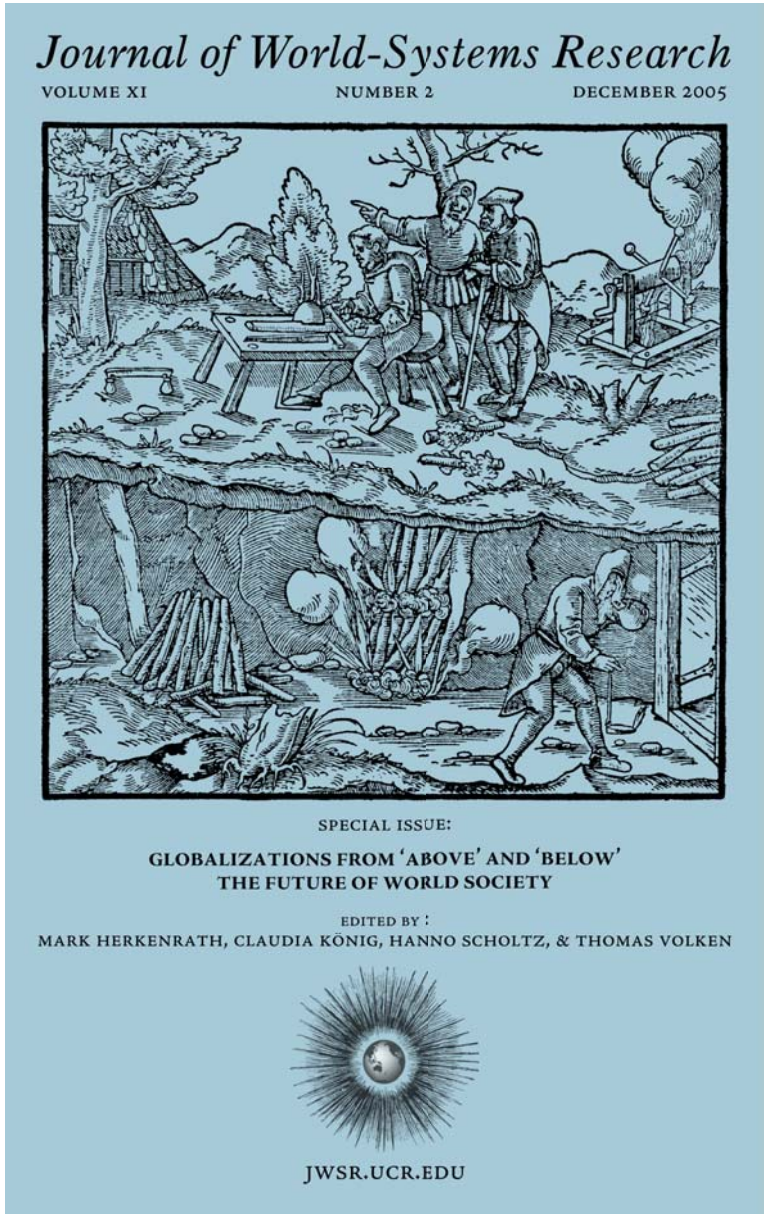

ABSTRACT:

The idea of world society implies a fully articulated complex culture and consciousness. This has been emerging on a global scale, but the old world-system of multiple cultures continues to exist at the same time that a global culture is in formation. This article discusses the historical evolution of world orders, the coming dark age of deglobalization and the potential for the eventual emergence of a collectively rational and democratic global commonwealth.

Social Evolution and the Future of World Society

Christopher Chase-Dunn

CYCLES AND TRENDS IN THE HISTORICAL EVOLUTION OF WORLD ORDERS

This article is about the idea of world society and the possible futures of the world-system in long-term evolutionary perspective. Though I share a social constructionist and institutional approach similar to that of the Zurich and the world polity schools, my structural approach to world capitalism and the notion of world society emphasizes the importance of markets, money and geopolitics in the modern system, while seeking to take account of the ideological projects of both the contenders for predominance and those who have resisted domination and exploitation.[1]

My perspective also shares some characteristics with the Gramscian approach to international relations pioneered by Robert Cox, though my insistence on the continuing relevance of the interstate system and state-based geopolitics has led some critics to call me a vulgar geopolitical realist. The emergence

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[1] An earlier version of this article was presented at the symposium on "The Future of World Society," University of Zurich, June 23–24, 2004, and published in the conference volume (Chase-Dunn 2005). Thanks to Mark Herkenrath, Claudia König, Hanno Scholtz and Thomas Volken for organizing this excellent conference in tribute to the work of Volker Bornschier and the Zurich School. I began working with Volker in 1975 on cross-national comparative studies of the effects of dependence on foreign investment on national development. Volker and I published *Transnational Corporations and*

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of the Marxist global capitalism school and the wide diffusion of "new economy-speak" seemed to relegate all considerations of military power to the dustbin of history. But with the rediscovery of new forms of empire, brought out of the shadows by recent U.S. unilateralism, the ideas about long-term world-systemic cycles and continuities have regained plausibility (Harvey 2003). The kinder, gentler world-system of successive development models has begun to look more and more like the intricate and shifting combination of consensus and coercion that it has arguably been all along. Imperialism, old and new, has been a feature of this system since its beginning and it has reasserted itself in new ways in every crisis and restructuring. Primitive accumulation is not the birthing stage of capitalism. It is a fundamental and necessary feature of capitalism.

The idea of social evolution, washed clean of its unscientific corollaries (teleology, inevitabilism, progress),[2] provides a useful handle for clearing away the "fog of globalization," and for delineating future human possibilities more clearly. The comparative world-systems approach that I have developed with Tom Hall (Chase-Dunn and Hall 1997) retools the conceptual apparatus that emerged from the first generation of world-systems scholars for the purpose of studying social change on a millennial time scale. These concepts (core/periphery hierarchy, interstate system, capitalism as including peripheral capitalism, etc.) were originally invented to analyze and tell the story of the modern Europe-centered system. For the purpose of comparing small, medium-sized and global world-systems, the concepts needed to be opened up, and the links among them loosened.

