

# THE FUTURE OF GLOBAL RELATIONS

Crumbling Walls,  
Rising Regions

*Terrence Edward Paupp*



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*Terrence E. Paupp*

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*This book is dedicated to three scholars who have contributed so much to  
my life and thought:*

*Larry Birns, Director of the Council on Hemispheric Affairs  
Richard A. Falk, Milbank Professor of International Law Emeritus at  
Princeton University*

*Brian J. Foley, Professor Law, Boston University*

*and to my closest friends,*

*William Sims*

*Curt Hatch*

*& John Michael Thomas Baker*

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# CONTENTS

Foreword	ix
Preface	xv
Introduction	1
<b>Part I An Overview of American Hegemony</b>	<b>13</b>
1 Hegemony and Its Alternatives	17
2 Imperialism, Empire, Global Capitalism, and American Hegemony	29
3 Hegemonic Global Capitalism versus the Universal Claims of Human Rights Law	41
4 Confronting Hegemony as a Form of Social Domination	69
5 Hegemonic Purposes	91
6 The Unmapped and Uncharted Journey beyond American Hegemony	101
7 The Paradigm of Emancipation	115
<b>Part II Resistance, Regionalism, and Regionalization</b>	<b>133</b>
8 Competing Models to Explain American Hegemony and World Order	135
9 The Unbalanced Power Projections of the American Hegemon	147
10 Questions and Answers about Resistance to American Hegemony	171
11 The Future of World Order and the “ <i>Principle of Hegemonic State Accountability</i> ” (PHSA)	193
12 Alternative Models to Superpower Hegemony	213
Conclusion	231
Notes	241
Index	277



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## FOREWORD

*By Richard Falk*

OCTOBER 2008

When the Berlin Wall crumbled twenty years ago and the Soviet Union imploded two years later, it did appear that American primacy on the global stage was secure for decades to come. The triumphalism of the 1990s was crystallized by such phrases as “the end of history,” “the only surviving superpower,” and “the unipolar moment.” The American leadership in the 1990s was not bashful about claiming the mantle of global leadership, self-describing its status as that of “the indispensable nation” and making no secret of a resolve to sustain this role by sustaining a military capability that went far beyond normal security goals, even surpassing the drive of historic major powers for military superiority with respect to potential rivals. Long before the Bush militarists seized the reins of government in 2001, the U.S. government invested in a global military presence that was designed to ensure “dominance” throughout the world. It also believed in the aftermath of the Cold War that beneath this military umbrella the United States, with help from the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization, could effortlessly preside over and benefit from a dynamic form of economic globalization, managing a process of rapid economic growth by embracing the neoliberal model of market-driven, minimally regulated capitalism. This ideological shift from welfare to predatory capitalism became tenable with the collapse of socialism. The Soviet failure discredited socialism and freed Wall Street and its allies from any need to show that prevailing economic policies could be credibly reconciled with the well-being of people. Neoliberal ideologues lamely argued that over time the profitability of capital would drip down the social pyramid to benefit the poor, but as world poverty persisted and disparities between rich and poor widened, advocates of the invisible hand became increasingly regarded as apologists for predatory capitalism on a world scale. Yet even then, until “the battle of Seattle” in 1999, the unfairness of globalization seemed to have no adverse political consequences for the United States and its friends.

Then came the contested election of George W. Bush in 2000, followed by the 9/11 attacks the following year. Even before this unanticipated vulnerability was so dramatically disclosed by these spectacular attacks, the neo-conservative entourage surrounding the new president was championing a radical vision of the global dominance project that it had inherited from the Clinton presidency. It insisted upon increased defense spending, and, more significantly, it favored a greater willingness to use military force to reach strategic goals. It was preoccupied with both blunting the regional challenge of a rising China and even more so with asserting a more secure control over the countries of the Middle East. To achieve such a goal, it proposed a series of regime changes in this region, starting with Iraq and culminating with Iran. It was acknowledged that soft-power war insufficient and that American military intervention would be needed if governments that were perceived as hostile were to be replaced by those more compliant with Washington's ideological preferences and strategic interests. The neoconservative planners of such a grand strategy for the United States were realistic enough to realize that such aggressive plans were not politically viable in a stable post-Cold War setting that seemed to lack a plausible security threat.

The 9/11 attack conveniently filled this vacuum, and just as the rise of neoliberalism took advantage of a newly unchallenged capitalism to spread its global wings, so this neoconservative escalation of American geopolitical ambitions were hidden beneath the banner of counterterrorism. In both settings, these militant policies produced massive suffering by way of widening economic disparities and through a series of inconclusive wars that brought devastation to foreign lands. As the evidence mounted of Washington's dysfunctional impact on the wellbeing of the peoples of the world, it contributed to a rising tide of anti-American resentment. More surprising for these power wielders in Washington was the effectiveness of resistance to the American blueprint for the realization of durable global supremacy. The antiglobalization movement mobilized grassroots opposition around the world and exerted influence on governments in the global south that became aware that there were policy options available other than passive acquiescence in response to the diktats of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. The inability to translate battlefield victories in Iraq into a stable occupation also delivered a massive blow to neoconservative confidence. The Iraq War had been sold as a cakewalk, given the reality of an Iraq weakened by the Gulf War of 1991 and twelve years of punishing sanctions, but it turned out to be an endless nightmare that discredited the undertaking and imposed an enormous financial burden on the United States. The Iraq War has lasted now twice as long as either World War I or World War II and is likely to have resulted in a far more unstable Iraq and a far stronger Iran. No longer do we hear pundits speaking of America as a "benevolent empire" or even as heralding the advent of a projected second American century of global leadership. As the dollar declined and America's capacity for global leadership waned, the imperial project launched so boisterously by the Bush presidency a few years earlier faded from view.

From the perspective of early 2009, Washington's geopolitical hubris seems absurd in retrospect, especially as the Iraq War drags on, the Afghan War revives and expands years after it had been celebrated as an initial major victory in the War on Terror, and America's worldwide network of military bases and far-flung navies seems like a classic expression of imperial ambitions overwhelming imperial capabilities. At the same time, the world economy is spinning out of control in a downward spiral in a manner that seems certain to worsen the situation of the most vulnerable people everywhere, in rich and poor countries alike, increasing world poverty and causing famines in the face of falling incomes and rising food prices. The timing could not be worse for such convergent negative trends. These are years when leading governments should have adjusted their traditional priorities, devoting urgent and unprecedented attention and resources to meeting the multiple challenges of climate change, including polar melting, coastal flooding, devastating droughts, extreme weather incidents, as well as planning the huge adjustments associated with an inevitable transition to a post-petroleum world. A sober reckoning of the overall situation makes the outlook for the human future bleak and catastrophe prone.

Against such a background of dismal conjecture, this remarkable book by Terence Paupp is little short of an intellectual miracle. Without once blinking, Paupp brilliantly provides a devastating critique of the American pursuit of what he labels as "global hegemony." He provides a conceptually rich account that draws on the best scholarship and exhibits an impressive range of familiarity with diverse styles of economic, sociological, legal, and political analysis. Other authors have tried recently to capture the originality of the global setting characterized by this multiple fracturing of American dominance, but none have offered such a persuasive and comprehensive interpretation that manages to combine conceptual elegance with penetrating policy insight and awareness. Thankfully, Paupp is not content to limit his contributions to these most notable analytical achievements. His greatest achievement of all is undoubtedly to set forth imaginatively an exciting and credible positive vision of a post-hegemonic future for the peoples of the world that seems to offer us our best hope of backing away from the brink of this precipice of doom.

Paupp's vision rests on the emergence of a multicentric world order that is capable of supplanting the failed American experiment in hegemony. This is a sophisticated conception of current trends toward the regionalization of authority, most notably in Europe, but also in Asia, Latin America, and Africa. Paupp is careful not to fall into the sort of trap that leads such prominent commentators on the world scene as Robert Kagan or Fareed Zakaria to treat the future superficially, as merely a rerun of past periods of great power competition, with American primacy being challenged by the rise of China, India, Russia, and Brazil, resulting in nothing more notable than a new scramble for allies and balances. What Paupp projects as a possible and desirable future is shaped as much by normative energies associated with law and ethics as by the altered configuration of relations among world powers.

In this sense, following upon the pioneering work of the Swedish political scientist Bjorn Hettne, Paupp subscribes to the postulates of a “new regionalism” that is committed to the establishment of peaceful modes of relationships within all regions and to the promotion of a global rule of law centered in the United Nations to regulate interregional relations. A centerpiece of Paupp’s argument is the recognition of the values associated with the rise of transnational social movements, articulating a shared sense of global justice and human rights that offers humanity an emancipatory strategy. The form and substance of this new transnationalism is given vivid political expression at the annual meetings of the World Social Forum. The multicentric character of the new regionalism means that actors other than sovereign states and corporate elites now operate as creative participants in the quest for an alternative future of world order. The World Social Forum adopted as its defining slogan these revealing words: “There are alternatives!” It was meant as a rallying cry against predatory capitalism as well as to strike a contrast with the deterministic mandates of the World Economic Forum, the organization founded to give corporate and financial elites a unified voice.

Paupp’s championship of the new regionalism is not a utopian exercise in wishful thinking. It grounds its renewal of hope about the global future on a convincing and imaginative grasp of emerging trends. The European experience does support the conclusion that the new regionalism, despite setbacks and disappointments, is something far different, and more positive, than a reproduction on a regional scale of the sovereign state. Perhaps the greatest contribution of the EU is to establish over time a rather strong culture of peace that makes war among its members almost unthinkable. Beyond this, the European Parliament represents an important experiment in cosmopolitan democratic practice that is forging its own reality. The European undertaking represents an effort to combine the pursuit of regional public goods with responsible diplomatic participation in global issues. The absence of nondefensive military forces means that European diplomacy in other regions is restricted to soft power options, and is not accompanied by tacit threats of neocolonial coercion. Each region is developing according to its own civilizational foundations, historical memories, intraregional priorities, and interregional hopes, ambitions, and forebodings.

Any serious student of world affairs should read and reflect upon what Paupp offers us by way of critique and prescription. It provides us with the best available guidance for an impending transition to a post-hegemonic world that does not regress in the direction of chaos at a time when economic, political, cultural, and ecological imperatives require unprecedented cooperation among *all* participants in the world, including civil society actors, market forces, and international institutions, as well as governments. One of the many strengths of this book is to make us understand deeply that we will be living increasingly in a world that can no longer be successfully managed by exclusive reliance on the behavior of sovereign states. The United Nations was founded on the premise of a state-centric world that is controlled by geopolitics (as reflected in Security Council veto power and permanent

membership), but the fate of the twenty-first century will no longer be primarily shaped by states. As Terrence Paupp so well instructs us, it will be constructed by the complex dynamics of multicentrism, in which leading states will have to learn to share power and authority with regional actors and representatives of civil society. Better than any other treatment of the future, *Crumbling Walls, Rising Regions* prepares us to respond intelligently and hopefully to this overarching opportunity disguised as an intimidating challenge.

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## PREFACE

In the first decades of the twenty-first century, America's ability to project both its military and economic power around the globe will come to an end. Its decline began in earnest in the 1970s. It has exercised a unique form of political and economic power—what political scientists and historians call hegemony. In Western history, there have only been three hegemonies: the Dutch Republic, the British Empire, and the American Empire.<sup>1</sup> Each one of these hegemonies exercised its predominance over all other potential rivals and contenders for geopolitical dominance. Yet, as both their military and economic power began to wane and their ability to forge an international consensus around their policies crumbled, they have been replaced by some other great power.<sup>2</sup>

The “crumbling walls” of American hegemony are now giving way to a new international order. However, unlike past periods of transition, America will *not* be followed by another hegemon. It will *not* be a period of great power rivalry. Neither China nor Russia is equipped to assume that kind of global role. Nor will America's hegemonic role be reclaimed by building what has been referred to as a “league of democracies.” As this book goes to print, even Francis Fukuyama has noted, “To many people around the world, America's rhetoric about democracy sounds a lot like an excuse for furthering U.S. hegemony.”<sup>3</sup> In the same spirit, Charles Kupchan has observed that “the United States cannot win back its good standing abroad with grand schemes foisted on an unwilling world.”<sup>4</sup> According to Thomas Carothers, we must recognize that our new geopolitical reality is one in which “the calls for a League of Democracies are undoubtedly well intentioned, but they remain tethered to American preferences and habits that few want, or even appreciate.”<sup>5</sup> Therefore, rather than adopting the view that we are consigned to a historical repetition of past hegemonic cycles, we would be better served, due to the growing complexities of global governance and economic inroads being made through the processes of globalization, to see that the world is transitioning toward many different centers of power across every major region of the globe. These “rising regions” represent what James Rosenau has called a “multicentric world.” It is a term that I adopt and use throughout this book.

Traditionally, the political, economic, social, and geographical walls that have been constructed by nationalism, empires, and the drive of the great



powers for hegemony have also served to create what some scholars have seen as an inevitable historical cycle. A central thesis of this book stands for the proposition that this cycle is ending. Ending with it are the patterns of empire and hegemony that have created walls of domination and separation between peoples and nations. These walls are now crumbling as American hegemony begins to enter into its inevitable and final downward phase of decline. In its place, we discover the phenomenon of the transnational flow of billions in capital within the space of a day, the shift in power from nation-states to corporations and regions, and a communications revolution that extends from the Internet to the computer. In recognition of the emergence of these new forces in global relations, Edward Kolodziej has noted that “while actors and their agents have never been more connected and interdependent in real time, power has never been more fragmented and decentralized across these actors.”<sup>6</sup>

All of these transformative processes have combined to empower new regional alliances throughout Asia, Russia, Africa, Europe, Latin America, and the Middle East.<sup>7</sup> At the dawn of the twenty-first century, we find that on every major continent of the world there are emerging regional centers of power characterized by new and more inclusive regional organizations that are evolving toward new levels of complexity and maturity.<sup>8</sup> These regional powers and organizations reflect a greater concern with cultural identities, a shared recognition of the value of mutual cooperation as well as shared perceptions about the evolution of global relations, and the growing capacity of all cultures to move toward new levels of convergence, instead of clash.

In an emerging multicentric world, from Latin America to Asia, from Africa to the Middle East, from Russia to China, from India to the Persian Gulf, and encompassing the realm of the European Union, it is possible to identify the major geographical areas in which rising regional powers are emerging. When viewed collectively, we are able to discern and identify a world of rising regional powers in which political power is increasingly shared among them as are the benefits of economic cooperation.<sup>9</sup> The formation of this new constellation of nation-states and regions reflects the movement toward a future world of multicentric regional powers. The “unipolar moment” of the United States is now at an end.<sup>10</sup>

The subtitle of this book refers to the “*crumbling walls*” of an American Empire that has encircled the globe for more than fifty years. During that period of time, the ever-increasing influence of American hegemony has been exercised through the projection of America’s global power on every continent. Since 2003, it appears that the exercise and reach of America’s global power is in the process of receding and will most likely come to an end by the close of the second decade of the twenty-first century. In its place, we shall see an emerging multicentric world of “*rising regions*.” By juxtaposing these two realities the near future of human history can be seen as one of “*crumbling walls, rising regions*.”

In many ways, the decline of American hegemony has been following the historical path of other great powers. Yet, there are also some significant

differences. To begin with, after the decline and fall of the American Hegemon, there will be no other hegemon to replace it. Due to a variety of unique historical factors, the predominance that the American Empire has possessed and exercised since the close of the Second World War cannot be replicated by any other nation. Its power cannot be replicated in both military and economic terms within the framework of one particular nation-state. Neither can American hegemony be resuscitated by taking its place within a “league of democracies,” as some have suggested. This is necessarily the case because its power cannot be reproduced due to the costs of running an empire, the diplomatic challenges that accompany hegemony, and the heavy burden of being a predominant power—a hegemony. Further, historical circumstances are very different from those that existed in 1945.<sup>11</sup> For example, the processes associated with the term “globalization” are neither unchanging nor unchallenged. Rather, we have discovered that globalization itself is in a permanent state of flux and transition. In fact, globalization has accelerated the global pace, speed, and scope for the unfolding of dramatic changes in technology and innovation, terrorism and violence, as well as the transfer of global power and wealth.<sup>12</sup>

The intensity of competition between different currencies, the growing U.S. national debt, coupled with its trade imbalances, shifting trends in manufacturing, the outsourcing of jobs to cheaper labor markets, declining wages and rising executive salaries accompanied by golden parachutes, and the consequences of financial deregulation, have all combined to contribute to the current crisis of American capitalism and its global prospects.<sup>13</sup> In addition to the September 2008 meltdown on Wall Street and the \$800 billion bailout tag attached to it, the United States is now scheduled to spend over \$700 billion on national defense in the fiscal year that began on October 1, 2008. Added to this financial situation is the reality of declining tax revenues and the growth of mandatory spending such as Social Security.<sup>14</sup> As a result of this crisis (or as the cause of it), the nature of global capitalism itself has been changing. With these changes, the time horizon for the continuation of U.S. hegemony has been shortened. As expressed by German Finance Minister Peer Steinbrück, “The U.S. will lose its status as the superpower of the world’s financial system. This world will become multi-polar...the world will never be the same again.”<sup>15</sup>

The growth of transnational corporate power has served to shift the bulk of both political and economic power to a newly constituted transnational class that no longer recruits its membership from primarily one dominant nation-state. The United States can no longer act on the post-1945 assumption that there is one discernible pattern to world order and that it alone can shape that order and control its destiny. As a result of this shift, we have been witnessing the rising influence of a truly transnational corporate class, whose lawyers write the bulk of key legislation that governmental bodies enact into law. Regulatory bodies, such as the World Trade Organization, have begun to override national constitutions and local control. The same may be said of

treaty regimes such as NAFTA. Hence, the displacement of American power has resulted in a fragmentation of hierarchy, authority, and hegemony.

Increasingly, we find that investment decisions as well as the treatment of environmental and labor issues have been influenced by these transnational interests to the exclusion of democratic mechanisms of control. Yet, out of this transformational epoch, which has neutered the power of the nation-states, there has been a corresponding rise in nation-to-nation cooperation within regional blocs. In fact, one of the great paradoxes of globalization is that it has helped to facilitate the merger of nations within regions as well as their peoples' perceptions of common interests and common goals. Further, region-to-region dialogue, negotiation, and cooperation have been on the rise. An example of such an emerging dialogue is found in the competition between China and Taiwan for business ties among the nations of the Caribbean. China has increasingly sought to undertake major investments throughout the entire African continent as well as Latin America.<sup>16</sup> China has also begun the process of strengthening its alliances with other nations throughout Southeast Asia vis-à-vis the organizational umbrella of ASEAN.

As noted above, in this new international order of rising regions, the emerging reality about the future of global relations is that there is no other great power to replace the United States as a hegemon. We can refer to this phenomenon as a lack of hegemonic capacity in the governance structures of the twenty-first century's global community. Given this hegemonic vacancy in the arena of international power, the very order and nature of global governance has been shifting to multilayered forms of governance. People and regions share many identities simultaneously. They are not merely citizens of one nation-state, but rather are members of communities and groups that transcend the borders of their respective nation-states. Among these layers, we find that not only nation-states but also nongovernmental organizations, international institutions, groups that make up global civil society, and a multicentric world of regional power centers have all been at work on the task of redeveloping the quality and scope of the structures of international governance and security.<sup>17</sup>

Global governance not only moves from top-down and from bottom-up but also moves horizontally. This networked world of powers has moved away from strategies of domination to strategies of cooperation. Emerging out of these structures is a more cooperative world order that is increasingly defined by rising regions. Within each of these regions are calls for demilitarization, the renunciation of force, and the affirmation of dialogue and diplomacy. Not having to be preoccupied with hegemonic concerns, such as estimating in which ways the "*balance of power*" has tilted, people are discovering that regional power centers follow a different logic from that of a hegemonic state. Europe has largely escaped from the Cold War dominance of the United States and charted its own regional directions through the autonomous development of the European Union. Other regional alliances and unions have emerged or are in the process of emerging on other continents as well. The nations of Southeast Asia and China are beginning to work even

more cooperatively through ASEAN. China and India have begun to reach out not only to their Asian neighbors but also to Africa and Latin America. Latin America is beginning to follow its own version of the European road to union by strengthening Mercosur, a regional economic alliance of nations that are increasingly immunized from great power interference, coercion, and control. In a clear rejection of the NAFTA experiment and U.S. attempts to create a Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), Mercosur stands as an economic, social, and political rubric for a form of regionalism that is dedicated to the internal development of Latin America for Latin Americans.<sup>18</sup> In Africa, NEPAD is a contested form of regional economic organization that may or may not be replaced by a reinvigorated African Union that unites the continent for the development of Africa's inhabitants rather than allowing it to continue to be a resource-rich continent open to foreign exploitation. In July 2007, African leaders met in Accra to discuss the African union project. In the spirit of Kwame Nkrumah and Julius Nyerere, the participants in the conference at Accra discussed a vision for a unified African continent. It envisions a day when the entire African continent will be under one government called the Government of the United States of Africa.

In each of these examples, we can discern that a historical transition is underway—on a global basis—to move beyond the framework of nation-state competition for hegemonic dominance. In its place, there is a process wherein the entire future of global relations is moving toward a regional unity of nations within a series of geographic regions that are increasingly committed to each others well-being and destiny. That is because regionalism is not simply a response to functional and economic needs. Regionalism is fundamentally a political exercise that takes place in a political context. It is for this reason that the days of competing nationalisms are coming to an end. It is for this reason that “great power competition” is dying on the vine of history as nations recognize the benefit of moving their energies and resources away from military conflict and competition and instead toward mutual cooperation.

This means that a whole new conception of what constitutes security is emerging that encompasses the well-being of the person, the environment, and the need to collectively address common challenges throughout the commonwealth of the globe. Throughout Asia, Africa, Latin America, and many parts of the Middle East, we find that the concept of human security is now increasingly defined by the need to overcome interregional and intraregional inequality and poverty. In the context of the Middle East, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict comes to mind. The vast injustices created by poverty and inequality are threatening to undermine not only the cause of peace and the moral integrity of peoples but also the very foundations of economic and environmental health on which all people depend.<sup>19</sup> In this sense, the new regionalism that is engulfing Asia, China, India, Africa, Europe, Latin America, and the Middle East is born out of a consciousness that great-power competition for the control of the globe undermines both the economic

health of nations and regions while, at the same time, works to undermine sustainable development.

Also, contained in this new regional and global consciousness is the realization that normative and ethical concerns are intimately tied to the fate of national, regional, and international progress in every sphere of human endeavor. Therefore, the abuses of empire and hegemony are seen as antithetical to any kind of future that seeks to call itself human. Hence, the human future and the nature of human security can no longer be predominantly defined in terms of military supremacy or economic might as ends in themselves. Rather, it is more important to define the uses and purposes of military strength and economic might in alignment with a new concept of what constitutes the entirety of human security.

What kind of human security structure is being created? On what values and priorities is it to be grounded? What purposes and goals need to be articulated so that these goals and priorities can be realized? The questions surrounding the uses and purposes of power, relative to the establishment of human security, return our focus to normative and ethical concerns—in conjunction with (not separated from) those issues and questions associated with military force and economic strength. If the new concept of human security means that the problems of poverty, inequality, and environmental degradation must be dealt with and resolved, then it follows that new definitions and applications of military force and economic strength must evolve that are commensurate with, and complementary to, this new concept of what constitutes human security. It is in and through this inter- and intraregional process of self-interrogation and international debate that nations on every continent are discovering more solutions to the challenges of resource management, trade disputes, the need for transparency, and human development within the emerging matrix of cooperative regionalisms than within the old matrix of belligerent nationalisms.

The members of the American primacy coalition have discovered, perhaps too late, that the exercise of power is Newtonian. For every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction. U.S. actions that culminated with illegal military interventions and occupations, especially in the contexts of Vietnam and Iraq, have served to provoke an economic and ideological backlash around the world. At the end of 2008, even Henry Kissinger had to admit that fact when he acknowledged that, for America, there would now be “an end to hubris.” Writing about America’s future role in global relations in 2009, Kissinger counseled, “As it learns the limits of hegemony, it should define implementing consultation beyond largely American conceptions.”<sup>20</sup> I would argue that this is necessarily the case simply because what is coming into being to replace America’s global hegemony is the promise of a more integrated world. The future of global relations will most likely continue to move toward a multicentric world of regions. They will continue to evolve within a framework of what the Chinese have called a “*peaceful rise*.” It is the start of a posthegemonic politics. These regions will continue their rise together in

acknowledgment of the need for mutual cooperation, instead of a continuous reliance on the Darwinian competition of competing hegemonic rivals.

In our near and new global future, it is possible that a genuine global community can finally begin to be forged that can deal with planetary challenges that affect us all. Certainly, the challenges of global poverty, inequality, and global warming are in that category. Because everyone is affected, it is increasingly clear that the solutions to these problems cannot come from just one nation-state or one set of alliances. If the meltdown of the American financial system in late 2008 has taught us anything, it is that America is now one of several great powers that is “facing an uncertain future it can no longer shape.”<sup>21</sup> The politics of exclusion is starting to be replaced by a politics of inclusion at every level of global relations. America’s reliance on a unipolar foreign policy has come to be regarded as “America’s unipolar fantasy,” constituting what David Calleo has termed “the tyranny of false vision.” He makes this claim because “the past decade has provided a rich example of the damage that can follow from misinterpreting history and indulging in grandiose visions of global hegemony.”<sup>22</sup>

While the struggle for hegemony in world politics has gone on for centuries, it is no longer viable. It must now come to an end, or its continued pursuit will put an end to humanity. The ideology of regionalism and the processes associated with regionalization are changing the face of global culture, politics and economics. This is the birth of the Post-Hegemonic Era. This is the future of global relations.

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# INTRODUCTION

The close of the first decade of the twenty-first century marks both the culmination of an almost sixty-year-old world order dominated by the United States and the inauguration of a radically reconfigured one. In the parlance of historians, the twentieth century has been labeled the “American Century.” It is a term that represents a triumphalist rendering of the nature and scope of American power in the twentieth century. More specifically, it stands as testimony to America’s hegemonic role and dominance in the realm of global power politics. The gravitational pull of this idea has captured the fancy of ideologues and fanatics as much as policymakers and power brokers. From the entrenched power perspective of the Washington establishment, neoconservatives, liberal hawks and other post-cold war elites, the assumption that guided them through the successive administrations was one that depicted the United States as destined to enjoy an extended unipolar moment. It was supposed to be a unipolar moment that would make the next one hundred years into the “New American Century.” However, the tide of time and events has started to reveal a different set of factors at work for the evolution of twenty-first century global power politics.

## THE THESIS OF THE BOOK

This book is dedicated to addressing two major trends in the evolution of world order politics in the early twenty-first century. These two trends constitute an interwoven thesis. The first thesis is that the twenty-first century is witnessing the end of American hegemony and the demise of its unipolar moment in U.S. foreign policy. The second thesis is how a multicentric or multipolar world of rising regional powers is coming into being and is bringing with it an end to American hegemony and all potential future hegemons. As a consequence, a world of rising regional powers represents an historical opportunity for humanity to inaugurate a global world order of greater mutual cooperation among regional actors and powers within the emerging framework of a Post-Hegemonic Era.

The juxtaposition of the crumbling walls of American hegemony with the image of the rising regions of China, India, South and East Asia, Latin America, the Middle East, and the European Union, has allowed me to frame a unified thesis about this newly evolving twenty-first-century world order that



transcends the nature of previous discussions about world order. The central thesis of this book is that, up until now, we have only looked at narrow aspects of global power in association with globalization, the role of the state, and economic liberalization. The problem inherent in these earlier approaches is that each subject area has been placed in the traditional context of great power competition for hegemony and the maintenance of that hegemony. Such an approach largely sanctions an ideological worldview that embraces the notion of a hierarchical order premised on “top-down” governance by a few select players. In contrast to this approach, by shifting our frame of reference from studying the seemingly eternal dynamics of a global North-South hierarchical order toward the evolution of a Post-Hegemonic Era, we are now freed from the constrictions of the old paradigm. Therefore, we are now enabled to demonstrate that this hegemonic and hierarchical order is in the process of eroding and heading toward collapse. Hence, we now have a new theoretical possibility of seeing how world orders are actually constructed and how the present global order is in the process of transitioning toward a multipolar, multicentric, and more pluralistic world order.

Throughout this book, I make the argument that our concept of world order theory now has the capacity to move beyond its preoccupation with the category of hegemony and all of its associated theoretical constructs—including concepts such as the struggle for a “balance of power,” the enduring quest for “spheres of influence,” and a seemingly endless cycle of “great power competition” for global advantage over other potential rivals and hegemons. Emerging out of the wreckage of the crumbling walls of American hegemony—a hegemony that has served as a theoretical construct and as a policy goal of the U.S. foreign policy establishment since 1945—we are witnessing the emerging global historical reality of a world of rising regions. In short, the geopolitical paradigms that have been habitually centered on assumptions about the enduring nature of American hegemony and unipolarity are in the process of being swept away with the debris of history. These geopolitical paradigms are being either fundamentally altered or entirely replaced by the concept of a “polycentric” world order.

What makes this polycentric world order so different from the configurations of the past? It is that the idea of a polycentric, multipolar, and/or multicentric world order is currently being reconstructed around newly maturing regional arrangements and security communities. Further, these new security communities and regional constructs, such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), ASEAN Plus Three (China, Japan, and South Korea), the ASEAN-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership (AJCEP), ASEAN-China Free Trade Area (ACFTA), the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), are steadily revealing the evolutionary dynamics of a multipolar, polycentric, and multicentric world that can eclipse not only American hegemony but also all future attempts to reassert a hegemonic order. In this sense, the

regionalization of international governance is the byproduct of a major geopolitical shift. It is also precisely where the work of Bjorn Hettne and the subject of the “new regionalism” emerges with such significance and import for us. Hettne was the project director for an international research project on the new regionalism sponsored by the United Nations University/World Institute for Development Economics Research (UNU/WIDER). The project used a broad comparative approach that came to be called the New Regionalism Approach (NRA).<sup>1</sup>

The differences between old and new regionalism can be articulated as follows: (1) whereas the old was formed in a bipolar cold war context, the new was taking shape in a multipolar world order, and in the context of globalization; (2) whereas the old order was created “from above,” the new was a more voluntary process from within the emerging regions; and (3) whereas, in economic terms, the old was inward-oriented and protectionist, the new was often described as “open,” and thus compatible with an interdependent world economy. What unites all of these characteristics of the new regionalism together is the relative decline of American hegemony.<sup>2</sup>

At its core, the New Regionalism Approach has come to include security, social, and cultural issues. By incorporating traditional security concerns with social and cultural issues, the entire concept of security was modified and transformed. The notion of security now encompasses broad possibilities for cultural and social cooperation. This is especially true in the Asian context with its Confucian roots, the evolution of ASEAN, and its emphasis upon mutual cooperation. In Chapter 6, the Treaty of Amity and Co-operation in Southeast Asia (TACSA) is cited as an example of how new forms of cooperation are being developed that are opening the door on a historical opportunity to build a less conflict-prone future by transcending the traditional realist approach to international relations and instead embrace a different set of principles. The treaty’s specific goal is “to promote perpetual peace, everlasting amity and cooperation.” In reaching these goals, the treaty stipulates that relations between members should be guided by six principles: (1) mutual respect for the independence, sovereignty, equality, territorial integrity, and national identity of all nations; (2) the right of every state to lead its national existence free from external interference, subversion, or coercion; (3) noninterference in the internal affairs of one another; (4) settlement of differences or disputes by peaceful means; (5) renunciation of the threat or use of force; and (6) effective cooperation among them. Hence, in Chapter 12, the discussion on regionalization makes it clear that that the new regionalism (as an ideology) enjoys a distinct comparative advantage arises out of three governing capacities that are of particular importance: (1) its efficacy in producing collective action, (2) its identity is the product of voluntary compliance, and (3) its legitimacy arises from the way in which it is embedded in the political systems of its members. In this respect, the well-being and security of the people who are members of a regional order evolves into a more comprehensive political approach to the well-being, social unity, and economic security of an entire region and people. It is a concept that

transports us beyond borders and into a new configuration of world order. It is for these reasons that regions are always changing and evolving. In this regard, “a region must be understood as a process and as a social construction. Like a nation it is an ‘imagined community.’”<sup>3</sup> Such a depiction of the approach contained in the New Regionalism is fundamentally different from conceptions associated with hegemony as the organizing principle for world order. Given the divergence of worldviews between the advocates of hegemony, the maintenance of American primacy, and the unipolar moment, on the one hand, against the worldview of the New Regionalism and the nature of an emerging multicentric world of regions in a Post-Hegemonic Era, on the other, this book will undertake to examine two intertwined thesis points.

### Thesis Number One

In light of these considerations, the first aspect of my thesis will address and analyze the reasons why the assumption of a unipolar moment is no longer credible. After all, the unipolar moment is a concept dependent upon the viability of continuing American dominance in world affairs and over the world order. Both the old “American Century” and the current attempt by the neoconservatives to extend its life into a “New American Century” require American domination. The maintenance of American global domination requires the pursuit of “hegemony.” However, the lingering problem with this scenario is that hegemony must involve more than the military dominance of a territorial state over the international system. In practice, hegemonic dominance can neither rest exclusively on military force or economic domination, although both of these factors form two of three pillars that are necessary for the exercise of hegemonic dominance. The third essential pillar for the exercise of hegemony relies on a normative aspect of political power, namely, consent—or legitimacy.

According to Torbjorn Knutson, “a hegemonic condition is one in which a great power is tolerated as *primus inter pares* because it is perceived as legitimate.”<sup>4</sup> Further, “hegemony is maintained to the extent that social consent takes precedence over coercion.”<sup>5</sup> To the extent that American power and global dominance has been viewed as legitimate, its hegemonic dominance did not require coercion to force global consent. However, since the Bush-II administration’s 2003 invasion and occupation of Iraq, neither legitimacy nor consent has been achieved by the American Hegemon in international affairs. Part of the reason is that the Bush administration neither obtained consent among America’s allies nor sought to abide by the legitimate rules and norms of international conduct as codified in international law.<sup>6</sup> Other reasons include the unfolding dynamics of emerging economies in China, Asia, and Latin America that are transcending the boundaries of history and previous impediments to their growth. The transcendence of these nations and regions beyond the dictates of American hegemony has come to be the defining aspect of the early twenty-first century. Along with a number of

other complex factors, such as the dynamics of globalization, global resistance to the economic model of neoliberalism, and the economic effects inherent in imperial overreach, American hegemony is crumbling. Hence, in its place there is an emerging world order of rising regions.

### **Thesis Number Two**

This leads us to our second and interrelated thesis. The evolving dynamic of the New Regionalism Approach (NRA) also has the potential to enhance the bargaining position and power of subordinate states and regions within the current institutional structures of global governance. According to David Held and Anthony McGrew, the New Regionalism Approach “also supports a form of international solidarity, which can take account of the enormous diversity among developing states, in terms of levels of industrialization, geopolitical situation and forms of governance.”<sup>7</sup> Throughout this book, I have described these forms of international solidarity as an emerging counterhegemonic alliance against American imperialism. It is a phenomenon that links social movements and creates interlinkages between countries and regions. On this matter, both Held and McGrew agree with my view of an international counterhegemonic alliance against American hegemony and also with Samir Amin, who has referred to this new regionalism as “polycentric regionalism,” since it is a strategy for helping to further erode the North-South hierarchy and build a more pluralistic world order. In this sense, Amin sees the new regionalism as simply a necessary building block on the path toward global institutional reform. When viewed from this perspective, “collectively and individually, developing states have sought to exploit the rules of the global governance system in order to advance development goals.”<sup>8</sup>

Throughout this book, I refer to this new phase of struggle for a world order as one that purposefully advances the often-neglected developmental goals of the global South. Evidence pointing toward the regional development of this new Post-Hegemonic Era is already emerging on every major continent of the world in the form of maturing regional organizations, new regional trade relationships within and between regional powers, and among many different centers of economic and political power.<sup>9</sup> Therefore, in order to understand the trends that are creating a Post-Hegemonic Era, this book is dedicated to explaining how and why a multicentric world of rising regions is coming into being. Such an undertaking is especially critical at a time when the embryonic attributes and features of a new multicentric or multipolar world order is already visible and is already connecting China with Africa and Latin America, as well as India with Africa, South and East Asia, new bonds are being forged between Latin America and the European Union, and common security and energy policies have begun to be created between Russia, Eurasia and the Middle East.<sup>10</sup>

## THE PLAN AND OUTLINE OF THE BOOK

The book is divided into two main parts and contains a total of twelve chapters followed by a conclusion. It begins with the assertion that the myth of the unipolar moment has dissolved on the sands of Iraq and Afghanistan, in the global currency markets, in the rejection of the neoliberal model of development throughout most of the world, and in the displacement of corporate investment from America to the low-wage markets of the Global South. The American primacy coalition in the twenty-first century is now being forced into retreat by a disgruntled American public and the strains of a growing international opposition to its demands. These are the central realities that Part I of the book addresses. **Part I** is entitled “**An Overview of American Hegemony: Past, Present, and Future,**” and is divided into seven chapters.

**Chapter 1** undertakes the topic of hegemony and its alternatives. There is a discussion about what differentiates an empire from a hegemon. This definitional distinction allows for an analysis of the political structure of American-centered transnational hegemony as it evolved throughout the twentieth century.

**Chapter 2** analyzes the interlinkages between imperialism, empire, global capitalism, and American hegemony. The decline of American economic dominance is addressed relative to the rise of other international powers and regions. The discussion is augmented by giving attention to the moral and ethical implications of a declining American hegemony and the accelerating nature of globalization. This analysis exposes the dangers of how exercising hegemony without legitimacy leads to the dichotomy between the power of ethics versus the ethic of power.

**Chapter 3** addresses the confrontation between hegemonic global capitalism, on the one hand, and the universal claims of human rights, on the other. The reasons are set forth as to why the pursuit of U.S. hegemony is antithetical to the recognition, enforcement, and practice of human rights in the Third World (hereinafter referred to as “the global South”). The remainder of the chapter tackles the concept of hegemony itself. It does so by acknowledging the fact that while the concept of hegemony is firmly established in the social science lexicon, it means different things to different speakers. There are at least four interwoven conceptions in the literature on the international order and the world capitalist system. The chapter concludes with a discussion of these four interwoven conceptions: (1) hegemony as international domination; (2) hegemony as state hegemony; (3) hegemony as consensual domination or ideological hegemony; and, finally, (4) hegemony as the exercise of leadership within historic blocs in a social formation.

**Chapter 4** makes the argument that in the twenty-first century, we shall find that the dynamics of American hegemony will remain in a global arena of contestation—trapped between emerging multicentric regions of power and previously subordinated classes now joined together in social movements and cooperating with one another in a global counterhegemonic alliance against

centuries of domination. From this perspective, the future international order will be forged in midst of a historical process that will be characterized by declining U.S. hegemony, on the one hand, and the ascendancy of an emerging multicentric world of regions, on the other. To explicate this dynamic, the India-Pakistan conflict (as an enduring rivalry) will be addressed in reference to the negative effects of American hegemony upon the entire region of South Asia. What this analysis produces is the realization that when regional politics can be divorced from the interference of great power interventions (i.e., the United States and China) we find, at that point, the greatest hopes for peace and a potential end to regional rivalry exists. The chapter concludes with a discussion of regional solutions to the legacy of British and American hegemony in South Asia and its implications for other regions around the world.

**Chapter 5** examines the foundational purposes of American hegemony in the Bush-II era. The Pentagon's doctrine of "full spectrum dominance" constitutes a key and central element of America's hegemonic purpose not only because it supplies a military response to global forces in opposition to American hegemony but also because it seeks to help consolidate financial power in the hands of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank, Wall Street, and the World Trade Organization (WTO). These are the institutions that form the web that connects multinational corporate interests in the world of an elite transnational capitalist class. The Pentagon supplies American soldiers to guard the oil pipe lines in Iraq and Afghanistan even as it commissions private armies and private contractors to pursue profit-making endeavors vis-à-vis a global drive to privatize both governments and national economies. This phenomenon is what I refer to as "hegemonic militarism." In the meantime, Latin American governments are creating workable alternatives in order to avoid being swallowed up by Bush-supported and corporate-driven plans to impose a Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA). In the meantime, with China at the center, throughout Southeast Asia, Northeast Asia, and East Asia, countries are working on building up their own regional and economic framework of unity under the banner of ASEAN. The emergence of ASEAN Plus-3 (the ten ASEAN countries plus China, Japan, and South Korea) has the potential to exclude the United States from playing a hegemonic role in the region.

Throughout the rest of the Global South, countries are united under the banner of the World Social Forum (WSF), thereby facilitating cooperation between diverse social movements that share a common interest in opposing the continued influence of American hegemony. This international counterhegemonic alliance opposes the presence of U.S. military bases as well the Bush-II administration's attempt to construct a missile defense shield in Eastern Europe in an effort to provoke Russia into a new arms race. At the same time, the European Union has been drifting away from the political orbit of American hegemony in the hope of building a more cosmopolitan global economy with its trading partners. Further, China is making the effort to initiate new investment and financial relationships with Africa and Latin America, thereby building up South-South financial partnerships and

political alliances. In response, the American primacy coalition seeks to use the Pentagon as a counterforce to these efforts by state and regional actors who are attempting to move out of their historical pattern of domination and exclusion by a hegemonic system. In short, this is the nature of the ongoing conflict between neoliberal globalization and an anticapitalist, counterhegemonic globalization process seeking to inaugurate a Post-Hegemonic Era.

**Chapter 6** looks at a number of future possible trajectories for charting the features of a new world order beyond American hegemony. While past efforts to establish a New International Economic Order (NIEO) have failed to materialize in the actualization of a new world order, the fact is that twenty-first century globalization remains contested terrain. Multilateral institutions under the control of the United States and the G-7 as well as the World Bank, WTO, and IMF remain committed to ensure that America's capitalist governance of the world's currencies and linkage to the dollar remain in place. However, the rise of the Euro and the yen makes it possible for rising regional orders throughout Asia and Europe to opt for alternatives that would challenge U.S. hegemony and begin to redefine the term "good global governance." Increasingly, the social costs associated with American hegemony are widening rates of inequality both within and between nations. At some near future point, these costs will become utterly unsustainable. Fundamental human rights protections are already in retreat as a result of this global imbalance of power and privilege. Contrary to the claims of "hegemonic stability theory" (HST) we are discovering that the predominance of one state or hegemonic alliance of states cannot really produce stability in the international system. Such a claim is an illusion.

Formulating world power in terms of the actions of great powers only produces what Professor John J. Mearsheimer calls the "tragedy of the great powers"—a formulation that argues that all great powers are perpetually seeking to maximize their share of world power in a zero-sum struggle with other powers doing the same thing. In presenting his case, he offers five points that appear to justify, explain, and legitimate aggressive state behavior in an anarchic global system that is cursed by its intrinsic nature and design to automatically consign human beings to a world of perpetual struggle with an unavoidable cyclical regularity that is beyond redemption. In contrast, by rethinking the concept of human security in a Post-Hegemonic Era, we can already find a new nontraditional security agenda is in the process of becoming the hallmark of change throughout Asia, specifically in China-ASEAN relations. New forms of cooperation are being developed that are capable of creating a less conflict-prone future by transcending the realist approach and instead embracing the basic principles outlined in the UN Charter and the Treaty of Amity and Co-operation in Southeast Asia (TACSA). The treaty's goal is "to promote perpetual peace, everlasting amity and cooperation." In reaching these goals, the treaty stipulates that relations between members should be guided by six principles. In contrasting these principles with the points that Professor Mearsheimer presents, we discover that we can choose between contrasting visions. One path involves a continuation of the

hegemonic enterprise. The other path involves adopting those principles that support the maintenance of a Post-Hegemonic Era.

**Chapter 7** elaborates upon the second paradigm, a Post-Hegemonic Era for the future of world order that points from tragedy to emancipation. It is undeniable that the endless search for hegemony among the great powers has been a historical tragedy. However, the road to emancipation from this cycle has become attainable in the twenty-first century though the promotion of a nonimperial conception of self-determination, which, in turn, leads to strengthening an emancipatory politics, as prefigured in the Algiers Declaration of the Rights of Peoples passed in 1976. Many nations throughout Latin America have embarked upon this new path of emancipation by having rejected the IMF and pledged their economic allegiance to the Bank of the South (Bancosur Del Sol). President Evo Morales of Bolivia has joined the Bolivarian Alternative for the America's (ALBA) with Venezuela, Nicaragua, and Cuba. Elsewhere in Latin America, we find that under President Rosas, Uruguay initiated a \$100 million "emergency plan" to meet medical needs and food assistance to those most in want. Under President Lula, Brazil initiated the "Fome Zero" hunger eradication program, which gives money directly to the poor. In Asia, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has the potential for expanding and institutionalizing its postwar era gains. This is important insofar as Asian-Pacific regionalism resists any renewal of Western hegemonic projects. At the same time, while the profits from the Iraq War accrue in the form of a financial windfall for some oil and military CEOs, the reality for most Americans is that they now have a depleted society. Decades of reliance on military Keynesianism in combination with Iraq War generated deficit spending has left the United States owing \$6 trillion more in debt since 2001.

Domestically, the unattended needs of America's infrastructure have left the United States a crippled giant. Social Security is nearing the point of insolvency, high paying jobs have continued to leave the country, the value of the dollar has continued to decline in foreign markets, and the ever rising and unregulated costs of health care threaten to bankrupt the federal government itself. Internationally, the projection of America's military power has alienated most countries of the world. America no longer exercises hegemony by consent but by domination, coercion, and threat of force. The disempowerment of America's global power is largely the product of a self-inflicted wound, brought about by a combination of imperial hubris coupled with the effects of a rising resistance to the neoliberal economic model from Russia to China, and throughout Asia, the Middle East, and Latin America. America's disempowerment is also due to the effects of a failed Bush-Cheney energy policy in combination with the negative effects of a foreign policy that has been intimately tied to an unending reliance upon the oil-producing countries of the Middle East. In response, Russia has increasingly moved to secure the oil-rich areas of Eurasia, while China has pursued its quest for energy in Africa and Latin America. As a result of these trends, a growing international



counterhegemonic alliance to U.S. power has become the defining characteristic of the early twenty-first century.

This chapter exposes the growing shape of a global counterhegemonic alliance to U.S. hegemony. At the same time, it juxtaposes the reasons for this hegemonic decline against a list of factors that demonstrate that the Global South is in a period of ascendance along with the growth of regional organizations. Gross Domestic Product, foreign direct investment, and free trade agreements, all show—in the aggregate—a profound shift away from U.S. dominance. The United States will continue to push for free trade agreements (FTAs), but will face growing opposition because of their tendency to effectuate higher levels of domestic inequality in Latin America and elsewhere. Latin American nations are rejecting the unequal trade dealings of U.S.-backed FTAs. Alternatively, Latin American nations are again embracing Mercosur and the Andean Community Free Trade Organizations that can easily promote greater regional integration. The influence of the IMF and the World Bank has diminished as the Bank of the South (Banco del Sur) is becoming the primary development bank for South America. Hence, the prospects for regionalism and regionalization are greatly improved. In this new international environment, “regionalism” (conceptual and theoretical) refers to a program—an ideology—to a situation in which there exists a clear idea of a region as well as a shared set of goals and values associated with a specific project that an identifiable group of actors wish to realize. “Regionalization” (the actualization of the concept and theory of regionalism) refers to the actual process of increasing exchange, contact, and coordination within a given region. These are some of the central forces that are contributing to the creation of a Post-Hegemonic Era.

**Part II** is entitled “**Resistance, Regionalism, and Regionalization: Counterhegemonic Beginnings among Social Movements and Between Regions.**” This section begins with a chapter addressing the differences and similarities between world order models and concludes with a chapter that defines regionalization as the movement of two or more economies (two or more societies) toward greater integration with one another.

**Chapter 8** begins by examining the two competing models to explain American hegemony and world order: the “Group Hegemony Theory” and the “Primacy Model.” The legal ramifications of the Iraq War are considered as well as the future of the UN Charter system and the collapse of the doctrine of unipolarity.

**Chapter 9** provides a historical account of the Nasserist Movement of the 1950s, the Eisenhower Doctrine, the Suez Crisis of 1956 as an expression of resistance to colonialism, the Bandung Conference of 1955, and the “Wilsonian Moment” of 1919. In combination, these historical passages are reviewed to demonstrate how both European and American versions of hegemony created “lost opportunities” for the nations of the Global South. This enables us to engage in a historically nuanced critique of twenty-first-century geopolitics that contemplates the price of lessons not learned and paths not taken in the twentieth century. The chapter proceeds to detail the

proposition of the American primacy coalition, which is that if American global preeminence is to be retained in the twenty-first century, then it must shut out all other potential rivals from access to the primary oil and energy reserves of the world. This leads to a discussion of what Professor Peter Dale Scott calls “deep politics” (hidden power arrangements and relationships) and the “deep state” (representative of private interests, not the public interest). This discussion concludes by identifying spheres of sociopolitical and socioeconomic repression both throughout the Global South and within the United States itself. The chapter ends with the question, “What made alternative models to U.S.-approved forms of capitalist development wrong?” The answer to this question brings us to what Professor Christopher Payne calls “the hegemon’s temptation.”

**Chapter 10** undertakes a critique of the Iraq War and its enduring legacy and impact upon the future of world order. It also examines what policy choices and strategic directions will be left open to the American primacy coalition. The limits and boundaries of humanitarian intervention are juxtaposed to what Professor Richard Falk calls “hegemonic government.” In light of this discussion, I raise the question, “How do we separate the legal principles embodied in the law of war, humanitarian intervention, and contained in justifications for the use of force from the actions of hegemonic states and geopolitical structures?” The remainder of the chapter explicates the dimensions of the legal and moral accountability of hegemonic states. To do this, I undertake a discussion of what evidence is required in order to establish whether or not the facts of a particular situation justify the hegemonic state’s reliance on international law principles in order to legitimize its actions. This analysis leads to my own original theoretical contribution to the issues raised, which I call the “Principle of Hegemonic State Accountability” (PHSA). I conclude this introductory analysis of the PHSA by asserting that “World Order must be the product of ending the practice of pursuing hegemonic dominance in world affairs.”

**Chapter 11** continues where Chapter 14 leaves off. Here, I discuss the future of world order in reference to the “Principle of Hegemonic State Accountability” (PHSA). A thorough legal analysis of the PHSA follows. It is a principle that is grounded in a definition of state crime presented by William Chambliss in his 1988 presidential address to the American Society of Criminology. The legal foundation for the PHSA is further augmented by a discussion of its rationale, its purpose, its extension into the arena of geopolitical affairs, the legal elements and concepts that support the PHSA, the means to enforce the PHSA, and obligations arising out of the PHSA. This is followed by an assessment of its relevance in a twenty-first-century world of growing counterhegemonic alliances to U.S. hegemony and the rise of regional orders. The chapter concludes with a discussion about the rise of China and the American primacy paradigm.

**Chapter 12** concludes Part II by proposing alternative models to superpower hegemony. There is an analysis of the construction and convergence of regional identity according to the “New Regionalism Approach” of the

post-cold war era, the exercise of U.S. hegemony versus the process of regionalization, and arguments advocating the value of regionalism for global governance. This is followed by my proposal to develop a new vocabulary and a new set of international structures for the reintegration of world order. The chapter concludes with a forward-looking assessment of the promise of regionalism and regionalization.

## PART I



# AN OVERVIEW OF AMERICAN HEGEMONY PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

*We are unfortunately living in a world where the primacy of geopolitics often suppresses the relevance of international law in those settings where the political actors who are in a situation to exert this kind of overbearing influence can shape the way in which conflicts are perceived, and either resolved or perpetuated. Whether in relation to nuclear weaponry or the rights of self-determination of a people, this vulnerability to geopolitics is responsible for much of the injustice and danger in the world.*

—Richard Falk<sup>1</sup>

The decline of America's global power is already in progress. The capacity and long-term ability of the United States to continue as a unilateral superpower is over. With the invasion of Iraq in 2003 and the subsequent U.S. occupation, the global community has been alienated and estranged by the exercise of American hegemony on the world stage. In tandem with the abuses wrought by the intervention of American military power, there has been a corresponding and parallel overextension of it, which has strained both its fighting capacity and the nation's budgetary capability. Growing financial deficits in combination with military overextension have left the nation vulnerable to the historical forces of great power decline.

In order to be able to intelligently evaluate the allegation of America's decline as a great power, it will be necessary to trace the historical path to this moment in time. Therefore, this chapter will survey the twentieth century ascendancy of the United States as a great power since 1945 and the course of those subsequent decisions and events that have led to its imminent decline in the twenty-first century. Juxtaposed to this historical review of the political, economic, and ideological decline of America's global primacy will be the beginning of an analysis of its alternative and replacement in the decades of the twenty-first century.

In the chapters to follow, this book will look at an emerging world of regional powers. It will be a world in which there will no longer be one dominant power on the world stage with the capacity to threaten, inspire, or intimidate the so-called lesser powers. Rather, we are beginning to witness an emerging world of regions that will forge regional alliances within their own blocs. Eventually, these regional alliances will probably lead to more cooperative relations between maturing regional blocs of nations. Power will no longer be centered in one nation but will be exercised from many different centers of the globe and exercised through many different layers of what is becoming global governance (as vague as that term may be at the moment). It will not be a world like the one we have been accustomed to in either recent history or in our more distant experience in the history of nation-states. In other words, by setting out to chart the decline of the United States as the twenty-first century's "sole superpower," we shall also begin to examine and trace the regional dynamics of a multicentric world order that will eventually span every continent. From Europe to Asia, from Latin America to Africa, from the Middle East to North and Southeast Asia, the early manifestations of a new global power structure has started to emerge. This new global structure of governance will represent a new era in global history. On the one hand, it will reveal the crumbling walls of America's Empire, which have encircled the globe since 1945. On the other hand, the revelation of this new global structure of governance will expose a world of rising regions. In this sense, this new era is quickly emerging as a Post-Hegemonic Era.

### HEGEMONY IS RELATIONAL

The purpose of this chapter will be to supply a brief overview of what political scientists and historians call hegemony. It is hoped that this overview will allow for a conceptual and historical starting assessment of the hegemonic enterprise. Out of this examination we can proceed to a consideration of the purposes, effects, and legacy of hegemonic power, as well as its limitations. In this regard, it is important to place this overall analysis within the praxis (time, place, and situation) in which these hegemonic powers emerged—this is because hegemony is, in large measure, relational. It is neither a static nor fixed set of relationships, arrangements, or policies.

Calibrating the nature of hegemony and the course of a dominant hegemon is particularly difficult for it involves changes in relationships between states, shifting patterns of dominant class interests, and evolving concepts about what the nature of international order should or should not be. Hence, our understanding and assessment about the nature of hegemony and the hegemonic enterprise is always subject to the pressures of historical change just as concepts about politics, economics, and culture are equally subject to change. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the elusive attempt to impose stability on the shifting structures of global power arrangements and the attempts to govern those arrangements with a degree of stability and predictability.

It is now axiomatic that the international environment of nation states and their relations has been depicted as anarchic. In fact, one of the main reasons for justifying the role of a hegemonic state to lord over all of the others is the perceived need to bring some semblance of order to a system that otherwise would seemingly fall into chaos. Hence, in response to this fear, we have witnessed the crafting of a theory in the field of international relations that is referred to as the “hegemonic stability theory” (HST). The theory is premised on the idea that a hegemon—or predominant state among all other states—is required to prevent the world from falling into a Hobbesian “war of all against all.” However, the fact remains that such stability has always been just a goal and an elusive one at that. Just because a nation-state achieves temporary predominance over other states does not mean that its dominance is not contested. On the contrary, the continuous rivalry of what has been called “great power competition” is itself testimony to the continuous uncertainty surrounding the struggle for and maintenance of global power and influence.

These considerations are just a few of the interpretative avenues that need to be traveled in order that we might begin to comprehend the historical evolution of American hegemony and the various assumptions that have lain behind its pursuit. Hence, this brief overview will hopefully serve to lay the groundwork for a more comprehensive and detailed analysis of the evolution, purposes, and decline of American hegemony in the chapters to follow. As such, this overview brings within its analytic scope the dynamics of how a relational understanding of power and the exercise of American hegemony affects (and is affected by) the processes of globalization, militarization, contending economic frameworks, and the demands of multinational corporate rule versus the role of international law and the universal claims of human rights.

In short, with the development of a relational understanding about the dynamics of hegemony, it should become possible to attain a more comprehensive understanding of how the American Hegemon acts and is acted upon. Further, the development of such a multifaceted conception of hegemony should provide us with a more encompassing perspective on the emerging trends and competing powers within a constantly evolving international order. Equipped with such a perspective regarding the true nature and scope of American hegemonic power, we will certainly be better positioned to identify potential rivals to the American Hegemon or, in the alternative, the emergence of new regional power centers and counterhegemonic alliances to its dominance throughout Asia, Africa, Latin America, the Middle East, and Europe. Armed with this knowledge, we may begin the task of making educated evaluations and projections about the eventual fate of American hegemony and its declining role of the United States as the dominant hegemon of the early twenty-first century.

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## CHAPTER 1



# HEGEMONY AND ITS ALTERNATIVES

By undertaking an examination of hegemony, it will then be possible to begin to address the central and ultimate concern of this book: *to be able to explicate emerging alternatives to the American Hegemon*. The identification and assessment of these alternatives, such as the evolution of new regional and security arrangements around the globe, will combine an objective analysis of current economic, social, and political challenges to the American Hegemon, along with a normative critique of it. Therefore, the purpose is twofold: in addition to providing a traditional power critique of American hegemony, we will also provide a normative critique of the policies, actions, and purposes of the American Hegemon. Taking this approach will allow us to juxtapose the foundational assumptions and principles of the current order of global governance with the newly emerging order of a multicentric world of regions—an order that will be increasingly guided by new conceptions of security and what constitutes an improved approach to global governance.

By being able to identify alternative governing principles from those that have characterized the exercise of American hegemony, we can finally present a much clearer picture of what it is exactly that differentiates the exercise of hegemonic rule from the twenty-first century's emerging multicentric/regional structure of world order and the associated tasks of global governance. Additionally, because the traditional understanding of exercising hegemonic power has been linked to the predominance of a single nation-state, juxtaposing a single center of power with a multicentric world of many centers of powers opens up the possibility of looking at the evolution, maintenance, and goal of achieving international stability in new ways.

Also, another beneficial component of looking at global governance through the study of the interaction between multicentric regional powers



is to begin to prioritize the importance of social movements for progressive change. Insofar as social movements, arising out of civil society, are often the driving force for progressive change and the primary source for placing demands for change on the state, the very multiplicity of social movements in numerous countries helps to explain the appearance of a growing global counterhegemonic alliance to U.S. power in the early twenty-first century. In this regard, one of the hopes of this book is to provide a more comprehensive explanation and appreciation of the nature of the political demands emanating from those movements. The importance of these social movements is centered in the fact that they serve to inspire progressive changes in governance and policies with regard to the challenges posed by the combination of neoliberalism and the pressures emanating from U.S. hegemony. The transformative effect of these movements is increasingly demonstrated by the realization that they embody the capacity not only to force governments and international institutions to listen to a new set of concerns from the ranks of civil society but also to act on them.<sup>2</sup>

Insofar as the growing power and influence of social movements directly affect the decisions of national states and the formation of their policies, this book will argue that the moral and ethical concerns of social movements need to be explained and incorporated into our analysis of global governance in order not only to fully comprehend the nature of world order, but also to assist us in helping to account for newly emerging forms of resistance that confront the American Hegemon as well as the transnational class forces that collaborate with its hegemonic rule. In the twentieth century, with the transition from British to U.S. hegemony, there were working class rebellions around the world that were demanding incorporation and inclusion in the decision-making processes that directly affected their socioeconomic fortunes. This was particularly true for the working classes of the wealthier nations of the West were promised both employment security and high mass consumption. This social contract in the United States came to be known as the New Deal. However, when promises were made to the elites of the non-Western world in the era of decolonization, such as the promise of national self-determination and the promise of assistance to catch up to the standards of the West, it became clear that these promises could not be delivered. The result has been that ever since the 1950s, subordinated and excluded groups throughout the global South have had their expectations for a better life destroyed by the reality of a U.S. hegemony that would not liberate them from their position of subordination. This has become the driving force that has precipitated the crisis of U.S. hegemony. Truly, recent history teaches that these kinds of social movements are the driving social forces that have affected, resisted, and confronted virtually every hegemonic order. Yet, what makes the twenty-first century so different is that the global reach of new networks of social power, when coupled with the phenomenon of globalization itself, has accelerated and enhanced the power of these social forces to reshape the scope and nature of global order itself.<sup>3</sup>

Globalization itself—of finance, capital, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), transnational and multinational corporations, and other transnational enterprises—has served to produce new social and class relationships as well as new forms of governance. Globalization has also brought forth renewed calls from the global South for a more egalitarian redistribution of wealth.<sup>4</sup> Given this constellation of factors, the nature of resistance to and confrontation with the American Hegemon is of a different order of magnitude and significance than the challenges put to other hegemons in the past. From this perspective, a historical assessment of the hegemonic enterprise and global forms of opposition to it will serve to produce new insights and theories about the historical longevity of hegemony as an enterprise and start to answer the question of why there have been so many challenges and challengers to it.<sup>5</sup>

Finally, this assessment will also serve to offer an explanation as to why the hegemonic enterprise is probably nearing its end and why the American Hegemon may be the last one in human history—at least for a long time. On this point, there is an emerging consensus among progressive scholars. Among these progressives, Professor William I. Robinson has noted, “The historical pattern of successive ‘hegemons’ has come to an end, and the baton will not be passed from the United States to a new hegemonic nation-state, or even a regional bloc.” Why? Robinson explains, “Pax American was the ‘final frontier’ of the old nation-state system and hegemons therein.”<sup>6</sup>

The nation-state that was formally inaugurated in 1648 with the signing of the Peace of Westphalia has been slowly undermined by the forces associated with late twentieth-century globalization. It has been further unraveled by powerful international organizations such as the World Trade Organization (WTO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the World Bank. In this sense, the next decades of the early twenty-first century will constitute a period of transition. The first decade of the twenty-first century has already produced new forms of an emancipatory global politics in the form of social movements and through a world of rising regions (a multicentric world order) that is not limited by the actions of a superpower or just one nation-state. At the same, as social movements against America’s neoliberal economic model are undertaken, there are also emerging regional efforts by groupings of countries throughout Latin America, Southeast Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and the European Union, which are consciously dedicated to the creation of a Post-Hegemonic Era.<sup>7</sup>

## DEFINITION

Hegemony is a word rarely used in American public discourse either in the speeches of politicians or in the daily editorials and opinion pieces that grace the pages of America’s corporately owned mass print and electronic media. In fact, it has, until recent times, only been randomly invoked within academic journals and books or the publications of those who work in think tanks that are dedicated to the task of shaping elite and public opinion. In large

measure, the reason for its infrequent use is because the word “hegemony” is usually employed in reference to empire, imperialism, imperialistic activities, or in the global context of one nation’s dominance or “power-over” other nations, thereby revealing its antidemocratic nature and its association with the imperial project of empire. This insight into modern twenty-first-century American hegemony has become even more glaring after the illegal invasion and occupation of Iraq by the United States under the orders of President George W. Bush. Reflecting on this state of affairs, Samir Amin has noted, “The U.S. program is certainly imperialism in the most brutal sense of that word...it aims to loot their resources. All this is part and parcel of the reduction of social thought to the mantras of vulgar economics, the single-minded focus on maximizing the financial profitability of dominant capital in the short term, putting the military at the disposal of this capital, and de-linking this capital from any system of human values.”<sup>8</sup>

It is those who are at the bottom of the imperial hierarchy that will pay the costs with their lives, their blood, and their limited treasure. In order to truly appreciate this reality under the tutelage of the American Hegemon, we must ask some basic questions about U.S. liberalism and “exceptionalism” as key doctrines of U.S. foreign policy. According to David Grondin, we must ask, “Is U.S. global dominance or its quest a call to empire? If not, why has the language of empire had such a ‘new beginning’ recently? As nicely put by the mainstream of American foreign policy ideologies, but especially by its archetype, John Mearsheimer, the United States as hegemon may pursue a liberal world order, but must often do so through illiberal means.”<sup>9</sup> It is here that we have the classic gap between thought and action, theory and practice, principle and implementation, for while the American Republic was founded on the principle that it was to be “an empire of liberty,” we find that the American Hegemon is founded on intervention, the violation of the principle of sovereignty, and the suppression of liberty in the name of “freedom.” The broken promises and fractured discourses of the American Empire have actually served mainly to negate liberty.

The negation of liberty by the American Empire is found in its unilateral assertion of the right to wage war at will under a doctrine of “anticipatory self-defense” or preemption. In addition to the negation of liberty, the empire has engaged in its own version of terrorism—state terrorism—wherein its self-righteous protective claims, based on defensive necessity, collide with the reality of devastating violence and humiliating submission premised on the maintenance of its global hegemony and the expansion of its empire.<sup>10</sup> In the place of liberty, billions of people around the world have inherited what Gibran described as “century filled with greed and usurpation.”

According to Professor Julian Go, “existing definitions of hegemony tend toward two poles: (1) relative preponderance over the world’s economy, such that there could be historical-periods when there is a single hegemon (as opposed to periods of hegemonic competition) and (2) political (and/or cultural) dominance over the geopolitical system of states.”<sup>11</sup> For example, one could argue that at the end of the Second World War in 1945, the United

States emerged as a competitor with the Soviet Union for “spheres of influence” in the Third World (the periphery of the two empires). It was only with the end of the cold war and the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989 that the United States became a hegemon—an uncontested superpower without any viable competitors. Still, there is a problem that remains with that interpretation. The problem is that from 1945 onward, the United States and USSR were never really “equal” or near equal in either the category of military capability and strength or economic capacity. Therefore, contrary to Professor Go, one could also argue that the U.S. Empire enjoyed both political and economic dominance as a hegemonic power even during the period of the cold war. That is the position taken in this book.

### IS THE UNITED STATES A HEGEMON, AN EMPIRE, OR BOTH?

At this point, it would be helpful to juxtapose the definition of “hegemony” with that of “empire” because there is an analytic difference. In Professor Go’s formulation, “Empire is ‘a system of interaction between two political entities, one of which...exerts political control over the internal and external policy—the effective sovereignty—of the other, the subordinate periphery.’” In this arrangement, Go asserts, “Political control can be formal (i.e., territorially based) or informal (through client regimes, financial loans, market control, etc.). In either case, empire is not the same thing as hegemony...A state can have an empire but not dominate the world economy.”<sup>12</sup> This definitional separation between empire and hegemon has worked with precision prior to the American Empire, but now this definition must be modified when looking at the historical uniqueness of American empire and hegemony in the post-1945 world.

In my view, the United States represents a hybrid between the notion of hegemony and empire, because it incorporates the notions of imperial and territorial control, on the one hand, and the hegemonic control of the global economy, on the other. The unique nature of the American Hegemon incorporates the imperial aspects of empire. At the end of the Second World War, the United States acted on the world stage as an empire—“leader of the Free World”—and as a hegemonic global force that virtually dominated the world economy (with the exception of the USSR and its satellite countries).

The historical record demonstrates that the United States enjoyed a position of predominance at the end of World War II as the result of a combination of factors. First, the United States inherited the colonies of the British and some of the colonies of the French. The second factor is that the United States held a position of predominance because of the atomic bomb and its nuclear weapons superiority over the Soviet Union. Hence, the communist powers of both the Soviet Union and China were constrained in their foreign policy decisions by the de facto nuclear superiority of the United States. Third, the U.S. economy was operating in its most expansive period between 1946 and 1964. America’s economy would only begin to recede in earnest

as a consequence of the costs associated with the Vietnam War. The next major recession of U.S. power would be in conjunction with years following the American invasion and occupation of Iraq. Fourth, the inter- and intraclass alliances that America's ruling elite maintained in conjunction with transnational capitalism's class structure also served to effectuate U.S. policy preferences. Fifth, these same transnational class alliances—within the larger structure of global capitalism—allowed the U.S. to employ the WTO, IMF, and World Bank in keeping the nations of the Third World subservient to the causes, purposes, and interests of the American Hegemon. Hence, the grand and global reach of the American Empire allowed the United States to operate as a de facto hegemon. In the final analysis, its global reach was largely guaranteed by virtue of its nuclear weapons superiority and the unequal “balance of terror” that resulted from it. With its military predominance, combined with its economic power, the pillars of American hegemony were locked firmly in place.

The same point could be made with respect to the effect that American nuclear weapons superiority had upon the foreign policy choices of both China and Russia in the 1950s. This is especially the case with respect to the unimpeded course of American intervention in Vietnam from the 1950s onward. In his revisionist groundbreaking book, *Perils of Dominance: Imbalance of Power and the Road to War In Vietnam*, Gareth Porter asserts that it is because of America's widely acknowledged lead in nuclear weapons capability that America enjoyed its resulting predominance of power, which, in turn, contributed to both Russia and China having to acquiesce to American actions in Vietnam and throughout most of Indochina.<sup>13</sup> In this sense, the relative preponderance of power that the United States enjoyed with regard to both its military capabilities and economic strength allowed it to virtually dictate how power relations would be constituted throughout the international order of the 1950s and 1960s. It would only be in the aftermath of the fiasco of the Vietnam War and the financial crises of the early 1970s that fissures within the American Empire, as a hegemonic power, would begin to be revealed.

From 1945 onward, the geopolitical system of nation-states was either largely locked within the U.S. capitalist orbit of influence or significantly constrained by it. Furthermore, this geopolitical system from 1945 to the early twenty-first century was either under the protection of the American nuclear umbrella or sufficiently deterred by it so that no serious threat could be raised against the unilateral military power of the United States—in its capacity as both an empire and as a hegemon. In the period of 1945 through 1999, the United States had a more viable structure of alliances and used its diplomatic powers more often and effectively than it did after the events of September 11, 2001.

Despite these failures of judgment by U.S. leaders, we may still argue that the American Hegemon retained sufficient cultural, economic, political, and military influence—from the end of World War II up until the Iraq War of 2003—to make it a global power without serious hegemonic rivals. Still,

even without external rivals, the United States has demonstrated its capacity to do great damage to itself by virtue of its tendency to imperial overstretch, a continuing failure to accurately assess its economic weaknesses and vulnerabilities, and its hegemonic arrogance in believing that it could and should dictate what constituted acceptable or unacceptable national policies around the globe. Once again, it would be an illegal intervention in Iraq, which, like Vietnam, would drive up its deficit, increase its national debt, and weaken its economic strength on both the domestic and international front.

Unsustainable short-term budgetary costs of the Iraq War amount to \$10 million per hour, \$246 million per day, and \$9 billion per month. According to Nobel Prize winning economist Joseph Stiglitz, the long-term costs of the Iraq War will exceed \$3 trillion. Along with a seemingly endless series of foreign wars, the Achilles' heel of the American Empire would be revealed in the logic and requirements of the global capitalist economy as well as the dynamics of other competing capitalisms—in juxtaposition to a world of rising regions. The growing strength of a multicentric world system of emerging regional orders, from Latin America to Africa, from Southeast Asia to China, from Russia to the European Union, would begin to define the historical forces of the early twenty-first century that would eventually lead to the crumbling walls of the American Empire, inevitable decline of American hegemony, and the transition to a world of rising regions.

