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Towards a New Tricontinental?

Shifting Perspectives
and
Realities in the International System

Roger Heacock

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Towards a New Tricontinental?
Shifting Perspectives
and
Realities in the International System

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My purpose in this study is to examine the historical interaction between international theory and practice, and to describe current characteristics and prospects. The project may not in itself be an entirely original one, but given the state of academic affairs it becomes relevant to go over the ground once again.

Two immediate justifications may be mentioned. One is the fact that the long dominance in the scholarship of realism and neo-realism (the first grounded in the Hobbesian view of “human nature”, the second in the “structure” of the system), stretching from the interwar period (exemplified by EH Carr’s *Twenty-Years’ Crisis*) through the cold war,¹ found itself so heavily contested with the collapse of the bipolar system that it survives today thanks to borrowings from such former enemies as institutionalism and neo-liberalism. This is because the various incarnations of realism never dealt with the conundrum of unipolarity, a hypothesis which it basically excluded except as a possible brief interlude during which the hegemonic power is brought down, and more importantly, because the founding axiom of neo-realism was the presumed permanence of the bipolar world.

The second, and more significant one, is the progressive shift in the discourse of key international actors that has been underway since the beginning of the twentieth century, and more particularly since the end of the First World War, resulting in the transmutation of the principles of civil and, especially, criminal law, over into the international sphere and engendering a new international discourse. In this way, a mechanical interpretation of international politics based on intersecting sovereignties was replaced by a normative one based on freshly minted absolutes. What is, for the first time in the discourse of international relations, became what *should be*, by the projection of domestic onto international law, and of the latter onto international politics. Speaking of the western tradition only,

¹ Hans Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations*, 5th ed., New York: Knopf, 1973; Raymond Aron, *Paix et guerre entre les nations*, Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1962.

which ultimately rose to a position of global hegemony, medieval popes and emperors had never conceded to each other the final say in defining political legitimacy; on the contrary, they never ceased to deny it to one another until the rise of Renaissance monarchs and their Westphalian system put the matter to rest *de facto*.² In the post-Napoleonic period, there was indeed a European Concert, but it was from the start deeply split between its major actors, and the Era of Metternich is one in which statesmen of all stripes (including the one after whom the half-century in question was named) were always aware of the social contestation that was finally to bring him and many of his peers down in the revolutions of 1848.

The process whereby existing reality became prescriptive in legal and moral terms, and whereby Hegel's dictum "The real is the rational and the rational is the real" became "the real is the rational and the rational is the Good," was prefigured throughout the nineteenth century, and came to fruition with the 1919 Paris and 1945 San Francisco conferences. It has effected a fundamental change in the vision and the practice of international law and politics. Previously dominant theories, specifically liberal nationalism, Marxism and fascism, have in the past decades been in large part overcome by world events. On the one hand, therefore, the balance between theory regarding the international and the domestic political system has been upended with the former "*parent pauvre*," international theory, becoming now the principal object of consideration and contention. Meantime, the stuff of speculation regarding the nature and the teleology of domestic politics has dried up in the academically hegemonic Western academy, to be replaced with the principle of eternal return (through the instrumentality of parliamentary politics and market economics). On the other hand, the discipline of international relations co-opted many of the former ideological principles of domestic law and politics, making them its own, based on the transformation of a system of diplomatic

² François L. Ganshof, *The Middle Ages: A History of International Relations*, New York: Harper & Row, 1968, pp. 324-328.

conferences modeled on the Westphalian paradigm (sovereignty, non-interference, balance of power) into an institutionalized and legalizing system mediated through international organizations, notably the UN and its specialized agencies.

It will be argued that the process has not been arrested here, that it has already overtaken its architects, and that the reinstatement of Westphalian international politics is now underway, following its collapse. And we will thus conclude that a unique opportunity has presented itself with this failure of post-cold war hegemonic policies/laws. Taking advantage of this failure, a new type of “tricontinentalism,” first experimented successfully in the 1960s to mount global, including domestic American, opposition to the Vietnam war, can reconstitute itself. This post-colonial, post-cold war, in short, post modern tricontinental is in a position to co-opt the legalized international system and by taking advantage of the death of the three major ideological-political models, move to use these synergies to fill the void in thought and action. That this should be possible can only be explained as a result of the bankruptcy of dominant paradigms, all of which originated and flourished in the West, and their replacement by new, untested ones whose roots plunge deeply into the contemporary history of the struggle for and against empire, but also, away from empire, as illustrated by the historians of the Subaltern Studies Group (SSG) specifically (an approach trail-blazed by Ranajit Guha, who convened and coordinated the group),³

³ Cf. Ranajit Guha and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, eds., *Selected Subaltern Studies*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1988, especially Guha’s “On Some Aspects of the Historiography of Colonial India,” and “The Prose of Counter-Insurgency,” pp 35-88. For recent writings marked by the SSG’s imprimatur, see Guha’s *History at the Limit of World-History*, New York: Columbia University Press, as well as Heikki Patomäki, “From East to West: Emergent Global Philosophies – Beginning of the End of Western Dominance?” *Theory, Culture & Society* 19(3), 2002, pp.89-111. For the resulting and overdue (modest) marginalization of Europe, cf. Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998.

and postcolonial analyses more generally, in addition to the great inroads of gender studies in the social sciences and humanities.

The study is divided into three parts: Part One outlines the three dominant modern modes of thought, with their specific epistemologies, characteristic of much of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (liberal nationalism, fascism and Marxism), and shows how they spawned original theoretical constructs regarding the international system. Part Two traces the history of that system since 1815, with its slow evolution during the century which followed, then its decisive maturation in the wake of World War one. Part Three analyzes how the course of international politics resulted in the decline and fall of the three dominant ideological constructs in the course of the twentieth century. And it will show how the paradigms managed to stage a comeback on the eve of the third millennium, although in various guises, a tribute to the general lack of ideological creativity. While appearing to have collapsed as explanatory paradigms, liberal nationalism, fascism and Marxism have resurfaced, in a new form, borrowing from and expanding on the old, sometimes disguising a beleaguered vision under something apparently quite different. But the decline and partial resurrection of these paradigms has created a vacuum nonetheless, in which various new national and international movements share in the quest for legitimacy. Among them is the new tricontinental, which is finding the space in which to develop into a formidable future force.

I. The Three Paradigms

In distinguishing between three sometimes overlapping paradigms particularly with respect to their international implications, it is most useful to adopt the categorization of Kenneth Waltz in his important *Man, the State and War*.⁴ In this work, a precursor to

⁴ Kenneth N. Waltz, *Man, the State and War – A Theoretical Analysis*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1959.

his *Theory of International Politics*,⁵ which created and continues to exemplify the neo-realist school, Waltz distinguishes between three images of international conflict, in reality, international relations. The first image explains international relations as an outcropping of human nature, nearly always seen as intrinsically evil, or animal (*homo homini lupus*, “man is a wolf to man”, explained Thomas Hobbes). The second image bases international politics on the internal structure of states, and their consequent interactions, while for the third image, the international system itself determines the interaction among states, seen largely as members of the system, or sub-units within it. From the first to the second to the third image, then, international relations are dominated by the nature of grouped individuals, or of states, or of the system of states.

Liberal nationalism

Throughout the nineteenth and the first part of the twentieth century, Hegelianism dominated the scene, and three of its offshoots vied for audiences: liberal, ‘horizontal’ nationalism (epitomized by Giuseppe Mazzini’s work and later identified with Woodrow Wilson); Marxism (Social Democratic or Leninist); and fascism or ‘vertical’ nationalism in its various incarnations. Various intermediary or hybrid approaches can be derived from one or a combination of these three schools even or especially when they were conceived in opposition to them (Comte, Weber, and others), but they are subsumed for the purpose of our argument into the three basic paradigms.

The tenets of liberal nationalism were simple enough, and all were foreshadowed by Montesquieu’s *Spirit of the Laws* and Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s *Discourse on the Origins of Inequality and Social Contract*. Immanuel Kant wrote his celebrated *Perpetual*

⁵ Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1979.

Peace – A Philosophical Sketch in 1795 based specifically on Rousseau's 1761 *Project for Perpetual Peace*.⁶ Kant's conclusions were landmarks for the following century, with their interconnected ideas that states should be "republics" (that is to say, liberal democracies), that they should create an international federation and thus ensure a lasting peace. In the same landmark text, he distinguishes between three levels of law, which were slowly to find their places in the world system: *ius civitatis* (domestic law); *ius gentium* (international law) and *ius cosmopoliticum* (the law of world citizenship in the context of the imagined federation of states). As will be seen below, this triple separation was effected during the following century and came to fruition in 1919 with the creation of the League of Nations.

The leading proponent of liberal nationalism was Giuseppe Mazzini, although he never used the term. Heir to the 1848 revolutions, he prescribed as the solution to problems of civil and international strife representative rule and the national sovereignty of states, which would be based on cultural, primarily linguistic borders. This can be seen in his 1858 *Essay on the Duties of Man*:⁷

Your first duties - first as regards importance - are, as I have already told you, towards Humanity. You are men before you are either citizens or fathers. If you do not embrace the whole human family in your affection; if

⁶ Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discours sur l'origine et les fondements de l'inégalité parmi les hommes* (1755), Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1995; *Du contrat social* (1762), Paris: Garnier-Flammarion, 1968. Immanuel Kant, "Perpetual Peace," (1795), in Kant, *Political Writings*, H.S. Reiss, ed., Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003, pp. 93-115. Rousseau, *Extrait du projet de paix perpétuelle de Monsieur l'Abbé de Saint-Pierre* (1762), translated by C.E. Vaughan as *A Lasting Peace through the Federation of Europe*, London: Constable and Co., 1917.

