not devoid of ethical considerations, his approach prioritizes the power of informed understanding and critical reasoning as catalysts for change.

Moreover, West's and Ramonet's respective audiences and primary spheres of influence differ from one to another. West's prophetic voice often resonates within academic circles, religious communities, and social justice movements, seeking to mobilize moral and spiritual energies towards transformative action. Ramonet's analyses, disseminated through journalistic outlets and intellectual publications, primarily target a broader public, aiming to cultivate critical awareness and informed engagement with global political and economic issues. This difference in their primary audiences shapes their rhetorical strategies and the nature of their intellectual witness. The concept of "truth-telling" also manifests differently in their work. For West, truth-telling is inextricably linked to ethical pronouncements and the articulation of moral imperatives. The prophetic intellectual bears witness to the truth of suffering and injustice, demanding accountability and advocating for a more just order based on deeply held moral principles. From that perspective, West interrogates,

> How does a black philosopher keep faith as he, or she, focuses on the pain and paranoia in America's chocolate cities and on Africa's sense of impending catastrophe? What are the sources for brave thought and courageous action in this frightening moment of global cynism and fatalism? (West, 1993, xi)

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[12] "Nous voici donc au Cœur d'un temps-carrefour. Arrivés à un de ces points de bifurcation où les règles culturelles fondamentales qui rythment la vie et la pensée des hommes changent, se modifient. Tout est bouleversé. Il nous faut remettre en cause des certitudes, réviser des pratiques, comprendre les nouveaux paramètres des temps présents. Les sociétés européennes continuent de naviguer dans la modernité, sans but précis et sans une claire représentation de son devenir." (Ramonet, 1997, 192)

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According to Ramonet, truth-telling involves the rigorous pursuit of factual accuracy and the unveiling of hidden power dynamics. The engaged journalist-analyst bears witness to the truth of geopolitical realities and the manipulative strategies employed by powerful actors, empowering citizens with knowledge to challenge dominant narratives. As Ramonet puts it, thanks to Journalists' works play significant roles; they help

> Citizens remember the warnings issued by George Orwell and Aldous Huxley against the false progress of a world administered by a thought police. They fear the possibility of subtle conditioning of mentalities on a global scale. In the grand industrial scheme conceived by the bosses of entertainment companies, everyone notes that information is above all considered a commodity; and that this character far outweighs the fundamental mission of the media: to enlighten and enrich democratic debate (Ramonet, 1997, 232-233).[13] (Ramonet, 1997, 232-233; Translation mine)

While both are committed to truth, their understanding of what constitutes "truth" and how it is to be articulated differs. Those divergent modalities of witness are combined with works of other contemporary intellectuals, such Judith Butler's concept of "bearing witness" in the context of social justice movements (2009). Her thought reconfigures the act of observation into an ethical stance, requiring an active and vulnerable engagement with forms of suffering and injustice that frequently resist legibility or official recognition. In the context of this study, it critically illuminates the prophetic witness articulated by West and Ramonet. Clearly, Butler's critical studies underscore their intellectual obligation to acknowledge and vocalize systemic vulnerabilities and profound disarrays that dominant discourses often eradicate. *Butlerian* framework highlights how their respective analyses, through rigorous intellectual exegesis and moral courage, perform the act of bearing witness to the casualties of neoliberal globalization, racial capitalism, and pervasive media power, thereby challenging complicity and demanding accountability. Her studies share certain affinities with West's focus on the ethical articulation and public representation of moral outrage, as outlined below,

> The new cultural politics of difference faces three basic challenges –intellectual, existential and political. The intellectual challenge –usually cast as methodological debate in these days in which academicist forms of expression have a monopoly on intellectual life –is how to think about representational practices in terms of terms of history, culture and society. (West, 1993, 5)

However, Butler is primarily interested in the performative aspects of resistance and the construction of collective identity, whereas West's prophetic voice carries a more explicit moral and theological weight. Similarly, Edward Said's notion of the intellectual as an "exile and marginal" figure speaking truth to power (1996) resonates with both West's and Ramonet's commitment to critical engagement, but Said's emphasis on the intellectual's positionality and the deconstruction of Orientalist discourse offers a distinct analytical lens.