### POST-1945 AMERICA AS BOTH AN EMPIRE AND A HEGEMON

Peter Gowan notes, “American hegemony since 1945 has been structurally different in its degree and type of dominance, from any other power in the history of capitalism. Instead of simply being the biggest power with the biggest capitalist economy among a number of great powers, the United States was able to exercise political dominance over the entire capitalist core. Before 1945 different capital centers had different geographic zones of political and economic dominance. The United States ends that arrangement, making the whole capitalist world its geographic sphere of political dominance. On this basis, it shaped and reshaped the conditions and forms of international capital accumulation throughout the capitalist world.”<sup>14</sup> Gowan’s analysis of the American Hegemon lends solid support to my thesis about the unique nature of the American Hegemon, for it not only demonstrates that post-1945 American hegemony was significantly different in degree and type of dominance from any other power in the history of capitalism but also is also very important for refuting the argument of William I. Robinson that “the term ‘hegemon’ is generally evoked in a particularly misleading way because a country or a state *cannot* be a ‘hegemon.’”<sup>15</sup>

Robinson argues that “when we speak of ‘British’ hegemony or ‘U.S.’ hegemony we do not really mean ‘British’ or ‘U.S.’ as in the country. This is merely shorthand for saying the hegemony of British capitalist groups and allied strata, such as British state managers and middle-class sectors, in the

context of world capitalism...A social group exercising hegemony through a state may be hegemonic, and hence the term ‘hegemon’ to describe that state.”<sup>16</sup> That is precisely what Gowan has described when he says that after 1945, the United States was able to exercise political dominance over the entire capitalist core. That means that the United States, *as both an empire and as a hegemon*, exercised power over all social classes and strata within the transnational capitalist order. The United States has been a hegemon since 1945 because in its extended outreach of investment, alliances, and efforts coordinated with and between other members of this transnational capitalist class, it has been able to shape, mold, and dominate the entire global economy. The work of the U.S.-led Trilateral Commission is a well-documented case in point.

When David Rockefeller formed the Trilateral Commission in the 1970s, it was specifically designed to lessen economic competition and conflict between Western Europe, Japan, and the United States. Its purpose was to bring together the political, economic, and cultural leaders of each of these three regions in order to work out—as a capitalist class—the differences between national and transnational fractions of classes. According to Stephen Gill, “‘Trilateralism’ can be defined as the project of developing an organic (or relatively permanent) alliance between the major capitalist states, with the aim of promoting (or sustaining) a stable form of world order which is congenial to their dominant interests. More specifically, this involves a commitment to a more-or-less liberal international economic order.”<sup>17</sup>

Gill sets forth his theory about the rising power of internationally mobile capital as “the conscious, organized, exertion of political pressure by various sections or fractions of capital, so as to secure rules, policies and resource commitments favorable to profit-making and the accumulation of capital.”<sup>18</sup> Yet, while he seeks to explicate the “class nature of global hegemony,” he never denies that it is an “American-centered transnational hegemony.” In fact, he argues that President Reagan’s policies “facilitated a growth in concentration within sectors of the American economy, so that its bigger corporations were better able to compete internationally. Thus, although perhaps not consciously intended, Reagan’s policies none the less reinforced the tendency toward transnational hegemony.”<sup>19</sup> Therefore, in this limited sense, Robinson is correct when he notes that “hegemony is exercised by social groups, by classes or class fractions, by a particular social configuration by these fractions.”<sup>20</sup> However, what Robinson has failed to account for is the fact that a specifically American-centered transnational hegemony has continued to live on—even in an age of globalization.

In accounting for this reality, Gill has noted that “as the American political economy has become internationalized there has developed a corresponding link with key elements in the civil societies of the other Trilateral states... These findings relate the ‘inner group hypothesis’ of control in American capitalism. The inner group is influential across a range of holdings and is uniquely situated to integrate the interests of large numbers of corporations. Thus, in the context of networks and linkages...the vanguard elements,

represented in organizations such as the Conference Board (which represents blue-chip American corporate wealth) and the Trilateral Commission, are able to develop a general class consciousness and cohesion. This process involves rotation of corporate leaders into and out of the American executive branch."<sup>21</sup>

### THE POLITICAL STRUCTURE OF AMERICAN-CENTERED TRANSNATIONAL HEGEMONY

The concentration of power between corporations and the American executive branch has been well established since the late 1950s when C. Wright Mills authored *The Power Elite*. Commenting on the nature of power within an elite-oriented executive department, Mills noted, "The executive bureaucracy becomes not only the center of power but also the arena within which and in terms of which all conflict of power are resolved or denied resolution. Administration replaces electoral politics; the maneuvering of cliques replaces the clash of parties."<sup>22</sup> In even more detail, Richard J. Barnett, in his 1972 classic *The Roots of War: The Men and Institutions Behind US Foreign Policy*, found, "If we look at the men who have held the very top positions, the Secretaries and Under Secretaries of State and Defense, the Secretaries of the three services, the Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, and the Director of the CIA, we find that out of the ninety-one who held these offices during the period between 1940 and 1967, seventy of them were from the ranks of big business or high finance, including eight out of ten Secretaries of Defense, seven out of eight Secretaries of the Air Force, every Secretary of the Navy, eight out of nine Secretaries of the Army, every Deputy Secretary of Defense, three out of five Directors of the CIA, and three out of five Chairmen of the Atomic Energy Commission."<sup>23</sup>

By the time of the presidency of George W. Bush, the pattern had been fully established. In fact, it had refined and extended under Reagan. In 1982, Ronald Brownstein and Nina Easton compiled a book about the top one hundred officials in the Reagan administration. Most of them were either millionaires or multimillionaires. In their book, *Reagan's Ruling Class*, the 747-page study also detailed which members of the administration had come from the industries they now regulated. It revealed which ones were either millionaires or multimillionaires, which of them would take the hardest line on foreign policy, on the Soviet Union, on arms control, and where the representatives of the competing factions of the Reagan coalition—from the New Right to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce—were in power. In all of these cases, their study chronicled how policy was being uprooted and changed throughout the executive branch.<sup>24</sup>

With this group in place and with the end of the cold war in 1989 (the triumph of capitalism and neoliberalism as an economic model for capital accumulation and exploitation), the Soviet Union lost its empire and had to withdraw from Eastern Europe and dissolve the Warsaw Pact. Alternatively, the United States, as the already dominant hegemon in the world



system, simply solidified its position of global dominance through an expanded NATO membership that grew by incorporating the Eastern European states under its military and financial umbrella (more markets to penetrate).

Hegemonic competition had ended with the eclipse of the Soviet Union's version of socialism and also in conjunction with Reagan's "rollback" policies aimed at the Third World. With the Third World's Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) reversed in the late 1980s by the U.S. Empire, capitalism reigned globally supreme under the ideological auspices of neoliberalism.<sup>25</sup> The primary economic goal of the Reagan administration was to speed up the integration of the global South into the global economy in order to offset the stagnation that was overtaking the northern economies (the United States and the rest of the transnational capitalist class). Therefore, Reagan's strategy was to end the calls from the global South that had been advocating the development of a New International Economic Order (NIEO). It was decided that the American Hegemon would continue to control and dominate the world economy through those global financial institutions that it helped to design after 1945—the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. Among the other casualties of the Reagan "rollback" was the UN development system that had been addressing the North-South divide. By the end of Reagan's term, United Nations Conference Trade and Development, Economic and Social Council would be limited to analysis, consensus building on certain trade related issues, and some mere technical assistance. With the replacement of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) by the World Trade Organization (WTO) in 1995, the American Hegemon solidified its control over the world's trade and commerce. The American Empire had retained its global role as both an empire and as an American Hegemon.<sup>26</sup>

Yet, the work of the American Hegemon, through its lending institutions, has exacerbated world misery, hunger, and suffering for billions of people. The IMF has continued to inflict its structural adjustment programs on nations throughout the global South that are already hopelessly locked in debt.<sup>27</sup> Insofar as the IMF and the World Bank were originally created in order to enforce U.S.-supported aims and policies around the world, it is clear that not only the IMF but also the socioeconomic interests of capitalists as a transnational class were bound up with the project of maintaining U.S. hegemony.<sup>28</sup> This transnational capitalist class consists of international bankers, speculators, and the masters of finance capitalism. In response to this situation, some one hundred developing countries have been struggling for nearly three decades to free themselves from the devastating burden of external debt, which has foreclosed on any real possibility of their embarking on genuine national development.<sup>29</sup>

The IMF and World Bank must now finally confront and deal with a series of debt cancellations under the 1999 enhanced "Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative" (HIPC) and the 2005 "Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative" (MDRI). These two initiatives were undertaken by the international community in recognition of the fact that the multilateral debts of the

world's poorest countries are never going to be able to pay this off. This pressure is what eventually led to these two initiatives. The HIPC Initiative has only offered partial debt relief while the MDRI promises deeper cancellation of IMF, World Bank, African Development Fund, and Inter-American Development Bank debts. Should these efforts go forward as planned, it will be the first time since the 1950s that many poor countries can finally break out of a cycle of debt and conditionality. Such a result would be historic insofar as it would not only engender "country ownership" of economic policies but also reduce the role played by the American Hegemon and its institutional linkages in their affairs.<sup>30</sup>

Almost 2 billion people live on less than a dollar a day, while millions of others go without adequate housing, clean water, or a living wage. Throughout the world, wages are reduced, labor unions are outlawed, and dissent is suppressed by governments that accede to IMF "loan conditionality agreements." The IMF exercises formal political control and economic control when it can dictate to other countries that as a condition for receiving IMF loans they must outlaw labor unions, reduce wages, and crack down on dissent. The IMF has made it a career of ignoring the sovereign rights of nations that come under the grip of its structural adjustment programs. This is what can be termed "imperialistic activity." Insofar as the IMF exerts the influence of the United States through its fiscal policies, it is possible to argue that this exertion of IMF influence amounts to "the exertion of influence by one state over other states or territories through formal political control or overt uses of force."<sup>31</sup> It is political control insofar as the IMF's social and political prescriptions for "loan conditionality" effectively amount to a political intervention into the sovereign affairs of recipient national governments and their decision-making processes.

Certainly, the 2003 invasion of Iraq and the subsequent U.S. occupation fulfills this particular definition of imperialistic activity. Insofar as the Bush administration directed Paul Bremer, the head of the U.S. Coalitional Provisional Authority (CPA) to privatize the Iraqi economy, we may conclude that these economic directives were aimed at the aggrandizement of Iraqi resources by the American Hegemon and its business partners. Such an aggrandizement of the natural resources and wealth of a nation is in violation of international law and constitutes imperialistic activities that exploit resources that help to maintain both its global empire and its hegemonic status. In that regard, the American Hegemon engages in policies and practices that may be defined as imperialistic insofar as imperialism "presumes empire and would include any activity that helps establish or maintain an empire."<sup>32</sup> America's empire was indeed operating as an "empire of capital."

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## CHAPTER 2



# IMPERIALISM, EMPIRE, GLOBAL CAPITALISM, AND AMERICAN HEGEMONY

It is through its economic domination of the globe and through its international institutional dominance of the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Trade Organization that the American Hegemon has been able to expand the frontiers of its empire. To augment these institutional and structural arrangements, America has engaged in the placement and positioning of thousands of military bases around the world so as to guarantee its hegemonic dominance against all potential rivals and competitors.<sup>1</sup> However, the establishment of America's empire did not guarantee its hegemonic sway. By the close of 2008, all that really remains in question is longevity of its approximately sixty-year hegemonic dominance. History provides evidence that a hegemon in decline will become even more willing to undertake imperialistic activity in an effort to retain or regain its waning power. However, American military dominance is not enough to secure hegemony in the absence of global economic dominance. In that regard, "the U.S. has lost its relative dominance in manufacturing; its trade deficit has consistently increased since the 1970s while the number of American firms dominating key industries around the world has steadily decreased; foreign investment into the U.S. has increased as never before, and whatever economic growth the U.S. has experienced since the 1970s has been driven by the financial sector rather than the manufacturing sector."<sup>2</sup> Further, the emphasis upon finance and financial speculation is a typical index of a hegemon's fall.<sup>3</sup> The financial meltdown on Wall Street in the fall of 2008 provides clear evidence of how American hegemony is now severely crippled in its capacity to pay for a continuation of the same policies that have characterized past decades.

With the collapse of the housing bubble, the ensuing mortgage meltdown, and the ripple effects of the collapse, the cover story of *TIME* magazine for the week of September 29, 2008, was entitled “How Wall Street Sold Out America: They had a party. Now you’re going to pay.”

In combination, these facts make the case that while the American Hegemon may still retain the largest share of GDP, its economic dominance relative to others has been and will continue to be challenged. Hence, it can be argued that its hegemonic status has been placed on the path of decline. Advances in GDP are being recorded in the European Union (EU) as well as East Asia. According to research conducted by Professor Go, we find that “East Asia has been the fastest growing economic area in recent decades, even excluding Japan, while America’s rates of growth have fallen off...The rise of the EU as a competitive economic entity has posed further challenges. In 2003, the U.S. took up 28 percent of world GDP, but the EU has 30 percent. This distribution is significantly different from 1950, when the U.S.’s share was 50 percent; and it is not unlike the distribution of world GDP shares among contending core states in the late 19th century, when Great Britain entered its autumn.”<sup>4</sup>

In order to stave off an even greater threat to its imminent decline the United States has relied on its military strength to thwart potential rivals to energy sources, such as oil. Its invasion and occupation of Iraq and Afghanistan are bloody evidence of a strategy that is designed to maintain hegemony at any cost. In its rise to hegemonic maturity, the United States reached outward to the Middle East in order to secure its rising dominance on the world stage. From 2001 onward, it has increasingly reached into the Middle East in an attempt to brace its fall from hegemonic maturity. Hence, history has reached a dangerous turning point for “while the U.S.’s recent wave has appeared amid its fall from hegemonic maturity, it might likewise manifest a last-ditch effort by the U.S. to ward off impending doom—acts of desperation amid the threat of demise.”<sup>5</sup> The Bush-II administration’s constant intimations of its intent to invade or bomb Iran because of its alleged work on a nuclear weapons program provide a case in point. Despite the vision of the U.S. primacy coalition, as expressed in the Project for the New American Century, which has been propagated by the hawks in the Bush-II administration, the unveiling of the military and economic facts that define the period of 2001 through 2008 demonstrate that the hawks are wrong. Their assumptions that (1) the United States can get away with whatever it chooses to do and that (2) if the United States does not exert its force it will become increasingly marginalized in world affairs have both turned out to be false. Rather, the path followed by the hawks has actually been working to transform a gradual descent into a more rapid and turbulent fall.

## THE MORAL/ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS OF DECLINING AMERICAN HEGEMONY AND THE NATURE OF GLOBAL FINANCE AND SPECULATION

Considerations of the moral and ethical implications that flow from this version of American Hegemonic strategy will be an important consideration throughout the rest of this book. The implications of how the United States deals with its hegemonic decline will take many forms. The history of the twentieth century and the path of the first decade of the twenty-first century serves to demonstrate that various forms of global resistance and confrontation have been building after more than half a century of both labor's exploitation and the destruction of the environment—across the global commons. One recent example of resistance to the capitalist interests of the North and the core institutions of American hegemony became quite visible when the WTO held its ministerial conference in Cancun, Mexico, in September 2003. At that conference, it was the large countries of the global South that would effectively block progress on a trade deal. It was a situation in which a deal had originally seemed possible with the rich countries reducing agricultural protectionism and the South agreeing to more lax standards for foreign investment. As it turns out, the so-called Group of 22 (including Brazil, Argentina, India, and South Africa) came together to reject U.S. pressures to sign on to the deal.

While the collapse of the talks in Cancun did not signal immediate failure for the Doha round of trade negotiations, the collapse did mean that the original January 1, 2005, deadline for completion was no longer possible. It could also be argued that the collapse of the talks at Cancun signifies a larger problem that the global South has with the WTO—its decision-making processes that are increasingly seen as “medieval.” Hence, there is a growing recognition of the need for new forms of “cosmopolitics” and “cosmopolitan constituencies” in support of public goods like a rules-based world trading system, emphasizing the need to learn from the EU's governance experiences with international economic integration without a common state. This also means beginning to mainstream human rights protections into WTO law, to recognize the indivisibility of human rights, and the need to clarify the legal impact of human rights law on WTO law and jurisprudence. Such an approach could also be extended to treat human rights arguments as “balancing principles” in WTO dispute settlement proceedings. Further possible avenues for reform and inclusion would involve establishing international trade sanctions and/or preferences for the promotion of human rights abroad.<sup>6</sup>

Having to face these consequences and their implications will be unavoidable for the architects of the American Hegemon. It will also be unavoidable for the rising regions of the rest of the world that have the task of trying to move toward a world in which there are multicentric regions of power. Across Latin America, Asia, Africa, China, Russia, India, Europe, and the Middle East, we are witnessing the efforts of global communities—within and between geographical regions—embarking upon a process of creating a

world without American hegemony. This is the first manifestation of a truly Post-Hegemonic Era.

Facing these implications will require, as Michel Chossudovsky has noted, “a transformation of the structures of ownership, namely the disempowerment of banks, financial institutions and transnational corporations, as well as radical overhaul of the state apparatus. All these issues are complex and will require careful debate and analysis in the years ahead.”<sup>7</sup> In September 2008, that transformation has been accelerated with the collapse of Wall Street giants such as Merrill Lynch, Lehman Brothers, and the near collapse of American International Group (AIG), a \$1 trillion insurance company. With Wall Street’s money market mutual funds and securities, the continuing devaluation of the dollar, and the treasury department’s call for a \$700 billion to \$1 trillion bailout for Wall Street, the government orchestrated shotgun marriage of Bear Sterns with JPMorgan Chase, and the U.S. government’s rescue of Fannie May and Freddie Mac, the world now watches as the financial contagion spreads. Sooner or later, the hundreds of billions (or trillions) of dollars that the Federal Reserve and other central banks are flooding the markets with will stabilize the financial crisis. But it will not halt the decline of American hegemony. Neither can this limited form of financial stabilization rectify the global abuses of American hegemony that have been borne by billions of people around the globe.

Take, for example, the fact that each day, some 50,000 human beings, predominantly children and women and people of color, die from starvation, diarrhea, pneumonia, tuberculosis, malaria, measles, and other poverty-related causes. This loss is actually avoidable through minor modifications in the global order that would involve just minor reductions in the incomes of the affluent. Yet, such reforms remain blocked by the U.S. government (as well as some European governments) that are more committed to advancing their own interests and agenda (as well as the agenda of their corporate allies) by continuing to design and impose a global institutional order that inexorably—continuously and foreseeably—produces vast excesses of poverty and premature deaths.

The implications that flow from this hegemonic indifference are many.<sup>8</sup> According to Gabriel Kolko, “the world was far more troubled economically in the 1990s, however one measures it—and therefore politically also. Increasingly unequal income distribution in much of the Third World explains most of the persistence of discontent, and grossly inadequate economic growth much of the remainder...IMF insistence on poor nations balancing their budgets caused many countries to reduce the proportion of their gross domestic product (GDP) allocated to health and education, and what spending there was on education, health, and transfer programs in developing nations did not reverse growing income inequality and often benefited many upper-income group.”<sup>9</sup>

New forms of confrontation and resistance are arising on every continent and in every region of the globe. Resistance to these injustices can already be monitored and studied from an examination of social movements that

are helping to bring to power left-wing progressive and populist governments throughout all of Latin America. Latin Americans, along with billions of other peoples on every continent, are desperately seeking emancipation from an imperial bondage that has robbed millions of their right to national development, trapped them into a life of poverty, and sought to exploit their resources. What this meant on a geopolitical level was that Washington has acted in concert with the Latin American military—for decades—in helping to overthrow the democratically elected governments of Chile, Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay. With U.S. support, newly installed dictators, supported by international financial institutions, proceeded to dismantle social and protectionist barriers, denationalize the industrial and banking sectors, and privatize public assets. It was during this time period that political linkages were strengthened between transnational corporations, Latin American transnational capitalists, and the state. As this political transformation was occurring, U.S. hegemonic aspirations became a reality.<sup>10</sup> The same can be said for millions of people on the continents of Africa, Asia, India, and throughout the Middle East.<sup>11</sup>

Today, many social movements of the early twenty-first century are in the process of becoming strong counterhegemonic alliances and economic forces that are dedicated to ending the negative effects of this domination. A host of regional alliances are seeking to establish their own regional autonomy from this system of unregulated capitalist globalization. Throughout South and East Asia, the people and their leaders are looking toward ASEAN (the Association of South-East Asian Nations—Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Brunei, Vietnam, Myanmar, Laos, and Cambodia) and other regional trade pacts to free them from the dictates of the American Hegemon. The near future holds for them the promise of a “Pax Asia-Pacific” in which East Asian integration is inevitable. Along with China, these Asian trends toward a “Pax-Asia Pacifica” may not include the United States in their calculus.<sup>12</sup> The exclusion of the United States from a “Pax-Asia Pacifica” is one more brick crumbling from the walls of America’s hegemonic enterprise. It is evident that the rising regions of the Asia-Pacific are representative of what is becoming one of the most dominant trends of an emerging Post-Hegemonic Era.

Additionally, Russia is now reluctant to go any further with neoliberal reforms and Western economic packages that have already devastated much of their economy and culture. The early 1990s brought “shock therapy” to Russia. It was a Western strategy that involved much more than the liberalization of prices, the stabilization of the economy through monetary and fiscal policies, and the privatization of state enterprises. By definition, “shock therapy” was aimed at nothing less than the call for a very rapid transformation of the economy. It turned out to be too rapid and too unregulated. The enormous costs of that the IMF-induced shock therapy imposed during 1992 through 1995 threatened to undermine the entire process of transition to capitalism in Russia. As a consequence of this experience, a joke circulated in Moscow that went as follows: “What has one year of capitalism in



Russia done that 70 years of Communism were unable to accomplish?" The answer: "It made Communism look good."<sup>13</sup> Finally, China is on the rise as an economic powerhouse in world affairs, seeking investments in, and linkages with, other nations not only throughout the regions of South and East Asia but also throughout Africa and Latin America.<sup>14</sup>

In short, the hegemonic project, as a concept and as a form of global governance, as a goal of transnational state policies, and as a global financial structure for corporate activities and economic enterprise, is rarely "benign." It is usually undemocratic, antidemocratic, and ruthless toward the subjects (the subjected) that it holds under its imperial sway. In that regard, what will probably be one of the most unique features of this book will be its treatment of "hegemony" as a global project that allows us to inject both ethical and moral considerations into an assessment of it.

For too long, a strict concentration upon purely economic and political factors has occupied the majority of analytical space in studies and discussions about hegemony. Why? First, hegemony has usually been largely defined in reference to the political realm. In geopolitical terms, the study of hegemony has been analytically confined to the nation-state system founded in 1648. This is the context and the focus that has traditionally formed the core of discussions about the nature of political power and its legitimate exercise. The second major factor used in defining hegemony, the realm of economics, has been used in terms of answering the question of how the hegemonic project would bring the blessings of capitalism and prosperity not only to the dominant hegemon and its allies but also to the peoples with whom it does its business, makes its investments, and sends its troops. The problem is that this purely "economic assessment" often excludes the effects of those economic policies on the quality of lives of the people it impacts upon. The result is that normative concerns, such as egalitarian redistribution, are ignored. Too often, the growing economic rifts between socioeconomic classes are ignored as part of the calculus of "economic growth." Further, the questions surrounding the eradication of poverty are too often reduced to economic measurements instead of a comprehensive assessment of power relations between political and social classes. Hence, when economic inquiry so restricts and constricts our focus to "economic growth" while ignoring egalitarian redistribution concerns, it becomes an ideological construct for maintaining the dominance of those social groups and classes that directly benefit from the economics and politics of exclusion. In turn, this relegates the problems associated with poverty, social hierarchy, and economic exploitation to the realm of obscurity.

Within this context, I am arguing that these two areas of study need to be augmented by a third factor in order to address a larger human experience in the political economy of nations, and that is the ethical and moral traditions, standards, and aspirations of humankind. In the fields of international law and philosophy, this is the area of human rights. Hence, I am going to identify human rights as this third category that needs to be considered in defining the nature, effects, and practices of hegemony and the role of a hegemon

in the current system. By placing human rights in juxtaposition to hegemony, we are provided with the challenge of developing new conceptual tools and categories that can open the doors of perception to a different kind of assessment of the international order—a normative assessment. The necessity for this normative assessment is summed up by Ulrich Beck’s observation that there is a “legitimacy vacuum in which global business actors operate...In very general terms, this is a starting point for social movements for whom the question ‘how do we want to live?’ is at the heart of politics and yet is sidelined or not addressed at all by the state or global business.”<sup>15</sup> Hence, if we want to bring accountability to the activities of states and the nature of global business, then we need human rights criteria for that purpose. In addition to that task, the criteria of human rights serves as an international law avenue through which the equality of nations can be asserted despite the reluctance of a dominant hegemon that prefers to play by its own rules, be accountable to no one, and rely on raw power as its justification for operating in a unilateral manner in world affairs.

The introduction of the category of human rights brings our assessment of the hegemonic enterprise within the scope of a set of standards located in a normative realm that judges the actions of a hegemon in light of universally held ethical and moral concerns. This normative realm is not only a feature of the teachings of the world’s great religions—it is also a feature characteristic of evolving standards in customary international law. At the dawn of the twenty-first century, this international law standard has already been applied by the International Criminal Court (ICC). Specifically, it has been a standard that has been applied in the tribunals constituted to judge accountability for the atrocities, war crimes, and genocides in Rwanda, Sierra Leone, and the former Yugoslavia. Given this recent history, the introduction of international law standards on human rights may be used in reference to judging the specific acts and international conduct of the American Hegemon.

### THE EXERCISE OF HEGEMONY WITHOUT LEGITIMACY

With respect to introducing the concept of human rights into our evaluation and assessment of the hegemonic enterprise, I believe it would be helpful to consult the work of Boaventura de Sousa Santos. Santos has identified three areas of dialectical tension that lie at the core of Western modernity: the first one occurs between social regulation and social emancipation; the second dialectical tension occurs between the state and civil society; while the third dialectical tension occurs between nation-state and what we call globalization.<sup>16</sup> For the purposes of this discussion, I want to concentrate on only Santos third point—the dialectical tension between the nation-state and globalization.

Santos notes, “today the selective erosion of the nation-state due to the intensification of neo-liberal globalization raises the question of whether both social regulation and emancipation are to be displaced at the global level...To begin with, most enforceable human rights are still enforced (and violated) at the state level and, therefore, the weakening of the state may

bring with it the erosion of enforceability.” Further, “from the 1990s onwards neo-liberal globalization began to be confronted by social movements and progressive NGOs, leading to a counterhegemonic globalization, a globalization from below, [and] new conceptions of human rights emerged offering radical alternatives to the liberal North-centric conceptions that until then had dominated with unquestioned supremacy.” As a direct result of this questioning in conjunction with the emergence of counterhegemonic globalization, “the global South began to question these conceptions by showing...that the global North and its imperial domination over the South—now intensified by neoliberal global capitalism—was indeed the root source of the most massive violations of human rights.”<sup>17</sup> In other words, the form of global capitalism that was and is being coordinated by the American Hegemon—in conjunction with its core capitalist allies in other nations as well as through interlinked economic networks—would ultimately be seen as being directly responsible for massive violations of human rights. This is the context in which the concept of human rights provides us with the means to construct an ethical/moral critique of hegemony and empire (in their American incarnation).

### THE POWER OF ETHICS VERSUS THE ETHIC OF POWER: HUMAN RIGHTS VERSUS HEGEMONY

The concept of human rights and the international law of human rights constitutes an indispensable tool with which to expose the inconsistencies, lies, and hypocrisy of an imperial project that continues to act in conjunction with its other adjunct features in the form of a capitalist-driven globalization, the networks of transnational capitalism, the economic model of neoliberalism, and the dynamics of an ever-expanding global corporate/capitalist order.<sup>18</sup> Insofar as the American Hegemon has preached the value of human rights as a universal value that deserves protection and enforcement, it is time to juxtapose these pronouncements with its actual policies. In general terms, it can be established that “hegemonic powers throughout history have sought to set the rules, not necessarily to abide by them. They have attempted to create the institutions and enforce the rules that govern the global political economy and that regulate relations among states and peoples. This means that they generally act differently from the rest of the world. For example, hegemonic powers typically protect their citizens from the judicial proceedings of other powers.”<sup>19</sup> When the United States exempted itself from the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court (ICC), it offered the excuse that it may result in “frivolous” proceedings against U.S. soldiers or policy makers who may find themselves charged with war crimes. Despite the fact that most nations have endorsed The Rome Statute that created the ICC, the American Hegemon has placed itself outside of its legal jurisdiction. In much the same manner, U.S. Attorney General Alberto Gonzales and special legal counsel to the U.S. Department of Justice, Professor John Yoo, both called the Geneva Conventions “quaint” and therefore not binding on the

Bush administration's use of torture on captured "enemy combatants" in its prosecution of the "war on terror."

According to Richard Falk, this history demonstrates "it is clear that this American hostility to the ICC is not a matter of principled opposition to international criminal law based on the primacy of sovereign rights...This manner of conduct can be understood either as 'empire's law' or as simple hypocrisy."<sup>20</sup> A similar conclusion has been offered by Professor Michael Mann about the burden of hegemony on the hegemon to follow established international law principles: "We must remain skeptical of American claims that the New Empire would be completely benevolent. Imperialists always say this but never are. But an Empire to which the ruled routinely consent is not unusual. This is what we call 'hegemony,' a word which indicates that the imperial power establishes 'the rules of the game' by which others routinely play...Hegemony should be an invisible hand, lying behind the accepted rules of the game. The catch is that to be hegemonic, the U.S. might have to play by the rules. An Empire based on highly visible militarism abandons the rules and so risks losing hegemony."<sup>21</sup>

By virtue of its fear of losing hegemony, "the United States preaches universalism, but it practices national particularity and cultural relativism."<sup>22</sup> Therefore, "because of American exceptionalism, a view deeply embedded in American culture, the United States has manifested persistent difficulty in adjusting to almost all contemporary multilateral arrangements it does not control or heavily influence."<sup>23</sup> The myth of American exceptionalism has worked to define the character, nature, and practice of American multilateralism. In this respect, American contempt for, and opposition to, joining the International Criminal Court (ICC) is connected to its contempt for the potential of the United Nations to circumscribe, challenge, or place limits on the exercise of American power.

In reality, there was no contradiction between the establishment of international institutions like the IMF, World Bank, NATO and SEATO, the GATT (and its successor, the WTO), and the bold assertion of U.S. hegemony. The paradox is overcome with the realization that American priorities and influence would have the last word on what these post-1945 institutions would seek to accomplish (or prevent from being accomplished) on the world stage. With this realization, the true character of American multilateralism becomes clear through the prism of America's hegemonic predominance. Whatever gloss that certain academics and U.S. policy makers would wish to bestow on NATO, SEATO, the IMF, the World Bank, GATT (and later, the WTO), the fact remains that these international institutions undertook the task of creating a global regulatory framework that excluded the global South from having a definitive voice or a vote on matters of trade and finance. Hence, "the point to be stressed here is that this form of multilateralism reflected few constraints on U.S. independence."<sup>24</sup> When viewed from this perspective, we begin to realize that a truly effective international law has not yet been created, for if an effective and democratic form of international law did exist, it would be one that protected the weak and the strong—and would

embody a form and practice of international law principles and mechanisms that would constrain the exercise of U.S. power.<sup>25</sup> Instead, we have in its place the *de facto* global dominance of an American Hegemon that “generally opposes the creation of international law and organization that might seriously restrain the independent or unilateral exercise of US power.”<sup>26</sup> The lack of a viable legal and rule-making capacity to effectively oppose or to even constrain the American Hegemon reveals the fact that there has been an underlying pattern of hegemony and domination that has held sway throughout the international system from 1945 to the present.

Acknowledging these patterns is critical to both understanding the complex relationship between the regional and global aspects of governance. On the one hand, regional actors have resented being forced to conform to a set of rules and regulations established by the American Hegemon and its global institutional network of financial forces. Yet, on the other hand, regional actors have also lived in fear of being excluded or completely left out of that hegemonic system. In light of this dialectic, the nations of the global South have been forced to live with a persistent conceptual and political duality. The regions of the global South have been caught between the two poles of America’s hegemonic power—marginalization, on the one hand, and domination, on the other. In striving to meet their developmental requirements the nations of the global South have been forced to participate in U.S.-dominated trading and financial structures and rules. To ignore this reality is to risk a path of marginalization that could lead to ruin. However, the other side of the coin is that participation carries with it the dangers associated with vulnerability, the surrender of sovereignty, and the loss of bargaining power. Under these conditions, the choice between domination and marginalization is not much of a choice. To awaken to this reality is to come to observe that “contrary to a rigorous or expansive understanding of hegemonic stability theory, great powers do not make great multilateralists.”<sup>27</sup> What hegemonic stability theory actually stands for is the proposition that, up until this most recent historical moment, the American Hegemon has effectively been able to either control or manage global relations largely unimpeded.

Given these facts, it is clear that the exercise of global power by the American Hegemon follows a double standard with regard to human rights. On the one hand, the hegemon preaches respect for human rights at home and abroad while often violating this standard in practice. U.S. corporations, the World Bank, the IMF, and the WTO have often intruded on the sovereignty and rights of nations throughout the global South. Hence, I will argue that the enterprise of America’s hegemony has made the central tenets and practice of human rights law incompatible with the universal claims of human rights. Further, I will argue that the pursuit of America’s global hegemony has led to a situation in which the United States has engaged in “state terrorism” *vis-à-vis* the criminal nature of America’s military tactics.<sup>28</sup> The U.S. reliance on the ethic of power, in isolation from the power of ethics, creates not only a crisis for human rights *per se*; it has also created a crisis the entire construct of international law. Nowhere is this more evident than with respect

to the notion and concept of sovereign equality. Under the auspices of the American Hegemon, we find that “the predominant position of the United States puts sovereign equality under significant pressure...it affects not only the traditional, formal elements of the legal concept of sovereign quality, but also keeps the United States outside the universal legal order created in recent decades, either through U.S. insistence on exceptional treatment, or through its abstention from treaties that otherwise find almost universal support—wherever possible, the United States seeks to evade international law’s pull toward equality.”<sup>29</sup>

The tragedy of the American hegemonic project is that through its military and economic interventions, the sovereign rights of independent states and the peoples within their boundaries have become enslaved to the dictates of the American Empire and its priorities, often to the detriment of their own interests, development, and rights. Yet, America’s global lawlessness during the Bush-II years has continued unabated. On this matter, let us just take a small sampling of scholarly titles critical of America’s rogue power between the years of 2003 and 2007: (1) *The United States and the Rule of Law in International Affairs*,<sup>30</sup> (2) *United States Hegemony and the Foundations of International Law*,<sup>31</sup> (3) *How America Gets Away With Murder: Illegal Wars, Collateral Damage and Crimes Against Humanity*,<sup>32</sup> (4) *Lawless World: America and the Making and Breaking of global Rules from FDR’s Atlantic Charter to George W. Bush’s Illegal War*,<sup>33</sup> (5) *The Iraq Crisis and World Order: Structural, Institutional and Normative Challenges*,<sup>34</sup> (6) *Strategies of Dominance: The Misdirection of US Foreign Policy*,<sup>35</sup> and (7) *The Constitution’s Text in Foreign Affairs*.<sup>36</sup> What these texts have in common is a deep concern with how U.S. strategists during the Bush-II presidency have combined their ideological vision with America’s economic expansionism and their attempt to guide America’s hegemonic role in the international system. Historically, it represents an American foreign policy approach that began with Woodrow Wilson. It has often held out the promise of peace for the United States. This peace, however, has turned out to be a peace of illusions. It did not make the world “safe for democracy” and, in the first decade of the twenty-first century, it has produced neither peace nor security for the United States or the world at large.

My purpose for citing the above-referenced select bibliography in the body of this chapter is to underscore the presence of a widespread recognition of some of the central problems associated with the exercise hegemony. While the historical roots of this problem may be traced back to the early years of the twentieth century, there is little question but that the presidency of George W. Bush has taken American lawlessness to a whole new level. Having started down this path, we are left to wonder how many successive U.S. administrations will continue down this same path or, in the alternative, will have difficulty in reversing the direction.

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## CHAPTER 3



# HEGEMONIC GLOBAL CAPITALISM VERSUS THE UNIVERSAL CLAIMS OF HUMAN RIGHTS LAW

In this chapter, I will argue that hegemonic global capitalism and American hegemony can easily be seen as the mirrored reflection of one other. After all, history demonstrates that American hegemony came to rest on the geographical spread of American marketplace society, as manifested in the most recent phase of capitalism's globalization.<sup>1</sup> The nexus between American hegemony and the hegemony of global capitalism is discovered in the realization that they are joint enterprises that can be collapsed together under the rubric of the term "globalization." As Professor William I. Robinson argues, this is the result of a historical process wherein "global capitalism is hegemonic not just because its ideology has become dominant but also, and perhaps primarily, because it has the ability to provide material rewards and to impose sanctions."<sup>2</sup> Yet, despite the power of global capitalism, counter-hegemonic trends have arisen around the globe. In fact, "globalization has fueled a rapid process of social polarization worldwide and a crisis of social reproduction." According to Robinson, this means that while the number of people who have been integrated into the global market has increased, "it is also true that the absolute number of destitute and near destitute has been increasing, and the gap between the rich and the poor in global society has been widening since the 1970s."<sup>3</sup>

Since the early 1970s, this result can be attributed to the imposition of a neoliberal economic model that has advanced privatization, the weakening of state, and deregulation of the economy to such a degree that it has deprived the public sector of its resources while, at the same time, it has engaged in transferring those resources into private hands. While many elites throughout



the global South recognize these realities and consequences emanating from following the neoliberal model, they feel trapped by the fact that they see no alternative to neoliberalism. Either one participates in a neoliberal system with all of its attendant problems (including vulnerability to and domination by foreign elites) or one is excluded and marginalized altogether.

One of the results of this process is the development of a three-tiered social structure that transcends national boundaries. According to Robinson, the first tier is made up of about 40 percent of the population “in what traditionally have been core countries and less in peripheral countries,” so that they represent those who hold “tenured” employment and are able both to maintain and expand their consumption. The second tier comprises approximately 30 percent of the population in the core countries and around 20 to 30 percent in the periphery. They form a growing army of workers who experience chronic insecurity about their ability to maintain their employment, especially since the demise of the welfare state in the 1980s and 1990s. The third tier, “comprising some 30 percent of the population in the traditional core countries and some 50 percent or more in the peripheral countries, represents those who have been structurally excluded” and have now become the “‘superfluous’ population of global capitalism.”<sup>4</sup>

Globalization of this type, according to a series of United Nations Development Reports (UNDP, 1999, 2000) “is a grotesque and dangerous polarization between the people and countries that have benefited from the system and those who are mere passive receivers of its effects.”<sup>5</sup> This growing gap between the global rich and the global poor represents “the new global apartheid.” As a result, the universal claims of human rights and the employment of human rights standards have been sacrificed more slowly in “more developed countries” (MDCs) than in “less developed countries” (LDCs), but it is happening in both First and Third World contexts.<sup>6</sup> In previous publications, I have referred to this phenomenon as “exclusionary governance.”

Exclusionary governance is both *a structural reality* and *a political strategy*. In the case of the United States, as in the case of nations throughout the global South, it is a *structural phenomenon* to the extent that both the bureaucracy and rule-making capacity of the state excludes the “lower classes” and group interests that are incompatible with hegemonic capitalism and the political ideology of those who have grabbed the power and institutions of the state. In short, structural exclusion effectively and systematically creates a permanent underclass of excluded persons that is confined to either poverty, or jail, or prison (the U.S. “prison-industrial complex”). The exclusionary state attains its ultimate goal when it is able to create a society of tremendous inequalities that continue to widen exponentially over time. Exclusionary governance is *a political strategy* to the extent that it denies giving voice to the concerns of the majority of people in a nation and further separates large social groups from access to the processes of national decision making. Strategically, the articulation of the national interest falls to elite groups who will determine, among themselves, how wealth will be distributed within the nation.<sup>7</sup>

In the context of the global South, we find that the trends associated with these manifestations of exclusionary governance have resulted in a crisis of legitimacy for the state—especially in those nation-states that have willingly privatized government services and sold them to the highest corporate bidder. Yet, the resulting socioeconomic and sociopolitical exclusion of privatization and market fundamentalism has led to higher levels of social conflict (“*sociopolitical instability*,” or SPI). Given this trend, Robinson writes, “Privatization results in a pure market-determined distribution. Given the highly skewed structure of income distribution, the process tends to aggravate inequalities and social polarization. It has predictably sparked sharp conflicts.”<sup>8</sup> This is where the significance of my definition of the Exclusionary State comes in. To begin with, the ES is not limited to authoritarian or dictatorial regimes but can also be applied to the so-called democracies. The criterion that matters most for making a determination of whether or not a country is truly democratic is a criterion that evaluates how, and to what degree, that state allows for the participation of the majority of its social classes, groups, and interests in both its deliberations and its distributional decisions. The greater the degree of inclusiveness, I have found that there is a greater likelihood of higher degrees of stability and legitimacy as well as a strong adherence to the protection of human rights, civil liberties, and an expanding human rights culture.<sup>9</sup> In the alternative, the greater the degree of political and economic exclusion, I have found that there is a trend toward sociopolitical instability and a strong bias against democracy as a mechanism for political participation and the protection of civil rights and civil liberties.<sup>10</sup>

From this analysis, it can be argued that hegemonic global capitalism is a force that in addition to producing tremendous profits for elite social classes, it simultaneously produces instability, inequalities, and social conflict for the majority of social classes, groups, and interests that exist outside of a culture of “crony capitalism.” Among the many examples to choose from is the 1994 \$50 billion economic bailout of Mexico by U.S. taxpayers. It was sold as a “neighborly act” that was designed to help the people of Mexico. In fact, it only bailed out the Wall Street speculators and the World Bank theorists who had imposed devastating economic “adjustments” on Mexico that failed to deliver their promised benefit and instead led to the infamous peso crisis.<sup>11</sup> This event is representative of a consistent pattern of governance created by U.S. hegemony throughout the Third World for decades.<sup>12</sup> Under the auspices of both U.S. hegemony and hegemonic global capitalism, most Third World leaders pursued self-serving policies and accepted inducements from the United States, as well as other industrial nations, that have effectively eroded any hope for balanced development and stability.

Under the Bush-II administration, “crony capitalism” has now made its most glaring appearance in the First World as well. This is not to say that it was not introduced before 2001. In the late 1980s, the United States, under the first President Bush, failed to effectively deal with the savings and loan crisis. Speculation and bad investments by bankers resulted in massive defaults by banks to their customers. Only the Federal Deposit Insurance

Corporation (FDIC) could even begin to bail out the victims of the fraud—and then only up to \$100,000 of their deposits. It was a financial crisis that resulted in about 1,169 savings and loan institutions collapsing and having to be bailed out at a cost of over \$500 billion through both the FDIC and heavy borrowing from the accounts in social security. As the so-called post-cold war “peace dividend” evaporated in scandal and “crony capitalism,” it would be nothing compared to the 2001 through 2008 period under the second President Bush as Halliburton became the recipient of no-bid contracts from the Pentagon and as corporations like ENRON stole the pension funds of its employees with virtual impunity and, in September 2008, Secretary of the Treasury Hank Paulson would come to Congress begging for an almost \$1 trillion bailout package for Wall Street in order to deal with the ripple effects of the real estate meltdown. Not to be outdone in the arena of market manipulation and war profiteering, the major U.S. oil companies—from Exxon/Mobil, Shell, and Conoco Philips to Chevron/Texaco, Petrobras, and Royal Dutch/Shell—derived their greatest tax-free profits in history from the Bush-II administration as it made its journey through Iraq.<sup>13</sup>

In light of this history, we may conclude that U.S. Global Hegemony—when intertwined with hegemonic global capitalism—has been an enterprise that has contributed to higher levels of socioeconomic instability in both First and Third World settings. The practice of this brand of capitalism may easily be referred to as monopolistic and antithetical to the ideal of the free market. At the very least, Wall Street enjoyed unregulated “free market” profiteering on the way up and then sought to enjoy socializing the cost of its financial recklessness on the way down as it sought to be rescued by a huge U.S. government bailout.

When practiced throughout the Third World, hegemonic global capitalism embodies all of the major characteristics of exclusionary governance by promoting and protecting “exclusionary states” and exclusionary practices that have not only disregarded human rights but violated basic human rights standards, protections, and concepts. Given the nature of this history, we can at least dispense with the illusion that the American Hegemon is benign or that the regimes it creates abroad are benign. In this regard, one of the most fundamental and enduring conflicts in the U.S. foreign policy establishment is the one between internationalists and nationalists. *Internationalists*, which include business and political elites driven by ideology and economic interests, have supported global institutions committed to lowering trade barriers and working to facilitate the progress of international trade and investment through multilateral lending arrangements. *Nationalists*, who have been coequally driven by ideology and economic interests, have supported high tariff barriers and opposed U.S. involvement in global institutions. In large measure, the internationalists have included business firms with extensive ties to foreign markets through both exports and foreign direct investments. In contrast, nationalist business interests have been largely tied to the U.S. domestic market and dependent on tariffs or other forms of trade protection to secure a profitable place in the U.S. market.

The U.S. corporate and political elites built their version of the post-1945 world within the framework of a Bretton Woods system that would help make the transition from British global hegemony to U.S. global hegemony a reality. As a hegemonic power, the United States would be forced to respond strategically, not only for the sake of maximizing the power of U.S. economic interests, but also for the opportunity to direct the establishment of multilateral global institutions such as the IMF and World Bank. In other words, the post-1945 international regime of finance and investment would be built in correspondence with the goals and policies of America's political and economic elites who not only made U.S. foreign policy but also directed the progress, priorities, and goals of the American Hegemon. It is a point underscored by Stephen Toope, who notes, "Whether one holds on to the hegemonic explanation of regime creation (perhaps incorporating non-material factors), or adopts a more complex view linking material and non-material factors in an interactive process of normative evolution, it is important to remember that neither hegemons nor regimes are inevitably benign."<sup>14</sup>

Toope's critique is especially insightful for analyzing the claim that the United States can create democratic regimes throughout the Third World without the use of military force and simply by the force of American ideals. The nature of the American occupation of Iraq from 2003 through 2008—and beyond—points to the inherent instability of a neoliberal economic model built on the foundations of privatization as well as the inherent inability of an American Hegemon to impose transplanted democratic ideals on an ethnically divided society that has few historical roots within a democratic tradition. Rather, the interactive process of normative evolution in Iraq (in the twenty-first century) has exposed the weakness of a hegemonic enterprise that was supposed to bring stability not only to Iraq but also to the entire region of the Middle East.

According to realist theory, instability is antithetical to what hegemony is designed to produce. So, if hegemony is supposed to produce international stability and fails to do so, then we may conclude that it is either ineffective as a stabilizing force in world affairs or, in the alternative, can only produce and reproduce hegemony through force and the exercise of raw power. It then follows that both global capitalism and the U.S. hegemonic enterprise work in combination to reproduce economic and political structures that are exclusionary in theory, practice, and outcome. It also follows that the capitalist structure is itself so inherently unstable that it requires U.S. military force to back it up and sustain it over the long term. Hence, the resulting combination of sociopolitical and socioeconomic instability, in combination with the suppression of excluded social forces (including ethnic minorities), reveals the continued existence of an international socioeconomic and sociopolitical order that is antithetical to the recognition, enforcement, and practice of human rights.

In examining the reasons why U.S. hegemony is antithetical to the recognition, enforcement, and practice of human rights in the Third World, three examples come to mind: (1) U.S. arms sales to the Third World, (2) the

issue of Third World debt to the richer nations, and (3) U.S. foreign aid. On the matter of arms sales, “Third World arms expenditures after 1970 grew nearly threefold by 1987, even in regions such as Latin America and Africa that were generally not at war, and in some years exceeded the economic aid they received.”<sup>15</sup> As recently as August 2007, under the guise of promoting a “security dialogue” in the Persian Gulf, the Bush administration proposed \$63 billion in arms transfers to the Middle East over the course of the ensuing decade. The foundation of the deal was a pledge to sell \$20 billion worth of high-tech arms to Saudi Arabia and the other oil-producing states in the region. Further, to ease any concerns about the Gulf buildup, the U.S. plan called for increasing military aid to Israel and Egypt to \$3 billion and \$1.3 billion per year, respectively. The cost to the U.S. taxpayer for this kind of support amounts to about \$43 billion over the ensuing decade. After more than sixty years of arms races in the Middle East, it is clear that the only real beneficiaries will be U.S. arms makers. On the matter of Third World debt, we find that “notwithstanding a temporary restructuring of nearly half of its debt during the 1980s, the external debt of the developing nations increased to an all-time high of \$1.270 trillion in 1991, only to catapult to \$1.970 trillion in 1999; debt service payments increased to 120 percent.”<sup>16</sup> Now, add to these numbers the real story of U.S. foreign aid. On the matter of foreign aid, it has been noted that “if all foreign aid given since 1950 had been invested in U.S. Treasury Bills, the assets of poor countries by 2001 would have amounted to \$2.3 trillion. Of course, the aid was not invested in such a fashion. Instead, much of it went to build a foreign aid bureaucracy. For example, the World Bank’s administrative expenses grew from \$81 million in 1959–1960 to \$1.5 billion in 1993–1994...while its staff grew from 657 to 7,106.”<sup>17</sup> Meanwhile, the typical poor country has stagnated. In this regard, Noam Chomsky notes, “The basic rules of world order remain as they have always been: the rule of law for the weak, the rule of force for the strong; the principles of ‘economic rationality’ for the weak, state power and intervention for the strong.”<sup>18</sup>

### THE CONCEPT OF HEGEMONY

While the concept of hegemony is firmly established in the social science lexicon, it means different things to different speakers. There are at least four interwoven conceptions in the literature on the international order and the world capitalist system:

1. Hegemony as international domination
2. Hegemony as state hegemony
3. Hegemony as consensual domination or ideological hegemony
4. Hegemony as the exercise of leadership within historic blocs in a social formation<sup>19</sup>

These four conceptions of hegemony will now be addressed in sequence. In so doing, it is important to remember that while each conception has unique identifying features, it is also true that they may be seen as part of

a larger interwoven dynamic that reveals itself over long waves of historical time. We now shall address each of these four conceptions in turn.

### (1) Hegemony as International Domination

According to William Robinson, the first conception of hegemony is derived from the realist tradition in International Relations Theory (IR) as well as those scholars located in the field of International Political Economy (IPE). Hegemony is understood as dominance backed by active domination. An example of this form of hegemony would be the way in which a post-1945 Soviet Union exercised hegemony over Eastern Europe and the manner in which the United States exercised hegemony over the capitalist world during the cold war.<sup>20</sup> This example is fine, as far as it goes. However, it has some severe historical limitations and stands in need of some qualifications.

According to Christopher Layne, we must acknowledge the historical fact that “before a great power reasonably can aspire to global hegemony, it first must gain dominance over its own region.”<sup>21</sup> Layne refers back to what I call the “*ghost of hegemony past*” by referring to the history of the European state system from 1500 to 1945. During these centuries, there were “successive failed attempts by great powers to establish ‘mastery in Europe.’” This effort by the great powers was premised on the idea that only by gaining regional hegemony would they have a sufficient enough “launching pad to bid for global hegemony.” In this quest, the “European powers failed to attain extra-regional hegemony because they were unable to first establish preponderance on the Continent.”<sup>22</sup>

On the other hand, the United States “is the only great power successfully to have gained regional dominance, the prerequisite for extra-regional hegemony.” From the time of the Monroe Doctrine, which warned the European powers about incursions into the Western Hemisphere, to the doctrine of “Manifest Destiny,” and through the cold war years as the United States defended the “Free World, America in its regional backyard remained “the master of its own house” (the words of JFK during the Cuban Missile Crisis).” Here we have the example of an America that “never had had to worry about rivals in its own region” so that “once the United States emerged as a great power and established its primacy in the Western Hemisphere, it has been free to concentrate its resources and ambitions on seeking extra-regional hegemony.”<sup>23</sup>

### (2) Hegemony as State Hegemony

In both world systems theory and IR literature, the term hegemony is largely defined in reference to a dominant nation-state within the core that serves to anchor the world capitalist system. It is also defined as a powerful enough state that it can both impose global rules and enforce them as well. It is this dual capacity for rule making and rule enforcement that allows the nation-state to function over time. We can cite a succession of hegemonic powers in

the history of world capitalism, beginning with the Dutch and then found in both the British and U.S. experiences. In this structuring of the world system, we define a particular power as a “hegemon.”<sup>24</sup>

The American Hegemon was born when World War II ended. In 1945, the United States enjoyed a virtually unfettered range of grand and global strategic choices with many options available to America’s elite. It would be helpful to rely on “realism”—the most important school of thought in the study of international politics—to outline the available range of choices. Realists subscribe to several “hardcore” assumptions about the nature of the international order: (1) the international system is state-centric, (2) it is anarchic, and (3) it is a self-help system. With the passage of time, there is an ongoing struggle between states for both power and security. Specifically, the exercise of power, in this context, means that the great powers strive to gain *relative* power advantages over their rivals.<sup>25</sup>

It is important to note the use of the word *relative* in this context insofar as it reveals the *relativity* of the idea of power in reference to some other state or states (seen as potential rivals to its position). In other words, the *relative* nature of judging power advantages among rivals is an interpretative task, not a science. As in any interpretation, the final product is little more than a construct of what the reality is perceived to be.

The postwar construct that became America’s “grand strategy” was premised on both domestic and international factors. Among the primary domestic considerations of capital-intensive investors and political elites was the need to construct a stable alliance system.<sup>26</sup> Associated with this concern was the awareness of the Washington and Wall Street elites in the importance of Latin America and the Far East due to their supply of raw materials to both the United States and Western Europe.<sup>27</sup>

Hidden behind all of the concerns with access to raw materials from the Third World was an overarching hegemonic concern—the need for global leadership to stabilize trade and investment conditions in Western Europe (vital to capital-intensive investors who viewed it as their most lucrative market since the 1920s and 1930s).<sup>28</sup> Hence, America’s ascendancy to not only hegemony in the international system but also being the most dominant hegemon in that system involved rebuilding war-torn Europe making strides to subsidize America’s partners and rehabilitate an economy of international exchange. The architects of the American Hegemon recognized the vital fact that only by resting American ascendancy on the foundation of a common dollar reserve could Washington provide its allies a subsidy in which hegemony could be transformed from a coercive predominance into a shared public good.<sup>29</sup>

According to Christopher Layne, it is clear that far from being structurally determined, the U.S. decision to pursue extraregional hegemony in Europe following World War II was a matter of choice.<sup>30</sup> This interpretation is supported by the “Open Door” school of U.S. diplomatic history. The Open Door school set forth the proposition that, at the beginning of the late nineteenth century, the United States had vigorously “pursued an

expansionist—indeed, hegemonic or even imperial—policy, first in the Western Hemisphere and then in Asia, Europe, and the Persian Gulf.”<sup>31</sup> According to Layne, this historical explanation holds the answer to the question, “*Why didn’t U.S. grand strategy change when the cold war ended?*” He believes that the answer is to be found in the realization that the Open Door school of thought effectively “incorporates both economic expansion and ideological expansion and links them to U.S. national security.” The effect of Open Door economic expansion was to create new interests that “had to be defended by projecting U.S. military power abroad.” In turn, this projection of military power “shaped policymakers’ perceptions of how these interests were threatened” and, at the same time, “led to a new conception of America’s security requirements by transforming the goal of US grand strategy from national defense to national security.”<sup>32</sup>

Precisely because the birth and evolution of the newly constituted American national security establishment was the product of choice—of elite choices embodied within the Council on Foreign Relations and its allies in the Roosevelt and Truman administrations, respectively—we can deduce from the historical record that the priorities of this elite establishment was not the product of democratic decision making or democratic participation. Rather, it can be more properly understood as having evolved from an elite social class in the United States that was largely comprised of big business, industry, and an incipient military-industrial complex that would continue to incorporate larger sections of American society and economy in the years after 1945. By the time that the Vietnam War was an acknowledged disaster in 1968, and by the time that the Iraq War and subsequent U.S. occupation was acknowledged as a political and human tragedy, what has become abundantly clear is that “because the formulation of national security policy has been undemocratic, public discourse related to those policies has been sterile, formulaic, and unproductive, more posturing than principled debate. The hegemonic status of the national security paradigm has served to squelch any consideration of real alternatives, despite the persistence and sporadic political influence of organized dissent.”<sup>33</sup>

The very thought patterns of the American foreign policy elites and their strategists reveal the dynamics of what has come to be called “group think.” It finds its intellectual justification in the evolution of rational-choice theory. In this closed world, the American national security structure was born. It grew to maturity in an atmosphere of secrecy. By the early 1950s, it had already reached its adulthood in the paranoid atmosphere of anticommunism and cold war rhetoric. It was an interpretation of history that came to reflect a self-fulfilling prophecy that effectively combined the doctrine of American exceptionalism with a twentieth-century version of “manifest destiny.” The result of this ideological mixture was to produce a convergence of imperial ideology with the logic of capitalist expansionism.

In large measure, by reviewing the post-1945 national security mind-set and its imperial assumptions, revisionist historians have discovered that the U.S. national security bureaucracy consistently ignored the “most fundamental



insight of realist international relations theory: that a rough balance of power is necessary to curb the tendency of the strongest state to exploit its power advantage to the maximum at the expense of the weaker states.” In so doing, political contention over the merits of this realist viewpoint “has now become part of the debate over the advantages and disadvantages to the United States and to the world of U.S. dominance of the international system.”<sup>34</sup>

The actual content of this debate seems to surround two central factors: (1) the capabilities of the American Hegemon in a globalizing world and (2) the very identity of the United States in its role as the most predominant power in the first decade of the twenty-first century. Yet, these considerations are not limited to the American Hegemon insofar as it shares the international arena with other great powers: Russia, China, India, Japan, and the nations that make up the membership of the European Union. On this matter, it has been observed that “in terms of capabilities, the great powers play a major role in shaping both the present power structure and the alternatives to it. In terms of identity, the great powers make an important input into whether the social structure is one of enemies, rivals or friends, and therefore into the character of international society. On both of these counts, the great powers have choices about whether to pull the props from U.S. superpowerdom or work to keep them in place.”<sup>35</sup>

At the beginning of this chapter, I began by arguing that hegemony and the place of a dominant hegemon would largely be decided in relative terms—that is, a great power in relation to other powers. Therefore, as early as the mid-1990s, some historians were claiming that the era of the American Hegemon was already in the process of decline and about to end. The reasons for this dire assessment were based on the view that “the era of American preeminence concluded not with the end of history and the fulfillment of national manifestations of abundance, aid, cultural exchange, and self-determination, nor with the end of military power. It concluded with the breakup of consensus and with the nation expending its resources, skilled labor, and wealth in unproductive ways and alienating parts of the world by the use of military force. A nation that refused to accept these domestic and international *relationships* stood to doom itself.”<sup>36</sup> The key word to concentrate upon is “*relationships*.” It is important because “we are not, therefore, in a unipolar world in the simple sense in which some neorealists and many politicians and political pundits would have us believe. We are in a more complicated world than that, and the existence of great powers alongside the superpower creates both opportunities and responsibilities to shape the direction in which world politics unfolds in the coming decades.”<sup>37</sup> In failing to recognize these complexities, the United States has placed itself at the mercy of history and historical processes that are completely beyond its control or ability to influence. As William Pfaff notes, “History does not offer nations permanent security, and when it seems to offer hegemonic domination this usually is only to take it away again, often in unpleasant ways.”<sup>38</sup> Interventionism and military force are usually counterproductive to the maintenance of hegemony insofar as these practices ignore diplomacy, make consensus among nations

next to impossible, and often disregard respect for the rule of law and the protection of human rights. Yet, the Bush-II administration has pursued a policy of interventionism and militarism in flagrant disregard of these lessons. The administration conducted an aggressive and unilateral foreign policy that has ignored the lessons of history and the realities of a pluralistic international environment. A clear alternative would be a noninterventionist foreign policy. According to William Pfaff, “the noninterventionist alternative to the policies followed in the United States since the 1950s is to minimize interference in other societies and accept the existence of an international system of plural and legitimate powers and interests...A noninterventionist policy would shun ideology and emphasize pragmatic and empirical judgment of the interests and needs of this nation and others, with reliance on diplomacy and analytical intelligence, giving particular attention to history, since nearly all serious problems between nations are recurrent or have important recurrent elements in them.”<sup>39</sup>

To argue for the need to replace decades of decisions grounded upon an emphasis of interventionism is to make a demand that formal recognition be made of the fact that this is a world in which international politics must be conducted in a manner respectful of interdependence. An interdependent world reduces the value of hegemony and hegemonic might in deciding issues. An interdependent world points to the global realities of pluralism, diplomacy, and cooperation—not domination. So, after decades of being incurably devoted to rule by force and coercion, it should come as little surprise that “views of interdependence went against the grain of established strategic thinking, and the United States had left-over extensive interests from its period of preeminence that blocked the acceptance of interdependence. The orthodox dismissed conceptions of interdependence with incredulity, if not contempt.”<sup>40</sup> Given this pattern of behavior throughout the twentieth century, it becomes clear, in retrospect, that “the American Century overestimated the nature of unilateral power, forgetting its relative qualities and the interests and desires of allies and rivals alike.”<sup>41</sup> Alternatively, to assert the need for a noninterventionist alternative to U.S. foreign policy is to come into direct confrontation with the entrenched American National Security State (NSS) and the adherence of its bureaucracy to the demands associated with continuing a path of hegemonic domination. Instead of rejecting interventionism and the hegemonic illusion regarding the true nature of unilateral power, the neoconservatives of the second Bush administration relied on their colleagues to write about and plan for the *Project for the New American Century* (PNAC). In its pages were the makings of the foreign policy fiasco known as the Second Iraq War and occupation.<sup>42</sup>

By engaging in a serious questioning process about the continuation of U.S. dominance and hegemony in international affairs, it would seem that the cumulative failures of past U.S. interventions in Vietnam, South East Asia, and in the impasse of the Iraq War and occupation, as well as other involvements throughout the Middle East, have served to reveal a deep disaffection with the consequences of American hegemony and the nature of its

involvements. By rejecting a noninterventionist alternative in its foreign policy, by its orthodox reliance on military force as the primacy vehicle through which to demonstrate its predominance, the American NSS establishment has consigned the American state, the American people, and the people of the world to a paradigm of “war without end.” It is a stance that appears to be embedded in America’s political DNA, making it, in the words of Robert Kagan, a “dangerous nation.”<sup>43</sup> For the American Hegemon, in the first decade of the twenty-first century, this growing disaffection and discomfort with its global role demonstrates how the *ghosts of hegemony—past and present*—are haunting the strategic planning of U.S. elites.<sup>44</sup> In short, this inquiry into the true nature of American hegemony now becomes not only a strategic and theoretical question but also a profoundly political and ethical question.<sup>45</sup>

Writing in 1938, the English philosopher Bertrand Russell asserted, “Violence and injustice breed violence and injustice, both in those who inflict them and in their victims. Defeat, if it is incomplete, breeds rage and hatred, while if it is complete it breeds apathy and inaction. Victory by force produces ruthlessness and contempt for the vanquished, however exalted may have been the original motives for war. All these considerations, while they do not prove that no good purpose can ever be achieved by force, do show that force is very dangerous, and that when there is very much of it any original good purpose is likely to be lost sight of before the end of the strife.”<sup>46</sup>

Writing around 467 BC, Aeschylus, the Greek tragedian, expressed the despair and hopelessness associated with the employment of reckless power in *Agamemnon*:

Upon what demon in the house do you call, to raise  
The cry of triumph? All your speech makes dark my hope.  
And to the heart below trickles the pale drop  
As in the hour of death  
Timed to our sunset and the mortal radiance.  
Ruin is near, and swift.<sup>47</sup>

### (3) Consensual Domination or Ideological Hegemony

Following the most classic or generic definition of hegemony (supplied by Antonio Gramsci), hegemony may be understood as the way in which a ruling group establishes and maintains its rule. Hegemony is rule by consent or the cultural and intellectual leadership achieved by a particular class, class fraction, strata, or social group as part of a larger project of class rule or domination. On this point, scholars who study Gramsci have reached a consensus on what he meant by the idea of hegemony at the national level: “hegemony at the national level is based upon what Gramsci calls the ‘historic bloc’...the social foundation on which hegemony can rest and may include different social classes, groups and movements that, together, are ambitious to obtain hegemony and to guide the structure and functioning of the state in a specific

situation.” Further, “a historic bloc is not a simple class alliance, but the complex totality of the relations of production in society.”<sup>48</sup> In the context of twentieth-century American history, the prime example of such a historic bloc is found in the origins of the Council of Foreign Relations (CFR; hereafter, “the Council”)—the product of a small number of American “men of affairs” and continuing through the period of the First World War. Its founding came during the period of 1918 through 1939, beginning with the Versailles Conference. At the conference, a small group of American and British participants began discussing the need for an organization that could engage in the continuous study of international relations. In the official history of the Council’s first fifteen years, there is an insightful statement of purpose that describes the problems faced at the conference in these terms: “Under the pressure of a public opinion which was impatient to be done with war-making and peace-making, decisions had to be taken in haste; and the minds of diplomats, generals, admirals, financiers, lawyers and technical experts were not sufficiently well furnished to enable them to function satisfactorily on critical issues at top speed. Realizing their own shortcomings, some of these men found themselves talking with others about a way of providing against such a state of things in the future.”<sup>49</sup>

The men who gathered at Versailles in 1918 represented an embryonic expression of what Gramsci had described as an historic bloc—a group of men from different backgrounds but all operating at the highest-class levels of their expertise within their respective nations. By starting a process of continuing dialogue, these men put into place a structure for international class dialogue regarding the common problems that they faced in maintaining their version and vision of what the emerging world order should look like, now that the First World War had ended.

What was first born in the Versailles of 1918 was the beginning of a consensual relationship between men of power and influence that would create the conditions for a new kind of hegemonic leadership capable of reaching into decision-making processes at the international level. This emerging hegemonic leadership was based on a sufficient number of subordinated states that were destined to continue to act within the framework of a belief system that was thoroughly supportive of this emerging hegemony. The membership of this new assemblage was drawn from a socially significant group of American and British elites. What is perhaps most significant about them is that they not only shared a common belief system but also accepted its major tenets as universalized principles.<sup>50</sup> This tendency to universalize principles that emerged out of these elite circles would continue to define American and British hegemony. Beginning with the origins of the CFR in 1918 and culminating with George W. Bush’s campaign to spread democracy, free trade, and America’s claim to global dominance, it can be argued that the decision of elites to pursue American hegemony has been part of a long historical trajectory that has continually shaped the nature of world order. Robert Cox and Timothy Sinclair have observed that “hegemony derives from the ways of doing and thinking of the dominant social strata of the dominant state or

states insofar as these ways of doing and thinking have inspired emulation or acquired the acquiescence of the dominant social strata of other states. These social practices and the ideologies that explain and legitimize them constitute the foundation of the hegemonic order.”<sup>51</sup> In this respect, “the world order is the common understanding of ‘legitimate’ or acceptable interstate behavior, legitimate in the sense that most states encourage, and the major powers actively try to punish, gross misbehavior.”<sup>52</sup>

The Treaty of Versailles served to create the institutional grounding for shared global principles among the great powers. This structure was ruptured by subsequent events. Into this abyss of uncertainty, the elites of Britain and the United States, operating through the CFR, struggled to create and to recreate a world order or “world polity” in which international and transnational rules, norms, and organizations that served their hegemonic interests would flower. In this sense, the world order or “world polity” emerges through interactions that “are structured mainly by the most powerful actors in the system.”<sup>53</sup> At the close of the Second World War, two of the Council’s senior directors wrote that they had become convinced that since the outbreak of the Second World War, the CFR had “come of age.” While they believed that the CFR had played a vital functional role throughout the 1920s and 1930s in developing the direction for U.S. foreign policy, it was only with the advent of the Second World War that a new role for the Council had been achieved. In making the claim that the CFR had “come of age,” the Council’s senior directors were “referring to the Council’s successful efforts, through its special War and Peace Studies Project, to plan out a new global order for the postwar world, an order in which the United States would be the dominant power.”<sup>54</sup> According to one assessment, “the War and Peace Studies groups, in collaboration with the American government, worked out an imperialistic conception of the national interest and war aims of the United States. The imperialism involved a conscious attempt to organize and control a global empire. The ultimate success of this attempt made the United States for a time the number one world power, exercising domination over large sections of the world—the American empire.”<sup>55</sup>

In keeping with our third definition of hegemony, what we are identifying in this third formulation is the idea of hegemony as “rule by consent or cultural and intellectual leadership achieved by a particular class, class fraction, strata, or social group, as part of a larger project of class rule or domination.”<sup>56</sup> To explicate this conception in even greater detail, it is necessary to add the following observations by Terry Boswell and Christopher Chase-Dunn: “(1) Hegemony is a condition of dominance without resort to coercion, due to the dependence of subordinates on the fortunes of the hegemon; (2) The dependence of economic growth on profitability gives capitalists a hegemonic position over both state and cultural institutions even without instrumental control; (3) In world-economy theory, a hegemon is a state that predominates over the world economy to such an extent that it sets major trading patterns and the political rules of the world order to match its own interests.”<sup>57</sup> All three of these observations (criteria) may be used in

understanding the historical evolution of American hegemony in the twentieth century. The practical relevance of this three-part criterion is borne out in any viable historical assessment of the evolution and function of the CFR.

The primary job of the CFR in 1941 was to develop a long-range strategy for the development of a one-world economy dominated by the United States. To this end, the intellectual and class leadership of the CFR, which included the N.Y. financial oligarchy but also counted among its membership industrial firms (US Steel, Mobil Oil, Standard Oil, New Jersey—now Exxon, IBM, ITT, General Electric), commercial banks (Chase Manhattan Bank, JPMorgan and Co., First National City Bank, Chemical Bank, Brown Brothers Harriman and Co., Bank of New York), life insurance companies (Equitable Life, New York Life, Metropolitan Life, Mutual of New York), investment banks (Morgan Stanley, Lehman Brothers), law firms (Milbank, Tweed, Hadley and McCloy), and an investment company (General American investors).<sup>58</sup> These companies may be further divided into groups, with each group representing certain companies with close Council interlocks (the Rockefeller group, the Morgan group, the First National City group, the Lehman-Goldman Sachs group, the Sullivan and Cromwell group, and the Du Pont group).<sup>59</sup> Between 1940 and 1945, the Council's War and Peace Studies Project tapped the intellectual repository of all of these groups, along with academic experts from the Ivy League schools, to staff study groups that averaged about ten to fifteen members per group. Almost one hundred individuals were involved in this work during this six-year period.<sup>60</sup> The primary aim of this vast undertaking was to directly influence the government. The Council's own official report, published in 1946, admitted that the "real touchstone" of the project was "the usefulness of the studies to the Government."<sup>61</sup>

The most fundamental questions asked and answered by the Council were "Was the Western hemisphere self-sufficient, or did it require trade with other world areas to maintain its prosperity?" and "How much of the world's resources and territory did the United States require to maintain its power and prosperity?" As it turns out, the Council's conclusions effectively supported the Marxist position on how U.S. capitalism was organized and what considerations American foreign policy had to be based on in order to meet those needs. Accordingly, the conclusions of the CFR came to effectively shape American foreign policy in the postwar years.<sup>62</sup> Designs for American hegemony in the postwar period were as much a reflection of the interests of these elite social strata as was the work of the men who officially occupied power positions in the U.S. government. America's eventual role as the dominant global hegemon was forged during the tempest years of the Second World War. In this period, "the Grand Area, as the United States-led non-German bloc was called during 1941, was only an interim measure to deal with the emergency situation of 1940 and early 1941. The preferred ideal was even more grandiose—one world economy dominated by the United States."<sup>63</sup> To this end, the CFR and its allies worked hard to make sure that America's postwar plans were "expanded to include the entire globe. A new world order with international political and economic institutions was

projected, which would join and integrate all of the earth's nations under the leadership of the United States. The unification of the world was now the aim of the Council and government planners."<sup>64</sup> This depiction of global order perfectly fits neatly with what late twentieth-century writers have called "globalization."