⁷ Giuseppe Mazzini, *An Essay on the Duties of Man, Addressed to Workingmen*, New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1898, pp. 57-59, retrieved from Hanover Historical Texts Project, <http://history.hanover.edu/project.html>

you do not bear witness to your belief in the Unity of that family, consequent upon the Unity of God, and in that fraternity among the peoples which is destined to reduce that Unity to action; if, wheresoever a fellow-creature suffers, or the dignity of human nature is violated by falsehood or tyranny - you are not ready, if able, to aid the unhappy, and do not feel called upon to combat, if able, for the redemption of the betrayed and oppressed - you violate your law of life, you comprehend not that Religion which will be the guide and blessing of the future.

But, you tell me, you cannot attempt united action, distinct and divided as you are in language, customs, tendencies, and capacity. The individual is too insignificant, and Humanity too vast. The mariner of Brittany prays to God as he puts to sea; "*Help me, my God! my boat is so small and Thy ocean so wide!*" And this prayer is the true expression of the condition of each one of you, until you find the means of infinitely multiplying your forces and powers of action.

This means was provided for you by God when He gave you a country; when, even as a wise overseer of labour distributes the various branches of employment according to the different capacities of the workmen, he divided Humanity into distinct groups or nuclei upon the face of the earth, thus creating the germ of nationalities. Evil governments have disfigured the Divine design... disfigured it so far that, if we except England and France, there is not perhaps a single country whose present boundaries correspond to that design...

But the Divine design will infallibly be realized; natural divisions and the spontaneous, innate tendencies of the peoples will take the place of the arbitrary divisions, sanctioned by evil governments. The map of Europe will be redrawn. The countries of the peoples, defined

by the vote of free men, will arise upon the ruins of the countries of kings and privileged castes, and between these countries harmony and fraternity will exist. And the common work of Humanity, of general amelioration, and the gradual discovery and application of its Law of life, being distributed according to local and general capacities, will be wrought out in peaceful and progressive development and advance... In labouring for our own country on the right principle, we labour for Humanity. Our country is the fulcrum of the lever we have to wield for the common good. If we abandon the fulcrum, we run the risk of rendering ourselves useless not only to Humanity but to our country itself.

It can be seen how liberal nationalism from the outset and through to its culmination in the vision and instruments of the World War one period, was religiously inspired. Of further relevance to the present argument is the fact that, following Mazzini, its proponents put the nationality principle ahead of any social consideration, meaning that Waltz's third image in fact applies: the adjustment of Europe's (and later, the world's) borders is a prerequisite to international peace, and for achieving a just social order, rather than the reverse:⁸

There are in Europe two great questions; or, rather, the question of the transformation of authority, that is to say, of the Revolution, has assumed two forms; the question which all have agreed to call social, and the question of nationalities. The first is more exclusively agitated in France, the second in the heart of the other

⁸ Giuseppe Mazzini, "Europe: Its Condition and Prospects," (1852), in *Essays: Selected from the Writings, Literary, Political and Religious of Joseph Mazzini*, William Clark, ed., London: Walter Scott, 1880, pp. 266-292, retrieved from <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1852mazzini.htm>

peoples of Europe. I say, *which all have agreed to call social*, because, generally speaking, every great revolution is so far social, that it cannot be accomplished either in the religious, political, or any other sphere, without affecting social relations, the sources and the distribution of wealth; but that which is only a secondary consequence in political revolutions is now the cause and the banner of the movement in France. The question there is now, above all, to establish better relations between labour and capital, between production and consumption, between the workman and the employer...The question of nationality can only be resolved by destroying the treaties of 1815, and changing the map of Europe and its public Law. The question of *Nationalities*, rightly understood, is the Alliance of the Peoples; the balance of powers based upon new foundations; the organisation of the work that Europe has to accomplish...The map of Europe has to be remade. This is the key to the present movement; herein lies the initiative. Before acting, the instrument for action must be organised; before building, the ground must be one's own. The social idea cannot be realised under any form whatsoever before this reorganisation of Europe is effected; before the peoples are free to interrogate themselves; to express their vocation, and to assure its accomplishment by an alliance capable of substituting itself for the absolutist league which now reigns supreme.

Thus Mazzini⁹ and Woodrow Wilson after him, saw the realization of the liberal nationalist dream as the single essential prerequisite for a permanent social as well as international peace (that is to

⁹ For the republican-revolutionary roots of liberal nationalism, cf. Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution*, New York: New American Library, 1962.

say, as far as Mazzini, is concerned, between European countries since like most people of his time, he saw no justification in granting those privileges to non-Europeans, who were best off if subject to the ‘civilized’ peoples). There would be peace because the causes of war were based on irredentism, which the national delineation of borders would eliminate. Later Western-inspired liberal nationalists, beginning with Woodrow Wilson himself, extended this prescription to other parts of the world, and finally to the planetary level.

Such forms of thought may be labeled horizontal nationalism, because they are applied equally to all parts of the continent/world, and imply that aggressive behavior stops at the correctly drawn network of state borders. In its essence, liberal nationalism is rationalist and positivist, although not necessarily linear, positing a historical course in which its principles ultimately prevail and transform the nature of human relations, which are subordinate to the quality of relations among states. It is premised upon the Enlightenment idea of human agency, that is to say, the idea that people can forge their own destinies. This idea, as we have seen, has a religious rooting, in this case, Voltairean deism, which sees God as the watchmaker who, once his work was done, turned His back on the world, leaving people to seek, and find, the mechanisms which permit the universe/clock to work, and to fix it if something should be wrong with it. The all-pervasive influence of the Enlightenment in contemporary thinking is continuously illustrated, although nowadays often in a critical, post-modern way.¹⁰

This unbounded optimism ascribed agency to members of existing social formations, meaning of necessity the people

¹⁰ One example among many is to be found in Jeffrey Alexander’s “Modern, Anti, Post, and Neo: How Intellectuals Explain ‘Our Time’,” in Jeffrey Alexander, *The Meanings of Social Life: A Cultural Sociology*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2005, Ch. 8.

in general, notably the subaltern groups, along with their elites, and not, as conventional wisdom has it, simply the latter. Pierre Bourdieu made a signal contribution with his theory of fields, within which particular categories of people operate in accordance with their specific *habitus*.¹¹ In other words, the generalization of the role of elites over a society or a nation is an oversimplification of the very complex form of interactions among discrete *fields*, in which therefore, the elites are broken down into sub-categories. In this perspective, their global importance in terms of the whole is reduced, since they are split into disparate and often competing fields. The top-down perspective has guided the recent literature on nationalism, including notably the works of Benedict Anderson and Ernest Gellner,¹² implicitly denying agency on the part of subaltern groups.¹³

¹¹ As elaborated in his 1977 *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Pierre Bourdieu, *Esquisse d'une théorie de la pratique*, Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 2000).

¹² Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities – Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, London: Verso, 1991 [1983]; Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1983.

¹³ In this regard, one should consult the groundbreaking work by Miroslav Hroch, *Vorkämpfer der nationalen Bewegung bei den kleinen Völkern Europas. Eine vergleichende Analyse zur gesellschaftlichen Schichtung der patriotischen Gruppen*, Prague: Karls-Universität, 1968; translated as *Social Conditions of National Revival in Europe: A Comparative Analysis of the Social Composition of Patriotic Groups Among the Smaller European Nations*, Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1989. See also Alexander Motyl, "Inventing Invention: The Limits of National Identity Formation," in *Intellectuals and the Articulation of the Nation*, Ronald Grigor Suny and Michael D. Kennedy, eds., Ann Arbor, Michigan: The University of Michigan Press, 1999, pp.57-75. In Middle East history, much remains to be done to overcome the predominant elitist bias. Some efforts have been made in this regard: see James L. Gelvin, *Divided Loyalties: Nationalism and Mass Politics in Syria at the Close of Empire*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998.

Marxism

Marxism posits the hegemony of one social class over all others in a given society, as well as the inherent dynamic of change (as opposed to the more or less static quality of nationalist theories) which brings about a shift in the class composition of a social formation and, therefore, the transformation or replacement of the social and political hegemon. There can no longer be a reification of states which may occur with Waltz's third image, since what is meant by "Germany," for example, is simply the set of policies worked out by the German bourgeoisie. Varieties of Marxist thought include or exclude representative democracy as the necessary conduit for social change, and the stabilization of the international system likewise passes through the replacement of a predatory ruling class by another, and finally (for revolutionary Marxists) the end of social and international oppression by the disappearance of the class system. Its emergence in the mid-nineteenth century changed the face of the social sciences, but also journalism and the writing of history, forever. Marx himself wrote texts that were economic, sociological, historical and journalistic in nature. But since it followed in the footsteps of utopian socialist thinking present since the early part of the nineteenth century, and based on the most egalitarian strands of the French revolution (Babeuf and the conspiracy of equals), it became the point of reference, whether in its later Leninist or its so-called 'revisionist' (actually, a return to the early Marxist) embodiment. What systematic (some would say vulgar) Marxism brought to thinking on international politics was the idea that change would accelerate with the advent of revolution in one of Europe's most advanced capitalist economies which Russia at the time of the 1905 and 1917 revolutions certainly was not. As a result, the operative Marxist model was amended by Lenin and the Bolsheviks, to make room for a first revolution in a less advanced state (Russia) whose role would be to ignite the process elsewhere. In other words, change was built into the system. Marxism and its offshoots partake of Waltz's second image, in

which the internal makeup of states over-determines matters of war and peace (“Marx and the Marxists represent the fullest development of the second image”).¹⁴ For Marxism in its various forms, the capital-holding bourgeoisie controls the state, and war is the external manifestation of this class monopoly. International affairs as such (or matters relating to what is known today as the international system), however, as opposed to the workers’ International, or the colonial question, are not at the center of Marx’s writings. He takes a sociological approach throughout, seeking prospects for revolutionary change first in Germany: ¹⁵

The Communists turn their attention chiefly to Germany, because that country is on the eve of a bourgeois revolution that is bound to be carried out under more advanced conditions of European civilization, and with a much more developed proletariat, than that of England was in the seventeenth, and of France in the eighteenth century, and because the bourgeois revolution in Germany will be but the prelude to an immediately following proletarian revolution.

