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## The Mutual Existence of Nascent and Senescent World Orders

Burak Akcaper

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**CENTER FOR TURKISH STUDIES  
PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY**

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**THE MUTUAL EXISTENCE OF NASCENT  
AND SENESCENT WORLD ORDERS**

**Dr. Burak Akçapar**

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The views expressed in this text are mine alone and cannot be attributed to or associated with any government or institution.

I would welcome any comments on my working paper at [burak.akcapar@gmail.com](mailto:burak.akcapar@gmail.com)

## FOREWORD

In this essay I will address the issue of change in the international system which the scholars of International Relations have grappled with however inadequately. Accordingly, I will argue that this deficiency stems in no small part from the frequent mutual distance between scholars and practitioners of international affairs. I will, therefore, try to bridge this gap.

Ultimately this essay will:

- a) Suggest a model (mutual existence of nascent and senescent orders) equipped with a number of hypotheses (laws) of systemic change in the international “order”;
- b) Provide a baseline for bringing scholarly and practitioners’ perspectives closer together, including by identifying the crossover or mediating activities of the think-tanks and official Policy Planning units.

## INTRODUCTION

Amidst global economic calamity the calls for a new international order are in vogue, again. This is some surprise because as painful as this economic crisis is, it does not resemble the typical juncture for a sea change. As John G. Ikenberry explains: “At rare historical junctures, states grapple with the fundamental problem of international relations: how to create and maintain order in a world of sovereign states. These junctures come at dramatic moments of upheaval and change within the international system, when the old order has been destroyed by war and newly powerful states try to reestablish basic organizing rules and arrangements.”<sup>1</sup>

In modern history, 1648, 1713, 1815, 1919, 1945, 1989 are all examples to extraordinarily critical turning points where the victors acquire opportunity to shape new politics, set out new rules and principles of international relations. These are the periods when a new distribution of power abruptly emerges, and the “leading or hegemonic states face choices about how to use their newly acquired power- choices that ultimately shape the character of postwar international order.”<sup>2</sup> Paul Kennedy

agrees: “Every so often in the history of international affairs, a great transnational turbulence shakes the foundations of the world and brings many of its older structures tumbling to the ground, as we witnessed in 1919, 1945 and 1989. In the confusion and babble that follow, it’s difficult to see through the dust and recognize the shape of the altered strategic landscape.”<sup>3</sup>

For sure, great events which form moments of discontinuity from the standard practices and the typical are but only one of the markers of change. As Kalevi J. Holsti explains, great achievements like those denoted as a “Golden Age” or as the reign of a particular leader; significant social and technological innovations; and of course “trends” are also considered to mark change in international affairs, although there is no consensus among the IR scholars on how to define and identify change in the international system.<sup>4</sup> Marking and assessing change or transformation is one challenge with which the discipline of International Relations has found it hard to reckon.

At any rate, there is no convincing argument that the ongoing global economic crisis amounts to a dramatic and episodic moment the likes of which in history produced what Robert Gilpin called the “systemic shift” in the global order. 2008 is in no way akin to 1453 when the Ottomans defeated the Eastern Roman Empire or 1918 when the US broke its taboos about



military engagement in the Old Continent. It is not 1989 when the US was left without any competing power with a rival ideology. There was no war. No major state or bloc disappeared. There was no political and military game changing change of circumstances. Despite the fact that the US Intelligence Community did warn that security risks would be aggravated by the economic crisis, there is room for skepticism even on that point. The economic crisis did not create new failing states; it might have exacerbated the situation in the already failing ones.

It is true however that it all could have been different. To the credit of the Bush administration the vitalization of the G-20 was a masterful move. To the credit of the Obama administration, they continued the US support behind it. As in the 1930's Great Depression, this crisis could have hastened the fall into an international political abyss, even a global war. After all, there is already enough political problems, geopolitical rivalries, shifts in power balances, economic imbalances, and almost everything else that triggered not only economic but also political and military crises. That is not happening. The fact is 2009 is different from 1930's. During the Great Depression there was an adolescent world order. In 2009 that world order is mature after umpteen amendments and revisions, and a record of insufferable pain inflicted by mankind on mankind in the last one hundred years.

That said, the same mature world order may also be senescent. The current economic crisis may have produced an instance to highlight the fact that has been almost universally expressed but hardly acted upon: the current order of things in the world, whichever way one defines it, is manifesting serious wear and tear. It is maintaining a minimum order today yet should not be expected to live up to the challenges of tomorrow. At the end of the first decade of the 21st century, the international community finds itself in a flux in which almost every aspect of the international order is being challenged from the top down and from the bottom up. Irrespective of the economic crisis, multiple transformations are underway that are global in scope and historic in impact. Faced with a daunting agenda, even in the absence of a war, these may be the times when it is legitimate to ask hard questions and take bold actions. These are the sort of times when historic leaders, whether political or intellectual, are made.

Against that background, the economic crisis may be an opportunity to revamp the world order. Debates already galore. Nevertheless, realistically speaking, no new world order, for better or for worse, will replace the current one this time around. Rather the next world order will be incubated in the human civilization's collective womb and tested gently in reality. If history is any guide, the basic contours of the international

system to come may have already made their debut. The old and the new are living together, one shaping up, and the other struggling to hang in.

Bar historical determinism. History did not happen in a preordained way. Future will also be shaped by the vagaries of human action and follies. It will be a product of an unpredictability that humans have not as yet comprehended and unlocked. What we think is clearly visible is only that which is permitted by our limited knowledge and comprehension. Truth is what we create and believe in. Knowledge is not absolute but partial.

However, therein rests the human dilemma: We need to understand. And, we need to participate in the shaping of the future global environment that will surround our destinies. Fatalism can be a personal attitude, but it is not a political approach. Formulating policies to shape and/or respond to changes taking place, however, is. If that be the objective, then the task involves accurate identification and analysis of the shifts and challenges; competent evaluation of options and opportunities; setting out of correct strategies and tactical policies.

This is no easy feat. The task to assess global change involves questions that have no easy answers. It also concerns both the academic and policy worlds in a way that neither can deny. Every IR position comes from some conception of the world system in which we live. Every international policy needs to take account of the world system. In fact, understanding world order and the phenomenon of global change is one subject on which the policy and academy circles need to collaborate.

The following is a baseline effort to merge scholarly and practitioner's perspectives on assessing change in international circumstances in relation to what is already codified as world order.

## II

# THE SCHOLAR AND THE PRACTITIONER

### 1. The Practitioner Also Needs Input and Innovation

Early on during my tenure at NATO my boss gave the unenviable task of finding a way to accommodate a partner nation's request to have NATO presence on its soil although NATO nations were not yet ready to deploy their forces. For hours I stared at a clean sheet of paper not even able to write a title to my plan. My contacts fishing for ideas from colleagues, superiors, friends and allied representatives did not produce any breakthrough. Bewildered, annoyed and increasingly stressed I took refuge in a bowl of ice cream while watching tv. I came across an interview by the chairman of the Virgin Group, Sir Richard Bronson, who was explaining his thinking behind lending the Virgin brand name to a cola producer. He would not produce cola, but lend the prestigious name of Virgin based on a rigorous analysis of quality. What worked for Virgin, I hoped, could work for NATO, which did not deploy forces but examined and approved partner facilities and lent the NATO/PfP brand

name. I went on to draft the “Concept for PfP Training Centres”, which was approved by the North Atlantic Council on 16 November 1998 according to which numbers of such centers operate around the Euro-Atlantic geography to this day.<sup>5</sup> I have yet to hear a story where International Relations scholarship came in out of the blue to help resolve a practical international relations problem. But, I remain dedicated to continue searching for common ground. The practitioner needs input from other outside not only to know more but also to achieve more. This help can come from variety of fields and should come from the scholarship, as well.

If business and diplomacy have the shared pursuit of practical innovations resolving problems and generating gains (in my example, security gains for NATO and the partner in question, not to mention personal relief in having solved the quagmire), scholarship and diplomacy ought to have the shared hope of making this world a better place. After all, social sciences benefited immensely from the refugees fleeing Europe before and during World War II carrying lasting traumas of war, persecution even genocide. That said, scholarship and practice is now considered to be perpetually disconnected. It should be stated up front that I could not find any useful method for merging the two positions. And, this disconnect is partly by design.

## **2. The Ivory Tower**

A large segment of the academia consider it necessary even ethical to distance academic work from the subject matter which it is observing and analyzing. This assures academic integrity, and an enquiry that is free from values, distinguishing between empirical facts and subjective values. It is also a way for the academia to remain immune and neutral to the tainted world of politics. This point of view is even enforced within the academia by the fellow academics. President of the International Studies Association (2003-20034) Steve Smith observed that: “within International Relations there have been many such disciplining moves, right back to the famous distinction between Idealism and Realism, through the disciplinary disputes between behaviouralists and classicists, and now manifested in the attack by rationalist scholars on reflectivist work, that is to say those engaged in post-modernist, feminist and gender, Critical Theory, ethnic and cultural approaches to International Relations.”<sup>6</sup> For those who detracted from the majority view and thus fallen out of the so-called scholarly legitimacy, there were consequences on their career and publishing prospects, reported Steve Smith. This is highly surprising even unsettling for someone who thinks life within the academia, unlike life within politics, business and bureaucracy, is a fairy tale.

The pretensions of isolation from the political world can itself be subjective. Smith makes this point, writing: “to maintain that there is a secure isolated place where “real” academics can report on the world itself relies on a prior, usually unstated, notion of the world. Such a view of social science takes the world as given as it presents itself to the analyst, as external, as separate, and does not therefore enquire into how theories both construct, reconstruct and are then constructed in turn by that world.”<sup>7</sup> What this account stops short of noting is that by constricting intellectual and scholarly inquiry within narrow paradigms, these conceptions are also complicit in sustaining the “world” that politics has engendered and codified in the first place. It is not isolation; it is a live and let live perpetuation.

Equally complicit may be the opposite point of view which aims to speak truth to power; engage the politicians and offer detailed case studies, rather than increasingly abstract theories and meta-theories. Although as a practitioner of international relations I obviously welcome such detailed case studies, although obviously not too many of them, I cannot but agree with Steve Smith that this view of International Relations scholarship “tends toward the anti-intellectual in that it denies the possibility and desirability of the discipline reflecting on itself, and on the definitions of politics that it works within.”<sup>8</sup> Academia as part of the broader intellectual community needs to be pluralistic, essentially rebellious, but preferably conscious



of its cultural subjectivities. The progress hardly comes from knowing more of the same within a static paradigm. And, paradigmatic shifts are the product of that dissenting, rebellious, but conscious thinking.

The academic ivory tower exists. The 2008 Teaching, Research and International Policy (TRIP) poll by the Institute for Theory and Practice in International Relations of the College of William and Mary identified scholars which fellow academics voted as having produced the most interesting scholarship in the last five years.<sup>9</sup> Joseph Nye, who is among those honorably mentioned, is critical of the fact that of the 25 scholars that fellow academics have voted for only three (including himself) had any policy experience.<sup>10</sup> Although, Nye's recommendations to increase the policy relevance of the IR scholarship mostly concur with those of Stephen Walt and concentrate on what the academia should do in terms of promoting policy relevant publications and young scholars, his unstated initial premise about the downside of academics not finding jobs in government is open to debate.

### **3. The Official Ivory Tower**

Obviously, whatever the academia does to be relevant, the convergence that is required between the academia and

practical world is also severed from the policy side. “Thinking academically” is one pejorative qualification any practitioner is loath to hear. It is one mud that diplomacy hardened elders and colleagues can slap at any time with impunity. Academic is the exact antonym of relevant or realistic. Academics are revered as the once teachers not as the current guides. An academic becoming a political leader has to work twice as hard to prove him/herself as a businessman or a general aspiring to the same.

At the same time, neither the politicians nor their advisers including the bureaucracy would want to hear anything that doesn't confirm their policy preferences. The appreciated ideas are essentially those that square the circle already drawn by the policy elite's own thinking. Exceptions usually prove the rule.

Stephen Walt may thus be right in that policy makers pay “relatively” little attention to the vast theoretical literature in IR. He is, however, even more correct in stating that “many policy debates ultimately rest on competing theoretical visions, and relying on a false or flawed theory can lead to major foreign policy disasters.”<sup>11</sup> Policy almost always has a certain political background event that is distorted beyond recognition and molded by the practical exigencies. Plethora of wrong premises and flawed theories and postulations followed the 9/11 terrorist attacks. A terrorist organization the political ideology of which is

incoherent, marginal and even outcast in any context was inflated beyond recognition and confronted with policies that only damaged and isolated the attacked rather than the terrorist.

#### **4. The Practicing Scholar**

Several scholars have indeed been able to implement their theories. The case of Professor Dr. Ahmet Davutoğlu merits separate analysis in terms of theory-policy convergence. The author of the doctrine of “Turkey’s Strategic Depth”, eponymous with his acclaimed best-selling book, Dr. Davutoğlu has also had the opportunity to implement his theory, first as Special Advisor to the Prime Minister of Turkey, then as the Minister of Foreign Affairs. Dr. Davutoğlu summarized his approach as follows: “In terms of geography, Turkey occupies a unique space. As a large country in the midst of Afro-Eurasia’s vast landmass, it may be defined as a central country with multiple regional identities that cannot be reduced to one unified character. Like Russia, Germany, Iran, and Egypt, Turkey cannot be explained geographically or culturally by associating it with one single region. Turkey’s diverse regional composition lends it the capability of maneuvering in several regions simultaneously; in this sense, it controls an area of influence in its immediate environs”<sup>12</sup> Bülent Aras comments that “the new foreign policy took form under the impact of Davutoğlu’s re-definition of

Turkey's role in the neighboring regions and in international politics, namely its "strategic depth," with frontiers that have expanded beyond the homeland in the cognitive map of policymaker's minds. The territorial limits to Turkish involvement in neighboring countries has disappeared in this new mindset."<sup>13</sup> This doctrine engenders in the policy of "zero problem" with neighbors and a multi thronged near global Turkish engagement while not challenging, and arguably reinforcing, Turkey's NATO membership and its EU accession bid.<sup>14</sup> This is one case where theory is turned into practice by none other than the architect himself. A similar case could be made for the influence of Henry Kissinger as Secretary of State although in this case Kissinger's realist thinking rather than his own theorization was on the foreground.