The late 1940s through the 1970s marked the merger of multinational corporate rationales and goals with American foreign policy objectives and priorities. In this context, the contours and very structure of America's global primacy and predominance would be representative of a merger between elite capitalist interests among other capitalist nations within a larger international hegemonic bloc. This arrangement allowed for the United States to be at the epicenter of power in the post-1945 world. As a result, the nations within the Western alliance structure would largely subordinate their own interests to those of the American Hegemon. From NATO to SEATO and all points in between, it seemed that American international hegemony was largely secure. Its only potential rival was the Soviet Union and the distant possibility that Third World Nations might seek to break away from the bipolar power struggle that the cold war induced. The Non-Aligned Nations Movement (NAM) and the Third World's struggle for a New International Economic Order (NIEO) were two such attempts. However, both challenges proved to be manageable for the American National Security State and its bureaucrats. Only the tide of time and events would begin to alter the key elements that had led to its post-1945 predominance.

The undermining of American hegemony can be traced, in part, to the dynamics of uneven capitalist development. Throughout Western history, we find that the unequal and uneven development of the world capitalist economy periodically resulted in core powers that usually achieved hegemony by virtue of their leading economic positions. Yet, this is not to say that they all become hegemons. Usually, a core power will only become a hegemon as a result of a global war that destroyed competitors and left a power void in the world system. That void creates a demand in the international order for a form of international stability that could only be supplied through the leadership of a dominant hegemon. In the history of the world, there have only been three such hegemonies—the United Netherlands (1648–67), the United Kingdom (1815–97), and the United States (1945–74).<sup>65</sup>

### TRACING THE ROOTS OF AMERICAN HEGEMONY

The end of the Second World War made the entry of the United States as the American Hegemon a formality. Still, it is important to realize that the American Hegemon existed within the womb of an informal American Empire—as a rising imperial power—long before the events of 1941. It was the recognition of this potential that led Hitler to embark upon such a radical course for world domination. In fact, according to Ian Kershaw, "The colossal risks which both Germany and Japan were prepared to undertake were ultimately rooted in the understanding among the power elites in both countries of

the imperative of expansion to acquire empire and overcome their status as perceived ‘have-not’ nations. The imperialist dominance of Great Britain and the international power (even without formal empire) of the United States posed the great challenge. The need to counter with the utmost urgency the growing economic disparity, quite especially the increasing material strength of the United States, which could only work over time against the ‘have-not’ nations, meant that the quest for dominion as the foundation of national power could not be delayed. This was the basis of the rationale, accepted by the power-elites in Germany and Japan, for undertaking such high-level risks that even national survival was put at stake. Economic domination of the Eurasian land mass by Germany and of south-east Asia by Japan would, as American analysts recognized, have undermined the position of the United States as a world power. This was certainly the presumption in Berlin and Tokyo. From the perspective of the German and Japanese leadership, the gamble had to be taken.”<sup>66</sup>

From this perspective, it becomes clear why the realities associated with unequal and uneven development in the world capitalist economy are so important. Unequal and uneven development in a world capitalist system will lead to tremendous disparities both within and between nations. Over time, these disparities will tend to create even greater inequalities between social classes within and between nations. Recognizing the nature of this order, in the context of the 1930s, Germany’s business class, its militarists, and its fledgling Nazi Party all agreed that something had to be done to reverse course so that the tensions stirred up by uneven development—a product of global capitalism itself—could be mitigated. On this very point, historian Adam Tooze notes, “The originality of National Socialism was that, rather than meekly accepting a place for Germany within a global economic order dominated by the affluent English-speaking countries, Hitler sought to mobilize the pent up frustrations of his population to mount an epic challenge to this order. Repeating what Europeans had done across the globe over the previous three centuries, Germany would carve out its own imperial hinterland; by one last land grab in the East it would create the self-sufficient basis both for domestic affluence and the platform necessary to prevail in the coming superpower competition with the United States. The aggression of Hitler’s regime can thus be rationalized as an intelligible response to the tensions stirred up by the uneven development of global capitalism, tensions that are of course still with us today.”<sup>67</sup>

By combining Kershaw’s and Tooze’s interpretations on the rationale for the Second World War, it becomes clear that the capitalist world system that existed in the 1920s and 1930s was one in which “the German electorate faced a choice between a politics centered on the peaceful pursuit of national prosperity and a militant nationalism that more or less openly demanded a resumption of hostilities with France, Britain and the United States.”<sup>68</sup> In making this choice, Hitler was able to convince the people of Germany that “the emerging economic dominance of the United States placed in jeopardy the ‘global significance’ of all of the European countries. Unless the political



leaders of Europe could shake their populations out of their usual 'political thoughtlessness,' the 'threatened global hegemony of the North American continent' would reduce all of them to the status of 'Switzerland and Holland.'"69 By the end of the Second World War, "Germany had ceased to exist as a political entity, as a military force or an economic unit."<sup>70</sup> The war's end finally wiped out the last traces and temptations of militarism, but "with it also went any aspiration to the 'freedom' once implied by great power status."<sup>71</sup>

Alternatively, the war's end had a different meaning for the men at the CFR, the American ruling class, and the leadership of the U.S. government. The alternative conception was this: "The ruling class, through the Council, had successfully put forward a particular conception of the United States 'national interest.' This perspective did not in reality uphold the interest of the people of the nation, but rather the special interests of a capitalist economic system controlled by and benefiting the upper class. Simply stated, the Council theoreticians argued that the United States needed living space to maintain the existing system without fundamental changes in the direction of socialism and planning. Council member Henry R. Luce put the issue more bluntly when he stated in his famous February 1941 *Life* article that 'Tyrannies may require a large amount of living space. But Freedom requires and will require far greater living space than Tyranny.'"72

The issues and questions that surround this 1945 American ruling consensus are still with us. The first decade of the twenty-first century, declared to be *The New American Century* by the neoconservatives of the Bush administration, continued to resonate with the idea that "this military supremacy serves the interests of preserving the long-established hegemony."<sup>73</sup> According to the 2002 National Security Strategy (NSS) and the 2004 National Military Strategy (NMS), we are told that the U.S. military should be ready to serve at any time. Even more explicitly, both documents describe an approach to global leadership in which the United States will not only lead but also dominate in order to achieve: "*full spectrum dominance across the range of military operations.*"<sup>74</sup> However, "from an objective standpoint the American homeland essentially has been unthreatened, so security imperatives cannot explain U.S. expansion or the U.S. pursuit of extra-regional hegemony. Yet, paradoxically, U.S. policymakers have perceived the international environment as highly threatening. Consequently, they have believed that establishing extra-regional hegemony is the only way to ensure America's security. The big question, of course, is why they have believed this."<sup>75</sup>

In answer to this question, what may be most revealing is the historical record of what constituted the CFR ruling class conception of the "national interest" since the inception of America's entry into the Second World War. The concept of the national interest, as put forth by the CFR, "laid the basis for America's war aims. The nation's interest was first of all defined and discussed within an economic framework, focusing on the most basic facts and long-term trends: the type of economic structure existing in the United States, its requirements, and the regions of the world crucial to the satisfaction of these needs."<sup>76</sup> By providing U.S. government officials with this worldview,

it can be argued that the CFR crafted both the form and purpose of America's foreign policy. Therefore, the following two points can be made with certainty: (1) in its *most essential form*, the national security construct of the CFR was an inherently hegemonic status quo formulation and (2) its *primary purpose* was to preserve "a capitalist system with private ownership of the productive property of society, resulting in inequality in the distribution of wealth and income and attendant class structure."<sup>77</sup>

In this sense, American foreign policy and domestic policy are inherently intertwined. For example, the corporate offensive against labor from Ronald Reagan to George W. Bush, which is a record of the shift in incomes from workers to the owners of capital, is evidence of a conservative mentality that is dedicated to the preservation of an economic order of privilege. It is also profoundly antidemocratic. The consequences of the shift in incomes from 1980 through 2008 reverberated from the top of the economic pyramid to the socioeconomic classes at the bottom of the social hierarchy. In 1998, during the Clinton presidency, the number of poor people became greater than in any year since 1961. Under the Bush-II administration, the number of people either at or below the poverty line more than doubled beyond the 1998 figures.<sup>78</sup>

Domestically, the U.S. capitalist ruling class has embraced probusiness strategies that merely reinforce tendencies toward centralized and unaccountable power. These strategies all share three basic principles: "profit-led growth, market-based allocation, and arms for economic power. The first of these principles involves a transfer of resources to the wealthiest and largest corporations. The second extends the dominion and reduces the accountability of corporate decisions—by insisting on the primacy of profitability in economic life. The third strengthens the hand of corporate interests against those abroad while sacrificing the needs of the poor in the United States for the sake of military spending."<sup>79</sup> The emphasis upon economic sacrifice for the sake of military spending returns us to one of the guiding motivations that lie behind the foreign policy dimensions of U.S. statecraft. Economic sacrifice by the middle and lower classes in the United States is, in large measure, part of the price of empire and a large part of the cost of maintaining American hegemony.

The Open Door school's interpretation of U.S. grand strategy emphasizes "the continuity of a conscious, aggressive, expansionist, and self-interested America." With these priorities in mind, the primary lesson to be derived from the Open Door "tells us that economic and ideological concerns drive America's hegemonic expansion after World War II...the goal of U.S. grand strategy has been to create an 'Open Door world'—an international system or 'world order,' made up of states that are open and subscribe to the United State's liberal values and institutions and that are open to US economic penetration."<sup>80</sup> Contrary to the propaganda of the Bush-II administration, the ultimate political concern is not with America's homeland security. The real concern is an imperial one—a concern about maintaining U.S. corporate access to foreign markets and maintaining the military strength to insure that

those foreign markets remain open and congenial to U.S. corporate, financial, and banking interests. At the heart of the matter, we discover the truth behind how American policymakers measure threats to their system. They largely do so by determining “whether the international environment favors openness or closure.”

According to Christopher Layne, “U.S. policymakers fear that important regions of the world—especially in Europe and East Asia—will be closed to the United States economically and ideologically, ‘cut[ting] off the oxygen without which American society and liberal institutions generally would asphyxiate.’”<sup>81</sup> From inside the crumbling walls of the American Empire, the advocates for perpetual American hegemony fear a world of rising regions. Wishing to retain their “unipolar moment,” it seems apparent that the social elites and decision makers of the American Hegemon are vehement adversaries of the emerging “multipolar” world. This perspective proceeds from the fact that the essence of U.S. grand strategy is ultimately based on the Open Door—derived assumption that political and economic liberalism cannot flourish at home unless they are safe abroad. The elites who have constructed the grand strategy of the United States are not pursuing a truly national interest but rather have engaged in an elite-driven/private interest distortion of it. When analyzing the CIA financial establishment of the 1960s and its hidden elite class structure, Peter Dale Scott has noted that “the advantages of a socially restricted elite class who were as over-represented in government (particularly the CIA) as they were in the economically concentrated areas of oil, international banking, and multinational enterprise” led to “the disastrous success of this socially restricted establishment in furthering their own version of national priorities.”<sup>82</sup> This same elite coalition reasserted its influence over the direction of U.S. foreign policy during the Bush-II administration.

The power of these economic interests meant that the economic forces and interests of the Open Door policy effectively pulled U.S. military power along in its wake. When understood in this light, it becomes clear that the desire to achieve an overseas extension of U.S. economic interests was the actual catalyst for the extension abroad of U.S. military power. We can see this process at work in the case of the Vietnam War. The history of Vietnam War decision making during the Kennedy-Johnson years shows that “the recurrent influence on bureaucratic decision-making by privately interested institutions like Socony-Mobil and the First National City Bank of New York” was determinative in launching the Vietnam War. Intelligence estimates from the CIA were always secondary to “the overall prevalence of perceived economic interest in moments of crisis.”<sup>83</sup> This phenomenon is clearly discernible in cases in which the extension of U.S. economic power had led directly to U.S. military interventions abroad. A prime example of this would be U.S. involvement in Indochina and Southeast Asia after the Second World War. American economic access to Southeast Asia was seen as “an interconnected strategic unit of far reaching importance.” This belief constituted a perspective that enabled the domino theory to be perceived as a valid concept. Hence, we are left with a geopolitical answer to the question

“What justified dispatching over 500,000 US troops to Vietnam, sustaining over 56,000 deaths, 300,000 wounded, and spending over \$150 billion?” With respect to just natural resource endowments, the justification for these sacrifices can be reduced to the importance of two strategic materials—tin and rubber. Of these materials, Southeast Asia supplied around 90 percent of the world’s natural rubber and 55 percent of the world’s tin.<sup>84</sup>

In the hegemonic and geopolitical calculations of American policymakers, the loss of Southeast Asia—by allowing it to withdraw from the American empire—had very serious consequences. These dire consequences would potentially include (1) decreasing the economic living space and power of the U.S. vis-à-vis potential enemies and geopolitical rivals, (2) based on the assumptions of the domino theory, additional losses might follow that could extend to Japan, the Middle East, and Europe, (3) the conclusion that could be reached from such a scenario was that the living space that would be afforded to the American capitalist system could be limited to the Western Hemisphere, thereby necessitating a transformation of the system itself.<sup>85</sup>

The consensual domination or ideological hegemony of the American ruling class from 1941 to the present has been predicated upon nothing less than a version of geopolitics driven by an ideology of imperialist expansion. In this regard, capitalists as well as fascists have practiced this approach to geopolitics. As Franz Neumann observed in *Behemoth*, his classic 1942 critique of the Third Reich, “in the final analysis, geopolitics is nothing but the ideology of imperialist expansion.” To this basic definition he added, “The bulk of geopolitics is a hodgepodge of ethical, military, economic, racial, demographic, historical and political considerations.”<sup>86</sup> Similarly, John Bellamy Foster has noted, “More precisely, it represents a specific way of organizing and advancing empire—one that arose with modern imperialism, but that contains its own peculiar history that is reverberating once again in our time. Geopolitics is concerned with how geographical factors, including territory, population, strategic location, and natural resource endowments, as modified by economics and technology, affect the relations between states and the struggle for world domination.”<sup>87</sup> Even G. John Ikenberry has acknowledged that “if empires are inclusive systems of order organized around a dominant state—and its laws, economy, military, and political institutions—than the United States has indeed constructed a world democratic-capitalist empire.”<sup>88</sup>

## AVERTING THE HEGEMONIC TEMPTATION

As a world democratic-capitalist empire, America’s foreign policy leadership has been consistently preoccupied with the struggle for world domination. The question at the dawn of the twenty-first century is whether such a world democratic-capitalist empire can be sustained. The challenge of maintaining this kind of imperial dominance necessitates the constant ordering and reordering of laws, the redirection of economic priorities, the enhancement of military capabilities, and the evolution of political institutions. According to Ikenberry, “a variety of features associated with American hegemony—rooted

in geography, history, ideology, democracy, institutional structures, and modernization itself—make it different from past great powers.” In support of this assertion, he argues that “these characteristics of American power mute and restrain that power and alter the risk calculations of weaker and secondary states.” However, regarding Ikenberry’s assertion about characteristics of American power that serve to mute and restrain it, I completely disagree with his conclusion. What we actually discover throughout the historical record of post-1945 American hegemony is a great lack of restraint. Kenneth Waltz, a scholar who is representative of the structural realist school, has stressed the dangers that ensue whenever power becomes too tightly concentrated (whether internationally or domestically). Waltz has stated, “I distrust hegemonic power, whoever may wield it, because it is so easily misused.”<sup>89</sup>

Waltz and other realists like Walter Lippmann, George Kennan, Reinhold Niebuhr, and Hans Morgenthau have all explicitly cautioned about the boomerang effects that follow when overwhelming power is matched with overweening ambition. It is a cautionary warning that has resonated with even more clarity in an age in which thermonuclear weaponry makes the drive for power in world affairs even more absurd.<sup>90</sup> In the absence of this sense of history, of the dangers associated with the use of atomic weapons, Christopher Layne has asserted that there are only two mechanisms that can prevent the United States from succumbing to the “hegemon’s temptation.” The first mechanism would be “a roughly equal distribution of power in the international system” because there would be a countervailing power which would force the United States to forego hegemony and adopt a more cautious strategy. The second possible restraining mechanism is that America’s own domestic political system would effectively restrain the national leadership from engaging in dangerous adventures.<sup>91</sup> On both counts, the years of the second Bush administration (2001–8) would bear witness to the failure of both mechanisms of restraint.

This lack of hegemonic restraint is so glaring that Robert Jervis has observed that “the United States may be only the latest in a long line of countries that is unable to place sensible limits on its fears and aspirations.”<sup>92</sup> However, despite its lack of restraint, the United States may find that “if the ongoing shift in the distribution of relative power continues, new poles of power in the international system are likely to emerge during the next decade or two. The real issue is not *if* American primacy will end, but *how soon* will it end?”<sup>93</sup> This conclusion constitutes the essential thesis argument of this book. I am arguing that the future of global relations will be inexorably defined by two historically intertwined characteristics—the crumbling walls of America’s declining global hegemony, on the one hand, and a multicentric world of rising regions, on the other.

Professor Edward H. Carr, in his classic book, *The Twenty Years’ Crisis, 1919–1939*, was writing in the late 1930s against the backdrop of a similar transition in the organization and conduct of global relations. Writing against the backdrop of a crisis in international affairs, Carr declared that “the real international crisis of the modern world is the final and irrevocable

breakdown of the conditions which made the nineteenth century order possible. The old order cannot be restored, and a drastic change of outlook is unavoidable."<sup>94</sup> Similarly, at the dawn of the twenty-first century, the hegemony of American power cannot be restored or extended. The crumbling walls of its financial and military edifice should adapt and come to embrace the global realities of an interconnected world of rising regional powers. In this interconnected world, there are the ingredients of a worldview that looks at the global commons through the lens of shared challenges. From climate change and global warming to the continuing threat of resource wars, the early twenty-first-century world of global relations will have to be defined in larger terms than the nation-state and the limitations inherent in the pursuit of superpower hegemony. Carr was writing at a time when the nation-state system was still taken for granted. His era was not really an era of world domination by one hegemon but rather a world in which numerous states exercised regional hegemony and aspired to the status of a hegemon with global influence.

By contrast, writing in 1998, professors David Held and Anthony McGrew have written against the backdrop of American global dominance and the phenomenon of economic globalization. In their view, the late twentieth-century political world "is marked by a significant series of new types of 'boundary problem'...In a world where powerful states make decisions not just for their peoples but for others as well, and where transnational actors and forces cut across the boundaries of national communities in diverse ways, the questions of who should be accountable to whom, and on what basis, do not easily resolve themselves." They conclude that "contemporary forms of political globalization involve a complex deterritorialization and re-territorialization of political authority."<sup>95</sup> Insofar as this is the terrain over which struggles for the maintenance or overthrow of U.S. hegemony must be contested, we are led into a discussion of our fourth conception of hegemony: hegemony as the exercise of leadership within historic blocs in a social formation.

#### **(4) Hegemony as the Exercise of Leadership within Historic Blocs in a Social Formation**

The fourth major conception on hegemony in the literature on the international order and the world capitalist system defines hegemony as the exercise of leadership within historic blocs within a social formation. According to William Robinson, the United States "was able to achieve hegemony in the post-World War II period as a result, not so much of its economic dominance in the global political economy and military might to back it up, than of the development of a Fordist-Keynesian social structure of accumulation that became internationalized under the leadership of the U.S. capitalist class."<sup>96</sup> In part, the shape of this argument is derived from the thesis presented in Mark Rupert's book, *Producing Hegemony: The Politics of Mass Production and American Global Power*.<sup>97</sup> Rupert argues that American global power was shaped by the ways in which mass production was institutionalized in the United States

as well as by the political and ideological struggles that were integral to this process. The production of an unprecedented volume of goods propelled the United States to the apex of the global division of labor. This arrangement (social bargain) not only ensured victory in World War II but also enabled the process of postwar reconstruction to be conducted under American leadership. Out of this matrix, a “historic bloc” of American statesmen, capitalists, and labor leaders fostered a productivity-oriented political consensus within the United States. It was also a social construct of American power that C. Wright Mills wrote about in his classic work about the “power elite.”

In short, it was a social contract that was, as I suggested earlier, hammered out under the guiding hand of the membership of the Council of Foreign Relations in conjunction with those public officials charged with national planning throughout the federal government. This elite group was then able to generalize their vision of liberal capitalism around the world. However, by the early 1970s, this arrangement had begun to decline within the United States due to the pressures of transnational competition and corporate America’s attack on labor. When transnational pressures were combined with the political and corporate attack on the working class through immersions of recession and unemployment, designed to weaken labor and impose maximum wage flexibility, the overall effect was to drive workers to greater productivity at reduced wages. As a result, the political foundations of the postwar regime were severely damaged and altered for decades to come. As a consequence of this pattern, Rupert writes, “It is my contention that the hegemony of neo-liberal capitalism in the United States and in the core of the world economy is expiring; but no new system of capitalist (or other) organization has yet emerged to replace it.”<sup>98</sup>

The decline of U.S. hegemony started when U.S. corporations faced resistance and challenges in both First and Third World settings. These challenges weakened the international position of U.S. capital. By 1966, with military disaster already looming in the Vietnam War, the entire edifice of Pax Americana was starting to crumble. At the same time, Japanese and European economic growth created a competitive challenge for the United States in the world market, which eventually led to a massive penetration of the U.S. domestic market. By the end of the 1960s, it appeared that the decline in U.S. competitive strength was partly attributable to the size and role of the U.S. military machine. While the U.S. military policed the postwar international political system, it also constituted a drain on the productive capacity of the United States. The costs of being the American Hegemon were steadily rising while, throughout the Third World, global resistance to and resentment of U.S. hegemony was growing. The economic failure of military Keynesianism was becoming increasingly apparent. Domestically, the postwar capital/labor accord was unraveling. The programs of the Great Society—Medicare, Medicaid, the war on poverty, the expansion of public assistance, affirmative action, and equal rights—all cost money. Their growing costs reflected the mounting and expensive requirements of containing resistance to an unequal distribution of power and privilege. In the continuing struggle over the

production and distribution of the economic surplus generated by productivity, the corporate counterattack on both foreign and domestic resistance dissolved the postwar accord forever.<sup>99</sup>

The breakdown of neoliberal capitalist hegemony in the United States and around the world—in the core states of the global capitalist system—did not take more than about three decades. If we trace the phases of postwar boom and decline from 1948, the boom lasted until around 1966 and the decline began in 1967 (as the effects of the Vietnam War began to register) and continued through two other periods of decline that take us from 1980 to the present.<sup>100</sup> Table 3.1 presents an outline of these phases.

By the early 1970s, the crisis of the world capitalist system was quite apparent to the leading centers of capitalism and their ruling elites located in the

**Table 3.1** Phases of postwar boom and decline

Phase	Economic developments	Political developments
Boom: 1948–66	Rising rate of profit	Capital-labor accord
	Rapid productivity growth	Bretton Woods system
	Low and stable inflation	U.S. international domination
	Low and falling unemployment	of the Third World
	High levels of investment	Capital-citizen accord
Decline I: 1967–73	Rising real wages	
	Falling rate of profit	Erosion of capital-labor
	Productivity slowdown	accord
	Accelerating inflation	U.S. loss in Vietnam
	Low, then rising, unemployment	Demise of Bretton Woods
Decline II: 1974–79	High levels of investment	OPEC emerges
	Slowing of wage growth	Rise of citizen movements
	Low profit rates	Political stalemate
	Sharper productivity slowdown	Great Depression
	Runaway inflation	International instability
Decline III: 1980–Present	Rising unemployment	
	Stagnating investment	
	Falling real wages	
	Low profit rates	Business ascendancy
	Further productivity slowdown	Remilitarization
	Slowing of runaway inflation	International debt problems
	Highest unemployment since 1930s	
	Declining investment	
	Sharp increases in real wages	

Source: Samuel Bowes, David M. Gordon, and Thomas E. Weisskopf, *Beyond the Wasteland: A Democratic Alternative to Economic Decline*, Anchor/Doubleday, 1983, 120.



United States, Europe, and Japan. In response to the crisis, the Trilateral Commission was founded in 1973 by David Rockefeller (the chairman of Chase Manhattan Bank), Zbigniew Brzezinski (President Carter's national security advisor), and other like-minded "eminent private citizens." In 1973, it had a membership that was around two hundred persons. By 1980, it had over three hundred members drawn from banking, government, academia, the media, and conservative labor. The commission's primary purpose was to engineer an enduring partnership among the ruling classes of North America, Western Europe, and Japan—hence, the term "trilateral"—in order to safeguard the interests of Western capitalism. Like the old CFR, it dedicated itself to molding public policy and to construct a framework for international stability in the decades to come. The overall purpose of the Trilateral Commission can be defined as "the project of developing an organic alliance (or relatively permanent) alliance between the major capitalist states, with the aim of promoting (or sustaining) a stable form of world order which is congenial to their dominant interests."<sup>101</sup> In this regard, the Trilateral Commission's project conjoins all of the four conceptions of hegemony that we have just covered—and then it transcends them. It transcends all previous incarnations of hegemony because it is more expansive than all of them while, at the same time, seeks to incorporate their distinctive functions into its larger overall project.

According to Stephen Gill, the 1970s and 1980s embodied a shift away "from an international economic order of economically sovereign states and national political economies...a transnational liberal economic order." In its place, in this ascending order, he sees "capital flows and interpenetrating investments are fusing the world political economy into a more integrated whole...The class forces which will be at the vanguard of many of the changes in the economic structure will be those associated with highly mobile and large-scale transnational capital."<sup>102</sup> From this scenario, Gill focuses mainly on "a transnational fraction of capital, developing its hegemony. Leading elements of this fraction have a highly developed consciousness, shared institutions, and complementary, although sometimes conflicting, material interests."<sup>103</sup>

From the perspective of William Robinson, "the relationship between nation-states, economic institutions, and social structures has become modified as each national economy has been reorganized and integrated into the new global production system. Class formation is no longer tied to territory and to the political jurisdiction of nation-states in the way that it has been for much of the history of world capitalism. It is the globalization of production that provides the basis for the *transnationalization* of classes and the rise of a transnational capitalist class (TCC)."<sup>104</sup> Therefore, he asserts that "hegemony in twenty-first century global society will not be exercised by a dominant nation-state—which, in any event, is shorthand for saying that it will not be exercised by dominant groups from any particular nation-state or region—but by an emergent global capitalist historic bloc...At the center of the globalist bloc is the TCC, comprised of owners and managers of the transnational corporations and other capitalists around the world, who manage

transnational capital.”<sup>105</sup> Yet, we must be careful here not to prioritize the owners and managers as the only emerging class within this *transnationalization* of classes.

Robinson has focused largely on the emergence of a TCC made up primarily of transnational professionals and executives. However, this depiction of a new global hegemonic bloc is too limited. By its overemphasis on a TCC as the newly emergent transnational hegemonic power, it is a perspective that has too easily led to the exclusion of other emerging classes and international actors. In contrast, Saskia Sassen has identified the emergence of three other global classes that are in the making. The first identifiable class “arises out of the proliferation of transnational networks of government officials.” Among the members of this class, we can count experts on a variety of issues such as judges who must negotiate among an array of international rules, immigration officials charged with having to coordinate border controls, and police officials in charge of discovering financial flows that support terrorism. The second class is “an emergent class of activists.” This includes key sectors of civil society. We have seen them in the “battle of Seattle” as they protested against the WTO, in the United States and other nations in which the IMF and World Bank have attempted to conduct their annual meetings, and they have been active in Europe at the various DOHA conferences. The third emergent transnational class consists of mostly disadvantaged waged workers, which include members of transnational immigrant communities and households.<sup>106</sup>

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## CHAPTER 4



# CONFRONTING HEGEMONY AS A FORM OF SOCIAL DOMINATION

At this point, I want to make two observations. First, throughout this book, I will argue that these three other categories of transnational classes, identified by Sassen, will be crucial for building a counterhegemonic alliance to both the American Hegemon and the emerging hegemony of a predatory capitalist Transnationalist Capitalist Class. Second, I will assert that these other three classes—apart from the class of TCC professionals and executives—will eventually develop the capacity to reconstitute their efforts around a counterhegemonic alliance and through their ideological reliance upon the power of a shared progressive agenda. In this manner, they will become increasingly empowered to make themselves into a global constituency—across global civil society—as a political, economic, ideological, and spiritual force for change in the direction of realizing egalitarian values, distributive justice, and the cause of human rights beyond the borders of nation-states. As such, by reliance on such a progressive and cooperative agenda, it will be within their power to assert democratic rights and claims within an emerging multicentric world of regions. These three global classes will continue to be linked together by their common economic, political, and ideological interests, while simultaneously demonstrating a new capability for exercising their counterhegemonic power against the United States and its TCC allies, thereby making possible a new historical reality, which begins with being decoupled from predatory capitalists and capitalisms.

### ASSESSING THE FUTURE OF GLOBAL RELATIONS

Throughout this book, I argue that a more precise and accurate view of the true nature of twenty-first-century hegemony will remain in a global arena of

contestation—trapped between emerging multicentric regions of power and previously subordinated classes now joined together in social movements and cooperating with one another in a global counterhegemonic alliance against decades of domination. Essentially, this emerging counterhegemonic alliance will find itself pitted against the lawlessness and exploitative policies of the American Hegemon and its corporate constituency in the TCC.

From this perspective, the future of the international order will be forged in the midst of a historical process characterized by declining U.S. hegemony, on the one hand, and the ascendancy of an emerging multicentric world of regions, on the other. On the basis of early twenty-first-century trends, it already appears that this multicentric world of regions (as seen and exemplified by already existent regional organizations on every continent) will have both the incentive and the capacity to more actively promote genuine democratic development in conjunction with new approaches to economic democracy, more inclusive forms of governance, innovative forms of institution building, and the prioritization of humane world order values in place of the pursuit of profit for the sake of profit. Now, let me take each of my thesis points in turn.

First, there has been a growing opposition to U.S.-led globalization from the “bottom-up”—a counterhegemonic globalization, if you will. This counterhegemonic globalization opposes both the American Hegemon and the emerging hegemony of a TCC. This counterhegemonic globalization reflects the work of social movements around the globe—from Southeast and Northeast Asia to China and from Africa and Russia to Latin America. At the heart of all of these movements is a global effort, among progressive forces, to equalize global wealth and power.<sup>1</sup> This counterhegemonic alliance against both the American Hegemon and the emerging hegemony of a global TCC has already started in earnest. Certainly, the involvement of China throughout the African continent is a prime example. There are many other examples. The European Union is engaged with nations throughout the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America as well as South and East Asia. Many Latin American states are establishing interlocking regional networks in order to opt out of the U.S. orbit of hegemonic coercion and intimidation. This newly forged regional consciousness of Latin American states can be seen in the rejection of the FTAA trade pacts that the Bush administration has persistently pushed for throughout the period of 2001 through 2008. The fact that many left-wing and moderate Latin American states have systematically rejected these trade pacts is both a sign of the United States losing its ideological consensus in the hemisphere as well as a positive demonstration of the assertion of social movements that continue to demand more progressive policies from their respective governments and less reliance on the failed neoliberal formulas of the 1980s and 1990s.

U.S. grand strategists continue to deny that this is happening for two reasons. One reason, they argue, is that other states still continue to view the United States as a benevolent or nonthreatening hegemon. The other reason they give is centered on the assumption that the United States is strategically

immune from counterhegemonic balancing and counterhegemonic alliances because the overwhelming might of U.S. military and economic power. Based on the possession of raw power along, these U.S. strategists believe that this position of U.S. primacy in world affairs makes it impossible for others to effectively engage in such sustained resistance. This viewpoint is a manifestation of the decades-old belief, held by U.S. grand strategists, that the United States retains its earlier claim to American exceptionalism in the conduct of international affairs. However, the reality is that the case for U.S. hegemonic exceptionalism is weak.<sup>2</sup> The reality of the situation is that the American Hegemon is neither benevolent nor benign. It is not immune from global centers of resistance. It has rarely acted in a benign manner, especially when one recalls its long history of “gun-boat diplomacy.” Instead of being a status quo power, it is “the antithesis of a status quo power...it is an expansionist power that constantly is attempting to add to its lead in relative power vis-à-vis potential rivals” and is doing so throughout the Middle East “by acquiring new bases in Central Asia” and in attempting to enlarge its “influence ideologically by spreading ‘democracy’ worldwide.”<sup>3</sup>

As to the assertion that U.S. military and economic power will make it impossible for others to engage in sustained resistance to the American Hegemon, it is only necessary to look at the consequences of President George W. Bush’s fiasco in Iraq. Also, we can observe the congealing of Latin American left-wing opposition to U.S. intervention in order to determine that “the claim that others regard American primacy as benevolent because of U.S. *soft* power and shared values is...dubious.”<sup>4</sup> All of the Bush administration’s talk about “democracy promotion” rings hollow. What recent history has made evident is that “the current phase of economic globalization has come to be characterized increasingly not by free competition idealized in neo-classical theory, but by oligopolistic neo-liberalism: oligopoly and protection for the strong and a socialization of their risks, market discipline for the weak.”<sup>5</sup> In this regard, “from the standpoint of Marxian theory, which emphasizes the economic taproot of imperialism, such a global thrust will be as ineffectual as it is barbaric. Power under capitalism can be imposed episodically through the barrel of a gun. Its real source, however, is relative economic power, which is by its nature fleeting.”<sup>6</sup> To acknowledge this historical fact is to admit that while “the U.S. will, for some time, remain the world’s dominant military, economic, and cultural power,” it is equally true that “the rise of new centers of power—China, Japan, India, a United Europe, a restored Russia—combined with the relative decline of the United States, will render American hegemony unworkable. This is no doubt true in the longer run.”<sup>7</sup>

Second, during the course of the Bush-II presidency, the world at large has seen the growing evolution of a progressive counterhegemonic alliance to the American Hegemon on every continent. This new global constituency, born of progressive social movements throughout nations, regions, and the larger global civil society, is becoming increasingly representative of an emerging world of interlinked nation-states that are evolving toward a multicentric world of regions—increasingly linked together by a set of common

ideological and economic interests. At the top of their collective agenda is their desire to begin a process of decoupling from the predatory patterns of capitalist globalization engaged in by the emerging TCC as well as by America's grand strategists and their allies on Wall Street and the Trilateral Commission. In this regard, there are some scholars who now think that this interactive process "between globalization, regionalism and nationalism" is demonstrating a capacity for generating "the possibility of a new conception of hegemony within the world economy."<sup>8</sup>

Scholars on one side of the power equation, such as Robinson, have envisioned an emerging TCC that attempts to play the role of the "new hegemon"—seeking to forge a "dynamic web of global corporate structures embedded in a vast dispersed network of regions, communities, and districts within the world-system instead of a nation or several nations combined into a transnational economic region."<sup>9</sup> Those who subscribe to this view also believe that "the hegemony of global corporations, in turn, would also require the formation of a world state."<sup>10</sup>

On the other side of the power equation, other scholars argue that we are starting to witness "an emerging hegemony without a hegemon." They see the European Union (EU) as being on its way to becoming a new societal model. From this perspective, the EU will "not produce a new hegemon similar to those we know from the British and American examples."<sup>11</sup> That is because a future hegemonic state or even a group of states within the core is unlikely. Insofar as globalization is responsible for bringing about a new way in which the world market functions, it can actually preclude the rise of a new hegemonic state or even a group of states within the capitalist core from rising. With this prognosis, then, it is possible to predict a global and regional convergence towards what has been attempted in the EU model.

What becomes noteworthy is that "such a convergence would also imply that North America and [a] Japan-centered East and South East Asia will imitate the projects of the EU type—a process that is already underway" in the cases of the North American Free Trade Association (NAFTA), the ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA), and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC).<sup>12</sup> The only problem with the current accuracy of this perspective is that it was written in 1999. Now, in the first decade of the twenty-first century, instead of Japan being at the center of an emergent South and East Asian regionalism, it appears more likely that this role will be played by China. If that is the case, Berberoglu has noted,

"Whereas the share of U.S. corporations in the top twenty-five list declined from fifteen in 1974 to nine in 1988, the share of the European and Japanese corporations increased from nine in 1974 to fifteen in 1988. This trend continued to unfold during the 1990s, placing European and Japanese corporations in an increasingly favorable position vis-à-vis their U.S. counterparts. These developments clearly show that a shift in the centers of the world economy has taken place—away from the United States and toward Japan and Europe, and increasingly China, with Japan controlling the financial lifeline of the global capitalist

system and Europe (especially Germany) and Japan making inroads into industrial production, while China captures a growing share of world trade.”<sup>13</sup>

### THE RISE OF A MULTICENTRIC WORLD OF REGIONS AND NEW NORMS

The above-cited trends regarding regional directions in Asia and ASEAN constitutes a perspective that reflects my own view on the nature of twenty-first-century American hegemony in Asia. It is a perspective that is conditioned by Washington’s attempt to contain China by seeking to actively limit China’s geopolitical and strategic choices. Washington’s chosen strategy for accomplishing this result is to cultivate friendly Asian powers along China’s periphery in order to channel Beijing’s regional and international ambitions. By accelerating the rise of U.S.-friendly and independent centers of power, the architects of U.S. hegemony in the region must still face the implications of current trends—which is that relative U.S. power will wane as China and India rise. The situation is an evolving geopolitical reality in which there will continue to be a series of simultaneously emerging multicentric regions that will be attempting to carve out the precise configuration of their patterns of trade, production, and politics while, at the same time, the American Hege- mon begins to enter into the final stages of its decline in South and East Asia.<sup>14</sup> In short, developments in East Asia, Northeast Asia, and South Asia are reaching a point of critical mass wherein ASEAN can become a neutral broker between Asia’s giants.

Further, these regions will have the task of organizing themselves under an enforceable rubric of a universal and enforceable international law that respects and protects human rights, labor, and the environment—just as much as the American hegemonic order has sought to protect the primacy of U.S. capital, open markets, and the pursuit of profit as its ultimate value. This new emerging reality for global relations will also translate into a significantly different kind and type of globalization than the type embodied by the American-driven brand of globalization. In this regard, Stuart Harris has addressed the normative challenge that Asian regionalism faces in the years ahead, noting, “Not all norms have been accepted region-wide but Asian countries have generally agreed on a number of norms. While most attention is usually directed to the norms of preservation of national sovereignty and the principle of non-interference in domestic affairs, others include: the pursuit of prosperity through competitive market mechanisms; the pursuit of economic interdependence to enhance security; the resolution of disputes by peaceful means; and adherence to functional multilateral agreements at the global level.”<sup>15</sup>

In the most practical sense, the overarching question with respect to the role of regionalism versus that of global institutions is, “What can be sensibly done better regionally than globally?” In answer to this inquiry, Harris has suggested that global institutions have to set global standards and to provide



resources on a grand scale in order to meet the needs that come with major crisis situations. Yet, the very size of those institutions often means that they are slow to respond and that they lack both flexibility and knowledge of the regional circumstances to make effective contributions in solving the problems at the regional level. This being the case, a better question might be how to go about harnessing the inevitable integration of the region. According to Joshua Kurlantzick, the trend toward greater East Asian integration is due to a variety of factors. Among these factors is the fact that regional trade patterns are increasingly centered on China. Additionally, as threats from traditional security challenges fade, the possibilities for greater integration increase. Finally, integration becomes easier to accomplish as Asia's political and economic institutions become more mature. After all, "ten years ago, when the financial crisis hit Asia, nations from Thailand to South Korea looked to the United States for assistance. Today, if another contagion spread in East Asia, the regions leaders might not look so readily to Washington... In some respect, this integration will reduce U.S. influence. In particular, as Asia becomes more reliant on interregional trade and consumption, the United States will wield less influence as a consumer and trader. Some Asian leaders may even promote a dramatic drop in U.S. power," but the fact remains that "because East Asian integration is inevitable, Washington has only one effective choice: to shore up its own image in the region by giving Asia the same priority as Europe and by reinvigorating its public diplomacy while facilitating closer interaction between Asia's leading powers, potentially using ASEAN as an intermediary."<sup>16</sup>

In light of this analysis, some scholars have suggested that we use three criteria to address the appropriate division of labor between global institutions versus regional institutions: (1) efficiency in terms of the level of resources needed; (2) efficiency of experience and information; and (3) efficiency in terms of institutional capacity. The conclusion is that global institutions have been mainly effective and efficient in the first and third categories, while regional institutions are probably best equipped to meet the demands contained in second criteria.<sup>17</sup> Still, that is not to say that as regions evolve over time, they cannot mature to a point at which they develop the capabilities and capacities to meet the demands of all three criteria. If that turns out to be the case, then the implication is that the IMF, World Bank, and WTO may eventually become expendable as these new regions work to inaugurate a "*Post-Hegemonic Era*."

In addition to the institutional questions, there are equally important questions and considerations associated with the issues of both national and regional security. In this regard, "with the absence of any authorities at the global level to help enforce agreements among states, each individual state confronts a 'self-help' situation, forcing it to devise an effective plan to protect its geographical sovereignty on its own."<sup>18</sup> That is, of course, unless nations work together to develop regional organizations and alliances that give them greater cooperative advantages and protection—regardless of the nature of the threat. What this means is that traditional international relations

thought on the issue of security may have to be redefined insofar as its past logic is no longer compatible with current realities or evolving trends. In fact, one of the great shortcomings of IR theory is that it has been preoccupied with the question of how best to pursue the national interest in the anarchic structure of the world system. What happens when elements of the world system, such as large regions, no longer exhibit these anarchic qualities? What happens to the value of IR theory in this new context, in which there is a discernible shift in perspective to an ordered, well structured, and mutually interdependent regionalism?

### A WORLD OF RISING REGIONS

The problem with traditional IR theory is that it has been preoccupied with the notion of hegemonic domination as pure power politics. This notion is then coupled with a very narrowly defined concept of security as a purely military matter. When we move our analysis in a new direction, toward a new focus upon the formation of regional cooperation, the entire dynamic of IR theory collapses into irrelevance with respect to its fear of international anarchy. Therefore, the great new discovery of recent history is that as nations seek to develop higher levels and degrees of mutual interdependence in order to achieve their various sociopolitical goals, we find that a new emphasis (derived from regionalist thought) was placed into the concept of “collective security.” This is a lesson that has already been learned from the experience of the cold war years—a period when the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the Central Treaty Organization (CENTRO), and the Southeast Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO) were starting to focus mainly on security cooperation among the participating actors.<sup>19</sup> Now, with the end of cold war politics, as well as the newly converging dynamics unleashed by globalization, the challenge of reinterpreting regional economic integration has been brought to the forefront. Hence, in addition to collective security requirements, we discover the emergence of a variety of regional alliances that have been formed in order to enhance existing forms of economic and political cooperation among the member nations. These new alliances include the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Organization of African Unity (OAU), and the Regional Cooperation for Development (RCD), which involves Turkey, Iran, Pakistan, and the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) as well as the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). In all of these cases, new definitions and norms emerged about regional security, regional cooperation, and regional interdependence that “demanded political and economic integration mainly to foster to group solidarity.”<sup>20</sup>

With the influence of the American Hegemon at its omega point, it appears that new historical processes of cooperation and human solidarity can finally emerge that will be capable of bringing about a redefinition of older conceptions of what constitutes security. Such a redefinition can serve to reinforce both social and psychological processes that are capable of unleashing the

power of collective action through civil society and even advance the emergence of dynamic forms of informal regionalism. One of the more discernible aspects of this dynamic can be identified in civil society networks. In this regard, "what is important to observe is that the proliferation of such civil society networks both at the national and regional levels has contributed to the construction of a new agenda of regionalism, where the concerns are shifting gradually from high politics items to such low politics issues such as poverty, gender, ethnicity, human rights, peace-building, migration, environment" and a growing apprehension about "the potential for another war in the region, which could involve nuclear weapons."<sup>21</sup> This is especially the case with regard to India and Pakistan.

One of the more tangible effects of this new regionalism in South Asia is found in the emergence of new opportunities for antinuclear movements that are dedicated to preventing the region from producing and possessing weapons of mass destruction. These movements have urged the adoption of a new security approach that is pro-poor and pro-environment. In other words, the concept of security is becoming more inclusive and the concept of governance is becoming more inclusionary by virtue of an expanding definition of what constitutes security. A more inclusive concept of security allows us to incorporate concerns with poverty, economic inequalities, and questions involving the distribution of wealth. A more expansive concept of security allows for greater attention to be given to the effects of business decisions on the quality of the environment and the need to create policies that can advance the cause of sustainable development.

These are some of the agenda items that contain the essential normative components of an emerging regional order in South Asia. In time, these same normative components will be able to encompass the political capacity to reflect the concerns of popular social forces that are seeking to redefine the traditional concept of security. Emerging out of this process is the possibility that the demands and claims of human rights will not have to automatically collide with either the process of wealth creation or the requirements of regional security.

Insofar as human rights can be used as a normative force in policy making, it follows that business and industrial practices will, in the context of new regional arrangements, be held accountable to environmental standards. Such a result can be mandated for the sake of the human right to health and well-being. In turn, this result can also lead to the creation of a mandate for regional policies that advance sustainable development. Insofar as human rights can only be effectively realized through the protection of employment rights, it follows that the rights of labor will have to be incorporated into both national and regional economic strategies. It is for this reason that the promise and hope that these movements embody is evident in the fact that "they claim that by shifting their priorities toward poverty reduction and human development, the region can successfully attain a high level of human development in just a few years time."<sup>22</sup> The reason for optimism is that these

regional civil society groups are inclusive—composed of professionals, workers, activists, and former military generals.

Despite these positive trends, there needs to be a word of caution with respect to expectations. As important as these trends are within the historical praxis of Asia's early twenty-first century, they do not point to an absolute panacea on the way to a more peaceful regional order or combination of regional orders. Therefore, it is still important to temper hope and idealism with practical realism on the road to building Asia's *Post-Hegemonic Era*. While it is true that the power of these progressive regional movements continues to increase, the fact remains that their rising power still does not guarantee that a significant sociopolitical change will be immediate or long lasting. Further, there are no guarantees that these movements will have the capacity to create an alternative human society in the region that will be devoid of discrimination and domination. Yet, as Quadir observes, it is possible to discern "a new form of regionalism is being born out of these popular struggles for sustainable development." He argues that, "if the current trend continues, it is likely that such a process of building informal regionalism would contribute to the creation of a new concept of citizenship in South Asia that transcends existing ethnic, religious, political and cultural divides."<sup>23</sup> Given the troubled history of this region, one that has remained divided along religious, political, and cultural lines for more than half a century, one could easily say that such an alternative is a lot to hope for in the near future. However, there are those who contend that in the very midst of such contentiousness, the development of a new concept of citizenship need not remain unattainable but rather may be anticipated in terms of it becoming "a realistic utopia."<sup>24</sup>

### CONSTRUCTING A "REGIONAL CITIZENSHIP"

If this assessment is accurate, then it becomes necessary to identify the real challenge(s) that are currently blocking the realization and development of "a new concept of citizenship" throughout the region. By being able to more clearly identify what forces and challenges have acted to historically block the termination of South Asia's embedded conflicts—as exemplified by the India-Pakistan rivalry—it is then possible not only explain the persistence of these conflicts but also provide prescriptions for how best to terminate them. As recently as 2005, some leading scholars have delineated what they believe are some of the key answers and solutions to problems that have allowed for the persistence of these conflicts and how such conflicts might be eventually terminated. Their answers to these questions now serve to provide both theoretical and policy-oriented analysis and prescriptions on the India-Pakistan conflict. By extrapolation, their findings also serve to provide an answer to one of the central questions presented in this book: *why it is necessary to confront the American Hegemon and the exercise of American hegemony as a form of social, political, and economic domination*.

In a volume entitled, *The India-Pakistan Conflict: An Enduring Rivalry*, edited by Professor T. V. Paul, the contributors to this study have discovered that

“international relations paradigms, such as realism, and theories such as balance of power and power transition that draw on systemic level explanations offer only partial clues to the understanding of the ongoing conflict.”<sup>25</sup> While admitting that a truly comprehensive theoretical framework still remains to be assembled, there is a congruence of opinion among area specialists on what some of the key elements are to resolving these persistent conflicts and rivalries. In particular, the scholarly consensus among those who have been able to offer explanations based on some key idiosyncratic variables has identified three central elements that will frame the nature of the conflict and/or its eventual resolution. These elements are (1) decision makers, (2) the nation-state, and (3) regional factors.<sup>26</sup>

By allowing for an exchange of views between area specialists, on the one hand, and with international relations theorists, on the other, this collection of essays offers the first major comprehensive explanation for explaining the persistence of this multifaceted conflict. To begin with, the contributors were each presented with a set of three core questions: first, to what extent is the India-Pakistan conflict an enduring rivalry; second, what specific factors explain the persistence of this conflict; and third, when and how can this enduring rivalry end?<sup>27</sup> The answers that they provide also give us some clear and suggestive answers about the negative nature and effect of American hegemony on the entire region of South Asia. In providing these points of departure for an explanation, their responses help us to make the case as to why it is necessary to remove the negative influences of American hegemony from this region. Based on the findings presented in their study, Professor Paul constructed the table seen in Table 4.1.

With regard to my contention that the statecraft and ultimate purpose of American hegemony has largely been a political exercise of applying “power over” peoples—regardless of the costs and sacrifices exacted from them—often leading to extended periods of conflict, violence, and even war—it is noteworthy that Professor Paul has concluded, with respect to the India-Pakistan rivalry, that “the international level factors for the rivalry’s persistence are centered on the changing systemic conditions in general and the politics among great powers that are deeply involved in the conflict.”<sup>28</sup> While it is true that other great powers have been periodically involved in the region, the fact remains that the hegemonic role of the United States, and its intervention in this conflict, has had an uninterrupted history that covers the entire period of the cold war as well as its immediate aftermath. In fact, “from a great-power-centered perspective, the U.S. alliance with Pakistan and American arms transfers to Islamabad in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1980s encouraged the Pakistani military to resort to war, as in 1965 and 1999.”<sup>29</sup>

It is only since the 9/11 attacks on the U.S. homeland that the “American-led war on terrorism has offered both India and Pakistan a limited policy window to work toward rivalry de-escalation.” Still, there remains other great power involvement in the region. Hence, the problems associated with the challenge of realizing regional peace are also partially compounded by the role played by China, which has allowed the conflict to continue so as to

**Table 4.1** Factors determining persistence and possible termination of the rivalry

	Persistence	Termination
International level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Great power involvement</li> <li>• Systemic/structural factors (e.g., bipolar competition)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Major change in great power policies (U.S.-CHINA)</li> <li>• Post-cold war, post-9/11 constraints/opportunities</li> </ul>
Regional level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Territorial divisions</li> <li>• Nuclear Weapons (Stability–Instability paradox)</li> <li>• Truncated power asymmetry</li> <li>• Lack of effective regional institutions</li> <li>• Dearth of economic interaction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Territorial settlement</li> <li>• Nuclear Stability</li> <li>• Preponderance of status-quo power</li> <li>• Strengthening of regional institutions</li> <li>• Deepening economic interdependence</li> </ul>
Domestic level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Problems of national identity</li> <li>• Institutional incompatibility</li> <li>• Secession-irredentism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secure identities</li> <li>• Full democratization (Pakistan)</li> <li>• Change in Strategies and Goals, e.g., abandonment of irredentism/low intensity war (Pakistan)/limited war options (India)</li> <li>• Autonomy for Kashmir</li> </ul>
Decision-maker level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dysfunctional learning</li> <li>• Leadership priorities/strategies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Functional learning</li> <li>• Change in leadership priorities/strategies</li> </ul>

Source: T. V. Paul and William Hogg, “South Asia’s Embedded Conflict: Understanding the India-Pakistan Rivalry,” in *The India-Pakistan Conflict: An Enduring Rivalry*, ed. T. V. Paul, Cambridge University Press, 2005, 252.

prevent India from emerging as a peer competitor in Asia. Yet, China’s role in this dynamic is quite limited when compared with the decades-old U.S.-driven globalist version of American hegemony and how this U.S. position has created a distorting prism of doctrinal rigidity that was able to refract an image of China that was more of a creation of the U.S. National Security community than of what the evidence pointed toward and what changed circumstances reveal.<sup>30</sup>

Despite competing U.S. and Chinese interests in the region, one of the most important findings from the work of Professor Paul and his colleagues is that, at the regional level, “contested territorial divisions, truncated power

asymmetry, and nuclear weapons are seen as key variables explaining the rivalries persistence.<sup>31</sup> It is worth noting that other scholars involved in this project, including Paul Diehl, Gary Goertz, Daniel Saeedi, John Vasquez, and Daniel Geller, all give significant weight to these territorial considerations in the ongoing rivalry. Most strikingly, what is also true in this regional context is that when regional politics can be divorced from the interference of great power interventions, we find, at that point, the greatest hopes for peace and an end to the rivalry.

Furthermore, these scholars found that the economic variables in that regional context—even beyond the isolated issue of nuclear stability—could play a major role in conflict termination. The great discovery of these scholars is that “the development of economic interdependence between the two states may exert the most effect on the prospect for rivalry termination.”<sup>32</sup> Their research has confirmed what most scholars on economic interdependence highlight, which is the conflict-reducing role and potential of this economic variable in redefining relations between trading states.

Hence, in accord with the thesis of this book, what is most needed for the emergence of a peaceful Asia—in addition to the relative decline of American hegemony—is the termination of great power competition and balance-of-power games. In place of these vestiges of the past, what is most critically needed for the cause of peace and human development is the movement toward a multicentric world of regions, working cooperatively toward the achievement and practical realization of a Post-Hegemonic Era. In this regard, it can be argued that there exists a great potential within South Asia’s new regionalism for the realization of regional peace and prosperity. This book submits the thesis that, with the relative decline of American hegemony, Asia and other world regions can move toward a redefinition of what constitutes genuine human security. Such a redefinition of human security would have to be premised on the fundamental recognition that true human security cannot be produced or achieved on a unilateral basis.

### REDEFINING HUMAN SECURITY IN AN ERA OF REGIONALIZATION

True human security is premised upon the development and maintenance of stable and cooperative relationships among nations. So that these relationships may be enduring ones, these kinds of relationships will have to be dynamic. They will be dynamic in the sense that they will be created not only from the top down but also from the bottom up. Hence, achieving a fully functioning human security system will require greater solidarity among both classes and communities. This conclusion is supported and underscored by Professor Paul when he writes that “within the region, the creation of the proposed South Asia Free Trade Area (SAFTA) and the strengthening of the South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC) could evolve in a manner similar to ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) and its free trade arrangements and this could lead to regional peace and prosperity.”<sup>33</sup>

In my judgment, this more hopeful future for South Asia is predicated not merely on achieving greater mutual cooperation through economic interdependence but also by the achievement of a new and commonly shared definition of what constitutes genuine human security.

In redefining the concept of security, Professor Barry Buzan has invoked the term “*desecuritization*,” which is defined as “a process by which a political community downgrades or ceases to treat something as an existential threat to a valued referent object, and reduces or stops calling for urgent and exceptional measures to deal with the threat. The process can be directly discursive addressing the definition of the situation; more often it is indirect, where *a shift of orientation towards other issues* reduces the relative attention paid to the previously securitized issue”<sup>34</sup> (emphasis added). In other words, we can begin to take a discursive shift from a narrow focus upon nuclear weapons and move toward nonnuclear alternatives. Such a shift constitutes what Buzan has called “*a shift of orientation towards other issues.*” Such a shift would allow all concerned and affected parties to focus more on what unites them than what divides them. A search for commonality overcomes many of the difficulties associated with a narrow focus on differences defined in primarily military terms. By removing military threats and counterthreats from international discourse, we no longer need to worry about taking exceptional measures to deal with perceived threats. By removing military threats and the fears that they engender, we can then begin to terminate the most deadly aspects of historical rivalry between states—the threat of war and the destruction of “the other.” It then becomes possible to reject the “balance-of-power” game and the allure of pursuing “great-power hegemony.”

### ENDING THE PURSUIT OF GREAT POWER HEGEMONY

To those cynics who will claim that I am suggesting we no longer need to discuss the lurking dangers of nuclear threats, my response is that a new perspective is needed to even begin building a global regime of nuclear stability. We have to change our basic paradigm regarding the concept of “security.” Security can no longer be premised upon a race for nuclear predominance or nuclear balancing. Rather, genuine security can only be ultimately achieved by rejecting the nuclear paradigms of the past and embracing a commitment to denuclearization and begin the march toward worldwide nuclear disarmament. Both great powers and lesser powers need to finally accept the 1998 ruling of the International Court of Justice, which held that nuclear weapons are illegal. The threat that they present to human life on this planet cannot be rationally justified in the name of national security or human security.

Such a refocusing and reframing of the definition of security could serve to restore the centrality of negotiations on a comprehensive test ban treaty (CTBT) as well as adherence to, and the restoration of, an effective nuclear nonproliferation treaty regime (NPT). Unfortunately, this has been a path that the Bush-II administration has refused to take since coming into office in 2001. Yet, the benefit of a refocused definition of what constitutes security



would ultimately result in placing the bulk of state expenditures not on military investments but rather on the serious and continuing problems associated with the lack and/or weakness of effective regional institutions. If a refocused definition of human security became dominant, then the entire South Asian region could then begin to move more effectively toward the realization of a universal notion of human security. In so doing, South Asian nations would thereby be able to adequately fund related security needs—such as the expansion of trade and investment as well as human rights enforcement, the advancement of environmental and labor protections, and pay for the creation and enforcement of policies that can support a path of sustainable development.

Such a reorientation of both focus and values has the capacity not only to alter regional policies and investments but also to make possible a new political environment wherein a higher priority could finally be given to the task of strengthening regional institutions. In the economic realm, for example, instead of failing to produce solutions to the dearth of economic interaction between contending parties and/or states, a comprehensive approach to economic and security concerns could be inaugurated in order to deepen economic interdependence between India and Pakistan. Instead of devising new military strategies to deal with territorial divisions, the various parties and states in the region should be encouraged to develop new nonmilitary strategies for the alleviation of interstate rivalries and begin to engage in a process of interstate and intrastate dialogue that can eventually lead toward territorial settlements—as in the case of Kashmir.

### REGIONAL SOLUTIONS TO THE LEGACY OF BRITISH AND AMERICAN HEGEMONY

In the final analysis, contested territorial divisions are largely responsible for much of the continuing rivalry, violence, and the threat of war that still exists between India and Pakistan. In order to overcome this perpetual cycle, it has been suggested that India and Pakistan work toward what Anand Giridharadas calls a “*peace without borders*.”<sup>35</sup> Writing in the op-ed section of *The New York Times* on January 18, 2004, Giridharadas recounted the fact that India and Pakistan have been bitter neighbors since their partition in 1947. A predominantly Hindu India and predominantly Muslim Pakistan have gone to war three times and were on the brink of a fourth in 2002. In large measure, “the barrier to rapprochement remains the Himalayan region of Kashmir. Two-thirds of the area is under Indian control, but a majority of its inhabitants are Muslim.” In this environment, “Kashmir’s symbolic importance cannot be overstated. It is seen as the incarnation of each country’s founding ideal: for Pakistan, an inextricable part of a Muslim homeland; for India, testimony to its secular pluralism.” He suggests, “for the sake of both India and Pakistan, as well as the wider region, Kashmir could be reunified as a semiautonomous, neutral province. In an age of ever-deepening global integration, this would mark a new kind of peace, drawing Indians and Pakistanis into friendship through the compulsion of shared space.” A similar proposal has

been made with respect to Jerusalem—itsself an object of contention between three of the world’s oldest religions—Christianity, Judaism, and Islam.

The suggestion that a peace without borders could be constructed with the advent of a semiautonomous, neutral province in Kashmir is important in terms of the regional dynamic. With plans for South Asian integration already underway, it would seem that the effective framework for peace is in the making. In 2006, the South Asian Free Trade area has linked together India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, the Maldives, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. Proposals have been made for a supranational currency, parliament, and bureaucracy. The architects of this plan call it the South Asian Union. Giridharadas notes, “As a neutral space within that union, Kashmir could host the capital for its administrative machinery. The city could adopt the name Shantinagar—Hindu for ‘peace town.’ It is a borderless solution to an endless argument over borders.”

Should this path to be taken, it would represent the reversal of an historical trend that has continued unabated since 1947 when departing British colonizers ordered 562 Indian princes to join with India or the new Islamic Republic of Pakistan. As it turned out, Kashmir’s Hindu maharajah ignored the decree, choosing instead the building of a free state. However, when Pakistani tribesmen aided a local rebellion, he turned to India for protection. This move was seen as a betrayal of his Muslim-majority subjects. War ensued. In the case fire of 1949, Pakistan kept one-third of the kingdom. Both in 1965 and 1971, both India and Pakistan fought all-out wars over Kashmir. In the aftermath, hard-liners in each country have claimed Kashmir wholly for their side. Given this result, it would seem that a settlement based on borders would merely redraw the maps without resolving the essential conflict. Therefore, it has been suggested that a borderless peace has the best chance to halt the firing. Such a borderless peace would also signal a rejection of American hegemony in the region. It would create a structure through which the nations and regional organizations of South Asia could work to preclude other potential hegemonic rivalries from developing.

This perspective is representative of a viewpoint advocated by Bjorn Hettne who—when speaking of the creation of a new concept of citizenship in South Asia that transcends existing ethnic, religious, political and cultural divides—has called such a result a “realistic utopia.”<sup>36</sup> In the same spirit as Hettne, Giridharadas argues that “a plan for a borderless peace makes the most of a global moment.” He bases his contention on the view that “the insight of our age is that borders sanctify difference, but that borderlessness spurs partnership.” It is for this reason that “our century may enrich Asian tigers. But it will belong to the snarling lions that learn to hunt in packs.” In advocating a bold approach to conflicts over contested lands, Professor Sumantra Bose has argued that “the prospects for peace are not necessarily well served by the incremental approach that emphasizes gradual, piecemeal progress and prioritizes less contentious issues over the more fundamental issues that divide the antagonists.”<sup>37</sup> From the vantage point of this perspective, “contested lands do not have to remain contested.”<sup>38</sup>

In such a new and more hopeful regional environment, it seems that the prospects for peace—even the achievement of a borderless peace—are greater in the first decade of the twenty-first century than at any time in recent history. Yet, this fact is either lost on the architects of the U.S. Global Empire or remains just out of the range of its hegemonic concerns. Not only has the Bush-II administration failed to make progress on these peace initiatives and peace prospects between India and Pakistan, it has also failed to address the concerns of the Southeast Asian nations as a whole. For example, on July 29, 2007, U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice announced that she would be absent from an Asian security forum in Manila that week. In response, China stepped into the great power gap as China's new Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi came to the conference seeking to build ties and trust in the region—at Washington's expense. Rice's decision came after President George Bush opted to skip a forum in Singapore planned for September 2007.<sup>39</sup> As a side note, it is more than interesting to come to realize the fact that Southeast Asia has been increasingly important to China not only as a trade partner but also as a transit area for most of the imported resources that have fueled and will continue to fuel China's growth—such as oil.

It became clear that the Bush administration had written off the chance for a serious dialogue with the ASEAN nations. This result lends credence to the view that the United States has sent a signal that it is not interested in genuine engagement with the region. In the meantime, China and ASEAN have been at work since 2002 in efforts to lower tariffs on a range of goods and have also been discussing liberalizing trade in services. Therefore, Rice's decision to pass over this meeting with ASEAN seems to be self-defeating considering that ASEAN is a bigger export market for American products than China.

This decision comes after the U.S. chose to be absent from the 2005 ASEAN economic ministers meeting held in the Lao capital, Vientiane. The United States has not been a part of the ASEAN Plus-Three annual gatherings that connect ASEAN with its three northeast Asian partners, China, Japan, and South Korea. Additionally, the United States has been excluded from several multilateral initiatives, such as the new continent-wide East Asia Summit, which represents half of the world's population. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization is another rising bloc in Central Asia that received Washington's attention in 2005 when it chose to issue a timeline for U.S. forces to pull out of Uzbekistan. Taken together, these events represent a discernable pattern. Not only has the Bush-II administration been noteworthy for its invisibility at these regional events; it has also begun to undermine a vast network of multiple alliances that it has built over time.

Despite this neglect, the one thing that can be counted on is the fact that the security architecture that has been emerging in the Asia-Pacific will continue to be built—with or without U.S. participation. The way in which the strategic architecture of the Asia-Pacific unfolds will directly affect the future of U.S. hegemony in the region. This is especially the case as ASEAN prepared to unveil a new rules-based ASEAN Charter at its November 2007 summit.

In so doing, ASEAN sees itself as being grounded in legal certainty—just as the EU sees itself so grounded. Given the importance of these trends, it can be argued that they point toward a future in which the dominance of U.S. hegemony in the region of Southeast Asia will soon be coming to an end.<sup>40</sup>

With the benefit of hindsight, there are historical parallels between the current actions of the American Hegemon under the Bush administration and the end of British rule in India. At the beginning of the twentieth century, but at the end of British hegemony in Asia, the great Indian poet, Rabindranath Tagore, viewed the nature of British rule as uncreative. It was for that reason that he condemned it. According to two leading scholars on Tagore, “the chasm of aloofness between ruler and ruled, of which he had spoken with bitterness to the Quakers in London in 1930, deprived the *Pax Britannica* of any glory in Tagore’s eyes. It was a machine, not a living organism.”<sup>41</sup> Ironically, international relations scholars often describe the hegemonic project as one in which the practice of hegemony in world affairs has an organic quality to it. So, the perception that Britain’s practice of its hegemony in India was more machine-like than the expression of a living organism constitutes a telling reminder of what contributes to hegemonic decline. In any case, the ultimate verdict on British rule in India that was offered by Tagore may also serve as the ultimate verdict on U.S. hegemony in Asia under the Bush administration and its days as a hegemon in decline. In June of 1941, Tagore wrote,

“I have neither the right nor the desire to judge the British people as such; but I cannot help being concerned at the conduct of the British Government in India, since it directly involves the life and well-being of millions of my countrymen. I am too painfully conscious of the extreme poverty, helplessness and misery of our people not to deplore the supineness of the Government that has tolerated this condition for so long...I had hoped that the leaders of the British nation, who had grown apathetic to our suffering and forgetful of their own sacred trust in India during their days of prosperity and success, would at last, in the time of their own great trial, awake to the justice and humanity of our cause. It has been a most grievous disappointment to me to find that fondly cherished hope receding farther and farther from realization each day. Believe me, nothing would give me greater happiness than to see the people of the West and the East march in common crusade against all that robs the human spirit of its significance.”<sup>42</sup>

Tagore’s rebuke of British rule in India seems to be a fitting and worthy rebuke of the conduct of the second Bush administration in general, and its treatment of the global South, in particular. Tagore’s rebuke of Britain’s colonial hegemony over India remains as a glaring indictment of the events of August 1947 when the world’s mightiest modern empire at that time officially abandoned its vow to protect one-fifth of humankind. By 1947, the decision had been made to divide British India into the fragmented dominions of India and Pakistan. History has laid official blame for much of what was to follow on Lord Mountbatten, the cousin of the king who rushed the process of nationhood along at an absurd and unrealistic pace. Acting

as Viceroy to India, Mountbatten engaged in a drawing of new borderlines through the middle of Punjab and Bengal.

Virtually everyone involved with Mountbatten advised him that to move ahead with partitioning those provinces was a grievous mistake that would unleash uncontrollable violence. Indeed, civil unrest among Muslims, Hindus, and Sikhs escalated as Independence Day approached. When the new boundary lines were announced, waves of arson, murder, and mayhem erupted with an unstoppable vengeance. Partition uprooted over 10 million people. Out of this number, around 500,000 to a million died in the ensuing inferno of Britain's imperial departure.<sup>43</sup> Their deaths would remain a historical testament to the arrogance of a European empire in this part of the global South. It would not be the last time that either Britain, or the United States, for that matter, would leave behind a human disaster and call it peace. One reason for such a bleak appraisal of these two hegemon is that "it is not clear that the role of the United States has become qualitatively different from that of earlier hegemon. The irony is that even as the United States has become more powerful and aspires to a post-territorial empire, frontiers and traditional concepts of territory recover their physical importance."<sup>44</sup>

Like the British of a century ago, the United States has most probably entered into a period of relative decline with little official acknowledgment of the abject failure of its ideology of preventive war, unapologetic unilateralism, and greed masked in the rhetoric of "democratic values" and the magic of the "free market." This failure to acknowledge the limits of America's imperial ideology is an aspect of the imperial mind-set that is held in common between both America's neoconservatives and its liberal hawks. That is because, like their ideological ancestors, "they are just as much utopians as the Communists used to be. They too believe of what is in fact an impossibly stable and permanent state for the world, a kind of world democratic nirvana under American hegemony."<sup>45</sup> Throughout the Bush years, Senator Joseph Biden seized every opportunity to dismiss critics of the Iraq war within his own party. Biden spent his time vocally denouncing Bush's handling of the war, while strongly supporting the war effort itself. In similar fashion, Senator Hillary Clinton, a member of the Armed Services Committee, appeared to be more comfortable accommodating the president's war policy than opposing it. In this situation, Biden and Clinton were not alone. According to Ari Berman, a fellow at the Public Concern Foundation, standing behind these hawks of American hegemony are their enablers in "the strategic class—the foreign policy advisors, think-tank specialists and pundits. Their presumed expertise gives the strategic class a unique license to speak for the party on national security issues" and, since 9/11, "it has risen in prominence, egging on and underpinning elected officials, crowding out dissenters within its own ranks and becoming increasingly ideologically monolithic."<sup>46</sup>

The domestic benefits of this hawkish approach would accrue to them at the polls while, at the same time, these democratic party hawks and liberal imperialists cynically worked on the international scene, in concert with Bush and the rest of the neoconservatives, to maintain and extend the American

empire through American hegemony. In this task, Senator Biden has consistently voiced his opinion that after the American occupation of Iraq ends, the country should be divided up into a sort of federation. On September 26, 2007, over seventy of Biden's fellow senators voted to endorse his idea. On a 75 to 23 vote, the U.S. Senate decided to support splitting Iraq into three sectarian statelets. The response has been to incense Arabs in the region and fuel fears that the disillusioned Americans plan partition. At the same time, a U.S.-backed oil law that is aimed at distributing Iraq's oil wealth among its disparate sects, under firm central control, continued to languish in the Iraqi parliament throughout the fall of 2007. In Iraq, power rests with whoever controls the nation's energy riches. These are estimated at some 200 billion barrels of oil, but unexplored reserves could well double that. There are also large reservoirs of natural gas. So, efforts by both the Kurds and Shi'ites to control the oil fields could lead to a de facto fragmentation of Iraq into three self-governing regions that could easily become the prey of competing regional powers. It was in this climate of uncertainty that the U.S. Senate's endorsement, on September 26, 2007 of the proposed decentralization of Iraq—by establishing three semiautonomous regions for Shi'ites, Sunnis, and Kurds under a federal system—was met with dismay, anger, and resentment in Baghdad and across the Middle East.