Later, hope maybe vested in Russia for specific reasons,¹⁶ or even somewhere in Asia, most likely India, when “the Hindoos themselves shall have grown strong enough to throw off the English yoke altogether.”¹⁷ And elsewhere he asks rhetorically, “can mankind fulfill its destiny without a fundamental revolution

¹⁴ Waltz, *Man, the State and War*, p. 125.

¹⁵ Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, “Manifesto of the Communist Party,” in Robert C. Tucker, ed., *The Marx-Engels Reader*, 2nd ed., New York: W.W. Norton, 1972, p.500.

¹⁶ “Preface to the Russian Edition of 1882” of the Communist Manifesto, in Tucker, *The Marx-Engels Reader*, p.471.

¹⁷ “The Future Results of British Rule in India,” (1853), in Tucker, *The Marx-Engels Reader* p.662.

in the social state of Asia?”¹⁸ But the transformational perspective is always in a sociological and not an international (polemological) one. Change in one country will have a domino effect on the working class of another, resulting in emulation rather than war.

Antonio Gramsci represents as always a special case within the paradigm. By 1926, he had developed a sophisticated view of international politics (dominated always by concern for reform and revolution), distinguishing between advanced and peripheral states in the international system, and the need to deal with each case differently with an eye to advancing social conditions in accordance with specific situations, and not simply to demand unconditional allegiance to the Third International (i.e., the Soviet Union). This means that his adherence to the principles of the Waltzian second image was abundantly clear, state-level social relations being granted uncontested primacy, with priority given to social reform, always as a prelude to social revolution.¹⁹ He recognizes for example, that what he calls the states which form the “keystone of the bourgeois system” have a solidly entrenched ruling class, while “the broad stratum of intermediate classes” in “the periphery of the capitalist world” might successfully be wooed to the cause of the proletariat.

Meantime, the link to the international system had become explicit through Lenin’s *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, written in mid-World War one:²⁰

“If it were necessary to give the briefest possible definition of imperialism we should have to say that

¹⁸ “The British Rule in India,” (1853), in Tucker, *The Marx-Engels Reader*, p.658.

¹⁹ Antonio Gramsci, “A Study of the Italian Situation,” (1926) in Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from Political Writings 1921-1926*, New York: International Publishers, 1978, pp.408-411.

²⁰ Lenin, “Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism,” Ch. VI, *Selected Works*, Volume 1, pp./667–766. Quoted from the Lenin Internet Archive 1999. Retrieved from <http://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1916/imp-hsc/>

imperialism is the monopoly stage of capitalism. Such a definition would include what is most important, for, on the one hand, finance capital is the bank capital of a few very big monopolist banks, merged with the capital of the monopolist associations of industrialists; and, on the other hand, the division of the world is the transition from a colonial policy which has extended without hindrance to territories unseized by any capitalist power, to a colonial policy of monopolist possession of the territory of the world, which has been completely divided up.

The unstated but obvious dynamic of such global saturation is war between the monopoly-capital based states, which need to expand in a non-expanding world, and have thus no choice but to attack one another in predatory fashion. In other words, the Great War (which to Lenin and Wilson both was the war to end all wars by the realisation of one or the other of the two models we have discussed so far) was the result of competitive monopolist possession and acquisitiveness. The destruction of monopoly capital would be the first step towards ending the capital-based international state system, and through the withering away of states, bringing an end to war. Not all Marxist analyses are as linear as this one, fuelled as it was by the horrors of the World War. Nonetheless, they clearly base themselves on the image of an international system resulting from the interaction of state-level units.

Fascism

Vertical nationalism, which we identify here with fascism, grew out of liberal nationalism for a variety of historical reasons, above all the refusal in certain states, of governments to grant full, or even partial, republican rights to their citizens. The duality between horizontal and vertical nationalism has been obscured by a recent generation of theorists of nationalism, whose approach (expressed

in terms of the “invention” of nations and of nationalism) is in my opinion deeply flawed, in that it confuses nations and nationalism, fails to adopt a sufficiently social-historical approach, and necessarily rejects the vertical/horizontal dichotomy. Even these scholars cannot escape the fact that nationalism was at first a movement where “nations dream of being free...,” and that “the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship.”²¹ Unfortunately, they have complicated the study of fascism as a new construct by equating it with all other forms of nationalism as a single category of concepts, and made it possible to conclude that “[f]ascism and other forms of radical-right populisms have evacuated democracy per se, it is true, but otherwise right-wing politics have successfully relocated to the formal ground of popular sovereignty.”²² In other words, leftwing and rightwing, horizontal and vertical nationalism, are all based on the same type of democratic-popular theoretical and political base. Such a view is not convincing, and Habermas²³ is correct in pointing out that

[w]ith the French Revolution, then, the meaning of “nation” was transformed from a prepolitical quantity into a constitutive feature of the political identity of the citizens of a democratic polity...The nation of citizens finds its identity not in ethnic and cultural commonalities but in the practice of citizens who actively exercise their rights to participation and communication.

²¹ Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, p.7. Gellner, in this respect like-minded, published his *Nations and Nationalism* the same year, 1983.

²² Geoff Eley and Ronald Grigor Suny, “Introduction,” in Geoff Eley and Ronald Grigor Suny, eds., *Becoming National – A Reader*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1996, p.30.

²³ Jürgen Habermas, *Between Fact and Norms. Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy*, transl. William Rehg, Cambridge, MA: MIT University Press, 2001 [1992], pp.494-495.

Vertical nationalism rose to power in Italy, Germany and elsewhere, in the wake of and as a frightened answer to the Russian Revolution and the advent of Soviet Russia. As such, it was the social pendant of a peculiar type of Darwinism, in which Darwin would have had great trouble in recognizing “his” thought. It rejected the idea of the equality of human beings and therefore, of states, to which it applied, *mutatis mutandis*, the axiom of the survival of the fittest. For any number of reasons (racial, religious, civilizational, historical) some were born or raised to dominate others. Representative democracy was to be rejected for its misplaced and dangerous egalitarianism. States were to be organized internally in vertical fashion (the corporate state, the “*Ständestaat*,” the clerically or aristocratically-ruled polity). And states could not be seen as equal to one another. They were irreducible units based on absolute criteria that made one incommensurably superior to the others. This form of vertical nationalism arose in the early twentieth century to challenge the earlier, liberal/horizontal version, and was to be found in the writings and policies of the apostles of Italian fascism, German National Socialism, Spanish Falangism, Portuguese National Syndicalism, as well as local variations in Hungary, Romania and elsewhere.²⁴ Since the “myth” of democratic theory is rejected, there must be a hierarchical ordering. This ordering is not based on God-given characteristics within the given society as in feudalism, because such an ordering implied rights (for the people) and obligations (for the rulers) as well as the reverse. This complementarity of rights and duties had, indeed, also applied to the Renaissance-era “Absolute Monarchies” which never deserved that particular designation (“absolute”). Partial responsibility for attaching the stigma must be

²⁴ The phenomenon is widely described and analyzed, for example by Renzo De Felice, *Interpretations of Fascism*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1977; A. James Gregor, *Mussolini's Intellectuals – Fascist Social and Political Thought*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005; and many other authors, including, in the Anglophone academy, Eugene Weber, Juan Linz, Stanley Payne and George Mosse.

attributed to Hobbes, who, because of the depths of depravity he attached to human nature, based in turn on the terrible bloodletting of civil war, wanted no limits to the rule of the monarch.

Instead, fascism posits a natural (not God-granted) internal and international qualitative hierarchy. Rights therefore are at the highest vertices, obligations at the lowest. In the same way and by extension, international hegemony is a national right, and becomes an obligation when it is not a given, an obligation to be carried out through diplomacy then war. International relations are based on the fundamental inequality of nations, the primacy of one. The dialectics of international processes inevitably culminate in war. The classic formulation by Giovanni Gentile and Benito Mussolini perfectly sums up the premises of vertical nationalism and shows how it came as a replacement doctrine for both liberal nationalism and Marxism:²⁵

[Fascism] sees not only the individual but the nation and the country; individuals and generations bound together by a moral law, with common traditions and a mission which suppressing the instinct for life closed in a brief circle of pleasure, builds up a higher life, founded on duty, a life free from the limitations of time and space, in which the individual, by self-sacrifice, the renunciation of self-interest, by death itself, can achieve that purely spiritual existence in which his value as a man consists...

Such a conception of life makes Fascism the resolute negation of the doctrine underlying so-called scientific and Marxian socialism, the doctrine of historic materialism which would explain the history of mankind in terms of the class struggle and by changes in the processes and instruments of production, to the exclusion of all else...

²⁵ *The Doctrine of Fascism* (1935), translated from Giovanni Gentile and Benito Mussolini, "La dottrina del fascismo," in *Il Fascismo – Dottrina ed Istituzioni*, Rome: Ardita Publishers, 1935, pp.7-42.

After socialism, Fascism trains its guns on the whole block of democratic ideologies, and rejects both their premises and their practical applications and implements. Fascism denies that numbers, as such, can be the determining factor in human society; it denies the right of numbers to govern by means of periodical consultations; it asserts the irremediable and fertile and beneficent inequality of men who cannot be leveled by any such mechanical and extrinsic device as universal suffrage...

First of all, as regards the future development of mankind, and quite apart from all present political considerations. Fascism does not, generally speaking, believe in the possibility or utility of perpetual peace. It therefore discards pacifism as a cloak for cowardly supine renunciation in contradistinction to self-sacrifice. War alone keys up all human energies to their maximum tension and sets the seal of nobility on those peoples who have the courage to face it. All other tests are substitutes which never place a man face to face with himself before the alternative of life or death. Therefore all doctrines which postulate peace at all costs are incompatible with Fascism. Equally foreign to the spirit of Fascism, even if accepted as useful in meeting special political situations — are all internationalistic or League superstructures which, as history shows, crumble to the ground whenever the heart of nations is deeply stirred by sentimental, idealistic or practical considerations.