Barring these and rather limited number of other exceptions, an academic serving in a practitioner role does not automatically produce the theory-policy convergence; neither does a practitioner who had the training to employ academic methods. That is mainly because of the inherent conflict between the two walks of life and the associated and expected mentalities that is not contingent on individual qualities, rather that which goes with the territory.

## **5. Common Grounds**

### **a. Shared Tasks**

That notwithstanding, common ground does exist. The academician and the practitioner face at least a couple of **shared tasks**:

- Firstly, both need to compile relevant and discard irrelevant or misleading data. This task whether in terms of compiling, but also in filtering data, is greatly aided thanks to the diversity of third party data aggregators.
- Secondly, they both need to assess and contextualize that data. Irrespective of whether that contextualization would take the form of theories, at any rate it would be consciously or unconsciously helped by theories.

Once these two fundamental tasks are completed, from that point on the academician has the luxury of deciding whether or not to become immediately relevant for policy through concrete suggestions. On his/her part the practitioner, however, is obligated to carry his diagnosis all the way to the policy domain almost unfailingly under dire time limitations and near universal political, bureaucratic and cultural constraints.

Although topical case studies by the learned men and women can often be of extreme use to the practitioner on almost all

sorts of policy issues, on assessing the meaning and implications of change in the world it is particularly incumbent on the practitioner to be aware of the intellectual lens through which every so-called detailed analysis is likely to proceed.

The fact of the matter is that every concept of “world order” rests on a certain theory about the nature of the actors in the world, the context that surrounds them and the type of economic, political and social interaction that exist among these actors. The divergence of view on these points is mind boggling. The roots of these differences of view are easily traceable to unresolved philosophical debates about the nature of man. Tell me who you think is right: is it Hobbes, Kant, Marx, Rousseau or Weber? The answer may well dictate the prognosis and prescription to follow. There are far too many useful theories and far too little time, energy and even opportunity to incorporate all of them into the policy world. This is complicated by the fact that all of these mainstream and non-mainstream theories are in fact comets which include myriad internal variations making it practically impossible for any cast of decision makers and their counsels and bureaucracies, first to master, then to select, and then to agree on.

However, this does not obviate the relevance of theory, and IR, for the practitioner. First of all, theories and knowledge of them provide a structure to thinking through issues, which in the

international level can involve a daunting diversity. Theories provide an opening through which one can move beyond knowledge as concatenation of data to knowledge that is derived from systematic analysis and synthesis.

Secondly, most of these theories actually support a particular conception of the international system. This is true for the number of IR theories that is purported to be at odds with each other, including realism, neo-liberalism and constructivism. In their totality, these theories suggest that there is an international order to things that is enhanced by global institutions but in which it is “natural” that the hegemon violate the order, however the system is nonetheless malleable owing to the potential for reconstruction of identities and actions through learning. In that conception, free trade is the norm, democracy is the ideal, global institutions are the way to go. If these reflect your particular values, then the job becomes easier.

Thirdly, from the point of view of the practitioners and policy planners, theories provide a useful mirror to observe and understand the aspirations, ideas, ideals, actions, intents, purposes and even limitations of the societies and polities that produce them. This should in no way suggest a conspiracy between ruling elites and the academia. It is instead that academia as human agents are a product of the sociological

context within which they are socialized. That the world of theoretician is often times disconnected from the world of practitioner does not negate this premise. Mainstream theories become popular not only by the inherent strength of their arguments. They attract the fascination and admiration of the learned societies that see a certain relevance and explanatory power with regard to the actual world. Despite the winding debate about theory versus practice, I cannot locate any major theory that is not considered to have a fair shot in explaining what happened and aspires to shape policy towards what ought to happen.

#### **b. Shared Platforms**

Against this backdrop, the **common ground for synergy exists basically on three platforms**. One is task oriented, the other two are locational:

- Two shared tasks of the academician and the practitioner are the first platform where a synergy is formed. Thus, gathering relevant data and assessing what they mean as aided by the theories.
- Policy Planning as an analysis and synthesis oriented bureaucratic platform can help generate synergy by



engaging in actual or disciplinary dialogue between theory/scholarship and practice.

- Think-tanks aspire to influence policy and form a bridge between scholarship and practice.

The ideal product is not only a multi-disciplinary study, rather one that is also multidimensional and multifunctional. Multidisciplinary in the sense that IR cannot be self contained within its own theoretical premises but need to incorporate at least the economic and sociological aspects, as well. Multidimensional, because the policy and scholarly emphases, although mostly differentiated can ultimately be mutually complementary. And lastly, preferably multifunctional when the study ends up not only informing the debate and understanding but also generates policy outcomes.

In the following sections I will adopt the approach I've laid out above by first completing the two shared tasks of scholarly and policy analysis, and then to enter the academically voluntary field of policy synthesis in the spirit of bureaucratic policy planning.

In so doing I will develop and employ my own theses and pre-theoretical framework in assessing change in world order and likely policy premises for states.

## IV

### CHANGE IN THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM

#### 1. Economic Shifts and Political Drivers of Change

As Holsti explains, “currently, the field is in the throes of a major theoretical reorganization precisely because change, whether in speed, organizational types, or processes, seems to be ubiquitous in the contemporary world. But we do not know what, theoretically, to make of it because there is no consensus on what we mean by change, not to mention how we identify it.”<sup>15</sup> Or, as Ruggie argues “no shared vocabulary exists in the literature to depict change and continuity,...we are not very good as a discipline at studying the possibility of fundamental discontinuity in the international system.”<sup>16</sup>

The perplexing confusion within the IR scholarship is nevertheless met with an (occasionally) complacent clarity on the part of the broad informational sector that has emerged between the scholars and the practitioners. The practitioners may choose to afford not to follow the scholarly debates about international change. However, the non-scholarly writings of

public intellectuals, influential columnists, as well as panoply of think tanks and consultancy firms are omnipresent. Together this intellectually vibrant, factually rich but scholarly unassuming body of analysts has been reporting that a massive shift is underway in the world.

A near unanimity exists however with regard to pinpointing the massive economic shift in the world from the Euro-Atlantic powers towards particularly China and India as the main driver of change in the global system. This shift of economic power has indeed become impossible to ignore. Since the prestigious global financial services firm Goldman Sachs published its paper “Building Better Global Economic BRICs” in 2001, the countries making up the so-called BRICs have achieved staggering pace of development. The combined weight of Brazil, Russia, India and China has already reached 15% of the world economy. The BRICs are expected to overtake the cumulative size of the G7 countries by 2035. The BRICs are not alone on the path to reconfiguring the world’s top echelons of economic pecking order. In 2005 Goldman Sachs then identified the Next Eleven (N-11) countries which “could potentially have a BRIC-like impact rivaling the G7”. Although the main criterion for the selection of these eleven countries was their population size, the group included Mexico, Korea, Turkey and Vietnam which “have both the potential and the conditions to rival the current major economies or the BRICs

themselves.”<sup>17</sup> This is what Fareed Zakaria deftly called the “rise of the rest”<sup>18</sup>.

The shift in the economic balance of power is driven mainly by the explosion of manufacturing and some service industries in Asia that is aided by lower costs and deliberate government policies including regarding exchange rates. In the case of Russia and the Gulf States high oil and commodity prices were the main factor increasing their prospects. In turn, these two factors have created two consequences which are potentially lasting:

One is that the locus of manufacturing has shifted to Asia. This has resulted in the shift of some 2.7 million manufacturing jobs to China from the US alone between 2000 and 2008. Today China by itself produces 40% of all microwave ovens sold in Europe; 50% of cameras, 30% of air conditioners, 30% of televisions, 25 percent of washing machines and some 20% of refrigerators sold in the entire world. Add other Asian countries and the picture becomes even more vivid for the US and Europe, the latter particularly if it fails to incorporate Turkey as member.<sup>19</sup>

Secondly, extraordinary amounts of funds accumulated in the hands of governments. The special investment funds broadly

labeled as Sovereign Wealth Funds now amount to an estimated \$3 trillion. Despite their significant depreciation due to the global economic crisis, the forecast is that these funds that manage government wealth can reach \$12 trillion by 2012.

Together these two consequences consolidate a trend towards greater economic clout on the part of what Parag Khanna called the “Second World”.<sup>20</sup> The economic crisis has further reinforced the erosion of the Western centric international order. As shockwaves from the collapse of US banks’ rampant practice of providing high risk mortgage loans to people with poor credit histories led to a global credit crunch, pundits around the world have come to debate whether the deregulated market capitalism has reached the end of its lifetime and would now have to be reorganized. The view began to spread that the neoliberal policies of the last 30 years were the reason for this crisis. Financial Times warned against the reversals of globalization.

The size of the bubble that was artificially created in the world through unregulated financial engineering is hard to fathom. The total value of assets such as mortgages, stocks, loans, bonds and the like is around \$15 trillion. The bubble emerges when these assets are reinvested in financial contracts whose notional value, multiplied through reinvestments in derivatives. Thus, the funds thus inflated have reached in 2007 some \$596 trillion or even over \$700 trillion, according to different

estimations. Compare this to the total value of goods and services produced in the entire world, which amounts to around \$65 trillion.

Estimations vary because no one actually knows the exact size of the financial bubble due to the type of accounting involved. The notional value of a derivative is contingent on the value of the real asset or index. While the latter is recorded on balance sheets, there was no rule to record the notional value artificially generated. Famous investor Warren Buffet called the derivatives “financial weapons of mass destruction.” This too smart by half financial wizardry made possible only because nation states starting with the US failed miserably in bringing an order and control over the practices accelerated since 2007 and then exploded causing a chain reaction around the world’s financial institutions. By early 2009 there was little doubt left that by the inevitable metastasis of the financial crisis to the real sector, the world writ large was engulfed in an economic crisis the depths of which were yet to be seen. Global capital that operates in the “no-state land” beyond national sovereignty would have to be brought under control perhaps through global institutions. The initial panic was instigated by the fact that the money involved was not only heaps larger than the total GDP of the world’s largest economy; it was heaps larger than the entire global GDP. It was aggravated by the cries of a “ticker culture” whose sense of historicism is measured in minutes not eras.

Fareed Zakaria observed: “Over the last six months, the doomsday industry has moved into high gear. Economists and business pundits are competing with each other to describe the next Great Depression. Except that the world we live in bears little resemblance to the 1930s. There is much greater and more widespread wealth in Western societies, with middle classes that can withstand job losses in ways that they could not in the 1930s.”<sup>21</sup> By mid 2009 the panic, but not the crisis, began to settle down. On the other hand, the sense of exigency and even doomsday forecasts have in fact helped avert a repeat of the 1930s. Governments reacted in a speedy fashion. They have taken measures including by trying –although not always succeeding- to resist the temptation to turn inward, which proved calamitous in the 1930s. The world order survived.

Irrespective of the economic crisis, multiple transformations have long been underway that are global in scope and potentially historic in impact. There is a case that the current economic crisis will need to have ramifications albeit gradual and minimal for the global and national economic systems. This is because the abrasion in the consensus behind the current global order is all too obvious. The trust in the Western led global financial structure is broken. The necessity for a more representative global power structure is widely acknowledged.



Globalization as an economic phenomenon has been hurt not the least by growing economic nationalism, including more assertive state control over the economy and the motivation to accumulate foreign current reserves while limiting current account deficits. Given the linkage between economy and politics, the economic crisis may have longer term political implications, as well.

The challenges are manifold and concurrent. Any shortlist of the high order systemic challenges would include the stagnation in the reform efforts of the current cornerstone international organizations including the UN Security Council and the G8 as well as the Bretton Woods institutions and the WTO; the depreciation of the powers to lead on the part of the superpower; EU's tragic introversion and lack of vision and direction; the demise of the confidence in the neoliberal prescriptions; the lack of coherent alternative economic prescriptions that would simultaneously generate growth and remedy inequalities; the inability to deal collectively with the transnational issues foremost economic development, trade liberalization and climate change, as well as terrorism; and the dismal failure in stabilizing the failing states around the world; not to mention the need to reinvigorate global good governance and the rule of international law.

The crisis has also aggravated existing problems of international security. The US Director of National Intelligence warned in February 2009 that global economic turmoil and the instability it could ignite had outpaced terrorism as the most urgent threat facing the United States. Similar warnings came also from the UK. As the economic drama unfolded, of all the rising stars only Russia launched an armed anti-US and thus anti-systemic challenge to the global power structure when it invaded Georgia in August 2008. Russia thereby underlined with broad strokes its influence zone against the countries that seek to ensure their security under Western institutional umbrellas. China, India and Brazil as almost every other ascendant power around the globe have been acting within the system albeit with varying degrees of critical discourse. Nevertheless, several observers indicated that a process was underway for the US, which became the leading economy at the turn of the last century and the leading pole in the 1990's, to increasingly share "authority" and seat at the global power equation. Irrespective of the merits of this point, there is already an actual pressure building in that direction.

Geopolitics is back –if it ever went away- with a vengeance. As Robert Kaplan aptly describes: "rather than eliminating the relevance of geography, globalization is reinforcing it. Mass communications and economic integration are weakening many states, exposing a Hobbesian world of small, fractious regions.

Within them, local, ethnic, and religious sources of identity are reasserting themselves, and because they are anchored to specific terrains, they are best explained by reference to geography. Like the faults that determine earthquakes, the political future will be defined by conflict and instability with a similar geographic logic. The upheaval spawned by the ongoing economic crisis is increasing the relevance of geography even further, by weakening social orders and other creations of humankind, leaving the natural frontiers of the globe as the only restraint.”<sup>22</sup> At any rate the order of globalization is expanding inexorably towards the areas it has little touched. Globalization with its economic, political, social and institutional precepts must to expand. And, that expansion is not a bad thing. However the transition is not easy.

Remaining out of the system is the default position the inertia of which is hard to beat. However, the cost of staying out is far too heavier for the countries concerned and the world at large. The geopolitics of world order expansion will have significantly diverse effects on the countries involved. Some will successfully adapt and prosper, while several others will likely be squeezed under failing state structures, economic and social backwardness, and external interventions. Overall, as before, also in the future, staying out will be significantly more costly than accomplishing transfer towards the center. However, this geopolitics can also be tricky for the major powers. India and

China are already competing in the Indian Ocean. Other races should be expected around the world. Historically, the process of pulling in China into the global economic market and the US-Japanese competition around 1917 produced deep shocks, even entry of the US into a World War. In our day and age, four regions in particular seem to be subject to strong currents and potentially shocks of globalization. These are Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan; former Soviet Union's non-EU territories; former Ottoman Empire's Middle Eastern territories; Africa. The Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean in this regard will be standing as geopolitical center stages.