Once again, as with the U.S. Senate vote authorizing the president absolute discretion with regard to military force against Iraq, both Republicans and Democrats gave the Bush-II administration a bipartisan consensus—a consensus that placed the international law principle of sovereignty on the sacrificial altar of greed and self-interest. The fact that Senator Biden's proposal could garner such support is evidence of the deep-seated nature of the imperial mind-set among America's political elite. As to who would be responsible for the line drawing is not clear. What is clear is that Biden's evolving vision for Iraq's future has much in common with Lord Mountbatten's vision for India and Pakistan between 1947 and 1948. The common denominator that connects the exercise of American and British attempts to reshape the world in their own image is an abject failure to learn from history. It is further testimony to the recalcitrance of the imperial mind-set.

This new "strategic class" constitutes the latest generation of imperialists in the service of empire. In fact, they are the quite unapologetic apologists for an American imperial policy that I have termed "*hegemonic militarism*." Hegemonic militarism, as it is projected globally, obfuscates diplomacy. And, with diplomacy removed, so, too, are the ethical components of a potentially benign foreign policy. In its place resides the arrogance of unilateralism combined with the hubris of a hegemonic mind-set that is blind to cultural, religious, and political differences. Like Lord Mountbatten, I would argue that they are also doomed to fail. The prospect of imperial failure arises out of the fact that "preponderant power alone can do a nation much more harm than good. When unchecked, primacy often invites enemies and provokes the formation of hostile, countervailing coalitions."<sup>47</sup>

## COUNTERVAILING COALITIONS AND AN EMERGING MULTICENTRIC WORLD

The vision of a declining U.S. primacy accompanied by the rise of countervailing coalitions points toward a new dynamic throughout the various regions of an emergent multicentric world. It is a dynamic that emanates from a combination of ascendant regional ideologies, regional coalitions, and humane values that are, at the start of the twenty-first century, beginning to redefine both the meaning and the practice of what constitutes genuine human security, economic development, human rights, and the right to development.<sup>48</sup> In this regard, there can be little doubt that the values and the ideologies that are most expressive of this new multicentric world of regions will have to be fundamentally different from those of the American Hegemon if a multicentric and regional approach to governance is to work effectively and endure the tests of time.<sup>49</sup>

Throughout this ongoing period of regional emergence and maturity, there can be little doubt that these new regional alliances, institutional arrangements, and mutually supportive organizational structures will also have to confront the *ghosts of hegemony—past, present, and future*. In order to dispense with the haunting specter of all three of these ghosts (*both in terms of their legacy and continuing influence*) a fundamental transformation of the international system will be required. In part, such a transformation will involve the rise of a multicentric world of regions that will be capable of developing their own norms, producing their own policies, and expressing their own values. Additionally, there will be an inevitable effort to redefine the world capitalist system that moves it away from its historical emphasis on the centrality of profit to one that incorporates the needs of people in conjunction with their universally recognized human rights. Among these rights should be the right to development (*which involved the equitable sharing of the benefits of development vis-à-vis a politically structured arrangement that guarantees both distributional equity and sociopolitical inclusion*).

The priorities and policies of this emergent multicentric world of regions will have to continue to reject those of the American Hegemon and the authors of the “Washington Consensus” if the challenges of global poverty, protecting human rights, advancing human development, confronting climate change and global warming, engaging in conflict prevention, and meeting humanitarian concerns are to be dealt with effectively. On this very point, Walden Bello has noted that “a fluid international system, where there are multiple zones of ambiguity that the less powerful can exploit in order to protect their interests, may be the only realistic alternative to the current global multilateral order that would weaken the hold of the North. The main beneficiaries of clearly articulated structures are always the powerful and the rich. The fewer structures and the less clear the rules the better for the South.”<sup>50</sup>

Throughout the global South, it was not hard to find a natural unity of interests among entire regions because their unity has largely been the result

of a shared structural similarity within the global system. Professor Stephen Krasner has referred to this shared condition as one in which “the unity of developing countries is a product of their objective situation and subjective self-understanding.”<sup>51</sup> As with Bello, we find that Krasner seemed forced to acknowledge the effects of the world capitalist system itself as being responsible for producing not just unequal, but inequitable, exchanges. After all, the central defining characteristic of Third World polities throughout the entire global South is their vulnerability. Insofar as this vulnerability has not been reduced by economic growth, there remains, for them, a decisive need to advance their own developmental agendas, thereby reducing their vulnerability.

Given this analysis, I submit that the best way for the global South to strategically opt out of this situation of vulnerability is twofold. First, the South has to reject the continuing primacy and hegemony of certain international institutions, such as the WTO, that disadvantage and/or exploit Latin America, Africa, the Middle East, and Asia. Second, each of these regions throughout the global South must work cooperatively toward developing a multicentric world of regional organizations, institutions, and international alliances that will be strong enough to insulate themselves from the intrusions of predatory capitalism and imperial interventions. Otherwise, the rich nations of the North will continue to destroy inclusive UN organizations, such as UNCTAD, by replacing and marginalizing them with institutions like the WTO that foster and promote neoliberal economic policies that only work to the advantage of the North. For example, the basic fact that the “WTO differs significantly from UNCTAD appears already from its name: the ‘W’ stands for ‘World,’ as opposed to the ‘UN’ (‘United Nations’) in UNCTAD. This was deliberate: the major industrial countries did not want the trade organization to be part of the UN system. Secondly, while the ‘TAD’ in UNCTAD stands for ‘Trade and Development,’ the ‘T’ in WTO stands only for ‘Trade,’ excluding the ‘D’ for ‘Development.’ Neither in name nor in practice is the WTO a development organization.”<sup>52</sup> Rather, the WTO essentially works to advance the economic hegemony of U.S. and other transnational capitalist interests. It is with this reality in mind that we next turn to the subject of hegemonic purposes.



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## CHAPTER 5



# HEGEMONIC PURPOSES

Under the George W. Bush presidency, the actual purposes of the wars and conflicts unleashed by the United States in the Middle East have brought the word “hegemony” to the foreground once again.<sup>1</sup> Its salience has been resurrected on the U.S.-occupied sands of Iraq.<sup>2</sup> Its relevance made poignantly clear by the Bush administration’s threats of war against Iran. Its practical use in American statecraft has revealed itself by the formulation of energy policies designed to alleviate America’s thirst for foreign oil.<sup>3</sup> In the realm of international affairs, the pursuit and defense of American hegemony is dedicated to efforts that will forestall, and perhaps prevent, the race of other states (such as Russia and China) to capture their share of all available oil reserves.<sup>4</sup> In short, ever since the end of the cold war in 1989, the “hegemony” sought after by the architects of the American Empire has made American domination of the globe the primary goal of national security planners throughout the U.S. National Security State.

Ever since 1950, it has been clear that America’s elites constructed a policy of imperial interventionism. It can be discerned in NSC-68, which declared, “Our overall policy at the present time may be described as one designed to foster a world environment in which the American system can survive and flourish.”<sup>5</sup> The way in which this policy fostered a military policy designed for global reach led to costly interventions under two Texans: Lyndon B. Johnson in the context of the Vietnam War and George W. Bush in the context of the Iraq War and occupation. The primary domestic parallel that can be gleaned from these two interventions is that “as the regional beneficiaries of military spending became increasingly Southern and Western over time, they also became wealthier.”<sup>6</sup> Apart from U.S. domestic politics, however, the private gains to certain groups are dwarfed by the social costs and expenditures both in current and future terms.

When the military forces of the American Empire invaded Iraq in 2003, the Bush administration predicted that the war would pay for itself and turn a profit. So far, though, like most of its predictions, it was not only wrong—it was dramatically wrong. According to one of the world’s leading economists, Joseph Stiglitz (winner of the Nobel Prize in Economics), the true cost of the war can be estimated at \$2.267 trillion. That figure includes past and future spending on the war itself (\$725 billion), health care and disability benefits for veterans (\$127 billion), and hidden increases in defense spending (\$169 billion). It also includes losses that the entire American economy will have to suffer from injured veterans (\$355 billion) and higher oil prices (\$450 billion).<sup>7</sup> If these costs were not bad enough in and of themselves, also consider the fact that from the early 1980s onward, income inequality within the United States has widened to such a degree that by 2007 over \$1 trillion in income is currently being transferred every year from roughly 90 million working class families in the United States to corporations and the wealthiest nonworking households.<sup>8</sup>

By 2007, the general economic direction of the United States had become so precarious that Robert D. Hormats, vice chairman of Goldman Sachs (International) and a managing director at Goldman, Sachs & Company, warned that “decades of success in mobilizing enormous sums of money to fight large wars and meet other government needs have led many Americans to believe that ample funds will be readily available in the event of a future war, terrorist attack, or other emergency. But that can no longer be assumed. Budget constraints could limit the availability or raise the cost of resources to deal with new emergencies. If government debt continues to pile up, deficits rise to stratospheric levels, and heavy dependence on foreign capital grows, borrowing the money needed will be very costly.”<sup>9</sup> True, he failed to address the worthiness of the policies being pursued, the moral implications, and the political wisdom of it all, but he did address the objective crisis of America’s financial soundness in an age of empire and hegemonic overreach. In so doing, America’s Achilles’ heel has been exposed.

Still, the question of America’s hegemonic purpose remains. America, by virtue of its post-1989 status as the “*sole remaining superpower*” has been endowed with great wealth, unsurpassed military power, and an unmitigated desire to embark upon what the Pentagon calls “*full spectrum dominance*” over land, air, sea, and outer space.<sup>10</sup> The capacity of America to wage war in any arena, against any rival in order to secure its hegemonic position of dominance, now extends from the depths of the oceans to the outer reaches of space. However, the drive for American primacy is further complicated by the fact that capitalism “has largely turned the world capitalist and cannot legitimate itself as a civilizing force in the face of pre-capitalist societies.” At the same time “it has to produce a world order that doesn’t blow up in its face or cause mounting or spreading chaos and conflict.”<sup>11</sup> That is because “the primacy model is bursting at the seams in the international political field, and its coercive imposition by the U.S. primacy coalition threatens to create the conditions for domestic blow outs and institutional disintegration on the

internal front of international capitalism. But there is no strong constituency for an alternative world order model within the American ruling class."<sup>12</sup>

Further, the lack of an alternative world order model to replace or even restrain the imperial reign of American hegemony has left the quality of life for billions of people around the globe no better off, and in many cases, worse off. The reality of daily life on earth for almost 2 billion people who live on less than one dollar a day, is one of poverty, hunger, and subjugation to U.S. hegemonic rule and the vagaries and unevenness of the world capitalist system. Exacerbated by the pace and unevenness of globalization, the earth's multitudes remain largely excluded from the decision-making processes that affect their very lives.<sup>13</sup> The ramifications and unevenness of this phenomenon points to what I call the "*Globalization of Sociopolitical Exclusion*" (GSE).

What defines its essential nature is a conscious neglect of the issue of both national and global inequality. This particular brand of globalization, operating under the auspices of American hegemonic leadership, has entailed the prior liberalization of the domestic markets and the privatization of state-owned enterprises. The empirical evidence that has emerged on these trends mostly contradicts the supposed favorable distributive effects of these measures.<sup>14</sup> The strictly economic explanation for these results is found in the realization that "left to themselves, deregulated financial systems cannot perform well owing to the problems of incomplete information, markets and contracts, herd behavior, panics, weak supervision and speculation on asset prices."<sup>15</sup> When placed in historical perspective, we find that for both Washington and Wall Street, the effects of deregulation, derivatives, and subprime mortgage loans exploded in the economic crisis of September 2008, with the severity of the economic meltdown requiring an over \$700 billion bailout by the American taxpayer.

When placed in broader sociopolitical terms we discover that the "Globalization of Sociopolitical Exclusion" (GSE) has created a crisis that affects every continent and every regional body. In fact, the phenomenon of GSE has created nothing less than a worldwide human rights crisis. As a result, it can now be argued that the concerns of social policy, traditionally the prerogative of sovereign states, have become supranational in scope.<sup>16</sup>

The 1945 postwar settlement for governing the world economy that emerged out of Bretton Woods even more fundamentally emerged out of negotiations that embodied large-scale new ideas about international economic governance that placed the United States at the epicenter of power. The very structure of the new international economic order was designed so that the United States would retain authority over the institutions through voting rights, funding, and control over mandates.<sup>17</sup> Hence, by September 2008, it became clear that the ramifications of America's hegemonic influence would inevitably be felt throughout and among all other governments as well as throughout the major multilateral institutions that govern global economic affairs.<sup>18</sup> Whether it is authoritarian governments in the Middle East, Africa, or Asia, or whether it is the centers of financial power within the

International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the World Trade Organization, the U.S. Treasury Department, and Wall Street, the power and reach of American hegemony is undeniable.

American hegemony has created an international economic and political structure that has a tremendous downside. As a direct consequence of its hegemonic priorities and policies, there is increasing hostility toward global capitalism as it enriches some but leaves others behind in terms of skills, rewards, and power. In many ways, globalization as the reign of global capitalism may have made the world flat but there are yawning gaps of inequality between the haves and have-nots, both within and between nations. From Wall Street to the World Trade Organization (WTO), the instruments of America's financial power have effectively exploited the most vulnerable. On this matter, Thomas Pogge notes, "The present design of the global order is not, and nowhere near, optimal in terms of poverty avoidance...Poverty avoidance would...be better served if these countries faced lesser constraints and handicaps on their exports into the affluent countries: The \$700 billion reported annual loss in export opportunities due to rich-country protectionism is huge relative to ODA and relative to poor-country exports and GNIs."<sup>19</sup> It is undeniable that America's international economic empire has exacerbated the problems of global poverty with its creation of the World Trade Organization (WTO). As Pogge observes, "Poverty avoidance would also be better served if the WTO Treaty had included a global minimum wage and minimal global constraints on working hours and working conditions in order to constrain the current 'race to the bottom' where poor countries competing for foreign investment must outbid one another by offering ever more exploitable and mistreatable workforces."<sup>20</sup> After the events of September 2008 on Wall Street, the global exploitation of billions of people throughout the world had come home to roost in the streets of America itself. The American middle class would find itself in forms of financial distress not seen since the Great Depression of the 1930s. America's poor and uninsured would be subjected to an even more precarious position. Yet, at the same time, America's elite would still cling to their notion of American global hegemony, military primacy, and geopolitical dominance. Yet, Americans were on the way to discovering that the nation's failing economic health would not be able to sustain the requirements of hegemony for much longer.

### THE MARCH OF HEGEMONIC MILITARISM

Being preoccupied with maintaining the current international order as it is currently constituted, the authors of the "*Project for the New American Century*" (PNAC) recognized that American hegemony was already in decline. Therefore, they advanced the idea that America had to invest in a military route of global conquest to take up where its capitalist-driven form of globalization had left off. However, by pursuing a strategy of resurgent militarism in order to maintain the perception of American global primacy, the neoconservatives and the liberal hawks got it wrong, missed the point, and created a

world of greater chaos and conflict. As Professor Charles Maier has observed, we discover that the real conflict is actually “between the privileged and the powerless in the world economy. Far more misery is likely to emerge from this confrontation if it is badly managed than from traditional international conflict.”<sup>21</sup> It is legitimated within the United States through an ideology of resurgent militarism that is allegedly dedicated to fighting a “war on terror” while, in reality, it has been engaged in fighting “a global war against the world’s poor,” subordinated groups, repressed rivals, and potential rivals who might one day replace it as the most dominant. The basic problem with this worldview is that the old paradigms and patterns regarding power no longer fit with the realities of the twenty-first century. The new realities include the fact that “without the inequalities that result from global economic changes, there would be far less movement of peoples to wealthier countries. With this movement have come problems of ethnic conflict, disputes over migration, and heightened religious tensions.”<sup>22</sup>

This same hegemonic project is being rejected and confronted not only by individual nation-states but also by regional groupings. Newly formed and forming regional and political alliances, in combination with progressive social movements, are beginning to characterize the shape and direction of the new international environment. Across every continent, it is manifestly clear that numerous states and regions are seeking to divorce themselves from the sway and interventions of American hegemony. These states and alliances view the hegemonic project as an infringement upon the sovereignty and integrity of their very status as legally recognized independent states. In recognition of these trends, Professor Maier has noted, “All this suggests that we will not be able to analyze the major challenges to global security in the decades to come within the frameworks of international relations that governed in the last century...The balance of power presupposes stable reservoirs of power—bordered territories that can be filled and refilled with a measurable amount of military assets and economic capital. But this carefully structured international order captures little of the tensions and the distress of the world’s population. The conception of power that lay behind George W. Bush’s October 2002 National Security Strategy statement thus seems increasingly antiquated.”<sup>23</sup>

## EMERGING ALTERNATIVES

As U.S. foreign policy makers remain trapped in the hegemonic paradigms of the past, we find that Latin American leaders and heads of state in Cuba, Brazil, Venezuela, Ecuador, Bolivia, and Peru have been in the process of developing their own regional economic trade zone under the rubric of Mercusor. They have done so in order to avoid being swallowed up by Bush-supported and corporate-driven plans of multinationals to impose a Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), which is a more extreme version of NAFTA.<sup>24</sup> Throughout Southeast Asia, East Asia, and Northeast Asia, countries are working on forming their own economic framework of unity under the banner

of ASEAN. The emergence of ASEAN Plus-3 (the ten ASEAN countries plus China, Japan, and South Korea), which has held its own summits since 2001, and whose membership matches the East Asian Economic Group, "has the potential for excluding the United States as a venue which might short circuit APEC, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum which the United States has dominated."<sup>25</sup> Other regional attempts to exclude the United States were undertaken in a 2006 meeting between the presidents of Brazil, Argentina, Venezuela, and Bolivia, representing a group of leaders who range from leftist to populist, but all reflecting an antiliberal trend in South America.

Additionally, "Brazil has staked out a regional hegemonic role for itself, while Venezuela is the loudest advocate of a hemispheric economic zone that does not include the United States."<sup>26</sup> At the dawn of the twenty-first century, more nations and regions seek to exclude the United States from its historical position of economic intimidation and interference. Nowhere was evidence of this trend more striking than at the World Social Forum (WSF). Since its inception in Porto Alegre in 2001, the WSF has refused to adopt political positions on world events, preferring instead to provide a platform that facilitates cooperation between diverse social movements. However, the work of leading sociologist Boaventura de Sousa Santos recognizes that it has always been an inherently political organization. He has argued that if the WSF is able to realize its potential as an institution for a new form of politics, it will become a global power to be reckoned with.<sup>27</sup> As such, the WSF would be one of many emerging institutional centers on the international terrain capable of coordinating a counterhegemonic alliance against the U.S. Global Empire.

At the same time, Russia, China, and India have been working to build a triangular alliance that will allow them to resist and confront any further encroachments by the U.S. Hegemon. From Moscow's perspective, Russian-Western relations are competitive but not antagonistic. Russia does not crave world domination, and its leaders do not dream of restoring the Soviet Union, but they do plan to rebuild Russia as a great power with global reach, organized as a supercorporation.<sup>28</sup> Evidence of this intention surfaced in May 2007 when representatives from India, China, and Russia met in New Delhi, India, for a summit to promote international peace and discuss energy and economic cooperation between their nations, which encompass approximately 40 percent of the world's 6.5 billion people. The significance of the meeting was that it was a continuation of the collaboration between the countries that formally started at a summit held in June 2005 in Vladivostok, Russia. These events are evidence of newly emerging trends regarding Russian, Chinese, and Indian attempts to create a cooperative regionalism that is both peaceful in principle and mutually cooperative in scope.

The greatest and most harmful force that has been at work to destabilize these trends has been the foreign policy of the Bush-II administration. The most militant neoconservatives and hawks in the Bush-II administration have been at work to create the possibility for a new cold war with Russia.

This effort began in 1992 as Pentagon hawks within the Bush-I administration—a cabal comprised of Wolfowitz-Cheney-Libby—developed plans for the United States to prevail as the world’s sole superpower. To that end, they developed a plan entitled “Defense Planning Guidance,” which mentioned unilateral and preemptive action as a viable defense policy. This proposition was unprecedented. In the furtherance of this plan, they sought to secure a buffer zone around the former USSR, namely in Central Asia, the Caucasus, and Eastern Europe. These geographical areas have a vast underground oil reserve, with 17 to 49 billion barrels of proven oil reserves in the Caspian Sea region alone. The Pentagon’s chain of military bases in the area stretches from Kosovo to Kazakhstan, from the Black Sea to the Baltic. All one has to do is to connect the dots between the bases along several pipeline routes that are due to be constructed between 2007 and 2010.

Following the guidelines outlined in the 1992 Bush-I “Defense Planning Guidance” report, it is clear that the United States has continued to extend “security guarantees” to the newly exposed nations of the Eastern Bloc as a way to ensure U.S. hegemony in a region previously off-limits. The United States now ignores international treaties brokered by the UN or NATO and has pursued its own security interests and hegemonic enterprise through bilateral agreements. In so doing, the United States has ignored the democratic opposition to U.S. bases and a missile defense shield being installed in Romania, Bulgaria, and the Czech Republic.

Just one decade after the publication of the Bush-I defense agenda, these guidelines—which were highly criticized at the time—have come to fruition under the administration of Bush-II and his 2002 National Security Strategy. Throughout 2007, the Bush administration made a series of bitterly anti-Russian statements, including plans to bring Ukraine into NATO, backing for Georgia in its conflict with Russian-backed breakaway republics, and announced a move to extend American antimissile defenses to Eastern Europe.<sup>29</sup>

Putin ordered missile tests in response to the U.S. and NATO provocations. He clearly noted that the missile tests were Russia’s response to the planned deployment of new U.S. military bases and missile defense sites in the ex-Soviet satellites of Eastern Europe. Also, in response to the U.S. plans to build a missile in Eastern Europe, President Vladimir Putin found it necessary to declare a moratorium on a key European arms control treaty. This moratorium, Putin suggested, had come about because it was now clear to him that Washington was pursuing “an imperialist policy” that might have triggered a new arms race. Putin assailed the United States and other NATO members for failing to ratify an amended version of the 1990 Conventional Forces in Europe treaty (CFE), which limits the deployment of heavy non-nuclear weapons around the continent. Specifically, the CFE treaty limits troops and military hardware on the NATO-Russian border. On June 1, 2007, Putin declared, “We have signed and ratified the CFE and are fully implementing it. We have pulled out all our heavy weapons from the European part of Russia to locations behind the Ural Mountains and cut our military by 300,000 men.”<sup>30</sup> This is true. Putin has also agreed to withdraw



bases from Georgia. However, in response to Bush's threats to install a U.S.-NATO missile defense shield on the Russian border, Putin found himself, in late April 2007, calling for a moratorium on the CFE treaty and, in response, shock waves rippled across Europe's twenty-seven NATO countries, which realized that they would be first targets in the event that Russia should decide to retaliate.

In fact, Russia has been both progressive and cooperative with Washington on the need for a new U.S.-Russian Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START). On June 27, 2006, Putin proposed to begin talks with the United States on replacing START, which is set to expire in 2009. Calling for a "renewed dialogue on the main disarmament issues," Putin did not provide any specifics on the kind of agreement he was seeking—but neither was there any direct response from Washington. At least Putin acknowledged his disappointment with the fact that disarmament issues had vanished from the international agenda. This was even more significant in light of the fact that the 2001 Nuclear Posture Review placed a strong priority on converting excess U.S. strategic delivery systems for use as conventional-weapon carriers. Some of these plans collide with START restraints. The bottom line is that by maintaining transparency in strategic areas, a new or an extended START agreement has the capacity to increase both American and Russian confidence in their broader relationship and would, at the same time, demonstrate the two nuclear superpowers' commitment to Article VI of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty. Instead of proceeding down this path, the Bush-II administration sought to spend billions more to retool the U.S. military's nuclear arsenal if Congress decides to authorize the *Reliable Replacement Warhead* (RRW) program and the Complex 2030 program.

The Bush-II administration has continued to pour billions of dollars into an unworkable missile defense program that has made the geopolitics of missile defense every bit as troublesome as the science. Even the U.S. Missile Defense Agency has conceded that the shield, originally envisioned as a shield against a rival superpower, is no longer of any use against Russia or China. Russia's large strategic force could easily overwhelm the U.S. system's limited number of deployed interceptors. The program has morphed under Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld into an all-purpose defense for the *Age of Terrorism*. What this ideological turn has translated into is another excuse to pay billions of U.S. tax dollars to U.S. defense contractors under the rubric of terrorism as a replacement for the ideological construct of the cold war.<sup>31</sup>

Even the European Union (EU) has gradually been drifting further away from the political and economic orbit of American hegemony in the hope of building a more inclusive and cosmopolitan global economy with its trading partners. Yet, there have been some limits in this effort because the EU is not taking advantage of the open door to further regional integration and economic influence in Latin America that could be achieved through a free trade arrangement with Mercosur. If the EU remains sluggish in advancing its negotiations with Mercosur, Latin America's demand for manufactured goods could be met by China.<sup>32</sup>

China has taken the initiative in seeking its own strategic gains not only in Latin America but in Africa as well. What most distinguishes the Chinese approach from that of the United States is that the Western approach of imposing its values and political system is not acceptable to China. Rather, China prefers to focus on mutual development, not promoting the development of one country at the expense of another.<sup>33</sup> In fact, China has been joined by India in making Africa the center of the African-Asian trade and investment explosion. The evolving nature of this *South-South partnership* already demonstrates that the most striking hallmark of the new trend in South-South commercial is one that “holds great potential for growth and job creation in the poverty-stricken sub-Saharan region. According to the World Bank, Indian and Chinese foreign direct investment (FDI) has grown considerably, with China’s FDI in Africa amounting to \$1.18 billion by mid-2006.”<sup>34</sup> These realities are part of a broader trend within the context of “rapidly growing *South-South investment and trade relations* among developing countries,” which is evidenced by “the formation of initiatives like the India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) alliance.”<sup>35</sup> The benefits of this IBSA alliance can be measured by the fact that trade with Asia is producing affordable goods that are either being sold in Africa or exported to Asia. In just fourteen years, we find that “India-Africa bilateral trade has risen from \$967 million in 1991 to \$9.14 billion in 2005. Trade between China and Africa has quadrupled in the last five years to reach \$40 billion in 2006.”<sup>36</sup> The aforementioned trends confirm my central thesis that *as American hegemony declines, there shall be a corresponding rise in South-South regional alliances that will constitute, de facto, a new counter-hegemonic alliance against the U.S. Global Empire.*

It is a process that was already foreseen in 1999 as globalization started to move into a new phase. It was evident to John Borrego when he wrote that “the interactive processes between globalization, regionalism, and nationalism and the new economic regions have generated a new hegemonic social form within world capitalist economy. The new hegemon becomes the web of global corporate structures linked to a vast dispersed network of regions and districts within the world-system instead of a nation or supranation formed by a transnational economic region.”<sup>37</sup> In this scenario, there is no one nation that has a hegemonic monopoly over this economic and political system. Rather, the evolution of this new social formation can be understood as a new phase in global history. In this phase, we witness a shift from watching empires succeeding one another to a new paradigm that is defined by the rise of a multicentric world of regions that is linked by the dominance of locally and regionally embedded corporate structures, but not entirely left to their unfettered mercy.

For example, from 2002 to 2007, trade between China and Africa has quadrupled. Part of the explanation for this lies in the fact that “the Chinese and Indian hunger for commodities is an opportunity that could create significant wealth and global champions in the extraction sector. By incorporating new technologies, African companies can differentiate themselves by wiring from the ground up to be more agile, more innovative, and more intelligent than

their first-world rivals.”<sup>38</sup> By definition, this is an example of the workings of a multicentric world of regions that are linked by locally and regionally embedded corporate structures. Insofar as the American Hegemon has lost its legitimacy in many parts of the world, it has failed to maintain the *active consent* of the powerless. After all, legitimacy does not simply depend on the claims of the powerful. Therefore, “regionalism is in part a response to this situation. If a global hegemony organized around one state is no longer possible, might not a number of regional hegemonies be more successful?”<sup>39</sup>

In short, emerging out of the current global system of state actors, there are other social and economic forces moving out of the historical patterns of domination and exclusion. Social movements for justice such as Brazil’s landless workers’ movement are moving into a struggle against dispossession that has been replicated elsewhere by the intrusions of agribusiness and U.S. interventions.<sup>40</sup> Across the vast expanse of the South American continent, the existence of “progressive” governments, which are in the majority today, was made possible by social struggles that debilitated the neoliberal model.<sup>41</sup> Third World social movements throughout the global South have contributed to this new moment in history when international institutions themselves are being forced to respond to their demands and their critiques.

In the midst of this struggle, we find that international law has remained “strangely artificial and narrow,” but this very fact has led to an emerging genre of new scholarship called the “*Third World Approach to International Law*” (TWAIL).<sup>42</sup> It represents the advent of new strategies and rules to circumscribe the abuses of the state as well as illegal interventions into the sovereign integrity of Third World states by international institutions such as the IMF, World Bank, and the WTO. The recognition of the place and power of social movements, of the excluded and of the unrepresented, has been a major accomplishment in struggles for justice against the institutions that have so often uncritically carried out the dictates of the elites of the American Empire and implemented the agenda of its hegemonic enterprise.

Yet, the fact is also that “the arrival of social movements in international law does not mean that the state has become an insignificant actor in the Third World or international law...The state remains a powerful and important site of ideological contestations in most Third World countries and an important source of strength and defense in international law. However, it is undeniable that the nature of Third World resistance has undergone a radical transformation due to the emergence of local social movements as independent actors...Clearly, a new form of politics, a new form of power organization, and new methods of expressing resistance are emerging from the grassroots and are only likely to intensify in the coming millennium.”<sup>43</sup> In the words of Boaventura de Sousa Santos, “the conflict between neo-liberal globalization and anti-capitalist counter-hegemonic globalization is a relatively unmapped social field characterized by relatively and socially uninsurable risks of oppression, human suffering, and destruction as well as by new, unsuspected possibilities and opportunities for emancipatory politics.”<sup>44</sup>

## CHAPTER 6



# THE UNMAPPED AND UNCHARTED JOURNEY BEYOND AMERICAN HEGEMONY

One of the central purposes of this book is to explicate the true nature of neoliberal globalization as it has evolved throughout the recent history of American hegemony and also to identify the historical benchmarks that are becoming a part of the transition from this epoch. We can fulfill the demands of this twin task by contrasting the history of American hegemony in the Third World with a revisionist analysis of the global benefits that can accrue to national and international social movements that are dedicated to anticapitalist and antihegemonic strategies that are a part of an evolving counterhegemonic globalization.

When viewed in this light, this book centers upon the following question: while states and peoples must deal with the world as it is, does it follow that the future of the world order will be nothing more than a continuation of the past? In answer to this question, we need to be aware that an essential distinction is lost when “the need of states to prepare themselves for direct competition in the world market is falsely equated with a lack of alternatives.”<sup>21</sup> There are significant alternatives, even though many of them have been left unexplored. As Ulrich Beck explains, “In those theoretical approaches bound up with the national outlook, the meta-power game is explored in a one-sided way, namely from the perspective of what may turn out to be the temporary historical dominance of business actors. In contrast to this, the necessity of redefining ‘the state’ and ‘politics’ for the age of globalization remains unexplored.”<sup>22</sup>

By having to redefine the evolving nature of the state and politics in the age of globalization, we are returned to our primary question: “If a global

hegemony organized around one state is no longer possible, might not a number of regional hegemonies be more successful?" In answer to this question, Andrew Gamble and Anthony Payne acknowledge that "the United States, the European Union, and Japan might use the undoubted economic dominance they enjoy in their regions to establish a political and security framework and a set of economic institutions which promote prosperity and development through trade, investment and aid. If such regionalist projects embrace open regionalism they would still be compatible with the pursuit of policies at the global level through the G-7 to stabilize the world economy and maintain economic growth."<sup>3</sup> However, this explanation misses a central point insofar as the intentions of the regionalist projects are much more limited than this. As Gamble and Payne note, "What is often described wrongly as the regional hegemony of Japan and the United States is based more on dominance and traditional asymmetries of power, than on true moral and political leadership. The key aspect of hegemony which makes it a rather rare as well as very powerful political relationship is the incorporation of subordinate groups through the granting of special privileges and benefits. Usually this involves not simply the acceptance of a common set of ideological principles but the construction of a new identity in which both leader and subordinate share."<sup>4</sup>

In large measure, the U.S. hegemonic project has lost its legitimacy throughout the global South because it consistently failed to accommodate Third World demands for a New International Economic Order (NIEO), failed to accommodate new and emerging regional blocs and, despite massive global resistance, maintained an imperial stance in its foreign policy that stood against the aspirations of the poor, the excluded, and the dispossessed. The blockage of Third World demands has created new forms of global resistance and, with them, a global crisis of legitimacy for the American Empire. When understood in this context, the resulting twentieth- and twenty-first-century crisis of American-driven globalization is truly a crisis of legitimacy because "it is important to understand that when we say that countries choose liberal globalization 'willingly,' we are saying that particular domestic interests choose globalization, often over strong opposition. So long as that opposition remains in existence, and there is evidence that it is growing, globalization's hegemony will be fragile. Moreover, in addition to opposition from national and regional groups bargaining for advantage within a more integrated global economy, there is increasing opposition coming from those who envision a more egalitarian globalization."<sup>5</sup>

Twenty-first-century globalization is contested terrain. According to Richard Kozul-Wright, the Senior Economic Affairs Officer in the Globalization and Development Strategic Division of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, because we live in "a world where markets fail, institutions evolve with distinct local characteristics and at an uneven pace, and massive imbalances in productive capacities abound, it seems inevitable that greater integration will expose the problems of successful management to the interface between national and international economic spaces."<sup>6</sup> From

the perspective of the managers of the project of neoliberal globalization, the interface between national aspirations in Third World states and regions is on a continuing collision course with the maintenance of American hegemony and its requirements.

While the Pentagon takes on the military aspects of dividing the world into five zones of command with contingency plans for the use of force to secure the declared interests of the United States, on the economic front, the U.S. dominance of the leading multilateral institutions is seen as the most effective bastion to ward off all economic competitors from impinging on its position. Under the rubric of these multilateral institutions, specifically the G-8, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the World Trade Organization, the elite class interests of the United States and their transnational capitalist allies remain conjoined to ensure that America's capitalist governance of the world's currencies, investments, and its rate of return in the form of profits never suffers a critical reversal of fortune. Simply put, this version of reality is what constitutes governance under American hegemony. However, this vision and the power to enforce it is becoming increasingly contested around the globe. For example, Walden Bello has chronicled the crisis of multilateralism and the key institutional forces working with the American Hegemon in it, such as the IMF, the WTO, and the World Bank. While these hegemonic actors chant their mantra about the need to support practices of "good governance" throughout the Third World, they are themselves practicing new strategies on how best to violate the fundamentals of what constitutes good governance.

As a result, the declining legitimacy of the IMF and World Bank in the South have made Southern countries less willing to compromise on their domestic goals on the altar of repayments.<sup>7</sup> In this nexus, we find the conflict between neoliberal globalization and an anticapitalist counterhegemonic alliance has been enjoined to do battle. Reflecting on this situation, Amiya Kumar Bagchi notes, "There is little doubt that imperialist forces will use every instrument from the IMF, WTO, and military intervention to squash any attempt to construct a developmental state that can challenge their hegemony. On the other hand, in a world of nation-states, there is no alternative before any people seeking to attain a decent quality of life to the construction of a developmental state on a foundation of a high level of social capability and democratic principles of governance."<sup>8</sup>

According to Walden Bello, "While governance—a nice neutral word—is often described as the function of these institutions, a more appropriate description of their role might be maintenance of the hegemony of the system of global capitalism and promotion of the primacy of the states and economic interests that mainly benefit from it."<sup>9</sup> So, we find that the newly formulated concept of "global governance" has itself been taken hostage—hijacked, if you will—to help the neoliberal elites make their market reforms nearly irreversible by having their neoliberal reforms actually inscribed into the legal systems of most countries. This is, after all, an attempt by the wealthy architects of global capitalism and American hegemony to subordinate the emancipatory

force of potentially rebellious forces and states. In this respect, the concept of “global governance” is hardly neutral. Insofar as it is on its way to being emptied of its counterhegemonic content, its redefinition by the servants of neoliberal capitalism and the American Empire has turned the potentially revolutionary aspects of the concept into an ideological cover for the further consolidation of capital on a global basis. Hence, as Bello observes, it should be quite clear that only select states and the socioeconomic interests of particular classes will benefit under the rubric of this type of “global governance.”

While the main focus of this book is about the negative effects of global dominance of the American Hegemon, we will simultaneously chronicle the efforts of those nations, social movements, and groups that are attempting to break free of the deadly financial patterns imposed by an economic model of neoliberalism with its attendant baggage of privatization, deregulation, and structural-adjustment programs. The objective need to study and to explicate this overlap between the economic realm and the political realm is unavoidable. So, the argument on the need to incorporate both elements runs in two directions. In his essay on the “overselling of globalization,” Joseph Stiglitz stated, “My focus is on economic issues, but I should emphasize that one cannot fully separate out economics from a broader context.” He continued: “If the critics are right—and I believe that they are—there are adverse economic consequences from the failure to pay due attention to the non-economic factors.”<sup>10</sup> The IMF usually fails to take into account the social costs of its policies. It is with this reality in mind that Stiglitz points to the Asian financial crisis in 1997 through 1998 as a prime example in which the IMF “failed to take into account the predictable (and predicted) consequences...leading to huge increases in unemployment and reductions in real wages, and measures to eliminate food and fuel subsidies...The political and social turmoil led to the flight of capital and high-skilled individuals, creating adverse economic consequences for years to come. The same story applies to Argentina.”<sup>11</sup>

Given this recent history in East Asia, we are being supplied with an even stronger rationale to argue for the benefits of creating stronger regional arrangements throughout Asia and elsewhere around the world. Even though regionalism may have some inefficiencies, excesses, and infringe on some aspects of national sovereignty, “if the ultimate payoff of regional institutionalization is a more peaceful, more cooperative and perhaps more prosperous region, it will be a remarkably small price to pay.”<sup>12</sup> This is where the unmapped and uncharted journey that takes nations and regions beyond the reach of American hegemony needs to begin. The journey begins with a very clear and conscious acknowledgment of recent history. In the case of East Asia, the 1997 through 1998 financial crises constitute such a starting point. The beginning of the journey must also incorporate an appreciation of the uncertain and contentious nature of placing East Asia on the path of a working and workable institutionalization of regional organizations, with an eye to maintaining the achievements of the past while working toward even greater long-term gains in the future. In this regard, the urgent need to embark upon a redirection of policy and process should be evident. This is necessarily

the case because “without such institutions, the chances of resolving major tensions over energy security and environmental stability are reduced, and threaten to undermine some of the very real gains the region as a whole has made over the past 50 years or so.”<sup>13</sup>

The reality of globalization is that it creates far deeper and more pervasive inequalities across all of the regions of the world as well as within countries, across classes, and across income groups. At the center of this globalization process is the American Hegemon. Yet, in playing this role, “even as the American created ‘McWorld’ expands and, octopus-like, swallows up other countries, it sows the seeds of divisiveness and suggests its own disintegration.”<sup>14</sup> Hence, more people around the world have come to realize the need to resist “the hegemonic onslaught of an international propagation of culture that is both unnecessarily homogenizing and essentially undemocratic. The need is not only to forge new types of cultural and social responses without falling prey to reactionary fundamentalism but also to work out more creative ways of uniting people across the world who can maintain their separate identity even as they create a new and more participatory internationalism.”<sup>15</sup> In this mosaic, local agencies, national agencies, regional agencies, and global agencies will all have a part to play but, at the end of the day, “there would be no hegemon, and no requirement for one.”<sup>16</sup> From this perspective, it is possible to project the future trajectory of global history as one that is moving inexorably beyond American hegemony.

### CHALLENGING THE HEGEMONY OF AMERICA’S GLOBAL CAPITALISM

In the mid-1970s, even before the formal onslaught of right-wing politics under Reagan and Thatcher, it was clear to some economists that the United States had become a hegemon that was determined to block historical challenges to its rule. One of these economists was Michael Hudson. Throughout his writings were frequent references to the Third World’s quest for a New International Economic Order (NIEO). Professor Hudson acknowledged that a NIEO “may not emerge in the form presently envisioned by Europe or by Third World countries. The United States may succeed in driving a wedge between Europe, the near East and Africa, as well as between Japan and the rest of Asia...What it cannot do is roll back the carpet of time, or the new philosophy of economic development and self-sufficiency that has now achieved a critical momentum of its own.”<sup>17</sup> Hudson’s analysis proved to be an accurate diagnosis of the challenges to the Third World’s development, but it was not an accurate prediction of what the decade of the 1980s would bring under Reagan. President Reagan brought to American foreign policy a strategy of “rollback.” This meant that all of the Third World’s gains that were advanced in the 1960s and 1970s would now be reversed by the American Hegemon and its collaborators.<sup>18</sup>

At the center of Reagan’s rollback was the economic strategy of privatization. Privatization, according to William Robinson, has exhibited different



patterns and forms “depending on particular local histories and conditions, ranging from how states and public sectors have evolved to the relative size and composition of pre or non-capitalist spheres prior to globalization, political conditions, and the balances of historical forces.” In the context of Central America, from the 1980s to the twenty-first century, we find that “government itself has been privatized to the extent that numerous state functions have been transferred to the private sector and converted from a social (public) to a market (private) logic.”<sup>19</sup> The ultimate consequence of Reagan’s intervention in Central America was one in which, “given the highly skewed structure of income distribution, the process tends to aggravate inequalities and social polarization.”<sup>20</sup> The human tragedy that emerges from this situation is that inequality itself becomes a constant source of conflict.

When viewed on a global basis, the inequality factor is a source of conflict in any territory and in any culture. According to Fabrizio Eva, “it exists, or coexists, in three main areas.” These main areas are (1) inequalities of power, (2) inequalities in economic conditions, and also (3) inequalities in the recognition of rights.<sup>21</sup> These conclusions are not necessarily revolutionary by themselves, but when evaluated in combination and then placed in the context of the geopolitics of empire and American hegemony, they take on a new relevance and meaning. The heightened relevance of these factors of inequality and equality—within the global context of American influence (especially through its economic hegemony)—serve to show how the very projection of American power generates and causes conflict around the world. In this regard, there is a geographical component to assessing the political dynamics at work insofar as “geography is an investigative tool that identifies and analyses dynamics, and compares differences (and inequalities). It can even attempt to anticipate effects and make predictions. Whether we like it or not, by doing this it is performing what is essentially a political function.”<sup>22</sup>

Because geography can be employed in this manner, geographers can also play an important role in defining and analyzing peace processes. Given this nexus between geography, geopolitics, the dynamics of inequality versus equality, and social conflict, it becomes possible to argue that the United States has structured conflict into global relations by virtue of the regimes it supports, the economic policies it imposes, and the political policies that it pursues as it seeks to advance and maintain its hegemonic position. These policies have been used to reinforce the privileges of some classes while actively excluding the majority from the distributional benefits of the growth in national wealth. Insofar as “exclusionary states” are purposefully structured to deprive many of their citizens’ basic human rights, the fact that the United States has historically continued to support such regimes represents a failure of moral leadership and stands as a political and economic critique of the nature of U.S. hegemony that has been projected in the name of “democracy” but in reality has been pursued for the sake of maintaining an empire and the profits to be derived from empire.<sup>23</sup>

For the sake of bringing about peace in situations of social conflict and civil wars (as in the Central American cases of El Salvador, Nicaragua, and

Guatemala),<sup>24</sup> it will be necessary to look at the degree to which sociopolitical and socioeconomic inequalities may exacerbate a situation of war and conflict while, alternatively, it will be necessary to look at the degree to which sociopolitical and socioeconomic equality may serve to heal the divisions within and between nations. Further, given this nexus, we can specifically identify schemes for assessing peace processes based on the principles of equality and inequality, as exemplified in Table 6.1.

The promotion of the American Empire is directly linked to the global maintenance of an unjust world order that is characterized by both socioeconomic and sociopolitical inequality. Acknowledging this relationship allows us to see the interplay between these two orders—the order of dominance, on the one hand, and the order of subjugation, on the other. It is well established that the “main element of the existing world order, which is also an accepted ‘ideological’ concept, is inequality of power (and therefore of action and rights) between states.”<sup>25</sup> Because inequality is built into the international order, this very fact should raise moral, social, economic, and political questions about any efforts dedicated to reinforcing that type of global order. This is especially the case when the outcomes, results, and consequences of maintaining such a world order seems to lead inexorably toward war, conflict, the growing depth and widening of poverty, and the abuse of human rights.

Contrary to hegemonic stability theory (HST), I will argue that the proposition that asserts the necessity for the primacy-predominance of one state to produce stability in the international system is an illusion. The reality is that the primacy of any hegemon will always be contested, challenged, and opposed by other “great powers” or even some of the lesser forces of resistance (insurgencies and social movements) that are active throughout the international system. I maintain that neither peace nor stability will be realized at the nation-state level, or at the international level, as long as a hegemon is present on the international scene. Peace and stability can exist between states without a hegemonic presence. As far as global relations in the twenty-first century are concerned, the argument can be made that in a multicentric world of regions, there will be a greater tendency toward mutual cooperation and the promotion of mutual interests. Hegemonic competition between great powers and the search for dominance promotes the opposite result.

Conservative realists, such as John J. Mearsheimer, assert that peace in the international system will probably not be realized because, in their view, great power competition is the natural state of affairs. To justify his fatalistic narrative of the history of the great powers, Mearsheimer outlines five propositions that are designed to support his central narrative that all great powers are perpetually seeking to maximize their share of world power in a zero-sum struggle with other powers doing the same thing. His logic of great power competition is largely premised on the notion that the past is prologue. In presenting his case, he offers five points that appear to justify, explain, and legitimate aggressive state behavior in an anarchic global system that is cursed by its intrinsic nature and design to automatically consign human beings to

**Table 6.1** Schemes for assessing peace processes based on the principles of equality and inequality

Equality	Inequality
<p><i>Power</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The players in the process are numerous, internal, and external at different levels.</li> <li>• There are permanent forums for negotiation.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Power</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The players in the process are few, internal, and external formal institutions or important figures.</li> <li>• Negotiation takes place at high levels in the hierarchy only.</li> </ul>
<p><i>Economics</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Efforts are made to compensate for imbalances.</li> <li>• Financing is directed.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Economics</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Differences remain as either they are ignored or no action is taken.</li> <li>• Those who possess more retain greater scope for action.</li> </ul>
<p><i>Rights</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Numerous players are involved.</li> <li>• Attempts are made to accommodate different views through continual negotiation to achieve ongoing solutions to conflicts; recognition of individuals' right to choice (as wide as possible).</li> <li>• Sovereignty and borders can be modified through negotiation.</li> <li>• Spaces are shared.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Rights</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some players are devoid of rights.</li> <li>• Only a few cultural values are recognized (ethnicity, religion, language, etc.).</li> <li>• Collective rights are recognized to homogenous groups.</li> <li>• Privileges are retained.</li> <li>• The forums for action of the process are set.</li> <li>• Spaces are separate.</li> </ul>

*Source:* Fabrizio Eva, "Global Stability through Inequality versus Peace Processes through Equality," in *Geopolitics at the End of the Twentieth Century: The Changing World Political Map*, ed. Nurit Kliot and David Neman, Frank Cass, 2000, 114.

a world of perpetual struggle with an unavoidable cyclical regularity that is beyond redemption. He maintains that (1) the international system is anarchic because there is no “government over governments,” (2) the great powers inherently possess some offensive military capability that, in turn, gives them the wherewithal to hurt and possibly destroy each other, (3) states can never be certain about other states’ intentions, (4) survival is the primacy goal of great powers, and (5) great powers are rational actors.<sup>26</sup>

What these five points reveal are more important than what they demonstrate. Mearsheimer’s five-point schema places his entire interpretative focus upon what transpires at the international level among only the most powerful nation states. By doing so, he ignores the larger reality that there are many layers to this system. These layers include a global hegemon, a core, a semiperiphery, and a periphery, but there are also multiple efficacious actors within each layer, such as international organizations, states, firms, media, organized classes, social movements, and interest groups. A further limitation in his schema is that it allows little room for action by transformative actors and forces on the international scene. For example, transformative actors such as Nelson Mandela and social forces such as the African National Congress (ANC) have demonstrated their respective capacities to bring down South Africa’s order of apartheid and replace it with a democratic system that is highly inclusive. So, when confronted with the question of whether or not a strategy of global transformation is possible, I would suggest that we must look at the issue of *agency*.<sup>27</sup> This is important at both the nation-state level as well as the international level. After all, among all of the potential global actors that might be identified, who among them would be the most strategically and effectively positioned to challenge American hegemony, confront the abuses of American-driven capitalism, and work toward the construction of a world order that is capable of allowing for social progress? I would suggest that a combination of both progressive social movements for social justice and progressive states will be capable of forming a counterhegemonic alliance to oppressive national orders and to hegemons. I would suggest that my earlier reference to “inclusionary states” and the promulgation of inclusive policies proposed both by inclusionary states and social movements for justice would be a proper starting point to address this question.<sup>28</sup>

It follows that an emphasis upon building a more inclusive international order, both within and between states, would provide the socioeconomic and sociopolitical and cultural space for a global culture of inclusion to develop. Such a culture of inclusion would be a necessary ingredient in overcoming the supposed inevitability of conflict, war, and aggressive behavior. Such a culture would also provide the social and political space necessary to construct a counterhegemonic alliance to the abuses associated with the enterprise of American hegemony. Further, I will argue along with Goran Therborn that this proposition can be made in good faith insofar as “inclusion is the most widespread of the equality mechanisms. It is intrinsic to the modern nation-state, which entitles citizens and normally also its permanent residents to certain rights and public services. For EU membership the new member

states each had to provide a National Action plan on Social Inclusion by 2004... Human rights, including rights to social and economic development, and the diffusion of medicine and medical knowledge, exemplify efforts at global inclusion.”<sup>29</sup>

The struggle for inclusive institutions, policies, programs, and goals is a struggle that is intimately tied to the struggle for the birth of a Posthegemonic Era. It is a struggle that must simultaneously take place at the national and international levels. Therefore, the final success or failure of this struggle will be dependent upon the abilities of the respective parties as well as progressive social, political, and economic forces to coordinate their efforts and channel their collective energies.

### RETHINKING THE CONCEPT OF “HUMAN SECURITY” IN A POSTHEGEMONIC ERA

This part of the analysis returns us to the issue of security. In the struggle to move toward more inclusive forms of governance in a Posthegemonic Era, there is a need to reconceptualize thinking about security so that we are able to transcend a predominantly military focus on the idea of what actually constitutes human security in the twenty-first century. Hence, in addition to using the transformational elements of globalizing forces of human agency and investing in the development of mechanisms for greater social, economic, and political inclusion, we also need to consider the value of some newly emerging regional formulations and concepts of what constitutes genuine human security. For example, a new nontraditional security agenda is in the process of becoming the hallmark of change throughout Asia, specifically in China-Association of South East Asian Nations relations. New forms of cooperation are being developed that are also seen as making possible a less conflict-prone future by transcending the traditional realist approach and instead embracing the basic principles outlined in the UN Charter and Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TACSA). The treaty’s goal is “to promote perpetual peace, everlasting amity and cooperation.” In reaching these goals, the treaty stipulates that relations between members should be guided by six principles:

1. Mutual respect for the independence, sovereignty, equality, territorial integrity and national identity of all nations
2. The right of every state to lead its national existence free from external interference, subversion or coercion
3. Noninterference in the internal affairs of one another
4. Settlement of differences or disputes by peaceful means
5. Renunciation of the threat or use of force
6. Effective cooperation among themselves<sup>30</sup>

The contrast between these six principles and the realist perspective, as set forth by Mearsheimer, are very clear. We need to acknowledge that these two different sets of perspectives on international order also represent two diametrically opposed worldviews. In choosing between these two alternatives,

we can contrast the vision of a continuation of the hegemonic enterprise against the vision of a Posthegemonic Era. One vision of the future embraces a belief in the repetition of the past and the historically contingent nature of endless global conflict over hegemonic perceptions of power relationships and a geopolitics rooted in the presumption of aggressive human behavior at the national and international level. In contrast, the other vision of the future presupposes the need to redefine the idea of human security in nontraditional ways. In this regard, “since the end of the Cold War, non-traditional security issues have challenged China and ASEAN nations as well as the world. With the possibility of a world war reduced and the process of economic globalization speeded up, governments have designed economic plans for the goal of creating well-developed societies. These are the people-based strategies but they need a peaceful environment to fulfill the goals.”<sup>31</sup> The selection and application of these people-based strategies are central to the birth of a Posthegemonic Era. The employment, use, and incorporation of these people-based strategies are also necessary to effectively meet the challenges posed by a form of global capitalism that remains under the control of the American Hegemon.

### CAUGHT WITHIN THE PARADIGM OF ENDLESS HEGEMONY

Despite all of the analysis and history regarding the dangers and failures of the hegemonic enterprise, we still find that the proclivity of the United States is to continue to seek hegemonic predominance. This lingering temptation to pursue the hegemonic enterprise begs some basic questions about the wisdom of pursuing hegemony in the new world of the twenty-first century. We often find that the justifications that are presented for the pursuit of hegemony usually center around a generalized notion about the quest for stability—“hegemonic stability theory.” However, this narrow focus on the theoretical role and goal of achieving hegemonic stability obscures a great deal. Therefore, let us consider what is being obscured by this narrow focus in the form of six questions and six answers.

First, what is the great merit of achieving hegemony and the status of being a hegemon when it leads to the reinforcement of inequality within and between nations? *Answer:* No merit except to the elites who benefit from these types of arrangements. There is also the assumption, on the part of the dominant powers and elites, that the benefits that accrue to them are greater than the costs to them—regardless of any serious consideration of the costs borne by those who have been subordinated by the hegemonic enterprise.

Second, what is the merit of the hegemonic project when the inequalities that it produces can be seen as a constant source of conflict? *Answer:* No merit, except for the weapons manufacturers who profit from arms sales. Also, there is a benefit for the privileged classes to maintain their respective positions of power in the sociopolitical and socioeconomic hierarchy of their own national order and within the international order.

Third, what is the value of a hegemonic “world order” when it merely amounts to “stability for the sake of stability?” *Answer:* From a normative perspective, the value of “stability for the sake of stability” has only real value if we are speaking of the stability of a just order. Alternatively, if we are speaking of maintaining an unjust order, such as the apartheid order of the old South Africa, there is no real long-term value for its maintenance. Again, there is primarily a benefit that accrues in the short-term to that class of persons who perpetuate the domination. Yet, the moral, economic, political, and social costs will eventually become unbearable as the negative effects of this order of domination continue to widen and deepen.

Fourth, is the maintenance of the status quo a legitimate object or goal for the hegemonic enterprise? *Answer:* Any status quo is always at risk and remains trapped in the processes of historical change, whether those processes are acknowledged or not.

Fifth, are the advocates and proponents of HST correct in their assertion that there are no other values that trump stability? *Answer:* No, there are many other values that trump stability, especially if stability is construed as merely an end in itself. This is obviously a normative question. Therefore, the priority that is given to some values over others will depend directly on the consciousness of the individual or group (class) that is doing the answering. Clearly, the dominated—for example, the slaves of Rome—preferred revolt against the Roman Empire to a future of laboring under the imperial domination of the Romans (the elites and citizens of the empire).

In the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, the opposition of oppressed groups to both empire and hegemony has taken many forms—some violent, some nonviolent. In either case, all opposition to empire and hegemony represents a refusal to accept the stability of a given order. This was the predicament that eventually led to the demise of the Soviet Union. It is the same dynamic that is contributing to the global decline of the American Empire. From an economic standpoint alone, the economic costs associated with maintaining a global order of subordination are staggering and, over time, unupportable. In addition, forms of resistance to this order of imperial “stability” set forth alternatives to the status quo and engage in active opposition to it (as has been evident with meetings involving the IMF, the WTO, and the World Bank).

Sixth, are there no other alternative global orders that could be structured so as to provide for the creation of a world of greater equality and the greater enjoyment of basic human rights? *Answer:* Yes, there are many alternative global orders. In fact, the emerging notion of “global governance” suggests that there are multilayered systems of governance that are already in existence. There are many different actors in this system. Therefore, the idea of global order cannot be defined or circumscribed by merely one definition. There is also the problem that agency, conflicting agendas, and multiple centers of authority have to be taken into account. Hence, there is an emerging sense of what the concept and term “global governance” really means. That

is because there are multiple and overlapping centers of power, authority, and legitimacy.

In summary, it can be asserted that the structure, privileges, and maintenance of the currently existing hegemonic world order has had a negative affect on every national and subnational order that mirrors the hegemonic model. At its core, the existing tendency of a hegemonic world order is one of seeking power for the sake of power. Ultimately, the historical tendency of any hegemonic order involves little more than the challenge of seeking endless hegemonic dominance for the sake of dominance. Further, this tendency is augmented by a conscious desire for maintaining national and international inequalities that enrich some national elites and transnational classes at the expense of others. With this conclusion as our logical endpoint, we then can ask two summary questions: (1) "Stability for whom?" Following the response to that question, the next question that logically follows is (2) "Stability to what end?"

The history of the West is littered with a series of hegemonic wars that seem only to repeat the same cycle over and over again—the start of a new cycle of growth, expansion, and eventual decline.<sup>32</sup> One of the first scholars to advance this thesis was Professor Robert Gilpin. In his book *War and Change in World Politics*, he noted, "The conclusion of one hegemonic war is the beginning of another cycle of growth, expansion, and eventual decline. The law of uneven growth continues to redistribute power, thus undermining the status quo established by the last hegemonic struggle. Disequilibrium replaces equilibrium, and the world moves toward a new round of hegemonic conflict. It has always been thus and always will be, until men either destroy themselves or learn to develop an effective mechanism of peaceful change."<sup>33</sup>

What Gilpin reveals is that we are caught between two entirely different paradigms. The first paradigm is one that views human history as a repetitious cycle. We can call this "the paradigm of endless of hegemony." It is grounded in ideology—a belief system about power and its uses. The second paradigm is one in which humans can develop an effective mechanism of peaceful change. I am arguing that this alternative mechanism will be found in the twenty-first century's ideology of regionalism and the process associated with regionalization.

Some have argued that we cannot escape ideology. On this very point, Philip Allott has noted, "In the year 2000 we were marching into a Brave New World under four ideological banners which were perfectly familiar in the year 1900—great power hegemony, inter-state rivalry, global capitalism, and science-led social progress."<sup>34</sup> He concluded that "these four ideological premises, taken together, mean that the social Darwinism of the late nineteenth century has ceased to be merely a tendentious optimistic dogma and has come to be seen as some sort of natural law of human existence."<sup>35</sup> Allott's position on this point is important insofar as his interpretation serves to explain the continuing dogmatic certainty of some realist scholars in the



International Relations school, which holds that a great power hegemony is here to stay and there are no alternatives to it.

It is this tragic sense of an endless historical repetition that constitutes Mearsheimer's depiction of international relations as the "*tragedy of the great powers*" because "great powers fear each other. They regard each other with suspicion, and they worry that war might be in the offing. They anticipate danger. There is little room for trust among states...From the perspective of any one great power all other great powers are potential enemies."<sup>36</sup> Mearsheimer's version of great power politics is steeped in a Darwinian law of the jungle commingled with a Hobbesian "war of all, against all." I have called this perspective the "*paradigm of endless hegemony*." In large measure, it is little more than the product of fear-based and unimaginative thinking. It does not reflect some of the most critical terms, conditions, and trends of the early twenty-first century.

## CHAPTER 7



# THE PARADIGM OF EMANCIPATION

There is a second paradigm, however, which points from tragedy to emancipation. It represents an escape from an unceasing cycle that is bound to a paradigm of endless hegemony. The second paradigm is one that views human history as the entire horizon of human possibility. As such, it encompasses the promise of emancipation from the mistakes and cruelties of the past. Hence, this new paradigm for humanity's alternative-potential global future is going to be the product of what Santos calls "*a non-imperial conception of self-determination*," which leads to an "*emancipatory politics*."<sup>1</sup> In this regard, he notes, "From the perspective of a nonimperial conception of self-determination, a special reference must be made to a nongovernmental document that has gained worldwide moral authority and in which the right to self-determination of peoples receives the fullest recognition. I am referring to the Algiers Declaration of the Rights of Peoples of 1976, and, specifically, to its Articles 5, 6, and 7.

### **Article 5b**

*Every people have an...unalienable right to self-determination. It shall determine its political status freely and without foreign interference.*

### **Article 6**

*Every people has the right to break free from any colonial or foreign domination, whether direct or indirect, and from any racist regime.*

### **Article 7**

*Every people has the right to have a democratic government representing all the citizens without distinction as to race, sex, belief, or color, and capable of ensuring effective respect for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all.<sup>2</sup>*

Given the emancipatory focus of these aforementioned principles, de Sousa Santos concludes, "The Algiers Declaration comes closest to the full

vindication of the right to democratic self-determination. It provides, in my judgment, an adequate foundation for a broader and deeper conception of the right to self-determination insofar as it acts as a guiding principle in the struggles for a counter-hegemonic globalization.”<sup>3</sup> The first attempt in the twentieth century to begin a counterhegemonic alliance to U.S. hegemony and its drive for globalization under the American Hegemon was in the decade of the 1970s with the Non-Aligned Nations Movement (NAM) and calls for a New International Economic Order (NIEO), which proposed a substantial redistribution of wealth and power from North to South. For many developing nations at that time, a model of sorts was provided by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), “which brought together regimes as varied as Mu’ammar Gadhafi’s Libya, the Saudi monarchy, center-right democratic Venezuela, and Saddam Hussein’s Iraq in an ambitious effort to dictate the price of oil and accumulate financial resources.”<sup>4</sup> In this emerging global struggle against American hegemony, the global South was starting to make gains until, in the early 1980s, President Ronald Reagan initiated a foreign policy of “rollback”—an effort to rollback the gains that the people of the global South had been making from the 1960s through the 1970s.

Reagan’s “rollback” was generally successful in causing the devastation it visited upon Latin America in the so-called “lost decade” or “decade of debt,” where the continents’ debts to the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and foreign investors made it a debt slave to the neoliberal economic model of development. This was a stark reversal from the period when Latin America emerged from World War II as the richest continent in the developing world. In large measure, this earlier achievement was facilitated by what Professor Alice Amsden has called the First American Empire (1945–79).<sup>5</sup> By the 1980s, Asia had overtaken it in per capita income, exports, and even poverty alleviation. According to Professor Amsden, “growth had taken the form of spurts and slumps, but on average, as Latin America followed its northern leader down the path of liberalization, its growth in income, employment, regional trade and technology had stagnated.”<sup>6</sup> This was the result the policies undertaken by what Amsden has called the Second American Empire (1980 to the present). The “Second American Empires’s agenda—privatization, deregulation, and liberalization hit Latin America especially hard...Privatization in Latin America created ore foreign takeovers in industry and finance, often fanning the flames of inflation. Deregulation allowed the completely free movement of ‘hot’ money and cold-hearted loan pushers, which enable contagious region-wide debt crises beginning with Mexico in 1982.”<sup>7</sup>

The legacy of the 1990s was not much better because of the “free” trade agreement that the United States signed with Mexico in 1991 and Central America in 2006. The effect of these agreements was to outlaw state-led restructuring as the price of accessing a tariff-free U.S. market. The “Second American Empire” implemented an economic system that “was rigid, opportunistic, and devoid of creative ideas and practical policies [for Latin America].”<sup>8</sup> Hence, it is little wonder that by 2001, Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez broke with the Bush administration and began to forge a path of

regional autonomy with his neighbors, designed to eventually emancipate all of Latin America from the neoliberal tyranny of the American Hegemon.<sup>9</sup>

Starting around 1998, President Hugo Chavez picked up where the proponents of the New International Economic Order left off in the late 1970s. Chavez's analysis has been true to Michael Hudson's diagnosis of the failure of private sector ownership to produce developmental gains for the poor and excluded of Latin America and elsewhere throughout the global South. Under the leadership of Chavez and other progressive Latin American leaders, we now find that correctives and alternatives to the IMF and its neoliberal economic model are now transforming the region for the betterment of the majority of its people.

Argentina restructured (and defaulted) on a multibillion-dollar debt following the IMF-induced economic collapse of 2001. Now, under forms of new regional cooperation such as "No to IMF, Yes to 'Bancosur,'" the IMF presence in Latin America has dwindled to nearly nothing as countries restructure and pay off their debt, often with help from Venezuela. Presidents Chavez of Venezuela and Kirchner of Argentina signed an agreement to launch the Bank of the South (Bancosur). Chavez has pledged 10 percent of Venezuela's foreign reserves to the bank. Throughout Argentina worker co-ops are operating factories abandoned by owners. Freed of IMF mandates, strong and steady economic growth has brought 8 million out of poverty in a country of 36 million. Polling indicates that 50 percent are satisfied with Argentina's new democracy and the approval rating for the government is at 73 percent.

Under the leadership of President Juan Evo Morales, Bolivia renegotiated natural gas and oil contracts—Bolivia's chief export—to increase the nation's share of earnings. At the same time, the constituent assembly is drafting a new constitution aimed at giving more power to the majority indigenous population. Also, President Morales has joined the Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas (ALBA) with Venezuela, Nicaragua, and Cuba. ALBA agreements, to date, have covered exchanges of Cuban medical care and the training of doctors, Venezuelan oil, and Bolivian indigenous knowledge, natural medicine, and food exports. This is a genuine victory for progressive forces in the region insofar as ALBA, unlike "free trade" agreements such as NAFTA and FTAA, has, as its primary purpose, the goal of ending poverty and social exclusion while protecting the environment.

Under the leadership of President Tabare Ramon Vazquez Rosas, Uruguay initiated a \$100 million "emergency plan" to meet medical needs and food assistance. Around 98 percent of the population is literate, life expectancy is in the 70s, and, due to the leadership of President Vazquez, the country scores high marks for civil liberties. About 66 percent of the citizenry is satisfied with their democracy and the approval rating for the Vazquez government is 62 percent.

Under the leadership of President Veronica Bachelet, the 2005 constitutional amendments reduced presidential terms to four years and barred

consecutive terms. About 42 percent of the citizenry is satisfied with Chile's democracy and the approval rating for Bachelet's government is 67 percent.

Under the leadership of President Luiz Lula da Silva, Brazil initiated the "Fome Zero" hunger eradication program, which gives money directly to the poor. There has been a 19.8 percent reduction in poverty within four years. Brazil cofounded the Mercosur trade bloc in the 1990s. The approval rating for Lula's government is 62 percent and 36 percent are satisfied with Brazil's democracy.

Under the leadership of Rafael Correa, Ecuador now opposes the renewal of U.S. military bases at Manta. President Correa won 80 percent support for rewriting the constitution after a referendum on April 25, 2007. Following the international law doctrine of "odious debt," he has called Ecuador's debt illegitimate because much of it was established under exclusionary military regimes with no popular vote or mandate.

Venezuela has embarked, along with Argentina, Cuba, Bolivia, Uruguay, Chile, Brazil, and Ecuador, on a path dedicated to developing a regional organization of Latin American states that would not be subject to the dictates of an American Hegemon and its neoliberal dogma—its failed "Washington Consensus." Chavez's approach is strategically brilliant insofar as he has begun the process of crafting not only a unity between regional states but also a Third World-centered organization of states. This organizational strategy has enabled a variety of social movements to build momentum for change and for resistance to the American Hegemon. Some of the leading social movements that have arisen throughout Latin America are Via Campesina (International Peasant Movement), the Landless Workers' Movement, Recuperated Factories, Water Wars, Human Rights Movements, and the Indigenous Rights Movements. New forms of regional cooperation are seen in the Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas (ALBA) and also "No to IMF; Yes to Bancosur."<sup>10</sup>

The universal lesson emerging from the decade of the 1970s and the Third World's attempt to build a New International Economic Order (NIEO) is that the global South must carry the main burden of organizing for effective change. This is a point that has been well understood since 1979, when Shridath S. Ramphal, writing in *Third World Quarterly*, noted, "What the world needs is a convergence of positions on the essentials of the new order—a convergence that can help to move the international community away from the environment of inequality and hostility that the old order has generated. Constantly widening disparities in the human condition unleash dangerous tensions that are not compatible with global harmony...The human resources exist; they need only to be assembled in the framework of a political commitment and put to work. Such a southern 'Organization' will be serving in the end the process of development itself and, therefore, all mankind. For the South, in the era of negotiations, effective unity is the mandate of the world's poor."<sup>11</sup>

The lesson of which Ramphal wrote did not perish in the decade of the 1970s. Rather, its message has been reawakened. The universal theme of

unity has again begun to resonate among people around the globe. According to Rosenau, there are three central points that can account for the fact that a global consciousness of unity has developed with regard to advancing the interests of the poor and extolling the virtues of cooperation. First, “more than a little truth attaches to the aphorism that there is safety in numbers.” Second, “there is a consciousness of and intelligence about the processes of globalization that is spreading widely to every corner of the earth.” Third, and finally, “the advent of networks and the flow of horizontal communications have brought many more people into one or another aspect of the ongoing dialogue.” In combination, Rosenau asserts that “the conditions for the emergence of a series of global consensuses never existed to quire the extent they do today.”<sup>12</sup> In reference to the renewed call for a Bolivarian revolution for equality throughout all of Latin America, Istvan Meszaros writes of Bolivar and Hugo Chavez in the same breath. He does so because both of these leaders committed themselves to overcoming the structural determinations of capital’s irreconcilable antagonisms and the negative effects that have emerged out of the experience of American hegemony. This is especially the case throughout the global South, where there exists a perceived need to press for the “strategic unity and equality of the Latin American countries not simply against the United States, but within the broadest framework... Indeed, by realizing their social and political unity based on their solidarity,” Meszaros declares, “the Latin American countries can play a pioneering role today, in the interest of the whole of humankind. None of them can succeed in isolation...but together they can show a way forward to all of us in an exemplary way.”<sup>13</sup>

If Ramphal was correct in his assertion that the global South must carry the main burden of organizing for effective change, then the dedicated pursuit of economic regionalization offers the best and most effective way to effectuate that change. According to Richard Falk, such a transformative move toward more integrated trading blocs remains conjectural and intensely contested. Therefore, there is a real question as to whether “*positive regionalism*” can overcome the negative effects of capitalist-driven globalization and American hegemony. In Falk’s view, “a worst-case assessment would suggest that regionalism is serving as a cover for the re-entrenchment of relations of privilege and domination that were challenged during the revolt against colonialism. A best-case scenario would attribute inequality in benefits and burdens to the short run, with a more equitable, sustainable, and democratic global economic order emerging in response to grass-roots and other challenges mounted against negative globalism.” For hope, Falk looks to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) because of its historical potential for expansion and further institutionalization in the postwar era. Yet, in his view, there is an even greater reason for hope. It is hope born of the combination of a new Asian cultural assertiveness that affirms regional identity while, at the same time, “represents a deepening of the decolonization process by its implicit repudiation of Euro-centricism. In this regard, Asian-Pacific regionalism resists any renewal of Western hegemonic projects.”<sup>14</sup>

From this perspective, hope is grounded in a vision where the crumbling walls of the American Empire will eventually be eclipsed by a multicentric world of rising regions that will be increasingly characterized by high degrees of mutual cooperation, unity, and solidarity around progressive values. In fact, one of the transformative lessons to be derived from the evolution of Asian-Pacific regionalism is that it has been an undertaking that has consciously resisted any renewal of Western hegemonic projects. As such, Falk believes that “Asian/Pacific regionalism, even more than its European counterpart, may be moving toward limiting the Western role, especially the U.S., thereby encouraging a defensive dimension of regionalism.”<sup>15</sup> If this is indeed the case, then it is further evidence of how and why the crumbling walls of the American Hegemon are receding into history while a world of rising regions holds out the promise of a more peaceful and less conflict-prone world order.