Although both Cornel West and Ignacio Ramonet recognize the crucial role of mental stimulation in an age of global disarray, their conceptualizations of the "praxis of witness" diverge in significant ways. West embodies the prophetic intellectual, driven by ethical imperatives and seeking to awaken the moral conscience through passionate articulation. Emphasizing the power of unraveling, he maintains, "I call demystificatory criticism 'prophetic criticism' –the approach appropriate for the new cultural politics of

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[13] "Les citoyens se souviennent des mises en garde lances naguère par George Orwell et Aldous Huxley contre le faux progrès d'un monde administrer par une police de la pensée. Ils redoutent la possibilité d'un conditionnement subtil des mentalités à l'échelle de la planète. Dans le grand schéma industriel conçu par les patrons des entreprises de loisirs, Chacun constate que l'information est avant tout considéré comme une marchandise; et que ce caractère l'emporte, de loin, sur la mission fondamentale des médias: éclairer et enrichir le débat démocratique." (Ramonet, 1997, 232-233)

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difference –because while it begins with social structural analyses it also makes explicit its moral and political aims" (West, 1993, 21). As far as Ramonet is concerned, he exemplifies the engaged journalist-analyst, committed to rigorous investigation and the decoding of power structures through informed analysis. A close look at Ramonet's analysis helps to discover that the new media are certainly relevant but they cannot definitively replace Journalists:

> There is no doubt that with the Internet, a medium now as commonplace as the telephone, we are entering a new era of communication. Many believe, not without ingenuity, that more communication, in itself, does not constitute social progress. Even less so when it is controlled by large commercial multimedia firms. Or when it contributes to widening differences and inequalities between citizens of the same country, or inhabitants of the same planet.[14] (Ramonet, 1997, 230; Translation mine)

Those disparate modalities of witness, while reflecting their distinct intellectual traditions and primary spheres of influence, both underscore the enduring exigency of intellectual articulation in navigating the complexities of a disordered world. The tables below summarize the convergences and divergences between West's and Ramonet's thoughts.

Table 1

Core Diagnosis of Global Disorder	Nature of Witness
West focuses on the moral, spiritual, and democratic decline within the American empire. He identifies nihilism (meaninglessness, hopelessness, lovelessness) as a spiritual disease propagated by racial capitalism, unfettered individualism, and a decaying public sphere. This leads to the systemic oppression of marginalized groups and the erosion of civic virtue.	As a prophetic critique, West's analysis heavily draws from the Black prophetic tradition, Christian radicalism, and American pragmatism. He offers an ethical and moral indictment of power structures. His witness is characterized by an unflinching truth-telling, a deep empathy for the oppressed, and a relentless call for justice, love, and hope. It is both intellectual and deeply spiritual.
Ramonet diagnoses global disorder as a consequence of the collapse of bipolarity (post-Cold War) and the rampant, unregulated forces of neoliberal globalization. He highlights the rise of "chaos" driven by financial speculation, media homogenization, the weakening of nation-states, and the proliferation of new, often non-state, conflicts.	As an analytical and activist critique, Ramonet's witness is grounded in rigorous journalistic and geopolitical analysis. He meticulously dissects the mechanisms of global power (economic, media, military) that generate chaos. His witness is also explicitly activist, providing intellectual ammunition for the alter-globalization movement and advocating for counter-hegemonic media.

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[14] "Il ne fait pas de doute qu'avec Internet, média désormais aussi banal que le téléphone, nous entrons dans une nouvelle ère de la communication. Beaucoup estiment, non-sans ingénuité, que plus il y aura de communication, en soi, ne constitue pas un progrès social. Et encore moins quand elle est contrôlée par les grandes firmes commerciales du multimédia. Ou quand elle contribue à creuser les differences et les inégalités entre citoyens d'un même pays, ou habitants d'une même planète." (Ramonet, 1997, 230)