World-systems are defined as intersocietal networks of regularized interaction. Networks are not a unique feature of a recently emerged information society. Networks have been the key to social structure since the emergence of language. The idea of a core/periphery hierarchy is defined generally as any

Underdevelopment in 1985, and that same year I finished writing *Global Formation* (Chase-Dunn 1998 [2nd ed.]). Chapter 5 of the book, entitled "World Culture, Normative Integration and Community," was an effort to formulate a world-systems perspective on global culture that was informed by the writings of Immanuel Wallerstein, Samir Amin and Andre Gunder Frank, but also of Peter Heintz and Volker Bornschier (founders of the Zurich school) and the new institutionalism of John W. Meyer and his students, later called the "world polity school."

2. Stephen Sanderson (1990) admirably separates the scientific core of evolutionary explanations from the confusing and unscientific baggage that has accompanied much earlier work on long-term social change. The study of patterns of social structural change does not need to include assumptions about progress, teleology or inevitability.

kind of power hierarchy among polities or regions, and is turned into a question rather than an assumption, i.e. "does a particular world-system have core/periphery relations, or not?" The question of interstate relations is broadened to include systems of interacting polities, so that tribes and chiefdoms may be studied. The analysis of hegemonic ascent and decline is expanded to include the rise and fall of large chiefdoms, states and empires as well as modern hegemons.

This comparative perspective, which combines archaeology and ethnography with world history, allows us to see important patterns that are much more clearly visible once one systematically juxtaposes smaller, older systems with larger, more recent ones. It becomes apparent that while early core/periphery hierarchies were unstable and power was not projected over very long distances, the emergence of new techniques of power allowed core/periphery hierarchies to become spatially larger and more stable. States, markets, empires, religions, military infrastructure and organization are all important institutions that allow greater integration and more efficient long-distance exploitation and domination. Small-scale stateless world-systems have very little in the way of core/periphery hierarchy (e.g., Chase-Dunn and Mann 1998).

The other important recurrent pattern that becomes apparent once we use world-systems as the unit of analysis for analyzing social evolution is the phenomenon of "semiperipheral development." This means that semiperipheral groups are unusually prolific innovators of techniques that both facilitate upward mobility and transform the basic logic of social development. This is not to say that all semiperipheral groups produce such transformational actions, but rather that the semiperipheral location is more fertile ground for the production of innovations than is either the core or the periphery. This is because semiperipheral societies have access to both core and peripheral cultural elements and techniques, and they have invested less in existing organizational forms than core societies have. So they are freer to recombine the organizational elements into new configurations and to invest in new technologies, and they are usually more motivated to take risks than are older core societies. Innovation in older core societies tends toward minor improvements. Semiperipheral societies are more likely to put their resources behind radically new concepts.

Thus knowledge of core/periphery hierarchies and semiperipheral locations is necessary for explaining how small-scale interchiefdom systems evolved into the capitalist global political economy of today. The process of rise and fall of powerful chiefdoms (called "cycling" by anthropologists [Anderson 1994]), was occasionally punctuated by the emergence of a polity from the semiperipheral zone that conquered and united the old core region into a larger chiefly polity or an early state. This phenomenon is termed the "semiperipheral marcher chiefdom" (Chase-Dunn and Hall 1997: 83–84; Kirch 1984: 199–202).

Figure 1 – Core-Wide Empire Compared to Core with Hegemon

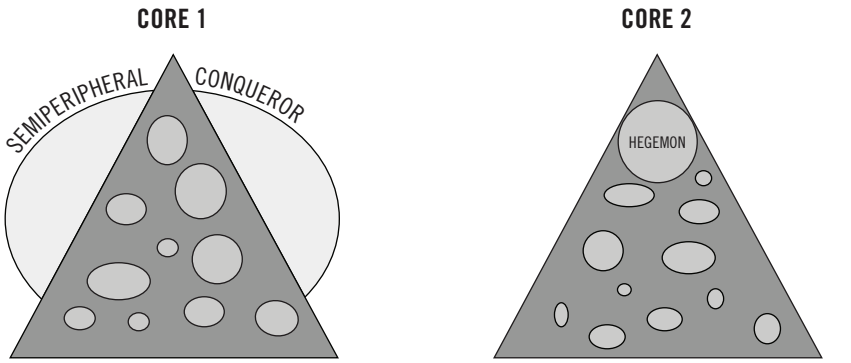
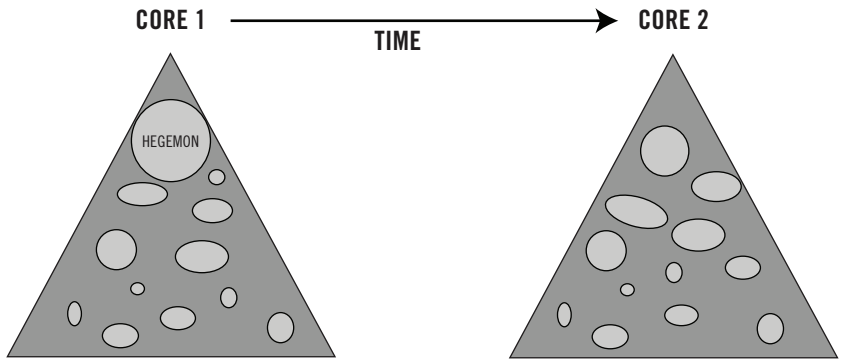


Figure 2 – The Modern Hegemonic Sequence



Much better known is the analogous phenomenon of "semiperipheral marcher states" in which a relatively new state from out on the edge of a core region conquered adjacent states to form a new core-wide empire (Mann 1986; Collins 1981). Almost every large conquest empire one can think of is an instance of this. A less frequently perceived phenomenon that is a quite different type of semiperipheral development is the "semiperipheral capitalist city-state." Dilmun, early Ashur, the Phoenician cities, the Italian city-states, Melakka, and the Hanseatic cities of the Baltic were instances. These small states in the interstices of the tributary empires were agents of commodification long before capitalism became predominant in the emergent core region of Europe, itself a still semiperipheral region in the larger Afroeurasian world-system.