### THE DECLINE OF THE AMERICAN HEGEMON

Those who benefit from American hegemony have a special relationship to the social classes and institutional centers of power that make America’s hegemony possible. This reality not only leaves the rest of the world excluded, suppressed, and exploited but also leaves a global insurgency against the American Hegemon. This insight is the foundation of the intertwined thesis of this book. First, insofar as the dominant financial centers of Western powers, as expressed through the institutional mechanisms of American hegemony (WTO, IMF, World Bank, Wall Street, U.S. Treasury Department) have used their coercive powers to govern through their version of international hegemony, we discover that the resulting socioeconomic and sociopolitical subordination of the global South has created a dangerous divide between the haves and have-nots. Second, it is in this context that the first decades of the twenty-first century are destined to become a period of historical struggle that will decide and ultimately determine whether consensus or coercion will define the international order of the century. If consensus is to define this new era, it will most likely emerge within the context of a multicentric world of regional powers. If coercion is to define the coming era, it will be a continuation of the era of great power hegemony, of empire, and of widening realms of social, economic, and political inequality.

The choice is clear: either the global North will begin to work cooperatively and consensually with the people and nations of the global South, or the status quo of great power struggles for hegemony will continue to be played out with the United States struggling to coerce the rest of the world to abide by its dictates. In either case, the realities of long-term historical forces and economic trends have converged to ensure that the decline of American hegemony is both inevitable and irreversible. At its core, the eventual decline of American hegemony is inevitable and irreversible because its military overstretch has fatally weakened the American homeland economically.<sup>16</sup>

Sociologist Thorstein Veblen pointed out in *The Theory of the Business Enterprise* (1904) that the gains of empire flow into the hands of the privileged business class while the costs are extracted from the “industry of the rest of the people.”<sup>17</sup> The bad news for the American taxpayer is that “there is nothing irrational about spending three dollars of public money to protect one dollar of private investment—at least from the perspective of the investors. To protect one dollar of their money they will spend three, four, and five dollars of our money. In fact, when it comes to protecting their money, our money is no object.”<sup>18</sup> In the case of the 2003 Iraq War, the subsequent privatization of both the American and Iraqi economies by the cronies of the Bush-II regime had become quite lucrative for defense contractors and other members of the military-industrial complex whose CEO’s have received gigantic paychecks. According to Michael Brush, President Bush’s military buildup has caused defense contractor revenue to double, triple, and even more since 2003. Their executives have reaped huge bonuses and stock windfalls as the companies’ share prices have jumped. For example,

1. CEOs of top defense contractors have reaped annual pay gains of 200 percent to 688 percent in the years since the 9/11/01 attack on the World Trade Center.
2. The chief executives at the seven defense contractors whose bosses made the most pocketed nearly a half-billion dollars from 2002 through 2006.
3. The CEOs made an average of \$12.4 million a year, easily more than the average corporate chief. Since the start of the war, CEOs at defense contractors such as General Dynamics, Halliburton, and Oshkosh Truck have made, on average, more in four days than what a top general makes in a whole year—\$187,390.<sup>19</sup>

There are six companies whose CEOs head the list in profits from the Iraq War and the privatization schemes that have accompanied it. The usual suspects are General Dynamics, Halliburton, Lockheed Martin, Boeing, Alliant Techsystems, and Oshkosh Truck. The total pay for these CEOs from 2002 through 2006 are displayed in Table 7.1.

The above-cited figures are only the most recent example of a long process of private profit making at public expense. These figures are characteristic of a permanent military economy that has laid the basis for American economic decline for the majority of U.S. citizens and a rising enrichment of its elites in the military industrial complex. It represents what has been termed “military Keynesianism.” The phrase was coined in 1971 by British economist Joan Robinson. She used the phrase to describe how military spending during the cold war era had become the major driving force in the U.S. economy. In Keynesian economics, one of the key concepts is that government spending for goods and services is a major determinant of the economy’s overall level of output and employment. Since 1947, a little more than 75 percent of the goods and services purchased by the federal government were for military



**Table 7.1** Profits from the Iraq War provide huge windfall for CEOs

Company	CEO	Total pay 2002–6*	Average Annual Pay
General Dynamics	Nicholas Chabraja	\$97.90	\$19.58
Halliburton	David Lesar	\$79.83	\$15.97
Lockheed Martin	Vince Coffman	\$64.77	\$12.95
	Robert Stevens		
Boeing	W. James McNerney, Jr.	\$55.99	\$11.20
Alliant Techsystems	Daniel Murphy	\$46.73	\$9.35
Oshkosh Truck	Robert Bohn	\$43.64	\$8.73

Source: Michael Brush, “War Means a Windfall for CEOs.”<sup>20</sup>

\* In millions of U.S. dollars.

purposes. By definition, a society that, for over half a century, has devoted three-fourths of the output of its national government to military purposes is a society dominated by military Keynesianism. In this respect, American decline was not the result of the revival of other nations alone, but rather America’s misguided use of its own resources, the proclivity of its citizens to yield to the indulgence of consumption, and the lack of imagination and discipline for production. These were the central ingredients that opened the way for either another power to surpass American hegemonic control or for the transition to a multicentric world order. In either case, the relative decline in production has been accompanied by unabated consumption.<sup>21</sup>

It is also a society that, in the words of Seymour Melman, has turned into a “depleted society.”<sup>22</sup> The American economy has become depleted because productivity has slowed. That is because military Keynesianism has affected both productivity and growth. In what has been described as an “aerospace-communications-electronic complex” (ACE), we find that these three industries (plus those that supply ships, ordinance, and tanks) have become the prime beneficiaries of the more than \$4.5 trillion spent on defense in the forty-seven years since the end of World War II. In calculating this cost, according to Wallace Peterson, we can answer the question: “*How much is \$4.5 trillion?*” He states that it is \$95.7 billion a year, \$262.2 million a day, \$10.9 million an hour, \$181,666 a minute, or \$3,038 a second.<sup>23</sup> Those are 1994 figures. In the aftermath of the Bush-II regime’s escalation in spending for the Iraq War, we can now double those figures. With the cost of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan estimated to reach \$3 trillion, it can be projected that, by 2010, the sum spent on “defense” (*imperial adventures of the American Empire and the costs associated with its hegemony*) will rise to over \$7 trillion.<sup>24</sup>

As increased war-related expenditures have increased for the Iraq War, we find that America’s infrastructure has decayed, private investment has slowed down, credit card debt has continued to escalate, home mortgage foreclosures have increased since 2006, and the lack of a federally funded system of universal health care has begun to bankrupt not only American families but

the Medicare system as well.<sup>25</sup> At the same time, the long-term processes associated with deindustrialization, along with the gradual loss of its manufacturing base, has further crippled the domestic economy.<sup>26</sup> The so-called New Economy of the 1990s exposed a corporate governance problem whose most graphic symbols were Enron, WorldCom, and Global Crossing. The “*New Economy*” emerged out of a regulatory black hole in which there were no rules governing the conduct of financial analysts, bankers, and accounts. These professionals then used powerful institutional levers to pump the value of stocks—duping investors while insiders sold their holdings for fantastic profits before the crash.<sup>27</sup> Then, in the same spirit, the Bush administration launched its doomed effort to privatize the entire social security system by encouraging “private investment accounts” through the stock market and Wall Street.<sup>28</sup> Simultaneously, throughout the 1980s, 1990s, and into the first decade of the twenty-first century, there has been an increasing inequality of wealth in America that has made the financial pyramid “top-heavy.”<sup>29</sup>

Internationally, the so-called free trade regime, inaugurated by NAFTA during the Clinton years, has been an economic disaster for the majority of people on both sides of the U.S.-Mexican border. In fact NAFTA, the WTO, and similar “free trade” agreements are really deals among the global elite to rip up the social contract that allows the benefits of capitalism to be broadly shared. As the first secretary general of the WTO admitted, they make up “the constitution of a single global economy.” Its bill of rights protects just one citizen—the large transnational corporation.<sup>30</sup> These developments have already laid the groundwork for a global showdown between the forces of global corporate rule, on the one hand, and labor, activists, and the global South, on the other.<sup>31</sup> In combination, these are some of the key factors that have exposed a long-term structural crisis for American capitalism and the decline of American hegemony. They constitute just a few of the major factors that serve to augur a precipitous economic and hegemonic decline for the American Empire.

Even more critically, hovering behind each of these factors is the overarching issue that could prove most serious for the U.S. economy—its dependence on attracting huge amounts of foreign capital. The ability of the United States to attract sufficient foreign capital to finance its large current account deficit has been assisted by the international role of the dollar since both governments and private investors have held onto an important part of their international liquidity in the U.S. currency. However, since 2001, both the boom and the subsequent periods of recession and recovery have depended on ever-rising levels of borrowing by households, by corporations, and once again, by the government. Under these conditions, a major financial crisis cannot be ruled out. Also, in combination with the problem of ever-rising levels of borrowing is a corresponding difficulty with the weakening of the American dollar. In particular, by late 2007, multinational corporations emerged as the main drivers of a U.S. stock market rally as investors moved to capitalize on the weak dollar by buying into companies with large overseas earnings. By outsourcing jobs overseas and lowering wages domestically and

internationally, multinational corporate behavior resulted in a growing belief that the dollar would continue to weaken, thereby prompting investors to own international large-cap stocks. Commenting on this trend, *The Financial Times* noted that “the weakness in the dollar, which has hit a series of all-time lows against major currencies benefits multinational companies in two ways: it makes their U.S.-made products cheaper on the international markets and increases the dollar value of their overseas earnings.”<sup>32</sup>

Added to the dangers of a major financial crisis is the political phenomenon of what has been termed “*broken government*”—a situation where the key institutions of government (the legislative, executive, and judicial branches), no longer operate as contemplated by the U.S. Constitution.<sup>33</sup> As a result, under the Bush-II administration, Congress has allowed itself to become a body that is largely incapable of meaningful deliberation or presidential oversight. Under these conditions, President Bush began to amass greater power because he was unhindered by any meaningful system of checks and balances.<sup>34</sup> At the same time, the federal judiciary was in the process of being corrupted by the ascendance of federal judges and Supreme Court justices who were committed to the dictates of a radical conservative philosophy that has protected the special interests of the most wealthy and powerful sectors of civil society to the detriment of the majority and the concept of the general welfare.<sup>35</sup> In short, a major component of the legacy of the Bush-II administration had already come into focus even before the president left office. Among the hallmarks of the Bush-II legacy were the following: secrecy where there should be transparency, corruption where there should be accountability, and self-interest where there should be public advocacy.<sup>36</sup>

### THE COMBINED ELEMENTS OF AN ACCELERATED DECLINE OF THE U.S. EMPIRE

When viewed in combination, all of the major elements for an accelerated decline of the American Empire are in place. Domestically, the United States has been transformed from a republic into an authoritarian state with fascist elements in place.<sup>37</sup> Internationally, the United States continued to fall behind both Europe and Asia in economic growth and productivity.

According to Charles Kupchan, all that an objective observer has to do is “combine the rise of Europe and Asia with the decline of liberal internationalism in the United States and it becomes clear that America’s unipolar moment is not long for this world.”<sup>38</sup> The open question is whether its decline will be peaceful or violent. However, there is a middle ground possibility between a peaceful or violent decline. It is a situation in which America, like Rome before, did not so much fall as fall away—it will just become socially and economically nonviable and irrelevant on the world stage.<sup>39</sup> According to Charles Kupchan, all that an objective observer has to do is “combine the rise of Europe and Asia with the decline of liberal internationalism in the United States and it becomes clear that America’s unipolar moment is not long for this world.”<sup>38</sup>

If we use history as a conventional yardstick in answering such questions, then the outlook is grim. More often than not, the historical landscape is littered with the remnants of great powers that have had more than a little difficulty in accepting their mortality. Few have made room for rising challengers. Because the hegemonic impulse has proven to be so indelible in the calculus of great powers, few have adjusted their grand strategies accordingly.

In a twenty-first-century world of crumbling hegemonic walls, we are left wondering whether the death of American unipolarity will give way to a world of multiple centers of power, where regional discourses and mutually cooperative institutional arrangements—at both regional and international levels—are continuing to make gains in an emerging multicentric world.<sup>40</sup> Some scholars have suggested that the reason for so much uncertainty about new forms of regionalism is at least threefold. First, they acknowledge that the academic fields of international relations, world politics, and global political economy are in flux. Hence, there are many unanswered questions not only about the evolution of regionalism but also about the entire concept of “global governance.” Second, newly constituted forms of regionalism are constantly emerging in response to a world order that is in flux. Due to the uncertain outcome of globalization and antiglobalization, as well as the difficulty in coming to terms with the goal of sustainable development, there is a wait-and-see approach. Third, despite the tremendous proliferation of debates, new concepts, and new definitions of what constitutes regionalism, there has been no singular or authoritative “theory book” for the field.<sup>41</sup> Yet, despite all of these uncertainties, there are many hopeful assessments about the actual and potential contributions of regionalism to the achievement of such widely affirmed world order values as peace, social justice, human rights, and democracy.<sup>42</sup>

In light of the imperial decline of the American Empire, as well as the challenges confronting rising regional regimes, it is clear that the unfolding processes associated with both of these phenomenon have left unanswered questions. One of the central questions is, *In a world without the American Hegemon, how will the emerging global power equation be balanced?* In other words, having reached an historical turning point wherein the hegemonic enterprise can no longer be justified or sustained, and where there is no national power capable of projecting its influence in both economic and military terms, how will the regional dynamics of a multicentric world discover a point of equilibrium? The other central question—which is also a part of the emerging global power equation—is, *Whether the United States’ declining empire will seek a continuation of the neoconservative (and neoliberal) drive for American hegemony or, in the alternative, will it face the inevitability of its hegemonic decline by making peaceful adjustments to its change in fortune?* In other words, can the political and economic forces guiding the policy choices of the American Empire opt for peaceful solutions to an emerging global transition of power, or will the military-industrial complex continue to exert an inordinate influence upon the decision-making processes of the American government? It is precisely on the answer to these two pivotal questions that the future of American

hegemony—and the future of the world order—will be resolved one way or the other.

It is a central assumption of this book that the architects of American hegemony will not go quietly into the imperial sunset without imposing more wars and more threats on humankind. Eight years of the Bush-II administration have served notice on all of humanity that this will be the case as far as the architects of American hegemony are concerned. Since the end of World War II, the United States has allowed its economy to be driven by the military-industrial complex. As a consequence, a permanent war economy has been able to artificially preserve both the American consumer and American hegemony. At the dawn of the twenty-first century, the American consumer society is about \$800 billion in debt while the American Empire has spent trillions to invade and occupy South Korea, Vietnam, and Iraq as well as to build over 700 military bases around the globe to enforce its hegemonic rule.

In a world of rising regions, the rumblings of an emerging multicentric world have already become the visible and tangible proof of great changes on every continent, heralding the emergence of a great global power shift in the first decades of the twenty-first century. The movement and evolution of this emancipatory project is already unfolding throughout Latin America and Asia. Resistance to American hegemony has already slipped into violent opposition throughout the entire Middle East. New regional alliances are manifesting themselves between India and the Caribbean, between China and Latin America and Africa, as well as between Russia and parts of Asia. Their collective resistance to imperial coercion has the capacity to liberate new and developing patterns of consensus, economic and political bargaining, and confidence building between a variety of peoples, states, and regions. In so doing, the previously dreamed of liberation from hegemonic coercion and control will finally have achieved the practical capacity to develop fissures of great magnitudes throughout the domain of American hegemony in the arenas of trade and commerce, currency and exchange, thought and action.

Clearly, this newly emerging global consensus will not be preoccupied with concerns about how to maintain global “stability” for the continued reign of an American Hegemon. Rather, it will be—and already is—a consensus built on the need for emancipation from the American Hegemon and any other hegemon that would seek to replace it. The nature of this counterhegemonic consensus is already visible in the positions taken at the Sao Paulo Forum, founded in 1990. Meeting annually, its purpose is to discuss ways to build an egalitarian form of unity that is dedicated to redirecting hemispheric integration away from U.S. hegemony and toward Latin American integration (with a continental perspective that addresses North-South inequalities). The Sao Paulo Forum is an example of regionalism “*from below*,” dedicated to opposing “top-down” initiatives such as NAFTA and the FTAA. As such, it is a form and example of reactive regionalism. It seeks both to resist globalization “*from above*” as it also works “*from below*” to forge a counterhegemonic alliance to U.S. power.<sup>43</sup>

In contrast to the current era of American hegemony, wherein the exercise of power is narrowly defined and conceptualized as “*power over*” other nations, the definition and conceptualization of this emerging Post-Hegemonic Era will be premised upon a rejection of coercive “*power over*” forms of governance. In its place, there is an emerging emphasis upon exercising national and international “*power through consensus*” and “*power through mutual cooperation*” within a multicentric world comprised of regional orders. While this new regionalism is not monolithic, it does seem to increasingly exhibit an international desire to create a shield against U.S. hegemony.<sup>44</sup>

Governance in a multicentric world of regions, if it is to be successful, must be premised more upon equality than hierarchy, more upon mutual cooperation than upon ruthless competitive advantage. If regionalism and global governance initiatives are to be divorced from the pressures of U.S. hegemony, then it will be essential for each region to eliminate all forms of their security dependence on the United States. Insofar as these emerging regions are able to do so, there is a greater likelihood that their economic participation with the United States will be more scrutinized and will ultimately be more constrained. Should this be the eventual outcome, then this world of rising regions will have contributed to the erosion of U.S. hegemonic capacity.<sup>45</sup>

To put this point even more precisely, we need to understand the basic fact that mainstream conceptions of global governance only appear as workable when we ignore the realities of inequality, exploitation, and class struggle within a capitalist world system with the American Empire at its core. Therefore, “by contextualizing global governance within the wider contradictions and struggles associated with global capitalism, we are better placed to observe and explain relations of power that are not only unequal but also inherently exploitative in nature. This condition places important limits on the assumptions of mainstream understandings of global governance that states and societies are able to choose their own destiny by simply working hard to exert their particular interests through the most appropriate steering or control mechanisms, and thereby change the social structures around them.”<sup>46</sup> In other words, it is not enough to say that we live in an era in which there are rising regions. It is also necessary to observe the fact that rising regional orders need to do more than build institutional structures and regional alliances to steer their economies. Additionally, these rising regional orders need to develop a set of policies and institutions strong enough to resist the intrusions and interventions of new neoliberal programs and capitalist forms of restructuring that only work to prolong American hegemony and the vestiges of its global empire.

In order to avoid the pitfalls presented by the concept of “global governance,” it is important to understand that global governance, as represented by both mainstream thinkers and policy makers, lacks a historical understanding of capitalist relations of power. As a direct consequence of such neglect the following problems arise: (1) there is no explanation of the changing nature of American hegemony, empire, and capitalist power in the world

and (2) mainstream versions of global governance serve to normalize, neutralize, and legitimate increasingly austere forms of capitalist restructuring and expansion process—especially in the global South.<sup>47</sup> These restructuring processes should be understood as deepening and broadening the reach of neoliberalism—both as an economic model and as a means of continuing American hegemonic control.

An emerging global community comprised of regions, exercising power from multicentric power centers, there needs to be a greater consciousness about the true nature of *capitalist relations of power*. Only then can exploitative capitalist relations of power be confronted and rejected. Effective forms of regionalism capable of engaging in emancipation from American hegemony must find ways to resist the *capitalist restructuring and expansion process*. Hence, I concur with Ronaldo Munck when he identifies social exclusion as the “new poverty” that needs to be confronted and dealt with. After all, the main result of neoliberal restructuring works to maintain a hierarchical order of social exclusion and global inequality. If new forms and strategies of regionalism throughout the global South do not take this threat into account then, as these regions evolve, they, too, will have to face a continuing danger of maintaining inequality, exploitation, and social exclusion as they swallow whole the American Empire’s new package of capitalist restructuring. Therefore, the most effective analytical antidote to this attempt at neoliberal capitalist restructuring, under the guise of “global governance,” comes in the recognition that “social exclusion can serve as a powerful term to analyze (and combat) global inequality. It allows us to break with the economic and individualistic parameters of traditional concepts of poverty. It is a paradigm that is multidimensional and multidisciplinary in the way it approaches social inequality. It is not static, as most conceptions of poverty tend to be, but is dynamic, focusing as it does on the ongoing processes of social exclusion. Finally, it is relational and understands that poverty has as its counterpart wealth and that globalization has generated huge levels of deprivation but also a massive concentration of wealth in a few hands.”<sup>48</sup>

The brilliance of identifying *social exclusion* as the “new poverty” is clearly a perspective from the “*bottom up*.” Recognizing the centrality of social exclusion as a hindrance to the developmental process of states and regions provides social movements and the counterhegemonic alliance to empire with a concern that is “their own.” By making the concern with social exclusion a central concern of regionalism and regional agendas, the choices for development, the nature of mutual cooperation toward a common goal, the selection of proper policies for national and international development is no longer being dictated from the “*top down*.” The imperial hierarchy of the American Empire and American Hegemony is foreclosed upon from dictating its own priorities to the peoples of the global South when the identification of social exclusion as the “new poverty” becomes the overriding concern. The struggle against neoliberal capitalist restructuring can claim a victory when it becomes able to articulate its rejection of all of those policies and procedures associated with the neoliberal economic model.

The neoliberal model is faulty at best and socially destructive at worst because it prioritizes deregulation, privatization, and the search for capitalist profit to the exclusion of a consideration of the social consequences brought about by deregulation and privatization for millions of people—which is social exclusion.

Hence, the end of American hegemony and its imperial project will have to be rejected and opposed throughout all of those regions in the global South that have been undertaken with this neoliberal ideology at their core. In constructing their own alternatives to this model, a more socially oriented set of policies that gives priority to socioeconomic and sociopolitical inclusion becomes essential. After all, the great social inequalities that have arisen in Europe and within the United States have come about historically with the reconstruction of industrial societies when “the prime concern was to establish a state capitalist order under the traditional conservative elites, within the global framework of U.S. power, which would guarantee the ability to exploit various regions that were to fulfill their functions as markets and sources of raw materials...In the wealthy industrial centers, large segments of the population would be accommodated, and would be led to abandon any more radical vision under a rational cost-benefit analysis.”<sup>49</sup>

On every continent, the peoples of the global South are beginning to build regional alliances and regional organizations that will be able to further new forms of economic cooperation that can lead to genuine national and regional development—as well as new forms of international cooperation. For the first time in human history, it is becoming objectively possible to speak of a global community.<sup>50</sup> Some recent IR scholarship has wrongly assumed that the United States, as leader of a unipolar system, can pursue this aggressive policy without fear of serious opposition. The reality is that major powers are already engaging in the early stages of balancing behavior against the United States by adopting a strategy of “*soft balancing*” measures that do not directly challenge U.S. military preponderance. In actuality, we discover that this kind of “*soft balancing*” allows them to use international institutions, economic statecraft, and diplomatic arrangements to delay, frustrate, and undermine U.S. policies. Eventually, this kind of “*soft balancing*” could establish the basis for hard balancing against the United States.<sup>51</sup> The revolutionary potential for a new regionalism is found in the fact that when regions and social movements withdraw their consent from the neoliberal project and the allure of American hegemony, it is at that point they become faithful to their own best interests. By withdrawing consent from neoliberal “solutions,” there is a final rejection of the brute force and coercive nature exercised by both the military arm and economic arm of American hegemony.

For the American Empire, it is now clear that, at the dawn of the twenty-first century, the necessary amalgam between consent and coercion—for the sake of its continued hegemony—can no longer be sustained without military force. American hegemony has lost its legitimacy in the eyes of the world. The exercise of its power will no longer be tolerated as a matter of consensus. Rather, the exercise of its power will increasingly be met with resistance



and moral resolve. To this end, the Global Community is in the midst of reconstituting itself by looking to the United Nations as a forum that can ultimately unite nations and regions in undertaking the construction of a new international order. The goals of the UN Charter are the goals of the Global Community and every major region in it. Unfortunately, those goals are no longer the goals of the American Empire or its hegemonic aspirations. It is for this reason as well that the American Hegemon has lost its consensual powers to legitimately advance its interests. The old international order that has allowed a double standard in international affairs to continue for so long is now coming to an end. The fact that this double standard will no longer be tolerated by the Global Community is itself testimony to the emergence of a Post-Hegemonic Era.

### THE POST-HEGEMONIC ERA AND THE REMAKING OF INTERNATIONAL LAW

The Post-Hegemonic Era is beginning to emerge on the ashes of a broken U.S. military force in Iraq. It is also beginning to emerge on the basis of calls from the entire international community for a world order constructed on the basis of an international law that is just, enforceable, and devoid of double standards. This means that there needs to be a major shift in the way in which international law is written and applied so that the powerful are held to a standard of accountability for the injustices that they inflict on the powerless. If this is not the case, then international society is not truly “*international*” but is, rather, under the control, and in the domain, of some ruthless hegemony that exercises its power without consent.

Up until now it seems clear that the structure of international society itself is “morally backward.” This is also the perspective taken in Paul Keal’s groundbreaking and innovative book, *European Conquest and the Rights of Indigenous Peoples: The Moral Backwardness of International Society*.<sup>52</sup> He examines the historical role of international law and political theory in justifying the dispossession of indigenous peoples as a part of the expansion of international society. Over five centuries, the language, rules, and institutions of international society have enabled the destruction and dispossession of indigenous culture and territory. A major finding from his work is that the relationship between the European and the non-European world is capable of reinventing itself but never fully escaping the exclusionary terms of its construction. Hence, we have an historical perspective from which we can revisit the human rights problems associated with mainstream interpretations of global governance—as well as empire and hegemony. The central problem that is built into our concepts and system of international governance is that expansion and dispossession have been two sides of the same coin. That is because “the expansion of Europe resulted in a progressive erosion and denial of the rights of indigenous peoples.”<sup>53</sup>

Given this history, it is no wonder why the neoliberal economic model that has operated in conjunction with the American Hegemon has resulted

in high levels of socioeconomic inequality on a global basis. American hegemony is built on the foundations of European colonialism that the United States inherited in 1945 when it took over the hegemonic role that had previously belonged to Great Britain and other European powers. Hence, there has been a continuing pattern of inequality throughout those nations within the global South that were previously colonies of the European powers. After all, the communities that were implanted by the Europeans were, *de facto*, greatly advantaged over natives both in terms of human capital and legal status. As a consequence, European colonial activity has had long and lingering effects insofar as the development of institutions in these societies were marked by high degrees of inequality and the practice of “exclusionary governance” that led to the creation of exclusionary states.

In large measure, this outcome was foreordained by the fact that in the nineteenth century, individual rights were strictly those rights that accrued to the citizens of the European states that “defined and controlled membership of the society of states. It is a view that does not address the indigenous and other non-European people who were not included in the society of states defined by the international law of Europe.”<sup>54</sup> It was only by the purposeful and conscious exclusion of non-European people from the rights and protections afforded European citizens that the expansion of Europe into the global South resulted in a progressive erosion and denial of the rights of indigenous people. Therein lies the problem associated with mainstream interpretations of “global governance”—these interpretations serve to ignore the true nature of capitalist relations and the true nature of exploitation through both imperial expansion and a neoliberal restructuring of international society. Further, the nature of imperial expansion and neoliberal restructuring carries within itself the historical legacy of racism and racist attitudes that were originally operative when the first imperial-colonial adventures began. Therefore, we are dealing with an international society that is already based on principles of domination, which, in turn, has been supportive of a power system that is based upon coercion and hegemony without consensus.

Therefore, I argue that *in order to overcome this system of hegemonic coercion, it is necessary to see it for what it really is, and not what the apologists for an imperial ideology say that it is*. One of the great contributions of Keal’s work is that it exposes the reality that it is wrong to conclude that international society is now “universal.” Rather, Keal shows that the description of international society is incomplete for the reason that an estimated 250 to 300 million indigenous peoples have not been accorded self-determination. Until this is achieved, the very legitimacy of international society is in question. When we add the concept and practice of hegemony into the equation, we can begin to question the moral authority of hegemony and international society as they have evolved and are currently constituted. Such a critique could also be made of Western institutions such as the WTO, World Bank, and IMF.

In a landmark study entitled, *The Moral Purpose of the State: Culture, Social Identity, and Institutional Rationality in International Relations*, Christian Reus-Smit reaches back to Ancient Greece to examine the roots of hegemony and

the nature of the moral authority on which it is based. He discovers that in reading the *History* (by Thucydides), that “Thucydides recognizes the importance of military, economic, and technological capabilities, but contrary to prevailing interpretations, he does not consider them a sufficient source of hegemonic power.”<sup>55</sup> A similar position is taken by Daniel Garst, who notes, “In Thucydides’ history, whether or not a state is hegemonic depends on the moral authority it is able to wield”<sup>56</sup> That is because such authority must be grounded in preexisting social norms about legitimate statehood and international action: “Attributions of power are conditional: that is, they do not necessarily follow from possession of physical resources or observable changes in the behavior of actions but are instead tied to inter-subjectively defined social conventions and the institutions associated with them that delimit the conditions under which political power is held and exercised.”<sup>57</sup> From this perspective, the rise and decline of hegemons is only partially related to shifts in the distribution of material capabilities. Since the continuing strength and viability of hegemony depends on authority, it follows that changes in the moral standing of the dominant state is crucial, and “the establishment and maintenance of hegemony is essentially an open-ended process that requires continual activity in the form of persuasion and negotiation.”<sup>58</sup>

The American Empire (in conjunction with the United Kingdom) has acted as a unilateral and hegemonic global power that does not require persuasion or negotiation to attain its ends. In so doing, the American Hegemon has worked to effectuate even higher degrees of inequality and injustice throughout the marginalized nations of the global South. Those inequalities and injustices are now in the process of being confronted and ultimately being brought to an end—along with American hegemony and its attempt to spread its brand of neoliberal globalization.<sup>59</sup>

What is of vital importance to recognize is the fact that the promise and evolution of this emerging Post-Hegemonic Era need not become just another historical phase of one nation or region seeking hegemonic dominance over all other nations. Nor should the promise and evolution of this emerging Post-Hegemonic Era be taken captive by what has been called “disaster capitalism,”<sup>60</sup> or “turbo-capitalism,”<sup>61</sup> or even “super-capitalism.”<sup>62</sup> Rather, the current historical trends—outlined and addressed throughout this book—point toward the evolution of a world of regional alliances and organizations that are becoming increasingly capable of exhibiting a proclivity for the multicentric exercise of power without violence, leadership without reliance on coercive force, and diplomacy by the establishment of a principled consensus that emphasizes the priority of constructing new forms inclusive and humane governance that can finally overcome the legacy of “*a century of greed and usurpation.*”

## PART II



# RESISTANCE, REGIONALISM, AND REGIONALIZATION

## COUNTERHEGEMONIC BEGINNINGS AMONG SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AND BETWEEN REGIONS

*Though world affairs are clearly in constant flux, there are patterns to these affairs nonetheless, and it is because of these patterns that we can talk about them as having conceptual foundations. World affairs may be anarchic, in that there is not yet a global government, but world politics are not random. As a consequence they can be systematically described, explained, and prescribed for in policy terms.<sup>1</sup>*

—Ralph Pettman

“Conceptual Foundations for a New Internationalism”

*Tendencies towards global integration and attempts to reconstitute power at the core of the world order are also bound up with tendencies towards social disintegration and chaos...Both elites and social movements shape the historical dialectic. Thus, consciousness and action, mobilization and strategy are involved. Thus an initial task is to identify ‘the limits of the possible’ for different groups, classes, nations, within which, for example, forms of social reintegration can take place.<sup>2</sup>*

—Stephen Gill

“Power and Resistance in the New World Order”

*'Regionalization' is the movement of two or more economies, i.e., two or more societies, toward greater integration with one another.<sup>3</sup>*

—Charles Oman  
“Globalization, Regionalization, and Inequality”

*A system of global apartheid appears to be emerging...As within the South African apartheid regime, global apartheid is not a stable system. Requiring the free flow of goods, services, capital, labor, ideas and information across state boundaries, characterized by porous borders and ethnic divisions, the transnational world economy is vulnerable to sabotage, terrorism, recession and protectionism. In erecting the structures making for a global apartheid, global capitalism may well be sowing the seeds of its own destruction.<sup>4</sup>*

—Majid Tehranian  
“Taming Capital, Holding Peace”

## GLOBAL CAPITALISM AND ITS CONTRADICTIONS

**I**n Part II, I shall discuss the specific consequences and contradictions of the union between American hegemony and global capitalism. I shall also outline the emerging alternatives to it. This is a task that the architects of American hegemony have consistently refused to undertake. This observation is important because the habitual reluctance and outright obstinacy of America's primacy coalition to consider any fundamental alteration of its policies or to engage in a course correction does not augur well for the longevity of American power or the global capitalist framework to which it is attached.

## CHAPTER 8



# COMPETING MODELS TO EXPLAIN AMERICAN HEGEMONY AND WORLD ORDER

According to Peter Gowan, “the great problem for capitalism is how to manage the contradiction between its necessary fragmentation into separate geopolitical units and its necessary tendency to construct deep transnational social linkages—political, economic, and cultural—between these units. This is capitalism’s world order problem.”<sup>5</sup> In this sense, both the continued drive for American hegemony and the management of global capitalism in its current form have similar problems. Both are entangled with a host of contradictions stemming from how they deal with the application of their power in a world that is increasingly hostile to the kind of world order that their respective powers have created. Simply put, that is the essence of the “*world order problem*.” It is for this very reason that “the primacy model is bursting at the seams in the international field, and its coercive imposition by the U.S. primacy coalition threatens to create the conditions for domestic blow-outs and institutional disintegration on the internal front of international capitalism.”<sup>6</sup>

### THE WORLD ORDER PROBLEM

In attempting to conceptualize the current dynamics of the “*world order problem*” it would be helpful to turn to a consideration of two prominent theories about the challenges associated with establishing a world order. What should be noted at the outset is that both theories are preoccupied with the maintenance of the hegemony of the most powerful nation state(s) in the international system. I have chosen to discuss these two theories in tandem

despite their clear similarities. This will give us better insight into the nature and patterns of American hegemony. In so doing, we will also be addressing how this assertion of hegemony is the main contributor to what has been euphemistically referred to as “the world order problem.”

One theory is the “*primacy model*,” while the other is the “*group hegemony theory*.” The primacy model emerges out of the “American strategic tradition,” whereas the “group hegemony theory” arises out of the “neoliberal institutional tradition.” Both of these traditions begin with the assumption that the U.S.-created hegemonic order was constructed in the 1940s and has been actively maintained in order to satisfy the needs of the core capitalist countries and, to some degree, assist the less powerful states and their ruling elites. Additionally, the two traditions also share three basic assumptions about what constitutes a stable world system. A stable world system is depicted as being contingent on the presence and constancy of the following three characteristics: (1) the global distribution of power, (2) the provision of goods through the institutional mechanisms of open markets and foreign investment, and (3) the inherently hierarchical structure of the world capitalist global order. Should there be a change in any one of these conditions of world order, then the appearance of such a change would either necessitate a change from one system to another or, in the alternative, force the core capitalist countries with a situation of having to confront the growing instability of the present world system.

The major difference between the two theories is that the group hegemony theory assumes that the G-7 has already replaced the United States as a hegemon. In contrast, the primacy model assumes that the current world order is still an American-centric world order and is maintained by the dependence of all other states upon its position of primacy. Therefore, the primacy model postulates that the continuation of American hegemony is dependent upon transforming the current world order into a new structure of international dependence on the services of the American state. We shall discuss both of these theories in greater detail, beginning with the theory of group hegemony.

### THE GROUP HEGEMONY THEORY

According to the *group hegemony theory*, the internal front of international capitalism is comprised of those nations who have been powerful enough to write the rules for the operational efficiency of the entire global order since the mid-1970s. Those nations are the G-7. This group includes the United States, Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, and Japan. The term G-7 refers to the heads of state and government ministers as well as the central bank governors of these nations. The G-7 represents a concentration of global power that has existed since 1945. Yet, it was not until the mid-1970s that it was officially created in order to combat the inability of the United States to improve the worst economic downturn in the global capitalist economy since the Great Depression of the 1930s. Some scholars have sought to refer

to the G-7 as a “*group hegemon*” because it has functioned on the world stage as a force to maintain the liberal economic order and as a set of institutional forces arranged to manage the eruption of the international economic crises.<sup>7</sup> In this respect, “as a group of countries, the G-7 members collectively furnish liquidity and financial support, manage exchange rates, provide large open markets, and supply foreign investment (and development assistance).”<sup>8</sup>

The “*group hegemony theory*” seeks to explain how a group of wealthy countries sustains the liberal economic order, and how this order contributes to the economic disparity between rich and poor countries.<sup>9</sup> In so doing, the theory also seeks to explain how other countries are integrated into the liberal economic order. To accomplish this goal, the theory posits that these countries are increasingly dependent on foreign trade and investment for their future economic well-being. As a result, these countries are forced to adhere to the rules produced and promulgated by the G-7 in order to receive reciprocal treatment from others.<sup>10</sup> As to those countries located in the top tier of the international hierarchy, it is assumed that there will be no future challenge to this group hegemon insofar as the emergence of the group hegemon effectively broke the cycle of the hegemon’s rise and fall. In order to better comprehend the assumptions that lay behind this theory, the following table outlines the four key concepts, arguments, and indicators that are constitutive of the theory of group hegemony.

From 1945 onward, the great powers cooperated to support the U.S.-created Western order. Now, at the dawn of the twenty-first century, it is unlikely that any single country would be able to increase its power to such an extent that it would be able to pose a threat to the group hegemon. In part, this view is born out of the assumption that emerging powers such as China profit too much from the present arrangements that hold together the world capitalist economy.<sup>11</sup> Other reasons that are given for this assessment include the fact that nations in the position of Russia are too dependent on the most powerful for aid, trade, and foreign investment.<sup>12</sup> Yet, these assumptions may not hold given the number of changing variables and conditions that are in the process of emerging. Therefore, it is believed that the actual demise of group hegemony is more likely to come from within the group hegemon. The prime candidate for that role is the United States itself. With that in mind, we now turn to a discussion of the primacy model.

### THE PRIMACY MODEL

The primacy model argues that the strategy of the Bush-II administration in its conduct of the “war on terror” has actually been centrally concerned with pulling the state elites of the main international powers (the G-7 as well as Russians and Chinese) into a new structure of dependence on the services of the American state. In line with the American strategic tradition, the Bush strategy seeks to achieve this *indirectly*. The architects of American hegemony have tried to change the international environment in such a way that other nations will, as Joseph Nye put it, “want what America wants.”<sup>13</sup> To be able



to accomplish this kind of compliance in international politics requires a different kind of power from raw military power (“hard power”) and a different kind of power from mere persuasiveness or influence (“soft power”). Rather, what is required by the United States in this new twenty-first-century era has been termed “dark power.” Professor Charles Maier has described it in this way: “Just as physicists postulate dark matter to explain the full strength of gravitation in the universe, we might term this often overlooked capacity to compel outcomes as ‘dark power.’”<sup>14</sup> The ability of the American Hegemon to compel outcomes constitutes the ultimate expression of “dark power” because it exercises a form of power that is quite familiar—the power dynamic that exists within families—“unless it becomes abusive, we interpret the very real power exerted by parents over children as a form of nurture. Nevertheless it is often very real.”<sup>15</sup>

In this regard, we can begin to view the economic institutions of Western capitalism as an expression of “dark power.” Therefore, while it is “denied by orthodox theorists who characterize economic activity as taking place through unconstrained exchange that benefits all parties...that does not mean that most of those participating in this collective process of material improvement would voluntarily have chosen the conditions under which they interact. Market participants confront arrangements...that they are not able to choose or affect. For them, economic life is another great reservoir of dark power.”<sup>16</sup> And so it is for this reason that “on a global scale, dark power has helped to structure international markets and channel flows of wealth to private entrepreneurs in the United States, the advanced industrial and post-industrial societies, and increasingly to East and South Asia. This could bring great disruptive potential to the dynamics between favored and less favored nations.”<sup>17</sup>

The conditions for blowouts and institutional disintegration that are being manifested in the early twenty-first century can be seen in growing inequalities of wealth and class disparities—both within and between nations. These inequalities have already created a worldwide system of global apartheid that enriches some but leaves others behind in terms of skills, rewards, and power. Under these conditions, it is predictable and quite understandable that both peaceful and violent forms of resistance would emerge in response to the kinds of coercive threats and military power that the United States has been in the process of unleashing for decades upon Third World peoples. According to Professor Michael Klare, “the immediate motives behind the expansion of America’s invisible empire and the actual mechanisms of control have changed throughout the years. Nevertheless, the relationships forged between the United States and its overseas dependents have followed a consistent pattern: each linkage is designed to meet some current need of the American economy while further securing the dependent status of the colonial economy.”<sup>18</sup> Yet, it is also representative of a grand strategy that works to secure the dependence of America’s allies by providing a needed service for them. In this regard, we can view the exercise of U.S. cold war primacy over the capitalist world as an expression of the primacy model. A historical

review of U.S. primacy over the capitalist world during the cold war offers a number of insights into the way that the American establishment has come to understand how primacy can be established and how it can be consolidated. Collectively, these insights have formed the basis of the American view and approach to the establishment of world order.

According to Peter Gowan, the U.S. cold war primacy model demonstrates that “the U.S. did not confine its role as the protector power to the fronts facing the Soviet bloc. It also took command of the peripheries of the Eurasian allies: the Mediterranean and Middle East at the western end of Eurasia and Southeast Asia at the other end, as well as mineral-rich parts of Africa. As a result it policed the supply routes of allies for strategic raw materials and the courses of many of the key materials. This was a service for the allies, but it was also a source of their dependence on the U.S.”<sup>19</sup> This is exactly the same strategy that the Bush-II neoconservatives have been seeking to pursue—but with a more radical twist.

### THE BUSH DOCTRINE AND THE RISE OF “FULL SPECTRUM DOMINANCE”

While the Bush-II foreign policy has been concerned with pulling the West Europeans, East Asians, Chinese, and Russians into a “*new structure of dependence*”<sup>20</sup> it has, at the same time, embarked upon a radical unilateralism that has alienated both allies and adversaries. Nowhere is this attempt to achieve American primacy more evident than in the Middle East and Eurasia. The Bush Doctrine has launched the American military into the area lying between all the Eurasian great powers—the region from China’s western border to the eastern Mediterranean—at the heart of which is the bulk of the world’s oil reserves. For all of the Eurasian powers, “this region is very important for various different reasons. For the West Europeans and East Asians (though not Russia) it is vital for oil. For Russia and China it is vital for political and military security. For Europe, the Middle East is an obvious political and military security issues as well as an obvious zone for expanding Europe’s political and economic influence. By taking command of it, America could construct new relations of dependency for all these powers.”<sup>21</sup> By seeking to build a *new structure of dependence* with itself at the center, the U.S. primacy coalition’s effort contradicts one of the fundamental assumptions that inhere in the theory of group hegemony. The *theory of group hegemony* assumes that it is unlikely that a single country would increase its power to such an extent that it would pose a threat to the group hegemon. That assumption, however, has largely to do with countries that are *outside* of the G-7. When, as in this case, a country *within* the G-7 acts in ways that violate the agreed-upon rules for the maintenance of world order by invoking its own unilateralist agenda, then the downfall of the group hegemon itself becomes more likely—as in a case where the United States seems to be attempting to resurrect its position as the sole hegemon.

Also, at the same time that the Bush Doctrine launched its invasion into Iraq and made its plans for a permanent occupation of parts of Eurasia, it began the process of critically undermining American legitimacy through its own deliberate challenge to the legitimating institutions of international relations, such as the United Nations and the principles of the UN Charter. As the neoconservatives of the Bush administration attacked, and actively worked to undermine, the UN, the administration also made it clear that “it claimed the right for itself to disregard the institutional division of the world into sovereign states with sovereign rights and the authority of the UN Charter as the fount of international law.”<sup>22</sup> At the heart of their dissent from the legal and treaty constraints of UN membership was the deeply held belief that many international agreements, and institutions as well, limited, rather than secured, American power.<sup>23</sup> As Richard Falk has argued, “the Charter System is not a legal prison that presents states with the dilemma of adherence (and defeat) and violation or disregard (and victory). Rather, adherence is the best policy, if understood against a jurisprudential background that is neither slavishly legalistic nor cynically nihilistic. The law can be stretched as new necessities arise, but the stretching must to the extent possible be in accord with procedures and norms contained in the Charter System, with a factually and doctrinally persuasive explanation of why a particular instance of stretching is justified.”<sup>24</sup> However, in the case of Iraq, Falk concludes that “the Iraq War and the disastrous American occupation that has ensued represent a serious setback for advocates of a law-governed approach to world order.”<sup>25</sup>

Yet, developing a law-governed approach to world order was not even a serious question for the Bush-II administration or the neoconservative ideologists who drove its agenda. Rather, the roots of the Bush Doctrine can be traced to the late 1990s and the work of a group that called itself “*Project for the New American Century*” (PNAC). Its primary and most infamous report was entitled “*Repairing American Defenses.*” The report stated that the American people need to be awakened by “a new Pearl Harbor.” The events of 9/11 in New York supplied them with that kind of awakening—whether by coincidence or conspiracy.<sup>26</sup> The central theme of the PNAC report was that the next U.S. administration ought to seize the opportunities offered by the end of the cold war and begin to control the direction of the new unipolar world order.

The dominant message of the report was that America should take geopolitical advantage of this unique historical circumstance by exerting its underterred military power toward the Middle East in order to achieve regime change in Iraq. The report presented two primacy rationalizations for this approach. First, there was the “security” argument and a discussion about the defense of the United States. Second, there was the more ideological argument about America’s mission in the world to spread “democracy.” In combination, these two arguments became the central pillars of the Bush Doctrine. After all, it was a doctrine that distrusted liberal multilateralism, warned of the perils of neorealism, and exhibited a profound disdain for the realism of classical realists.<sup>27</sup> The report of the PNAC expresses concerns

about “security” and the spread of “democracy.” These concerns, at first, seemed to arise out of the historical context and general trajectory out of which the primacy model had been evolving. Yet, when viewed in the context of the entire Bush Doctrine, the arguments about “spreading democracy” were really just another way of describing nation building. And, in this case, nation building implied the spread of the neoliberal economic model around the world—in order to penetrate those nations and markets that had not yet been fully incorporated into the world capitalist system and America’s full geopolitical influence. Therefore, to spread democracy was to spread the gospel of the free market. The injection of the free market ideology would necessitate the removal of the state as the ultimate resource for the people’s protection of their sovereignty and self-determination. By substituting the governing process with the neoliberal prescriptions of privatization and deregulation, the door would be opened for corporate capitalists and allied Western interests to exert their power to dictate the terms of trade and the costs and benefits of obedience. If there was opposition to this plan, then the notion of “security” became a convenient argument that would help to rationalize and legitimize the use and deployment of American military forces so that these interests would be empowered to achieve their vision of world order. And it was the realization of this particular vision of world order that became the centerpiece of the neoconservative agenda and worldview.

When understood in this context, notions about “security” and “spreading democracy” serve largely as euphemisms to mask the American Empire’s underlying geopolitical logic, motives, and impetus. The strategy and tactics that lay behind the Bush Doctrine are designed to forestall perceived dangers to America’s national interest. Therefore, the architects of the Bush doctrine have also engaged in a “shaping” strategy—a strategy that is designed to mold the very political, military, and economic configurations of regions from the Persian Gulf to Europe and East Asia. As mentioned earlier, one primary goal of this strategy is to create a structured dependence upon the United States hegemon. If American primacy is to survive in the twenty-first century, so the argument goes, then its primacy must be seen as the logical outcome of a world order structure that legitimately compels other states to follow in step with its choices and directives. However, this kind of structured dependence will not and cannot survive in the twenty-first century if it is premised on the old formulations of colonial domination. A special kind of engagement with these nations and regions will be necessary. It will have to be a form of engagement that does not directly dominate the day-to-day operations of other nations but can effectively influence the contours of those operations. Despite this realization, the authors of the Bush Doctrine and the membership of the neoconservative/neoliberal primacy coalition have continued to believe that the actual accomplishment of these American objectives would ultimately require a superior military capacity to engage in the projection of American primacy. In short, the projection and maintenance of American primacy could only be guaranteed by employing superior military force—whenever and wherever necessary.

In this regard, it has become clear that neither stated concerns about maintaining American “security” nor the “spreading of democracy” could sufficiently guarantee the central tenet of the Bush Doctrine—the projection of American primacy and hegemony throughout the world order. Therefore, if we are to discover the missing piece of the puzzle that could reveal the true nature of the Bush Doctrine and its implementation, then we must refer to a Pentagon document that emerged out of the strategic planning division of the Pentagon itself. It was released on May 30, 2000, and it is entitled *Joint Vision 2020*. In a pertinent part, it states, “The overall goal of the transformation described in this document is the creation of a force that is dominant across the full spectrum of military operations—persuasive in peace, decisive in war, preeminent in any form of conflict . . . *Full spectrum dominance*—the ability of U.S. forces, operating unilaterally or in combination with multinational and interagency partners, to defeat any adversary and control any situation across the full range of military operations.”<sup>28</sup> The key phrase is “*full spectrum dominance*.” It is the clearest and most precise expression of what now constituted the neoconservative/neoliberal vision of the Pax Americana.

By 2003, the basic tenets of the doctrine had been digested and accepted by those individuals in the academic community who have already willingly served as the intellectual disciples of the school of American primacy. In that year, Professor Robert J. Art published *A Grand Strategy for America*.<sup>29</sup> The book announced that the United States was likely to remain the world’s preeminent power for at least several decades to come. Therefore, the central question had become, “What behavior is appropriate for such a powerful state?” His answer proposed a grand strategy that he called “*selective engagement*.” It was a “*shaping strategy*” that would seek to “*help mold*” the economic, political, and military configurations of entire regions of the world. He argued that because these regions contained “*vital natural resources*,” the “United States cannot remain indifferent to what happens in those regions, and it must have a military presence there in order to affect the paths that they take.”<sup>30</sup> His wording was slightly different from the strategic vision contained in the Pentagon’s *Joint Vision 2020* but the meaning and implications were the same. If U.S. primacy was to be maintained, then a military force was required that could effectively exercise “full spectrum dominance” over those regions of the world that contained those “*vital natural resources*” that were the building blocks of American hegemony and its continued primacy into the next decades. Hence, in order to advance U.S. hegemony over these vital natural resources, across many regions of the world, he specifically states that “*history has demonstrated that without a military presence in a region, a great power cannot hope to influence that region effectively*” (italics added).<sup>31</sup>

It is also worth noting that Professor Art’s book and its central thesis was endorsed by Joseph S. Nye (author of *The Paradox of American Power* and former Assistant Secretary of Defense), John J. Mearsheimer (the Distinguished Service Professor at the University of Chicago), and Kenneth N. Waltz (Institute of War and Peace Studies at Columbia University). The leading realist scholars of International Relations (IR) theory gave their enthusiastic

blessing to a point of view about the projection of American power, which was shared by neoconservatives, democratic hawks, and liberal imperialists alike. The main problem for all of them is that many nations and regions throughout the world did not agree with the strategy because it looked, talked, and walked like imperialism. Even old cold war allies in Europe had become distrustful of the approach and the way in which the primacy agenda was being implemented under the Bush Doctrine. Elsewhere around the world, from China to Russia, from North-East Asia to India and Pakistan, there has been a growing sense of unease with the doctrine's underlying assumptions about unilateralism, multilateralism, preemption, and deterrence. It is to the concerns voiced by these critics that we now turn.

### GLOBAL RESISTANCE TO THE BUSH DOCTRINE AND AMERICAN HEGEMONY

Out of the simmering cauldron of growing inequality, high levels of exclusion, and an increased reliance upon coercive power, there is a growing global resistance to the kind of world order that is envisioned by the advocates of “selective engagement” and “full spectrum dominance.” It is precisely because of the growing number of new social resistance movements to this hegemonic/primacy project—both within and between nations—that we will need to seek out, examine, and try to explain the nature and character of this global opposition to an American-centered hegemony.

The reach of this globalized resistance can be seen from Latin America, China, Africa, and Russia to the European Union and the Middle East. In charting the trajectory of this global opposition, it will be necessary for us to unravel the dynamics and relationships that exist between the nations and regions that have been subjected to the threats and implications of the Bush Doctrine. Specifically, the primary and central source of threats emanating from the Bush doctrine is its underlying doctrine of preemptive war. The rationale for preemptive war provides an easy excuse for the United States to invade and occupy any nation that it unilaterally deems to be a “terrorist threat.” There would be little need, under this doctrine, to consult with or seek the authorization of the UN Security Council. The implications of such a move would both reveal the proclivity of the United States to act as an aggressor nation and contradict basic international law as embodied in the Nuremberg Principles. In particular, its application would place the effectiveness of the UN Charter's Article 51 in jeopardy. Insofar as Article 51 both recognizes and authorizes the legitimacy of the right of individual and collective defense (in the specific case of an armed attack by an aggressor state), it then follows that if the aggressor state turns out to be the United States, it is at that point that the UN Charter's authorization of individual and collective defense would essentially evaporate upon the altar of geopolitics and superpower hegemony. Such an outcome would have negative implications for global, regional, and national security.

Under the circumstances of such a scenario, it would seem that the possibility of establishing any kind of genuine security in the world would be effectively eviscerated. In its place, all that is left is little more than the doctrinal mask of preemptive war—behind which the United States can try to hide its imperialist tendencies. A major problem with the doctrine of preemptive self-defense is that it is self-executing and self-regulating. It allows for a subjective assessment of any potential future threat from international terrorism to be transfigured into the ultimate justification for an unjustifiable use of force. Under this doctrine, the maintenance of American hegemony becomes a de facto operation of raw military power without reference to any legitimate standard of international law. It can then be said that imperialist activity is a function of the American Empire. For example, in addition to the doctrine of preemptive force, the empire has developed an imperial vocabulary with terms such as “failing states” and “rogue states” that enable the United States to engage in preemptive strikes against any potential threat or government that it believes is hostile to U.S. security and interests.<sup>32</sup>

Some scholars have even suggested that the moral, legal, political, and strategic issues raised by the Bush Doctrine are open to two fundamentally different interpretations. On the one hand, it is suggested that the “new U.S. policy of ‘anticipatory action’ can be conceived of as an attempt to alter the Charter-based rules governing the use of force” while, on the other hand, the Bush revolution in national security policy can be explained “in terms of American exceptionalism.” However, “in either manifestation, it is evident that the Bush Doctrine represents a radical assault on the principles of the UN Charter.”<sup>33</sup> In response, I would concur with the basic assumption that the Bush Doctrine is a radical alteration of preexisting approaches to the implementation of U.S. foreign policy, the treatment of international law, and the U.S. sponsored post-1945 structure of world order. However, I would also add that the application of the Bush Doctrine from 2001 through 2008 has been the most extreme expression of the American drive for projecting American primacy in the entire history of U.S. administrations that have sought to secure U.S. hegemony. It is the most extreme approach, because it sacrifices the support of allies by ignoring their counsel, it reneges on international treaties and covenants to which the United States has been a signatory, and it stands ready and prepared to indulge in behaviors that are outside of the pail of post-1945 international law standards prohibiting torture, respecting national sovereignty, and the recognition of the right to self-determination.<sup>34</sup>

However, when placed in historical perspective, it could also be argued that previous administrations were simply more discreet in their handling of the projection of American power for the purpose of maintaining its version of world order through the exercise of American hegemony. For example, the Clinton administration believed in multilateral cooperation and avoided what Andrew Bacevich called “*the Wolfowitz indiscretion*” of explicitly advocating a policy of global preeminence, yet Clinton practiced a liberal form of it. In this sense, Clinton’s grand strategy “appropriated Wolfowitz’s vision

of sustained global superiority without acknowledgment.”<sup>35</sup> To acknowledge the long-term presence of this grand strategy would reveal the fact that it has its historical roots in American nationalism. Since the 1820s, both the notion of America’s “manifest destiny” and the geopolitical pronouncements for the Western Hemisphere—as contained in the “Monroe Doctrine”—there has always been an incipient nationalistic creed operating at the core of American foreign policy. American exceptionalism reappeared in the early the twentieth-century’s challenge from Woodrow Wilson to “make the world safe for democracy.” It reemerged in the aftermath of the Second World War when the United States declared itself to be the “defender of the Free World.” Yet, what was left unresolved was the other side of America’s mission: how to make democracy safe for the world.

Unfortunately, for the world at large, an overtly moralistic American discourse on foreign policy has often been used in a way that conflates the United States and the world in the protection of liberal democracy and liberty. As a consequence of this conflation, the foreign policy actions of the United States are strewn with enormous contradictions. Yet, the ideological construction of American nationalism never seriously takes into account the human costs and human rights abuses that this enterprise entails. In part, this can be explained by the “dialectical relationship” that exists between “exceptionalism,” on the one hand, and “universalism,” on the other. David Grondin explains it this way: “It is in the framing of U.S. globalist nationalism that its neoliberal hegemonic global strategy tries to have it both ways, to remake the world in America’s image, while assuming that its national interests are global interests, thereby conflating its national security with global security, as if the great aspirations of the U.S. and of mankind were one and the same.”<sup>36</sup> In his opinion, the tragedy of Bush’s war on terror is that it “becomes a nation-building project that has evolved into a sort of a ‘Global Leviathan,’ without its mandatory ‘social contract’ with the peoples of the world.”<sup>37</sup>

The tragic irony is that the United States did sign a global contract with the peoples of the world in 1946 when it became a signatory to the Charter of the United Nations. However, with the advent of the Bush-II administration in 2000, that contract was unilaterally cancelled. Now, the “*Global Leviathan*,” which is the U.S. Empire itself, has unilaterally proclaimed its right to wear its hegemonic mantle through a militarized projection of American primacy and also through its demand that the peoples of the United States and the world owe their ultimate fidelity and allegiance to “the decider”—George Bush himself. In order to comprehend the extent of this historic departure from the general conventions and standards of America’s foreign policy and strategy, we need to briefly review the road of decisions and events that led to the Bush-II administration’s ill-fated attempt to maintain American hegemony through its “*war on terrorism*.” By so doing, we shall also lay the explanatory foundations for the global rise of resistance movements and movements for social change that have accompanied this enterprise. In keeping with the thesis of this book about the dynamic behind crumbling walls and rising regions, my research has led me to the following underlying theme:



As paradoxical as it may appear at first glance, the twenty-first-century drift toward the evolution of a multi-centric world of regional powers is directly proportional to American applications of its military power and claims to a world order premised on its hegemony and primacy.

The very notion of a world order presupposes some kind of balancing of interests, rights, and resources. Insofar as the unbalanced powers of the American Empire have altered central international law concepts and standards regarding the regulation of state conduct, the power equation of American unilateralism versus the rest of the world has created a toxic brew of global resistance, while it has also sown the seeds of America's internal collapse. By having projected the campaign for American primacy into the Iraq War, the Bush administration has actually weakened America's position both domestically and internationally. Economists have calculated the ultimate costs of the Iraq War will well exceed \$1 trillion and most likely reach a sum of \$2 trillion. In part, the reason for this result is that the war was financed by borrowing and deficit spending, not by a war tax, because Bush and a compliant Congress chose instead to provide eight years of tax cuts (over \$1.4 billion) to the wealthiest 1 percent of American society. Meanwhile, domestic costs in the areas of health care, housing, credit, and other essential areas rose so swiftly that the American middle class had become not only imperiled but also placed on the edge of virtual extinction. At the same time, Bush continued to alienate the international community with his interventions and occupations in Afghanistan and Iraq, while threatening war with Iran over an alleged nuclear program that, according to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in December 2007, was discovered to have been closed down and nonoperational since 2004. Still, despite this finding, Bush continued to threaten war with Iran through December of 2007.

Given the nature and ideological grounding of Bush's geopolitical aims for the Middle East, his unipolar saber rattling continued from 2001 until the end of his presidency. The consequences of these actions for the future of world order are enormous. According to Charles Kupchan, "If the world that comes after America's unipolar moment depends on partnership and equitable sharing of risks and responsibilities, then an America that prefers acting alone spells trouble for the future. The United States may have the luxury of being headstrong while it still enjoys primacy; smaller states have little choice but to play along. But when America's dominance is less pronounced and other centers of power have the wherewithal to stand their ground, its unilateral impulse will serve only to guarantee the return of geopolitical rivalry."<sup>38</sup>

## CHAPTER 9



# THE UNBALANCED POWER PROJECTIONS OF THE AMERICAN HEGEMON

Ever since the events of September 11, 2001, both that date and the phrase “war on terror” have been repeated so often that the endless references to both the date and phrase are now virtually countless. Yet, despite the atmosphere of fear that their constant incantation has brought about, the mere repetition of this mantra does not reveal any particular truth(s) about the current state, history, or nature of world order at the national, regional, or international levels.<sup>1</sup> Rather, it is the uncritical repetition of the date and the phrase that obscures many existing and emerging truths about how best to engage in the conceptualizing of world order.<sup>2</sup>

Perhaps the best place to begin is by identifying some of the historical truths about the United States in the Middle Eastern region and throughout the international system. Among these truths is that of the American Empire itself was largely responsible for creating many of the regional conditions throughout the Middle East that directly led to the events of 9/11.<sup>3</sup> For example, in the final year of the Carter presidency, the president’s 1979 State of the Union Address enunciated what became known as the Carter Doctrine. President Carter proclaimed, “Any attempt by any outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region will be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the United States of America, and such an assault will be repelled by any means necessary, including military force.” From 1979 forward, each one of President Carter’s successors expanded the level of U.S. military involvement in the region. The ultimate tragedy of this decision is revealed in the fact that “in promulgating the Carter Doctrine, the president

was effectively renouncing his vision of a less materialistic, more self-reliant democracy.”<sup>4</sup>

Beginning with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, a secret war against the Soviet army in Afghanistan was developed by the Central Intelligence Agency and Carter’s national security advisor, Zbigniew Brzezinski. It was continued throughout the entire length of the Reagan presidency, in conjunction with his goal of working toward the disintegration of the Soviet Union.<sup>5</sup> Contained within this buried history is a record of events that reveals how an American foreign policy strategy, originally designed to be used against the Soviet army in Afghanistan, created a group of “*freedom fighters*” that would later be identified as a “*terrorist organization*” called Al Qaeda. In this operation, there is little doubt that America’s CIA was largely responsible for the creation of its military training as well as the implementation and introduction of a new form of Islam—a form that was both highly radical and politicized. The CIA created this new blend of religious doctrine and political ideology for the purpose of gathering support for the expulsion of the foreign infidel (the Soviet army) from Afghanistan. It would be within the framework of this American-sponsored program that the seeds of a violent “*blowback*” against the United States had their origin.<sup>6</sup>

During that period, as well in previous decades, there were already resistance movements and nationalistic forces at work against American hegemony throughout the Middle East. Arab dissatisfaction with U.S.-sponsored dictatorships in Iran and Saudi Arabia had already spawned a growing sense of resentment toward the West in general and U.S. efforts in particular. This resentment was palpable and clearly evident since the 1950s when Egyptian president Gamal Abdel Nasser inspired a new generation of Arab nationalists to adopt the tenets of his manifesto, *The Philosophy of the Revolution*. In his manifesto, Nasser had referred to oil as the “*vital nerve of civilization*,” which Arabs could use to their advantage in their dealings with the West. In November 1956, it appeared that Nasser was prepared to carry out his threat by blocking the Suez Canal and closing off the flow of Gulf oil to Western Europe. By 1957, he had emerged as an intractable foe of the Eisenhower Doctrine. At the same time, Nasser’s relationship with Moscow seemed to indicate that there was an emerging coincidence between the aims of Arab nationalism with those of Soviet communism. In this geopolitical context, “as explained by NSC 5801/1, the basic policy document on the Middle East drawn up in early 1958, America’s support for Israel, ties with Western-aligned Arab regimes, and economic stake in the region’s oil put Washington at odds with revolutionary nationalism. By contrast, the Soviet Union ‘has managed successfully to represent itself to most Arabs as favoring the realization of the goals of Arab nationalism.’”<sup>7</sup>

In the 1950s and 1960s, the foreign policy relationship of the United States with Egypt, as well as with many other nations throughout the Third World, would evoke a formative process between the maturation of America as an empire and the evolution of former Third World colonies coming into their own as sovereign nations. The framework of world order throughout

these decades was, in large measure, dictated by the pressures of the cold war. The Third World remained caught between the superpower competition between the United States and the Soviet Union for regional “*spheres of influence*.” For that reason, the evolution of this particular world order arrangement largely remained the product of a dialectical phenomenon. The American Empire was seeking to project its global hegemony as the primary capitalist power. As such, it sought to incorporate other nations into its own sphere of influence, seeking to use trade and commerce as a means of penetrating their economies, influencing the decisions of their governments and political leaders, and always working to ensure that both markets and natural resources remained available to U.S. business in the name of the American national interest. Only when this strategic approach failed would the perils of gunboat diplomacy begin—as was the case with President Reagan’s handling of the Central American wars in Nicaragua and El Salvador during the 1980s.

From the 1950s through the 1990s (with the exception of the Kennedy years), the agenda and project for American hegemony failed to incorporate any substantive response to the aspirations of Third World peoples. It was an agenda that effectively ignored their desire to participate in the affairs of their own governments as well as efforts to resolve the problems associated with massive levels of poverty and inequality. From the standpoint and perspective of the architects of an emerging and ascendant American hegemony in the decade of the 1950s, the world order that it sought to bring about was premised largely upon the limited international law notion of legal equality between sovereigns, not upon creating a socially just world order or the desire of poor peoples for social equality. This was despite the fact that the Bandung Conference of 1955, representative primarily of the African and Asian nations, explicitly called upon the two superpowers to support their anticolonial stance against the European powers. As was the case in the limited historical window of opportunity that was presented by the Versailles Peace Conference of 1919, the Third World’s calls for the recognition of the principles of self-determination and sovereignty would be largely ignored. The power arrangements between the old empires of Europe and the emerging superpower system to which it was connected, led by the United States, was more preoccupied with the West’s continued hegemonic dominance of the world order than with the emerging nations of the Third World and their aspirations to have a voice and a vote in how this new post-1945 world order would be constructed. In this connection, Charles S. Maier has observed,

empire and nation can...reciprocally generate each other. But they offer different virtues. A nation will often develop a more militant sense of shared identity, including linguistic and sometimes religious identity. It often develops ideologies of popular participation in government and aspirations for social equality. It will be strong on indices of belonging. In general and allowing for a great range, nations are better at equality, empires at tolerance. Empires tend to give up on social equality—at home as well as in their far-flung domains where

it was rarely, if ever, an aspiration—although they can promise legal equality. They offer group tolerance rather than individual participation, which is frankly assigned to elites, whether of birth and class, ethnicity, or some measure of merit.<sup>8</sup>

What would or would not be tolerated by the American Empire and its Western European allies would ultimately be discovered in the context of the Suez Crisis of 1956.

### THE SUEZ CRISIS OF 1956 AS AN EXPRESSION OF RESISTANCE TO COLONIALISM

In the context of the post-1945 world, the Third World was in the midst of a great transformative historical moment—it was coming into its own. The ideological struggles between fascism and democracy had released new aspirations for freedom, democracy, social justice, and equality that could no longer be relegated either to the secondary considerations of great power politics or placed back into the mode of European colonial practice. Yet, the dominant mind-set of the still dominant Western European and American powers was how to construct a world order that would largely benefit their hegemonic interests while keeping the Soviet Union and the Third World at bay. Despite these imperial pretensions, both Western Europe and the United States would discover that there were certain limits to their power in attempting to impose Western hegemony on the world. In the case of Egypt, despite what Washington may have wanted from Nasser, there were limitations to what the American Empire could do. The reality faced by Washington was that “the Suez crisis of 1956...painfully illuminated the denouement of the postwar transition from Pax Britannica to Pax Americana. The lesson of Suez...was not that a perfidious Washington precluded a British reconquest of Egypt, but that the Third World had become refractory and resistant and an actor in its own right.”<sup>9</sup> From now on, the Third World could no longer be dominated—it had to be confronted. Its nationalist aspirations would have to be addressed in some fashion, its resistance movements would have to be crushed when they threatened vital Western interests, and the grievances of Third World states would have to be heard in the assembly of the United Nations.

The post-1945 world emerged as a world of anticolonialism. It was the spirit of anticolonialism that drove Third World resistance to imperial powers intent on grabbing the resources of others and caring little for the rights or aspirations of the global South. It was also the spirit of anticolonialism that drove nationalists to assert their newfound independence through widening circles of an emerging Third World political consciousness. In this context, Third World nationalism would be employed as both a protective device for maintaining their sovereign interests as well as an assertive political mechanism for social organization, political institutionalization, and diplomacy throughout the global South. So it was, in this new world order, that Third

World peoples learned not only to hold the practices associated with the old European empires in absolute disdain but also to hold them accountable for their actions under a new international legal standard. That disdain was then transferred to the creation of Third World strategies designed to thwart any attempt by the United States or USSR to impose any new forms of superpower involvement in their sovereign affairs. The battle of the cold war for “spheres of influence” treated the nations of the global South as little more than pawns on the chessboard of superpower competition. If allowed to continue, it was apparent that the consequences not only would create havoc on their economic lives but also would also destroy large segments of their own populations and leave them as political puppets, subjected to the whims of one or both of the superpowers.

More than ever, Third World peoples aspired to social equality, irrespective of the fact that empires gave up on social equality as a worthy goal for their time and the solidification of their imperial ambitions. Unfortunately, the U.S. Empire was content to exercise its influence and hegemony through the recruitment of compliant Third World leaders who were willing to bargain with Washington for their own gain while selling out the hopes, visions, and developmental requirements of their peoples. Yet, the people themselves would ultimately revolt against their treacherous leaders (as with Diem in South Vietnam, 1963) and proceed to engage in every type of resistance imaginable (as with Ho Chi Minh) in order to bring about the final extrication of British, French, and American imperialists and their armies of occupation.

In this regard, most historians writing after 1974 would have had a tangible and legitimate right to assume that, since the end of the Vietnam War, one of the outcomes of the Vietnam War would have been a shared recognition of the fact that forms of Third World nationalism and resistance were here to stay. Unfortunately, throughout the 1970s and the 1980s, the architects of American hegemony—located throughout the American primacy coalition and among the councils and strategists of the American Empire—refused to see the realities of the new world order and sought, instead, to escape into a framework of denial. Instead of learning the lessons of Vietnam they would speak and write of the “*Vietnam Syndrome*” and the “tragic reluctance” of the American public to support any more U.S. foreign interventions. Writers and academics in the service of the Trilateral Commission, for example, such as Samuel Huntington, bemoaned the “*Crisis of Democracy*” in the United States—a crisis of there being “too much democracy.” The presence of too much democratic participation would make it harder to manipulate the public for support in the case of future American interventions into Third World nations and conflicts. Elites throughout the American establishment also refused to acknowledge the legitimacy and force of Third World resistance movements against Western intrusions and continuing efforts to subordinate their development to the dictates of the IMF and World Bank. In fact, the view of the American primacy coalition was so massively constricted that its members could only see the reality of this particular phenomenon (of Third World resistance) in terms of the cold war, that is, in reference to the Soviets

and their occupation of Afghanistan from 1979 through the 1980s. Thus, the U.S. establishment and its leadership proved that it could only learn half of the lesson of Vietnam. In many ways, the U.S. establishment's failure to grasp the full meaning of the tragedy of the Vietnam War also represented a repeat of its failure to grasp the full meaning and implications of the Suez Crisis of 1956, the Nasserist Movement of the 1950s and 1960s, and the principles enunciated at the Bandung Conference of 1955.