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Table 2

Key Themes/Focus Areas	Method of Engagement & Action
Race, class, and democracy are relevant in West's philosophy; he intersects race and class oppression within the American context, exploring the new cultural politics of difference, the dilemmas of the Black intellectual, and the need for radical democratic praxis. West critiques the commodification of culture and the spiritual impoverishment of consumerism. Emphasizes the importance of keeping faith in the struggle for justice.	West combines prophetic criticism and intellectual activism. Through these themes, he engages through academic writing, public oration, sermons, and active participation in social movements. Emphasizes intellectual rigor combined with moral passion. Calls for a reinvigoration of democratic practices from the grassroots, fostering alliances across racial and class lines, and nurturing a culture of critical solidarity grounded in love and justice.
Globalization, media power, and geopolitical fragmentation are of paramount interest in Ramonet's geopolitical analysis. Through these themes, he focuses on the tyranny of communication, the dismantling of the welfare state, the rise of financial capital's dominance, and the fragmentation of traditional state-centric international relations. Examines the role of media in shaping global consciousness and manufacturing consent. Advocates for global social justice and media independence.	As far as Ramonet is concerned, he uses informative disruption and counter-hegemonic mobilization. Clearly, Ramonet employs investigative journalism, media commentary, and the establishment of independent media platforms. He advocates for the creation of global counter-powers to challenge corporate and state hegemony, emphasizing informed citizen action and the fostering of new forms of international solidarity (e.g., alter-globalization movements).

Table 3

Target Audience & Actors for Change	Underlying Ethical and Philosophical Foundations
West addresses American society, intellectuals, and progressive movements, particularly the Black community. He believes change emanates from moral awakenings and organized efforts among the oppressed and their allies, inspired by a prophetic vision and rooted in communities of resistance.	West's philosophy is rooted in the Black prophetic tradition, Christian theology, American pragmatism (Dewey, James), and existentialism. He emphasizes radical love, justice, humility, and tragic hope as foundational for democratic flourishing and human dignity.
As to Ramonet, he addresses a global audience, particularly civil society organizations, activists, and citizens disillusioned with neoliberal globalization. He thinks change can arise from a conscious, mobilized global citizenry capable of challenging dominant narratives and structures, emphasizing the power of collective intelligence and networked resistance.	Ramonet's work is informed by critical theory, Marxism (neo-Marxist analysis of media and capitalism), and a commitment to human rights and social justice. He emphasizes rational analysis, transparency, and collective action as essential tools for dismantling oppressive global systems and fostering a more equitable world order.

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As shown above, West and Ramonet articulate divergent modalities of intellectual testimony; as to the following axis, it is about the normative horizons and implicit or explicit intervention strategies suggested for dealing with systemic disorder.

4. Normative Horizons and Strategies of Intervention

Subsequent to delineating their respective diagnoses of systemic instability and their distinct modalities of intellectual witness, this final axis scrutinizes the teleological vectors and pragmatic imperatives implicitly or explicitly espoused by Cornel West and Ignacio Ramonet as potential pathways towards ameliorating the pervasive global disarray they so astutely dissect. West's normative horizon is characterized by a vision of participatory democracy, substantive equality, and a deep-seated empathy for the marginalized and the dispossessed. Through his critique, there is a clear sense of humanism,

> The ambiguous legacies of the European Age, American pre-eminence and decolonization continue to haunt our postmodern moment as we come to terms with both the European, American, Japanese, Soviet and Third World crimes against and contributions to humanity. The plight of Africans and contributions to humanity. The plight of Africans in the New World can be instructive in this regard. (West, 1993, 14)

Conversely, Ramonet operates within a framework of critical geopolitics, informed by a desire for a more equitable, and stable global architecture. He advocates for systemic reforms predicated on a recalibration of power dynamics, the democratization of information, and a concerted effort to mitigate the destabilizing effects of unfettered neoliberalism. In the textual clues below, he presents the absolute precondition for the advent of fair democracy:

> New technologies will only contribute to the improvement of democracy if we first fight against the caricature of a global society that is preparing multinationals to rush headlong into building information highways.[15] (Ramonet, 1997, 233; Translation mine)

Though both thinkers evince a palpable desire to transcend the current epoch of disorder, their envisioned end-states and the pragmatic strategies they implicitly or explicitly endorse reveal both significant areas of convergence and crucial points of divergence. This reflects their foundational philosophical and political commitments. A notable congruence emerges in their shared aspiration for a more just and equitable global order. Both West and Ramonet are deeply critical of existing power structures and the profound inequalities they engender. West's critique of racial capitalism and systemic oppression in the United States is fundamentally driven by a normative vision of a society where justice and equality are not merely aspirational ideals but lived realities for all. West advocate a political challenge,