## **2. Concepts of the World System: The Scholarly Perspectives**

I prefer the terminology of world system rather than the world order but will use both interchangeably. At least since the UN General Assembly advanced a plan in 1974 to redistribute wealth from rich to poor nations which it called the New International Economic Order and Henry A. Kissinger as Secretary of State in the mid-70's talked about "a new structure of stability, a new order of peace", the term new world order, and especially "new world order", has in fact been overused over time by politicians, media commentators and academics alike, often meaning different things. The term may even be tainted given the numerous conspiracy theories associated with

it. Obviously I would not know about the objectives of putative secret societies that aim to establish global dominion. However, that aside, the issue of the nature of the international architecture is a worthwhile topic of intellectual and scholarly scrutiny as well as a major policy-planning task.

The term is much abused as it is incoherent. We read from Stanley Hoffman that at a conference organized in Italy in 1965 five possible meanings for “world order” were identified by the late French philosopher and political scientist Raymond Aron: “Two of the meanings were purely descriptive: order as any arrangement of reality, order as the relations between the parts. Two were analytical, partly descriptive, and partly normative: order as the minimum conditions for existence, order as the minimum conditions for coexistence. The fifth conception was purely normative: order as the conditions for the good life.”<sup>23</sup> Georg Sørensen in a bid to cut through the confusion offers another definition: “a governing arrangement among states, meeting the current demand for order in major areas of concern”.<sup>24</sup> This definition, like the long list of alternatives that it aims to clarify, is also fraught with problems. My own definition would be that a world order is the body of rules, principles, organizations, and anticipated actions considered to be governing the functioning, norms and purposes of the international system. This, admittedly, is also irreparably problematic.

Different theories of “world order” reflect their particular reference points with regard to the nature of the actors, the type of economic, political and social interaction that exist among them and the international context. Aron, reportedly asked the participants in the conference to focus on the “minimum conditions for coexistence”. This reflects an ubiquitously realist perspective to world affairs which, according to realists, have not left the state of the law of the jungle: “The society of sovereign states is in essence asocial, since it does not outlaw the recourse to force among the ‘collective persons’ that are its members. Order, if there be one, in this society of states is anarchical in that it rejects the authority of law, of morality, or of collective force.”<sup>25</sup> Henry Kissinger argues that there are only two roads to stability: one is hegemony; the other is equilibrium. The latter is a restatement of the balance of power concept which frames the substantive content of the realist conception of the world order.

Realists, who include among them a bewildering number of powerful intellectual icons from E.H. Carr to Kenneth Waltz, would thus argue that since world order is created and maintained by the power of state, orders would change with the changing distribution of state power. In conditions where hegemony is not achievable, world orders are created and recreated as rivaling states in the fundamentally anarchic international stage balance each other. Rules and institutions

are the product of this inherently volatile state of affairs. They may be created by enlightened awareness of the factors that create equilibrium. Alternatively, they could be the coincidental result of the balance that was conceived. The bottom line is that when the balance of power is upset, so does the order. Wars and power politics are accepted as natural and oftentimes the only means available for altering undesired political or territorial conditions. Any concept of order, realist thought would argue, does not abnegate the reliance on armed forces, secret diplomacy, and shifting alliances. The consequence of disequilibrium would be conflicts or even hegemonic war which in turn creates a new order as part of a postwar settlement. The order that is thus created would reflect the preferences of the hegemonic state, which would use its power to establish and maintain a particular arrangement.

Realism and versions of it are the most pervasive and resilient of all theories and they are also considered common sense. After all, who can really refute the fact that if a state, democratic and capitalist or not, had enough power and will, it would do whatever it is that it can afford to do in order to maximize its interests even if that implied rupturing of an order it had the lead in establishing? If you are trying to refute this premise, please stop. From the perspective of any policy maker, the abnegation of the responsibility to take this possibility fully into account would be indefensible. Realism, and I am grouping versions of it

such as neo-realism into one school, has enjoyed global and timeless appeal across all polities and cultures. It predates the emergence of International Relations as a discipline and can very well be vibrant beyond it. After all, realists even count Thucydides among them. Yet, realism is not alone being helpful in providing insight and the insight it provides is not representative of the whole picture. Balance of power or hegemony premise of realist and neorealist theoreticians could not be taken at face value.

To begin with, it is hard to deny that there is a certain international order that is applicable in most of the times. Voluntary ruptures of a particular minimum international order are not the rule but rather exceptions both in terms of the number of actors which can afford such behavior and the number of times they could afford it with relative impunity. There is a living and breathing system in place which includes the states as individual actors, states as part of groupings, international organizations that have a logic and sense of their own, and international law that does not have enforcement mechanisms comparable to developed national legal systems yet work through public pressure. This political layer lives alongside an economic order, which have national economies, international economic and trade groupings, multinational economic entities, private business that are truly powerful, not to mention international financial accumulations that are beyond



any country's sovereign control, not to forget again international law. As such, international organizations and international law are both the progenies and gatekeepers of a minimum international order that exists and works everyday. Hence, the usefulness of the neo-liberal theories in highlighting and appreciating that phenomenon.

Neoliberal IR theories tell us that institutions are contracts among actors whose purpose is to reduce uncertainty about the actions of other actors. This approach needs to be seen in the context of the idealist view which disagrees with the realists "over the capacity of human society, and especially international politics, to eliminate the vagaries of existence in an anarchic state system."<sup>26</sup> Accordingly, the international system is flawed because of the outmoded forms of human organization, whether domestically or internationally. These deep flaws however could be meliorated. Thus, states build institutions in a bid to realize joint gains, restrain opportunistic behavior, create norms, and where possible adopt enforcement mechanisms. The institutions mitigate the conditions of anarchy while reducing the transactional costs. As such institutions are utilitarian and functional "agreements about a structure of cooperation".<sup>27</sup> These institutions in return for the benefits they provide require the acceptance of constraints on individual behavior. The world order includes a host of multilateral institutions which "like governments...issue rules and publicly

attach significant consequences to compliance or failure to comply with them-and claim authority to do so.”<sup>28</sup>

They nonetheless do not simulate all functions and jurisdictions of a state. For instance, they stop short of monopolizing the legitimate use of force within a specified territory, at least without the consent of their constituent states. Examples to such “global governance institutions” include the UN Security Council, the International Criminal Court and the other international permanent courts and tribunals, the International Monetary Fund as well as the World Trade Organization. This includes the other non-governmental networks including those of judges and regulators. Anne Marie Slaughter observes:

“We live in a networked world. War is networked: the power of terrorists and the militaries that would defeat them depend on small, mobile groups of warriors connected to one another and to intelligence, communications, and support networks. Diplomacy is networked: managing international crises — from SARS to climate change — requires mobilizing international networks of public and private actors. Business is networked: every CEO advice manual published in the past decade has focused on the shift from the vertical world of hierarchy to the horizontal world of networks. Media are networked: online blogs and other forms of

participatory media depend on contributions from readers to create a vast, networked conversation. Society is networked: the world of MySpace is creating a global world of "OurSpace," linking hundreds of millions of individuals across continents. Even religion is networked..."<sup>29</sup>

Slaughter takes the argument even further by pointing out that the emerging world order will exist "above the state, below the state, and through the state." Accordingly, the state will continue to exist and maintain its position as the main constituent element of the global order. But, "state with the most connections will be the central player, able to set the global agenda and unlock innovation and sustainable growth."<sup>30</sup>

Theories by their nature are abstractions derived from observation of the reality. They reflect what the theorists sees as ultimately essential and what expendable. The particular philosophical lens shapes the angle through which this selection is made and the reality interpreted. As such, both the realist and liberal strands of international relations theory adopt a filter to understate the role of ideas, identities and norms in world politics. Enter the Constructivists who bring this focus into the debate on world affairs and orders.

Constructivists argue that “the identity and interests of states (and other actors) change across contexts and over time. Who actors are and what actors want is determined by their interactions with other actors and by the larger social context in which they exist.”<sup>31</sup> States learn to act in a particular way. Their socialization within the international society influences what states pursue and how they define their interest. As the behavior and interactions of actors change over time, so does the context of world politics. International institutions shape the behavior of states in accordance with socially constructed worldviews. Interests and actions are defined by the pattern of relationships that are set out in these institutions. In the words of Peter Katzenstein, “institutionalized power can be seen to mold the identity of the states themselves and thus the interests they hold.”<sup>32</sup> Change in the world order is a result therefore not only of the relative capabilities of the states but also of the current thinking on the principles and purposes that shape the basic identities of states. In the words of Alexander Wendt, in “a world in which identities are learned and sustained by intersubjectively grounded practice, by what states think and do, is a world in which anarchy is what states make of it.”<sup>33</sup>

Wendt also argues for the inevitability of a world state within 100-200 years, which would be a product of the struggle of individuals and groups for recognition of their subjectivity, as well as the logic of anarchy, which generates a tendency for

military technology and war to become increasingly destructive. The instabilities of a system of states would usher in a society of states, which would also be unstable. Thus, a world society would emerge to be improved by collective security and ultimately by the world state, in which “as in territorial states today, cooperation... would be mandatory and enforceable.”<sup>34</sup> This obviously is the kind of an end-state that conspiracy theories have actually been alluding to for long time. Since the emergence of the world state is deemed to be historically contingent and the nation state should be expected to resist its demise, a struggle should be as inevitable as the world state. Constructivism although considered a rebel within mainstream IR scholarship is nonetheless not only mainstream but currently most popular within academic circles.

The mainstream theories, like the international order they postulate about, are those that reflect the particular viewpoints and interests of the major forces, whether economic, political, military or ideational, that had shaped the particular international order in the first place. Otherwise, these theories would be located at the fringes and left outside the mainstream. The mainstream theories almost inevitably perpetuate the centrality of the major state actors, their political and economic regimes, and the preferred modes of interactions among state and non-state players. As such, much of the IR theorization is actually of less relevance and use from the standpoint of much

of the rest of the world. The most important possible exception arises when the rest of the world must assess the politics and current behavior of the most powerful actors at the top of the global pecking order. In these cases, the mainstream theories may be of use in assessing why, when, how's of great power actions. In turn, the theories that do not start off from the centrality of leading powers and their preferred political, economic and institutional ideas and norms are of less relevance to those who have the upper hand in shaping the international order by their leverages and actions.

Although Wendt, also makes a case that his argument in favor of World State has “interesting” grand strategy implications, I have serious doubts as to whether any state can have a 100 year grand strategy in place. It may sound banal, but in fact the default position for the primary mental frame of policy makers across cultures and time is located somewhere between “realism”, “pragmatism” and whatever is considered to be “common sense”. In reality, I suspect, “bandwagoning” is as much a factor as anything else, at least for most of the actors. A limited number of US and other Western think tanks and newspapers and TV channels shape assessments around the world in much more effective ways than countless empirical studies and theoretical ruminations. In international relations, reality is what it is perceived to be, not what is empirically proven to be. In that regard, constructivist point of view is not

too far off from restating what states have known all along: socialization and indoctrination, and the “control” of the means, is as important in the international scene as it is domestically. Whether in the form of subtle public diplomacy or aggressive information operations and propaganda, influencing the nature of information is a vital task. This is particularly so in open societies and democratic regimes although others are surely not exempt.

These may be the dominant Western IR paradigms, but they are not the only one. The hopelessly divided IR scene is in fact rich and diverse in contending or non-mutually exclusive theories, meta-theories, pre-theories, theses and postulates. For instance, Orientalism and Post-Colonial theory, which I haven't addressed in this essay, also offer equally stimulating and interesting perspectives. This body of scholarship competes to quantitatively or qualitatively “prove” that their particular image of world order has the explanatory power of the reality as was, as is and as would be.

In this regard, Robert Harkavy identified seven models or paradigms which he calls “discrete images” whose proponents assert would define international reality. Although his article was written in 1997 these models continue to contest. These include the three-bloc geoeconomics; the multipolar balance of power model hinged on the traditional "realist" and/or neo-realist frameworks; the controversial

"clash of civilizations" thesis; the unipolar dominance model, related to the traditional geopolitical "long cycle" theory and to theories of "hegemonic stability"; the "zones of peace" versus "zones of turmoil" model based on the apparently widening gulf between the developed and developing worlds; the "global village" model based on the apparent shift of power and sovereignty from nation-states to international or non-governmental organizations, and the growth of functional global regimes; the bipolar-redux model anticipating either a future challenge to U.S. dominance by China, Russia, Japan, or Europe, or a return to some sort of bipolar bloc structure.<sup>35</sup>

As Harkavy notes, these models are not necessarily mutually exclusive. The author of the Clash of Civilizations, Samuel Huntington, himself stated a world otherwise defined by the "clash of civilizations" might be alternatively characterized by "One World: Euphoria and Harmony" akin to Fukuyama's end of history predicated on the global acceptance of representative government and market economics; "Two Worlds: Us and Them" such as rich north versus poor south or the West versus the rest or market economies versus state capitalists; "184 States, More or Less," which is builds on classical realism; or "Sheer Chaos" which again can come under the realist paradigm and denotes a point beyond zones of turmoil thesis predicting governmental collapse, disintegration of states, ethnic, sectarian and tribal warfare, refugee torrents, rampant proliferation and terrorism in the developing world.

Before moving on, I should also recall that IR scholarship is by no means exclusively theoretical and includes an even richer body of case study literature. These mostly describe, analyze and interpret a



particular clearly narrowed down topic or region or phenomenon. There is however less to be said on those because as valuable as these studies are they do not carry a presumption of comprehensiveness and of explanatory power for the world system writ large. And, they are under strong competitive attack from the think tank and third party consultancy world in terms of relevancy for the policy world, a point I will return later in this essay.

### **3. Theoretical Conceptions of Change**

I have referred to the difficulty in pinpointing what exactly is meant by change although analysis of change is inherent in the field of international relations theory. Holsti is critical of the proliferation of terminologies without a coherent sense of what is important and what is not:

“A whole new vocabulary of clichés or analogies has invaded debate. “Globalization,” the “global village,” “spaceship earth,” “interdependence,” the “new millennium,” “the borderless world,” and the like, suggest that we have entered, or are entering, a new era or epoch in which contemporary ideas, practices, institutions, and problems of international politics are fundamentally different from their predecessors. But popular monikers, while evocative of things that are different, do not substitute for rigorous analysis. Lacking in all of this claim

of novelty is a consensus not only on what has changed but also on how we can distinguish minor change from fundamental change, trends from transformations, and growth or decline from new forms.”<sup>36</sup>

Holsti goes on to argue that there are five conceptions of change which he lists as: “change as replacement”; “change as addition”; “dialectical change”; and “change as transformation.” Accordingly, in the concept of “change as replacement”, a significant change happens which is usually the antithesis of something old. Thus, if the assertion is correct that the end of the Cold War has made war among great powers improbable, then a significant pattern in relations among such powers has changed. That in turn points to a major discontinuity and replacement of the old not a transformation.