### THE BANDUNG CONFERENCE OF 1955 AND THE NASSERIST MOVEMENT

Twentieth-century history had already demonstrated that Third World peoples were dedicated to remaining outside of superpower influence. The entire history of the Non-Aligned Nations Movement (1955–79) had made it clear to both the United States and the USSR that the peoples of the Third World did not want their nations to become the intermediate battle grounds for superpower competition—caught up in an endless search for “*spheres of influence*.” Rather, the peoples and governments of the Third world wanted to develop their own national agendas and their own international alliances without interference by the U.S. Empire or the Soviet Empire interfering with this process. These ideas were at the heart of the 1955 Bandung Conference when the host, Ahmed Sukarno, offered this catechism for the Third World:

Let us not be bitter about the past, but let us keep our eyes firmly on the future. Let us remember that no blessing of God is so sweet as life and liberty. Let us remember that the stature of all mankind is diminished so long as nations are still unfree. Let us remember that the highest purpose of man is the liberation of man from his bonds of fear, his bonds of poverty, the liberation of man from the physical, spiritual and intellectual bonds which have for long stunted the development of humanity's majority. And let us remember, Sisters and Brothers, that for the sake of all that, we Asians and Africans must be united.<sup>10</sup>

Similarly, Nasser laid out his vision of the 1952 revolution as “undertaken for the working people, for dissolving differences between classes, for establishing social justice, for the establishment of a healthy democratic life, for abolishing feudalism, for abolishing the monarchy and control of capital over government and for abolishing colonialism.”<sup>11</sup> This statement was the embodiment of Nasser's hopeful vision for the construction of “Arab Socialism.” In this critical respect, what both the Bandung Conference and the Nasserist Movement held in common were their shared values about the liberation of man—especially that part of humanity that resided in Asia and Africa. Further compounding the irony is that these shared values—freedom, justice, empathy, and understanding—also constituted shared frames of reference for Americans and Nasserists. Paradoxically, therefore, what some international historians now recognize about the dynamics of this period is

that “Eisenhower’s feud with Nasser was not a conflict over values; it was a contest of interests, mediated by shared values.”<sup>12</sup>

What this interpretation implies is that “cultural differences were important, but tensions between the Eisenhower administration and the Nasserist movement had less to do with clashing values than with differing applications of shared values.” In other words, “each party was moved by two competing sets of values. The first set was associated with the vanquishing of evil: honor, sacrifice, solidarity, steadfastness, simplicity, and moral absolutism. The second set was best suited to conciliation and deal-making: patience, pragmatism, empathy, compromise, subtlety, and moral relativism. In Middle Eastern diplomacy, the two parties applied their shared values inversely, each urging compromise in precisely those areas in which the other demanded commitment. The Americans wanted the Arabs to be conciliatory toward Zionism and European imperialism but partisan in the Cold War. The Nasserists insisted on their right to make deals with the communist bloc even as they demanded U.S. support for the Arab positions against Zionism and imperialism.”<sup>13</sup>

It would not be the first time that the nations and peoples of the global South would express their hopes for a world order more accommodating to their interests—only to be denied by both the Western powers. The “*Wilsonian moment*” of 1919 at Versailles was another time of denial. In the case of a post-1945 world, however, it was Nasser’s belief that Israel and British colonialism posed greater threats to Arabs than Soviet communism. This particular belief was so entrenched in Nasser’s mind and the rest of the Egyptian leadership that it forced Eisenhower and Dulles to terminate their plans for the building of a Middle East Defense Organization based on strategic ties with Cairo. Instead, Washington was compelled to look toward the “northern tier” countries of the region, “including Turkey, Pakistan, Iran, and Iraq, the sole Arab country among this group. The result of the ‘northern tier’ strategy was the formation of the Baghdad Pact in 1955.” However, before it could be completed, “Washington refused to join the pact after London’s membership tainted the new organization with British imperialism and led Arab nationalists to regard it as a vehicle for British colonial rule.”<sup>14</sup> American-led hegemony in the Middle East was not an easy thing to achieve.

This Egyptian-led rejection of British and American imperialism was an example of an earlier resistance movement to European and Japanese expansionism that had been simmering since the Versailles peace of 1919, which heralded the end of World War I. While the British, French, and Japanese made significant territorial gains by the close of the First World War, the hard lesson remained that “empire...cannot survive on territorial control alone. It requires accommodation and legitimacy, at least among a portion of the population in both the metropole and the periphery.” In this regard, “the adoption of the language of self-determination by colonial nationalists, as well as by anti-imperialists in the metropole, weakened these underlying supports of the imperial edifice.”<sup>15</sup>



### 1919: THE YEAR OF THE “*Wilsonian Moment*”

The end of World War I was the first time in global history that the nations of the Third World were able to collectively express their hopes for a world order more accommodating to their own interests. It was a period that came to be defined as “*the Wilsonian moment*”—a time in history that was perceived, experienced, and enacted by colonial peoples in a manner that was both national and transnational in its scope. Access to this international stage was made possible because “the anti-colonial movements of 1919... profoundly transcended national enclosures in their genesis, conduct and aims. They were shaped by transnational networks of nationalist activists who imagined themselves as part of a global wave, operated explicitly on an international stage, and aspired to goals that were specifically international; namely, the recognition of the peoples and territories they claimed to represent as self-determining, sovereign nation-states within a new international society whose structure and dynamics would reflect Wilsonian precepts.”<sup>16</sup> In many ways, it also represents the first incipient effort among the nations of the global South to create a counterhegemonic alliance against the dominating tendencies of a world capitalist class and Western imperial powers.

To be sure, these aspirations far exceeded what Wilson intended, but he inspired a belief in a vision that would “transform international order in ways that would help them gain the right to self-determination.” It was in this atmosphere that “they moved with dispatch and energy to seize the opportunities that the Wilsonian moment seemed to offer to reformulate, escalate, and broaden their campaigns against empire, and worked to mobilize publics both at home and abroad behind their movements.”<sup>17</sup> As might have been expected, the Western powers meeting in Paris ignored the demands and aspirations of non-Western peoples. Still, their struggles for sovereignty, equality, and dignity as independent actors in international society continued. In this sense, the Wilsonian moment “marked the beginning of the end of the imperial order in international affairs, precipitating the crisis of empire that followed the war and laying the foundation for the eventual triumph of an international order in which the model of the sovereign, self-governing nation-state spread over the entire globe.”<sup>18</sup> While the Wilsonian moment did not last, “the experiences of the Wilsonian moment cemented ideological and political commitments to anti-colonial agendas, and the movements launched then did not disappear with its demise.”<sup>19</sup>

Further, while the colonial authorities attempted to stem the anticolonial wave, the political programs and organizations committed to self-determination became more powerful and more pervasive than before. This is important because while the war on the Western Front ended on November 11, 1918, the reality is that “brutality, violence, and conflict reigned across Europe, the Middle East, and Asia Minor, in such struggles as the Irish Civil War, *Freikorps* operations in the Baltic against the Bolsheviks, the Russian Civil War and Allied intervention in Russia, the Russo-Polish War, and the Greco-Turkish War. Not only had the war overturned the traditional

political order and left endemic war; it also appeared to threaten the traditional order in other realms such as race and gender. In the realm of race, both domestically and internationally, the war heightened the fear of white people toward peoples of color. The enormous slaughter of Europeans and their use of colonial peoples to fight, particularly on the Western Front, aroused the specter that Europeans might lose their accustomed supremacy. This very fear further exposed the true nature of imperialism in its insidious exploitation of peoples through division, conquest, and continued violence."<sup>20</sup>

Although Third World nationalism continued to flourish between the two world wars, it did not grow into full maturity until the advent of the cold war. As Jason C. Parker notes: "The concurrent hardening of the bipolar conflict and softening of the European empires meant that the anti-colonial struggle, and the embryonic nations to emerge from it, could be plotted along two definitional axes. The first was ipso facto oppositional: resistance to white supremacy and imperial rule, expressed as nationalism. The second, expressed as neutralism and eventually embraced by a significant number of emancipated nations, reflected the desire for independence not only from European landlords but also from the Cold War dichotomy as well."<sup>21</sup>

*LOST OPPORTUNITIES—THE "WILSONIAN MOMENT,"*  
**THE BANDUNG CONFERENCE, THE SUEZ CRISIS,**  
**THE NONALIGNED NATIONS MOVEMENT,**  
**AND THE END OF THE VIETNAM WAR**

The history between the end of World War I and the beginnings of the cold war is marked by many lost or missed opportunities for the Third World's potential for a self-determined course of economic development, political liberation, and greater interregional unity by building more South-South alliances and relationships. A review of these lost opportunities connects a number of historical dots on the trajectory of the Third World's evolution. For example, by 1955, the Bandung Conference represented both a revival of the "Wilsonian moment" and an extension of it. On one hand, it sought to revive the nationalist aspirations that were unleashed in 1919 regarding the principles of sovereignty and self-determination. In its nationalist aspect, the delegates to the Bandung Conference forged a united front of opposition to all forms of colonialism and imperialism—as well as colonialism's racist incarnations. Yet, on the other hand, the conference was also an extension of the Wilsonian moment in that "the conference's announcement of an embryonic Third World-neutralist bloc presented a potential paradigm shift in international affairs."<sup>22</sup> While affirming Third World nationalist sentiments and the right to self-determination, it also had the potential to remove the global South from a potential nuclear conflagration if the superpowers decided to include their nations in a World War III superpower confrontation for global hegemony.

As with the Versailles Conference in 1919, the Bandung Conference of 1955 represented a global moment for the global South to speak to the

world about the aspirations of the neglected, the excluded, and the socially marginalized of the entire Third World. It was an opportunity to invoke the themes of liberation and freedom as the new driving dynamics of international affairs that had the potential to release the poverty-stricken from their chains and their developmental agendas from their subordination to Western forms of imperialism. In coming to understand the sociopolitical dynamics of Bandung in this manner, we can capture a sense of the ideological currents running through the Bandung Conference. As these running currents began to merge, there was a coming together of the themes of neutralism, anticolonialism, Third World nationalism, and the issue of race in cold war politics. In short, Bandung was an intellectual and paradigmatic conceptual shift in thinking about international affairs, for the claims that it made united the concerns of peoples North and South, East and West. If there had been a sufficient degree of political will among the Western nations, there was a great potential for the conceptual shifts in world order thinking to be translated into new practical forms of action and institutionalization at the levels of international politics, economics, and diplomacy.

Given this history, I would argue that the Bandung Conference was America's second chance to redeem its promise to act as more than just a hegemonic power and begin to act in accordance with its own idealism and stated purposes, as embodied in the Declaration of Independence and within the U.S. Constitution. This opportunity was first squandered during the Wilsonian moment of 1919, and now it reappeared in 1955, again presenting itself to America's "free world" leaders. However, even though Eisenhower, Dulles, Lodge, and Rockefeller realized that Bandung had forever changed the international equation with respect to the nature of world order and the inevitable collapse of European colonialism, they stood back from this moment of historical opportunity out of a fear that their acceptance and acknowledgment of the conferences' aspirations and political claims would somehow grant the Soviet Union a geopolitical advantage in the cold war. Thus "was the missed chance born—the administration deduced after Bandung that the conference had opened the way for an ultimately necessary break with European colonialism, but it did not follow this logic to its end—did not, in the end, act on it until the proverbial moment of truth at Suez."<sup>23</sup>

Additionally, I would also argue that, along with the Bandung Conference of 1955 and the Suez Crisis of 1956, there were many other missed opportunities for the West to come to terms with the nationalist aspirations of the Third World and the West's own stated ideals relative to freedom, human dignity, and human rights. We find these missed opportunities are present in the "Wilsonian moment" of 1919, the ignored calls of the Non-Aligned Nations Movement (NAM) for the creation of a New International Economic Order (NIEO), and the lessons that emerged from the conclusion of the Vietnam War. The common thread that connects all of these events is an historical chronicle of the Western world's failure to give substantive and practical expression to the international law ideals of self-determination

and the sovereignty of all nations. That is not to say that the “*Third World project*” did not have its own built-in flaws, because it did.

While the unity of Third World movements for liberation, political independence, and progressive economic changes had often been preserved at all costs, once new nations came into their hands, many of the movements that produced these new Third World states did not realize the socialist dream that they believed in. Rather, they inherited state and governmental systems that combined the promise of equality with the maintenance of social hierarchy. In this respect, the “*idea of the Third World*” all too often collapsed as these new state regimes protected the elites among the old social classes without providing the promised social welfare benefits that were a part of their nationalist campaigns. In their place, either the nation’s military or a victorious people’s party took charge of the nation’s affairs. When these events transpired, however, most Western elites were usually quite content to work with these governments as long as they kept the door open for multinational corporate business enterprises and foreign direct investment. It often did not matter that human rights abuses were common, that economic deprivation for the majority was to be expected, and that the economic and investment climate favored the West at the expense of the majority who inhabited these nations. In light of this failure of moral and political will, we still find, at the dawn of the twenty-first century, a situation throughout the global South where there are billions of people who remain permanently excluded from the promises of the “*Wilsonian moment*,” the stated protections in the Charter of the United Nations, and the promises contained in the agendas of the twentieth-century nationalists and the twentieth century’s leading Western states.

Throughout the global South, the first generation of the twenty-first century is engaged in trying to set its own agenda for a trajectory of Third World development that will finally be freed from all forms of Western exploitation, especially those forms that are the creations of the IMF, WTO, and World Bank. From the standpoint of history, it should be remembered that many billions of people throughout the global South were excluded from the promised termination of all forms of colonialism and imperialism as well as from the Non-Aligned Nations Movement’s call for genuine autonomy and noninterference by the superpowers in their struggle for global hegemony. For them and their children, the call for reparations has a special salience and relevance. Certainly, the issue of reparations has special meaning in the case of twenty-first-century Iraq. At the end of 2007, it has been calculated that over 3 million refugees have been produced by the Bush administration’s war and occupation, over 600,000 Iraqi civilians have been killed as a consequence of the administration’s involvement in the country, and the future sustainability of the nation itself remains in doubt.

PRACTICING TWENTY-FIRST-CENTURY  
GEOPOLITICS: THE PRICE OF LESSONS NOT  
LEARNED AND PATHS NOT TAKEN

As noted above, the Suez crisis was Nasser's declaration of nationalist pride and his concomitant desire to cut the "vital nerve" of Anglo American civilization: oil. Still, even in the aftermath of the Suez crisis, the history of the period demonstrates that there were American officials in the Eisenhower administration narrowly focused on only one issue—the single issue of developing new sources of petroleum in order to prevent Arab nationalism from again threatening Western Europe's oil supplies.<sup>24</sup> At the same time, just as Eisenhower administration chartered the interdepartmental body on Iraq, a committee chaired by commerce secretary nominee Lewis Strauss was in the process of considering whether to recommend mandatory import controls on oil to shield domestic producers from a glut of cheap foreign petroleum. In a decision that would foreordain the energy policies of the Bush-Cheney White House, Eisenhower found himself responding to pressures from congressmen who represented coal- and oil-producing states to approve the quotas, "acknowledging that overabundance, not scarcity, had become the principal challenge in energy policy."<sup>25</sup> Clearly, these were economic decisions made for largely domestic reasons. Yet, their geopolitical consequences would gradually unfold in the decades that were to follow.

From a strictly geopolitical perspective, "the CIA had always seen vast potential to use the terrorist network established by bin Laden during the Cold War in an international framework in the post-Cold War era against Russian and Chinese power, i.e., in Eastern Europe, the Balkans, and Central Asia. From the beginning of U.S. policy in Afghanistan, the CIA had hope that the network of terrorists being spawned by Osama bin Laden with assistance from Saudi Arabia and Pakistan would continue to be used after the Afghan war against the Soviet occupation. Indeed, U.S. intelligence maintained its co-optation of Al-Qaeda by proxy as a means of expanding U.S. power in the Balkans wars."<sup>26</sup> After cutting through mountains of U.S. government disinformation, the truth about Al-Qaeda is that it is "shown to be not an 'enemy' to be fought and eliminated, but rather an unpredictable intelligence asset to be controlled, manipulated, and co-opted as much as possible to secure covert strategic ends."<sup>27</sup> In the furtherance of those particular strategic ends, "Western intelligence agencies have both maintained connections with and actively/tacitly supported Al-Qaeda...in the following diverse countries across the globe: Bosnia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Chechnya, Algeria, Libya, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and the Philippines. These countries span several key regions: the Balkans, the Caucasus, North Africa, the Middle East, Central Asia, and the Asia-Pacific, all of which are strategically connected to the Eurasian continent—the latter being at once a depository of vast economic resources and a lever of global pre-eminence."<sup>28</sup>

It is at this point in our discussion of twenty-first century geopolitics that we have reached the central core of what constitutes current forms of American

hegemonic planning. Following the logic of the American primacy coalition—if American global preeminence is to be retained in the twenty-first century, then it must shut out all other potential rivals from access to the primacy oil and energy reserves of the world. In light of this goal, Professor John Duffield has argued that “for at least a quarter of a century, U.S. military planning, preparations, and actions have increasingly centered on the Persian Gulf. These policies have been justified on a number of grounds: deterring Soviet adventurism, protecting neutral shipping, upholding international law, enforcing UN Security Council Resolutions, and fighting terrorism, to name only a handful. But underlying all of these rationales has been the region’s strategic importance as the leading source of oil production and exports in the world.”<sup>29</sup> A similar conclusion about U.S. military strategy has been reached by Professor Michel Chossudovsky, who has argued that “the militarization of the Eurasian corridor is an integral part of Washington’s foreign policy agenda. In this regard, America’s quest to control the Eurasian pipeline corridors on behalf of the Anglo-American oil giants is not only directed against Russia; it is also intended to weaken competing European oil interests in the Transcaucasus and Central Asia.”<sup>30</sup>

In the long march toward this new strategy for American hegemony, it would take the unique context of the Afghanistan cauldron, as it evolved during a decade-long Soviet occupation in the 1980s, to foment the beginnings of a full-fledged terrorist network—and to foment the response of a small part of that terrorist network that came to global attention on 9/11/01. In part, 9/11 was both a “*new Pearl Harbor*” that helped to supply justification and a rationale for the Bush administration’s intentions to invade Iraq. Yet, it was simultaneously a very clear response to the long-term imperial policies of the U.S. Empire in the Middle East. The evolution of this network would become much more than a militarized expression of Islamic rage and dissatisfaction with the West. In point of fact, it is even more than an expression of popular anger over the perceived abuses of America’s regional hegemony throughout the Middle East. However many different levels may be cited to explain terrorist networks and the planning for and use of the 9/11 event, the fact remains that the neoconservatives of the Bush-II administration would become the newest leaders of an American primacy coalition that would ultimately be responsible for employing a global military strategy in order to fight a stateless enemy that could be everywhere and yet nowhere. In truth, all of this is only a small part of the story about the purposes for the “war on terrorism.”

The rest of the story can be traced back to the fact that America’s newest war “consists in extending the global market system while opening up new ‘economic frontiers’ for U.S. corporate capital.”<sup>31</sup> More specifically, the U.S.-led military invasion of Iraq, in conjunction with its “coalition partner” Great Britain, “responds to the interests of the Anglo-American oil giants, in alliance with America’s ‘Big Five’ weapons producers: Lockheed Martin, Raytheon, Northrop Grumman, Boeing, and General Dynamics. The ‘Anglo-American axis’ in defense and foreign policy is the driving force behind the military

operations in Central Asia and Middle East. This rapprochement between London and Washington is consistent with the integration of British and American business interests in the areas of banking, oil and the defense industry.”<sup>32</sup>

In light of these above-referenced Western power coalitions and trends, I will argue that the main elements of the U.S. primacy coalition—consisting of banking, oil, and defense industry giants—constitute a core group of Western capitalist industries that remain committed to a geopolitical strategy designed to promote their version of twenty-first-century American hegemony. Obviously, the U.S.-primacy coalition is committed to the view that their strategy will be a viable strategy that continues to work in their favor, to their profit, and is in their long-term interests. However, I will also argue that their enterprise is not viable in the long-term and that to pursue it is a proverbial “fool’s errand.” As a consequence of the hardened positions taken by the U.S. primacy coalition, the remainder of this book will provide evidence demonstrating that they are sitting on the crumbling walls of an American-centered hegemony, in the midst of a world of rising regions and emerging multicentric areas of global power, located primarily in Asia, but extending outward to Russia, Latin America, and the Middle East. When viewed in this light, it will become clear that the evidence I have assembled herein shall prove that the U.S. primacy coalition, as well as its allies, are on a self-defeating path. As long as they remain committed to this path, the open question is whether they engage in actions and behaviors that bring about a global conflagration that results in World War III.

To place my comments in perspective, I am making these arguments recognizing that the powers and interests behind the U.S. primacy coalition are mainly comprised of a variety of powerful strategic and economic interests that are historically entrenched in the very core structures of the U.S./Western institutions of power. As such, these embedded and entrenched interests have operated above the law. They are largely antidemocratic in character. Their policies have been largely allowed to operate without any degree of accountability or democratic oversight. In this respect, they represent what some authors have depicted as a “hidden government.” This hidden government represents a constellation of powers that certainly is representative of private interests and therefore constitutes a “private government” that operates over, under, and through the auspices of public and democratically elected governments.

This is the realm of what Professor Peter Dale Scott calls “*deep politics*”—a realm where key political practices, such as the furtherance of American hegemony and primacy, are usually repressed in public discourse. The nature of “*deep politics*” is that it is linked to the operations of a “*deep state*”—a state that represents a closed network of interests and is said to be more powerful than the public state. This “*deep state*” takes its order from a “cabal” or a “network of cliques” that are able to work within the status quo so as to maintain and sustain top-down rule. In reference to Scott’s framework, and by employing this analytical approach and set of definitions, I am seeking to characterize the nature of the U.S.-primacy coalition as a “cabal” of powerful

cliques that is operating within a broad social and bureaucratic base. This is the power base of what constitutes the “hidden” or “private” government that supported the Vietnam War and now supports the Iraq War and Bush’s policy for dominance in the Middle East and Eurasia—both militarily and economically. The Bush plan has been provided to him—literally, provided to him—by a realm of wealthy or privileged society, more properly understood as a category and not as a class per se. In the case of Iraq, it is a category of interlinked industrial forces that brings together the interests of oil, banking, and weapons manufacturers. It is to a discussion of these forces and their relation to the so-called “war on terrorism” that we now turn.

### “DEEP POLITICS,” “DEEP STATE,” AND A STATUS QUO “CABAL”

The CIA and other Western intelligence services have been in the business of guiding the work of Al-Qaeda and having it sponsored by a multiplicity of states that are strategically connected to the Eurasian continent. All of them are closely allied to the West. This interlocking web of intelligence services has provided the Bush-II administration with a convenient narrative. In truth, this narrative is nothing more than “a façade, concealing a core system of reciprocal interests and policies binding the West to its solemn enemies.”<sup>33</sup> Further, this stateless enemy of the American Empire was made up of a broad group of individuals, drawn from a variety of countries who had decided to choose terrorism as a tactic and as a strategy for confronting the hegemony of the United States. Al-Qaeda has also been used by the neoconservatives and the U.S. primacy coalition to further the hegemony of the United States and its transnational capitalist allies in the industries of oil, banking, and weapons manufacturing (the military-industrial complex).

The so-called “war on terror” has been used to justify spending billions of dollars on security. Yet, the net result of this expenditure has mainly been to enrich privatized business interests who make surveillance equipment and run private security firms. Some of these business interests are the direct beneficiaries of Bush’s new Department of Homeland Security. The so-called “war on terror” has also bloated the Pentagon budget by hundreds of billions. Bush’s proposed Pentagon budget for FY 2009 is over \$515 billion. These extra billions have primarily gone to the enrichment and profit margins of America’s “Big Five” weapons producers and the “Anglo-American axis” of defense contractors and its allies in the foreign policy establishment. So, for the Bush-II administration to declare its intention to “*fight a war on terrorism*” was essentially tantamount to the United States declaring war on a tactic (*a declaration that was actually devoid of constitutionally mandated congressional consent*).

Unfortunately, the constitutionally structured arrangement for the “separation of powers” had been so seriously compromised by big money, lobbyists, and defense contractor interests, that a complicit U.S. Congress gave blanket authorization to the Bush-II administration for the “*use of force*”



(undefined and without limits) against this vague and stateless enemy. In so doing, the U.S. Congress, regardless of political party affiliation, refused to meet its constitutionally mandated obligation to provide an actual declaration of war.<sup>34</sup> Additionally, with the passage of the U.S. Patriot Act, there has also been the suspension of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA)—which governs the laws on domestic spying and the empowerment of the National Security Agency (NSA)—to set up a police state within the United States. Further, the Bush-II administration's conduct of the "war on terror" effectively suspended most of the nation's remaining constitutional protections on civil liberties and civil rights, including those pertaining to the treatment of prisoners captured in the war (suspension of the Geneva Conventions concerning the use of torture).<sup>35</sup> Additionally, the Bush-II administration authorized the use of a private mercenary army called "Blackwater" to augment the formal U.S. military role in Iraq and, rather strangely, engage in policing the streets of New Orleans in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.<sup>36</sup> When viewed in combination, these are not isolated events. Rather, they are reflective of what Professor Peter Dale Scott has labeled "*deep politics*." "*Deep politics*" refers to "all those political practices and arrangements, deliberate or not, that are usually repressed in public discourse rather than acknowledged."<sup>37</sup>

Professor Scott has provided a framework of analysis that is very powerful in helping to expose the current power structure of the American-led primacy coalition and the various elements that comprise it. First, the American-led primacy coalition is better understood as a category, not a class. In Scott's terminology, we can refer to the realm of this primacy coalition as "over-world." "Over-world" is "that realm of wealthy or privileged society that, although not formally authorized or institutionalized, is the scene of successful influence of government by private power. It includes both (1) those whose influence is through their wealth, administered personally or more typically through tax-free foundations and their sponsored projects, and (2) the first group's representatives."<sup>38</sup> I believe that the "Big Five" weapons producers and the Anglo-American axis of defense contractors are in this category, along with banking and oil industry elites. The realm of "*over-world*" is responsible for the creation of a "cabal," which operates as a network of cliques "within or across a broad social and bureaucratic base with an agenda not widely known or shared."<sup>39</sup> This certainly depicts the role played by the neoconservatives in the events leading up to the Iraq War and the subsequent occupation of the country. This "cabal" is located in the "deep state" and operates within the status quo to sustain, maintain, and promote top down rule. Donald Rumsfeld was an expert at "top down" rule in the planning, preparation, and production of the Iraq War and larger Middle East-Eurasian policy. This "cabal" operates in the "*deep state*." The term "deep state" is from Turkey, "where it is used to refer to a closed network and said to be more powerful than the public state."<sup>40</sup> In this regard, Scott's interpretative framework is useful on a variety of levels.

First, Scott's analysis helps to contextualize the political and bureaucratic forces that have sold the American people and the world on the concept of a "war on terrorism." It does so by providing us with an analytical framework that defines and differentiates between the private state and the public state and the difference between public state policies and private state policies.

Second, it assists us to better understand the logic and motivations that guide and sustain U.S. foreign policy in both its military and economic dimensions. It is able to do so because it provides us with a nuanced understanding of where a particular agenda comes from. Its point of origin is in the realm of "over-world" (weapons manufacturers, oil industry interests, and the realm of banking and finance) and then proceeds to delineate how the agenda is implemented through a willing group of believers in a "cabal" (consisting of an alliance that encompasses a common-interest union of both American neoliberals and neoconservatives).

Third, it explains how such a "cabal" can infiltrate the public state by creating its own private and largely undetected "*deep state*." Insofar as the "*deep state*" refers to a closed network, it remains more powerful than the public state because it is not accountable to public scrutiny or democratic oversight and accountability. It also explains why the 2006 election, which switched the balance of power to the Democrats in the House and Senate, made so little difference with regard to Iraq war-spending bills and the provision of supplemental spending bills. The functioning and closed nature of the network of the "*deep state*" also goes a long way toward explaining how the FISA laws could be usurped by a largely unregulated National Security Agency, subject only to Bush's executive orders (which are themselves the product of a neoconservative cabal).

Fourth, when viewed in combination, it becomes clear that the practice of "*deep politics*" allows for the secretly arrived at policies of the "cabal" to move forward in an uninterrupted process toward implementation, due to the fact that those political practices and arrangements are needed to further the project of the U.S. primacy coalition. It is a further indicator that the forces that actually run the U.S. government are dedicated to the maintenance of U.S. hegemony at all costs, including the virtual destruction of America's constitutional government and democratic practices (which have been repressed in both official and public discourse). Clearly, if the policies and programs designed to extend U.S. primacy do not have to be debated in public discourse, then they do not have to be acknowledged and the potential for public resistance is virtually eliminated.

Now it is possible for us to apply these aforementioned definitions and concepts to the problems that the American primacy coalition must face in the world as it seeks to implement its geopolitical designs for continued American hegemony—based on weapons, oil, and banking interests. To begin with, there are severe structural problems with the world capitalist system that encumber the primacy project. As sociologist Giovanni Arrighi has pointed out, "Far from being a spontaneous process originating from the actions of capitalist accumulators '*from below*'—as it had been in the

nineteenth century under British hegemony—uneven development under U.S. hegemony was a process consciously and actively encouraged ‘*from above*’ by a globalizing U.S. warfare-welfare state.”<sup>41</sup> Given the fact of uneven development, he argues that “the outcome was an anticipated but unavoidable economic cost of policies whose primary objectives were not economic but social and political—that is, the containment of communism, the taming of nationalism and the consolidation of U.S. hegemony.”<sup>42</sup>

Earlier in this chapter, I discussed the “road not taken” with respect to the Bandung Conference of 1955, the Suez Crisis of 1956, the nonrealization of self-determination and sovereignty for Third World nations at the time of the “*Wilsonian moment*” in 1919, the fragmentation of nationalism, and the Non-Aligned Movement from the late 1960s through their ultimate demise in 1980. It should now be clear why these roads were neither taken nor endorsed by the U.S. government. The deep political forces behind the U.S. primacy coalition found these efforts throughout the global South as not only unproductive for the purposes of American hegemony but also a threat to its long-term viability. Therefore, the efforts of the peasantry to achieve their own developmental path, both in individual countries and throughout the global South, were seen as “unproductive” (not “profitable”) from the standpoint of American policy makers due to the nature of capitalism’s own path of uneven development. If the system was to function on a global basis, then these movements and principles would have to be repressed, beaten back, contained, and ultimately defeated.

This point was graphically made by Odd Arne Westad (Director of the Cold War Studies Center at the London School of Economics and Political Science) in his book *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times*. He notes, “The wars fought in the Third World during the Cold War were despairingly destructive. Since they were, mostly, wars against the peasantry, the best way of winning them was through hunger and thirst rather than through battles and bombing. The methods of these wars were to destroy lives rather than to destroy property. In country after country—Kurdistan, Guatemala, Vietnam, Angola, Ethiopia—peasants were taken off their land and out of their villages, and given the choice between submission and starvation. Even after the battles were declared over, governments continued to wage war on parts of their peasant populations: much of what the IMF and the World Bank—in their twenty-twenty wisdom of the late 1980s—called mismanagement and indifference was in fact warfare intended to break the will of recalcitrant peasant communities through destroying water resources, irrigation systems, and pastures. The *cultural* violence was sometimes as bad as the physical: millions were forced to change their religion, their language, their family structure, and even their names in order to fit in with progress.”<sup>43</sup> In light of this critique, as well as the critique of the American power structure by Peter Dale Scott, I have constructed the following table, which outlines the structures, practices, and design of twentieth- and twenty-first-century American geopolitical hegemony.

**Table 9.1** The Twentieth- and Twenty-first-century Organization of American Geopolitical Hegemony: Structures, Practices, and Purposes

<i>I. Over World</i>	
Primacy Leaders and Members:	
(1) Weapons manufacturers; (2) International oil; (3) Banking and finance [The realm of Unfreedom and Deterministic Thought and Policies]	
<i>II. The Cabal</i>	
Primacy Leaders and Members:	
(1) Neoconservatives and (2) Neoliberals	
<i>III. Institutional Mechanisms of Power</i>	
<b>Deep Politics</b> -----	<b>Deep State</b>
[Hidden arrangements and relationships]	[The Deep State represents private interests and not the public interest.]
<i>IV. The Exercise of Hegemony</i>	
<b>The Global South</b> -----	<b>American Public</b>
[Locked into a global system of exploitation and “resource wars.”*]	[Subordination of public discourse and substantive loss of civil liberties, civil rights, and democratic state.]
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. IMF, World Bank, WTO</li> <li>2. Weapons manufacturers (\$) </li> <li>3. Big oil, banking, and finance</li> <li>4. The U.S. declares noncompliant states to be labeled as “rogue states”*** (new enemies).</li> <li>6. U.S. dependence on foreign oil unites energy policies with overseas security commitments.***</li> <li>7. The maintenance of superpower status locks the U.S. into the pursuit of hegemony in order to preserve access to worldwide energy supplies.****</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Disinformation from U.S. government and corporate media.</li> <li>2. NSA, CIA, FBI, surveillance</li> </ol>
<i>V. Spheres of Repression</i>	
<b>The Global South remains repressed</b> -----	<b>The American people have lost democratic state to an oligarchy</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Low-intensity conflicts</li> <li>2. Not allowed a developmental path of their own choosing.</li> <li>3. U.S. Interventionism (military/economic)</li> <li>4. The “global war on terror” (GWOT) is a new paradigm that has been invoked to arrest and to torture prodemocracy activists in Egypt (+).</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Rule by wealthiest 1 percent</li> <li>2. Fascist policies</li> <li>3. Deep state intrusions into public’s private affairs.</li> </ol>

**Table 9.1** The Twentieth- and Twenty-first-century Organization of American Geopolitical Hegemony: Structures, Practices, and Purposes (*continued*)

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5. The GWOT helped the U.S. leverage a ten-year multibillion-dollar arms package for Saudi Arabia, the Gulf States, Israel, and Egypt (July 2007) (+).
  6. The GWOT made the U.S. and El Salvador partners by criminalizing protest and turning citizens into Fugitives (++)
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Sources: Peter Dale Scott, *The Road to 9/11: Wealth, Empire, and the Future of America*, University of California Press, 2007; Giovanni Arrighi, *Adam Smith in Beijing: Lineages of the Twenty-First Century*, Verso, 2007; Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times*, Cambridge University Press, 2005; Richard J. Barnet, "The Costs and Perils of Intervention," *Low-Intensity Warfare: Counterinsurgency, Pro-insurgency, and Anti-Terrorism in the Eighties*, Pantheon Books, 1988, 207–21; \*Michael T. Klare, *Resource Wars: The New Landscape of Global Conflict*, Metropolitan Books, 2001; \*\*Michael T. Klare, *Rogue States and Nuclear Outlaws: America's Search for a New Foreign Policy*, Hill and Wang, 1995; \*\*\*Michael T. Klare, *Blood and Oil: The Dangers and Consequences of America's Growing Dependency on Imported Petroleum*, Metropolitan Books, 2004; \*\*\*\* John S. Duffield, *Over a Barrel: The Costs of U.S. Foreign Oil Dependence*, an imprint of Stanford University Press, 2008; (+) Negar Azimi, "What the GWOT Has Wrought: Egypt," *The Nation*, December 31, 2007, 18–20; (++) Wes Enzinna, "What the GWOT Has Wrought: El Salvador," *The Nation*, December 31, 2007, 20–21; (\$) Rachel Stohl, "Questionable Reward: Arms Sales and the War on Terrorism," *Arms Control Today* 38, no. 1 (January/February 2008): 17–23.

*This table is the work product of the author, Terrence Paupp.*

By the end of the 1980s, a term had been created to describe the wars against the peasants of the global South. The new term for an old concept was dubbed "low intensity conflict." The doctrine of low-intensity conflict took up where the doctrine of counterinsurgency left off. It was another expression of America's interventionist impulse. Reflecting on this development in late 1988, Richard J. Barnet wrote, "since the end of World War II, it has been an axiom of American foreign policy that national security required a continuing commitment to intervene—by military means, if necessary—in internal wars and insurgencies, mostly in the Third World, in order to prevent revolutionary political change and 'Marxist-Leninist' models of economic development."<sup>44</sup> He concluded, "The readiness to conduct low-intensity conflict to prevent models of development that the United States opposes for ideological reasons telegraphs a clear message—this country prefers *no* development to what we consider the wrong path to development."<sup>45</sup> Reagan's penchant throughout the 1980s was to engage in low-intensity conflicts throughout Central America. Relying on the doctrine and practice of low-intensity conflicts in order to somehow thwart the intrusions of the Soviet Union was simply more proof that U.S. interventionism in the affairs of the global South had become axiomatic in U.S. foreign-policy thinking and actions. Inasmuch as the Reagan Doctrine of the 1980s employed low-intensity conflict practices as a substitute for diplomacy, it could be said that Reagan's foreign policy approach simply updated the Eisenhower Doctrine of the 1950s.

Certainly the covert armies and practices of the CIA figured prominently in the foreign policy conduct of both administrations. Similarly, the Bush Doctrine's reliance on unilateral intervention in the Middle East has updated

the Carter Doctrine of 1979 through 1980 but with one significant caveat: Bush's invasion of Iraq became a "war of choice"—not a "war of necessity." As such, Bush radicalized U.S. foreign policy. At the same time, the civilian leadership of the Bush-II administration often hid behind the general's at the Pentagon—often implying that what the generals wanted, the generals would get. The only problem was that it was not true. It obviated the central fact of the Bush years: a neoconservative plan had been set in motion by the civilian leadership and it would be up to the U.S. Army, in particular, to develop a strategy for success. However, the attempt to shift the leadership responsibility from the White House to the Pentagon, even for the sake of public relations, became a mockery of the traditional pattern that had characterized American civilian-military relations.

Foreign policy changes from administration to administration usually reflect the ongoing transformation of American imperialism.<sup>46</sup> A recent example took place in March 2002, when President George W. Bush established what the administration referred to as the "new global development compact"—officially labeled the *Millennium Challenge Account* (hereinafter, "MCA"). The purpose of the MCA was to increase its core developmental assistance to other nations. This global development compact seeks to replace existing loans to the poorest seventy-nine countries with grants, so as to help governments "who rule justly, invest in their people, and encourage economic freedom."<sup>47</sup> Eligibility for grants would be contingent on sixteen broadly defined criteria. These criteria range from civil liberties to trade policies. The point is that the recipient countries must meet all of these criteria as a precondition to receiving aid. According to Bush, the MCA "will be based on a distinctly American internationalism that reflects the union of our values and our national interests. The aim of this strategy is to help make the world not just safer but better. Our goals on the path to progress are clear: political and economic freedom, peaceful relations with other states, and respect for human dignity."<sup>48</sup>

Despite the president's assertions, historical evidence to the contrary demonstrates that there is not a union but often a large gulf between America's expressed values and ideals, on the one hand, and the pursuit of its "national interests," on the other. Further, the notion of safety to which Bush refers is more akin to the safety of the hidden relations and arrangements born out of his version of "deep politics." Only in that particular sense could the MCA be better for anyone else, especially given the fact that "the MCA reflects the ongoing transformation of American imperialism, which has become more explicit after 9/11. For instance, the fervor with which the U.S. has sought to promote its values and norms is clearly articulated in the 2002 American National Security Strategy (NSS). The NSS signals at least two important changes concerning the relations between the American government and the target of the MCA...First, there is no room for moderates or non-alignment in America's war on terrorism...second, it is believed that the route to achieving a more just and peaceful international environment in the post-9/11 world is to codify American values and rules in the South."<sup>49</sup> Bush's

other attempts to codify American values and rules in the global South are even more explicit in his proposal for a U.S.-Middle East Free Trade Area. Using this particular vehicle, Bush and Chevron, Bechtel, Halliburton, and Lockheed-Martin hope to spread the economic invasion of Iraq to the entire region. In this effort, “each company is a participant in the U.S.-Middle East Free Trade Coalition, a business lobby created for the sole purpose of advancing the president’s Middle East Free Trade Area.”<sup>50</sup>

### “RIGHTS” AND “WRONGS” OF U.S.-APPROVED FORMS OF CAPITALIST DEVELOPMENT

Still, the question lingers: what made alternative models to U.S.-approved forms of capitalist development wrong? In response, Giovanni Arrighi has provided this answer: “historically, uneven development after the Second World War was embedded from beginning to end in Cold War rivalries, and was therefore thoroughly shaped by the successes and failures of the strategies and structures deployed by the hegemonic U.S. warfare-welfare state.”<sup>51</sup> The logic of U.S. hegemony in the cold war was to fight, contain, and ultimately defeat communism. The logic of U.S. hegemony in the twenty-first century is to fight, contain, and defeat terrorism. According to Bush, this defeat of terrorism will come about through the implementation of the MCA, his U.S.-Middle East Free Trade Area initiative, and by following the logic contained in the 2002 National Security Strategy (NSS). All of these models have one thing in common—a shared intolerance of alternative models to U.S.-approved forms of capitalist development. Hence, it is the task of the American primacy coalition to strong-arm the U.S. Congress to fund a U.S.-military apparatus that can globally enforce the mandates associated with the ongoing transformation of American imperialism. To this end, the maintenance of American hegemony is central to this organizing logic of the American Empire. Without it, the entire edifice of American imperialism will crumble. That is why, according to some critics of the Bush agenda, “we must address each of its key pillars individually—war, imperialism, and corporate globalization.”<sup>52</sup>

According to these critics, this approach will necessitate “cancelling the negotiation of the U.S.-Middle East Free Trade Area” and then proceed to “supporting the development of meaningful alternatives to corporate globalization.”<sup>53</sup> I concur with the comprehensive scope of this proposition. However, the problems associated with the dynamics and repercussions of these foreign policies go much deeper—they go to the heart of American democracy itself. It is for this very reason that realist thinkers such as Kenneth Waltz have echoed Morgenthau’s injunction that the task of realism is to prevent statesmen from “moral excess and political folly.” The best way to do this is to recognize that “a hegemonic United States would be tempted to equate its own preferences with justice, and be just as likely as other powerful states to use its power unwisely.”<sup>54</sup> This warning has special salience in view of Bush’s confluence of his version of American values with their

codification in the MCA, a foreign policy vehicle that is designed more with the advancement of American hegemony as its central focus than a balanced approach to foreign relations with other states that would respect their own self-chosen paths to economic development, their sovereignty, and their right to self-determination under international law and the Charter of the UN. So, what early twenty-first-century events and policies seem to demonstrate is that while American realists have historically counseled that the U.S. should pursue a grand strategy based upon prudence and self-restraint, the Bush administration has taken the opposite course.

Professor Christopher Payne has proposed two mechanisms that he believes can prevent the United States from succumbing to the hegemon's temptation: "First is a roughly equal distribution of power in the international system, because confronted by countervailing power the United States would be forced to forego hegemony in favor of a more cautious strategy. The other possible restraining mechanism is that America's own domestic political system will restrain national leaders from dangerous and unnecessary adventures."<sup>55</sup> And, if either of these two paths are not taken, we must ask, "*What may be the consequences of failing to restrain these hegemonic impulses?*" In response, some scholars have argued that "without a genuine reorientation of its foreign policy, American democracy may end up suffering the same fate as Soviet socialism."<sup>56</sup>



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## CHAPTER 10



# QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT RESISTANCE TO AMERICAN HEGEMONY

Now, at the dawn of the twenty-first century, the answer to why American intervention in the Global South is wrong also provides us with some provisional answers to the following questions: (1) What can be done right for the cause of development in the Global South without the interventions of U.S. hegemony?; (2) What can be done both nationally and internationally so that alternative models to U.S. hegemony can be designed and implemented?; (3) “What can be done so that mutually beneficial forms of national and international development can be built, structured, and practiced in such a way that they advance the integration of human rights along with solutions to the many challenges associated with bringing about political, economic, and social inclusion?; and (4) What strategies can be advanced, what political alliances can be forged, what economic practices can be inaugurated in order to actively advance the global trends at work that are moving toward regionalization and the evolution of a multicentric regional order?

The various answers that I propose to these dilemmas of U.S. hegemony are as follows: (1) to resist superpower hegemony, (2) to embrace and restore the democratic ideal so that alternatives to superpower hegemony can be designed, (3) to work toward the building of new international structures that help to create mutually beneficial forms of national and international development, honor the norms of international law, and protect the integrity of cultural differences, and (4) to embark upon a developmental trajectory for the future of humankind that unites an evolving multicentric regional world order. It is to the elaboration of these points that we now turn.

## RESISTANCE TO AMERICAN HEGEMONY AND ENDING INTERVENTIONISM: THE CASE OF IRAQ AND BEYOND

The history of terrorism demonstrates that it has been used and employed by insurgents, “freedom fighters,” and revolutionaries throughout history. By virtue of the fact that the U.S. response to the events of 9/11 was to make the strategy of terrorism into something more than a mere tactic, that the Bush-II administration failed to honor or follow America’s traditional categories governing the strategies and conduct of war per se. Rather, in this case, we find that the enemy of choice—terrorism as a tactic—allowed for the creation of a political space in which there would be a continuing state of confusion. The confusion was not only about the nature of the war that the U.S. intended to wage; it was also a state of confusion about the very nature of how to exercise American hegemony in the Middle East while projecting its power. Part of the confusion may be accounted for by the fact that the projection of U.S. hegemony into the world as a whole has undergone an historical transformation. The change has been from following the logic of military Keynesianism to adopting the logic “Global Neoliberal Militarism.” What this essentially means is that, as a result of the Vietnam War, U.S. cold war militarism fell apart. If the U.S. Empire was to be maintained, then this necessitated getting U.S. militarism back to a level of incontestable ideological hegemony.

The Bush-II administration assumed that it had finally been given the proverbial keys to the kingdom for the ultimate purpose of building an incontestable hegemony. The administration assumed that both God and the fortunes of history had blessed their ventures by virtue of the power that came to be vested in them after the events of 9/11. The ensuing strategy of “shock and awe” that was directed at Iraq in 2003 was supposed to be the harbinger of the restoration of U.S. militarism as the premier ideological construct for the twenty-first century. As such, it seemed as if the recommendations and directives of the Project for New American Century report were on the verge of being actualized. From this perspective and behind this construct, we find that the architects of U.S. Empire *rebuilders* assumed that “U.S. power could fluidly unfold, as the world’s only superpower demonstrated that no form of nationalist defiance would go unpunished. A new era of *neoliberal militarism* was consolidating, according to the architects of the new model—Paul Wolfowitz, Richard Pearle, Douglas Feith, Dick Cheney, and Donald Rumsfeld (among others).”<sup>1</sup> Yet, what was assumed to become the final achievement of an incontestable hegemony of U.S. militarism now turned out to be something entirely different. Instead, “rather than engendering integral hegemony, militarism has achieved at best minimal hegemony. That is, in the deployment of force by the U.S. state, the level of consent to be extracted from the underlying population is weak and conditional.”<sup>2</sup>

To their chagrin, Bush’s war cabinet of neoconservatives would be confronted with a massive insurgency throughout Iraq, accompanied by new forms of a more globalized resistance to their policies. It would quickly become

apparent that Rumsfeld's "shock and awe" strategy would fail to produce the much-anticipated restoration of U.S. hegemony through global neoliberal militarism. In my judgment, it was precisely because of their announced decision to wage a war against a strategy (terrorism), as opposed to an identifiable state, that the endless nature of the imperial war project was guaranteed to proceed without a clear objective, without a means to determine when such a war would actually be over, and what constituted "victory." The explanation for the failure was clear from the start for anyone with a critical eye and reasoning capacities that were not entirely blindfolded by the strictures of ideology. The failure of the ensuing U.S. occupation was inevitable because of the difficulties associated with conducting an imperialistic war against the tactic of "terrorism" leaves the "*objective observer*" (one who can view the entire situation without prejudice or preconceptions) without a rational way or means to define what would actually constitute victory or defeat.

A viable exercise of hegemony requires consent. That was not produced before or after the 2003 invasion of Iraq. It is for this reason that "militarism's hegemony in the organization of the U.S. state and the conduct of foreign policy is fragile. It is not what followers of Antonio Gramsci's concept would term '*integral hegemony*' based upon a very broad level of consent."<sup>3</sup> To make matters even worse, by November of 2006, the U.S.-led occupation had succeeded in fueling already rising levels of sectarian violence. Writing in the March/April 2007 issue of *Foreign Affairs*, James Fearon noted that "as the ethnic cleansing of Baghdad proceeds, the weak Shiite-dominated government is inevitably becoming an open partisan in a nasty civil war between Sunni and Shiite Arabs." As a result, President Bush's "commitment to making a 'success' of the current government will increasingly amount to siding with the Shiites: a position that is morally dubious and probably not in the interest of either the United States or long long-term regional peace and stability."<sup>4</sup> The ensuing civil war reflected not only ethnic and sectarian differences but also the failure of an interim Iraqi government to ignore the democratic claims of its citizens and, instead of dedicating itself to resolving differences, exacerbated the situation by taking sides and making partisan judgments through a governmental policy of exclusion and selective representation.

However, to put the matter of ethnic violence into perspective, it should be noted that, by the close of 2007, some U.S. scholars were willing to dismiss the idea that there would be an inexorable spread of the Sunni-Shi'ite conflict. Writing in *Current History*, Augustus Norton came to see the spread of a Sunni-Shi'ite conflict as only a "worst-case" scenario and one that was not very likely. Why? Because "a mere century or so ago, sectarian affiliation was neither a particularly important marker of faith, nor an important basis for political action. In recent decades, before the present fever of sectarianism infected the region, there were actually several initiatives toward *taqarub* (rapprochement) between Sunnis and Shiites. While these ecumenical impulses

were not successful, they hint that assuming an unbridgeable gulf between the sects is a contemporary prejudice.”<sup>5</sup>

If Norton is correct about there *not* being “an unbridgeable gulf between the sects,” and that such a viewpoint is little more than “a contemporary prejudice,” then we must ask, “Where did this contemporary prejudice spring from?” Could it be that this is an argument being set forth in order to set the stage for a U.S.-imposed partition of Iraq? And, if so, why does the United States have such a great interest in pursuing the political path of partition? In response, let me remind the reader that I have already referred to this idea in the context of a proposal for such a partition coming from Senator Joe Biden, one of the U.S. Senate’s leading Democratic Party hawks. As previously noted, I have been critical of Senator Joe Biden’s attempts to build a U.S. political consensus for the partition of Iraq. Biden has publicly sought to sell the idea of a partitioned Iraq as an elemental part of a larger “peace plan” that would lead to the eventual withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq. There are darker reasons and a hidden rationale for such a plan. It might well be that Biden’s motivations and plan for a partitioned Iraq stems from something other than the idea of how to inaugurate a phased U.S. withdrawal. In this regard, Samir Amin has suggested that “Washington is incapable of maintaining its control over the country (*so as to pillage its petroleum resources: which is its number one objective*) through the intermediary of a seeming national government. The only way it can continue its project, then, is to break the country apart. The division of the country into at least three states (*Kurd, Sunni Arab, and Shia Arab*) was, perhaps from the very beginning, Washington’s objective.”<sup>6</sup>

As radical as it might seem at first glance, it is clear that Amin’s critique is not an isolated one. A similar analysis of the situation was provided by Ali A. Allawi, a senior advisor to the Prime Minister of Iraq. In his 2007 book *The Occupation of Iraq: Winning the War, Losing the Peace*, he writes,

In all these struggles for Iraq’s future, the new Iraqi political establishment was notably silent about how to extricate the country from its current predicament. The dependency on a foreign power to tackle Iraq’s essential questions was embarrassingly evident, even after three sovereign governments had been in power. The Iraqi political class that inherited the mantle of the state from the Ba’athist regime was manifestly culpable in presiding over the deterioration of the conditions of the country. The absence of leadership on a national scale was glaring... There were only Shia, Sunni and Kurdish politicians, a smattering of self-styled liberals and secularists, each determined to push their particular agenda forward. There was no national vision for anything, just a series of deals to push forward a political process, the end state of which was indeterminate. There was also no governing plan. The corroded and corrupt state of Saddam was replaced by the corroded, inefficient, incompetent and corrupt state of the new order.<sup>7</sup>

Allawi’s assessment of the performance of the Iraqi establishment under American occupation is nothing less than an indictment of its failed performance to restore the nation to a more peaceful state of affairs through a

process of national reconciliation and the resolution of the objective concerns of the contending parties with respect to their economic position in the distribution of oil revenues. So, the question becomes, "Can we construe the silence of the Iraqi political establishment as evidence of complicity and collaboration with Washington and its allies in the petroleum industry?" And, if so, we must ask, "Is this evidence of the effects that stem from the hegemonic project of the U.S. Empire?"

In large measure, both Amin and Allawi are describing the fragmentation of an entire nation that has fallen apart because of the hegemonic project of the U.S. Empire. Instead of acting as the guardian of universal values, such as freedom and human rights, the United States, under Bush's neoconservatives and democratic liberal hawks, have brought about a culture of violence in Iraq as a consequence of their own direct and indirect actions. Most recently, many of these individuals have been discussing their plans for a partition of Iraq. Yet, some are still debating how the war began and under what principle or rubric of international law it could now be justified. It is with this in mind that there have been entire sections of the U.S. foreign policy establishment who have consistently proclaimed that the United States was exercising a form of humanitarian intervention by engaging in the military overthrow of Saddam Hussein ("*regime change*"). Yet, the violence that these policies have provoked throughout Iraq has been such a considerable source of suffering and oppression that the proportionality of U.S. force that has been brought to bear on these situations is now being brought into contention and into question.<sup>8</sup> This is a relevant interrogation not only for questioning the boundaries of humanitarian intervention; it is also relevant for questioning the right of the United States to impose on the sovereign state of Iraq a U.S.-backed plan for the partition of the country. I would now like to take this opportunity to address both of these issues in turn.

### **The Limits and Boundaries of Humanitarian Intervention**

In the name of "*humanitarian necessity*," there have been some academic liberal hawks, such as Anne-Marie Slaughter at Yale University, who have sought to engage in a justification of the Iraq War. Their attempts at justification have been explicitly modeled on the approach taken by the Kosovo Commission when it considered the appropriate boundaries for humanitarian intervention.<sup>9</sup> The Kosovo Commission's Report put forward three threshold principles that were designed to "provide guidance as to *when* an intervention would be legitimate, and *how* such an intervention should be carried out to maintain its legitimate character. The overall purpose of these principles is to depict conditions of what might be described as '*humanitarian necessity*'—that is, only by acting promptly and proportionately can an acutely vulnerable people be protected against massive suffering."<sup>10</sup>

From the perspective of Richard Falk, "the proposed American war against Iraq was definitely illegitimate as well as illegal before any use of force against Iraq was undertaken, and could not have been rendered retroactively

legitimate regardless of whether WMD were found, the public welcomed the intervention, and the UN took over the post-conflict occupation and reconstruction.”<sup>11</sup> In contrast, Professor Slaughter seems to claim that “a potential demonstration of legitimacy was a sufficient sign of adherence to the rules of world order even if such a claim should subsequently be shown as lacking a factual foundation.”<sup>12</sup> Falk’s response to this claim is that “so long as the power of exception is a matter of decision by a *hegemonic government*, the limitations associated with the constraining guidelines are not likely to inhibit discretionary wars” (*italics added*).<sup>13</sup>

The reason that the United States, as a hegemonic state, was able to invoke humanitarian arguments as legal grounds to justify its overthrow of Saddam Hussein through “regime change” is because the universal claims of human rights have become a part of the universal vocabulary of political legitimacy and humanitarian law. Unfortunately, for the cause of human rights, the use of humanitarian arguments in this context does not act as a constraint on the pursuit of national interests in the international arena by military means. Rather, the vocabulary of human rights has been compromised by its injection into a discourse of justification for the employment of the traditional means of statecraft. This compromise has effectively resulted in a situation where the vocabulary of virtue has been appropriated in the service of power. In the case of Iraq, the entire vocabulary of political virtue (*democracy, humanitarianism, and human rights*) has been appropriated by the U.S. hegemonic state so as to create an ideological cover for the privatization of Iraq’s oil resources and the profits to be derived from Iraq’s oil revenues as well as the profits to be had from the reconstruction of Iraq by foreign (non-Iraqi) contractors. These are some of the primary benefits that have accrued to the U.S. hegemonic states, its allies, and its collaborators in conjunction with its long-term geopolitical calculations.

Falk’s reference to the decision-making process of a “*hegemonic government*” is instructive here. The salience of the term is invaluable insofar as the terminology he has chosen to characterize the power source behind the drive for the Iraq War serves to strengthen the thrust of my arguments about the true nature of U.S. hegemony—as an unconstrained and unaccountable geopolitical force. As the final arbiter of decisions on the use of force in world affairs, the power and practice of the U.S. hegemonic state—not the authority of the United Nations—has effectively come to be lodged within the rather exclusive domain of world capitalist elites. By being able to advance their private interests through a manipulation of U.S. foreign policy, this transnational class, working in conjunction with liberal hawks and neoconservatives, has been enabled to exert their agenda and their influence vis-à-vis the U.S. hegemonic state. Given the fact of this unlawful appropriation of geopolitical powers, these elites and their allies are now free to impose and unleash the logic and practice of Global Neoliberal Militarism at a whim (*often justified by the notion of “American exceptionalism”*). If this is true, then there is no longer a functional international world order based on the rule of law or any particular set of normative values. Rather, world order under these circumstances

and under such conditions is merely the product of an imperial and unilateral force—the American hegemon. It is also an unaccountable power in world affairs. Its very unaccountability comprises the integrity of world order as a law-based order. The unaccountable interests that influence the policies and agenda of the U.S. hegemonic state constitute a private government that is beyond the reach of law and any form of democratic accountability.

If this is the case, it follows that (1) *if* the U.S.-led intervention and invasion can be viewed as illegitimate on these grounds, *then* so, too, should be the U.S.-occupation. Further, (2) *if* both the U.S. intervention and the U.S. occupation of Iraq are illegitimate, *then* so, too, is any U.S.-backed plan aimed at partitioning the nation of Iraq. After all, under these facts, the U.S. intervention, occupation, and proposed partition of Iraq are all the product of the exercise of decision-making powers within a hegemonic government—certainly not the product of decision making by a legally constituted international body or structure operating within the framework of international law. Therefore, in order to resolve the quandary, I would conclude, on these facts, that U.S. hegemony should be both condemned and resisted.

### **Resisting the U.S. Intervention, Occupation, and Partition of Iraq**

In order to restore the rule of law both to Iraq and to the idea of world order, it would be helpful to listen to the proposals made by the Iraqi resistance. The Iraqi resistance has presented three proposals that would make it possible for the United States to finally extricate itself from the country. The details of the proposal have been published in the prestigious Arab review, *Al Moustaqbal al Arabi* (January 2006), published in Beirut. The proposals are as follows: “(1) formation of a transitional administrative authority set up with the support of the UN Security Council; (2) the immediate cessation of resistance actions and military and police interventions by occupying forces; and (3) the departure of all foreign military and civilian authorities within six months.”<sup>14</sup>

In my judgment, the value of the aforementioned proposals is found in the fact that they are mutually reinforcing and sufficiently multifaceted to deal with a complex set of problems. If followed, these proposals have contained, within their framework, the capacity to bring about an international legitimacy for Iraq and its governing structures and policies (that does not and cannot exist under U.S. hegemony). For example, by removing U.S. combat troops and privatized civilian contractors, and replacing them with a transitional administrative authority under the direction of the UN Security Council, the future of Iraq can be placed on a viable developmental trajectory. Action by the UN Security Council to put in place a transitional administrative authority under UN supervision would have the capacity to enlist the aid of the entire international community in helping to heal the wounds of war and work toward reparations for the damage done to the country by the U.S. intervention/occupation. It would also have the legal strength and capacity to preclude any future threat of the imposition of an unnecessary



and illegal partition of Iraq as a sovereign nation. In this regard, the role of the United Nations in such an arrangement would have the added benefit of restoring the integrity of the rule of international law, the UN, and the UN Charter. In short, the implementation of this particular proposal could finally begin to reign in the dangers associated with the unilateral and illegitimate actions of an unaccountable hegemonic government. As far as world opinion is concerned, the United States has consistently been squandering what is left of its fading legitimacy on the sands of Iraq ever since the 2003 invasion.

Richard Falk has argued that in the aftermath of the Iraq War, it is important to distinguish between two different notions of “legitimacy.” The first notion is one that conflates legitimacy with the exercise of raw geopolitical power. Put simply, this notion stands for the proposition that whatever the United States seeks to do in the world as a hegemonic state is legitimate. The other notion is one that does not presuppose law abidingness in the exercise of geopolitical power when that power is used by a global hegemon (insofar as it is probably in the furtherance of its own interests and nothing more).<sup>15</sup> Whichever of these two notions of legitimacy that one ultimately subscribes to, at the very least, it should be acknowledged that the unilateral use of the hegemonic power of the United States (under the Bush-II regime) has “contributed to the image of the United States as a global leader of severely diminished legitimacy.”<sup>16</sup>

In addition to world opinion, as we survey the larger context of the law of war and justifications for the use of force (such as humanitarian intervention), we constantly remain confronted with the central question of whether or not we are “using humanitarian pretexts to pursue otherwise unacceptable geopolitical goals and to evade clear legal prohibitions on the use of international force and the nonintervention norm.”<sup>17</sup> When issues are framed in this perspective, the challenge that arises from an international law perspective is how to separate the legal principles contained in the law of war and justifications for the use of force from the exercise of geopolitics and the actions of a hegemonic state. So, let us ask the following question: **how do we separate the legal principles embodied in the law of war, humanitarian intervention, and contained in justifications for the use of force from the actions of hegemonic states and geopolitical structures?**

This is an essential question with regard to a series of interrelated challenges: first, the resolution of the civil war in Iraq (which has escalated since 2004); second, the process of withdrawing U.S. troops and bringing to an end of the U.S. occupation of Iraq; and third, establishing a future path for Iraq’s development as a sovereign nation with legal rights over its own natural resources—as opposed to following the “orders” written and promulgated under the direction of the U.S. head of the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), Paul Bremer. To answer this question, we should begin with a series of interrelated observations, as follow.

First, it is necessary to identify and assess the praxis (time, place, and situation) of the international political environment at specific moments in history. In the case of the Middle East in the second half of the twentieth century and

the first decades of the twenty-first century, there is one constant—the world economy is dependent on the supply and pricing of oil.

Second, given the fact that the need for the control of oil is linked to military superiority and to the maintenance of Israel as a secure base area for the U.S. presence in the Middle East, it is unlikely that any basic regional escape from geopolitical influences will soon occur. From the end of the Second World War to the Bush-II administration's invasion and occupation of Iraq, history provides cold comfort for those seeking either a national or regional escape from the incessant pull of geopolitics.

Third, despite the stranglehold of geopolitics on the regional autonomy of the nations of the Middle East, there still remain a number of niches of opportunity that exist within the geopolitical situation. These include the possibility that, under the pressures that come from the ebb and flow of normative and tactical adjustments, Israel may be eventually induced by a mixture of rewards and anxieties to endorse and help to establish a Palestinian state (a goal that was jointly announced by the U.S., Israeli, and Palestinian leadership in November 2007).

Fourth, despite any progressive moves toward peace and a reconciliation of differences in the region, the fact remains that these moves and movements will not likely be able to break the geopolitical stranglehold any time soon because of what Falk has called the "cruel subjection" of the people of the Middle East "to the vagaries of geopolitics," as well as the fact that these vagaries have induced "constantly shifting balances, which produce recurring torment for the most vulnerable and exposed societies."<sup>18</sup>

Fifth, given this constellation of factors, it appears that while geopolitics always seeks to stifle the political imagination, the fact is also that its designs and dogmas are constantly being challenged by both elements of surprise and leaders and movements that emerge and seek to resist. In this regard, a key factor that enhanced sectarianism was the Bremer-led Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA). The CPA contributed to the sectarianization of Iraq in at least two ways: first, by its allocation of posts to the Interim Governing Council (IGC) and also by the de-Baathification process. In the first instance, when the CPA established the IGC in July 2003, it adopted sectarian criteria to fill the council's seats with what was supposed to be a "balanced" list of representatives from various sects and ethnic groups. In reality, the sectarian criteria immediately became the determining factor in deciding the allocation of important political and administrative positions. As a result, sectarianism became the dominant feature of the political process set in motion by the CPA. In the second instance, Bremer's de-Baathification plan wiped out most of the managerial class of the state institutions. Not only did this measure leave a political vacuum, but the rebuilding effort of these institutions soon fell victim to the sectarian outlook of ministers and their political patrons who guided the transitional process from 2004 through 2006.

As a direct result of Bremer's ill-advised policies and his various "orders" issued during his term as head of the CPA, the Sunni Arabs responded with both fear and resentment. After all, the group that had dominated Iraq since

the creation of the modern Iraqi state now found itself excluded from power and marginalized. Soon thereafter, the Sunni religious and political leadership joined forces with the insurgency. Commenting on this turn of events, Professor Abdel Salam Sidahmed noted, "It is rather ironic that nationalism appears associated more with the insurgency, the anti-coalition groups in general, and the Sunni Arab community at large, while sectarianism appears more a feature of the political process set in motion by the U.S.-led coalition."<sup>19</sup> The rise of sectarianism and insurgency in Iraq since 2003 is a prime example of how the US-led occupation created both a new sense of nationalism as well as an insurgency against its presence. By having allowed Paul Bremer (under the authority of the CPA) to undertake the privatization of Iraq through the promulgation of his "orders," he was able to accomplish what colonizers and imperialists have usually succeeded in doing once they occupy a foreign nation—inspire national resistance, create the political justification for a widespread insurgency, and exacerbate both ethnic conflict and sectarian violence.

Sixth, and finally, "geopolitical structures of domination are never serene for long. The interplay of resistance and repression ensures that the logic of cruelty will continue to shape the politics of the region" but "perhaps [be] periodically softened by horizons of possibility and hope."<sup>20</sup> The dialectical tension between resistance and hope in this situation (*the drive for U.S. primacy of hegemony over the oil resources and peoples of the region despite their desire to be free of such hegemonic dictates*) points to the inherent instability of geopolitical structures of domination. Additionally, the long-term effects associated with the U.S. intervention and occupation has already generated widespread opposition to the continuing US presence among various domestic and regional actors as well as elite and nonelite groups. The high numbers of civilian deaths and casualties that can be directly attributable to the Iraq War, as well as the resulting flow of over 2 million Iraqi refugees into neighboring countries, has continued to have a destabilizing effect on both national and regional stability. Furthermore, in addition to the difficulties associated with maintaining US hegemony, it can be argued that the longevity of geopolitical structures of dominance remain in question largely because of the fact that the resistance and opposition to it will have generational effects.

In light of the aforementioned observations, what is the solution (or, what are the solutions) to the original question? Ultimately, can we ever separate or disengage the legal principles embodied in the law of war, humanitarian intervention, and contained in justifications for the use of force, from the actions of hegemonic states and geopolitical structures? First, I will argue that these principles cannot be separated from how we judge the actions, behavior, and policies of hegemonic states. Yet, second, I will also argue that we must separate these principles from the capacity of a hegemonic state's automatic claim that its actions are always to be viewed as acting in the furtherance of these principles when its actions, behaviors, and policies are often more influenced by its covert geopolitical agenda and are, in all probability, standing in direct contradiction to these very principles. Therefore, I will argue that yes,

we can separate and disengage the legitimating function of these principles from the actions, behaviors, and policies of a hegemonic state insofar as a hegemonic state will, in all likelihood, seek to justify its imperial ambitions by reference to these principles—but will ultimately fail to demonstrate fidelity to their substance. In fact, the very invocation of these legal principles by a hegemonic state as a justification for its aggressive acts and undertakings does a disservice to the integrity and purpose of these principles. When these legal principles are used by the officials of a hegemonic state to justify the pursuit of geopolitical goals, the official justifications offered by those officials conflates the principles with the geopolitical project. This conflation takes place by the hegemonic state attempting to make them seem as one and the same. When this takes place, the hegemonic state is actively evading its accountability both to the precepts contained within international principles as well as the demands and mandates that emanate from international law. The result of pursuing such a strategy is that the hegemonic state evades all forms of accountability for its illegal actions and the damage incurred by those actions. Further, such a conflation of principled justifications with geopolitical designs allows the hegemonic state to avoid the imposition of accountability for even flagrant acts of aggression—as in the case of the invasion and occupation of Iraq by the Bush-II administration. So, on this second point, I will argue yes, the principles can be separated from the actions of hegemonic states and geopolitical structures—but *with a bold condition*. The condition is that:

Hegemonic states and geopolitical structures must be made legally and morally accountable for their illegal actions. Legal and moral accountability cannot be established merely by justifying their actions in reference to the above-stated principles. Rather, the actual facts of a particular situation must be established by evidence in order to establish whether or not the facts justify the hegemonic state's reliance on these principles in order to legitimize its actions.

In order that an effective national and international process can be undertaken to ensure that U.S. moral and legal accountability can be reasonably established as well as effectively enforced, I suggest that the following six actions be undertaken.

*(1) Establish an International Tribunal*

In my judgment, as a general principle, in order to make a hegemonic state accountable to the substance of these international law principles will require that the affected parties must work—in conjunction with the United Nations—to bring the actions of the hegemonic state, which have transpired in their respective nations and region, to a formal accounting and establish its liability for the harm inflicted as a result of its actions. In the case of Iraq, the application of this requirement shall ultimately have to involve bringing an end to the U.S. occupation as well as an end to all U.S. efforts to privatize the Iraqi economy for the benefit of foreign business interests, and also bring an end to any and all policies that lead to the creation of more civilian

refugees and deaths by virtue of military actions undertaken by U.S. and coalition forces.

Further, it should be noted that the first steps toward making the United States subject to standards of international accountability have already been undertaken with the establishment of the World Tribunal on Iraq (WTI), which convened in Istanbul between June 24 and 27, 2005. These hearings represented the culmination of a global effort that involved a series of earlier tribunal sessions devoted to pronouncing judgment upon the legality and criminality of the Iraq War.

Such an approach to the actions of hegemonic states in world affairs will be necessary so long as hegemonic states and geopolitical structures remain unaccountable for their violations of legal and moral norms that have been created to support a just, peaceful, and cooperative world order. To that end, I would advocate the need for such tribunals to be empowered to take testimony and gather evidence with the goal of mandating that the hegemonic state be held liable for paying reparations to a nation (such as Iraq) for the commission of war crimes stemming from acts of aggression, such as the invasion and occupation of the country.

*(2) Recognize that Governments are the Agents of Domestic Actors*

To accomplish such an outcome, it will also require of the people and parties (Sunnis, Shi'ites, and Kurds) of the affected nation (Iraq) and region (Iran, Syria, and Egypt) that they reclaim control over the shaping of policies that are hammered out by their own governments. This is *the* essential precondition because the ultimate fact (political reality) that remains—in the wake of hegemonic states and geopolitical structures—is that *governments are the agents of domestic actors*. Only when viewed in this manner can the affected peoples and parties of a region (the domestic actors) demand a shift of their own government's policies, so as to finally have *their* own government's policies reflect *their* interests for achieving peace and ending all forms of geopolitical meddling (by the United States or any other hegemonic state). In fact, this is why the peace proposal offered by the Iraqi resistance and published in the Arab review *Al Moustaqbal al Arabi* (referred to above) is so essential—it calls upon the UN Security Council to actively embrace its own proper role as an international structure and as an international forum that is supposed to act as a counterweight or counterforce to those unconstrained and illegal actions that are often undertaken by hegemonic states.

Further, from the standpoint of assessing US culpability in the destruction of Iraq, it will be essential to identify those US companies, businesses, and financial interests that have benefited from this war through the practice of war profiteering. In this regard, Haliburton, Blackwater, Lockheed-Martin, Boeing, and other similar entities are prime examples. After all, the Bush-II administration has acted as an agent on behalf of these US domestic actors. As such, these entities share in the moral and legal culpability that can and should be assessed against the US when accounting for the damages done to the country of Iraq and its people.