In the optics of vertical nationalism, war is therefore the ideal human state, reflecting the intrinsic Hobbesian relationship, and it cannot end until the day when the inevitable hegemony has been established by the elimination of contestation (for Hitler, one thousand years, that is to say, forever). In fascist theory, the elite becomes a small minority and finally a minority of one (based on the theory of the select or elect few, and the majority are marginalized. This system, according to some thinkers, has projected itself into the contemporary

era. In the words of Michel de Certeau, “[m]arginality is no longer limited to minority groups but is rather massive and pervasive.”²⁶ The marginal groups have become an all too silent majority. A careful reading of the Subaltern Studies approach likewise makes it possible virtually to identify the subaltern with the majority. Fascism clearly pertains to the first Waltzian image, because of the key role of the morally superior individual, surrounded by his party.

In the following section, we will notice how Westphalian Europe, which premised the primacy of the international system (Waltz’s third image) was followed, after the destabilizing period of the French Revolution, by a long period in which efforts to rebuild it during the nineteenth century through the instrumentality of great power diplomacy interspersed with limited wars, increasingly featured an attempt to model the system on the liberal constitution of states (second image), before succumbing to the Hitlerian onslaught (first image), then reappearing in 1945 in the form of a legalized system rooted in nineteenth and twentieth century developments, and summed up in the United Nations system, with the criminalization of deviant international behavior, and thus the downfall of the Westphalian system as well as the collapse of the three dominant paradigms.

II. The Resurrection and Decline of the Westphalian System, 1815-1914

The so-called Westphalian system consists of three interrelated elements:

1. Recognition of the notion of sovereignty as the highest form of allegiance, above which there is no legitimate cross-state decider (in this way, opposed to the medieval legal and constitutional principle of Empire, in which the

²⁶ Michel de Certeau, “The Practice of Everyday Life,” in *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: A Reader*, John Storey, ed., New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1994 [1980], pp.474-85, p. 479.

Emperor was king of kings, and Christ, through His bishop in Rome, presided over the empire (hence the long struggle between pope and emperor);

2. The subsequent elevation of the principle of mutual non-interference in the internal affairs of states through the extension of “*cuius regio, eius religio*” (the ruler determines the religion) to administrative and ideological issues in general;
3. The balance of power principle as the underlying objective of the diplomatic or military (peaceful or belligerent) conduct of international relations. In this way, the temptation of a return to the medieval empire (now condemned as international hegemony) was to be banished once and for all. Conveniently, in the nineteenth century, Britain could never aspire to continental hegemony and therefore was the most acceptable balancer.

All along the nineteenth century, Europe (and by extension, the increasingly European international system) experienced the slow growth of institutional thinking and practice as it was progressively interwoven with the very fabric of statecraft.²⁷ By definition, institutionalization reduces the margin of maneuver in an international environment where sovereignty, the balance of power and non-interference are the guiding principles of conduct. Paradoxically, the reasons why a group of rather conservative statesmen (around Metternich and Palmerston until 1848, Napoleon III to 1870, and Bismarck to 1890) should have worked

²⁷ This historical section is based on a variety of familiar sources, notably David Thomson, *Europe since Napoleon*, New York: Viking Penguin, 1985; Inis Claude, Jr., *Swords into Plowshares – The Problems and Progress of International Organization*, 3rd ed., New York: Random House, 1964, pp.17-35; and Henry Kissinger’s classic *A World Restored: Metternich, Castlereagh and the Problems of Peace, 1812-1822*, New York: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1999, which he originally wrote at a time (1953-54) when his academic credentials were still intact.

to transform the system in a way which implicitly threatened the time-honored Westphalian framework, are linked to their very desire to preserve it. The Marxian concept whereby the ruling class digs its own grave seems here to apply in the international system to those who paved the way to the demise of the European-centered international system.

The French revolutionary and Napoleonic period presented a model of European unity imposed from above, modernizing in most of its effects as would have befitted an Enlightened monarch in the mold of Frederick or Catherine the Great or Maria Theresa, as shown by the administrative transformations of Italy and Germany, which were necessary conditions for their later unification. It was of course an unacceptable model, because of its purpose: the subjection of the continent to France and its imperial ambitions, combined with an emancipatory propaganda that excited the ire of rulers (and in the case of Russia, most of the people) of the conquered lands. The Westphalian precepts had been violated: respect for sovereignty (with the subjection of Prussia and Austria); non-intervention in ideological affairs; and of course, preservation of the European balance.

The French geo-strategic as well as ideological quest for hegemony failed as a result of the time-tested Westphalian system of coalitions, a series of which rose and fell until they finally felled Napoleon. The innovation was the replacement of temporary coalitions with a permanent alliance, intended to last 20 years, in the form of the 1814 Chaumont Treaty (whose article 16 explicitly mentioned as a fundamental goal the preservation of the European equilibrium), confirmed by the Quadruple Alliance of November 1815, the first element of an institutionalized, albeit as yet non-institutional, European (later world) system. By definition, such an alliance (twenty years in the future is a generation) meant that balancing was bound to be threatened, in case France was to be replaced by another power as the incipient hegemon. That the treaty in question was signed only by the four greatest Powers involved in the anti-Napoleonic coalitions (Russia, Austria,

Prussia, Britain), was in itself a significant development – one has but to compare the dozens of participants in the previous pan-European endeavor, the 1648 treaties of Münster and Osnabruck (Treaties of Westphalia). This showed the progressive reduction of the notion of the international system to its Great Powers.

The Congress of Vienna, resulting in the Vienna Treaty of June 1815, marked the return to the kind of Westphalian stability based on the balance, with the reacceptance of France to the concert of nations, as the fifth acknowledged Great Power. The terms imposed upon France were remarkably generous. The insistence upon a restored and discredited Bourbon monarchy, although inevitable, bode ill for the longer-term stability of the country and the continent, and, along with the incipient institutionalization of Chaumont, meant that another Westphalian principle was being violated, that of non-interference in internal affairs, it having been understood that in an era of growing national and social sentiment, internal and external affairs could not be separated clearly. Thus was born the idea of the Concert of Europe, in fact a European “Security Council.” Meantime the dynastic principle, a residue of a millennium of European politics, was still present in force (and not only in Czar Alexander I’s rather utopian project of the Holy Alliance), testimony to the weight of tradition as well as the strength and fear of revolutionary ideas.

The series of four congresses (in contemporary parlance, conferences) held between 1818 and 1822 in the context of the Concert of Europe formed the basis for multilateral diplomacy conducted throughout the rest of the century. They were trend-setting and gave a clear idea of the new conditions in which international relations were being conducted. As such, they formed models for the future. And the Congress system they reflected was consciously dedicated to preserving the peace in Europe as a whole and Europe as a concept.²⁸ This Europeanization of the

²⁸ Claude, *Swords into Plowshares*, p.22.

statesperson's mission began, consciously, with the creation of the Congress system. That is to say, it was now seen as a process based on the handful of state pillars which were the Great Powers, not exactly from below, but a kind of Europeanization which marked its difference with Napoleonic Europeanization in which the summit (the Emperor) joined with the base, the peoples of Europe. This was a transitional or intermediate type of Europeanization. The overall goal, of preserving the peace of Europe, was never abandoned, even though it was left to the Great Powers to define what was meant by 'peace' or rather, what constituted a challenge to the peace, whether social revolution or internal borders or external borders. The Great Powers decided what degree of social revolution was deemed a threat to the Westphalian system, that is to say, to existing dynasties, and of course in this regard there were differences between the parties, either based on ideology (Metternich was more conservative than any British statesman) or on the perceived threat to one's own polity. The Great Powers (self-appointed guardians of the European order) likewise decided on the shape of Europe. While the outlying historic powers were always considered part of it (Russia, Britain and the Ottoman Empire), they might be augmented or deprived of provinces here and there.

The progressive ascension of Europe to its status of virtually total world mastery by the end of the nineteenth century signified, along with the Europeanization of the world, the globalization of the European order, or the mandate of maintaining peace, no longer simply in Europe, but in the entire world. In this respect, the four congresses had been decisive and trend-setting. At Aix-la Chapelle (Aachen) in 1818, along with the full reinstatement of France (and the secret continuation of the pact of Four, in case the balance should be threatened again), was born a principle which would later be enshrined in the Monroe Doctrine. Czar Alexander was anxious to help in putting down the generalized uprising against Spanish rule in the Americas, and found, not only no support, but active opposition to the idea of restoring legitimate rule there, spearheaded by Castlereagh. Certainly this constituted resistance

to what was after all nothing more than what the Great Powers had vowed to do in Europe, namely, preserve threatened thrones. It was motivated, on the one hand most certainly by the reality principle, given the material impossibility of bringing any, and certainly not all, of the newly independent Latin American states to heel. But it was more than that: a reincarnation of the 1494 Treaty of Tordesillas, through which for the first time in more than three centuries the hemispheres were being endowed with geo-strategic value and mutually exclusive borders. An invisible line was being drawn in the middle of the Atlantic, one which would play such an important role thereafter. The British role in drawing that line, and in inspiring the proclamation of the Monroe Doctrine, is well known, and it foreshadowed the kind of globalization based on extra-European considerations, which would come to restructure the international system in the twentieth century. Of utmost relevance is likewise the fact that the dreamer-Czar introduced other projects which themselves presaged later developments, and involving generalized disarmament, international military forces, and a permanent union (although the purpose of these various schemes would have been to protect ruling dynasties against their peoples, and not to protect peoples against aggressive rulers or neighbors).

The second congress took place at Troppau (Opava) in 1820 to discuss constitutional developments in Spain. The argument, once again between the Czar and the other participants, concerned the desirability of resorting to military intervention to suppress the constitution which had been imposed on the king of Spain. In the name of Westphalian principles, interventionism was resisted, until the constitutional movement spread throughout the Iberian peninsula and to various Italian states, now demanding the restoration of their former constitutions. In each case, the constitution in question was the relatively liberal one dating back to the height of Napoleonic rule, in 1812. At this point, Metternich became convinced that things were getting out of hand, since an Italian infection was, first of all, in itself a threat to Habsburg rule in the north, and Spain and Piedmont were dangerously close to France.