> The challenge principally consists of forging solid and reliable alliances of people of color and white progressives guided by a moral and political vision of greater democracy and individual freedom in communities, states and transnational enterprises, for instance, corporations, and [pieces of] information and communications conglomerates. (West, 1993, 25)

Similarly, Ramonet's conception of the "geopolitics of chaos" is underpinned by a desire for a more balanced and stable international system, one where the interests of marginalized nations and populations are not subjugated to the dictates of dominant global actors. This shared commitment to a more just distribution of power and resources forms a crucial nexus between their otherwise disparate approaches. Ramonet draws a status report that unveils the commitment of the leaders of democracies follows,

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[15] "Les nouvelles technologies ne pourront contribuer au perfectionnement de la démocratie que si nous luttons, en premier lieu, contre la caricature de société mondiale que préparent les multinationales lances à tombeau ouvert dans la construction des autoroutes de l'information." (Ramonet, 1997, 233)

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> In the name of the philosophy of progress (scientific, cultural, social, economic), the leaders of democracies have, for a hundred years, raised the level of public education, developed social rights, and increased the purchasing power of disadvantaged groups. The aim was to reduce inequalities between individuals, by helping the most deprived to progress. In order to reduce violence.[16] (Ramonet, 1997, 100; Translation mine)

Nonetheless, the specific contours of their normative horizons and the pragmatic pathways they envision diverge considerably. West's teleological vector points towards a radical transformation of individual and collective consciousness; it underscores the imperative of moral conversion and the cultivation of empathy as preconditions for meaningful social change,

> In this way, prophetic criticism –with its stress on historical specificity and artistic complexity –directly addresses the intellectual challenge. The cultural capital of people of color –with its emphasis on self-confidence, discipline, perseverance and subcultures of criticism –also tries to meet the existential requirement. (West, 1993, 25)

His pragmatic imperatives often involve grassroots mobilization, the cultivation of critical consciousness, and the unwavering articulation of ethical demands. While he acknowledges the importance of political and economic reforms, his primary emphasis remains on the ethical and spiritual dimensions of social transformation. In contradistinction, Ramonet's normative horizon leans towards systemic reforms within the global political and economic architecture. His pragmatic imperatives often involve advocating for greater regulation of financial markets, the democratization of media ownership, the strengthening of international institutions, and a recalibration of the relationship between the Global North and South. While not entirely neglecting the role of individual consciousness, his primary focus resides on the transformation of macro-level structures and policies. As Ramonet notices,

> It is therefore shocking to note the extent to which, paradoxically, a period of turmoil, crises and perils of all kinds like ours coincides with an overwhelming ideological consensus, imposed by the media, by polls and by advertising thanks to the manipulation of signs and symbols, and the new control of minds.[17] (Ramonet, 1997, 116-117; Translation mine)

Besides, West's and Ramonet's perspectives on the role of the state and political action differ. West exhibits a deep skepticism towards the capacity of existing political institutions to deliver genuine social justice without fundamental moral and spiritual transformation. His emphasis on prophetic witness often entails a critical stance vis-à-vis established political power, urging individuals and communities to hold institutions accountable to higher ethical standards.

> In the recent past, the dominant cultural identities have been circumscribed by immoral patriarchal, imperial, jingoistic and xenophobic constraints. The political consequences have been principally a public sphere regulated by and for well-to-do, white males in the name of freedom and democracy. The new cultural criticism exposes and explodes the exclusions, blindnesses and silences of this past, calling from it radical libertarian and democratic projects that will create a better present and future. The new cultural politics of difference is neither an ahistorical Jacobin program that discards tradition and ushers in new self-righteous authoritarianism that celebrates token pluralism for smooth inclusion. (West, 1993, 27)

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[16] "Au nom de la philosophie du progrès (scientifique, culturel, social, économique), les dirigeants des démocraties ont, depuis cent ans, élevé le niveau d'instruction publique, développé les droits sociaux, et augmenté le pouvoir d'achat des categories défavorisées. Il s'agissait de réduire les inégalités entre les individus, en faisant progresser les plus démunis. Afin de faire reculer la violence." (Ramonet, 1997, 100)