The semiperipheral development idea is also an important tool for understanding the real possibilities for global social change today because semiperipheral countries are the main weak link in the global capitalist system—the zone where the most powerful antisystemic movements have emerged in the past and where vital and transformative developments are most likely to occur in the future.

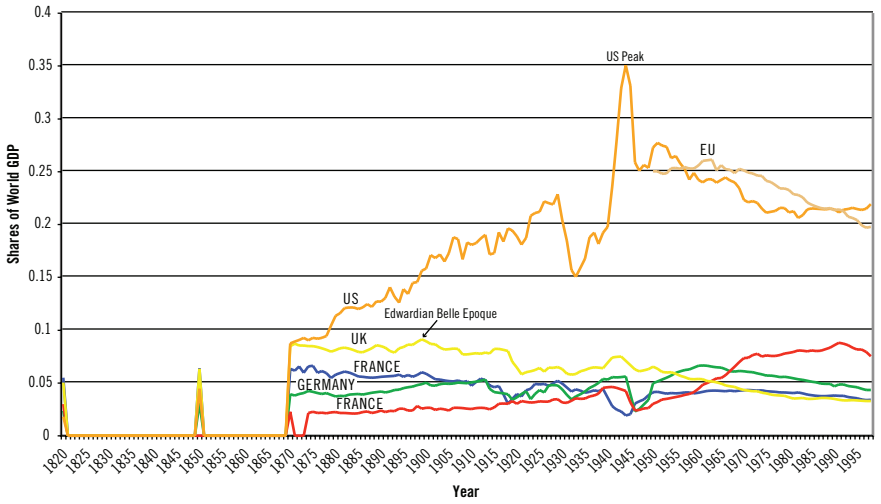
The hegemonic sequence of the last four centuries (the rise and fall of hegemonic core states) is the modern version of an ancient oscillation between more and less centralized interstate systems. All hierarchical systems experience a cycle of rise and fall, from cycling in interchiefdom systems to the rise and fall of empires, to the modern sequence of hegemonic rise and fall. In state-based (tributary) world-systems this oscillation typically took the form of semiperipheral marcher states conquering older core states to form a "universal empire" (see Figure 1).

One important consequence of the coming to predominance of capitalist accumulation has been the conversion of the rise and fall process from semiperipheral marcher conquest to the rise and fall of capitalist hegemons that do not take over other core states. The hegemons rise to economic and political/military preeminence, but they do not construct a core-wide world state, at least up to now. Rather, the core of the modern system oscillates between unipolar hegemony and hegemonic rivalry (see Figure 2).

One implication of the comparative world-systems theory is that all hierarchical and complex world-systems exhibit a "power cycle" in which political/military power becomes more centralized followed by a phase of decentralization. This is likely to be true of the future of the world-system as well, though the form of the power cycle may change. Our species needs to invent political and cultural institutions that allow for adjustments in the global political and economic structures to take place without resort to warfare. This is analogous to the problem of succession within single states, and the solution is obvious—a global government that represents the interests of the majority of the peoples of the Earth and allows for political and economic restructuring to be accomplished by democratic processes.

Capitalist accumulation usually favors a multicentric interstate system because this provides greater opportunities for the maneuverability of capital than would exist in a world state. Big capitals can play states off against each

Figure 3 – Declining U.S. Economic Hegemony



other and can escape movements that try to regulate investment or redistribute profits by abandoning the states in which such movements attain political power.

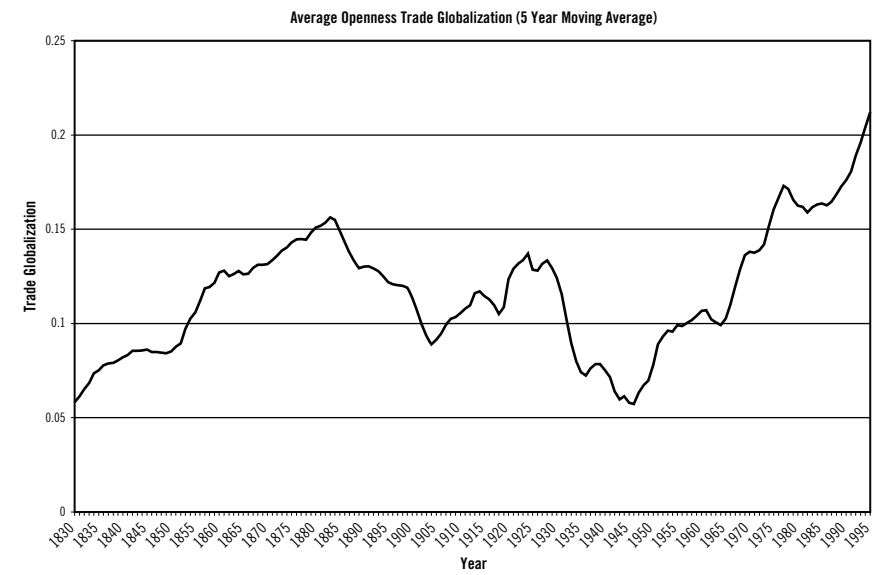
The three hegemonies of the modern world-system have been the Dutch hegemony of the seventeenth century, the British hegemony of the nineteenth century, and the U.S. hegemony of the twentieth century. World-systems analysts see a strong analogy between the decline of British hegemony after 1870 and the trajectory of the United States after the 1970s. Figure 3 shows the declining U.S. share of world GDP since 1945.