A third congress, at Laibach (Ljubljana), was duly convoked one year later. Britain and France maintained the reserve which had characterized their policies since the outbreak of the crisis, and the system seemed to lurch towards a revival of ideological considerations in the conduct of great power diplomacy (liberal vs. conservative states), or Waltz's second image. The fourth and last congress took place in Verona in 1822, having been called in response to the Greek uprising against Ottoman rule, now one year old. For Metternich, the balance of power principle excluded the possibility of assisting the insurgents, while for their own reasons Russia, France and Britain all contemplated what form and what limits to give to the assistance for the Greeks. At the same time France, for dynastic reasons of its own, intervened to crush the constitutional movement in Spain and restore the monarch to his previous position. The first halting exercise in Congress diplomacy had collapsed in a few years, but not without having left a lasting and a decisive impact on European statesmen, on Europe and, thereafter, on the world.

While the successive congresses had ended in the breakup of the Concert of Europe for lack of consensus on how to deal with issues, and thrown into relief the contradictions between the more liberal states (Britain and France) and the absolutist ones (Russia and Austria), they had also been put to use as forums for discussing vital issues dealing with the slave trade and interstate arbitration, as well as navigation on inland waterways. They remained as precedents in the consciousness of European statesmen, and as models for ulterior developments. And in fact dozens of European Congresses were held in the course of the "long nineteenth century" leading up to World War one, whether they came in order to forestall war, to end it, or to discuss problems related to interstate relations in time of peace (arbitration, navigation, and so on).

European states now went their own ways, and an ideologically based division between east and west took place. In most instances (but only when they were not involved in rivalry overseas, as in Egypt) France and Britain sided together in the attempt to rein in

the three Eastern powers, Prussia, Austria and Russia. This could certainly not be deemed a cold war, but there was indeed a split between the two limited parliamentary democracies, with their growing overseas interests, and the purely continental autocracies.

The nineteenth century saw the progression of international politics based on liberal nationalist premises, as well as efforts by Marxist and other socialist theorists and groups to ensure the kind of internationalism which would engender change and guarantee its direction. 1914 proved to be a significant cutoff point, when all of the important socialist parties voted war credits, thus aligning themselves with the liberal nationalists and dealing a first significant blow to the socialist model.

The League of Nations was the result of accumulated experiences in the domain of international organization, including institution building, and fundamentally was the result of the first World War. The nineteenth century influenced its shape, in combination with the four years of the war. As in the case of most significant institutional transformation, the codification of international organization which took place after 1919 was the combination of long-term forces at work during periods of calm, and the cataclysmic upheavals linked to war. Other examples are the American declaration of independence and constitution or the institutions of the successive French republics. The Concert of Europe provided the example of great powers taking up issues affecting European security, in its four regular conferences and then, over the decades. This seemed in retrospect like a rehearsal for the later establishment of the League Council (and UN Security Council), a directorate of the great powers. The attempt, following the two Hague Conferences of 1899 and 1907, to set up a veritable “Hague system” was the first concrete effort to establish institutional facts on the ground. The Hague conference was originally convened on the initiative (once again!) of the Russian czar, this time Nicholas II (a courageous but logical move, since he represented the most peripheral of the great powers), and this time the conferences were explicitly to organize more effectively

the state system. By the time of the second conference, dozens of states were participating. The third one was scheduled for the year 1914, but never convened because of the war. Already the spirit of the later League Assembly (and UN General Assembly) was embodied in the successive Hague Conferences of 1899 and 1907, because of the implicit notion of the equality of all states, large or small, as envisaged by the liberal democratic model, the only condition being the Westphalian one of internationally recognized sovereignty. The number of participating states nearly doubled from the first to the second conference. These were now intended to take place every seven years. The ideals of liberal nationalism can be seen, after one century, to be coming to fruition, because of the clear distinction between the Hague experiences and the earlier Concert of Europe system, which had included all the major powers, and only the major powers. The development also suited European public opinion, largely pacifist in the early twentieth century.

With regard to the deeper significance of the Paris settlements of 1919, nothing can be more instructive than a perusal of the collected papers of Woodrow Wilson's closest foreign policy advisor, Colonel House.²⁹ One gets a picture of the extent to which Wilsonian idealism pervaded the political decisions and activities of the American president during the crucial war years, and how a system which he shaped, largely in opposition to his French and British allies, was left to be run by those who would most likely have created something different. The League of Nations is of course a case in point. The one addition, an essential one not always recognized for what it was, was the post of General Secretary with a significant bureaucracy, the secretariat. This was definitely a departure in legal-political terms, because it constituted the League as a separate (although not equal or autonomous) partner in the

²⁹ Charles Seymour, ed., *Edward Mandell House. The Intimate Papers of Colonel House*, 4 vols., New York: Doubleday, 1926-1928.

international system. The position also symbolized the perceived necessity of unifying the large variety of initiatives, regimes and organizations under the umbrella of a single Organization.

The League of Nations was like so many innovations, the direct result of the war itself. Nothing succeeds like success, and its creation reflected the idea that the unified allied War Council established late in the war, under the aegis of General Foch, could be projected forward into the post-war phase in the battle to preserve the peace.³⁰ And the nature of the peace to be preserved was the peace of the victors. That is to say, it was not peace in general, as proposed by Woodrow Wilson while the fighting was still going on, a peace without victors, based on the need to end all wars. It was a peace in which the new order (established by the successive Paris treaties of 1919, particularly Versailles) was now redefined, in the light of the developments of international organization culminating in the League, as an upgrading of domestic, criminal law to the global level.

The scene was now set for the later definition of wars, no longer as temporary setbacks to the reestablishment of the Westphalian principles, notably the balance, but also that of non-interference, but as police actions to restore the legal order when it had been challenged by revisionist powers. The policemen were by definition the major Council powers, France on land and Britain on the seas. Of course this particular peace could not endure, because it was based on an order those predominant powers could not maintain since they were falsely hegemonic,³¹ an appearance based on centuries of European history, not taking into account the globalization of the Westphalian system, nor the temporary retreat of Germany and Soviet Russia, and the lingering isolationism of the greatest power of the twentieth century, the

³⁰ Claude, *Swords into Plowshares*, p.43.

³¹ Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers – Economic Change and Military Conflict from 1500 to 2000*, New York: Vintage Books, 1989 [1987].

United States. This criminalization of revisionist international politics succeeded in neutralizing specific powers.

The League did not survive the Second World War, not because it had failed, but because its instruments had not been employed as they were intended, that is to say, to preserve the existing order. France and Britain lacked the will, and most certainly the means, to maintain the hegemony that thanks to the United States they had won in 1918, because of the latter's return to isolation. The widespread idea that the League had failed needs to be revised, since, like the UN later on, it is a shell that acts in accordance with the will of its members, most notably the great powers among them. Indeed, the UN was a reincarnation of the League, with its basic instruments and bodies, and the addition of some new ones. In particular, it resurrected the principle of unanimity, in the form of the veto. What it added was the notion that all of the great powers should be present at the creation. This was at first accomplished (Germany did not exist as a sovereign state) although somewhat later, the dilemma of the League was revived with the refusal of the United States to accept the legitimacy of the People's Republic of China after 1949, something which immediately contributed to serious instability in the form of the three-year long Korean war. The liberal nationalist principle was strengthened in the form of the General Assembly representing dozens, then a hundred and now nearly two hundred states, and provisions for voting. But it was powerfully negated, in both theory and fact, by the primacy given to the Security Council.

Germany was twice defeated even as it was kept out, then kept itself out, of the international system crafted over a century to 1919. The Soviet Union was once and for all defeated with the end of the cold war, and despite its inclusion in the international system rebuilt in 1945 along the lines of that which followed World War one. In other words, the history of Europe in the 19th century, culminating in the system devised in Paris in 1919, succeeded in its intended purpose, as devised by Wilson and his associates of the time, and despite Wilson's own purely electoral defeat.

Woodrow Wilson, although he did not live to see it happen, sacrificed his own career, then his health, in the service of his goal, as defined through the testimony of Colonel House. Other sister powers shared in this victory, and the powers earmarked for defeat were in fact defeated in the seventy years which followed 1919, with international law and organization in tow.

The criminalization of international politics

It is at this point that one must speak of the intrusion of domestic into international law, making the latter over as a branch of criminal law. Violations of the various Paris peace conferences were to be considered breaches of the peace and thus illegal acts. They were to be envisaged no longer in the perspective of Westphalian principles, but in that of the prescriptions of Versailles, Saint-Germain, Trianon and Neuilly (the case of Sèvres, although comparable, is in many ways contradictory to this rule, because the victor powers lost out almost immediately to a revisionist Republican Turkey), to be enforced by a permanent international actor, the League, indeed the highest international actor, dominated by France, Britain, and such powers as might be admitted thereafter, flanked as of 1921 by the Permanent Court of International Justice.

The peace seen as the extension worldwide of domestic law had two effects: it negated the longstanding reality of what Carl Schmitt designates as the *Nomos* of the earth,³² by which he means essentially the geo-strategic projection of state power over land. *Nomos* is “the immediate form in which the political and social order of a people is manifested in spatial terms...” Furthermore, “in the taking of land, in the foundation of a city or a colony, the

³² Carl Schmitt, *Der Nomos der Erde im Völkerrecht des Jus Publicum Europaeum*, Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1997 [1950]. Available in English as Carl Schmitt, *The Nomos of the Earth*, transl. G. L. Ulmen, New York: Telos Press, 2003.