[17] "Aussi, est-il choquant de constater à quel point, paradoxalement, une période de bouillonnement, de crises et de perils de tous orders comme la nôtre coïncide avec un consensus idéologique écrasant, imposé par les médias, par les sondages et la publicité grâce à la manipulation des signes et des symboles, et au nouveau contrôle des esprits." (Ramonet, 1997, 116-117)

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Ramonet, while critical of neoliberal governance, often looks towards reformed state action and international cooperation as crucial mechanisms for mitigating global chaos and fostering greater stability and equity. His pragmatic proposals frequently involve policy recommendations aimed at reshaping global economic and political structures. To further interrogate those convergences and divergences, it is relevant to address other contemporary thinkers concerned with global justice and systemic change, such as Thomas Piketty's analysis of capital and inequality (2014) that provides a rigorous economic framework. This contributes to grasping the structural roots of the economic disparities that both West and Ramonet critique, though Piketty's focus is primarily on policy recommendations within existing state structures. Similarly, Boaventura de Sousa Santos's work on "epistemologies of the South" (2014) resonates with both thinkers' concern for marginalized perspectives and the need to challenge dominant Western-centric understandings of global order, though Santos's emphasis is on cognitive justice and the decolonization of knowledge.

Both Cornel West and Ignacio Ramonet articulate compelling normative visions that can to transcend the current era of global disarray, yet their teleological vectors and pragmatic imperatives diverge in significant ways. West envisions a transformative project rooted in ethical awakening and grassroots mobilization, while Ramonet advocates for systemic reforms within the global political and economic architecture. West's and Ramonet's shared aspiration for a more just and equitable world underscores a fundamental ethical impulse, but their differing emphases on individual transformation versus structural reform reflect their distinct intellectual traditions and primary areas of engagement. Ramonet blames politicians for their incapacity to maintain global order,

> Parties and politicians are widely held responsible for the overall crisis of a society that offers neither security nor solidarity, and where frustrations of all kinds are multiplying. Citizens seem tired of mismanagement; corruption; dysfunctional public services; taxation that they do not see as having a practical impact on their daily lives; the lack of reforms; excessive bureaucracy and the lack of care from the state.[18] (Ramonet, 1997, 34-35; Translation mine)

Understanding those nuanced differences is crucial to appreciate the diverse pathways proposed, navigate the complexities of global disorder, fosters a more just, and stable future. This comparative exploration of West's and Ramonet's diagnoses, modalities of witness, and normative horizons reveals the multifaceted intellectual landscape engaged in grappling with the exigencies of global disarray, underscoring the enduring need for both prophetic moral critique and rigorous geopolitical analysis in charting a course towards a more equitable and stable world.

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[18] "Partis et hommes politiques sont largement considérés comme responsables de la crise globale d'une société qui n'offre ni sécurité, ni solidarité, et où les frustrations de tous orders se multiplient. Les citoyens semblent lassés de la mauvaise gestion; de la corruption; des dysfonctionements des services publics; de la fiscalité dont ils ne voient pas la traduction pratique dans leur vie quotidienne; de l'absence de réformes; de l'excès de bureaucratie et du manque de sollicitude de l'État." (Ramonet, 1887, 34-35)

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5. Conclusions

This comparative exegesis, predicated on the central objective of elucidating the distinct yet potentially resonant intellectual architectures erected by Cornel West and Ignacio Ramonet in their respective approaches to global disorder, traversed the variegated terrains of their diagnoses, modalities of witness, and teleological vectors. By juxtaposing West's theologico-ethical excavations of societal malaise with Ramonet's politico-economic cartographies of global turbulence, this study unearthed both striking congruences in their apprehension of systemic fragility and salient divergences in their prescribed modes of intellectual involvement and envisioned pathways towards amelioration.