The modern world-system has experienced waves of economic and political integration (structural globalization) (Chase-Dunn, Kawano and Brewer 2000). These waves of global integration are the contemporary incarnations of the pulsations of widening and deepening of interaction networks that have been important characteristics of all world-systems for millennia. But these have occurred in a single global system since the nineteenth century. Figure 4 shows the waves of global trade integration in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

CAPITALIST GLOBALIZATION

The historical development of the modern world-system can be understood in terms of the evolution of certain key institutions that have been shaped by tremendous struggles: commodity production, technology and techniques of

Figure 4 – International Trade Relative to the Size of the Global Economy, 1830–1994



power. The struggles have included conflict among contending powers and between the core and the periphery over the past six centuries as Europe rose to hegemony and capitalist globalization expanded in waves of commodification and integration.

The story of how global orders have been restructured in order to facilitate capitalist accumulation must be told in deep temporal perspective in order for us to understand how the most recent wave of corporate globalization is similar to, or different from, earlier waves of globalization. Of particular interest here is the phenomenon of world revolutions and increasingly transnational antisystemic movements. In order to comprehend the possibilities for the emergence of global democracy we need to understand the history of popular movements that have tried to democratize the world-system in the past.

The most relevant for comprehending our own era is the story of the nineteenth century and its *tsunami* (tidal wave) of capitalist globalization under the auspices of British hegemony. Transnational antisystemic movements, especially the trade union movement and the feminist movement, emerged to contend with global capitalism. Workers and women consciously took the role of world citizens, organizing international movements to contend with the increasingly transnational organization of an emergent global capitalist class. Political and economic elites, especially finance capitalists, had already been

consciously operating on an intercontinental scale for centuries, but the degree of international integration of these elites reached a very high level in the late nineteenth century.

The British created the Concert of Europe after defeating Napoleon. This was an alliance of conservative dynasties and politicians who were dedicated to the prevention of any future French revolutions. The British Royal Navy suppressed the slave trade and encouraged decolonization of the Spanish colonies in the Americas. The English *Anti-Corn Law League's* advocacy of international free trade (carried abroad by British diplomats and businessmen) was adopted by most European and American states in the middle of the century. The gold standard was an important support of a huge increase in international trade and investment (Chase-Dunn et al. 2000; O'Rourke and Williamson 1999). The expanding Atlantic economy, already firmly attached to the Indian Ocean, was accompanied by an expanding Pacific economy as Japan and China were more completely and directly brought into the trade and investment networks of Europe and North America. American ginseng was harvested in Pennsylvania as an important commodity export that could be used in lieu of silver in the trade for Chinese silk and "china."

The nineteenth century wave of capitalist globalization was massively contested in a great globalization backlash. The decolonization of Latin America extended the formal aspects of state sovereignty to a large chunk of the periphery. Slave revolts, abolitionism and the further incorporation of Africa into the capitalist world-system eventually led to the abolition of slavery almost everywhere. Within Europe socialist and democratic demands for political and economic rights of the non-propertied classes strongly emerged in the world revolution of 1848.

I have already mentioned the idea of *semiperipheral development* (Chase-Dunn and Hall 1997: chapter 5). Institutional development in premodern world-systems occurred because innovations and implementations of new techniques and organizational forms have tended to emerge from societies that have semiperipheral positions within larger core/periphery hierarchies. Semiperipheral marcher chiefdoms conquered adjacent core polities to create larger paramount chiefdoms. And semiperipheral marcher states conquered adjacent core states to create larger and larger core-wide empires (e.g., Chin, Akkad, Assyria, Achaemenid Persia, Alexander, Rome, the Islamic Empires, etc.). And semiperipheral capitalist city-states (Dilmun, Phoenician Tyre, Sidon, and Carthage; Venice, Genoa, Malacca, etc.) expanded commercialized trade networks and encouraged commodity production within and between the tributary empires and peripheral regions, linking larger and larger regions together to eventually become the single global economy of today.

The modern hegemons (the Dutch Republic of the seventeenth century, the United Kingdom of Great Britain in the nineteenth century, and the United States of America in the twentieth century) were all formerly semiperipheral nation-states that rose to the position of hegemony by transforming the institutional bases of economic and political/military power in response to challenges from contenders for hegemony and challenges from popular movements contesting the injustices of capitalism and modern colonial imperialism. The modern world-system has experienced system-wide waves of democracy rather than separate and disconnected sequences of democratization within individual countries (Markoff 1996). These waves have tended to start in semiperipheral countries and the institutional inventions that have diffused from country to country have disproportionately been invented and implemented in semiperipheral countries first (Markoff 1999). Both the Russian and Chinese Communist challenges to capitalism emerged from the semiperiphery.

The workers' movement became increasingly organized on an international basis during the nineteenth century. Mass production made working conditions increasingly similar for industrial workers around the world. Labor organizers were able to make good use of cheap and rapid transportation as well as new modes of communication (the telegraph) in order to link struggles in distant locations. And the huge migration of workers from Europe to the New World spread the ideas and the strategies of the labor movement. Socialists, anarchists and communists challenged the rule of capital while they competed with each other for leadership of an increasingly global antisystemic movement that sought to democratize the world-system.

The decline of British hegemony, and the failure of efforts after World War I to erect an effective structure of global governance, led to the collapse of capitalist globalization during the depression of the 1930s, culminating in World War II. Figure 4 above demonstrates that capitalist globalization is a cycle as well as a trend. The great wave of the nineteenth century was followed by a collapse in the early twentieth century and then a reemergence in the period after World War II. The global institutions of the post World War II order, now under the sponsorship of the hegemonic United States, were intended to resolve the problems that were perceived to have caused the military conflagrations and economic disasters of the first half of the twentieth century. The United Nations was a stronger version of a global proto-state than the League of Nations had been, though still a long way from the "monopoly of legitimate violence" that would be the necessary effective center of a real state.