Nomos becomes visible, with which a...people establish themselves., that is to say, in which it spatializes (*verortet*) itself and raises a piece of the world to the level of an order.”³³ In other words the Nomos is both the bounded place and the projected space of a people. This concept is essential to grasping the present argument: throughout the nineteenth, then the twentieth centuries, the ground was being laid for the conceptual transformation of the international system in line with movements in the field of international law and organization. Events of the last century transformed international law in the sense of its juridification, by which is meant, the extension of precepts taken from civil law to the international sphere. That sphere was essentially defined by the historic sea powers, with the European land powers falling by the wayside one by one. In this way, the Nomos of the land powers was replaced by the global Nomos of the sea powers (and after Britain in turn fell by the wayside following World War two, by the United States).

Hegemony was thus successfully claimed for sea-, and later air-power (even more global than sea-power). Germany was thus, beginning in 1919, reduced to dimensions which it was reluctant to accept, and this, incidentally, was the major problem Schmitt had with it.³⁴ Just as importantly, the process of encirclement of the Soviet Union soon began, based on the same revised form of international legality (it is interesting to note that the Soviet Union was the only power expelled from the League of Nations), of which Stalin complained bitterly in the twenties, thirties and forties, which was nonetheless genuine, and finally resulted in the physical reduction of Russia, fifty years after the same effect had been obtained with regard to Germany at the end of World War two. The ultimate result of the successful war against Eurasian

³³ Schmitt, *Der Nomos der Erde*, pp.39-40.

³⁴ Ellen Kennedy, *Constitutional Failure – Carl Schmitt in Weimar*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004.

land powers – Germany, then Russia – appeared to signify the end of the Westphalian structure with the emergence of a unipolar world. The resulting vacuum, speaking now of the most recent phase, following the disappearance of the Soviet Union and its Nomos, which is nowadays universally labeled an Empire, is what explains the rise of partially successful alternative challenges, in the form of non-territorial movements, for example those Islamist groups which had first been instrumentalized in the struggle to contain and then destroy Soviet power.

Combined with the idea of the Nomos is the question of the state of exception, since the powers that have successfully managed to replace the international system based on contending spatial projections with one based on a single legal projection, with the criminalization of non-conformists, are also those who have institutionalized the state of exception on the same series of occasions (World War One, the Depression, World War Two, the Cold War, the War on Terror). Giorgio Agamben, in his *State of Exception*,³⁵ takes the concept, which includes martial law, emergency regulations, rule by decree, and the like, and shows how pervasive they are, precisely in those countries which constitutionally are defined as parliamentary or presidential republics. Slavko Zizek also makes this point:³⁶

“And is it not a fact that...liberal warriors are so eager to fight antidemocratic fundamentalism that they will end up flinging away freedom and democracy themselves, if only they can fight terror? They have such a passion for proving that non-Christian fundamentalism is the main threat to freedom that they are ready to fall back on the position that we have to limit our own freedom here and now, in our allegedly Christian societies. If the “terrorists”

³⁵ Giorgio Agamben, *State of Exception*, transl. Kevin Attell, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2005

³⁶ Slavko Zizek, *The Puppet and the Dwarf: The Perverse Core of Christianity*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2003, p. 37.

are ready to wreck this world for love of the other, our warriors on terror are ready to wreck their own democratic world out of hatred for the Muslim other. Jonathan Alter and Alan Dershowitz love human dignity so much that they are ready to legalize torture – the ultimate degradation of human dignity – to defend it.” Zizek goes on to show that Professor Dershowitz of Harvard University deploys “utilitarian” arguments (use torture to stem terrorism) which potentially signify the legitimization of that very phenomenon which has aroused his ire. “Just as one should torture a terrorist whose knowledge could prevent the death of many more innocent people, should one not fully condone terror, at least against military and police personnel waging an unjust war of occupation, if it could prevent violence on a much larger scale?”

Agamben shows how George Bush’s September 11th-based emergency laws are the crystallization of more than a century of precedent, and the synthesis of constitutional development in such democracies as the US, Britain, France, Germany and Italy, based on an accumulation of events taking place in the shadows and under the citizens’ noses precisely because of the widespread liberal positivism of contemporary political discourse. The development was anticipated by Walter Benjamin, who opposed it, and Carl Schmitt, who welcomed it. And by the time World War two came about, even Benjamin welcomed it, saying that “it is our task to bring about the real [*wirklich*] state of exception, and this will improve our position in the struggle against fascism.”³⁷ The argument was picked up by George Bush speaking of “Islamofascism.” Of course Agamben is quite right, following Schmitt, to place the exception at the limit between politics and law, or “the legal form of what cannot have legal form,” with a semiotic slip in which the “paradigm of security” has replaced the state of exception. He adds that “it is significant that though this transformation of the constitutional order (which is today

³⁷ Quoted in Agamben, *State of Exception*, p. 57.

underway to varying degrees in all the Western democracies) is perfectly well known to jurists and politicians, it has remained entirely unnoticed by the citizens. At the very moment when it would like to give lessons in democracy to different traditions and cultures, the political culture of the West does not realize that it has entirely lost its canon.”³⁸

In parallel to the legalization or juridification of international politics, we can thus retrace the process of de-legalization of the domestic order, as shown by Schmitt in his devastating critique of liberalism, *Legality and Legitimacy*,³⁹ which draws a clear fault line between these two categories, ignored by liberal theorists, noting that in contrast to mere legality, “plebiscitary legitimacy is the single type of state justification that may be generally acknowledged as valid today.”⁴⁰ This might be seen as a statement of fact or of a norm, but reading to the end one realizes it is a norm:⁴¹

“A constitution that...forgoes imposing a substantive order, but chooses instead to give warring factions, intellectual circles, and political programs the illusion of gaining satisfaction legally, of achieving their party goals and eliminating their enemies, both by legal means, such a constitution is no longer even possible today as a dilatory formal compromise; and, as a practical matter, it would end by destroying its own legality and legitimacy.”

The process whereby the international arena was endowed with juridical content is closely linked to that which transformed “liberal”

³⁸ Agamben, *State of Exception*, p.1, 14, 28.

³⁹ Carl Schmitt, *Legality and Legitimacy*, transl. Jeffrey Seitzer, Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2004. Originally published as *Legalität und Legitimität*, Munich: Duncker und Humblot, 1932, on the eve of Hitler’s appointment as chancellor.

⁴⁰ Schmitt, *Legality and Legitimacy*, p. 90.

⁴¹ Schmitt, *Legality and Legitimacy*, p.94.

polities into ones deeply entrenched in the state of exception, for the stated purpose, in the case of Britain, France or most notably the United States, of protecting the new international legal order against those bent on bringing it down. Agamben outlines this historical enthronement of the state of exception, but fails to point out the symbiosis between it and the inversely parallel international process.⁴²

Between the middle of the twentieth and the beginning of the twenty-first centuries, and along with the continental powers, the paradigms which had presided over political thought and practice were all defeated as well. They collapsed in the flames of World War two for fascism, in the end of the Soviet experiment (and even before it) for the Marxist model, and at the latest September 11th, 2001 for the liberal model. While they have shown their resilience by restructuring themselves and reappearing, chameleon-like, in various garbs and guises (fascism in the 'war on terror', liberalism in the politics of the European Union, Marxism in the discourse of some Latin American states), their former strength is sapped, and they can no longer compete with other ideological constructs positing different types of solidarities found in various parts of the world, such as the international women's movement, ecology, mass democracy, and Islamism. This relative political and ideological void has set the stage for the possible revival of the tricontinental.

III. The new Tricontinental

It is in the context of this collapse of states and paradigms, and of the rise of unipolarity, that the space has been created for a new tricontinental. The original tricontinental was an alliance of progressive countries from the global south, and specifically from Latin America, Africa and Asia, whose purpose it was to combat domination and exploitation by northern powers. If Soviet state

⁴² The latter process is outlined in Agamben, *State of Exception*, pp.11-22, but he does not make the link, apparent to us, between the two inversely parallel processes.

capitalism (or “really existing socialism”) couldn’t survive the cold war, it is not surprising that the coalition of poor third world tricontinental countries could not do so either. Why should it be different today? The answer is obvious: the countries of the global south which make up the new tricontinental, are no longer poor. Whether one speaks of China, of India, of Brazil, of South Africa, one no longer is speaking of miserable states that cannot feed their own people (that they do not always choose to do so is another matter entirely). They are rapidly joining the club of the rich countries (once again, regardless of the unequal internal distribution of that wealth) which govern the affairs of the world in an era of globalization.

As so often, Immanuel Wallerstein seems to have intuited future developments when, writing in the early 1970s,⁴³ he defined

what I call the semi-periphery, that is all those states who play an intermediate role in the world-economy: large along at least one crucial dimension (population, skilled manpower, total industrial output, per capita income)...

There are a large number of such countries in the world today: Brazil, Venezuela, and Mexico; Algeria, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia; Iran, India and Indonesia; Nigeria, Zaïre, and South Africa; and, yes, Canada.

With the exception of Canada (and the listed Arab countries, which have all since chosen to ensconce themselves in the American camp, as well as the war-ravaged Democratic Republic of the Congo - Zaïre), the list is remarkably in line with the recent emergence of a powerful potential tricontinental. Understandably, he left China off of the list, because its economic and political

⁴³ Immanuel Wallerstein, “Old Problems and New Syntheses: The Relation of Revolutionary Ideas and Practices,” in *The Capitalist World Economy*, Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1979, pp.246-247.

evolution, which propelled it to the very top, was not yet visible. And while he could not foresee the extraordinary economic and technological transformations which would give them power far beyond that which he attributed to them (as sources of raw materials, benefiting from world economic downturns only), he did unerringly identify a phenomenon of differentiation within the global South that has today become palpable.

The foundations of the new tricontinental are constituted by the archaeology of the old paradigms, which are not strong enough anymore to condition policies or even to convince the bourgeois practitioners of Habermas's beloved "public sphere,"⁴⁴ that is to say the cultural, economic and political elites identified by Bourdieu.⁴⁵ In addition to the rising states of the tricontinental, always in opposition to what Hardt and Negri call "imperial power", are those they call the "multitudes," who condition the policies of states members of the new tricontinental, as in Latin America, electing and bringing down their political leaders, and guiding them towards original and emancipatory policies.⁴⁶

Beyond the question of individual and combined states of the new tricontinental, lies that of non-state actors and movements. These are not yet properly documented in the academic literature, but they already play a role and seek to play a larger one. I am referring here in particular to the "alternative globalization" movement (in French: *altermondialisme*), which has taken shape

⁴⁴ Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere – An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, transl. T. Burger and F. Lawrence, Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT University Press, 1989.