Under “change as transformation”, quantitative changes accumulated and in time produce something new. Here there is certain continuity between the old and the new.

“Change as addition” involves complementary features to arise and exist alongside what already is present. The fact that internal wars are more common does not negate the premise that external wars can and do happen as before. Old patterns

and concepts are not inevitably replaced. Instead they are further complicated.

Last but not least, the concept of “dialectical change” can mean the old and new interacting to produce something novel but continuous which is not a total replacement. The Marxist version of this concept can also mean the thesis and the anti-thesis producing a superior synthesis.

Holsti’s classification can be more complicated than necessary. The distinction between transformation, dialectical change and addition is although valid it is also fine. A dialectical interaction is always at play in social phenomena and especially in the international stage, all transformations begin with an addition. Those additions if they manage to resist the corrosive influence of time and events and find the appropriate context culminate in a transformation. The question of impact is therefore most likely to be a result of time and opportunity. The cataclysmic or systemic moments provide for the latter. And, the concept of change as absolute replacement is almost unrealistic and extremely rare. The UN in all reality except in legal sense did not totally replace the League of Nations it has transformed it and created something new out of the genes of something existing. The Warsaw Pact is dead but there is the CSTO albeit much different in many respects. Although, far too many commentators write in a way that seem to suggest total

ruptures and discontinuities, it is hard to think that they actually mean it all the time. Are there truly that many thinkers who believe that that in the international system something old is totally effaced when something different arrives? The most notorious example of a verbal abuse is the title of Francis Fukuyama's 1992 best seller *The End of History and the Last Man*. The sophisticated albeit flawed argument that Fukuyama sets out in that book is totally victimized by a title that sells the book but allows the inherent argument to corrode rather immediately under sunlight. Examples to snappy wordage, titling, but also argumentations, flash news assertions of new world orders, clean breaks, unprecedented developments and other superlatives must be a lamentable anti-intellectual malaise of our contemporary culture and economy.

At the same time, basic question implied in Holsti's classification is truly insightful: what constitutes meaningful change and not a "mere quantitative change on a particular dimension of international communication over a relatively short period of time". In Holsti's words "for the stock market player, the day's events, or the week's economic trends may be a key component of buy or sell decisions. But for the theorist of international politics, mere quantitative change on a particular dimension of international communication over a relatively short period of time will probably be of little interest unless those trends have a demonstrable major impact on how diplomatic,

military, or commercial things are typically done. The change must have significant consequences.” In Rosenau’s terms that significant change happens when the established and time tested basic rules, including norms, procedures and institutions become “variables” although Rosenau himself is conflicted whether to subscribe to an additive notion of change or one that is based on replacement.<sup>37</sup> How do these ruminations help assess the changes in the international order?

#### **4. Orders and Collapses: Anatomy of Change**

Examination of these shifts and their drivers individually however do not suffice in conceptualizing change in a comprehensive fashion. That is when the need for a comprehensive framework of understanding change is needed both by the practitioner and the scholar.

Unfortunately, the fact is there is no consensus among the scholars of International Relations on how to define and identify change in the international system.<sup>38</sup> Marking and assessing change or transformation is one challenge with which the discipline of International Relations has found it hard to reckon.

The popular premise among IR scholars is that world orders change in a cycle of war, breakdown and reconstruction in what

Peter Katzenstein called a “sequence of irregular big bangs.”<sup>39</sup> In modern history, the end of the two world wars as well as that of the cold war are examples of extraordinarily critical turning points where the victors acquire opportunity to shape new politics, set out new rules and principles of international relations. In reality, great “events” such as wars or their endings are not the only markers of fundamental change. Great achievements or failures during the reign of particular leaders; major social and technological innovations and discoveries also considered to mark change in international affairs. All these however take a snapshot fixed in time or period of ceremonial beginnings and endings at the cost of the incremental processes that precede them.<sup>40</sup> The analysis of trends, whether mega- or micro- do go further in indicating change as it flows in historical course yet again are specific in focus and not comprehensive in conceptualizing overall change. In the ensuing paragraphs, I suggest a model of change in the world system built upon a series of hypotheses that mark the evolution of the global order.

### **Hypothesis One:**

Any international order is, in fact, reflective of the global political and economic architecture which in turn is a codification permitted by a period’s circumstances. It reflects the minimum that is achievable in a sustained fashion. The wars and other

systemic moments facilitate adoption of a certain arrangement which is beneficial to the victor. Nonetheless, even from the victor's standpoint that arrangement reflects a compromise that is acceptable at a given mortal moment. In a world that will always be in flux there is no future-proof world order or "perpetual peace."

### **Hypothesis Two:**

As such, a world order is not a novel creation but an arrangement that is naturally selected from among the already extant options. Those options and the overall arrangement cannot be too much ahead of its time without being incomprehensible. Instead, those arrangements do not reflect only the interest of the powers to be. These concrete institutions and setup of a world order also represents the niveau of thinking already reached among the policy makers and their learned and lay publics. Therefore, what exists and what will supplant are most probably already here with us, one in senescent, the other in nascent or prototypical form. The world order at any moment thus coexists with its successor. This redundant existence ends with the demise of the old but is soon to be re-enacted with the birth of the next.

### **Hypothesis Three:**

The next order will be carrying the genes of its predecessor complete with several flaws that pass from generation to generation. The realists are right in pointing out to these endemic flaws, but constructivists are also right to assume that some of these are containable. Institutions, liberals would come in here, are one way of containing and transforming these flaws. Ultimately, however, realists are likely to be right again as when orders collapse or when an action of a determined actor is not deterred havoc would break. The Power Transition theoreticians may also offer useful insights in that regard by indicating when instability would peak and due to tension between which types of powers.<sup>41</sup>

The mainstream classification is to treat post World War I and post World War II world orders as separate. By the end of World War I a new political world order did indeed start to take shape. However, alternatively, one could also argue that it took a calamitous crash of the world economy particularly of the most advanced capitalistic economies of the US and Germany but not the Stalinist Russia; a cataclysmic crash of liberalism and the ascent of totalitarian ideologies; a total world war that killed tens of millions of people for this world order to be refined and fully instituted. The idea captured and promoted by the President although not the Congress of the leading power was “replacing a balance of power approach to world order with one based on collective security under the auspices of the



organized international community.”<sup>42</sup> Accordingly, the League of Nations established to ensure collective security; to assure functional cooperation; and to execute the mandates of peace treaties, as set out in the Covenant of the League. The Covenant became Part I of the peace treaty of Versailles. The creation of the League was followed by the institution of the Permanent Court of International Justice. The United States which created the institutional underpinnings of the new world order opted not to participate in it. European powers probably agreed to the League out of deference to President Wilson whose forces ended the war of the trenches.

The League of Nations may have been the creation of a victorious President Wilson who worked hard to realize his “program for peace” which pronounced as item 14 that a “general association of nations must be formed under specific covenants for the purpose of affording mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small states alike.” Yet, President Wilson’s fourteen principles for world peace were in fact derived from the “18 Final Recommendations to End the War and Foster Peace” adopted in 1915 International Women’s Congress held in The Hague where some 1,200 delegates from twelve countries were represented. Furthermore, the International Peace Bureau of the Interparliamentary Union established in 1889 by pacifist members of parliament was an inspiration for the League. These ideas and forerunner initiatives were seized by President Wilson whose political clout in Europe helped transform them into tangible institutions supporting the world order.

The League was not without its achievements. Its work in aiding the refugees of war, in improving health services and labor conditions around the world, as well as the settlement of the dispute over the Aland Islands and the Greek-Bulgarian conflict are among its notable successes. Yet, League's failings were phenomenal. These included Japan's invasion of Manchuria, France's occupation of Ruhr, Italy's occupation of Kerkira (Corfu) and Abyssinia (Ethiopia) and ultimately World War II. In fact, from the very beginning the League's engagement in collective security proved shoddy. The League always tried to refrain from disputes involving permanent members or their interests and when it did enter that minefield it failed to be effective. The League's disposition of former German and Ottoman Empire territories in the form of mandates to major powers effectively created a market for a new sort of colonialism.

The failures of the League of course are better known. However, these aside, as Falk notes, the idea of an organized international community survived World War II and "the presence of an institutional center for world politics has not been allowed to disappear from the international scene."<sup>43</sup> The League was based on an idea that was good in essence but its timing was perhaps not right.

Thus, following the worst carnage of all times in World War II an international institutional setup was created in the form of the United Nations, International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the International Monetary Fund. Deals struck in San Francisco and Bretton Woods came to consolidate an international order which took

account only partly of the failings of the previous institutional setup and better reflected the American primacy in world affairs, despite the bipolar structure that was in the offing. Thus, the seat of the United Nations and its Security Council was established in New York with offices also in Geneva and Vienna for specialized agencies, and the World Bank and IMF based in Washington DC.

When one looks closer the great paradox of the 19th century appears in astonishing perplexity. Economic liberalization continued throughout this century together with a benign proliferation of international institutions. Often conceived as a bottom up process, inspired no doubt by the ideals of the American and French revolutions of the earlier century, notable individuals took up internationalist causes that culminated in the creation of such enduring institutions as the International Committee of the Red Cross in 1864 and the Universal Postal Union in 1874 and the International Olympic Committee in 1894. The codification of international law regarding the treatment of non belligerents in war and settlement of disputes in the 1899 and 1907 Hague Conferences provided a befitting ending to an eventful century in which humanity took large steps forward in expanding human rights and international cooperation to sustain peace and prosperity.

Almost simultaneously, the great powers were arming to the teeth, arms races were raging among navies which were essential instruments of power projection to colonies and alliances were being forged. As Paul Kennedy observes, "the era from 1871 to 1914 was a bizarre and puzzling one, with great and increasing evidence of international integration existing side by side with ethnic-nationalist

passions, warmongering, and social Darwinist notions about the primacy of struggle.”<sup>44</sup>

Thus, the mere establishment of the League was not sufficient to govern a minimum world order and despite its bases among peace movements around Europe, the strategic context was not yet ripe for it to be effective. In fact, the League by virtue of being prematurely born may have even been counterproductive for world peace. The expectations created around the League may have contributed to the abandonment of balance of power strategies to contain the Nazi’s expansionism and the League’s weaknesses further exacerbated the resolve of Germany, Italy and Japan. The failure to force the return of Germany, first to the League sponsored disarmament talks and then to the League itself punched nails on the coffin of peace.

Niall Ferguson, goes to great lengths in the “War of the World” to demonstrate that World War II could have been prevented or significantly limited.<sup>45</sup> It would be too presumptuous anyway to consider history fatalistically developing on a predetermined track. Had the right policies been implemented and World War II averted, one could argue that the League of Nations despite its flaws would have survived. Once institutions and orders are created they regularly become fixations on the stage until the point their demise becomes inevitable. The League of Nations disbanded in 1946 only after the San Francisco Treaty established the United Nations.

#### **Hypothesis Four:**

There is no doubt that a world order is shaped by the enduring interests of the leading actors. This invariably includes the fundamental aspect of the economic interest. It can also be said that the body of arrangements and norms that constitute a world order is also shaped in the mental image of these major actors. The Power Transition Theory's core assumptions about AFK Organski's four types of states (dominant state, great powers, middle powers and small powers) exerting differential influences on the evolution of regional and world orders supports this assertion, although no single dominant state was observed in modern history, including the United States. The unipolar moments may have existed and in terms of concentrations of power attributes unipolarity does exist. However, power and influence are not congruent and this very fact has been one dilemma puzzling even frustrating US and other intellectuals and policy makers alike. That said, historical experience does bear out the hypothesis that world orders are shaped by the economic and other interests of the leading actors.

The world has almost always had certain orders that are weaved around the leading power or powers of the time and place. In what Falk calls the "complacent consensus"<sup>46</sup> the world order until World War I, or more accurately roughly between 1648 and 1918, depended on a group of European "Great Powers" striking balance of power among them. The

world outside Europe was and treated as the periphery. For every local order outer rims form the periphery. However, this time around most of the rest of the world was already ruled directly or indirectly by naval European Empires. Particularly in the wake of the Napoleonic Wars, while the competition and violent rivalry continued among the Empires within Europe, their contests were more intensive in the periphery. And, ultimately this was part of the logic of the Concert of Europe in which groupings of European powers strived to enforce international norms and cooperated to that effect as they reassured that no single one of them could overpower the rest. This world order gave birth to the development of a set of generally accepted international laws, and a certain ad hoc conference or concert diplomacy.

Economically, the mercantilist policies like the Navigation Acts in England effectively helped build up skilled industrial population and shipping industry and ushered in the modern capitalist system fueled European imperialism. However, as Industrial Revolution started to unfold and imperialism progressed, laissez faire policies came to supplant mercantilism as of late 18th century when the free trade ideas of classical economists led by Adam Smith won out. The premises of this European balance of power started to erode as following unification Germany started to grow incongruently within Europe and set its sight on the colonial territories or influence

zones of the other European powers. This coincided with the decline of the easternmost European Empire, the Ottomans, which opened further areas for imperial competition. By the time the European Powers engaged in the Great War the fall of Eurocentric conceptions of the world had already occurred in essence as the United States became the largest economy in the world by the turn of the 20th century. The US was until then a neutral and isolationist power in the rivalries within Europe. When Washington finally entered the war the US military power proved decisive. A certain world order had come to an end ushering in a new one which included in two non-European powers, the US and Japan, entering the political and military centre as they had entered the economic one decades ago.

The world order set out by the Treaty of Versailles included 32 states which ultimately became 63 although only 28 remained members throughout the lifespan of the organization between 1920 and 1946. The League included members around the world except Africa. However, the continued Eurocentric nature of the organization was manifest in the fact that the Council's permanent members included five European countries (France, Italy, UK, Germany and the Soviet Union) and Japan.