The Bretton Woods institutions—the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund—were originally intended to promote Keynesian national development rather than a globalized market of investment flows. Free trade

was encouraged, but important efforts were made to track international investments and to encourage the efforts of national states to use fiscal policy as a tool of national development. The architects of the Bretton Woods institutions were suspicious about the effects of volatile waves of international capital flows on economic development and political stability because of what they perceived to have been the lessons of the 1920s. The restarting of the world economy after World War II under the aegis of the Bretton Woods institutions and U.S. support for relatively autonomous capitalism in Europe and Japan succeeded tremendously. But the growing power of unions within the core, and the perceived constraints on U.S. fiscal and financial interests imposed by the Bretton Woods currency regime, along with the oil crisis of the early 1970s, led the U.S. to abandon Bretton Woods in favor of a free world market of capital mobility. The "Washington Consensus" was basically Reaganism-Thatcherism on a global scale—deregulation, privatization, and reneging on the "social contract" with core labor unions and the welfare state. The IMF was turned into a tool for imposing these policies on countries all over the world.

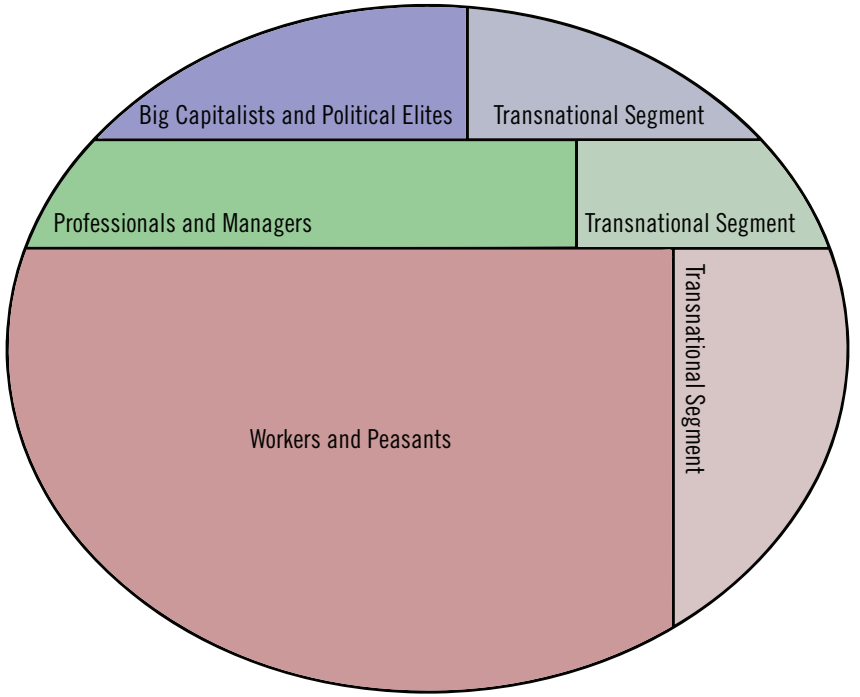
The theorists of global capitalism contend that the most recent wave of integration has created a single tightly wound global bourgeoisie that has overthrown the dynamics of the hegemonic sequence (hegemonic rise and fall and interstate rivalry) (e.g., Sassen 1991; Robinson 2004). While most world-systems theorists hold that the U.S. hegemony continues the decline that began in the 1970s, many other observers interpret the demise of the Soviet Union and the relatively greater U.S. economic growth in the 1990s as ushering in a renewal of U.S. hegemony. In Figure 3 (above) the U.S. share of global GDP can be seen to have turned up in the early 1990s.[3] The theorists of global capitalism contend that the U.S. government and other core states have become the instruments of an integrated global capitalist class rather than of separate and competing groups of national capitalists.

Walter Goldfrank (2000) contends that both models (global capitalism and the hegemonic sequence) are operating simultaneously and are interacting with one another in complicated ways. Despite the rather high degree of international integration among economic and political elites, there is quite likely to be another round of rivalry among core states. Indeed, the imperial over-reach pursued by the current Bush administration is provoking some of this kind of rivalry within the core. Global elites achieved a rather high degree of international integration during the late nineteenth century wave of globalization, but this did not prevent the World Wars of the twentieth century.

Admitting to some aspects of the "global capitalism" thesis does not require buying the whole cake. Some claim that information technology has changed everything and that we have entered a new age of global history in which comparisons with what happened before 1960 are completely inappropriate. The most important thesis of the global capitalism school is the part about global class formation, and this needs to be analyzed for workers and farmers as well as for elites (Goldfrank 1977). Figure 5 illustrates the idea that a portion of all the objective classes in the world class structure are transnationally integrated. Thomas Reifer is currently leading a research project that is comparing the

[3] While some interpret this U.S. upturn in the 1990s as the beginning of another wave of U.S. "leadership" in the global economy based on comparative advantages in information technology and biotechnology, Giovanni Arrighi sees the 1990s as another wave of financialization comparable to the "belle époque" or "Edwardian Indian summer" that occurred in the last decades of the nineteenth century. Much of the economic expansion in the U.S. economy was due to huge inflows of investment capital from Europe and East Asia during the 1990s.

Figure 5 – World Class Structure with Transnational Segments



nineteenth and twentieth century global elites as to their degree of international integration, as well as changes in the patterns of alliances and connections among the wealthiest and most powerful people on Earth (Reifer et al. 2004).