⁴⁵ Pierre Bourdieu, "Political Representation – Elements for a Theory of the Political Field" and "Delegation and Political Fetishism" in Pierre Bourdieu, *Language and Symbolic Power*, Cambridge Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1991, pp. 171-220.

⁴⁶ Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, pp.393-411.

in a series of “world social forums”(WSFs) beginning in Porto Alegre in January 2001.⁴⁷ The Charter of Principles of Porto Alegre proclaimed its opposition to neo-liberalism and to world domination by narrowly-held capital. The declared institutional enemies of the movement are those international organizations which manage the financial and economic affairs of the planet: International Monetary Fund, World Bank, World Trade Organization, G8 meetings, and so on. In the view of the social forums, the neo-liberal wave was born with the end, around 1970, of the “Keynesian” era in which capital, labor and governments cooperated. This collapse paralleled the decline and fall of the socialist model, as of the previously attempted third world-oriented approach (that is to say, the first tricontinental). The political collapse was accompanied by the historical repression of the significance of global events, especially those of the late 1960s, when the original tricontinental was alive and well.⁴⁸ Those who acted out the 1968 uprising in France and elsewhere knew what they wanted: to end the US war in Vietnam and the conditions that had produced it, that is to say, the transformation of the international system and the rules governing it. The next generation of repentant revolutionaries⁴⁹ re-defined 1968 as a kind of cathartic and self-absorbed media event staged by bored petty bourgeois intellectuals, forgetting that it had been accompanied by a paralyzing nation-wide strike in France, and social movements of similar power elsewhere.

Clearly, such initiatives, networks, demonstrations and conferences are not convincing in their presentation of alternatives.

⁴⁷ Samir Amin & François Houtart, “Trois défis pour les Forums sociaux,” *Le Monde Diplomatique*, May 2006, p.31.

⁴⁸ This occultation is admirably traced by Kristin Ross, *May '68 and its Afterlives*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002.

⁴⁹ The causes and effects of this collective penance are ironically recounted by Guy Hocquenghem, *Lettre ouverte à ceux qui sont passés du col Mao au Rotary*, Paris: Agone, 2003 [1986].

But they are consistent in their logic, and are a legitimate and integral part of the movement which is taking place, and in which new champions may emerge singly or together, to challenge the existing international system. The vulnerability of that system is shown by the failed policies of the years between 2001 and 2006, during which the entire project of the Bush administration came apart, to the extent that one wonders how it can be put together again. Radical unilateralism has not worked and cannot work, because of its cultural presuppositions and blind spots. It cannot work, because of the expected reaction of other international actors, not simply states. And it cannot work because new powers are on the rise, which may well emerge in the context of this new tricontinental paradigm.

After the Fall

The international system, after seeming to become simpler, became much more complex in the wake of the events set off by the al-Qaida assault of September 11th, 2001. The latter produced a discursive, political and military overreach by the USA, Britain and Israel, in the shape of the Iraqi and Lebanese adventures, from 2003 to 2006. This precipitation of events actually came to confirm the kinds of theoretical inputs that dated back to the period prior to the advent of unipolarity. The sudden shift of 1990 was surely unpredicted and this has led to a critique of international relations theory in the shadow of this “failure” to predict the collapse of the Soviet Union. Such a perception was in itself based on the Enlightenment premise of unlimited rationality and progress, in short the scientification of social sciences. If you can predict in a physical system, such as the astronomical, you should be able to predict in social systems, for example the international. In fact, theoretical constraints in the social sciences permit prediction, but only in a chronologically and geographically limited fashion, because of the enormously increased number of variables in the humanities and social sciences.

Following the collapse of the USSR, the general tendency was once again to consider the emergent system to be permanent, that is to say, to be destined to last at least two generations (half a century or more). The overwhelming nature of US hegemony seemed to guarantee such an outcome. But a careful reading of the literature might have yielded a different picture. Paul Kennedy, writing in the mid-1980s,⁵⁰ had of course not predicted the collapse of the Soviet Union, but he had identified the combination of processes which generally lead to the collapse of great powers, and they were, as he showed, massively present in the Soviet case. What he had not done was to identify the importance of conditions pertaining to the up and coming powers particularly China, but also, it is now clear, India. Those writing in the immediate aftermath of the Soviet collapse were correct in worrying about increasing instability after the end of the bipolar system. But they got it wrong geographically, because they didn't take into account the disappearance of the classical (Eurocentric) Nomos and its replacement by a global one. They tended to think instability would come from established important states, notably Germany.⁵¹ A factoring of the combination of population, economic and military factors, combined with the quest for a paradigm to replace those which had succumbed, is what suggests the makeup of the new tricontinental.

Edward Said, deconstructing Henry Kissinger's writings, shows how for the latter, "the contemporary actuality of relations between the United States and the so-called Third World (which includes China, Indochina, the Near East, Africa, and Latin America) is manifestly a thorny set of problems..."⁵² The creation of the tricontinental is, like so many international phenomena, the result

⁵⁰ Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*, pp.488-513.

⁵¹ John J. Mearsheimer, "Back to the Future: Instability in Europe after the Cold War," in Sean M. Lynn-Jones and Steven E. Miller, eds., *The Cold War and After: Prospects for Peace*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1994, pp.141-192.

⁵² Edward W. Said, *Orientalism*, New York, Vintage Books, 1994 [1978], p.46.

of a combination of push and pull. The emergent tricontinental is at present making a virtue of what had originally been a necessity, imposed by the ever diminishing group of great powers.

The Chinese case is well documented and signs of its emergence were precocious, going back to the time of the breakthrough in US-Chinese relations under Nixon and Mao Zedong in the early 1970s. By the 1990s it had become commonplace to predict its emergence as a great power, eventually, but surely not, it was thought, in the short run, because of poverty and overpopulation. Prodigious growth and demographic planning changed those two elements, transforming them into strengths, transforming China into the world's fourth economic power, and thus earning for it a portion of preponderant international economic and financial power through such organizations as the IMF and World Bank, which it will increasingly come to co-control along with a handful of other giants.

As for India, it is the surprise addition to the club, although the ground was laid from the day the cold war ended, as it was freed from its symbiotic relationship with Russia, just as the USA found itself freed from that of Pakistan. Whereas China rose to putative great power status despite its anti-Russian coalition with the United States, India recently appeared at the door through its own efforts, but also thanks to a new post-cold war relationship with the USA.⁵³ This relationship promises to open the door to massive technological transfers to India, already a technological giant, in the nuclear field. Although the agents of that fateful rapprochement were President Clinton and the strongly pro-American former Prime Minister, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the movement was a natural one. And India, like China before it, did not absolutely require the new coalition; it had all of the elements of its transformation in hand anyway. What this shows is that the Westphalian principles

⁵³ Cf. Christophe Jaffrelot, "Respect for Power and Pragmatic Alliances. India's New Best Friend, the US," *Le Monde Diplomatique* (English), September 2006.

resumed their operation (the liberal Clinton had nothing in common with the fundamentalist Hindu Vajpayee) in the form of balancing not long after the Soviet collapse had appeared to bring them to an end. This event had rendered meaningless for a time Waltz's idea that "[i]nternational politics is necessarily a small-number system...the advantages of subtracting a few and arriving at two are decisive."⁵⁴ On the other hand, he is being proven correct with his idea that "[t]he expectation is not that a balance, once achieved, will be maintained, but that a balance, once disrupted, will be restored in one way or another."⁵⁵

India, like China, is unlikely to stand in the shadow of the United States for long. The conflict over Kashmir with Pakistan is not on the way to being resolved, and US mediation in that regard is useless since it has too high a stake in the Pakistani relationship, because of Afghanistan. India is another emerging giant, and nothing forces it to seek a single strategic ally to the exclusion of its own global objectives. Indeed, it does all it can to show that it is not an enthusiastic member of the anti-Muslim "war on terror," but only concerned with the territorial issue of Kashmir, which is a state-to-state question. It labors daily to maintain good relations with Arab and Muslim countries in the Middle East.

The list of new states members of the new tricontinental extends to all of those countries in Latin America who have voted to detach themselves from the US economic and security system, preceding and following Chavez's Venezuela. To date, they include Bolivia, Ecuador, Argentina and Brazil, each of which has sought out a particular road to its emancipation: Latin America has not forgotten the pain inflicted by its American supported military dictators.

In the Middle East, given the extraordinary stakes of the game and the strategic importance of oil resources, few have dared to

⁵⁴ Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, p.192.

⁵⁵ Waltz, *Theory of International Politics*, p. 128.

join the tricontinental. Thus far only Iran can be counted a member, and it is not clear, given the pressures on the regime, how long this will be, since it may well be willing to purchase its benevolent neutrality in exchange for American flexibility on the nuclear issue. As in the theoretical realm (gender perspectives, Postcolonial and Subaltern Studies, the revision of Neo-Realism) so in the political field, the large Middle Eastern states, most particularly the Arab ones, continue to lag in the quest for emancipation from the great powers. The exemplary exceptions are to be found in the smallest units, Palestine and Lebanon, and their example may yet prove decisive in the future, in terms of the regional prospects of the tricontinental.