The US already the largest economy before 1914 was the main benefactor of the result of World War I due to the wealth accumulated by trading with the belligerent allies. Furthermore, the

US Senate's Nye Committee, which met between 1934 and 1936, established that the US loaned \$2.3 billion to United Kingdom and allies which would have been lost if Germany won the war. The main reason why the US entered the war in 1917 was thus to protect investments in Europe. US entry into World War II also had an economic backdrop mainly related to Japan's obstruction of American economic access to China and the subsequent US embargo of oil and steel sales. Despite Senate's rejection of the Treaty of Versailles and thus membership to the League of Nations, due no less to the personal rivalry between President Wilson and the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, US engaged actively with Europe throughout the 1920's as its exports, imports and investments rose continually. In the interwar years US dominated the world economy and when it faced the Great Depression in 1929 the whole world and with it the international order went into a tailspin.

The economic dimension of the post World War II order, like the political dimension, consolidated US preeminence, enhanced multilateral institutionalization and reflected the lessons learned from past failures. Thus the US Secretary of Treasury Morgenthau, in opening the international conference of 45 countries held in 1944 in Bretton Woods , blamed the Great Depression for breeding fascism and war and asserted that global economic institutions would create "a dynamic world community in which the peoples of every nation will be able to realize their potentialities in peace." The post World War II economic system thus depended on three main pillars. The first pillar comprised the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. The IMF was tasked to structure the international monetary system in



order to make sure that exchange rates remained stable. This standardization of monetary policies would enhance international trade. After all, the experience with the Great Depression was that the ailing countries instinctively raised trade barriers which only worsened the crisis. The IMF would also provide temporary financial aid to countries that faced difficulty in their balance of payments. The World Bank or the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, on the other hand, would also assist the development of international trade by assisting the reconstruction and development of territories of members by facilitating the investment of capital for productive purposes. Together the two Bretton Woods institutions provide for a multilateral framework to manage economy and trade the collapse of which was seen to have direct implications for peace.

The second pillar of the global economic order that was created after World War II was the institutionalization of US preeminence. The IMF ensured that values of the national currencies of its members were pegged to US dollar, and the value of the dollar to gold. This has consolidated US dollar as the dominant currency medium in international trade. In 1971, the Nixon administration ended the convertibility of the dollar into gold. Similarly the US would hold 20% of the votes at the World Bank, the largest public development body in the world.

The third pillar was the bilateral US aid to war torn European economies. This started in 1945 under various different arrangements and between 1948-1951 European Recovery Program (Marshall Plan) kicked in to bundle and streamline various aid

schemes and extend some \$13 billion (around \$100 billion) more in current dollars.<sup>47</sup>

The cumulative result was a smashing hit for the US and Europe. Economic recovery and later surge in Europe and US economic and financial power went hand in hand. The transatlantic economy, which brings together the first and the second economies of the world are inextricably interdependent. There is more European investment in Texas than U.S. investment in Japan, and European firms own more than \$3.3 trillion worth of U.S. assets.<sup>48</sup> The relative weight and thus importance of the direct investments is likely to change as the Chinese rise continues. However, the importance of America for Europe and Europe for American in the economic field will continue to be essential.

#### **Hypothesis Five:**

The ensuing order also rectifies some of the flaws of the previous generation of orders. The League of Nations upgraded and institutionalized the Concert of Europe system; UN and its Security Council built on the Council of the League of Nations empowered with wider range of authorities to protect peace; the World Trade Organization did not replace IMF and the World Bank but articulated and developed its trade promotion functions, and so the list goes. The subsequent has built on the precedent and in so doing ameliorated some its shortcomings and flaws.

#### **Hypothesis Six:**

Any world order is also composed of a number of concurrent economic, political, military; global and regional orders. The global systemic orders cohabit with regional arrangements that establish a separate -albeit not incompatible- regional or even transnational orders. The European Union is the most advanced example in that regard. NAFTA, OSCE, ASEAN even Eurocontrol as well as countless regional and subregional arrangements establish a “patternistic” order that regulates one or many aspects of international life. Additionally, as the postcolonial-theorists argue “there are intimate connections between the private (e.g. ‘household’) and the public (e.g. ‘governance’), the upstairs (e.g. ‘masters’) and the downstairs (e.g. ‘servants’), the insiders (e.g. ‘pure bred’) and the outsiders (e.g. ‘hybrids’), the micro-personal (e.g. ‘sex’) and the macro-structural (e.g. ‘power’).”<sup>49</sup> This truly complicates the grasp of a world order in truly holistic fashion. Except that the international order is conceived in mental image of the leading actors and thus reflect the reigning points of view with regard to the interrelationships (orders) that exist between different “worlds”.

### **Hypothesis Seven:**

Nonetheless, the world orders to date were never truly universal. The common fallacy is to presume that a “world” order existed during the Cold War or even after. This

presumption of order would come as a shock to the millions of dead in the proxy wars or due to hunger all taking place in areas unregulated by the “world order”. The deadlocks in the UNSC that is tasked to regulate all conflict around the world, and the conflicts that took place in areas falling out of the zones of influence of the two opposing blocs, or failures in state governance in economies falling outside or the darker side of globalization rendered any order only partial not global.

#### **Hypothesis Eight:**

Yet, the trend is towards more and more expansive orders both in terms of geographical reach and in terms of the multiple layers of everyday life that the world order arrangements regulate. The human quest is to extend minimum international order as comprehensively as possible. Globalization, which is a beauty and a beast rolled into one, is the main driver. In fact, globalization is a process by which the world order seems to be expanding geographically and socio-economically. That however is bringing old periphery on par with the old center, threatening the primacy of the historical center.

#### **Hypothesis Nine:**

At this point I need to introduce another perspective which returns to the relativity of the world order experience. I have already proposed that from the perspective of the effect of the minimum world order it matters whether one is situated within or outside the areas regulated by the order. A child born in Rwanda in 1994 has a completely different world order experience than a child born the same year in Bethesda, Maryland. Even within the order, it matters whether one is at the center or at the periphery. The center and periphery as well as the area governed by world order are inherently in dynamic evolution. This evolution is by human standards very gradual and generations long. Globalization however creates a dynamic by which transitions are hastened. As such some areas have been set in motion from outside to inside and from the periphery to the core. Far East as a region and Turkey as a country are examples to upward mobility within the order. Middle East is an example to mobility from without to within. For those who are located in the vicinity of those mobile "units" change is an altogether robust concept. If the regional order around you is under pressure, despite all that globalization has done to shrink distances in a flat and global village, geographical proximity, as geography itself, matters a great deal.

#### **Hypothesis Ten:**

Last but definitely not least, rises and falls of world orders do not happen in a deterministic fashion. If the last hundred years were the American century this is not only due to US rise but also the dramatic European decline. The speed and totality with which the latter occurred is not due to American rise but rather to the a multiplicity of reasons including human error. Just as history was not a sequence of preordained phenomena, the future will also not be that. Therefore, what will shape the future is not only whether and how other powers will rise but also how the US will decline.

## IV

### **SENESCENT AND NASCENT WORLD ORDERS**

When I put the aforementioned hypotheses together, a coherent model of change may emerge. I call my model of a symbiotic and evolutionary experience the mutual existence of senescent and nascent world orders. The paragraphs below chart the contours of the outbound (senescent) and the inbound (nascent) world systems.

The current world order was shaped since late 19th century when Europe was beginning its decline, the US was quickly rising, Ottomans were dissolving, and much of the rest of the world except Japan was largely colonized. The world order in which we live has been a product of insufferable pain inflicted by humans on humans, world wars, economic and political collapses, and environmental degradation. This order has also engendered for the people who lived within its broadening center immeasurable prosperity, stability and progress.

A marked characteristic of both the senescent and nascent world orders is globalization. It is hard to find a conclusive definition of globalization as scholars seem to disagree on the

scale and causation, as well as development, impact, and policy results of this phenomenon. There is disagreement even on the historical trajectory and chronology of globalization although there seems to be a consensus on the point that in the past half century globalization has intensified. The journey might be traced back to the Islamic Golden Age, when traders and explorers from Muslim lands have established a “global” links expanding trade, scientific and social interactions across the known world. The Silk Road later further advanced this integration. The territorial and particularly maritime expansion of Europeans into new continents also culminated in the discovery and colonization of America. The first multinational corporation, The Dutch East India Company, helped cultivate globalization as a business strategy in the 17th century. During the 19th century globalization was a fact of life through intensive international trade and investment between European imperial powers, their colonies and the United States. These links continually expanded to include sub-Saharan Africa and the Island Pacific. A world economic order was thus being created. The experience of protectionism during the 1930's depression engendered deliberative planning to promote international economic integration and trade liberalization. By then China had also entered the world economic system. It is hard to negate Noam Chomsky's assertion that globalization is beneficial to its designers: Multinational corporations and the powerful states to which they are closely linked. However, as capital became more multinational and its operations and



investments geographically widespread, globalization also came to empower the target markets.

Anthony Giddens offers a particularly insightful definition of globalization “as the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa.”<sup>50</sup> This emphasis on “social relations” more accurately depicts the multilayered impact of globalization. Thus it is no longer about a powerful country sapping the natural resources of a weaker one and trading the processed goods back to the initial producer of the natural resource. The interaction is profusely and intimately social including political. The vector of the relationship continues to flow more from the powerful towards the weaker but it is no longer one directional. The expansion of globalization is therefore no longer merely economic expansion. It is also cultural, sociological, political and even psychological. Values and institutions are passed on as much as goods and capital. As such the reach of the world order is congruous with the reach of the multiple layers of globalization. A country that is fully within the world order is protected to a large degree against the torrents of being excluded. That is the zone of modernity, prosperity, liberty, and security. That is the first world. A country starts entering the globalized world order when it starts benefiting from the governing arrangements and adopting some of the economic,

political, institutional fabrics worn in the first world. This includes democratization, constitutionalism, rule of the law, accountability, collective security, free trading, financial liberalization including through stock exchanges and the like. I will use this explanation in the remainder of this essay when talking about countries and regions in or out of step with the world order.

The aging and rising world orders are cohabiting, one caving in, the other moving in. The following is an admittedly bird's eye view of the general contours of this asynchronous process or phenomenon.

President Lula of Brazil at the G-7 Summit held in Evian in 2003 reportedly said: "Gentlemen, I would like to suggest to you that next year maybe you would like to meet in Brazil to get yourself ready for 20 years from now when 5 of you will not be here. Because you should understand that in that period of time, 20 or 30 years from now, the number one country in the world will be China, number two will be the United States, number three will be India, number four will be Japan, and I regret to say that none of the rest of you will be here. I'll be here,' he said. 'But it would still be nice to have you around, so come get used to the developing world."<sup>51</sup> What President Lula's intervention whimsically underscored was that the power structure of the

world is under change and this is creating a new reality that will be recognized in due course.

The fundamental actors are the hyper power US, which is at the top of the global power structure, but may have reached the peak of its power potential; Europe which despite its painful and long decline still belongs at the top layer of the global power scala thanks to the EU, but is seriously lacking vision and direction. Discovering that vision and also admitting Turkey is likely to replenish the EU's potential to hang on to its position within the top layer. Together, the US and Europe form the top of the global power structure in almost every way. They also make up three of the five permanent posts in the worlds top multinational (or even supranational except for the permanent members) global organ, namely the UN Security Council. That Europe is not represented by a single seat at this forum is a relic of the war of half a century ago.

After having amassed attributes of power that no other mortal power has been able to assemble, the US has entered a relative stagnation the course and result of which is yet to be seen. That said, US will continue to be the dominant global power during the lifetime of anyone alive on this day. Obviously, US power cannot be easily matched although the EU has already superseded American economic power. In the military realm, Washington spends almost half of the entire global

defense expenditures. The US defense budget exceeds the combined spending of the next 46 countries. The US spends six times more than China, 10 times more than Russia and no less than 99 times than Iran. All the potential US rivals put together spend some \$205 billion annually that is little over one third of US defense expenditures. However, even these numbers do not show the full picture. If one adds the defense expenditures of NATO allies, Japan, South Korea and Australia one reaches over 70% of all military spending in the world. One ought also to consider that all of the top ten defense companies in the world are from NATO countries. In terms of strategic culture, the US is accustomed to its leadership role and its elites are not likely to give up this position. The Obama administration is no exception. Furthermore, the current economic crisis can even produce the effect of a certain cleansing of the financial system thereby mitigating or even halting long term US economic decline. The financial crisis in Turkey in 2001 had exactly this sort of effect rendering Turkish economy one of the fastest growing in the world. The counter example of course is Japan which has not been able yet to recover fully since 1997. Whether the effect of the current crisis on the fate of the world's leading superpower will be along the Turkish or Japanese examples will have to be watched and seen.

Russia is no longer the top contender against these two powers, but it has every resource to be on the rise and is thus

considered to be part of the BRIC. Russia's influence is curtailed by the loss of its political appeal but it is using its position in the energy market to recover ground lost since the end of the Cold War. It has also launched an open challenge against US-European primacy by attacking Georgia and recognizing the separation of Abkhazia and South Ossetia from Georgia. However, Russia is a systemic power in almost every other field.

China, like Russia, already belongs in the post World War II top layer of the global power structure including by virtue of its UNSC permanent membership. However, it is currently forming the second layer together with Russia. China is careful in not openly launching an anti-systemic challenge to the US primacy although it is not shy in drawing its own redlines including in Taiwan and Nepal. China is a major benefactor of globalization and thus far has been particularly lucky in staving off its inevitable challenges and problems.

I have essentially recounted the UN Security Council's five existing permanent members which is illustrative of which countries the current world order, as an institutional global compact, has codified as the top powers. Clearly, this list is not totally representative of what actually forms the top of the power chain. Although all the listed powers are in the actual top layer, there are others which exert significant leverage. In a recent

study the Stanley Foundation concluded that ten countries will form the top layer of the global major powers layer. These are the US, EU, Turkey, South Africa, Russia, India, China, South Korea, Japan. Obviously, this list is subject to debate. For instance, it takes for granted that Turkey will remain outside the EU. However, with perhaps a few additions the list also reflects more or less a general consensus as to the top achievers in the world. If that scenario is realized, it would have ramifications for the global economic, political, institutional structures.

It is interesting to note that at first side, leaving aside Russia's indecision, all the actors are in fact conforming to the global order that is shaped under the US lead. All act within the system, protect it, try to improve its position within the system, and aim to reform it without jeopardizing its fundamental parameters. They also show reflexes that try to keep the US within the order that US itself has pioneered. Furthermore, all of these powers shun the prospect of armed conflict between them. It can be said that the domestic dynamics of these countries, the type of the relationship that they will develop among them and how they would related to their close neighborhoods will be important from the perspective of the evolution of the coming world order.