The hegemonic sequence is not a simple cycle that takes the same form each time around. Rather, as Giovanni Arrighi (1994) has so convincingly shown, each "systemic cycle of accumulation" involves a reorganization of the relationships among big capitals and states. And the evolutionary aspects of hegemony not only adapt to changes in scale, geography and technology, but they also must solve problems created by resistance from below (Silver 2003; Boswell and Chase-Dunn 2000). Workers and farmers in the world-system are not inert objects of exploitation and domination. Rather, they develop new organizational and institutional instruments of protection and resistance. So the interaction between the powerful and less powerful is a spiral of domination and resistance that is one of the most important driving forces of the developmental history of modern capitalism.

ANTISYSTEMIC MOVEMENTS

The discourse produced by world-systems scholars about "the family of antisystemic movements" has been an important contribution to our understanding of how different social movements act *vis-à-vis* each other on the terrain of the whole system (Arrighi, Hopkins and Wallerstein 1989). It is unfortunate that public discourse about globalization has characterized recent protest movements in terms of "antiglobalization." This has occurred because, in the popular mind, globalization has been associated primarily with what Phil McMichael (2000) has termed the "globalization project"— the neoliberal policies of the Washington Consensus and the hegemony of corporate capitalism. This is the political ideology of Reaganism-Thatcherism—market magic, deregulation, privatization, and allegedly no alternative to submitting to the "realities" of global capitalist competition.[4]

The terminology of antiglobalization conflates two different meanings of globalization to imply that the only sensible form of resistance to globalization involves the construction of local institutions to defend against the forces of

[4] Giovanni Arrighi (2003) contends that the Reagan-Thatcher corporate globalization project that emerged in the 1970s and 1980s was importantly a reaction to the world revolution of 1968 that appropriated the anti-state ideology and many of the tactics of the New Left.

global capitalism. Structural globalization means economic, political and cultural international and transnational integration. This should be analytically separated from the political ideology of the globalization project (Chase-Dunn 1999).

The globalization project is what the demonstrators are protesting, but the term antiglobalization also implies that they are against international integration and global institutions. Our usage of the term antisystemic movements needs to be carefully clarified so that it does not contribute to this confusion.

Local and regional protectionism is indeed an important component of the emerging resistance to corporate globalization and neo-liberal policies (e.g., Amin 1997; Bello 2002). But one lesson we can derive from earlier efforts to confront and transform capitalism is that local resistance cannot, by itself, overcome the strong forces of modern capitalism. What is needed is globalization from below. Global politics has mainly been the politics of the powerful because they have had the resources to establish long-distance connections and to structure global institutions. But waves of elite transnational integration have been accompanied by upsurges of transnational linkages, strategies and institutions formed by workers, farmers and popular challenges to the logic of capitalist accumulation. Globalization from below means the transnationalization of antisystemic movements and the active participation of popular movements in global politics and global citizenship.

An analysis of earlier waves of the spiral of domination and resistance demonstrates that "socialism in one country" and other strategies of local protection have not been capable of overcoming the negative aspects of capitalist development in the past, and they are even less likely to succeed in the more densely integrated global system of the future. Strategies that mobilize people to organize themselves locally must be complimented and coordinated with transnational strategies to democratize or replace existing global institutions and to create new organizational structures that facilitate collective rationality for all the peoples of the world.

Globalization is producing a backlash much as it did in the nineteenth century and in the 1920s. Capitalist globalization, especially the kind that has occurred since the 1970s, exposes many individuals to disruptive market forces and increases inequalities within countries and internationally. The gap between the winners and the losers grows, and the winners use more coercion and less consent in their efforts to stay on top. Karl Polanyi's (1944) notion of the double movement by which marketization produces defensive reactions and new forms of regulation is conceptually similar to the notion that expansive capitalism produces efforts to decommodify labor and communities, and that these then drive capitalism to mobilize on a larger scale in order to overcome the

constraints that political resistance produces. Boswell and Chase-Dunn (2000) have metaphorically characterized these processes as the "spiral of capitalism and socialism."

Amory Starr (2000) has studied fifteen transnational social movements that name corporate capitalism as the enemy. She divides these movements into three categories: (1) contestation and reform (e.g., human rights, the peace movement, cyberpunks), (2) globalization from below (populist global governance); and (3) delinking of localities from the global economy to rebuild small-scale communities that are protected from global corporations. Starr herself favors delinking, and several other critics of global capitalism also envision a process of deglobalization as desirable (e.g., Bello 2002; Amin 1997; McMichael 2004).

One of the big challenges is how the different kinds of progressive social movements can work together to struggle against capitalist globalization. The issue of alliances is complicated by the fact that some of the groups in opposition to capitalist globalization are reactionary rather than progressive. So the enemy of my enemy is not always my friend. And even among the progressives there are major issues. Environmentalists and labor groups have notorious differences. Core and peripheral workers may have different interests regarding issues such as global labor standards. And there are obvious contradictions between those who want to democratize global governance and those who want to abolish it altogether in favor of maximum local autonomy. It is my position that the human species needs both more democratic global governance and more local autonomy, and that the globalization-from-below movements should work together with the local-autonomy movements, or at least with those who are progressive and willing. I contend that socialism or anarchism within one country or one community will not work for very long, and that we must confront the difficult issues of global governance head on in order to move toward a more humane and equitable world society. This will not require homogenization and further subordination. Cultural differences and diversity are desirable as long as they are not used as an excuse for domination and/or exploitation. And I favor the principle of subsidiarity in which problems that are most efficiently and equitably dealt with on a local or regional or national level need not be the concern of global governance. But some problems (global environmental degradation, warfare among states, reducing international inequalities) cannot be effectively solved by exclusively local jurisdictions. Thus we must envision and eventually create a democratic and collectively rational global government in order to survive and prevail as a species. Some localists will support this project.

The rest of this article will concentrate mainly on matters of strategy and tactics for the antisystemic movements. I do not wish to suggest that all the

problems of ultimate goals have been resolved. The model of global democracy based on new worldwide institutions and market socialism proposed in Boswell and Chase-Dunn (2000) is only the beginning of a huge conversation about political and organizational goals (see also Wallerstein 1998). But for now I want to discuss some tactical issues that are already pressing themselves upon the transnational movements that are challenging global capitalism.