Very important developments include the acquisition by Iran of nuclear energy resources, which scare the West at least as much because of their economic and political implications, as because of their military ones. Inevitably, other countries or groups of countries which can afford it, will go nuclear, acquiring the kind of symbolic and technological autonomy which accompanies such a development. And the nuclearization of Iran doesn't seem to have unduly frightened its neighbors. On the contrary, Turkey, especially as it becomes less and less certain of entering the EU in the medium-term future, shows every intention of getting close to regional and extra-regional powers of the global South, and thus potentially contributing, thanks also to its successful mixed form of secular-religious government, to the specificities of the tricontinental.⁵⁶

Formally, Turkey remains in the Western camp, but is increasingly the odd man out. In contrast, Turkey's relations with Russia have developed exponentially. Relations with Iran are also improving. Tehran provides assistance to Ankara's efforts to fight the PKK and is a significant gas supplier. While it is still too early to

⁵⁶ Cf. Suat Kiniklioğlu, "Spurned by the West, Turkey Looks Eastward," *International Herald Tribune*, 8 September, 2006.

talk about a major shift in Turkey, all the ingredients for a realignment are there.

What distinguishes this new tricontinental is then, on the one hand, the fact that it is based on economic strengths rather than weaknesses like the former one. Henry Laurens notes that “the deadly paradox of [last century’s] Afro-Asianism was its economic strategy.”⁵⁷ The author proceeds to show how 20th century developmentalism actually cemented domination by the North. This is no longer the case, since members of the three continents are fully equipped to compete in the era of globalization. Just as importantly, the new tricontinental is now willing to work with the legalized international parameters of the post-League UN era. It accepts the fact that deviant behavior has been criminalized, and its members continually position themselves so as to be on the right side of that juridical line, pushing the creator of the line, the United States, over on to the wrong side, as seen most dramatically in the proceedings of the UN Security Council leading up to the US/UK invasion of Iraq. The latter example shows how the tricontinental knows better than to put itself beyond the pale by failing to court one or more of the veto-yielding powers (in 2003 it was France and Russia; in the Iranian nuclear dispute, Russia and China). This is part of the winning, legalized strategy. One should not of course equate the tricontinental as a whole with its most vociferous members, as when the Venezuelan president promises to defend Cuba or Iran if one of them should be invaded.⁵⁸ But contrary to previous periods, nowadays most of the countries and peoples on the sidelines are cheering Chavez, along with his own people, who still re-elect him and his supporters at every occasion. This has strong symbolic significance, as did the US failure to carry the Security Council, even its most

⁵⁷ Henry Laurens, “Les Afro-Asiatiques: acteurs ou enjeux de la scène politique internationale?,” in *Politique Étrangère* 3-4, 2000, p.900.

⁵⁸ “Castro Walks, Chavez Talks,” MSNCB News Services, 14 September, 2006.

vulnerable third world members, and despite bluster and threats, in the run-up to the invasion of Iraq. Meantime, the US administration complains, as well it might, that the UN has turned against it, whether because the Secretary General declared the US war in Iraq “illegal,” or because the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), a UN agency, denounced “outrageous” inaccuracies in US claims about Iranian plans for building nuclear weapons.⁵⁹ And while one should not make too much of it, there is a distinct revival of interest in such allegedly outmoded organizations as the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) of cold war fame, judging by the strong attendance of its 118 members at the 14th summit of the NAM in Havana, and their concern to have a successful meeting.⁶⁰

In the words of Ignacio Ramonet, Director of *Le Monde Diplomatique*, on the eve of the fiftieth anniversary of the historic Bandung meeting, which showed the way towards the original non-aligned movement and tricontinental,⁶¹

The political objective underpinning the [World Social Forum] is radical in its modernity. Whereas the United Nations provides a forum for states or governments – the structures of power, the WSF aims to bring together, for the first time in history, an embryonic assembly representative of all humanity.

Interestingly, Ramonet recognizes the importance of an alliance between peoples and states, in this context, when he notes that the WSF meeting of 2006 in Caracas, “will be particularly impassioned in the Venezuelan capital where, for the first time,

⁵⁹ Associated Press, “IAEA: ‘Outrageous’ Inaccuracies in US Iran Report,” MSNBC News Services, 14 September, 2006.

⁶⁰ Alejandro Kirk and Dalia Acosta, “Non-Aligned Summit Opens Amidst Suspense Over Castro,” Inter Press Service News Agency (IPS), 11 September, 2006.

⁶¹ Ignacio Ramonet, “Never Give Up on that Other World,” *Le Monde Diplomatique* (English), January 2006.

the WSF will come into direct contact with the reforms introduced by President Hugo Chavez.”

To this perspective should here be added the contributions of gender-based analyses, which have added significantly to our understanding of international relations, and if combined to the notion of the rising tricontinental, with its third world perspective, they have even more to offer, given the direct and serious consequences of structural adjustment policies and the relocation of factories from the North to the South as well as the mass migration of women involved in services from housekeeping to prostitution, from east to west and south to north (South East Asia to the Gulf, Latin America to the USA, Eastern to Western Europe). At the theoretical level, the gender perspective is based on the critique of realist theory, for example with Ann Tickner’s commentary on Hans Morgenthau.⁶² She takes his guiding principles of international relations (as expounded in *Politics Among Nations*) and points out their emphasis on “objectivity” and “power” as well as the axiom of the continuation of the existing public sphere, which discriminates against women. Leaving her own theoretical presuppositions aside (a feminist standpoint divorced from social or cultural factors, and thus essentialist in the sense that she tends to posit a distinctly “female” and a distinctly “male” perspective, something more than problematic in the social sciences) this is a valuable contribution to the critique of international relations, based on the discipline’s discourse. The potential for mobilizing women as well as men is therefore also more of a reality.

The same potential exists in the case of the domestic and international politics of religion. In the Middle East, it is political Islam that currently struggles for democracy and bears potential for change. This is a time when even in Western Europe, one

⁶² Ann Tickner, “Hans Morgenthau’s Principles of Political Realism: A Feminist Reformulation,” *Millennium* 17 (3), 1988.

speaks of a trend towards “desecularization” of political thought. It has been thus far limited to the arena occupied by the politicians, taking Britain as an example, with the strident competition for the Christian identity high-ground thinly disguised as secularism, in the quest for position and votes. Judging from history, it can be foreseen that mainstream academia will follow. Liberation theology has a revived potential in the context of desecularization, and in that respect, “liberation Islam” is a largely untested perspective, but towards which there is some opening.

Further consolidating this combination of state and non-state actors, as well as types of analyses, pushing in the direction of global paradigmatic change, is the capital transformation of the flow of information. Despite the best efforts of such venues as UNESCO⁶³ it was always one way, from north to south; but with the breakthrough achieved by *Al-Jazeera* TV channel in the past decade, a series of media outlets has come into existence, most especially in the audio-visual field, that have contributed, if not to reversing, at least to balancing, the flow (although none of them have come close yet to matching the independence and courage of *Al-Jazeera*,⁶⁴ this is simply a matter of time). There is now a south-north and a south-south flow of information which can only help to strengthen those forces seeking to create a new intercontinental paradigm.

The reaction of the previously hegemonic power and its predecessor as hegemon and nonetheless close ally is of course also to be expected. Indeed, the Bush administration and Blair government have redefined international politics as a zero-sum

⁶³ Roger Heacock, *UNESCO and the Media*, Geneva: Graduate Institute of International Studies Press, 1975.

⁶⁴ Cf. Gary C. Gambill, “Qatar’s Al-Jazeera TV: The Power of Free Speech,” *Middle East Intelligence Bulletin*, 2(5), 1 June, 2000; Hugh Miles, *Al-Jazeera: The Inside Story of the Arab New Channel that is Challenging the West*, New York: Grove Press, 2005.

game, for the first time. The war against terrorism is seen as a one thousand and one night (that is to say, an infinitely long) process, one that will never end, the long adherence to international juridification, going back to the League, now being abandoned. As proclaimed by Bush on September 11th, 2006 from the Oval Office, the nation was now engaged in a “struggle to preserve civilization.”⁶⁵ In this he was aping Blair’s 21 March 2006 speech at the Foreign Policy Centre in London, when he said “[t]his is not a clash between civilizations, it is a clash about civilization. It is the age-old battle between progress and reaction...” (<http://fpc.org.uk/events/past/231>). To their support came Pope Benedict XVI with his notorious lecture at Regensburg University on September 12th, 2006. just one day after Bush’s civilization speech, he chose to quote a Byzantine Emperor’s statement that the Prophet Muhammad had brought nothing new that wasn’t evil and inhuman. Proving that he shared that vision, the Pope added that the Koranic injunction against spreading religion by force (Surah 2, 256: “There is no compulsion in religion”) was an early quote, dating back to a time when the Prophet was still “powerless and under threat,” that is to say, a deceitful statement.⁶⁶ The Pope, faced with a massive response that showed just how inexperienced he was politically, dropped out of the Anglo-American crusade quickly, paying as ransom a sudden reversal of views regarding Turkish admission to the EU, which he now supports.

If these international actors are concerned, it is because they are on the defensive. This is due to the variety of conditions which

⁶⁵ Others in the US, and not just the voters who brought down the Bush camp in November 2006, are taking a different, more political and pragmatic approach. Louise Richardson goes so far as to advocate negotiations with al-Qaida, in *What Terrorists Want: Understanding the Enemy, Containing the Threat*, NY: Random House, 2006.

⁶⁶ “Full text of Benedict XVI’s speech at the University of Regensburg, Germany, on Sept. 12,” text provided by the Vatican, MSNBC New Services, Sept 15th, 2006.

have come together in the contemporary era, including the juridification of the international system, the fall of classical paradigms, the political and therefore juridical contestation of US foreign policies, and the rise of a potential new tricontinental movement combining states, some of which are possessed of enormous economic, human and military might, seconded by popular transnational movements, able and perhaps willing to forge a new and original role for itself, and a new paradigm as well.

What remains to be seen is whether the countries that make up the potential steering committee of the Tricontinental will understand that it is in their interests to act in concert. The signs are marginally positive, and should this turn out to be true, the collapse of the three dominant paradigms, and the unipolar moment, will turn out to have been of short duration (as posited by neo-realism) and the future of the planet will be determined by those who represent its crushing majority, and at the same time, a fair share of its natural as well as its economic, technological and financial resources.