*(3) Governmental Representatives at the International Level must Demand an Immediate End to Illegal Actions taken by the Hegemonic State*

Simultaneous with the actions of domestic and nationalist forces, governmental representatives at the international level will be enabled and empowered to interact with representatives of foreign governments in demanding an end to the illegal occupation, interventions, and use of force undertaken by the hegemonic state. At the same time, it is vitally essential that representatives of domestic interest groups and substate regions be automatically incorporated into the loop of formal discussions and negotiations so that popular, nationalist, and democratic political forces within Iraq can publicly articulate their demands, be respectfully heard, and ultimately have the chance to witness their sovereign aspirations recognized, protected, and abided by.

On this matter, Professor Eyal Benvenisti has noted, “Robert Putnam has described the complex interactions between domestic and international politics as a ‘two-level game,’ a simultaneous game played by government representatives at the international level (Level I) with the representatives of foreign governments, and at the domestic level (Level II) with representatives of domestic interest groups and sub-State regions. Domestic negotiations are necessary to secure domestic support for the international agreement negotiated at Level I. This is true not only in democratic countries where treaties must be approved by domestic ratification procedures. Non-democratic regimes must also secure informal ratification by the elites from which they draw support.”<sup>21</sup>

*(4) The Ultimate Resolution of Iraq’s Problems must Evolve out of Decisions and Choices made by the Iraqi People Themselves*

The above-referenced scenario (the “two-level game”) is especially relevant in the context of the current state of affairs in Iraq where oil is the major resource, the major source of contention between the parties (Sunnis, Shi’ites, and Kurds), a major concern for other regional actors (Iran, Syria, Egypt), and, of course, the United States as the hegemonic state that has intervened and occupied Iraq since 2003 and now seeks to impose a planned partition upon the nation and its peoples. On this very point, Professor James Fearon has suggested two alternative outcomes to a US-backed plan for partition that would be much better for most Iraqis, for regional peace and stability, and for US interests in the region: “The first would be a power-sharing agreement among a small number of Iraqi actors who actually commanded a military force and controlled territory, to be stabilized at least initially by an international peacekeeping operation. The second would be the rise of a dominant military force whose leader had both the inclination and ability to cut deals with local ‘warlords’ or political bosses from all other groups. Neither outcome can be imposed...by the United States. Both could be reached only through fighting and bargaining carried out primarily by Iraqis.”<sup>22</sup>

*(5) World Order must be the Product of Ending the Practice of Pursuing Hegemonic Dominance in World Affairs*

Professor Fearon's scenario is also relevant to the six observations (*cited above on pp. 42–44*) with respect to international law principles and their disengagement from playing the role of justifying or legitimating the actions, behaviors, and policies of the American Hegemon in the Persian Gulf and rest of the Middle East. At this point, I want to take this opportunity to address the last three of these observations in particular. These points are especially relevant because they all support the proposition that world order must be the product of ending the practice of pursuing hegemonic dominance in world affairs. These three observations are as follows.

First, with regard to point number four, if we are to overcome the cruelties of the status quo, then we must disassociate the practice of accepted forms of international relations from "*the vagaries of geopolitics.*" In order to do this, we need to make the practice geopolitics accountable to the principles of international law and international structures. That also implies the application of laws and structures that are not in the service of the private agendas of hegemonic states.

Second, with regard to point number five, it is evident that the current set of geopolitical arrangements has led to a dialectal tension and dynamic between the tendency of geopolitical practice to maintain the status quo, on the one hand, with the resulting challenge of resistance leaders and movements, on the other. If that dialectic is to be effectively overcome, then it will require that the international community, acting through the UN, give its support and the full force of international law principles to those leaders and movements who seek to advance the principles embodied in the concepts of self-determination, nonintervention, sovereignty, and human rights.

Third, in addition to this enunciated list of principles, I will argue throughout the remainder of this chapter that we need to offer a new but complementary category and/or principle to the aforementioned list. I call it the "**Principle of Hegemonic State Accountability**" (PHSA). The wording that I would provide for this new principle follows.

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The Principle of Hegemonic State Accountability (PHSA)

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It shall be the goal of the entire international community to bring about an end to the hegemonic practices of any nation or group of nations. In this regard, hegemonic practices shall be defined as any policies or actions undertaken in the furtherance of (unlawful) acts that are undertaken for the sole purpose of achieving hegemonic dominance in world affairs.

Additionally, *if* the primary purpose of the State's conduct (and behavior) is specifically undertaken in furtherance of a Hegemonic State's national and/or geopolitical agenda to the exclusion of all other standards of international law and it subsequently undertakes actions that may be considered acts of aggression that violate established principles, practices, and obligations governing State action in world affairs, *then* the Hegemonic State shall be deemed to have engaged in unlawful acts against the international community and must be held accountable for those acts under the applicable standards of what constitutes the boundaries of acceptable State conduct in international law.

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*Source: Work product of the author, Terrence E. Paupp.*

At the beginning of this chapter, I compared and contrasted two different versions of hegemonic theories that arose to explain and justify the structure of world order since 1945. Now, with respect to this discussion, I am advocating an alternative vision for world order that will be given more attention as the book proceeds. I think that the most genuine and realistic alternative to recent theories that seek to justify hegemony, the current hierarchical order of the world system, and the unilateral primacy of a hegemonic state, is one that declares that **World Order must be the product of ending the practice of pursuing hegemonic dominance in world affairs.** This alternative to nonaccountable actions by a hegemonic state for the furtherance of its geopolitical agenda is the goal that the PHSA seeks to attain and realize in the construction of the world order.

In the place of the hegemonic state's uncontested actions, I am proposing an alternative conception of world order that advances the goals and ideals of both global peace and greater equality and equity within and between nations. To that end, I am proposing that our international institutions, structures, laws, and norms must begin to more realistically conform to the evolving realities associated with the evolution of a multicentric regional world order. In my judgment, it is only by pursuing this alternative approach to both world order and governance issues that we can finally resolve the ongoing dialectical tension contained within a hegemonic system that produces endless conflicts between hegemonic state policies and legal restraints imposed by international law. An alternative approach to world order would also help to lessen the current tensions produced by unaccountable hegemonic state action, on the one hand, and its potential rivals and victims, on the other.

The PHSA seeks to resolve and remove the dialectical tension that is inherent within a hegemonic system by making the pursuit of global domination or the maintenance of efforts undertaken to achieve global domination an unlawful act. Therefore, instead of endorsing the hierarchical status quo of a world order system dedicated to following the dictates of a hegemonic state, the PHSA seeks to lend legal and moral support to the nations, movements, and leaders who choose to resist the imposition of hegemonic state agendas. An empowerment of these groups conforms to the evolving realities associated with the evolution of a multicentric regional world order. As such, the implementation of the PHSA points toward the need of the global community of nations to work toward a shared goal of achieving the centralization of world order values that are both humane and inclusionary. Within such a normative framework there will be a much greater incentive to alter the behavior of all states in the conduct of world affairs. In practice, the PHSA would serve to provide a much needed framework for the exercise of state power that places respect for mutual cooperation, human rights, peace, environmental protection, and economic equality ahead of the unaccountable exercise of raw geopolitical power.

Fourth, and finally, with regard to point number six, what the case of Iraq clearly demonstrates is the inherent instability of geopolitical structures of dominance. It is for that reason that the case of US intervention in general,



and the case of Iraq in particular, points toward the need to develop and construct what Professor Trita Parsi has termed “a sustainable security order.” According to Parsi, what this means is that “a sustainable peace in the Middle East can only be achieved if coupled with a sustainable security order. Such an order must, by definition, be inclusive and reflect the reigning geopolitical balance. The order the United States pursued in the 1990s, under the policy of dual containment, was based on the exclusion of two of the strongest powers in the region, Iran and Iraq. The order the United States seeks today is equally disconnected from regional realities, particularly Iran’s growing influence and America’s declining position.”<sup>23</sup>

From this perspective—and in keeping with this book’s central thesis—I am arguing that it is precisely at this moment in history that it is becoming increasingly possible and justifiable to argue that the crumbling walls of US hegemony are becoming more pronounced by a rising multicentric world order of regions. What this means is that the need to end the practice of US unilateral military action in world affairs has arrived. Under these new international conditions, the US must recognize the fact that it should negotiate with regional powers in order to build a viable security order that meets its own strategic goals while, at the same time, respects and reflects the aspirations of the people who inhabit the region. This is an example of the logic that lies behind the “*Principle of Hegemonic State Accountability*” (PHSA).

The role of the United States, regardless of its superpower status, should not be one of unilaterally dictating what its elites believe the terms of world order should be. Rather, the proper role of the US is to strike a balance between the exercise of its power and the constraint of international principles of law and justice. Hence, we can conclude that in the case of Iran and Israel, “given the new balance in the region and the likelihood of continued Iranian power accumulation, Israel’s security will be better achieved through a significant restructuring of the security environment that deprives Iran of any incentive to continue its aggressive stance towards the Jewish state. The only policy that can achieve such a strategic design is comprehensive negotiations between the United States and Iran with the aim of détente and a new security order.”<sup>24</sup> Similarly, in the case of the civil war in Iraq, the US should encourage a rapprochement between Sunnis and Shi’ites. To that end, the US should stop supplying arms to all sides in the conflict, withdraw all US troops, and end its occupation of Iraq. It should also assume the obligation of reparations for the damage that it has caused to Iraq and its people. Such a stance would make the US a responsible actor and be an acknowledgment of its accountability for the harms that it has inflicted. In this regard, US participation in reparations programs should be conceptualized in terms of an obligation, not as a favor.

*(6) The Moral and Legal Accountability of the US must be Reestablished in Reference to the Principles Contained in the Nuremberg Charter*

If the US intervention, occupation, and its threats to partition Iraq have a lesson to impart, then it would seem to be that the exercise of US hegemony—under

the rubric of unilateralism—has unleashed a form of national and international lawlessness that the world has not seen since the Nazi reign over Europe in the 1930s and 1940s or, more recently, the Soviet Union’s invasion and occupation of Afghanistan. In either case, the principles forged at Nuremberg in 1946 are more relevant than ever. Correspondingly, not only are the principles of the Nuremberg Charter more urgently needed, but also the building of new structures and inculcation of new political practices will be required to ensure their universal enforcement—in fact, most vitally with respect to the hegemonic state. After all, if the behavior of states is to be regulated and constrained, then the global community must have sufficient power lodged in its available international institutions and structures to halt, preclude, and—if necessary—remedy the illegal actions of any hegemonic state that seeks to exercise its geopolitical options based on the power it possesses and the hostile actions that it undertakes as an aggressor hegemonic state. In the case of US actions in, and policies toward, Iraq, there is little doubt, based on the evolving historical record and accumulating mountains of evidence, that the US acted as an aggressor hegemonic state in pursuit of its own narrowly tailored geopolitical goals. In so doing, the US under the Bush-II regime, effectively destroyed the legitimacy of the US in the eyes of the world and, at the same time, undermined world order to such a degree that the coming decades of the twenty-first century are both more dangerous and precarious.

On January 3, 2008, the price of crude oil hit the symbolic \$100-a-barrel mark for the first time ever as the US government continued spending beyond its means and pumping up its ballooning debt. Meanwhile, US voters were beginning to gather in caucuses and prepare for voting in primaries that would choose the presidential candidates of the two main parties for the November 2008 presidential election. As America prepared for its formal change in presidential leadership to come in January 2009, the evolution of a new world order continued, and will continue, to take shape. On the shifting international scene, the people of the entire planet waited to see whether the 2008 presidential election would result in the choice of a president who repudiates or repeats America’s actions of the previous eight years.

Should there be a significant repudiation of the Bush approach to foreign policy, then that shift will signify that the US is beginning to move toward a stance of recognizing its accountability for its recent, unlawful past actions. Such a demonstration of acceptance for its accountability in launching a war of aggression against Iraq would obviously signal an embrace of some of the central elements of the “*Principle of Hegemonic State Accountability*.” On the other hand, if the new American president decides to merely engage in a repetition of the same policies of the Bush-II administration, then it will have placed itself in a position of liability for violating the central tenets of the “*Principle of Hegemonic State Accountability*.” Any further violations of this principle will place the US in a position of absolute contempt throughout the entire international community.

At the same time, the emerging new world order is being transformed by the continuing rise of Russia and China. In their rise, both countries have taken pride in the fact that they have been doing rather well without following the example of Western liberal democracy. As such, Russia and China now share a sense of purpose and defiance. Their viewpoint on the long-term nonviability of the US Empire is accompanied by various disquieting facts such as the “collapse” of the US dollar and the United States’ now longer-than-World-War-II involvement in Iraq. Among all of these facts, perhaps the greatest irony is that the Iraq War is being financed by America’s chief competitor—China.

With the war’s continuation, the US finds itself hopelessly engaged in a quagmire that not only absorbs a huge amount of money (ultimately a \$3 trillion bill for the total cost of the Iraq War) but also has also drained its policy making and diplomatic energies. At the same time, the very nature of the “war on terror” and the occupation of Iraq acts to weaken U.S. influence all over the world. The Iraq occupation is a distraction from other vital issues, such as the US failure to lead on climate change. It also exposes the US to the charge of hypocrisy because it has repeatedly failed to adhere to the democratic values that it says it wants to spread over the globe. Further, the US under the Bush-II administration, has rejected the most fundamental tenets of international law regarding the use of force (the crime of aggression), respect for human rights (torture), the recognition of national sovereignty (the occupation of Iraq), and the principle of nonintervention (except in the context of legitimate forms of humanitarian intervention). In all of these examples, perhaps the clearest indication of the damage done by the Bush administration’s unilateralism and drive for U.S. hegemonic dominance is that most people in the world view the United States as a threat to world peace, while a similar proportion have indicated that they believe that the United States is weaker at the end of the Bush-II administration than at the start of it.

### **The Case against the U.S. Partition of Iraq and the Flaws in the U.S. Constitutional Project for Iraq**

Since I first raised the issue in Part I, it has been my intention to compare Senator Biden’s proposal for the partition of Iraq to the plan for the partition of India and Pakistan by Lord Mountbatten, a little less than a century before. History demonstrates that Mountbatten’s idea for the two nations resulted in not only the ill-fated partition of India and Pakistan but also the legacy of a regional situation characterized by continuing tension and violence as well as the failure of the parties to reach a peaceful accommodation on the issue of Kashmir after many decades of threats and counterthreats. I also presented evidence of recent regional opposition to Biden’s idea about the partition of Iraq throughout the entire Middle East. It is more than evident that the nationalist impulse is alive and well throughout the Middle East. It also involves the recognition of certain rights that are codified in the

international law principles of nonintervention, self-determination, and sovereignty. For all of these reasons, I have made one of the central arguments of this book the bold assertion that **the current opposition to U.S. hegemony will continue to grow proportionately with the rise of twenty-first-century nationalist and regional impulses throughout the entire Global South.** Global opposition and resistance to the U.S. hegemonic state is a fact of current history that is here to stay. Trends evolving toward the evolution of a multicentric world of regional powers are further testimony to the fact that the days of the exercise of global hegemony by one nation or one economic class are effectively over and ended.

The global economic changes that have been wrought by over two decades of globalization, combined with the overwhelming challenges of global poverty and global warming, have forced most nations and regions to move toward the conscious adoption of a new paradigm. The dimensions of this paradigm are still uncharted but its qualities and characteristics are becoming increasingly evident. They encompass—but are not limited to—the recognized necessity for mutual cooperation in order to mitigate environmental damage and the dangers associated with power imbalances that are exacerbated by the unilateral actions of hegemonic states. In the case of Iraq, “as the Iraq Study Group has argued, attempting to impose some kind of partition would probably increase the killing. In addition, there are no obvious defensible borders to separate Sunnis from Shiites: the Sunnis would not rest content with an oil-poor patch of western Iraq; it is not clear that new Sunni, Shiite, and Kurdish states would be much more peaceful than Iraq is at present; and there would be considerable economic inefficiencies from making three states from one in this area. It is conceivable that civil war will someday lead the combatants in Iraq to agree on Iraq’s partition anyway, but this is a decision for Iraqis rather than outsiders to make.”<sup>25</sup> Yet, in the imperial mind-set of both the Americans and their British coalition partners, there was to be no final end or limitation to the various forms of intervention contemplated by the American Hegemon with respect to the present and/or future governance of Iraq. Even the writing of a new constitution for Iraq was not deemed as an Iraqi event by American officials.

The Iraqis were forced to draft a new constitution under U.S. supervision, a process that they not only disdained but chafed at. From the American side, it was part of what the US had touted as “*democracy promotion.*” What these US officials had failed to realize was that “for many Arabs, recent history framed the US mission of spreading democracy as a manifestation of post-imperialism. While US officialdom claimed that Iraqis supported the liberation of their country by US forces, a 2004 survey established that...81 percent of Iraqis considered coalition troops as occupiers, not liberators... Iraqis could ascertain that the nominal restoration of Iraqi sovereignty on 28 June 2004 did not alter the fact that US authorities—and their British allies—remained in the driver’s seat, and Iraqi history ensured that this US-British overlordship would be deeply resented.”<sup>26</sup>

In the case of post-2003 Iraq, whether we are discussing the possibility of an imposed partition of the nation, or whether we are discussing the foreign imposition of a new constitutional design for its governance, the reality that remains is that since the US invasion, the country of Iraq has fallen into a state of civil war. In this regard, the civil war in Iraq shares a great deal in common with other states in the post-1945 era. In a groundbreaking study entitled *Never-Ending Wars: The International Community, Weak States, and the Perpetuation of Civil War*, Ann Hironaka discovered that “in the first half of the twentieth century (and earlier), civil wars tended to be short and decisive. From 1900 to 1944, the length of the average civil war just one and a half years. By the second half of the twentieth century, the average civil war had tripled in length, lasting over four years, while several have lasted for decades.”<sup>27</sup> Hironaka attributes this sea change in the lengthening of civil wars to the realities associated with post-1945 decolonization. She argues that these newly independent states simply lacked the resources and governmental capacity of their older and more established counterparts. In this post-1945 world, “the international system has generally backed these new states, providing economic support and even military protection at times.” However, “the Cold War and a historical context of encouraging interstate military intervention in the post-1945 era have exacerbated civil strife within these weak states.”<sup>28</sup> It was in this cold war context that military aid, advisors, weapons, and troops were poured into these weak states by both the United States and the USSR. There was no measure of superpower accountability for these actions. As a result, “a steady stream of resources was available to *both* the central government *and* opposition groups in several weak states,” which allowed for “fueling conflict on a much larger scale than would have been possible otherwise. Civil wars could go on and on—even after domestic resources were exhausted.”<sup>29</sup>

In the case of the cold war, the empirical evidence that Hironaka cites proves that great power involvement by a hegemonic state exacerbated the tensions and civil conflicts to such a degree that the length of these civil wars became longer and more protracted. This is why she discounts the tendency of some scholars to attribute the causes of these civil wars to merely “ethnic differences.” She states, “Here I depart sharply from the work of other scholars and theorists. I argue that while participants in many civil wars are ethnic groups, their participation does not straightforwardly explain the length, or even the original causes, of the conflict... Many ethnic or identity-based civil wars are not very different from the wars fought by other kinds of social groups (for instance, political parties, class-based groups, or regional groups).”<sup>30</sup> Supporting evidence for this conclusion, with respect to the situation in twenty-first-century Iraq, is provided by Nir Rosen’s article, “*The Death of Iraq*.” According to Rosen, “that first month after the U.S. invasion there were impromptu gun markets on street corners.” By 2007, Iraq had become a place where “warlords rule small pieces of turf, militias prey on even members of their own sects, and many people fear the government’s security forces more than the militias they are ostensibly deployed to combat.”<sup>31</sup> Rosen’s

conclusion is that “the American occupation has been more disastrous than that of the Mongols who sacked Baghdad in the thirteenth century... There is no solution. The only hope is that perhaps the damage can be contained.”<sup>32</sup>

Both Hironaka and Rosen agree that great power intervention often unleashes political and ethnic tensions and then proceeds to destroy an already weak nation by making it even weaker through the process of providing more military aid to the warring parties. These conclusions support the proposition that I have laid out for the creation of an alternative world order—my central contention that **world order must be the product of ending the practice of pursuing hegemonic dominance in world affairs**. Instead, an alternative path relies on building a “sustainable security order.” To that end, James Fearon has suggested that “the basis for an Iraqi state is the common interest of all parties, especially the elites, in the efficient exploitation of oil resources. Continued civil war would persuade Shiite leaders that they cannot fully enjoy oil profits and political control without adequately buying off Sunni groups, who can maintain a costly insurgency.”<sup>33</sup> Such a strategy would signal the beginning of a sustainable security order for Iraq. Yet, it should also include a strategy for the reconciliation of parties in a divided society.

An effective strategy for reconciliation must take into account the fact that ever since the Baathist capitulation and the fall of Saddam Hussein, Iraq “could have gone a number of directions—a Western-style democracy, a strong federal state with significant protection for minority groups, a Shiite theocracy, an Arab nation inhospitable to Kurds, a multicultural nation in which all have a voice.”<sup>34</sup> Yet, for the sake of legitimacy, what continues to matter the most in any of these scenarios is political and economic inclusion. Until sociopolitical and socioeconomic inclusion are guaranteed, a situation will exist where each group will have an incentive to fight in order to make sure that they have a place at the decision-making table. Without the guarantee of inclusion in place the slide toward continuing civil war remains ineluctable.<sup>35</sup> Once a government is in place that is inclusive for all of the major parties, ethnic groups, and interests, then there can be a significant impetus to reconciliation.<sup>36</sup> This finding should not be surprising—it should be obvious. After all, “conflict over who is included and who is excluded from political participation is one of the primary loci of political struggle in strong and weak states... debates on political inclusion continue in strong states to the present day and should be seen as fundamental to the working of the politics in strong states generally.”<sup>37</sup> This scenario also presupposes the absence of an occupying foreign power, such as a hegemonic state, that would probably be engaged in pursuing a contrary agenda. In fact, the long-term agenda of an occupying foreign power may find that it is in its own best interest to keep a civil war going so it can justify a continuation of its own occupation while it exploits the nation’s resources and keeps other states (*including potential hegemonic rivals*) from laying claim to the resources and wealth that it seeks for itself.

When viewed in the context of history, it would seem that current expressions of nationalist and regionalist impulses throughout the Middle East

correspond almost perfectly with the nationalist spirit of self-determination that had animated similar social movements and the nationalist fervor of over a century ago. Now, as then, it has become a time similar to that era when the “*Wilsonian Moment*” inspired a generation of Third World peoples and emerging nations to demand their freedom from all forms of colonialism and imperialism. At the dawn of the twenty-first century, it is increasingly clear that there is a rising and universal call to bring an end to the overlordship of the “hegemonic state” and, in particular, to declare an end to the unilateral actions of the U.S. Empire.

The alternative model for building a sustainable security order must be premised on the foundational principle that **world order must be the product of ending the practice of pursuing hegemonic dominance in world affairs**. As we have seen, the cost of the pursuit and maintenance of hegemonic dominance in global affairs has often led to protracted civil wars, the exploitation of weak states, and even the destruction and dismantling of states under the combined pressures of civil war and foreign occupation. In light of this history, it has become increasingly clear that the pursuit of hegemonic dominance has led to the creation of weak states and failed states. States that have been incapacitated from being allowed to administer their own affairs have usually suffered such incapacitation due to the unlawful and illegal interference of a hegemonic state or two contending great powers in their internal affairs. Under such conditions, it is impossible to establish a sustainable security order. Therefore, the argument can easily be made that a sustainable security order requires strong states. Building and maintaining strong states is not possible if a hegemonic state (*or two intervening great powers*) can ignore international law, as well as the principles of sovereignty and self-determination, in order to capture some natural resource prize or seize some geopolitical advantage over potential rivals. Rather, we find that “when the society is strong enough to withstand problems and threats without disintegrating and when these problems are seen as aberrations, rather than as symbolic of larger social problems, it can be said the society is moving toward reconciliation.”<sup>38</sup>

## CHAPTER 11



# THE FUTURE OF WORLD ORDER AND THE “*PRINCIPLE OF HEGEMONIC STATE ACCOUNTABILITY*” (PHSA)

The universal call of the twenty-first century is a call from every corner of the globe to restore the rule of law and adherence to human rights norms that will benefit of the entire international community. This also means that the global community and every region within it possess a shared consciousness about the perceived need to build sustainable security orders. In order to reach this goal, the creation of such sustainable security orders will be the result of striking a legal, cultural, political, and economic balance between weak and strong states.

With this in mind, Richard Falk’s observations about the legacy of the Bush-II regime on world order are especially salient. Falk notes, “These recent American policies have sparked a worldwide counter-reaction of civic initiatives expressing a transnational consciousness in support of *universal standards of accountability*. As many as twenty distinct tribunals set up by civil-society actors have examined the criminality of various aspects of the Iraq War, with sessions in Japan, Britain, Belgium, the United States, Turkey, Germany, Sweden, and elsewhere. This ‘tribunal movement,’ unprecedented in global experience, expressed a worldwide sentiment of opposition to the Iraq War, and is an example of ‘globalization-from-below.’ Global civil society is waging a struggle *to extend the reach of criminal accountability* that includes those leaders acting on behalf of dominant states. Especially in democratically



organized states such as the United States, it is a matter of extending the rule of law to foreign as well as domestic policy” (*italics added*).<sup>1</sup>

And so, the call for the rule of law remains. Embodied within this call is a demand for the United States to end its reliance on the false pretexts and false pretenses under which its twenty-first-century “war on terror” has been conducted. The real war is one that has been going on for decades and is dialectical in nature. On the one hand, it has been and remains a war of resistance against the ruthless hegemony of global capitalism and the interventions of the U.S. hegemonic state. On the other hand, it has been a war of choice that has been waged by a certain class of American elites, in furtherance of their self-chosen interests, in order to both protect and project American primacy throughout the entire global system. These have been “wars of aggression”—by definition (*under the Nuremberg standard*). Because of the grave threat that wars of aggression pose to international peace and security, I have set forth my central argument that **world order must be the product of ending the practice of pursuing hegemonic dominance in world affairs**. A central element of the legal basis for this argument stems largely from the work of criminologists who have addressed the nature of state crime and have concluded that the responsibility of the United States for the invasion, occupation, the privatization of Iraq’s natural resources (in violation of international law standards on the rights and obligations of an occupier), and subsequent humanitarian disasters in the Iraq War, all constitute elements of what is an example of a state crime.

### DEFINING STATE CRIMES AND GOVERNMENTAL ACTS THAT VIOLATE INTERNATIONAL LAW

In his 1988 presidential address to the American Society of Criminology, William Chambliss defined state crime as “*acts defined by law as criminal and committed by state officials in the pursuit of their job as representatives of the state.*” Commenting upon this definition in 2005 in reference to its application to the Iraq War, some scholars found that this definition has three key characteristics: “First, it directs attention to the structural and organizational basis of state crime by emphasizing that these crimes are committed by state officials in furtherance of the organizational goals of the state. Second, it proposes that analyses of state crime must be grounded in a legal framework that enables us to clearly distinguish between legitimate and illegal uses of state power in the furtherance of state goals. Third, it relies on a conventional definition of law as legal prohibitions established by the nation-state in which the alleged crime was committed.”<sup>2</sup> A few years after Chambliss provided this definition, he chose to update it with a caveat in 1995, in which he revised his definition of state crime to include “*behavior that violates international agreements and principles established in the courts and treaties of international bodies.*” Other scholars commenting on this revised definition concurred with Chambliss and indicated that it was consistent with their own long-held view that “the study of state crime must include governmental acts that violate

international law, even when these acts do not violate the domestic law of the countries responsible for them.”<sup>3</sup> On this point, these scholars astutely noted, “Without this extension, criminologists and other social analysts surrender the definition of state crime to the very states whose criminality should be the focus of the study.”<sup>4</sup>

### A. THE NEED AND RATIONALE FOR CREATING AND ENFORCING THE “*PRINCIPLE OF HEGEMONIC STATE ACCOUNTABILITY*” (PHSA)

With these insights about what best constitutes the definition and elements of state crime in mind, I have framed my own proposed principle for how best to judge the hegemonic state within the framework of an international law and rule of law that is shared by the entire international community. The central difference between my proposed principle and the principle advanced by Chambliss is that I do not want to confine the focus on hegemonic practices to only the identification of state crimes and state criminality as advanced by individual officials. The existent law of universal jurisdiction has already begun to go down that path of inquiry and accountability. I want to expand our focus on the activities, behaviors, foreign policy practices, and the actual conduct of hegemonic states to include and to encompass **the hegemonic practices of any nation or group of nations that engage in formulating policies or actions undertaken in furtherance of (unlawful) acts that are undertaken for the sole purpose of achieving hegemonic dominance in world affairs. Additionally, if the primary purpose of the State’s conduct (and behavior) is specifically undertaken in furtherance of a Hegemonic State’s national and/or geopolitical agenda to the exclusion of all other standards of international law and it subsequently undertakes actions that may be considered acts of aggression that violate established principles, practices, and obligations governing State action in world affairs, then the Hegemonic State shall be deemed to have engaged in unlawful acts against the international community and must be held accountable for those acts under the applicable standards of what constitutes the boundaries of acceptable State conduct in international law.**

At this point in this discussion, I will present five interrelated aspects of the PHSA, which include the following: (1) its purpose; (2) its extension into geopolitical affairs; (3) the elements and concepts that support it; (4) the enforcement of it; and (5) the obligations arising out of it. We shall briefly address each of these five aspects in turn.

#### **(1) The Purpose of the “Principle of Hegemonic State Accountability”**

It is my intent in this wording to ensure that the Hegemonic State is not exempted from accountability for its acts on the world stage because of the unique geopolitical position that it occupies. Rather, it is precisely because of

its unique geopolitical position the PHSA is needed and required. As indicated by the wording of the PHSA, the above-cited set of interrelated international law concepts, principles, and obligations are combined in such a way so as to formulate the practical expression and essence of the “**Principle of Hegemonic State Accountability**” (PHSA). With this formulation, it is my primary intention to design and to apply an international legal standard that is aligned within a clear and internationally accepted normative framework—as embodied in the UN Charter, the rulings of the International Court of Justice, the rulings of the International Criminal Court, and the Nuremberg Charter—that is capable of addressing and assessing the “**purpose**” of Hegemonic State action in relationship to its conduct and obligations in international affairs.

Of course, the best approach to determining what constitutes state “purpose” begins with a factual inquiry into the actual conduct of a state. An illegal state purpose would have to be conduct that expresses itself in “*behavior that violates international agreements and principles established in the courts and treaties of international bodies.*” This particular understanding of state conduct and behavior represents the international law standard of what would constitute criminal state conduct and behavior. As such, it removes the jurisdictional component for judging criminal state conduct and behavior from the domestic level to the international level. This is something that has not yet been done in practice. For example, the International Criminal Court (ICC) settled on a compromise with states called “complementarity,” which allows states the first opportunity to deal with alleged state crimes in their domestic courts. The problem with that approach is that it effectively surrenders the definition of state crime to the very states that have engaged in the alleged criminality and whose criminality should be the focus of adjudication. Therefore, the (PHSA) automatically declares that the UN Charter and the Nuremberg Charter are the primary and overarching legal standard or rubric underneath which the violations of a hegemonic state are to be judged. Only in this way can the issue of the sovereignty of domestic courts be dispensed with so that the integrity and full force of international law standards can be effectively maintained. Otherwise, how can accountability for the crimes of a hegemonic state be effectively established as a matter of law? After all, because of the unique geopolitical position that the hegemonic state occupies, it is probable that no further legal action would be taken against a hegemonic state that is in violation of the (PHSA) if that determination is left to the sovereign state courts of its national jurisdiction. Therefore, the international community of nations must be empowered—in practice—by the standards of an international law principle that is universal in scope. It is universal in scope because its essential features have been developed under the auspices and evolution of customary international law. Only by guaranteeing the universal scope and jurisdiction of the (PHSA) can the international community of nations ever hope to forge an effective and enforceable standard set of practices and procedures that will guarantee the integrity and application of the (PHSA).

Therefore, if a state's "**policies or actions**" are "**undertaken for the sole purpose of achieving hegemonic dominance in world affairs,**" then its policies and actions should automatically be considered (presumed to be) unlawful and potentially criminal (*in the sense that its policies and/or actions render the established principles of self-determination, sovereignty, human rights, humanitarian intervention, and restraints on the use of force, virtually null and void*). In order to rescue the above-cited principles from the grip of geopolitics and the arrogance of unaccountable hegemonic state structures, it will remain necessary to make State practices associated with the conduct of geopolitics accountable to those universally recognized restraining principles contained in the UN Charter, the Nuremberg Charter, and relevant treaties of international bodies, which are understood to be the essential corpus of international law in this particular situation.

In order to do this effectively, it will be absolutely necessary to establish in practice the "**Principle of Hegemonic State Accountability.**" Only in this manner can the hegemonic state automatically then become accountable for its actions to the entire international community of nations when it acts with "**the sole purpose of achieving hegemonic dominance in world affairs.**" Therefore, I am making the argument that the furtherance of this "**sole purpose**" must be prohibited as a matter of law because it relegates the central elements of international law and a just world order to a position of irrelevance whenever raw power is allowed to trump principle and avoid accountability for doing so. Therefore, the need to establish and enforce the (PHSA) is predicated upon extending the scope of this principle beyond previously established boundaries in international law and in domestic law.

## (2) Extending the (PHSA) into the Arena of Geopolitical Affairs

Steps that will be required for the extension of the (PHSA) into the arena of geopolitics must involve the identification and articulation of the principle's main goals. Its goals are two-pronged: first, ensuring and enforcing the accountability of the hegemonic state for violating its duties and obligations toward other states (which is a *retrospective goal* that is designed to rectify past wrongdoing and resulting harms); and second, building a sustainable security system whose operation is assessed by its ability to halt states from conflating their geopolitical actions with those legal principles that are embodied in the law of war, humanitarian intervention, human rights, and justifications for the use of force (which is a *prospective goal* that is designed to assist in the building of a sustainable security system). Both retrospectively and prospectively, the (PHSA) presents itself as a direct challenge to the "business-as-usual" conduct of the hegemonic state. The extension of this principle seriously undermines the capacity of a hegemonic state to continue with its efforts to project its imperial and unilateral military forces in the furtherance of narrow geopolitical goals. That is because the application of the PHSA extends the boundaries of accountability into an interrogation of the purposes and obligations of the hegemonic state's actions. This is especially relevant with

regard to the use of force in international affairs. In the final analysis, the PHSA is a principle that forecloses on the ability of the hegemonic state to conflate the legitimacy derived from human rights and humanitarian law with the exercise of raw geopolitical power. In this sense, the hegemonic state can no longer presuppose or presume that its actions will automatically be assumed to reflect “law abidingness.”

### (3) The Legal Elements and Concepts that Support the (PHSA)

When I refer to the central elements of international law with respect to the (PHSA), I am especially referring to the incipient elements of the (PHSA) that are already set forth in the language of the UN Charter. These particular articles of its charter are meant to establish *jus cogens* norms and obligations *erga omnes*. The term “*jus cogens*” means “*the compelling law*” and refers to norms that hold the highest hierarchical position among all other norms and principles in national or international arenas. Insofar as *jus cogens* norms establish obligations *erga omnes*, *jus cogens* are duties, not optional rights, and they further establish that states may not “grant impunity to the violators of such crimes.” International law has already established that refraining from genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, piracy, slavery, slave-related practices, torture, and wars of aggression are *jus cogens* norms. To the extent that the U.S.-sponsored invasion of Iraq did not conform to international laws authorizing war, it was a war of aggression and therefore violates a *jus cogens* norm. However, now that we have established the violation of these norms, we now have to ask how it is possible to make the aggressor state accountable.

### (4) Enforcing the (PHSA)

Among currently existing institutions today, the International Criminal Court (ICC) and the UN Security Council are best suited to making the aggressor state accountable. The problem with demanding accountability in these two forums resides in the contentious problem of the relationship between international law—whether customary or criminal—and national jurisdiction. As I mentioned above, recent history demonstrates that the issue of jurisdiction was the central issue surrounding debates involving the United States and the ICC. The overarching question was, **Are the negotiating parties willing to cede sovereign rights and allow power to the new Court that would go beyond the existing provisions of public international law?** In these negotiations and debates, the representatives of the United States at these talks resisted the call to go beyond the boundaries of the existing provisions of international law. By doing so, the United States turned its back on an opportunity to engage with the community of all nations in expanding the claims of justice and accountability for criminal wrongdoing.

The representatives of the United States followed a logic of power and primacy that was grounded in the protection of that power and primacy at all costs. Therefore, the U.S. representatives defended the position of a status

quo of hierarchy and hegemony that refused to have any real accountability for its actions imposed upon it. In the name of promoting primacy and in the name of defending the hegemony and hierarchy of that primacy, the United States decided to hide behind a jurisdictional wall of noncompliance with the claims of justice that the ICC was attempting to institutionalize in international life. From the perspective of the representatives of the US Empire, its imperial actions were not to be questioned, nor were the imperial policies and the consequences of those policies to suffer any legal repercussions for the damages inflicted by the United States when it acted aggressively as a hegemonic state. What happened in these debates was that “the United States was at the vanguard of a group of states which insisted that the conference would have to concede the preeminence of domestic or national courts, and hence the precedence of domestic jurisdiction over that of international law and ICC jurisdiction. In other words, domestic judicial systems will have the first responsibility for prosecuting those suspected of war crimes within their jurisdiction; the ICC ‘will act only when national courts are unable or unwilling to exercise jurisdiction.’”<sup>5</sup>

Characteristically, the United States took the position that one would have expected a hegemonic state to take in such matters by arguing that if the primacy of national courts was not maintained, then it would be unrealistic for states to sign such a treaty because states would resist the requirement of ceding so many sovereign rights to the ICC. What ultimately emerged from the negotiations was a general agreement on the principle that there would be “*complementarity*” between the ICC and national criminal jurisdiction. Under this arrangement, the ICC can only take unilateral action in the investigation or prosecution of crimes when the domestic judicial system of a state had either failed to do so or when it was requested to do so by the UN Security Council. Procedurally, in order to guarantee the integrity of the principle of *complementarity*, if domestic courts were engaged in either investigating or prosecuting a suspected crime, the ICC would not be able to exercise its authority unless the UN Security Council decided to step in. In that case, Chapter 7 of the UN Charter would be triggered, thereby authorizing the ICC to pursue the case. In such a case, no state can prevent the ICC from proceeding, regardless of whether or not they had ratified the statute. That is because Chapter 7 decisions by the Security Council are binding and legally enforceable in all states.

Based on this analysis, it would seem that basic institutions and structures are in place, along with established procedural rules and jurisdictional determinations having been made, for starting to bring about the implementation of the proposed (PHSA). Ultimately, the success or failure of the (PHSA) will hinge on the yet-to-be-resolved question of whether or not there will be enough backing from the international system of states to allow this principle to be applied. At the present time, under international humanitarian law, heads of state (such as General Pinochet of Chile) have been indicted. As the Bush-II administration leaves office and in light of the eventual termination of the Iraq War, and with the completed work already done by the World

Tribunal on Iraq, there will be increased pressures and incentives to enhance and extend the jurisdictional scope and authority of the ICC.<sup>6</sup> Additionally, various actors throughout global civil society have been engaged in the work and fact-finding processes of tribunals. They have learned how to build a case for state accountability.

The same may be said of the work done by truth commissions. Both Peru and Chile have had experience with establishing a *Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)*. So, too, has South Africa. These civil society actors have recognized the critical importance of the role played by truth commissions in making the United States a responsible actor on the world stage. In this regard, I concur with Carols Parodi:

“The absence of the United States as a responsible actor in human rights violations in Peru is a key point of reference for understanding the TRC. As stated by the TRC, truth has two dimensions: ethical and scientific. The narrative not only has to explain the direct and indirect causes of violence but needs to establish responsibilities as well. Peru’s TRC together with other truth commissions have great potential for initiating a global process of truth, justice, reparation, and reconciliation. *A crucial step in this process is to bring in the United States as a responsible actor.* Progress in the human rights agenda requires victims [confronting] perpetrators as actors with the obligation to repair the harm done. Asking the government of the United States for ‘aid’ to fund reparations programs goes against this spirit. The participation of the United States in reparations programs has to be conceptualized in terms of obligation, not as a favor”<sup>7</sup> (*italics added*).

### (5) Obligations Arising Out of the (PHSA)

The conceptualization of reparations in terms of obligation is central to this analysis. That is because obligation triggers the requirement of accountability. It is for this very reason that the wording contained in the (PHSA) specifically refers to making the United States—as a hegemonic state—accountable for **“policies or actions undertaken in furtherance of (unlawful) acts that are undertaken for the sole purpose of achieving hegemonic dominance in world affairs.”** The wording here is very important because it demonstrates a clear recognition of the fact that the exercise of power by a hegemonic state entails bringing about harm—often through criminal negligence—which the Pentagon euphemistically calls “collateral damage.” When undertaking such an exercise of power **“in the furtherance of a Hegemonic State’s national and/or geopolitical agenda to the exclusion of all other standards of international law,”** it incurs obligations.

By virtue of having incurred such obligations, it becomes clear that the hegemonic state must be held accountable for its illegal actions. This is the primary purpose of the (PHSA). In this regard, it undertakes to accomplish two major goals: first, it seeks a formal acknowledgement of the harm done and for what purposes the harm was inflicted; second, it requires that the injured party(s) be made whole through reparations—not as a form of aid

but as an obligation. In the last analysis, the hegemonic state must be forced to acknowledge its wrongdoing because if it does not, then both the officials and policies of the hegemonic state will be able to casually assume that the passage of time—without the imposition of accountability—will make the Hegemonic State comfortable with injustice.<sup>8</sup> Therefore, the corollary purpose of the (PHSA) is to prevent any such future harm from reoccurring. The enactment and enforcement of the (PHSA) is a direct way to constrain and to restrain a hegemonic state from abusing its powers in relation to other states and the international system as a whole. Hence, even as it plays a restorative role, the principle also plays a proactive function and has a preventive effect. Therefore, the principle is designed to balance punishment with prevention and, in that sense, it is a principle designed to assure accountability.

## B. GLOBAL COUNTERHEGEMONIC ALLIANCES OF NATIONS AND REGIONAL ORDERS

For the sake of convenience and the needs of its propaganda machine, the members of the US primacy coalition decided to become the driving proponents of the “global war on terror” (GWOT).<sup>9</sup> They have singled out a relatively small number of “enemies” to justify the expenditure of billions of dollars for the profit of those on Wall Street and within the Pentagon (or associated with it) who financially benefit from investing in global neoliberal militarism.<sup>10</sup> Many of these individuals and groups are, by definition, war profiteers. The term “global war on terror” (GWOT) has often served an ideological function in their real “war for profit” and personal aggrandizement. The GWOT is increasingly being conducted through covert intelligence operations on behalf of powerful corporate interests. In this campaign to privatize the war there has been an ongoing privatization throughout the Pentagon, thereby subordinating state functions to private mercenary outfits. The line between “organized capital” and “organized crime” has become blurred. In this regard, the GWOT has been invoked to arrest and torture prodemocracy activists in Egypt, round up street vendors and protesters in El Salvador, rationalize politically motivated assassinations in the Philippines, jail bloggers and censor websites in Thailand, and condone military dictatorship in Pakistan.<sup>11</sup> In the process, the term GWOT has largely served as the chief public relations vehicle for the advocates of the Iraq War and the proponents of American primacy.

In part, the paradigm of the GWOT has been designed and constructed to distort perceptions and to manipulate American public opinion. The paradigm of the GWOT has been especially useful in playing this role because of the negative picture with which it seeks to characterize both the religion of Islam and the nations and peoples of the Middle East, thereby creating an identifiable enemy—“the other.” By presenting the American people with a caricature of Islam and a sanitized history of the Middle East, the GWOT is an umbrella term under which various powers and forces within the US



Empire have been enabled to conceal and subordinate the truth about the actual grievances and goals of resistance movements to US power.<sup>12</sup>

Israel and the US have often pursued a hidden agenda that encompasses their shared geopolitical plans for the wider region. This agenda includes an attempt to engage in the democratization of the entire Middle East. The US version of this plan has been euphemistically referred to as “*democracy promotion*.” Yet, for all of the hopes and plans that have been dedicated to creating a new security environment, the reality is that the entire region is less secure. In view of the lessened possibilities for creating a new security environment, the US and Israeli policy has been acknowledged as being a dismal failure. According to John J. Mearsheimer and Stephen M. Walt, “we may be witnessing the ‘*birth pangs of a new Middle East*,’ to use Secretary of State Rice’s regrettable phrase, but it will almost certainly be more unstable and dangerous than the one that existed before the United States invaded Iraq.”<sup>13</sup> This outcome should not have been a great surprise to anyone familiar with history—especially the history of empires and their vulnerabilities.

Since the Bush-II presidency began its 2003 invasion of Iraq, followed by its occupation—in addition to other interventions throughout the Middle East—both the US and Israel have increasingly acted as aggressors and have been increasingly perceived as aggressors. The rallying cries associated with the “global war on terror” have served as an ideological smokescreen for Israel as it expanded its settlements in Gaza and moved its army to the gates of the leadership of the Palestinian Authority in 2003. By the summer of 2005, the Israeli army illegally undertook an invasion of Lebanon—allegedly in search of the agents of Hezbollah. These aggressive undertakings have been, in the words of Anthony Cordesman, “escalating to nowhere.” In fact, “this conflict is not simply a local or regional struggle. There is a steadily growing risk that this tragedy will escalate other conflicts and tragedies in the region, encourage extremism and terrorism, divide the followers of three of the world’s greatest religions.”<sup>14</sup>

The tragic history surrounding the escalation of conflict in the Middle East has often been the product of elites threatening one another. If the situation is ever to be reversed, it follows that an alternative approach should be undertaken. A new approach would be one that replaces threats with offers of reassurance about a common commitment to satisfying the security needs of surrounding states. On this point, Charles Kupchan has noted, “In an international setting without aggressors, elites should seek to satisfy the security needs of other states, to reassure rather than to threaten. Put differently, they should take steps to ameliorate the security dilemma. When states are secure, they are less likely to fall prey to the self-defeating pathologies associated with high levels of vulnerability...it is when elites perceive high vulnerability that they engage in extremist behavior and pursue policies that precipitate international conflict.”<sup>15</sup> Examples of Israel’s extremist behavior have been visible in its expansionist settlement policy and in its landgrabbing “security fence.”<sup>16</sup> In this respect, Israel’s settlement policy is hardly any different from Europe’s nineteenth-century brand of colonialism. It is

basically a policy of repression. With the lessons of recent history in mind, Rashid Khalidi has observed, “Sooner or later Israelis themselves will realize, as some of their most respected intellectuals already have, that the way to deal with the hostility of the colonized is not to repress it, but to dismantle the structures of colonialism and repression that originally engendered it.”<sup>17</sup> From this perspective, viable alternatives to the status quo can emerge. For example, it can be argued that peace and security would be better advanced by strategies that rely more on accommodation than on deterrence and more on defensive, rather than offensive, initiatives. That is largely because “offensive actions and capabilities unnecessarily heighten vulnerability, exacerbate the security dilemma, and increase the chances that even deterrent initiatives will threaten states and fuel extreme responses.”<sup>18</sup> After all, as a result of the US-led invasion of Iraq, there are emerging counterhegemonic alliances to the US Empire that are seeking to contain and to resist the unbridled use and imposition of US military power and US economic coercion.

In light of these trends, I am arguing that the growth in number of these counterhegemonic alliances constitutes a natural reaction to the fact that the construction and operation of both twentieth and early twenty-first-century world orders have operated *without the benefit of* an enforceable “**Principle of Hegemonic State Accountability.**” In the absence of the kind of international legal framework envisioned by the (PHSA), there are not just millions but billions of people around the world who are disgusted with U.S. international lawlessness. They are also resentful of the deprivations that such lawlessness brings to their lives. Such resentment is understandable given the imperial attitudes found in the Bush-II administration, as exemplified by the statement made by an unnamed Bush administration official who said, “We’re an empire now, and when we act we create our own reality.”<sup>19</sup> Such resentment has also been fueled by the Orwellian nature of other statements made by Bush officials, one of whom audaciously declared that “truth can be created by assertion, principle can be established by deception, and democracy can be imposed through aggression.”<sup>20</sup>

It is largely in response to the absence of an enforceable principle of hegemonic state accountability (PHSA) that we are currently witnessing the beginnings of an aroused global consciousness with respect to the unconstrained use of geopolitical power. On every continent and throughout every major region, we are witnessing the inauguration of a widespread global transition in the way that people perceive how geopolitical power is to be judged, evaluated, and used. This process of reevaluation is taking place within a globalized world order of interrelated economies and regions. In the United States itself, recent polling has indicated that large numbers of American citizens have consistently opposed the Bush-II administration’s reliance on unilateralism as the basis of U.S. foreign policy. Authors Nina Hachigian and Mona Sutphen, for example, noted that “Americans surveyed in a 2005 BBC poll agreed by wide margins with citizens from other pivotal powers that the ‘best framework for ensuring peace and stability’ was *either a system led by the United Nations or a system led by a balance of regional powers.* Only 10 percent

of the Americans surveyed chose a 'system led by a single or two world powers'<sup>21</sup> (*italics added*).

Further, "findings by the Pew Research Center are in line with these results. Roughly three-quarters of Americans surveyed in 2004 said the U.S. should 'play a shared leadership role' in the world while only 11 percent said the United States should be the sole leader."<sup>22</sup> By 2006, 60 percent of Americans surveyed agreed with the following statement: "the United States should be more willing to make decisions within the United Nations even if this means that the United States will sometimes have to go along with a policy that is not its first choice."<sup>23</sup> The answer to this particular question also provides greater credence to my arguments about a working and workable (PHSA). The majority of the American people want to constrain the actions of their government in foreign affairs so as to advance cooperation with other countries as often as possible, even if such cooperation means that there will have to be compromises on occasion. This perspective is also strengthened by the survey's finding that 70 percent are in favor of expanding the UN Security Council to include other powerful countries such as India, Germany, and Japan.<sup>24</sup>

As a result of these preferences—which are being duplicated on a global scale—it can be effectively argued that there are a growing number of social movements and counterhegemonic alliances in every region of the globe. They are seeking to redefine and constrain the boundaries and power projections of the U.S. hegemonic state. Commenting on this phenomenon, Francois Polet has noted, "In political situations that are generally unfavorable, the first contribution of these social movements has been to help the social groups, who are paying heavily from the insertion of their national economy into the world market, to emerge from the shadows and take a front place on the political scene. Their presence and their dynamism have forced those responsible to explain their options regarding economic policies, to take into account the social consequences on the different groups in the population and to defend their interests more vigorously in international circles."<sup>25</sup>

In this historical moment, it would seem that this globalized world order of interconnected and interrelated economies and regions is starting to reflect the fact that a new grouping of movements, nations, and regions is on the rise. Together, they represent the framework of a counterhegemonic coalition to the U.S. Empire. They share in common two essential characteristics: (1) first, they are demanding that the hegemonic state finally becomes accountable to the mandates and obligations of international law and (2) second, that the alternatives to economic, social, and cultural development that they embody are not interfered with by Washington or its neoliberal appendages (such as the IMF, World Bank, and WTO). In combination, the members of this counterhegemonic coalition represent the evolution of an expanding union of powerful new regions and trading blocs. This counterhegemonic coalition also represents the coming together of a diversity of cultures that share a common consciousness about the need to deal with the unrestrained use of military and economic power by the U.S. hegemonic state. Finally,

the nature and quality of relationships within and between the members of this global coalition consist of a diverse combination of social movements (*seeking to realize progressive changes around humane values such as socioeconomic and sociopolitical inclusion, participation, and social justice*) as well as evolving regional organizations that are dedicated to building up the independence and effectiveness of new institutional structures at the regional level—such as the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Bank of the South, and the European Union.<sup>26</sup>

The first major task and greatest challenge that needs to be undertaken by these evolving regional orders is to be able to develop the capacity to oppose future threats or geopolitical incursions and unilateral interventions by the American Empire. It is for this reason that one of the primary goals of the emerging regional organizations will be to establish (*through the ICC and UN Security Council*) the practical means to enforce their sovereign autonomy and right to self-determination under the “**Principle of Hegemonic State Accountability.**” Only by working to insure the sanctity of these foundational international law principles can progressive social movements, in active association with emerging regional organizations, begin to take needed steps toward formulating their own distinct regional patterns toward the evolution of effective forms of multicentric governance. Further, only under the protective rubric of the (PHSA) can they discover and maintain alternative models for exercising their own self-chosen strategies for economic growth. In so doing, the demands of progressive social movements, nonstate actors (NSAs), and the legal claims embodied in the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ESCR), will be increasingly heard as national and regional organizations move toward a Posthegemonic era that is characterized by their collective assertion of independence from the hegemony of the United States, the G-7, the IMF, World Bank, and the WTO.

### THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, AND CULTURAL RIGHTS

One of the legal centerpieces for enacting a broad range of human rights within the context of monitoring the behavior of Western-dominated financial institutions is the **International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights** (hereinafter referred to as “ESCR”). The ESCR was adopted by the United Nations on December 16, 1966. It was the first global treaty that established the legal obligations of states to protect a range of important economic, social, and cultural rights. Now, only forty years later, the vast majority of states have ratified this treaty.

The main international institutions that form the backbone of the current international economic system and that have had an impact on the enforcement of ESCR are the IMF, the World Bank, and the WTO. In this regard, it is noteworthy that the IMF and World Bank lend exclusively to developing and emerging economies in the Global South. Furthermore, their loans are linked to externally imposed conditions that increasingly impinge on the

domestic policies of the state (such as “structural adjustment programs”). Insofar as the IMF, World Bank, and WTO are—by definition—nonstate actors (NSAs), it is beyond dispute that nation-states have a special obligation to meet and enforce the human rights requirements that are derived from their covenantal obligations under the ESCR. In this regard, “when states are dealing with NSAs, *the obligation to protect* demands that states take into account their domestic and international human rights obligations in all their activities with NSAs (including global actors like the World Bank, the IMF, and the WTO) to ensure that the ESC rights, in particular, of the most vulnerable, disadvantaged and marginalized groups of society, are not undermined”<sup>27</sup> (*italics added*). Strict adherence to ESC rights will require that human rights are always integrated into the policies of global NSAs. This will also require assurances that “there is greater complementarity between the basic tenets of international economic law and international human rights law” and, to this end, “it is necessary to re-engage in a dialogue with the member states of the WTO, the IMF, and the World Bank who, in the final analysis, will be vital to a determination of the extent to which the policies and decisions of these global actors are in conformity with the human rights obligations of state parties.”<sup>28</sup>

In addition to advancing human rights protections by monitoring the performance of NSAs, states always retain their sovereign responsibility to ensure that international law principles regarding sovereignty and self-determination are also strengthened and enhanced by the enforcement of the ESCR. This is especially important in giving credence and meaning to that widespread conviction that we should not cause damage or harm to others. In this specific sense, the ESCR helps to restore to the less developed nations of the Global South their unfettered right to develop along lines of their own choosing, and not to have the trajectory of their development imposed on them by outside institutional forces or governments. Too often, Western governments have failed to end the damage done to developing countries by international economic arrangements. That is why Professor Ha-Joon Chang, in addressing trade issues, has argued that “tilting the playing field in favor of developing nations is not just a matter of fair treatment now. It is also about providing the economically less advanced countries with the tools to acquire new capabilities by sacrificing short-term gains. Indeed, allowing poor countries to raise their capabilities more easily brings forward the day when the gap between the players is small and thus it becomes no longer necessary to tilt the playing field.”<sup>29</sup>

Chang’s suggestion fits perfectly with the internationally recognized “right to development.” The right to development was originally asserted as a claim against the developed countries in the context of what was perceived as a perpetuation of colonialism through economic domination and exploitation. At the dawn of the twenty-first century, the right to development could provide a unifying rubric for the different agendas of a global movement for ending the tyranny of the IMF-World Bank-WTO complex.<sup>30</sup> If understood in this way, it becomes possible to make a historical argument that the

right to development resurrects the “Wilsonian moment” when the anti-colonial movements “anticipated a transformation of international relations along liberal anti-colonial lines, which *would render illegitimate the suppression of national claims within imperial structures...* Within this new order...reforms toward liberal, democratic goals in each emergent national society would proceed in a mutually reinforcing relationship with international norms”<sup>31</sup> (*italics added*).

The ESCR represents the most recent embodiment of that evolving structure of international norms. In this sense, the principles, obligations, and mandates that emanate from the ESCR are designed to continue that earlier struggle from the “Wilsonian moment” to “*render illegitimate the suppression of national claims within imperial structures.*” In fact, the imperial structures of the IMF-World Bank-WTO complex can be depicted as the “*next generation version*” of old-styled colonialism but with a difference. The difference is that while the “*wretched of the earth*” have always demanded a fairer distribution of the earth’s scarce resources, due to the mandates of the ESCR and the work of progressive social movements, the political elites of the current system can only disregard this demand at their peril.

After a century of bitter struggle, the implementation of the right to development has come of age. In part, it is because the underlying assumption that the free trade system benefits all the member states (long run and/or short run) “has been falsified by the past performance of the free trade system...as practiced today [it] does not benefit all the states of the global community; it benefits mostly those industrialized countries already better off, and the tiny elite segments of the poorer countries well connected to those states.”<sup>32</sup> As a consequence, the bottom line is that many of the rules and institutions governing the international economy were designed to protect only the interests of the industrialized countries of the North. The disadvantages that have been inordinately suffered by the countries of the Global South have now culminated in a crisis of legitimacy for the entire international economic system. This is especially evident in view of the fact that the globalization of unfettered competition for profit maximization—promoted in the name of free trade—has contributed to the deterioration of environmental systems, global warming and climate change, as well as deepening inequality within and between nations.<sup>33</sup>

By virtue of the fact that a hegemonic state will often seek to engage in pursuing its own narrowly defined geopolitical interests upon nation-states and regions, to the exclusion of every other legal, ecological, and moral restraint, it is more than evident that an unconstrained and unaccountable hegemonic state can only jeopardize the integrity of a world order dedicated to the twin concepts of “sustainable peace” and “human security.” Further, it should be understood that the aforementioned qualities of this evolving world order have been increasingly premised on the promise that all states will ultimately respect and protect their shared obligations, many of which arise out of the ESCR, the UN Charter, and the Nuremberg Principles. In the process of coming to understand these shared interconnections, it should

now become evident that as nations begin to guide their affairs in reference to the PHSA (in combination with the ESCR), then it also becomes possible for nation-states and emerging regional orders to begin the process of creating and maintaining their own versions of what constitutes peace and prosperity for themselves.

In the alternative, by failing to enforce the obligations contained in the principle of hegemonic state accountability (PHSA), there will always be a danger that nation-states and regions seeking to operate outside of the core capitalist countries will remain locked within a U.S.-dominated hierarchical world order system that continues to subordinate their vital interests and foreclose upon their “right to development.” However, in a world of rising regions, there remains the hope that “by integrating such areas as peacekeeping, human rights and foreign policy, human security presents an alternative policy focus for middle and regional powers...As a policy framework, human security is gaining prominence amongst Asian regional institutions as they discover the limitations of the state in tackling economic, social, environmental, health and political crises and the need for a collective approach.”<sup>34</sup>

### THE RISE OF CHINA AND THE AMERICAN PRIMACY PARADIGM

In a world of rising regions, there is a pressing necessity for all nations and actors involved in the process of regionalization to abide by the logic of a collective approach. A collective approach opens the gateway to mutual cooperation, just as mutual cooperation opens the gate to a new and comprehensive notion of human security. Human security in the twenty-first century can no longer be premised on twentieth-century assumptions regarding security that define it as a purely military matter. Rather, human security reaches into the realms of human rights, environmental protection, and the fairness and integrity of the international trade system. This broader understanding of what genuinely constitutes human security (a universally shared goal) is certainly relevant in the area of global trade, where there is no equal playing field between the developed core capitalist countries and the majority of nations throughout the Global South. For the less developed nations of the Global South, to be locked into such a subordinated position only serves to further block the realization and enforcement of the principles and mandates that are contained in the ESCR. That is largely because the coercive capacities of a hegemonic state will often undermine the capacity of lesser developed countries to create alternative models of development. By virtue of being deprived of their autonomy, which should be protected under the terms and conditions of the ESCR, the unconstrained actions of a hegemonic state leaves many countries vulnerable to the unlawful intrusions and interventions of the U.S. hegemonic state. It has also left them vulnerable to interventions by U.S.-controlled institutions (the IMF, World Bank, and WTO) in violation of the ESCR.

Unfortunately, the elites of the U.S. primacy coalition have clung to the goal of maintaining American hegemony, at any cost. It is predominantly for this reason that the Bush-II strategy toward China, from the beginning, has been one of engagement with bared teeth. The central demand being made by the Bush administration to China is “to integrate itself into the U.S.-led international order—on Washington’s terms.”<sup>35</sup> This essentially means accommodation to the neoliberal straightjacket for all economies, which is premised on the assumption that “one size fits all.” It is a “cookie-cutter” mentality that is being applied by neoliberal economists in conjunction with U.S. national security planners. When viewed objectively, it is an approach that continuously misdirects U.S. strategic planning. For example, the Pentagon produced a document announcing that the United States wants China to become “a responsible member of the international community.” Commenting on this position, Professor Christopher Layne noted that “responsibility...is defined as Beijing’s willingness to accept Washington’s vision of a stable international order. As President Bush declared in a November 2005 speech in Kyoto, responsibility also requires China to achieve political liberalization and develop as a free market economy firmly anchored to the international economy.”<sup>36</sup>

As analyzed throughout this book, it is clear that the U.S. hegemonic state intervenes not only militarily but economically as well. Because of this dual capacity of the U.S. hegemonic state to violate the basic premises of national self-determination and national sovereignty, it can easily be argued that the U.S. hegemonic state should be constrained by both the PHSA and the ESCR. Clearly, one of the primary goals of the ESCR is to guarantee the autonomy of nations so that they will be able to develop their own alternative economic, social, and cultural models. So, too, the PHSA shares that goal as it simultaneously seeks to make the practice and conduct of geopolitics by the U.S. hegemonic state accountable to international legal norms condemning aggression. This is especially important in light of the Bush-II administration’s willingness “to employ the hard fist of military power against China,” given the fact that “Washington has made crystal clear that it will not countenance a China that emerges as a great power rival and challenges American primacy.”<sup>37</sup>

According to international relations scholars, China’s rise affects the United States because of what is called the “*power transition effect*.” What this term means is, “throughout the history of the modern international state system, ascending powers have always challenged the position of the dominant (hegemonic) power in the international system—and these challenges have usually culminated in war.”<sup>38</sup> In the current context, the tension between China and the United States arises out of an old logic and an old paradigm that sees “the logic of anticipatory violence as an instrument for maintaining American primacy.”<sup>39</sup>

In the current context of declining American hegemony, the U.S. power structure still clings to the logic of anticipatory violence (which is connected with the logic of interventionism). Because this brand of logic is still the basis



of America's current East Asia strategy, it embodies a number of powerful incentives for intervention that "would also arise from ideological antipathy toward China, concerns for maintaining U.S. 'credibility,' and support for a democratic Taiwan in a conflict with authoritarian China. Notwithstanding these arguments, which are underpinned by a national security discourse that favors American hegemony, the issues at stake in a possible showdown between China and Taiwan simply would not justify the risks and costs of U.S. intervention."<sup>40</sup> This is especially the case in an emerging multicentric (multipolar) world. Only by clinging to the assumptions of an increasingly antiquated U.S. primacy model do these arguments make any sense. Therefore, with the rise of regional powers around the globe, not just China but India, Russia, and Japan, it seems that "the wisdom of risking war with China to maintain U.S. hegemony in East Asia is all the more doubtful because America's predominance in the region is ebbing in any event. One indication of this is that U.S. economic supremacy in East Asia is waning as China rises. China is emerging as the motor of the region's economic growth."<sup>41</sup>

This perspective on the trends and transformation of twenty-first-century geopolitics is shared by William H. Overholt, the Director of the RAND Center for Asia Pacific Policy. Overholt maintains, "Change is coming. Old ideas, most notably late-20th century U.S. caricatures of China and Japan, have persisted long after the underlying reality changed...World history's most powerful military continues to be organized to fight the last war—and justified by caricatures of China that risk unnecessary strife."<sup>42</sup> Further, Overholt contends that "while the post-Cold War United States has far greater relative military power than it has had at any time in its history, its geopolitical leverage in East Asia has declined precipitously."<sup>43</sup>

To these observations I would add that a new geopolitics is in the process of evolving, both for the United States and the rest of the world. With the expansion of human rights norms, the global reach of the "*right to development*," and an enlarged conceptual framework for determining what constitutes "*human security*," the time has finally arrived for America's political leadership to engage in a rethinking of America's grand strategy relative to the needs and aspirations of the rest of the world. After all, the rest of the world is watching the unraveling of U.S. hegemonic power on the sands of Iraq, the decline of the dollar, and the shift of geopolitical and economic power to Asia. If the United States is to effectively accommodate itself to these new realities, then the American electorate will have to finally be incorporated into a determination of where America is willing to go—as a democratic country. Bringing the American electorate back into this determination should serve to bring an end the foreign policy disconnect that has allowed U.S. foreign policy elites to automatically follow the logic of American hegemony and primacy—to the exclusion of a foreign policy more weighted toward mutual cooperation with other nations and a clear recognition of the importance of the United Nations in maintaining the peace.<sup>44</sup>

In the task of overcoming the foreign policy disconnect between the American electorate and the U.S. foreign policy establishment, it becomes

even more evident that only by allowing the PHSA and ESCR to work in unison that humanity can begin to move toward the dawn of a peaceful posthegemonic era. From the vantage point of the first decade of the twenty-first century, it seems that this emerging era will be characterized by the operation of multipolar centers of power in which regional organizational structures and regional forms of governance will be encouraged to develop alternative models for their own development and, by doing so, finally eclipse the old era of empires and the global tyranny of hegemonic states.<sup>45</sup> It is to a discussion of these alternative models that we now turn.

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## CHAPTER 12



# ALTERNATIVE MODELS TO SUPERPOWER HEGEMONY

In reality, the history of American hegemony throughout the mid-twentieth and early twenty-first century chronicles the attempt of transnational capitalist classes to globalize a world economic and political system dedicated to profits for the few and that would ultimately result in the economic, political, and social exclusion of the majority. The inconvenient truth about this project was that it would inevitably produce social resistance movements and encourage the excluded—both individual groups and social classes—to actively form counterhegemonic alliances against this plan.

It has been an imperial project that created an endless series of wars and struggles throughout the Global South. Due to the brutality of this project and its devastating effects on the lives of billions of people, most of whom fill the global ranks of the excluded and subordinated, it should be no surprise that they would seek and are seeking to find a way out of their misery. This is especially the case in the poor cities of the developing world, which are often “vibrant hubs of global economic and cultural activity, but are also ecologically unsustainable and, for ordinary citizens, increasingly unlivable. Three-fourths of those joining the world’s population during the next century will live in Third World cities. Unless these cities are able to provide decent livelihoods for ordinary people and become ecologically sustainable, the future is bleak.”<sup>1</sup> According to Peter Evans, “the politics of livelihood and sustainability in these cities has become the archetypal challenge of twenty-first century governance.”<sup>2</sup>

Yet, for U.S. elites in the corporate world and in government, the well-being of those who inhabit Third World cities is usually below their radar. Their blindness to this reality has been attributed to two main factors: first,

their economic visions of global markets and second, their cultural visions of globalization. Both of these perspectives are wedded to their desire to maintain the status quo. That is because “economic visions of global markets imply a vast and intricate mechanism whose complexity defies the ability of any human agent to produce more desirable alternative outcomes. Cultural visions of globalization in which a hegemonic capitalist culture removes even the possibility of conceiving alternative outcomes are even bleaker. Proponents of the two views have antithetical assessments of the extent to which market outcomes maximize human welfare, but they agree on the impossibility of alternatives.”<sup>3</sup>

Despite their cynicism, their oversights about poverty, their ignorance regarding environmental sustainability, and their lack of vision, the advocates of the unrestrained free market and the elite membership of hegemonic capitalist culture have been forced by history to enter into a twenty-first-century world where there are “three major currents that are shaping the world, namely, globalization and regionalization from above, fragmentation and tribalization from below, and resistance and democratization at the center.”<sup>4</sup> The Table 12.1 outlines these dynamics.

In order to accomplish the long-term establishment of a world economic and political system for the benefit of elite transnational capitalist groups, the structures and processes of the military-political dimensions of power must continuously place their reliance upon a global military-industrial complex in order to reinforce the policies of corporate oligopolies in the areas of finance, trade, and investment. As a consequence of adopting this strategy, the American Hegemonic State has consistently opposed alternative forms of development and has sought to repress global movements for peace and nuclear disarmament. By adopting and employing this strategy, the United States has sought to exercise American hegemony through the defense of a system of global apartheid.

**Table 12.1** Globalization: Structures and processes

Globalization	Economic	Military-Political	Cultural
Hegemonic	Corporate oligopolies: Technology, finance, trade, investment	WMDs industrial oligopolies*	Communication and media oligopoly
Counterhegemonic	Self-reliant development and micro-credit banking	Local and regional organizations for WMDFZs**	Revival of indigenous cultures, languages, and media
Democratic	Global movements for sustainable development	Global movement for culture of peace, multiculturalism, and human solidarity	Ecumenical movements for peace and disarmament

Source: Majid Tehranian, “Democratizing Governance,” in *Democratizing Global Governance*, ed. by Esref Aksu and Joseph A. Camilleri, Palgrave Macmillan, 2002, 72.

\* Weapons of Mass Destruction

\*\* Weapons of Mass Destruction Free Zones

Numerous examples of a system of global apartheid can be found in various national and regional orders of privilege that that U.S. Empire has long supported and sustained. These servants of American hegemony can be termed “client states,” “collaborators,” or “dependencies.” Whatever the label, these allies of American hegemony serve a central purpose in the international power scheme. They are linked to a hierarchical order of capital accumulation that has been dedicated to the maintenance of American hegemony. They serve this function because they have come to believe that the maintenance of American support and primacy is in their best interest as well.

As examples, we can cite the long-term effects of U.S. backing for Israel to the exclusion of serious efforts being made to alleviate the suffering and human rights abuses that have been endured by the Palestinian people. We can cite the U.S. backing of South Africa’s white apartheid regime until the 1980s. U.S. support of South Africa’s apartheid regime continued until a U.S. Senate vote overrode President Reagan’s veto of legislation mandating the implementation of U.S. sanctions against the apartheid state. We can cite the continuous U.S. support of authoritarian states throughout the Middle East, such as Iran under the shah and the royal family of Saudi Arabia as examples of client states of the U.S. Empire doing its bidding and sustaining its hegemony. Whether the architects of U.S. primacy supported these various regimes in order to protect U.S. access to oil, or to guarantee the recycling of petrodollars backed by the U.S. dollar, it is beyond dispute that the projection of American primacy has come at a terrible human cost. The growth of social resistance movements in Palestine (the PLO), in South Africa (the ANC), and the various opposition groups in Saudi Arabia (including Al Qaeda), are all regional expressions of resistance to this system of global apartheid.