The major transnational antisystemic movements are the labor movement, the women's movement, the environmental movement and the indigenous movement. Of these, the environmental movement and the women's movement have had the most recent success in forming transnational linkages and confronting the difficult issues posed by regional, national and core/periphery differences (Moghadam 2004). But the labor and indigenous movements have made some important recent efforts to catch up. Transborder organizing efforts and support for demonstrations against corporate globalization show that the AFL-CIO in the United States is interested in new directions. One important task for world-system scholars is to study these movements and to help devise initiatives that can produce tactical and strategic transnational alliances.

Let us imagine that the family of antisystemic movements has managed to organize a working alliance (perhaps with the help of the World Party, an organization dedicated to the building of a global socialist commonwealth [Wagar 1992; Boswell and Chase-Dunn 2000]). This assumption is not meant to trivialize the practical and theoretical difficulties that will be involved in the emergence of such an agent of human sanity. But I wish to discuss some additional problems that will likely need to be confronted down the road.

Besides attending to its own contradictions, what difficulties would such an alliance be likely to face in the coming decades? I see three major potential disasters in the path:

- A return, within the next two decades, to a condition of hegemonic rivalry among core states and competing groups of capitalists that will again pose the danger of warfare among "the great powers," except with a potential for mass destruction that could result in a major global die-off.
- Possible environmental catastrophes caused by the continuing process of capitalist industrialization, energy utilization and new technologies.
- Increasing global inequalities and consequent multiple challenges to the hegemony of global capital and U.S. power.

All of these problems are predictable from what we know of the cyclical regularities and secular trends of capitalist development in the world-system (Chase-Dunn and Podobnik 1995). Each of them poses great dangers, but also

some opportunities, for the family of antisystemic movements. We must try to prevent or ameliorate the worst aspects of each of these likely disasters. And we also need to consider the best routes to take if truly disastrous events do occur.

This complicates an already thorny program. The calculus of tradeoffs between reforming existing institutions vs. radically restructuring them or replacing them will need to include considerations about reducing the likelihood of, or the worst consequences of, the above potential disasters. The issue of organizational goals needs to be informed not only by a consensual political philosophy, but also by a coherent structural understanding of the cyclical processes and secular trends of the world-system and their likely consequences in the next several decades. Long-term goals need to be clarified and their short-term and medium term pursuit needs to take into account the dynamics of the capitalist world-system.

Avoiding War among Core States

Here is an example of this sort of problem. Warren Wagar's (1992) fictional scenario, *A Short History of the Future*, tells the story of the next fifty years under the title "Earth, Incorporated." It is a story of further expanding domination by huge capitalist corporations, continued technological development, ecological degradation and the emergence of a capitalist proto-world-state, but not yet the dismantling of the military structure of the interstate system. U.S. hegemony continues to decline. Immigration, slow economic growth, growing inequalities and the emergence of greater class and racial divides in the U.S. eventually result in the election of a Mexican-American woman as president. Heartland Republicans start a civil war, but the U.S. army, now staffed by a large majority of non-white personnel, quickly puts down the opposition. The U.S. begins to support semiperipheral states that are resisting the hegemony of the global corporations and so the world government (under the control of the "megacorps") decides upon a nuclear first strike to take out the leftist U.S. regime. Thus begins a three-year nuclear war that destroys most of the cities of the Northern Hemisphere. In the aftermath the World Party is able to pull together a global socialist commonwealth.

If something like Wagar's scenario is at all probable, the antisystemic movements need to work to prevent such a catastrophe. It is ethically unacceptable to simply wait for global capitalism to destroy itself and then pick up the pieces. Wagar gets the timing of the onset of world war wrong because he believes that world wars occur during economic downturns. But Joshua Goldstein's (1988) research on Kondratieff waves and war cycles shows that wars among core states usually occur at the end of the K-wave upswing when states have lots of

resources with which to wage war. This means that the next window of vulnerability to world war will occur in two or three decades.

If it is true that another period of hegemonic rivalry will include a substantial risk of renewed warfare among core powers, this extremely risky situation could be avoided by a revitalization of U.S. leadership (hegemony) because the single superpower configuration is militarily stable. Without a bipolar or multipolar military configuration there will be no war among core powers. Continuing U.S. economic decline would arguably eventuate in the inability of the U.S. to serve as world policeman, and will result in the rearming of possible hegemonic contenders (e.g., Japan, Germany). If this can be prevented for another twenty or thirty years the system will have gotten through the sticky wicket of hegemonic rivalry until the next interregnum of the power cycle.

A truly democratic global peacekeeping government should be the eventual goal of the family of antisystemic movements. But the problem is that the emergence of an effective global state within the relevant time frame (the next two or three decades) is highly unlikely. This would require that the existing core states devolve a substantial portion of their sovereignty to the global state and there will be considerable resistance to this. A comparable situation in the European Union, while it is far more advanced than at the global level, shows how slowly consolidations of this kind move forward.

A more feasible alternative (within the relevant time frame) would involve the perpetuation or renewal of U.S. economic hegemony that is sufficient to prevent the reemergence of potential core military challengers. Some scenarios that focus on new lead industries (information technology and biotechnology) foresee the strengthening of the economic basis of U.S. hegemony (e.g., Rennstich 2001). The information technology (IT) industry has already run through most of the standard course of the product cycle. Technological rents are few and globalized competition over the costs of production and services, with IT jobs being outsourced to the semiperiphery, seems to imply that this sector will no longer serve as an engine of U.S. economic hegemony. Biotechnology[5] has been heralded as the new engine, but so far most of the money that has been made is in the selling of stocks. Governments and venture capitalists have put up great sums with the hope of grand paychecks down the road, and huge amounts have been spent on attorneys' fees obtaining patents on processes and

5. The revolution in biotechnology involves such radical recombinations that grave mistakes are almost certain to occur as these new technologies are applied to agriculture, pest control and biosphere engineering. Biosafety is a major concern.

genomes. Significant competition has emerged in Singapore and the People's Republic of China, challenging the notion that the United States is the only serious contender. A rapid expansion of real profits could occur, but more likely the development of real-world economic applications will continue to be slow. If this is the case biotech will not serve, in the next few decades, as an engine of renewed U.S. economic hegemony.