The preceding analysis foregrounded a shared recognition of the intricate interconnectedness pervading multifarious manifestations of global disarray, albeit refracted through disparate analytical prisms. West's scrutiny of domestic injustices, while anchored in the American sociopolitical fabric, intimates broader global ramifications stemming from historical legacies of domination. Conversely, Ramonet's macroscopic purview of geopolitical convulsions acknowledges their cascading effects on localized contexts. This shared perception of the link between local and global issues highlights a core idea: disorder, in its contemporary instantiation, transcends facile compartmentalization. Nevertheless, the present study also illuminated crucial disjunctions. West's prophetic intellectualism, fuelled by an ethical exigency and a profound moral suasion, posits a transformative trajectory predicated on the radical reformation of individual and collective consciousness. His emphasis on empathetic understanding and unwavering ethical commitment stands in contrast to Ramonet's more structuralist approach, which prioritizes the recalibration of global power dynamics and the democratization of informational conduits as prerequisites for a more stable and equitable global architecture. Their divergent normative horizons; West's emphasis on moral conversion versus Ramonet's direct attention to systemic reform; reflect their foundational philosophical and political orientations.

The methodological armature of critical comparative critique proved particularly apposite for this undertaking. By systematically juxtaposing the textual edifices of *Keeping Faith* and *Geopolitics of Chaos*, this approach facilitated the meticulous discernment of both overt and nuanced convergences and divergences in their conceptual frameworks. It enabled a richer understanding than would have been afforded by discrete analyses of each thinker, disclosing the subtle interplay between their distinct intellectual traditions and their shared engagement with the protean phenomenon of global disorder. The strengths of this critical exercise reside in its novel comparative approach. This brings into dialogue two prominent yet often siloed intellectual voices. It illuminates the multifaceted nature of global disorder by exploring it through the distinct lenses of philosophical theology and critical geopolitics. It helps to account for the enduring significance of West's and Ramonet's prophetic witness as an indispensable heuristic for comprehending and confronting the multifaceted systemic vulnerabilities that characterize the contemporary global crisis, particularly those related to the rise of digital authoritarianism and the escalating challenges of climate injustice. Better still, by grounding the analysis in textual clues and engaging with relevant contemporary scholarship, this comparative inquiry offers a rigorous and nuanced interpretation of the respective contributions of both thinkers.

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However, certain limitations warrant acknowledgment. The present study's weight on two specific thinkers, while allowing for in-depth analysis, inevitably entails a degree of selectivity and may not fully capture the spectrum of intellectual responses to global disorder. Further, this study primarily engages with the textual representations of their thought, and a more comprehensive analysis could benefit from incorporating their broader public engagements and the reception of their ideas, thus limiting direct engagement with empirical realities or contemporary socio-economic data.

From those limitations, a number of recommendations emerge for critical engagement. Firstly, for intellectuals and academics, there is an urgent imperative to foster genuine interdisciplinary dialogue that synthesizes deep ethical and philosophical inquiry (as exemplified by West) with rigorous structural and geopolitical analysis (as championed by Ramonet). This necessitates transcending disciplinary silos to cultivate publicly engaged scholarship, whose aim will consist of enlighten the moral and systemic roots of contemporary crises and empowering informed, morally grounded discourse. Secondly, for policymakers and civil society actors, the current study compels a renewed focus on dismantling the mechanisms of concentrated power. This translates into advocating for robust policies that counter pervasive media power and nurture genuinely democratic information ecosystems, while simultaneously supporting economic justice and environmental equity to address the underlying drivers of global instability.

Therefore, future scholarly endeavors could immensely benefit from diversifying research approaches. This might involve integrating qualitative empirical research, such as interviews with activist groups influenced by these thinkers, or in-depth case studies of policy implementations stemming from their theoretical propositions. The inclusion of quantitative analyses of social indicators and geopolitical shifts could contextualize the practical ramifications of their theories, moving beyond textual exegesis to assess their manifest impact on lived experience and policy outcomes.

Besides, forthcoming academic research could fruitfully extend the current comparative framework by incorporating the perspectives of other influential thinkers from diverse intellectual traditions and geographical contexts. A critical examination of how those distinct modes of analysis and witness resonate with, or diverge from, the experiences and perspectives of marginalized communities could also yield valuable insights. Furthermore, exploring the evolution of West's and Ramonet's thought in their later works, and their engagement with emergent forms of global disorder such as climate change and digital authoritarianism, could provide a more temporally nuanced comprehension of their enduring relevance. Significantly, reception study addressing the impact of their ideas on social movements and policy debates could offer a more pragmatic assessment of their efficacy as agents of intellectual and social transformation.

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