Alternative models to superpower hegemony have been developing in opposition to neoliberal globalization. The World Social Forum (WSF), whose first meeting took place in Porto Alegre (Brazil) in January 2001, is, today, one of the most vibrant and eloquent manifestations of the emergence of counterhegemonic globalization. In this new era, the major challenge to be faced by the members of the WSF is the question of how to combine the celebration of diversity with the construction of strong consensus leading to collective action. After all, the WSF is a celebration of diversity. Within this diversity, there are many forces at work that could bring about the fragmentation of the WSF. It is still intact but its future remains uncertain. What is certain, however, is the need of the WSF to both embrace the humanist alternative to worldwide apartheid and also to transcend the nostalgic illusions of the past. The effectiveness perspective is predicated upon being open to the future and seeks to go beyond polarizing forms of globalization in order to construct a new, postcapitalist form of economics and global governance that embraces real equality among peoples, communities, states, and regions. On this matter, it has been suggested that “the alternative to worldwide apartheid is a pluricentric globalization that can ensure different economic and

political relations among regions and countries, less unequal and therefore less unfavorable to those which have suffered the most destructive effects of globalization.”<sup>5</sup>

Uncertainty is reflective of the world economy at the dawn of the twenty-first century. Because of the shifting nature of the processes of globalization and geopolitics, it is an uncertainty born of a paradox—a paradox in which there is a simultaneous integration and fragmentation of the world economy. Driving this paradox are both the centripetal and centrifugal forces of globalization and regionalization. According to James Rosenau, this seeming paradox is more of a dialectic that exists between globalization, on the one hand, and localization, on the other.

The open question is whether the forces moving toward the integration or fragmentation of the world economy can continue to coexist or will one come to dominate? At an even more basic level, the question is “whether the forces moving toward globalization or regionalization will continue to coexist or will one tend to dominate?” In order to even begin to answer these questions, it is essential to delineate exactly what is meant or implied by the phrase “the forces of globalization” and what is meant by the term “regionalization.” To that end, it has been proposed that the following distinctions be made: “Globalization is privileging the modern and post-modern technocracies of each state while marginalizing the traditional tribal, rural, semi-urban and semi-literate populations. In this new ‘order,’ the status of the individual depends largely on whether or not he or she is logged into the global network of state, corporate, academic or criminal organizations.”<sup>6</sup>

What emerges from this definition is the picture of a world that is becoming increasingly unequal under the pressures and processes of globalization. After all, if one is not part of a modern or postmodern network of either organizations or states, then one is not privileged but marginalized. Hence, for the purpose of defining what “the forces of globalization” means in the context of this chapter, it means the growth of inequality within and between

**Table 12.2** The Dynamics and Dialectic of Globalization

DYNAMIC (1)	DYNAMIC (2)
(Identity as sameness)	(Identity as difference)
Markets	Psychic comforts of home
Global civil society	Native culture
Telecommunications	Face-to-face communications
Environmental issues	Neighborhood issues
Currency transfers	Territorial attachments
GLOBALIZATION ←	→ LOCALIZATION (interaction)
Dialectic	

Source: James N. Rosenau, “Distant Proximities: The Dynamics and Dialectics of Globalization,” *International Political Economy: Understanding Global Disorder*, ed. Bjorn Hettne, University Press Limited, 1996, 52.

nations, the marginalization of more traditional populations, and the exclusion of unincorporated groups, social classes, and political parties from having a say in how the state conducts its decision making and how the state distributes public goods and wealth.

To break this analysis down even further, we can take note of the fact that modern and postmodern organizations, corporations, and states are “social constructions.” Social constructions are the result of processes that are based on shared interests as well as intersubjective understandings. This being the case, it follows that social constructions can, and do, change over time. After all, social constructions represent and embody a particular identity. Yet, that identity is not fixed in concrete. Under the combined pressures and processes of globalization the identity of postmodern organizations and states can, and will continue to, evolve as well. As these identities evolve, it follows that the nature and scope of political boundaries, shared interests, and intersubjective understandings will evolve. The same can be said of regions.

Because “regions are almost always more than geopolitical divisions; they are also ‘social constructions’, i.e., processes based on shared interests and inter-subjective understanding. And, just as political boundaries can change, so also may identities shift over time. Therefore ‘regions’ cannot be viewed as empirical certainties.”<sup>7</sup> So, how are we to define “regions” and “regionness”? To begin with, regions must be understood (like the social constructions of globalization and globalization itself) as processes. Regions are not geographical or administrative objects. Rather, they are subjects in the making (or unmaking). Their boundaries are shifting and so is their capacity as actors, which is often referred to as their level “regionness.” Insofar as regions cannot be viewed as empirical certainties, we also find that “the new regionalism is multifarious and its various dimensions are not always or necessarily compatible. Multiple impressions of regionness tend to exist across class, ethnic, cultural and probably generational lines. Moreover, the entangled complex of bottom-up and top-down forces that comprise the new regionalism may often represent competitive and/or conflicting responses to current pressures of globalization.”<sup>8</sup>

Just from looking at the terminology and concepts on this subject, it becomes apparent that there are so many variables associated with this historical phenomenon that we have to speak of, and differentiate, between terms such as “regionalism,” “region-ness,” “regionality,” and “regionalization.” For the sake of definitional clarity, I would like to present the definitions of these terms, as worked out by Marianne Marchand, Morten Boas, and Timothy Shaw:

Regionalism...should be understood in a similar vein as globalization. Regionalism concerns the ideas, identities and ideologies related to a regional project. As such, regionalism is clearly a political project, but it is obviously not necessarily state-led, as states are not the only political actors around...Because of the interactions and deepening of cooperation among regional actors, there is the emergence of something called region-ness or regionality. This concept or



region-ness/regionality has to do with the relative convergence of dimensions such as cultural affinity, political regimes, security arrangements and economic policies (i.e., relative sameness). As such it is the outcome of not one but several processes and involves the creation of a regional identity. Thus the term suggests that the less convergence, the harder it is for a 'regionalization' actor to promote his or her vision of the region.<sup>9</sup>

From this definition, they conclude that "the new regionalism is...associated with and/or caused by the multitude of interrelated structural transformations of the world political economy...the point...is that there is a qualitative difference between the old regionalism of the cold war era and the one that emerged in the late 1980s...Taking new regionalisms seriously implies that actual practices, and not geographical proximity alone or formal political and economic cooperation, will determine the delimitation of the region."<sup>10</sup> The distinction between the "old regionalism" and the "new regionalism" is critical to grasp insofar as it represent a historical dividing line between two different sets of possibilities for world order.

To begin with, the "old regionalism" was a product of the cold war. Hence, the old regionalism was circumscribed by the logic of the cold war. Its logic made Third World states and regions into little more than "spheres of influence" that were supposed to be allied with either the Soviet Union or the United States. This geopolitical arrangement was born of a combination of imperialism, geopolitical rivalry, and the struggle for hegemony over the entire world system. It was also characterized by its rigidity. For example, if a Third World nation sought to abandon its allegiance to one or the other superpower, then it would become the battleground for superpower intervention through surrogates—as happened in the case of Nicaragua when its dictator was deposed and a Marxist political party called the Sandinistas took over the reins of government. The response of the Reagan administration was to engage in "low-intensity" war with the Sandinistas through a CIA-trained army called the "contras." To the Sandinistas, the contras were terrorists. To the Reagan administration, they were "freedom fighters." In either case, the Reagan administration illegally armed the contras through a complex funding scheme in violation of U.S. law. This series of events became known as the Iran-Contra Affair. It was accompanied by other illegal acts such as the CIA mining the harbors of Nicaragua. The World Court eventually heard the case and decided that the United States had violated international law. The Reagan administration chose to ignore the court and its findings. The main point from citing this history is to show that the old regionalism was constrained by the logic of the cold war.

Alternatively, the "new regionalism" is the product of the post-cold war era. It represents the possibility for a new developmental trajectory for politically independent states and regions to cooperate with each other by virtue of their own shared identity, their own ideas, and their own ideologies. This means that the "new regionalism" is largely premised upon the evolution of shared values and goals among a group of actors, which includes states but

is not delimited to states. This is because the new regionalism represents a political project that is undertaken by many different actors. Not only states, but also social, economic, and cultural groups, are all significant actors who are engaged in undertaking interactions that are leading toward the deepening of cooperation among these regional actors. These nonstate actors may also come from different nations, but work together for the sake of developing new international alliances with other states and civil society groups that aspire to build alternatives to neoliberal-led projects that have evolved under the rubric of globalization. When this alternative path is adopted, we find that cooperation then leads to a convergence of interests and identities. This newfound convergence is manifested in high levels of cultural affinity, the development of new security arrangements, a shared commitment to common goals between political regimes as well as a shared commitment to complementary economic policies. When there is such a convergence, we can then speak of the relative sameness of these actors and it is this quality that then creates “region-ness” or “regionality.” In short, the outcome of these processes results in the creation of a regional identity.

Given the numerous definitions offered above, my view is that regionalization represents a new form of global governance that increases exchange, contact, and coordination within a region. The argument that I am making herein is that the processes that are associated with regionalization also have the capacity to liberate millions of people from the repressive policies associated with the exercise of hegemony. It also embodies capacities to help people effectively confront those difficulties that arise from their marginalization as a consequence of the imposition of transnational forms of neoliberal-led globalization. Regionalization is a form of governance that will help to mitigate the damage done by socioeconomic and sociopolitical marginalization because it represents the practice of inclusiveness in cultural, economic, and political affairs. Also, I am arguing that the processes associated with regionalization will be able to achieve both newer and wider levels of inclusiveness because it is a phenomenon that is not conceived of only in economic terms but rather gives equal attention to noneconomic matters that are just as important in shaping policies and political alignments within and between states, civil society, and a variety of nonstate actors.

Whereas the pursuit of hegemony has been a geopolitical project designed to protect, perpetuate, and maintain the status quo (understood as an existing hierarchy of privilege), regionalization is the manifestation of something more than a geopolitical design. By rejecting most of the fundamental assumptions and goals associated with hegemonic projects (which are designed to homogenize people, cultures, and economics), regionalization represents a uniting force for both the evolution of cooperation between regional actors and for the maintenance of diversity among different classes, cultures, and ethnic groups. In this important sense, regionalization has the capacity to effectively protect human rights, whereas the pursuit of hegemonic domination usually denies and violates human rights. As such, regionalization represents a bastion of resistance to hegemonic projects that seek to divide and conquer

**Table 12.3** The Construction and Convergence of Regional Identity

According to the “New Regionalism” of the Post–Cold War

**Regions**

Regions are social constructions. They are not empirical realities, but constantly shifting realities. Their growth is dependent upon mutual cooperation and a convergence of interests between political regimes, security arrangements, and cultural affinity.

**Regionness or Regionality**

Regionness or regionality emerges out of shifting boundaries and capacities among regional actors. These boundaries are established by the level of interaction and cooperation that is achieved between state-led and nonstate actors

**The “New Regionalism”**

The “new regionalism” reflects post–cold war realities. It represents the relationship between ideas, ideologies, and identities as they are related to a regional project. Hence, a regional project that brings these factors together blends class, ethnic, and cultural identities. In short, the new regionalism is able to cut across class, ethnic, and cultural lines. The new regionalism emerges out of the interaction of “bottom-up” forces and “top-down” forces. It can be either competitive or conflicting. It can be influenced by either state-led or nonstate actors. There are four contrasting approaches to regionalism:

1. De facto Regionalism: Informal, market-led, and leading to enhanced economic integration. This is principally rationalist-economic in analytical orientation.
2. De Jure Regionalism: Formal, rule-governed, state-led enhanced institutionalized cooperation. This approach is principally legal-political in analytical orientation.
3. Instrumental Regionalism: Initially informal and interest-led. Built on the identification of the interest to be gained by the development of a common policy toward third parties in a given issue area. This is principally a power politics realist analytical orientation.
4. Cognitive Regionalism: Initially informal. Built on shared cultural, historical and emotional affiliations that distinguish “insiders” from “outsiders.” This is principally sociocultural in analytical orientation.

*Sources:* Marianne H. Marchand, Morten Boas, and Timothy M. Shaw, “The Political Economy of the New Regionalisms,” *Third World Quarterly* 20, no. 5 (October 1999): 900–5; Bjorn Hettne, “Globalism, Regionalism and Inter-regionalism,” in *Globalization, Development and Human Security*, ed. Anthony McGrew and Nana Poku, Polity, 2007, 27–44; Richard Higgott, “Alternative Models of Regional Cooperation? The Limits of Regional Institutionalization in East Asia,” in *European Union and New Regionalism: Regional Actors and Global Governance in a Post-Hegemonic Era*, Second Edition, ed. Mario Telo, Ashgate, 2007, 75–106.

*This table was composed by the author, Terrence E. Paupp*

people. In this sense, the “new regionalism” can be seen as being in opposition to any hegemonic project that attempts to impose a developmental model that results in greater social exclusion and higher levels of inequality. With respect to the exercise of United States hegemony, the emergence of the new regionalism can be seen as a viable alternative to militarism, imperialism, and the neoliberal model of globalization. The following table makes the distinctions that I have discussed about the exercise of U.S. hegemony, in contrast to the processes associated with regionalization.

The most current definition of “regionalism” emerges out of the work developed over the 1990s by Bjorn Hettne and colleagues at the World Institute for Development Economics Research at the United Nations University in Helsinki (WIDER/UNU) and at the Department of Peace and Development

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**Table 12.4** The Exercise of U.S. Hegemony versus the Process of Regionalization

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Hegemony

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U.S.-led hegemony is a global project undertaken with the purpose of global domination in mind. Therefore, its three main characteristics are militarism, imperialism, and the neoliberal model of globalization.

- (a) U.S.-led hegemony produces social marginalization as well as socioeconomic and sociopolitical exclusion within and between nations and regions. U.S.-led hegemony relies on exclusionary state structures throughout the world to enforce its agenda.
- (b) The U.S.-led hegemonic project produces political, economic, and cultural exclusion *because* it is designed to perpetuate, protect, and maintain the power arrangements of the status quo of international privilege.
- (c) If resistance to the U.S. imperial project becomes widespread, then a military response by the United States and its collaborators will result. Otherwise, subordination to the hegemonic agenda will be enforced through the economic discipline imposed by the neoliberal model.

Dynamics of The New Regionalism

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Regionalism is a multifaceted process that mitigates the damage done by hegemonic marginalization and exclusion *because* it represents the practice of inclusiveness in political, economic, and cultural affairs. It undertakes policies and practices that are designed to elicit and sustain mutual cooperation, interdependence, and shared priorities among regional actors. Therefore, regionalism exhibits an inclusive capacity to join together economic and noneconomic factors into a regional project. *An example of this phenomenon is the European Union.*

European integration is a multidimensional process, for it is an attempt to build a real community.

- (a) It includes an ethical dimension that is based on the European welfare state and on the continent's long intellectual tradition of liberal democracy.
- (b) The Europeans did not integrate in order to have a single market; they have created the single market in order to integrate.
- (c) The "European Way" places an emphasis upon accommodating national differences and also cultural differences.
- (d) The European Union is moving toward a "supranational polity" whose purpose is to institutionalize social protection against the contingencies of globalized markets.
- (e) The European Union presupposes international cooperation as a condition of European integration.
- (f) In sum, the European Union is as much an ethical as an economic and political project.
- (g) Given these aforementioned points, the "*new regionalism*" of the post-cold war era has a comparative political advantage, which arises out of its three governing capacities:
  - (1) Efficacy in producing collective action.
  - (2) Identity is the product of voluntary compliance.
  - (3) Legitimacy arises from the fact that it is embedded in the political systems of its members.

Regional Resistance to Hegemony

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There is resistance to the geopolitical designs of a hegemonic state *because* regionalism and regionalization favors the protection and advance of regional priorities and identities. The result is that regionalization is more effective in protecting human rights, expanding equality, and practicing inclusive forms of development.

In this sense, regionalization is one of many forms of "*globalization-from-below*" *because* it tends to be supportive of heterogeneity and diversity. This is in contrast with "*globalization-from-above*," which tends toward homogeneity and unity.

The politics of resistance in this era of globalization are still undergoing transformation but

**Table 12.4** The Exercise of U.S. Hegemony versus the Process of Regionalization (*continued*)

certain essential aspects of it are intact. At its core, a politics of resistance represents a rejection of hierarchical and hegemonic politics (“top-down”), on the one hand, while it embraces various forms of participatory politics (“bottom-up”), on the other. Understood in this way, progressive social forces (*representing* “*globalization-from-below*”) are engaged in shaping efforts to achieve different versions of a governance model that has been referred to as “*inclusionary governance*.”

*Sources:* Terrence E. Paupp, *Achieving Inclusionary Governance: Advancing Peace and Development in First and Third World Nations*, Transnational Publishers, Inc., 2000; Terrence E. Paupp, *Exodus from Empire: The Fall of America's Empire and the Rise of the Global Community*, Pluto, 2007; Richard Falk, “Resisting ‘Globalization-from-Above’ through ‘Globalization-from-Below,’” in *Globalization and the Politics of Resistance*, ed. by Barry K. Gills, foreword by John Kenneth Galbraith, Palgrave, 2001, 46–56; Helge Hveem, “The Regional Project in Global Governance,” in *Theories of New Regionalism: A Palgrave Reader*, ed. Fredrik Soderbaum and Timothy Shaw, Palgrave Macmillan, 2003, 83; Waldemar A. Skrobacki, “The Community of Europe and Globalization,” in *Globalization and Political Ethics*, ed. Richard B. Day and Joseph Masciulli, Brill, 2007, 197–214.

*This table was composed by the author, Terrence E. Paupp.*

Research at Goteborg University (PADRIGU). Their work exists under the title *New Regionalism Approach/Theory* (NRA/T). The NRA/T analyzes regionalization and transnational crossborder flows and interdependencies in a global perspective through historical, multilevel, and multidimensional perspectives. Thus, “regionalization is seen as ‘a complex process of change taking place simultaneously at three levels: the structure of the world system as a whole, the level of inter-regional relations, and the internal pattern of the single region.’ As such this approach represents a clear break with conventional theories about regional integration and cooperation.”<sup>11</sup>

The “new regionalism” involves the intertwined dynamics of regionalization and regionalism. By definition, regionalization refers to the actual process of increasing exchange, contact, and coordination within a given region while regionalism, on the other hand, refers to a program or ideology where there exists the clear idea of a region. This idea also involves the acknowledgment of a shared set of values and goals (which are associated with both a particular project and with an identifiable group of state and nonstate actors). In combination, the dynamics of regionalization and regionalism constitute a broadly inclusive process for governance. This inclusive capacity to join economic and noneconomic factors together gives rise to the new regionalism’s unique capacities, which, in turn, bestows upon regional projects a distinct comparative political advantage. The new regionalism enjoys a distinct comparative political advantage, which arises out of three governing capacities that are of particular importance: (1) its efficacy in producing collective action, (2) its identity is the product of voluntary compliance, and (3) its legitimacy arises from the way in which it is embedded in the political systems of its members.<sup>12</sup>

With these capacities in mind, some scholars have suggested that “the role of international regions could be to become a more effective public institution than each single state in dealing with certain problems associated with global processes, and at the same time represent a level of collective identity

that makes it more legitimate than global institutions.”<sup>13</sup> By valuing regionalism more than “universalism” (the notion of one world, as it were), there are both practical and principled considerations to take into account. For example, the advocates of universalism have argued that globalization has made possible the growing interconnectedness of human societies. In recognizing this new reality, there is now a more profound need to organize economic sanctions against potential aggressors on a worldwide scale. Further, universalists see the possibility that regional organizations may give rise to military rivalries and unconstrained economic competition between regions. Therefore, universalists assert that only a universal organization can provide an adequate check on the power of a large state that may be responsible for dominating the other members of a regional arrangement. This is coupled with the belief that regional resources may be too limited to resolve the problems that the region faces. Taken together, these arguments are the central components of the argument for universalism.<sup>14</sup> The strength of the argument in favor of universalism “lies in its appeal to the solidarity of the human race and, economically, in current trends toward an integrated world market. Its weakness lies in the fact that the cohesion and potential for the integration of any organization diminish, as membership becomes larger, more scattered and diversified.”<sup>15</sup> Additionally, it is possible that the regionalist position may someday be reconciled with the universalist position by stressing the usefulness of regionalism as a stepping stone or intermediary stage in cooperation on the path towards universalism. When viewed in this light, regional agencies can be seen as laboratories for developing habits of cooperation. After consensus is achieved, then global coordination and integration become more feasible.<sup>16</sup>

The advocates of regionalism, on the other hand, have put forward at least five major arguments that support a set of very different assumptions about regionalism’s intrinsic value as a model for governance. Their arguments are outlined in the following table:

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**Table 12.5** Arguments Advocating the Value of Regionalism for Global Governance

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- (1) Universalists fail to take into account the diversity of political, economic, social, and geographical factors throughout the world that prevent a global approach.
  - (2) Common interests, loyalties, traditions, and values, as well as the similarity of national problems, are strong enough to allow for a sense of common involvement and joint responsibility only in limited geographical areas.
  - (3) For that reason, political, economic, and social integration is more easily achieved at a regional than at a global level.
  - (4) Governments are more willing to deal promptly with regional threats to peace than to act on a global scale, since their interests are more directly affected.
  - (5) Nations are not ready to surrender sovereignty for the establishment of global authority that can maintain world peace and promote the general welfare.
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Source: Alfred van Staden, *Between the Rule of Power and the Power of Rule: In Search of an Effective World Order*, Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2007, 43–44.

In my view, the significance of this theory and its implications gives rise to the possibility of developing a new vocabulary and new international structures for the reintegration of world order. It is to this subject that I now turn.

### DEVELOPING A NEW VOCABULARY AND NEW INTERNATIONAL STRUCTURES FOR THE REINTEGRATION OF WORLD ORDER

For the conceptual purpose of identifying the actual forces at work behind the pursuit of the American hegemony and the enduring primacy of the U.S. Empire, it would be helpful to begin by changing (or expanding) some of the vocabulary and concepts used to depict world order and international relations. Such a change in the vocabulary is also necessary for the sake of identifying alternative interpretations to describe the exact nature and character of current regional and world orders. To this end, therefore, I would suggest that we employ the use of the evolving concepts such as the **disintegration** and **fragmentation** of world order. Let us examine the concept of **fragmentation** first. The nature of this **fragmentation** is twofold.

First, we find that the fragmentation of world order is operative in the current system of power relations—which is still largely based on the dominant role of a U.S.-centered hegemony. However, we also are discovering that the old conceptual paradigms about the exercise of international and national power do not fit with the new realities of world order that have developed since the 1970s. Objectively speaking, the world of the early twenty-first century is one in which older paradigms regarding the necessity of state having to constantly seek a “balance of power” have become rather outdated and anachronistic. Richard Little has noted that “even the most casual survey of the literature on the balance of power quickly confirms...that while the concept is long established and deeply entrenched so too is the criticism directed at the concept.”<sup>17</sup> Fredrick the Great acknowledged in his Confessions that although “balance is a word that has subdued the whole world,” it has to be accepted that “in truth this same balance is no more than a bare word, an empty sound.” In the centuries sense this observation, reassessments of the role played by the “balance of power” concept have ranged from calling it a meaningless concept that served to “inhibit thought” to asserting that there are “so many theories and renditions of the concept that it ends up essentially meaningless.”<sup>18</sup>

Tragically, despite these observations and insights, the majority of elites within the U.S. foreign policy establishment have clung to the concept during the entire post-1945 era. Hence, “the United States has consistently pursued a grand strategy that has opposed a return to global multi-polarity and has aimed instead at global hegemony.”<sup>19</sup> Yet, the reality of the early twenty-first century is that the operations and practices of the nation-state system as well as traditional conceptions of national sovereignty are undergoing a process of being transformed by the rise of new sites of power and power relationships. The ensuing fragmentation of the hegemonic order that has

existed in reconstituted form since the 1970s is in the process of dissolving. Whether the United States acknowledges it or not, American hegemony is at an end and “what we have today, for the first time in history, is a global multicivilizational, multipolar battle.”<sup>20</sup> The United States must now learn to live in a new geopolitical marketplace alongside the world’s two other superpowers: the European Union and China. They are the new “Big Three” and “lying alongside and between the Big Three, second-world countries are the swing states that will determine which of the superpowers has the upper hand for the next generation of geopolitics.”<sup>21</sup>

Second, the fragmentation of world order is also found in the **disintegration** of many precapitalist societies and forms of production. This is the case insofar as many of the older forms of economic and social life have only recently been penetrated by global capitalism. In this regard, both Mexico and Russia would qualify as being examples. Both Russia and Mexico have much in common insofar as the penetration of these economies by transnational capitalist and multinational corporations has largely been accomplished by the rather recent imposition of the economic requirements contained in the neoliberal model (i.e., the “*Washington Consensus*”).<sup>22</sup> Following neoliberal logic and its demands has involved the removal of state protections and regulatory frameworks from the conduct of national life. In this situation, even a former superpower such as Russia, as well as Third World states and subordinated social groups, have become susceptible to manipulation and exploitation for elite profit (*both foreign and domestic*).<sup>23</sup>

At the same time, while neoliberal requirements have been imposed upon the peasantry and farmers of Latin America, we also find that a contrary process has been undertaken by social movements that have found themselves trapped by neoliberal agrarian policies. Their opposition to U.S.-led and corporate-sponsored agribusiness has been responsible for the revival of rural militancy. Important social movements and organizations have emerged such as Mexico’s Zapatistas (Ejercito Zapatista de Liberacion Nacional or EZLN) and Brazil’s Landless Workers Movement (Movimento de Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra or MST).<sup>24</sup> These are groups, social movements, and social classes that are opposed to the arbitrary **disintegration** of their autonomy, as well as traditional frameworks of political, social, and economic relations that guaranteed their livelihoods and the recognition of fundamental human rights. It is the experience of this larger process of social disintegration and disenfranchisement that has led to a global crisis.

Those at the bottom of the socioeconomic hierarchy have found themselves adrift in a situation where their historic and traditional social, political, and economic structures have been taken hostage by new forms of corporate-capitalist domination. This has been especially the case with respect to the dynamics of foreign direct investment (FDI). Commenting on this phenomenon, James Petras and Henry Velmeyer have noted, “Because the negative economic, social and political costs of foreign investment (FI) are so evident to increasing numbers of people it is a major detonator of mass social movements, even revolutionary struggles, as in Bolivia during 2005.



Since FI is a direct result of political decisions adopted at the highest level of government, mass social struggles are as much or even more so directed against the incumbent political regime responsible for promoting FI. The increasing turn of social movements toward political struggles for state power is directly related to the increasing recognition that political power and FI are intimately connected. In the twentieth century, at least in Latin America, all of the electoral regimes which have been overthrown by popular majorities, had deep structural links to FI: Gutierrez in Ecuador, Sanchez de Losada and Mesa in Bolivia, and Fujimori in Peru.<sup>25</sup> In a rather revealing statement made during a speech at the Latin American Studies Association, Montreal, September 6, 2007, Bolivia's vice president, Alvaro Garcia Linera, stated, "We as a government do not seek to lead the social movements—we seek to be led by them."<sup>26</sup>

Clearly, the rebellion of social movements has been necessary because there has been no mitigation of damages caused by this hostile takeover of nation-states and governments by multinational corporations. As a result, social movements have arisen to remove governments that have collaborated with foreign corporations when those corporations have embarked on policies that were detrimental to the citizenry. Yet, once these capitalist forces have been removed, the struggle is far from over. Much is left to be resolved. But this much is clear: "Resistance struggles against neoliberalism, by moving from social to political struggle, have forged a new strategy for the left of the continent...It would be difficult for this post-neoliberalism to become socialist, but it definitely can and should be anti-capitalist."<sup>27</sup>

In addition to these trends of fragmentation and disintegration are the globalizing and hegemonic forces associated with **global integration**—transnational capitalist forms of corporate globalization. With the advancement and encirclement of globalization's integrative effects, this transformative process has placed large segments of the world's population into even more firmly fixed positions of subordination. These encircled and subordinated populations are diametrically opposed to the imposition of American hegemony and the corresponding rules of global capitalism as defined by transnational capitalist elites. Out of this struggle there is a new dialectic that has emerged that places the forces of **global capitalist integration**, on the one hand, against newly emergent forms of opposition—progressive social movements and classes that are victimized by **socioeconomic disintegration**, on the other.

As globalization and neoliberalism have progressed, the subordination of these populations and classes has created a steady increase in social and economic inequalities. As this process has transpired, the democratic capacity of people to reclaim their own destiny has been shattered. Therefore, in order to take back their power, or to assert it for the first time, a growing popular opposition in the form of class-based social movements has been at work, actively demanding that their governments seek out ways to withdraw from the grasp of both American hegemony and transnational corporate capitalist structures that detract from projects of genuine national development. They are discovering that this effort to seek a radical withdrawal from their current status of subordination will necessitate a strategy that actively embraces

both **regionalism** and **regionalization**. In truth, this “discovery” is actually a “rediscovery” of the advice given in 1974 by Rajni Kothari, the founder and director of the Center for the Study of Developing Societies in Delhi. As early as 1974, he advocated the adoption of the regional model by Third World peoples. He noted, “The regional model proposed by us should not be viewed as a mechanical development of a territorial type but rather as growth that is *sui generis*, based on a sense of common historical roots, common stake in the present and common destiny in the future. It should be looked upon as a consequence of a political movement, not just of economic or administrative convenience. For without a felt need based in a consciousness that is *national* in the best tradition of that term, without determination of finding a way out of common bondage and humiliation, and without a strong sense of community of interest, the kind of steps towards territorial reconstruction proposed by us as a means of putting an end to the present structure of dominance will not be possible, or even if possible at one time will not be enduring.”<sup>28</sup> The rediscovery of Kothari’s truth-claim about the necessity of the regional model has been resurrected and has energized global consciousness. The World Social Forum’s slogan that “Another world is possible” has resonated around the globe. In reaction to that call, the Zapatistas have added their own call for “a world within which many worlds will fit.” In my judgment, this vision of the Zapatistas is what the promise of regionalism and regionalization is all about.

### The Promise of Regionalization and Regionalism

Regionalization should be understood as a movement of two or more societies, or two or more economies, toward greater integration with one another. This amounts to what I term “**social re-integration**.” In other words, after having experienced social, political, and economic disintegration through the adoption of the neoliberal model, the rejection of this model now opens the door for the **reintegration** of social and economic life under different terms—terms that are more favorable to the affected communities, classes, and the larger civil society. In its initial stages, this process of reintegration constitutes a process of discovery into the “limits of the possible.” While alternatives to the status quo are clearly needed, there remains an open question. The question is, “How far and to what extent progressive and regional alternative models can be introduced into the emerging multipolar world order of the twenty-first century?” The answer to this question will provide the answer to our inquiry about the “limits of the possible.”

Ultimately, as we explore this emerging matrix of international order, we will come to discover the “limits of the possible” in the reconstitution of world order. There should be little doubt but that this journey *beyond the limits of the possible* will serve to identify transformative boundary changes between regions and identities. It will be a journey that inaugurates new political processes and newly articulated forms of consciousness. Both the ideology of regionalism and the practices of regionalization will increasingly come to define the core of this emerging world order. Whatever the final

form that this newly reintegrated world order takes, there is little question but that it shall operate on terms that will not be dictated by a new version of the "Washington Consensus." Rather, the nature of this emerging world order will be determined by the interactions and interrelationships of a world of rising regions. Therefore, we need to come to understand that an evolving world order of multicentric regional powers has begun the process of placing human history on a new trajectory.

What is the nature of this new trajectory? To begin with, it has been evolving ever since the "Wilsonian moment" of 1919 when nationalist calls for self-determination became so loud that even European imperialists could hear it. It has been rearticulated at the Bandung Conference of 1959 and rearticulated again in both the Non-Aligned Nations Movement (NAM) and the Third World's call for a New International Economic Order (NIEO) in the 1970s. Put simply, this trajectory is being constantly empowered to "move toward political integration that, while respecting cultural plurality, derives strength from the need to forge a sense of regional nationalism and common destiny."<sup>29</sup> For example, we can cite the aspirations of the peoples of Asia as they have been expressed under the rubric of the "Asian Way." In regard to general principles, the "Asian Way" is largely a recognition that there must be "Asian solutions to Asian problems," a slogan popularized by Japan in the 1920s but also a tenet of Thai foreign policy. In fact, "the phrase "Asia for the Asians," used by Claro Recto of the Philippines, conveys a similar view that the outsider is viewed as having too marginal an interest or understanding of Asian problems to be in a position to make a genuine contribution to Asia, except under very limited and temporary circumstances."<sup>30</sup>

The clash between the "Asian Way" and the West can easily be traced back to at least the year 1947, which marked the birth of the UN Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East (ECAFE). ECAFE was known as "the economic parliament of Asia." At that time, "the nature of the rhetoric in ECAFE, Western-oriented and, dominated as it then was, contrasted with the more relaxed diplomacy conducted bilaterally within and between Asian countries, often inspired by Buddhist, Confucian, Hindu, Muslim, and other indigenous influences. The tradition of sharp disputation in the West clashed with the Asian need to save face, for example."<sup>31</sup> Throughout the 1950s, a process of unlearning Western practices came to be associated with a rediscovery of more traditional Asian methods for conflict resolution. In time, the new style of diplomacy emerged, which was described as the "Asian Way." No one single individual can be credited with codifying or defining the Asian Way. Neither can any speeches or writings from major figures of the period, such as U Nyun or Thanat Khoman, provide any substantive clues. That is because the Asian Way appears to have been the product of a synthesis of many traditional approaches.<sup>32</sup>

Before 1951, Western countries and their colonies had more votes in ECAFE than the Asian countries themselves. Further, they insisted on controlling the outcomes of the meeting by overparticipating in debates, calling for votes, and pressuring Asian countries into adopting particular positions. As a

consequence, ECAFE was largely unable to act in an effective manner for the best interests of the people of Asia. The Lahore Convention sought to end this manner of Western interference by declaring, "the time has come when clearer recognition should be given to the principle that member countries belonging to the region should make their own decisions in the Commission on their own economic problems...In pursuance of this principle the member countries of the Commission not in the region would be willing, as a general rule, to refrain from using their votes in opposition to economic proposals predominantly concerning the region which had the support of a majority of the countries of the region."<sup>33</sup>

Writing in 1974 from a more global perspective on the Third World's assertion of self-reliance, Rajni Kothari observed that it was necessary to realize that "the need for such integration is much greater among the states of Southeast Asia, South Asia, Latin America, the Middle East, Eastern and Western Africa, and the West Indies if they are ever to acquire a sense of autonomy and undertake a concerted plan for the well-being of their peoples."<sup>34</sup> Acquiring this sense of autonomy from Western hegemonic dictates and building the capacity to undertake a concerted plan of action for the well-being of a region's peoples is what lies at the heart of the regionalization project and provides it with its ultimate rationale. To that end, many have argued that it would be better for the smaller states to be influenced by a regional power than to face "dominance by a big power that has global considerations and has little...sensitivity for local aspirations."<sup>35</sup> To understand this basic assumption is to understand why U.S. hegemony is unacceptable and why the paths of regionalism and regionalization are to be preferred. It is in this sense that regionalism and regionalization constitute a new historical trajectory. It is a new trajectory because it reflects the logic and perspectives of a Posthegemonic Era.

An historical turning point has been reached in the evolution of human affairs and world power arrangements. The nature of this turning point is discovered on the trajectory of a globally constituted historical process that is not the product of any one nation. It is not the product of hegemony but rather points toward the replacement of hegemony with something else. It is the consequence of a historical process that involves the unstoppable rise of regional alliances between China, North/South and East Asia, in addition to Africa, Russia, India, Latin America, and the European Union. Probably what remains most unique about this emerging new Posthegemonic Era is that it is only partially premised on economic and military calculations. There is a different notion of what constitutes human security and it is a notion that transcends traditional conceptions of world order. At its center, the Posthegemonic Era will exhibit the harmonization of a diversity of ethical, cultural, and social traditions. The regional and global security structures of this new era shall be defined by their fidelity to shared ethical and cultural visions for the human future. As a result, we shall witness the birth of a much more humane and inclusive future for human governance. It will be a Posthegemonic future that recognizes the preeminent principle of unity in diversity.<sup>36</sup>

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## CONCLUSION



# THE BIRTH OF A MULTICENTRIC WORLD ORDER

*The Soviet Union is no more and the United States no longer has the power, the money, or the will to impose its order on the world-system. It is still the strongest single power, but being the strongest is far from being hegemonic.<sup>1</sup>*

—Immanuel Wallerstein

*At the start of the new millennium the far-reaching social and economic effects of transnational regulatory frameworks and global capital flows, and the discourses of 'globalization,' have gravely undermined democratic accountability and national economic sovereignty. The spontaneous operation of market forces continues to generate wealth at one pole and poverty at the other, further rigidifying economic inequality between the major world zones. A more equitable and sustainable system of growth requires complex international cooperation and social arrangements that involve the collective transformation of center-periphery relations...No alternative to global neo-liberalism can hope to be credible if it fails to come to terms with the historical legacy and contemporary agony of this zone of humanity.<sup>2</sup>*

—Fouad Makki

*The proponents of 'globalization' as synonymous with trade liberalization and free markets are...at pains to chalk out the advantages and opportunities the process offers, primarily for growth and poverty reduction, ignoring the manifold social and political tensions and the limitations of the approach... Current development strategy therefore boils down to maximizing the opportunities and minimizing the risks from globalization...The choice is not between autarky and openness, but in how far to accept the externally defined parameters of development.<sup>3</sup>*

—Nasreen Khundker

*There is...another type of asymmetrical approach that weaker states and groups might adopt against entrenched powers, a non-hostile approach that we can think of as 'stealthy non-compliance.' This form of asymmetry involves the states of the South seeking to limit the West's trade and technology advantage by individually feigning compliance with the existing principles, norms, rules, and decisional calculus, and by collectively working to reconfigure the nature and objectives of the trade and technology regimes.<sup>4</sup>*

—Rubin Patterson

The collective transformation of center-periphery relations is the central issue that must be addressed in the formulation of strategies, policies, and regional formations for the future of global relations. Not only will the relationship between the Global North and the Global South have to change, but the entire future of global relations will have to be predicated upon the ability of different classes, cultures, nations, and regions to construct and to respect their self-chosen regional configurations. Those patterns of power, conduct, and behavior that are deemed to be supportive for the health and integrity of these regional configurations need to be centered on the capacity of the international community to assure accountability for the longevity and vitality of these configurations. Regional configurations are an increasingly prominent feature of world politics. Some are highly legalistic and bureaucratic while others are informal and flexible. Regardless of these distinctions, the primacy significance of them is that they signal the move from bipolarity toward a multicentric or multipolar world order. New divisions of power and of labor are key indicators that this “new regionalism” points toward the future of what global relations will become with the relative decline of American hegemony.<sup>5</sup>

In the midst of a collapsing American hegemony that has been historically predicated on the fantasy of seemingly endless U.S. global dominance, the inauguration of a Posthegemonic Era represents a radical historical break with the past. This Posthegemonic Era—defined as a multicentric world of regional orders—posits a different set of *world order values* and *priorities*.<sup>6</sup> For example, since the 1970s, neoliberalism has been the U.S.-backed ideology and practice of the dominant classes of the developed and developing worlds alike. The alliance between these dominant classes has been a major source of exploitation of the dominated.<sup>7</sup> In contrast, the values, norms, and priorities of this rising Posthegemonic Era of multicentric regional orders will be a democratizing alternative and determinative in the process of shaping the future of all global relations. It will be an era more in line with the “cosmopolitan peace thesis” because it treats peace as an attribute of order and views order as a complex, region-based composite of political, economic and cultural factors.<sup>8</sup> To fail to see this clearly is to fail to see the future—at least a workable future for the international community. In that key regard this book has argued that two central points need to be addressed.

First, the *world order values* of this emerging Posthegemonic Era should be appreciated as necessarily being centered upon cooperation and mutuality. To

that end, it will be an era defined both by a global respect for human rights and by the extension of a workable global framework for the attainment of socioeconomic justice so that poverty becomes an historical memory—not a persistent problem.<sup>9</sup> Connected to this agenda are the interrelated challenges of climate change and global warming and new forms of South-South cooperation. For example, since 2006, the world has seen economic power shift from the developed world to China and other emerging markets. As China's economy continues to grow, it will help pull other emerging economies along. Andre Gunder Frank noted, "'Leadership' of the world system—more than 'hegemony'—has been temporarily 'centered' in one sector and region (or a few), only to shift again to one or more others. That happened in the nineteenth century, and that appears to be happening again at the beginning of the twenty-first century, as the 'center' of the world economy seems to be shifting back to the 'East.'"<sup>10</sup>

In this new era, regionalism and regionalization will play critically important and defining roles, thereby contributing to America's hegemonic decline.<sup>11</sup> In this new international environment, regionalism (conceptual and theoretical) refers to a program, an ideology, to a situation where there exists a clear idea of a region as well as a shared set of goals and values associated with a specific project that an identifiable group of actors wish to realize. Regionalization (the actualization of the concept and theory of regionalism) is the actual process of increasing exchange, contact, and coordination within a given region. These terms are more precise than "globalization" insofar as "regionalization is a strong force that has and will continue to effect standards of living throughout the world. Regionalization will shift the balance of economic power away from the U.S. and toward Europe and Asia. The process has already begun and it will gain momentum, dragging down average U.S. incomes even further."<sup>12</sup> As of 2004, approximately half of the world's trade is intraregional integration agreements (RIAs). Virtually all 146 members of the World Trade Organization are partners in at least one RIA. Regionalism in the Asia-Pacific and in Latin America has allowed for better integration with the global economy as more regions have become increasingly active participants in the global economy, trading systems, and trade regulatory functions.<sup>13</sup> When juxtaposed to the losses in the U.S. banking system and the start of a U.S. recession in 2008, it is clear that there are cracks in the financial edifice of the dollar empire insofar as the credit crisis has led to speculative sell-offs of the dollar. Taken together, these are further examples of America's hegemonic decline.<sup>14</sup>

Second, the *priorities* of the Posthegemonic Era will ultimately revolve around building an institutional bulwark against old hegemonic inclinations and replacing them with institutional structures and norms that advance and sustain national and international accountability. After all, while hegemony will not define the future of global relations, the fact remains that some states will have different economic and political capacities. Given this difference in capacity, it follows that a more precise and defined set of international



accords and principles need to be put into place that will have the collective support of the international community so as to empower the UN and the Security Council in their ability to restrain the actions of any powerful state or group of states that might attempt to act outside of the mandate of the UN Charter.<sup>15</sup>

It is in this larger context that the *Principle of Hegemonic State Accountability* remains as a principle for the governance of global relations. This is because even after the United States is no longer a functional hegemonic power that does not mean it will not be tempted to reassert itself in ways reminiscent of the illegalities of the Bush-II years.<sup>16</sup> Therefore, it should be understood that there are two complementary aspects to the PHSA. On the one hand, the PHSA should still retain a negative or restraining force upon the exercise of unilateral national power. Yet, on the other hand, the PHSA also has the capacity to demand accountability from all nations for the actions of every nation and regional grouping in an evolving multicentric world order.

Therefore, the PHSA should remain as a vital principle through which the UN and regional structures, and nation-states, can effectively constrain and direct the ways in which force and political and economic power is employed. When understood and appreciated in this light, the PHSA can continue to play a positive role for coordinating and advancing global efforts designed to protect the environmental integrity of the planet, monitor state and regional efforts dedicated to furthering a planetary respect for human rights, and act as a barrier against genocide. Hence, the PHSA can ultimately serve as a shaping force that can actively promote the inculcation of national, regional, and international practices that can effectively assure accountability at every level of this emerging global system of governance.

To that end, Professor Brian Foley has advanced a brilliant proposal dealing with an enduring international problem regarding state practice and conduct with respect to the use of force. Like Richard Falk and I, Foley views the U.S. wars against Afghanistan and Iraq as either violations of international law or a radical modification of that law through state practice. Therefore, he has proposed a more precise series of steps be enforced through the UN Security Council that would provide better guidance for the international law that controls the resort to and use of force by either the UN or a single nation.

He proposes three steps in making that evaluation: “(1) whether the situation to be addressed falls within the category of situations where force is one of the allowable responses; if so, (2) whether force is a necessary response, that is, whether meaningful alternatives to force exist; and (3) whether the force used as a response complies with the norms of military necessity, proportionality and discrimination.” Fundamentally, he proposes a modification of the laws concerning the use of force by focusing on steps two and three “because these steps can serve, prospectively, to prevent the automatic and undisciplined use of force in response to a crisis or attack.”<sup>17</sup>

The first step of this process asks the threshold question, “*Does the problem to be solved fall within a category where force may be a permissible response?*”

Chapter VII of the UN Charter outlines the Security Council's approach and it can be read as requiring a thinking process.<sup>18</sup> Step two asks, "*Is force necessary?*"<sup>19</sup> This inquiry leads to the search for alternatives. The customary law of self-defense requires individual nations to search for alternatives to force. Had the Bush-II administration adhered to this requirement, the Iraq War could have been easily avoided. Undertaking a thinking inquiry for alternatives would have also forced the United States to ask, "Can the harms caused by the use of force be prevented or limited?" This question was altogether ignored by the Bush-II administration.

What Foley proposes is that some serious problems need to be addressed, including (1) lack of guidance for the Security Council's search for alternatives,<sup>20</sup> and (2) lack of guidance for individual nations to consider alternatives to force for self-defense.<sup>21</sup> Foley suggests that these problems find their solutions in requiring all decision makers to engage in thinking techniques that can improve the search for alternatives to force. These problems can begin to be addressed simply by "requiring strict adherence to the capabilities and tools that already exist in the UN to help resolve disputes."<sup>22</sup> But, even beyond this, the processes of thinking and conflict prevention and preventive diplomacy should not end at that point. Rather, "the Security Council should '*judicialize*' its decision making, that is, show the thinking behind its conclusions regarding the use of force. The Security Council could be required to prepare a document on the necessity of the use of force in a particular instance."<sup>23</sup> Further, such a document could be styled as findings of fact and conclusions of law, as used in the U.S. legal system. If this process were taken seriously as a matter of practice, "such a document could be required even after the fact, if time constraints made it impossible or unduly burdensome to write it before force was used." In any case, "a characteristic of competent problem-solving (as well as critical thinking) is asking the rights questions."<sup>24</sup> Asking the right questions is something that neither the Bush-II administration nor its intellectual and political apologists attempted to do. Why?

Throughout this book, I have referred to the U.S. primacy coalition. It is made up of national security state bureaucrats, political leaders, and members of the military-industrial complex. Yet, it also includes intellectuals, professors, and journalists who have been unapologetically committed to the idea of U.S. hegemony, of endless United States primacy, and the illusion of America's capacity to exercise global domination. The advocates of the American hegemonic doctrine may be placed into three categories: (1) neo-conservatives, (2) democratic hegemonists, and (3) liberal imperialists.

The neoconservative advocates, such as Michael Ledeen, Francis Fukuyama, Norman Podhoretz, and Charles Krauthammer all share the same positions: an undying adherence to unipolarity, the endless drive for U.S. hegemony, the need to ignore international law, their rejection of multilateralism, and their contempt for the UN. Many of them participated in authoring the infamous Project for the New American Century (PNAC). The democratic hegemonists count among their advocates Ivo Daalder, James Lindsay, Anne-Marie Slaughter, and John Ikenberry. Their arguments overlap with

those of the liberal imperialists who want to replace sovereignty with human rights because both groups endorse the invasion of sovereign states. They try to justify this position by arguing that the United States and its allies have a duty to invade, occupy, and govern failed states. So, they endorse a doctrine of preemption and hide behind the fig leaf of humanitarian intervention. This is what is shared in common between the democratic hegemonists and the liberal imperialists, whose advocates include Niall Ferguson, Michael Ignatieff, Peter Beinart, and Paul Berman. What all three groups have in common are shared values that favor U.S. primacy and hegemony, a concern with power and not peace. Finally, they all invoke the protection of human rights as a pretext to achieve strategic or commercial goals.<sup>25</sup> These are the exceptions they wish to see written into international law. Falk's response to this claim is prescient when he notes, "so long as the power of exception is a matter of decision by hegemonic government, the limitations associated with the constraining guidelines are not likely to inhibit discretionary wars."<sup>26</sup> It is for this reason that I have proposed the *Principle of Hegemonic State Accountability* (PHSA) and argue for its indefinite use into the future of global relations.

Hence, my proposed PHSA is designed to expose the hypocrisy of those members of the U.S. primacy coalition who seek to use the notion of humanitarian intervention and human rights as a fig leaf for continued U.S. hegemony—as exemplified in the call for interventionism, preemptive wars, and an aggressive foreign policy that was condemned at Nuremberg and prohibited by the principles enumerated in the Nuremberg Charter. Further, the UN Charter provides for a principled and effective path of accountability for all nations vis-à-vis the UN Security Council. While the Security Council stands in need of some basic reforms—such as the fact that the composition of the council should be changed to reflect current realities and that the veto power enjoyed by the Security Councils Permanent Five Members could be eliminated—I would argue that it is still a better place to oversee this transitional period historical period of the crumbling walls of the American Hegemon.

However, foreign policy heavyweights on both the Left and Right are now calling for a new "League of Democracies." One day, they say, it could replace the UN. But such a plan rests on the false assumption that democracies inherently work well together—or that anyone else besides the United States thinks it is a good idea. As Thomas Carothers notes, "by proposing yet another U.S.-led, democracy focused global initiative reflects an almost willful obliviousness to how such an idea would be perceived and received outside the United States."<sup>27</sup> Such an idea is just another extension of the imperial mind-set that has dominated the U.S. primacy coalition in order to continue the pursuit of hegemony even as it crumbles around them.

At the other extreme, there is Richard Haas, President of the Council on Foreign Relations. In addressing the question of what will follow U.S. dominance, he argues that "the principal characteristic of 21st century international relations is turning out to be non-polarity: a world dominated not by one or two or even several states but rather by dozens of actors possessing and exercising various kinds of power."<sup>28</sup> In this regard, he lumps together

not only the six major world powers but also a good many international organizations and NGOs. This is an approach that stands in stark contrast to my depiction of a multipolar or multicentric world of regional orders that are coming into being under the ideological rubric of regionalism and being birthed into existence by the practices and processes associated with the growing phenomenon of “regionalization.” So, where Haas finds an emerging era of “nonpolarity,” I have articulated the evolution of a multicentric world of regions that will replace and surpass the drive for U.S. hegemony by building what I call a “Posthegemonic Era.” Where Haas describes the development of “non-polar disorder” and argues that “the increasing non-polar world will have mostly negative consequences for the U.S.—and for much of the rest of the world as well,”<sup>29</sup> I argue the opposite. I argue that a multicentric world of regional orders will be premised on greater levels of cooperation and, at the same time, will effectively accommodate a postimperial America into its scheme and ordering.

There are many historical trends that are leading both the United States and regional organizations in a multicentric world of regional orders into a Posthegemonic Era. Among these trends are the rejection of the neoliberal economic model and the political agenda of neoconservatives. This rejection has led to the growth of regional alliances and international alliances. China and India are emerging as the great powers of the twenty-first century.<sup>30</sup> Latin America is a regional center for international investment.<sup>31</sup> The European Union is a regional model for the rest of the world.<sup>32</sup> Rising levels of prosperity in Asia are accompanied by a rejection of U.S. interventionism.<sup>33</sup> The growth rate of emerging economies has surged to around 7 percent. Emerging economies have large foreign exchange reserves—not less than three-quarters of the global total. During the Bush-II years, China and India added more to global GDP than America. In fact, America’s importance as an engine of global growth has been exaggerated. Since 2000, its share of world imports has dropped from 19 percent to 14 percent. America’s current account deficit has started to shrink, meaning that it is no longer pulling the rest of the world along. Since 2006, throughout the Global South, moves have been made to tighten existing investment rules to regulate foreign investments and protect “strategic sectors” from foreign investors. Unlike the 1990s, today the costs and benefits of foreign direct investment (FDI) are being evaluated in a more balanced manner that includes social, political, and strategic factors—not just economic ones.<sup>34</sup>

Further evidence of an emerging Posthegemonic Era is found in the reality that the EU can shoulder greater defense burdens, even as China and India emerge as great powers. Regional organizations fill the power gap as U.S. hegemony declines and its primacy comes to a close. The era of U.S. domination is ending as the Asian Century is beginning to emerge.<sup>35</sup> The growing strength of regional organizations is creating a world order of enhanced mutual cooperation for common purposes. For example, China, the United States, and the Middle East have a triangular relationship so that if any one of the three sides of this triangular relationship is unhappy, it has the power to

make the other two unhappy as well.<sup>36</sup> In this new geopolitical environment, diplomacy and dialogue must of necessity begin the task of replacing unilateralism.<sup>37</sup> Consensual governance among regional and international actors in alliance structures that increase trade and investment for the sake of genuine national and regional development are the pragmatic antidotes to neoconservative and neoliberal economic models.<sup>38</sup>

Latin American nations are rejecting U.S.-backed Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) more frequently.<sup>39</sup> The U.S. will continue to push for FTAs but will face growing opposition because of their negative impact in effectuating higher levels of domestic inequality across all of Latin America. The Andean countries (Ecuador and Peru) will be forced to democratize their respective participatory frameworks for decision making. In turn, the United States will be forced to accommodate radical changes to FTAs that have left millions of citizens out of the participatory framework. As Professor Timothy Canova has observed on the effects of the U.S.-dominated system of global finance in general: “the global monetary system, and the IMF in particular, systematically subordinates entire nations of color. Such systematic subordination generates literally millions of unheard stories of oppression, but these stories are often marginalized, ignored, or pathologized by the way that dominant discourse blames the victim.”<sup>40</sup> Appropriately, Canova recognizes that “the IMF’s structural adjustment punishment should be seen as a direct threat to Latin America’s cultural values. The IMF’s one-size-fits-all solution of downward adjustment has a leveling effect on local political cultures and social progress.”<sup>41</sup>

To counter these debilitating policies associated with the project of U.S. hegemony, Latin America embraces Mercosur and the Andean Community free trade organizations, which can easily promote greater regional integration. Guaranteeing fairness and inclusiveness to sectors of the populace not favored by past FTAs shows that these regions have learned that equitable development and democratization must accompany all approaches to economic liberalization. It is in both U.S. and Latin American interests to promote poverty reduction and long-term stability through greater inclusiveness of previously excluded sectors.

Additionally, the Bank of the South (*Banco del Sur*) is becoming the primary development bank for South America. It is designed to advance regional integration in the spirit of the more regional-centric Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas (ALBA). Due to these advances, the IMF and World Bank will continue diminish in importance throughout Latin America and the rest of the Global South. This trend is already evident in Southeast Asia thanks to the vision of an ASEAN Economic Community. The ten-member Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) has brought forward the planned deadline for the establishment of an ASEAN Economic Community from its original date of 2020 to 2015.<sup>42</sup>

In light of these trends it seems certain that the crumbling walls of American hegemony will be forced to accommodate a rising multicentric world of

regional orders. Yet, given the historical record, I am compelled to conclude that the U.S. Empire will not go quietly into the night of its imperial sunset. Rather, its political and military elites still seem dedicated to their conception of American primacy and its continuation into the twenty-first century. Associated with them is a class of transnational capitalist elites composed of banking, corporate, and financial interests that want to continue their global reign under the military auspices of the U.S. Empire. To both sets of elites, I would offer the following warning, taken from the writing of Petras and Veltmeyer: “*Empire building is the result of deliberate, calculated acts and improvised interventions in circumstances and contingencies, which are out of the control of imperial elites. Imperial policymakers utilize a vast array of policy tools in destroying adversaries and supporting clients, but they neither control all political resources nor dominate the conditions or social forces which act against them.*”<sup>43</sup> To this observation we may also note that the 2008 domestic economy of the United States has been placed in the throes of a serious meltdown, largely due to years of unrestrained financial deregulation. The U.S. citizenry and its elites are in the process of being forced to confront the following reality: “*Even those who favor the prevailing free-market dogma may well remember that a democracy that lacks effective and informed public debate during times of crisis is no longer master of its own fate, but an organism at the mercy of outside forces.*”<sup>44</sup> For the future of American hegemony, it appears that these lessons are being learned too late.

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# NOTES

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# INDEX

- Aeschylus (*Agamemnon*), 52  
Afghanistan, 122, 148, 158–60  
Africa, xvi, 99–100  
African National Congress (ANC), 109, 215  
Algiers Declaration of the Rights of Peoples (1976), 9, 115–16  
Allawi, Ali A., 174  
Alliant Techsystems, 121  
Allott, Philip, 113  
Al Qaeda, 148, 158, 161  
American Century, 1  
American empire, 122, 125–26  
American hegemon (as neither benign nor benevolent), 71  
American primacy coalition, xx  
Amin, Samir, 174–75  
Amsden, Alice, 116  
Argentina, 104, 117  
Art, Robert J., 142  
ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA), 72  
ASEAN-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership (AJCEP), 2  
ASEAN Plus Three (China, Japan, and South Korea), 2, 84–85  
ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), 2, 238  
ASEAN-China Free Trade Area (ACFTA), 2, 238  
Asia, xix, xvi  
Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), 2, 72  
Asian Century, 237  
Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), xviii, 2, 3, 33, 73–75, 80, 84–85, 111, 119, 238  
Baathist, 191  
Bachelet, Veronica, 117  
balance of power, 224; as anachronistic, 224  
Bandung Conference (1955), 152–53, 155, 164  
Bank of the South (Bancosur), 117, 238–39  
Barnett, Richard J., 25  
Beck, Ulrich, 101  
Bello, Walden, 88, 103–4  
Biden, Joseph (Senator), 86–87, 174, 188–89  
Boas, Martin, 217–18  
Boeing, 121, 159  
Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas (ALBA), 117–18, 238  
Bolivia, 117  
Bremer, Paul, 27, 178–80  
Bretton Woods (1945), 93  
British Empire, p. xv  
Brownstein, Ronald, 25  
Bush-I administration, 97  
Bush-II administration, 4, 43–44, 62, 91–95, 124, 161–66, 172–75, 202–3, 235–36  
Bush-Cheney energy policy, 9  
Bush Doctrine, 139–43  
Buzan, Barry, 81  
Calleo, David, xxi  
Carothers, Thomas, p. xv, 236  
Carr, Edward H., 62  
Carter Doctrine, 147–48, 166  
Central America, 106–7, 116–17  
Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), 148, 158, 166, 218  
Central Treaty Organization (CENTO), 75  
Chang, Ha-Joon, 206  
Chase-Dunn, Christopher, 54

- Chavez, Hugo, 116–18  
 Cheney, Dick, 172  
 China, xvi; and “peaceful rise” xx, 96, 99–100, 111; and the American primacy paradigm, 208–11; as the motor of East Asia’s growth, 210  
 Chomsky, Noam, 46  
 Chossudovsky, Michel, 32, 159  
 Coalitional Provisional Authority, 27, 178  
 comprehensive test ban treaty (CTBT), 81  
 Conventional Forces in Europe treaty (CFE), 97  
 Corporate Executive Officers (CEOs), 121  
 Correa, Rafael, 118  
 Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), 53–56  
 Counter-hegemonic alliance, 128  
 crony capitalism, 43–44  
 Crumbling walls, xvi
- Decolonization, 119  
 “deep politics,” 160–66, (*table*) 165  
 Dutch Republic, p. xv
- East Asia: integration of, 74; regional arrangements of, 104  
 Ecuador, 118  
 Egypt, 148  
 Eisenhower Doctrine, 10, 153  
 El Salvador, 201  
 ENRON, 44  
 equality versus inequality, 108  
 Euro-centrism, 119  
 European Union, p. xii, 70, 72, 98, 109–10, 221–22, 237  
 Evans, Peter, 213  
 exclusionary governance: defined, 42
- Falk, Richard, ix–xiii, 37, 119, 140, 175–76, 178, 193, 234, 236  
 Fearon, James, 173  
 Feith, Douglas, 172  
 Foley, Brian, 234–36  
 Frank, Andre Gunder, 233  
 free trade agreements (FTAs), 10, 238–39
- Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), 95, 126  
 Fukuyama, Francis, p. xv, 235  
 “full spectrum dominance,” 58, 92–93, 139–43
- G-7, 102, 139  
 Gamble, Andrew, 102  
 GDP, 30  
 General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), 26, 37  
 General Dynamics, 121, 159  
 Geneva Conventions, 36  
 geopolitics, 61, 158–61, 165; geopolitical structures and hegemonic states 181; relationship to the “Principle of Hegemonic State Accountability” (PHSA) 197–98  
 Gill, Stephen, 24  
 Gilpin, Robert, 113–14  
 global hegemony, p. xi  
 global movements, 214  
 Global Neoliberal Militarism, 172  
 global North, 120, 207, 232  
 global relations, the future of, 69–75  
 global South, 6, 88–89, 120, 128, 165, 171, 206–8, 232  
 Global War on Terror (GWOT), 166; and global counter-hegemonic alliances against US, 201–5  
 globalization, 214; as synonymous with trade liberalization and free markets, 231; dynamics and dialectic of, 216; “from below,” 222  
 Globalization of Sociopolitical Exclusion (GSE), 93  
 Go, Julian, 20–21  
 Gonzales, Alberto (US Attorney General), 36  
 Gowan, Peter, 23  
 Gramsci, Antonio, 52–53; “integral hegemony,” 173  
 great power competition, xix  
 group hegemony theory, 136–37
- Haas, Richard, 236–37  
 Hachigian, Nina, 203  
 Halliburton, 121

- Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative (HIPC), 26
- “hegemonic government,” 176
- hegemonic global capitalism versus human rights, 41–46; as imperialism, 29–39; as militarism, 94; as relational, 14–15; moral/ethical implications of, 31–35; regionalization versus hegemonic projects, 219–20; the US as both a hegemon and an empire, 21–25
- Hegemonic Stability Theory (HST), 8, 107, 111–13 . *See also*, Principle of Hegemonic State Accountability (PHSA)
- hegemony, 6; accountability of, 181–88; alternatives to, 95–100, 213–29; as consensus domination or ideological, 52; as a form of social domination, 69–89; as historic blocs in a social formation, 63–67; as international domination, 47; as opposed to regionalization, 221–22; as opposed to the “Principle of Hegemonic State Accountability” (PHSA), 197; an overview of, 13–27; as persuasion and negotiation, 132; as state hegemony, 47–52; aspects of, 214; conceptions of, 46; definition of, 19–21; political structure of American-centered transnational hegemony, 25–27; in reference to the “Principle of Hegemonic State Accountability,” 184–88; resistance to, 171; US-Approved forms of capitalist development, 168
- Held, David, 63
- Hettne, Bjorn, 220
- Hezbollah, 202
- Hironaka, Ann, 190
- Hudson, Michael, 105
- human rights: relationship to the “Principle of Hegemonic State Accountability” (PHSA) 197
- human security (redefined), 110–11
- humanitarian intervention, 175–77, legal principles of, 178, in reference to hegemonic states, 180–81
- Ilenberry, G. John, 61–62, 235–36
- inclusionary state, 109
- India, xvi, 76–80, 96
- Indigenous Rights Movement, 118
- inequality versus equality, 108
- Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), 27
- International Atomic Energy Agency, 146
- International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ESCR), 205–8
- International Criminal Court (ICC), 35; enforcement of the PHSA, 198–200; relationship to the “Principle of Hegemonic State Accountability” (PHSA) 196–97
- international law, 193–211
- International Monetary Fund (IMF), 7, 26, 37–38, 103–4, 112, 120, 151, 204, 205–7, 238
- International Relations Theory (IR), 47, 129
- intra-regional integration agreements (RIAs), 233
- Iran-Contra Affair, 218
- Iraq: constitution of, 189; and democracy promotion 189; partition of, 188–92
- Iraq Study Group, 189
- Iraq War, 92, 157, 166, 177–88, 194, 202–3
- Islam, 201–2
- Israel, 202
- Kashmir, 82
- Keal, Paul, 130–31
- Kennan, George, 62
- Kennedy, John, F., 47, 149
- Kershaw, Ian, 56–57
- Keynesian economics, 121
- Kothari, Rajni, 227, 229
- Kissinger, Henry, xx
- Kolko, Gabriel, 32
- Knutson, Torbjorn, 4
- Krasner, Stephen, 89
- Krauthammer, Charles, 235
- Kupchan, Charles, p. xv, 124, 146, 202
- Landless Workers Movement, 118

- Latin America, xvi  
 Layne, Christopher, 48, 59–60, 209  
 “league of democracies,” 236  
 less developed countries (LDCs), 42  
 Lippmann, Walter, 62  
 Lockheed-Martin, 121, 159  
 Luce, Henry R., 58
- Maier, Charles S., 149–50  
 Mandela, Nelson, 109  
 Marxian theory, 71  
 McGrew, Anthony, 63  
 Mearsheimer, John J., 8, 107–9, 114, 142, 202  
 Melman, Seymour, 122  
 Mercosur, xix, 238  
 Mexico, 116  
 Middle East, xvi  
 Middle East Free Trade Initiative, 168  
 Military Keynesianism, 121  
 Millennium Challenge Account (MCA), 167  
 Monroe Doctrine, 47  
 Morales, Juan Evo, 117  
 more developed countries (MDCs), 42  
 Morgenthau, Hans, 62, 168  
 multicentric world order, p. xi, 88–89, 127, 231–39  
 Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative, 26  
 multinational companies, 124  
 Munck, Ronaldo, 128
- Nasser, Gamal Abdel, 148, 153  
 National Military Strategy (NMS), 58  
 National Security State (NSS), 51  
 National Security Strategy (NSS), 58  
 neoliberal globalization, 101–2, 132, 225–26; as a failed model, 227  
 new poverty, 128  
 Niebuhr, Reinhold, 62  
 North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), 37, 56, 75, 97–98  
 NEPAD, xix  
 Neumann, Franz, 61  
 New American Century, 4  
 New International Economic Order (NIEO), 26, 56, 102, 105, 116, 118, 156, 228  
 New Regionalism Approach (NRA), 3, 5
- New Right, 25  
 Nicaragua, 218  
 Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), 26, 56, 75, 116, 156, 228  
 North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), xviii, 123, 126  
 Northrop Grumman, 159  
 Nuclear Nonproliferation Regime (NPT), 81  
 Nuremberg Charter, 186–87, 236;  
 Nuremberg principles, 207;  
 Nuremberg standard, 194;  
 relationship to the “Principle of Hegemonic State Accountability” (PHSA) 196  
 Nye, Joseph S., 142
- Open Door school of US diplomatic history, 48–49, 59–60  
 Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), 2  
 Organization of African Unity (OAU), 75  
 Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), 75
- Pakistan, 75–80; rivalry with India, 79;  
 in the Global War on Terror, 201  
 Paul, T. V., 77  
 Pax Americana, 142  
 Pax-Asia Pacifica, 33  
 Payne, Anthony, 102  
 Payne, Christopher, 169  
 Pearle, Richard, 172  
 Petras, James, 225, 239  
 Pfaff, William, 50–51  
 Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), 215  
 Porter, Gareth (*Perils of Dominance*), 22–23  
 Post-Hegemonic Era, 1, 9, 130, 229;  
 as a multicentric world of regional orders, 232; priorities of, 233;  
 world order values of, 232–39  
 poverty, 59  
 Primacy model, 137–39  
 Principle of Hegemonic State Accountability (PHSA), 11, 193–211, 234–36; aspects of, 195–201;  
 definition of, 184; enforcement of,

- 198–200; ESCR and, 211 goals of, 185; legal and conceptual support for, 198; need and rationale for creating, 195–97; obligations arising out of, 200–1; related to the decline of US hegemony, 186; text of the PHSA, 195
- Project for the New American Century (PNAC), 30, 51, 94, 140
- Ramphal, Shridath S., 118–19
- Raytheon, 159
- Reagan, Ronald, 105, 116, 218
- “regime change,” 175
- regional citizenship, 77–80
- regionalism, 12, 77, 88–89, 125, 217–18, 220, 233; as a form of global governance, 223; as “new regionalism,” 220–21, 232; as a path toward universalism, 223
- regionality, 220
- regionalization, 12, 134, 216–29. *See also* human security in an age of regionalization, 80–81
- regionness, 220
- regions, 217–18; defined, 220
- Regional Cooperation for Development (RCD), 75
- Reliable Replacement Warhead (RRW), 98
- Reus-Smit, Christian, 131–32
- Rice, Condoleezza (US Secretary of State), 84
- rising regions, xvi, 75–77
- Robinson, Joan, 121
- Robinson, William I., 23–24, 63, 105–6
- Rockefeller, David, 24
- Rosas, Tabare Ramon Vazquez, 117
- Rosen, Nir, 190
- Rosenau, James N., 216
- Rumsfeld, Donald, 172
- Rupert, Mark, 63
- Russell, Bertrand, 52
- Russia, xvi, 33–34, 96–98, 225
- Santos, Boaventura de Sousa, 35, 115–16
- Scott, Peter Dale, 60, 160–68
- September 11, 2001, p. x
- September 2008, Wall Street meltdown, xvii, 29–30, 32, 233
- Shaw, Timothy, 217–18
- Shiites, 173
- Slaughter, Anne-Marie, 175, 235–36
- Social exclusion, 128
- social movements, 133–34, 226
- Sociopolitical Instability (SPI), 43
- South Asia: normative components of an emerging regional order, 76–80
- South Asia Free Trade Area (SAFTA)
- South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), 2, 80
- Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO), 37, 56, 75
- state crime: defined, 194–95
- Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START), 98
- Stiglitz, Joseph, 92
- Stuphen, Mona, 203
- Suez Crisis, 150–52, 156, 164
- Sunni, 173
- Tagore, Rabindranath, 85
- Thailand, 201
- Therborn, Goran, 109
- Third World Approach to International Law (TWAAIL), 100
- Third World nationalism, 156
- Thucydides (*History*), 132
- Toope, Stephen, 45
- Tooze, Adam, 57
- Transnational Capitalist Class (TCC), 66–67, 72–73
- Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TACSA), 3, 8, 110–11
- Trilateral Commission, 24
- United Nations Charter, 140, 143–46; relationship to the “Principle of Hegemonic State Accountability” (PHSA) 196, 198–200
- United Nations Conference for Trade and Development (UNCTAD), 89
- United Nations Development Reports (UNDP), 42
- United Nations Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East (ECAFE), 228–29



- United Nations Security Council, 177;  
 extension of membership, 204;  
 reform of, 234–37
- United States, characteristics of: as  
 empire and hegemon, 23–25;  
 primacy coalition, 160–66;  
 US-Middle East Free Trade Area,  
 168
- United States, developmental phases of:  
 postwar boom and decline, 64–66;  
 primacy coalition, 160; “prison  
 industrial complex,” 42; “unipolar  
 moment,” p. ix
- Uruguay, 117
- U.S. Chamber of Commerce, 25
- Use of Force, 234–37
- Veltmeyer, Henry, 225, 239
- Venezuela, 116
- Versailles (1918), 53–54
- Versailles Peace Conference (1919), 149
- Via Campesina (*International Peasant  
 Movement*), 118
- Vietnam War, 49, 60–61, 64, 151, 164
- Wall Street, 120
- Walt, Stephen M., 202
- Waltz, Kenneth, 62, 142, 168
- Washington Consensus, 88, 118, 225
- Westad, Odd Arne, 164
- Wilson, Woodrow, 154–57, 164, 228
- World Bank, 7, 37–38, 100, 112, 120,  
 151, 204, 205–7
- World Court, 218
- world order problem, 135–36, 192;  
 disintegration of world order,  
 224–27; reintegration of world  
 order, 224–27
- World Social Forum (WSF), 7, 215–16
- World Trade Organization (WTO), xvii,  
 7, 26, 31, 37–38, 89, 94, 100, 103,  
 112, 120, 123, 204, 205–7
- Wolfowitz, Paul, 172
- Yoo, John, 36
- Zionism, 153