The reason why all the current and likely future major powers appear to support the current world order could be mainly economic. First of all being an anti-systemic power is

unbearably expensive even for a country like China that holds around \$2 trillion in reserves. Secondly, all these powers rise by benefiting from the current world order albeit in different degrees. Thirdly, the level of interdependence among US and China is such that historian Neill Ferguson talks about a *Chinamerica*, which smacks of Brzezinski's one time *Amerippon* idea. At any rate, a version of the nuclear strategic doctrine of Mutual Assured Destruction that formed the underlying logic of the US-Soviet balance during the Cold War is probably now applicable in the economic domain between China and America, which can shatter each other's economies.

The critical coefficient in the evolution of power structures will be not only how the BRIC's and the N-11 nations will manage their rise but also how the US will cope with the idea of a set of friendly or rival powers gradually closing the gap. The case of China's rise is particularly noteworthy although by no means the only challenge to the US pre-eminence. The power transition theoreticians show that under conditions of parity among two contending powers, if the challenger is dissatisfied, the probability of war increases dramatically.<sup>52</sup> Yet, for all intents and purposes, the reality may be more complex and involve not a "war" as such but a sustained and multifaceted global political, economic and even cultural struggle. This may happen even when what Ronald Tammen calls the "harmonization of elites" is realized and when the "elite ruling class ... is satisfied

with the international structure and the corresponding rules of the road.”<sup>53</sup> The current economic crisis has reconfirmed that the US and China have joint stakes in maintaining the current global system although China will surely have a number of amendments to seek and gradually it will grow more assertive in pursuit of what it sees as its national interest. However, near parity would also mean having to go through Beijing in every issue which the US, nor any other major power, is likely to tolerate. And, there will be many willing smaller actors that would likely play one power against the other.

Needless to say, acting against the system is risky given that it would spark not only US but also the fellow small and large powers’ potential resistance. Therefore, a free trading capitalist system has been anchored along the US-EU-China-India-Brazil axis and this forms the infrastructure of the evolving world order. This economic system will likely see specific amendments but will probably be resilient in its basic form beyond the horizon. However, there is already an old tension resurfacing between state control and the market this time with stronger vigor on the part of the proponents of state control.

On the one side is the astounding achievement of the private business in the world. The free market has produced a dramatic reorientation of the power relationship between the nation state and the private enterprise. In our day and age the US defense



budget is only half of the annual sales of two companies, Walmart and ExxonMobil. The latter's annual sales is approximately on par with the GDP of the 19th largest economy in the world. Top 250 companies have annual earnings that form one third of the global GDP. One third of all assets in the world are controlled by the top 50 financial institutions. There are around 100 companies that have sales worth over \$50 billion whereas only 60 nation states have GDP of similar power.<sup>54</sup> Private business is a powerful force. Ian Bremmer points out that the free market tide has receded: "Across the United States, Europe, and much of the rest of the developed world, the recent wave of state interventionism is meant to lessen the pain of the current global recession and restore ailing economies to health. For the most part, the governments of developed countries do not intend to manage these economies indefinitely. However, an opposing intention lies behind similar interventions in the developing world: there the state's heavy hand in the economy is signaling a strategic rejection of free-market doctrine."<sup>55</sup>

The 13 largest oil companies in the world, which Bremmer measures by their reserves, are owned and operated by governments. He thus argues that state capitalism in which the state functions as the leading economic actor and uses markets primarily for political gain is replacing free market policies. And, that signals a global competition not among rival political

ideologies but between competing economic models. This observation is interesting yet not necessarily novel. The free market has always been in tension with the state. What may be new is that the global economic crisis has increased this tension and created a backlash against neoliberalism also in the US and European markets. Therefore, Bremmer is right from his point of view in taking the nation-states' resurgence in the economic field seriously, because that trend can fundamentally influence economic policies and balances and thus the future place of private business in world order. However, the political dimension of the tension between state and private business can be equally if not more fundamentally important and game changing.

The main ideology that supports the current world order is shaped by liberal or even neoliberal economy that promotes global access over national boundaries, social and individual freedoms that encourage creativity and skilled migration, and multi party democracy and rule of law regimes which maintain stability and facilitate resolution of differences within a society with other means than physical violence. Following the end of the Cold War and the demise of the rivaling ideological model, the idea of global governance has gathered increasing momentum. The principle and structures of global governance and globalization are mutually supportive. In this picture, just as there is the issue of state control over economy, there has

always been a comparable tension between state control and individual liberties. For at least a few generations it will not be realistic to expect China, Russia and scores of other countries to adopt a Western style liberal and pluralistic democratic political model.

That will have at least three implications: Firstly, an ideology is ultimately only as powerful as the body in which it can insert itself. Read in reverse, whatever ideological model powerful countries adopt will find its admirers in other countries. A state controlled market economy, global trade liberalism matched with enlightened illiberal policies at home may well be an alternative model for a significant portion of the world. Variations of this model is likely to compete with Western models around the world and especially in countries that are outside the inner ring of the global order. Secondly, the liberal model has an evangelical tendency which would add tension to relations with countries which resist political liberalization. The colored revolutions of the 2000's have significantly soured the perceptions in Russia, Egypt and scores of other countries against the West which was suspected of instigating these popular movements. Thirdly, demands for liberal approaches will limit the reach of the West and ideas and values associated with it. The US has yet to invite the leader of Turkmenistan to Washington for an official visit despite the overwhelming

interests in forging good relations with this key energy security player.

As I have explained, geopolitical shifts are underway both in terms of the configuration of the biggest powers that take leading roles in defining and upholding world order and those who remain outside the relatively stable order. At the same time, there are shifts that are ideational. This relates to a dynamic already unleashed that pulls away from the only remaining comprehensive and successful economic, political and social governance model, which finds its ideal form in neoliberalism. The “only course, no alternative” approach underlying the “end of history” thesis is now strongly contested around the world.

However, this reaction to neoliberal, pro-globalization and world governance policies remain sporadic, disorganized and incoherent both intellectually and organizationally. How long it would take for this underlying opposition to find its wholesome ideological voice and example can only be guessed not foreseen. There is every reason to believe that China’s economic success is already producing ripples that as long as China continues its rise will attract increasing proponents and advocates as well as theoreticians.

A process may already be underway in which liberal democracy-free market economy nexus supporting globalization is strongly contested at the popular level. The violent street protests are a common sideshow to the high level gatherings of the world's prosperous and powerful nations. These however do not as yet form a coherent whole and include a diversity of viewpoints including nihilists and anarchists. As Paul Rogers notes: "The aspiration to what might be called the internationalisation of dissent has not yet been fully realised. But there are more than glimpses of the phenomenon in social, environmental and workers' movements - reflecting the fact that one result of globalization is the much wider understanding of the transnational nature of marginalization and exclusion. There is every chance that the early 2010s will indeed see the rise of fully transnational anti-elite movements triggered by wholesale deprivation, fuelled by anger, and armed with the hunger for an inclusive and just world. In time, they may be as or even more potent than the anti-colonial movements of the 1950s and 1960s."<sup>56</sup> In fact, the very formula that is touted as the agent for the transformation of the world into prosperous, peaceful, liberal and civic minded global community may just not be working that way.

Amy Chua argues for example that "the global spread of markets and democracy is a principal aggravating cause of group hatred and ethnic violence throughout the non-Western

world.”<sup>57</sup> Scores of people who thrived within the system including such prominent names the Nobel laureate Joseph Stiglitz and George Soros criticize the process of globalization and seek to reform it. The idea of social justice and social security are once again in ascendancy. It remains to be seen whether the social democratic movements, long puzzled by the strength and vigor of neoliberalism, may regroup and find a discourse befitting the current realities. They would be in search of such a discourse that would channel some of the popular discontent into a positive and non-destructive political agenda that also safeguards democracy and economic opportunity. Obviously, these are not developments that China can inspire, but the message here is that the stuttering of neoliberalism is likely to challenge more liberalism as a panacea against all ills and create an ideational fracture.

Whether the ideational fractures will lead to institutional consequences is a question worth asking. It is hardly so that the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) led by China and Russia or the Collective Security Treaty Organization led by Russia amount to an organized illiberal front or even aspire to that. Their main focus is security and although the CSTO occasionally makes rather exaggerated self comparisons to NATO it simply is not in the same league. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization deserves greater attention. Comprising China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan the SCO dates back to 1996. Its original

purpose was to establish confidence and help demilitarize China-Soviet Union border. Its focus and visibility have been increasing in recent years. The SCO has no economic dimension and its political dimension is currently secondary to its security focus. Even on the latter front the level of integration of the SCO is rather limited. The organization in 2005 openly called for US to end its military bases in Central Asia. The SCO is not an organization that can be overlooked and history is replete with examples of nucleus organizations eventually sprawling and assuming additional tasks and missions. However, the strength of the SCO, namely having China and Russia as members, is also its potential weakness. The real world may just be too complicated with these two giants to demonstrate a lasting common front.

On the other side, of course there are powerful and well established western led institutions already in place. The prime example is the NATO which is exclusively Europe and America and not global in membership. But, the idea is already out to develop an institutional framework that would transcend geographical limits and be based on ideological orientation. Although not the best example because of its different intention, Anne Bayefsky of the Hudson Institute called for a United Democratic Nations, “an international organization of democracies, by democracies, and for democracies” to replace the ineffective United Nations.<sup>58</sup> More to the point is the work by

the Princeton Project on National Security under the lead of John Ikenberry and Anne Marie Slaughter, which called for the creation of a Concert of Democracies.

The proposed Concert of Democracies would work towards the institutionalization of democratic peace. Thus, “if the United Nations cannot be reformed, the Concert would provide an alternative forum for liberal democracies to authorize collective action, including the use of force, by a supermajority vote. Its membership would be selective, but self-selected. Members would have to pledge not to use or plan to use force against one another; commit to holding multiparty, free-and-fair elections at regular intervals; guarantee civil and political rights for their citizens enforceable by an independent judiciary; and accept the responsibility to protect.”<sup>59</sup> Thus, the Princeton Project’s 2006 report *Forging A World of Liberty Under Law: U.S. National Security in the 21st Century* also argued that America would be safer, more prosperous and healthier if governments around the world were more popular, accountable, and rights regarding; if existing international institutions were reformed and new ones created to reflect liberal principles; and if the role of force was reconsidered in light of the threats of the 21st century. In the 2008 US elections Republican candidate John McCain also espoused a League of Democracies.



While not carrying much wind currently it should be seen totally within the realm of the probable that these ideas resurface also in the near future. They may even form the nucleus of the thinking behind the institutional makeup of the next world order either as a replacement to the United Nations, as the proponents on the left and right seem to suggest, or as a complement to it. Either way, another element of the senescent and the nascent world orders is again probably alive today.

This brings up the issue of the institutions of the current and next world order. The power, ideological and economic foundations of the world order are protected by a comprehensive network of international organizations, which have been updated in due course. This network has the UN and UNSC, Bretton Woods institutions and the WTO, NATO, and from another angle EU and ASEAN. All of those should be expected to remain beyond the horizon but go through minimal reform, minimal in the sense that barring complete disintegration, the necessary far reaching reforms will be politically unachievable.

Institutions obviously do shape the environment. However, more importantly international law and multinational structures are formed by the codification of what already exists or can exist. This codification is achieved in close proximity to the common denominators and under the lead of the dominant

power or powers. For the future institutional makeup a number of questions about the future nature of international relations should first find their answers. These include whether the US is prepared to share power or resist; whether ascendant actors will engage in attritive and/or violent struggles among them or with others; how the medium and smaller size countries will relate to the regional major powers; how a possible anti-systemic “revolutionary circumstance” in a major power would impact on the global system and other major powers. Under an optimistic scenario, the current world order may expand beyond current overrepresentation of the West to bring China and India but also potentially Turkey and other key states more into the decision shaping and decision making positions within the international organizations. At any rate, there is little doubt the future global institutions would be based on much more power sharing between America, Europe and Eastern Eurasia.

That is certainly the case with regard to the so-called Bretton Woods institutions. Since the Nixon administration severed the dollar-gold parity in 1971, the biggest reform drive may actually be approaching the IMF and the World Bank. This should involve more appropriate representation of the emerging powers like China, India, Brazil and Turkey. Similarly, a new revenue model would be required to secure new lasting sources of revenues without levying additional burden on the indebted countries whose interest payments help sustain the IMF. But of

equal importance may be the criticism that these institutions have failed to promote development. The recipes advanced by the IMF and the World Bank could be revised.

A process holding particular institutional promise is the G-20 which represents the world's leading economies. The Group was established in 1999 with the purpose of promoting the integration of the major emerging economies into dialogue with the G-7 countries comprising the most developed, namely the US, Germany, Japan, UK, France, Italy and Canada. The G-20 format thus includes all the G-7 countries, Russia (which is a member of G-8 for broader political interactions), and Argentina, Australia, Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, and Turkey, as well as the EU. The G-20 between 1999 and 2008 met annually at the level and within the mandate areas of the national finance ministers as well as central bank representatives. This group of twenty leading economies has been energized at the Heads of State and Government level by the US in November 2008 in order to create a broad global platform to tackle the current economic crisis. The G-20 did indeed make a good start in that regard when it pulled together a trillion dollars in support of the IMF when it met for the second time at the Summit level in London in April 2009. The Group also led the way to reform global financial management by calling for the regulation of hedge

funds and other means of shadow banking system that defied any control despite the trillions of dollars under their belt.

However, for the G-20 to reach its full potential it needs to be conceived not only as a financial gathering but as a global political-economic forum that supports minimum world order and helps harmonize national policies of the twenty leading powers in the world. The G-20 rather than G-8 or any version of it is the institution of the future. However, in the meantime there will be reactionary inertia to hold on to the obsolescent G-8 or circumspect G-7 plus 5 (BRIC) frameworks as agreed at the G-7's Heiligendam meeting. Here again the rule of redundancy until death is likely to apply because of the lack of zeal to end what is outdated and put in place that whose time has come.