Perhaps a more realistic alternative to another round of U.S. hegemony would be a core-wide condominium of global governance that includes the U.S. and allies and possible challengers (Germany, France, Japan, Russia and China). In this scenario the United Nations would be reformed so that it more realistically represents the core states, as well as the peoples of the world. Right now Germany and Japan are not permanent members of the U.N. Security Council. The Security Council needs to be expanded to include Germany and Japan and to better represent the non-core countries as well. This, and the beefing up of the U.N. peacekeeping capability, could be accomplished without greatly threatening the sovereignty of the core states. This would be a combination of enhanced proto-global-state formation and a partial renewal of U.S. hegemony that would get us through the next sticky wicket of hegemonic rivalry unscathed. It would move in the direction of a more legitimate global government as well. The key would be to get Europe and Japan to invest in multilateral peacekeeping rather than in beefing up their own national forces. This is what is meant above about needing to include the calculus of emergent systemic crises in the organizational strategies of the antisystemic movements and the necessity of compromises between medium-term and long-term goals.

ENVIRONMENTAL CRISES

Ecological disaster could arrive in smaller or larger, more catastrophic, dimensions. The current Hollywood film, "Day After Tomorrow" portrays the nightmare version. Peter Taylor (1996) portrays the emerging "global impasse," the ecological impossibility of the non-core countries developing the same level of energy and resource utilization as already exists in the United States. If the Chinese eat as many eggs and drive as many cars per capita as citizens of the United States do, the global biosphere will fry. Clean water is going to become scarce within the next twenty-five years. Gasoline prices have gone up a lot lately and are likely to go up a lot more in the long run. Global warming may produce destructive or even cataclysmic consequences. As with warfare, the antisystemic movements must try to prevent catastrophes at the same time that we invent institutions that can make our collective life sustainable. Preparation for these developments means coordinating with extant world parties such as

Greenpeace to educate about the causes of capitalist ecological degradation and feasible movement toward sustainable and democratic development.

GROWING INEQUALITIES

Growing inequalities (both within and among countries) were an important source of globalization backlash in the late nineteenth century (O'Rourke and Williamson 1999) and are already shaping up to be an important driving force in the coming world revolution. Mike Davis's (2001) analysis of late Victorian drought-famine disasters in Brazil, India and China shows how these were partly caused by newly expanded market forces impinging upon regions that were subject to international political/military coercion. He also documents how starving peasants created millenarian movements that promised to end the domination of the foreign devils or restore the rule of the good king. Islamic fundamentalism is a contemporary functional equivalent.

Huge and visible injustices provoke people to resist, and in the absence of true histories and theories, they utilize whatever ideological raw materials are at hand. The world-systems perspective has the potential to serve as the basis for a scientific understanding of social change that can be used by the antisystemic movements to organize an effective response to corporate globalization that constructs new institutions for democratizing the global political economy. But this will require popular communication of the main lessons of the world-systems perspective.

AN OUTLOOK

The phenomenon of semiperipheral development suggests that social organizational innovations that can transform the predominant logic of accumulation will continue to emerge from the semiperiphery. The Russian and Chinese revolutions of the twentieth century were efforts to restructure capitalist institutions and developmental logic that succeeded mainly in spurring the U.S. hegemony and the post World War II expansion of capitalism. The Soviet and Chinese efforts were compromised from the start by their inability to rely on participatory democracy. In order to survive in a world still strongly dominated by capitalist states they were forced to construct authoritarian socialism, a contradiction in terms.

We can expect that democratic socialisms will come to state power in the semiperiphery by electoral means, as already happened in Allende's Chile. Brazil, Mexico, and Korea are strong candidates, and India, Indonesia and China are possibilities. Democratic socialism in the semiperiphery would seem to be a good strategy for fending off many of the worst aspects of corporate glo-

balization. The transnational antisystemic movements will want to support and be supported by these new socialist democracies.

The ability of capitalist core states to destabilize democratic socialist regimes in the semiperiphery is great, and this is why support movements within the core are so important. Information technology can certainly be a great aid to transborder organizing. Issues such as sweatshop exploitation can help to make students aware of core/periphery inequalities and to link them with activists on other continents. The emergence of democratically elected challengers to global corporate capitalism will strain the ideologues of "polyarchy" [6] and facilitate the contestation of narrow definitions of democracy. The emergence of a World Party to educate activists about the world historical dimensions of capitalism and the lessons of earlier world revolutions can add the leaven that moves the coming backlash against corporate globalization in a progressive direction. The World Social Forum raises the issue of a coordinated popular approach to confronting and transforming global capitalism. The issues of global party formation and coordinated action are on the table of world history once again (e.g., Stephen Gill's 2003 discussion of the "post-modern Prince") and the comparative world-systems perspective can help the citizens of the world move toward a democratic and collectively rational global commonwealth.

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6. William Robinson (1996) examines the struggle over the concept of democracy. He defines polyarchy as a system in which a small group actually rules and mass participation in decision-making is confined to leadership choice in elections carefully managed by competing elites. Polyarchy usually prevents the emergence of more egalitarian popular democracy that would threaten the rule of those who hold power and property. The notion of popular democracy stresses human equality, participatory forms of decision-making, and a holistic integration of political, social and economic realms that are artificially kept separate in the polyarchic definition of democracy.

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