On the international security side, a critical question is whether it is possible to return from the current point where the erosion of the nuclear non proliferation regimes is a reality. Henry Kissinger at a speech referred to this question: "If proliferation is not stopped now, it will project us into a world that will become morally and strategically unmanageable. There will be too many countries with nuclear weapons with too many varied incentives. We are reaching a point where we are running out of time, and we have to be honest with ourselves. What price are we willing to pay to stop an Iranian nuclear weapons program? Failing that, how do we propose to organize a world of rampant proliferation?"<sup>60</sup> Although the emphasis on Iran is

obvious, the question is more diffuse and profound. The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty is actually premised on the eventual elimination of all nuclear weapons and President Obama has referred to the zero option. That is probably not achievable. There is a realistic chance that a gradual if long slide may occur towards a world where nuclear proliferation is accepted and regulated to the extent possible by potentially new instruments. However, it is also likely that in the process several countries which have nuclear weapon ambitions face serious problems, one or two even military interventions.

The Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty is already continuing its existence thanks to the life support it receives from numerous other nuclear non proliferation agreements, such as the Nuclear Supplier Group and several others. It is also around because it is basically impossible to negotiate anything new that would adequately answer the call with regard to how the nuclear monster is to be restrained.

NATO is the most impressive military alliance in history. If the US is the predominant military hyperpower that is unique in history, NATO is even more than that. It is among the the most successful post-World War II constructs. This organization is however perennially mired in debate about its relevancy. Since the 1960's when this questioning first began, NATO has continued its existence and even expanded its base of

operations. This is an alliance which binds the first and the second ranking economies of the world together in a one for all, all for one treaty. There is no other defence community and organization that fulfils that function. Whatever the possible scenarios for the future of global governance and the place of cooperative security arrangements within world order, NATO's alternative does not as yet exist. The same cannot be said for the EU foreign and security policy whose meaningful existence is strictly contingent upon its liaison to NATO. That said EU's civilian crisis management capabilities are form niche and the most important security contributions to the world. One would be safe to assume that NATO will undergo reforms and transformations, but these will fall short of what is necessary and instead will reflect what is politically and bureaucratically possible. But, it will stick around into the next world order although the currently faltering mission to stabilize Afghanistan, obviously in which NATO is just one player along others and particularly the UN, poses a further risk to how the Alliance is perceived among its constituent peoples.

The main natural resources supporting world order are hydrocarbons, mainly oil but increasingly natural gas; as well as uranium that is needed for nuclear energy. This is likely to continue for at least two more human generations. In the meantime, alternative energy resources will rapidly enter the field. The transition will not be abrupt but gradual. A new divide

will emerge between the states which lead and fall behind in investing in the development of future energy resources and generation means. It is now widely accepted that the next world order's energy and production base will have to be green (and blue). The future energy base will also be more technology intensive and distributed and utilized through more integrated and efficient networks. At any rate, as Jared Diamond explains in *Collapse* and Thomas Friedman in *Hot, Flat and Crowded*, the American model of development that is ecologically destructive is now implemented in China but it is not globally sustainable. The efforts to detract attention and focus from the impending global environmental catastrophes are not only counterfactual but also inexcusably immoral.

On the other hand, although the initial American experience with oil and the propelling effect it had on American takeoff tells otherwise, ultimately it is more essential to have access to energy resources and technologies than to own them. This is particularly true for countries which are vulnerable to foreign interventions and have feeble political structures. Oil is now the curse of a good deal of countries. Nuclear energy should also be expected to see a boost despite the potential negative implications for non proliferation. Even in the optimistic scenario of the world order's transformation without a major war, the turmoil will continue within and with regard to areas that will not be able to adjust to globalization. This also means that fierce

struggles will continue over natural resources including water. Areas that have been intentionally left outside contest, such as Antarctica, space, oceans and their beds are likely to face increasing competition.

Geopolitics is therefore back with a vengeance. As Robert Kaplan aptly describes: “rather than eliminating the relevance of geography, globalization is reinforcing it. Mass communications and economic integration are weakening many states, exposing a Hobbesian world of small, fractious regions. Within them, local, ethnic, and religious sources of identity are reasserting themselves, and because they are anchored to specific terrains, they are best explained by reference to geography. Like the faults that determine earthquakes, the political future will be defined by conflict and instability with a similar geographic logic. The upheaval spawned by the ongoing economic crisis is increasing the relevance of geography even further, by weakening social orders and other creations of humankind, leaving the natural frontiers of the globe as the only restraint.” At any rate the order of globalization is expanding inexorably towards the areas it has little touched. Globalization with its economic, political, social and institutional precepts must to expand. And, that expansion is not a bad thing. However the transition is not easy.



Remaining out of the system is the default position the inertia of which is hard to beat. However, the cost of staying out is far too heavier for the countries concerned and the world at large. The geopolitics of world order expansion will have significantly diverse effects on the countries involved. Some will successfully adapt and prosper, while several others will likely be squeezed under failing state structures, economic and social backwardness, and external interventions. Overall, as before, also in the future, staying out will be significantly more costly than accomplishing transfer towards the center. However, this geopolitics can also be tricky for the major powers. India and China are already competing in the Indian Ocean. Other races should be expected around the world. Historically, the process of pulling in China into the global economic market and the US-Japanese competition around 1917 produced deep shocks, even entry of the US into a World War.

In our day and age, four regions in particular will be subject to strong currents and potentially shocks of globalization. These are Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan; former Soviet Union's non-EU territories; former Ottoman Empire's Middle Eastern territories; Africa.

Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan are situated in between major powers of the future and straddle key strategic resources or geo-strategic junctures. They are also grappling with anti-

systemic movements that obstruct their change of tack towards the tight jacket of globalization and face significant violence potential. Pakistan is a nuclear weapon state, whereas Iran is progressing on that path. Although the dynamics in Afghanistan and Pakistan have come to show significant convergence, Iran is a separate issue in its own right. The future position of these three countries in any global or regional order will be the result of a major and trend setting struggle.

The countries that broke away from the Soviet Union were once part of a bloc that aspired to shape the world order in its own image. Since the demise of the Warsaw Pact and the Soviet Union those that were lucky to be the neighbors of the European Union were pulled into the Union and the tranquility of the globalized world order. This involved speedy enactment of reforms to make their governance more compatible with the rest of the Union. Europe acted decisively and rapidly to tie them in within both the EU and NATO, thus ensuring American guarantee over their place within the West, which Europe alone could not and would not venture. The small size of these countries also helped significantly in dissolving the *ancien regime* and adoption of a completely new set of political and economic fabric.

Those farther away from the EU and those which could not show the necessary resolve and sense of direction were not

that lucky. Russia as the center of the old regional order also could not carry through its own reforms and maintained a half in and half out presence on the margins of both the EU and China. The Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, Georgia and Armenia as well as all Central Asian Republics will be facing strong currents pulling them in all directions. Given the strong interests of Russia, Turkey, EU, US and China, including in terms of energy security, the future positioning of the countries of this basin stretching from Ukraine to Kazakhstan will be shaped by strong tremors.

The broader Middle East is mostly the parts of the former Ottoman Empire that have remained behind in adapting to a regional and world order. The region displays the scars of the fact that the Major Powers failed to agree on what regional order would best reflect their interests. The design failed miserably also thanks to the fact that the Turkish War of Independence and the ensuing Ataturk reforms disrupted the model where a subservient and much weakened regional foreman would maintain a pithy minimum order subject to the direction and manipulation of the stronger external powers. Lausanne Treaty of 1923 defeated this design mainly pushed by the earlier Treaty of Sevres. What Ankara proved then was that no viable regional order can be established that would not take Turkey into account. But, Turkey itself could not impose an order either. Oil complicated the efforts to establish a benign

order as did the failure to incorporate the reality of Israel into regional thinking.

Initially the League of Nations, in the wake of the failure of the Sevres design, struggled to regulate the competition of the World War I victors through mandates. In the wake of World War II, the countries of this region ran about without any coherent sense of direction behind different politico-economic models. They could not overcome the fractures among them. They developed a pattern of vacillation between authoritative regimes and opposition movements either detached from local realities or bereft of comprehensive and viable governance models.

The US primacy also could not translate into a substantive US control of regional dynamics and did not engender a transformation that would help the region embark on a journey towards adopting the precepts of globalization. In nearly a century since the collapse of Pax Ottomanica, no stable order could have been established to replace the Ottoman order. Instead, the region is mired in conflict, backwardness, authoritarianism, extremism, and external manipulation and intervention. The US efforts since 1990's to apply the example of Eastern Europe in this region intensified in the wake of September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks and produced ventures such as the invasion of Iraq and the Broader Middle East

initiatives, which are different in content and approach. In fact, the victory of Hamas in 2006 Palestinian elections has resulted in an upset for the US-led efforts. A new status has been created in Iraq the future of which is yet uncertain. And, Iran has been isolated as the only remaining point of resistance, except of course the resilient non state actors, and tightly put in a bind or potentially on a collision course. That said there is currently no lasting dynamic that would force liberalization and democratization of politics and economy and modernization of the social structures; except the example of Turkey. This region which has been resisting all change expects strong quakes in the near future.

Post-colonial Africa is almost entirely out of step with globalization. It is instead enmeshed all in but name within a deal that is but a leftover of their colonial past. However, the fact of the matter is that these are now independent countries with resources and the continent has new players including China and the US entering the field in addition to the lingering Europeans. The strongest naval power in the Indian Ocean and an emerging major power India should also be seen within this context. The competition over Africa will be more intense in comparison to the colonization experience of the last two centuries. Difficult times may indeed be ahead for the continent whose local progressive dynamics are scattered and as yet underdeveloped.

## V

### **BACK TO REMARRYING SCHOLARSHIP WITH POLICY**

Assessing how theory helps specific policy is a domain which the academia treats as voluntary. What does all of the above mean for a practitioner of international relations? Understanding the logic, direction, dynamics, protagonists, restraints, opportunities and perils of change, needless to say, are important on their own right. Setting priorities and assessing policy options could not, or rather should not, start before that exercise is first made in any detail.

In this regard, major theories all have a perspective but are ultimately of little help in their individuality. Realism appears to be most popular throughout the world but taken at face value it would only help freeze innovative thinking at the local level to mitigate the security dilemmas and the ultimately fragile nature of the international law and institutions. Institutional neoliberalism help bring in the policy options of multilateral organizations including local ones which can go a long way in preserving the interests and aggrandizing the voice of medium

and smaller sized countries. Yet, they fall short in accounting for the possible disruptive and destructive influences of neoliberal policies on bodies that are alien to such constructs. Constructivists help by highlighting the fact that interests and organizing principles can and do often change potentially opening up new vistas in overcoming some ardent regional conflicts (although that aspect is grossly under researched by the constructivists). But, they fail to take into account the fact that there are probably some primordial reflexes that cannot be reprogrammed but only contained or channeled including ethnic conflict when circumstances for a flare-up exist. Some theories are too narrow, some too vague, some completely misleading (sorry Mr. Huntington), some even outright morally challenged. The basket holds a colorful and rich fruit salad. The diversity of the basket is contingent on one's own position on the global map.

All theoretical paradigms are useful in their own way. They are also inadequate. Stephen Walt argues that academics need to make policy relevant suggestions. These suggestions are likely to have the same shortcomings as the theoretical underpinnings they are based on. That is not a dilemma peculiar to academics. Every policy maker also has a theoretical lens although pragmatism is the predominant mode for most. Then, theory and practice are bound by the same

problem of not being able to predict the future or design future-proof models.

Earlier in this essay I have argued that a common ground between scholarship and practice exists on three platforms, namely in shared baseline tasks of data collection and assessment; Policy Planning as an analysis and synthesis oriented bureaucratic platform; and think-tanks which aspire to influence policy through their policy recommendations.

I will therefore now turn to think tanks and policy planning from the viewpoint of facilitating synergy between scholarship and practice based on data assessment and policy advice.

#### **a. Think Tanks**

Think Tank is a broad and sweeping term. These are organizations, usually non-profit, which characteristically have significant research arms. Typically, they produce publications, organize lectures, hold conferences, provide experts to testify in parliamentary committees and give media interviews. In the Anglo-American model at least on paper they are not associated with any political party. This is to receive tax-exempt status in Canada and the US. In Germany all major political parties also have a foundation, basically a policy and advocacy think tank, attached to them. At any rate, in reality, think tanks



can be ideologically driven. As Sharon Orr writes, “Over time the boundary between objective policy evaluations, a traditional think tank activity, and policy advocacy have become blurred as think tanks have become increasingly involved in lobbying government.”<sup>61</sup> Think tanks do policy analysis and can be a fertile source of policy ideas. They also generate or popularize new ones. Sharon Orr divides think tanks into three general categories, two of which are “contract research” and “advocacy” oriented think tanks. Leaving aside the advocacy organizations, the clientele for the contract research oriented think tanks are governments and the objective and task oriented studies they produce may or may not be available to public. These organizations employ researchers with diverse backgrounds including varying academic qualifications.

The third type Orr identifies is closer to our topic. Thus the “Universities without students” as research-oriented organizations produce policy analyses that usually offer forward-looking policy recommendations. Their staff is composed mainly of academically trained scholars. The output includes books and articles in scholarly publications. Their research is academically rigorous and often long term rather than reactive to current events. Orr observes: “although of an academic bent, their work is distinct from that of most university research because the first priority is on policy-oriented work, rather than the theoretically oriented work typical of most

university researchers. Universities without students are also less likely to publish in the academic refereed journals preferred by university scholars. Their research also tends to include at least some prescriptive policy suggestions, unlike most university research.”<sup>62</sup>

Christopher DeMuth right before stepping down as President of the American Enterprise Institute (AEI) gave some interesting insights into the mind-set and objectives of think tanks in an op-ed he published in the Wall Street Journal. AEI in its foundation has made several key contributions to the policy world. The policy of “surge” in Iraq adopted by the Bush administration successfully in 2008 was based on Frederick Kagan’s idea; one of AEI’s founders, Raymond Moley, coined the term “New Deal” whereas the brain father of neoliberalism, Milton Friedman was also a member of this conservative think tank also home to neo-conservatism. Thus, DeMuth has argued that policy think tanks such as AEI have become important centers of applied scholarship and also “terribly influential” due to the new methods they have discovered for organizing intellectual activity. These methods were superior in many respects (by no means all) to those of traditional research universities. He reasoned that think tanks were "schools" in the old sense of the term, namely “groups of scholars who share a set of philosophical premises and take them as far as we can in empirical research, persuasive writing, and arguments among

ourselves and with those of other schools.” The organization model is also different from universities. The think-tank scholars are relieved of all administrative duties or privileges and concentrate solely on research and dissemination, the latter function also being promoted with alacrity. Think tank researches are top academics commissioned to study front-burner policy issues and try to influence policy. DeMuth argues that it takes at least a dozen years for an idea produced at a think tank to find influence in academic and professional circles. But, “think tanks serve as storehouses of ideas, patiently developed and nurtured, waiting for the crisis when practical men are desperately seeking a new approach, or for the inspired leader who sees the possibilities of action before the crisis arrives.”<sup>63</sup> AEI is of course by no means alone in either the US, or the global think tank hall of fame. The Center for American Progress is in the Obama administration what AEI was in the Bush administration. The Council on Foreign Relations, the Brookings Institution from the US, Chatham House, the International Institute for Strategic Studies in the UK, International Crisis Group with offices in several countries are iconic globally recognized powerhouses among several others. The think tank community is sprawling not just where it all began, the US, but all over the world from Turkey to China. Their track record in influencing policy is mixed and not comparable to the US where think tanks can serve also as government in waiting.

This has to do with funding as much as anything else. The best funded non-US think tanks include Overseas Development Institute in London with \$25.9 million, German Institute for International and Security Affairs in Berlin with \$16.4 million; IISS and Chatham House in London with \$15.3 and \$12.4 million, respectively. The top US think tanks operate with phenomenal budgets. The annual budget of the Rand Corporation is a whopping \$251 million. Brookings Institution works on a \$60,7; Heritage \$48,4; CFR \$38,3; Wilson Center for International Scholars \$34,5; Hoover Institute \$34,1; and the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace \$22 million dollars.<sup>64</sup> Think tanks form one link between scholarship and practice. They are increasingly a global network and not only US and Eurocentric although as in academic scholarship also in this area the standing of non-Western ones are routinely underrated or even totally ignored.

There are 5,465 think tanks worldwide, 1872 of which are based in North America. In fact only 350 think tanks are reportedly based in Washington, more than any country let alone city. Europe houses 1,722, entire Asia 653; Latin America and the Caribbean 538; and Oceania 38. Sub-Saharan Africa boasts a surprisingly high number of 424 think tanks whereas a relatively low figure of 218 exists in the Middle East and North Africa. The room for global growth however does exist as

almost all think tanks were created after 1951, the real take off occurred after 1980. And, I don't know where the Foreign Policy magazine puts the Turkish think tanks, some of which are increasingly influential in Turkey and but also abroad.<sup>65</sup>

In terms of the linkage between scholarship and practice, think tanks and IR scholarship interact in at least two ways. One is through educational backgrounds. Typical expert in a research think tank has an advanced academic degree and probably spent time teaching at college level, some even continuing both university and think tank careers simultaneously or consecutively. The IR scholarship that may be more ideologically "pure" in the college research (although that can well be disputed) is thus applied in the think tank context thanks to the shared academic base. It is less likely to have this sort of a revolving door, even in the US, let alone a simultaneous career track, for a practitioner in international relations, whether diplomat or political decision maker.

Secondly, both research think tanks and the academia are publicly vocal institutions which publish extensively and give interviews. "Publish or perish" is a common motto for both. While methodologies are completely different, their publications are monitored to a certain degree by each other. Actually, if a think tank researcher does not follow what leading academic scholars in a particular field have been arguing then probably

that would stand to his\her disadvantage sooner or later. I would argue that the same should apply to an academic regarding the research published by think tanks. This mutual interest would assure crosspollination although method and degree of immediate relevancy would continue to set the two apart. Think tanks are one common ground between academia and practice. However, practical focus and recommendations by themselves do not assure that the decision makers and their policy entourage take them on board or even pay serious attention to them. The problem, and I disagree with Nye and to a degree Walt in that regard, is not always that the academic scholarship produces policy irrelevant work, but it is rather that policy world has a tendency to be inward looking and rather overwhelmed with daily routines and demands. In that regard, think tanks are not that much less vulnerable than academia in getting the attention of the doers.

#### **b. Policy Planning**

Another platform that can reconcile scholarship and practice is the Policy Planning directorates found in the Foreign Ministries of numerous countries. The Policy Planning unit is essentially an analysis oriented bureaucratic platform. The website of the Chinese Foreign Ministry states that “The Department of Policy Planning reports on issues of overall and strategic importance concerning the global situation and in international relations. It develops diplomatic policies and programs and is involved in

the drafting of annual foreign assistance plan. It also drafts important documents and speeches, makes foreign policy pronouncements, and coordinates research and analytical work. It oversees the compilation of China's diplomatic history.” The German counterpart “deals with short and medium-term planning for issues that are relevant to foreign policy, and prepares topics that are of interest for the Minister's work. To this end, it works with academic and scientific institutes, foundations, political consultancy institutions and the policy planning staffs of other countries. It also hires experts from academia and business for specific projects, as required. The Policy Planning Staff helps coordinate research and development activities within the Federal Government. The Research Coordinator represents the Federal Foreign Office in the competent interministerial committee.”<sup>66</sup> The Finnish one “contributes to the formulation of foreign policy positions and guidelines and coordinates analyses and research.”<sup>67</sup>

Countries as large as the US or much smaller like Bhutan have such a unit in their foreign affairs ministry with more or less similar job definitions and purpose. Bhutan's Policy Planning Division for instance, like its cousins around the world “work on crosscutting issues involving political, security, human rights and humanitarian affairs; look at matters that do not fall under the purview of other departments in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; coordinate matters relating to international media and

academia.” Overall, in its ideal form that hardly exists, the Policy Planning unit is expected to function as an in-house think tank which has the possibility of directly impacting policy from within rather than from without. However, impacting policy is easier said than done.

The Policy Planning unit is essentially an American creation. It was founded by the legendary George F. Kennan upon the order of Secretary of State George Marshall in 1947. Thus, Kennan who was working in April 1947 on the “sudden and urgent problem of aid to Greece and Turkey, was instructed to set up a planning staff without delay. The reason for urgency was the desperate situation in Western Europe. Secretary Marshall emphasized that if the United States didn't take the initiative to improve matters, others would. Kennan was ordered to assemble a staff, and to make recommendations within ten days or two weeks on U.S. actions regarding Europe. The only advice the general gave him was to ‘avoid trivia.’”<sup>68</sup> Currently, the Policy Planning Staff defines its mission as broad analytical studies of regional and functional issues, identifying gaps in policy, and initiating policy planning and formulation to fill these gaps as well as institutionalized "second opinion" on policy matters - providing recommendations and alternative courses of action to the Secretary of State; undertaking special projects; policy coordination; policy articulation including speech writing; liaison with nongovernmental organizations, the academic



community, think tanks, and others; planning talks with counterparts in other countries; and dissent to bring constructive, dissenting or alternative views on substantive foreign policy issues to the Secretary of State and Senior Department Officials.

The American policy planners have started by helping put together the Marshall Aid and then played key roles in putting together Cold War strategy, NATO, the Korean War strategy, and the response to the 1956 Suez Crisis, to name a few brightest achievements.<sup>69</sup> They had also signed on to several initiatives that did not take off including the so-called Community of Democracies and probably scores of others which no one remembers.

US policy planning directors also assumed visible operational roles, including Dennis Ross' role in the Middle East Peace Process and Mitchell Reiss' role in the Northern Ireland Peace Process.

The fact of the matter is that, aside from these operational roles where the policy planner becomes the practitioner, it is hard for the analysis and planning to impact policy. As Daniel Drezner argued Policy Planning units face a challenging task of “balancing the inherent tension between strategic planning and

operational authority.”<sup>70</sup> Even Kennan himself wrote when he decided to resign in 1949: “It is time I recognized that my Policy Planning Staff, started nearly three years ago, has simply been a failure, like all previous attempts to bring order and foresight into the designing of foreign policy by special institutional arrangements.”<sup>71</sup>

As part of the bureaucracy any Policy Planning unit is subject to tension with expert operational units and the whims of short term crisis management. Kennan wrote about the impossibility of having the planning carried out outside the line of command: “the operating units—the geographical and functional units—will not take interference from any unit outside the line of command.”<sup>72</sup> The essential requirement to exercise genuine influence is to have the ear of the Minister, assuming of course that the Minister has the ear of the Prime Minister\President. Although Kennan’s association with Secretary Marshal is considered exemplary, perhaps an even tighter relationship existed between Henry Kissinger and his Policy Planning Director Winston Lord, who followed Kissinger from the National Security Council to the State Department. However, his case demonstrated as documented by Daniel Madar that “For planners concerned with being effective, usefulness defines not so much what may be explored, but what is practical to present.” The Minister finds the work of the Policy Planners useful because it reflects the Minister’s criteria of relevance.

This circumscribes the independent thinking of the very unit that is, theoretically, tasked to do just that in support of better policy. Yet, “If, on the other hand, they are not involved at the top, they will have substantive independence, but no effectiveness.”<sup>73</sup>

These internal problems are likely to be universal. However, they are not the only challenges of policy planning. The fact of the matter is that policy planning concerns prognostication of and intervention in events that did not yet occur. The past and present do not necessarily indicate the future. In this sense, to borrow Steven Bernstein and his colleagues’ catchy formulation, “God really gave physics the easier question”. This is fundamentally impossible, yet necessary to try. Planning needs to occur if only to narrow down options, prepare the minds for the range of possibilities in the spirit of US President Eisenhower’s famous motto: Plans are nothing, planning is everything. As Bloomfield rightly asserts: “Large and small powers alike need new mental and conceptual tools for their survival in a world essentially beyond their control.”<sup>74</sup>

What the academic community and theory has to offer to policy planning is however subject to elaboration. The attack on the academic work in this regard is severe: “Much theoretical and methodological work in the social sciences is unfortunately irrelevant to the needs of real-world planning, either because it is not applicable, or is still in the theory-building stage, or

because some of it is excessively primitive and even shoddy.”<sup>75</sup> Others have asserted that policy planning is a different kind of intellectual work. After all, it is “directed at that which has not yet happened, which means that the criteria on which we base our discussions of our contributions to it cannot model itself effortlessly on the scientific practices we follow in our scholarly work.”<sup>76</sup> But, the historical knowledge and theoretical insights of the academics should hold some value. The task then, the argument goes, is to present these contributions in forms that are accessible and accepted as policy-relevant. The academic profession is cut off from the current policy debates because essentially: “Scholars in international relations tend to privilege arguments that reach back into the past and parse out one or two causal variables that are then posited to be the major driving forces of past and future outcomes.”<sup>77</sup> Therefore, a method that is more appropriate than deductive-nomothetic theory is needed by the IR scholarship in order to be relevant.

This may take the form of hypotheses of how the future may unfold based on a chain of logic that connects drivers to outcomes, otherwise known as “scenarios”. Steven Bernstein et.al. make a strong point on the point that “scenario-based forward thinking is a promising method for tracking the policies of actors and the evolution of the international system.”<sup>78</sup> Thus, argue Neuman and Overland, “Scenario planning may be a heuristic skill that may come in handy in this regard. Building

and disseminating scenarios for the future is not traditional scholarly work. If one wants to have an impact on running policy, however, it may nonetheless be work for scholars.”<sup>79</sup>

Scenario building has in fact long been used in business. Shell is known to be working with scenarios since the 1960’s. It is also spreading to government as the US National Intelligence Council’s Global Trends 2025 report shows. Horizon scanning and scenario building are becoming legitimate instruments for policy planning, which almost universally is “notoriously laggard in using or applying social science research tools, even the potentially valuable ones.”<sup>80</sup> I would argue that this will help partially but obviously not entirely mitigate some of the dilemmas of policy planning as a common platform for science and practice.

The academic work will be essentially different from both the think tank and the policy planning activities. This point is uncontested at least in my eyes. That said, cross fertilization and mutual reckoning can be increased by enhancing common platforms, recognizing shared tasks and simply mutually paying due notice.

## VI

### CONCLUSION

In this essay I have proposed a few theses to conceptualize world orders and change. Accordingly, I have argued that:

- Any international order reflects the global political and economic architecture which in turn is a codification permitted by a given period's circumstances.
- As such, a world order is not a novel creation but an arrangement that is naturally selected from among the already extant options.
- The next order will be carrying the genes of its predecessor complete with several flaws that pass from generation to generation.
- A world order is shaped by the enduring interests and the mental image of the leading actors.

- Every ensuing order rectifies some of the flaws of the previous generation of orders.
- Any world order is also composed of a number of concurrent economic, political, military; global and regional orders.
- The world orders to date were never truly universal.
- Yet, the trend is towards more and more expansive orders both in terms of geographical reach and in terms of the multiple layers of everyday life that the world order arrangements regulate.
- That said the world order experience is relative to how close within or without one is located to the center of the order.
- And, last but not least, the rises and falls of world orders do not happen in a deterministic fashion. Decisions, cultures and personalities do matter.

The current world order may just have been forged in a single continuum, probably since the Enlightenment in Europe, but more visibly since 19th century, with major turning points, moments of acceleration and deceleration, and a certain handover of lead roles. This single continuum included

moments of systemic shifts. But, those shifts have pushed forward ideas, structures and powers that were already around waiting for their opportune moment.

The current economic crisis is unlikely to force a wholesale world order change. It may even reinforce the position of the central players simultaneously while bringing in more powers from the periphery to the center of globalization. Several regions will experience significant volatility. However, as the saying goes, the news of the demise of American dominance is grossly exaggerated. Similarly, neoliberal economic model is neither triumphant nor dead. But it is significantly challenged. The axis of contention will be between state capitalism and illiberal democracy on the one side versus free market economy -as mitigated by renewed vigor of social state- and pluralistic democracy on the other. Both sides in the above equation would be contained within the system and will stand separate from those failing state structures that will not be able to adjust and take part in globalization. In terms of institutions, no major institutional structure is likely to disappear in this crisis. The current economic shock is great enough to stimulate the growth of a new order; but not strong enough to obliterate the old/existing one.

However, this should not obscure the fact that a new set of arrangements which future generations will call world order are



already in development and incubation. Until the old is replaced by the new, there is a coming positive redundancy of world orders. It is realistic to expect the current system to linger while the elements of the new order take stronger hold. The task then is to make sure that the two do not work counter purposes or their generational tensions do not culminate in a seismic discontinuity bringing a revolutionary new order or disorder to life.

The academia and practitioners will be well advised to sharpen the tools of working together. Scenario based studies, common platforms such as the policy planning units and think tanks as well as minimal respect for each other would go a long way in helping both the academia and the policy wonks. After all, the founders of social sciences wanted to make the world a better place through the illumination of scholarship. To them theory could not be separate from policy. Theory's shortcomings in addressing the problems of actual politics would be disappointing after decades of IR scholarship. Rejection of the link, on the other hand, would have seemed unacceptable to them, as it seems inauspicious to this author.

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