



Modern World History as the Rise of the Rich: A New Paradigm

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Abstract

This article argues that the old paradigm for modern world history given us by Hegel of the Rise of the West has been rendered less useful by the development of new knowledge over the past half century and as a result there is today a good deal of dissatisfaction among professional historians about its retention. What other options are there? This article suggests we try out the idea of the rise of the rich.

For the modern period of world history, many would agree that the traditional paradigm of the 'Rise of the West' is too Eurocentric, that the field needs a new paradigm. Many today find it frustrating to have to choose either to dwell on the power of the Western elite peripheralizing the rest of the world and its culture or drop the question of power and discuss different human societies as if imperialism, notably that of one's own country, could be overlooked.

That said, it is equally clear that academic fields do not change quickly. This is both their strength and their weakness. In general, it seems safe to suggest that academic fields tend to be concerned with handing down their traditions. If there will be a paradigm shift some day in history, it will no doubt therefore come as a self-conscious rejection of at least a part of this heritage. Getting to such a point will require a good deal of self-conscious reassessment of that heritage.

History, as we know it today, arose as a professional field in Berlin in the late nineteenth century at the hands of Leopold Von Ranke. Von Ranke's worldview came from Hegel. Hegel had codified the familiar 'Rise of the West' model and this is what Von Ranke institutionalized.

The rise of the field of world history as a sub-specialty in history in the 1980s seemed from the outset to imply a certain challenge. Unlike the Annales School, here was a field that would potentially be going over the whole ground claimed by the Hegelian model but one which was not content to simply repeat what had gone before and refurbish the Western Civ course. It would deal with elites and states as it would deal with commerce and ecology.

From the onset in the 1980s, world history journal articles and conference papers made clear that the Hegelian model was not the preferred one. While

Hegel was not always identified by name, there is no mistaking the intent of those working to bring Africa and Asia into world history. In those years, I had the impression that Hegel's exclusion of Africa to a degree was being overcome. By the 1990s, much cutting-edge work was appearing on early modern China. It was forcing a re-thinking of aspects of Hegel's concept of the Orient as others earlier had forced a re-thinking of Hegel's concept of 'outside of history'. Did the Orient if there is such a thing really have a 'golden age' and then 'decline' to make room for the 'Rise of the West'? The Hegelian model, as a result of these challenges, is to my reading, very much under scrutiny. That said, the challenge still has a way to go. It has yet to contest the proposition that the West alone is making history following the Industrial Revolution. Some of course would disagree here that this is even necessary. They appear to be satisfied with the challenges already made. If the center of power keeps shifting throughout history does the importance of Europe for a couple of centuries not warrant its share of attention at that time? To give Europe the attention it deserves is not Eurocentric, it is simply an acknowledgement of Euro-dominance at a certain point in time. In fact, couldn't one now look at Asia as the rising power and the West as already in decline? All this may of course be true on the level of description but the argument on the level of theory is that it won't suffice as a critique of Eurocentrism. So long as historians in China and the US find the new class in China to be 'good learners' and to be becoming a 'Westernized' middle class, Eurocentrism carries on. The West retains its unique spiritual role of modernizer; China – if all this comes to pass – simply joins the West and de-orientalizes.¹

What world history, and one might add even some other fields seem to share at this point is some level of dissatisfaction with at least elements of the three-part division of the world, the West, the Orient, and the 'left out of History' (Africa and subalterns). The problem, especially for world historians, is one of finding alternatives. This problem remains.²

More than other developments, the growth of social history is what dramatizes for many historians, why the Hegelian tradition is passé. Hegel dwelt on elites, golden ages, declines, and then the rise of the West. This does not work for social history. One cannot continue to attribute everything that happens in the world to the actions of Western elites or to the reaction to their actions on the part of others. What about society? At the same time, one cannot fetishize society or trade and neglect the subject of power as the *Annales* School and so many others have done.³ And, one certainly cannot reform the Hegelian model by accepting and then by blaming the West for all the ills of the modern world as the Marxists tend to. Some more balanced solution will emerge; after all social history hasn't been used by world history that much; it still needs to be developed some more.

This article takes up the challenge of going beyond the Rise of the West, doing so as the Rise of the Rich as a fundamental metaphor to orient the study of modern world history. Why not, I thought, try to show that most

of the power lies in the hegemonic circles worldwide and not just in the West, and then try to show that each set of 'hegamons' is constrained by counter hegemonic struggles in his or her own country. Modern world history is not just made up of nation states on the core or the periphery of the world market, as political economy has been showing up to now, it contains as well an evolving and increasingly cohesive amalgam of dominant groups – 'hegamons', groups functioning within and across this divide, doing so simultaneously according to both national and class interests and as the article will also try to show – according to the logic of their hegemony.

The choice of the metaphor the rich drawn here out of the lexicon of hegemony analysis is an attempt to use class analysis but to go beyond it by embedding it in not only social history but in the analysis of transnationalism.⁴ Relying on the concept of class as political economy commonly uses it, would lead to problems. There class is typically fairly one-dimensional and not uncommonly rather Eurocentric. History scarcely has a dialectic.⁵ The rich as a metaphor implies as well a more complex set of linkages between national and global history than does the metaphor of the Rise of the West, the latter after all with its implications of historical agency limited largely to Europe. At the same time, the rise of the rich preserves the dialectic of class struggle, something generally lost with the Rise of the West model when it is applied to world history.

How then did the rich rise? How did hegemonic elements in modern world history come to amalgamate as they have? Since no systematic work exists on this, at least to my knowledge, I offer as a hypothesis from ordinary historical knowledge that there was a progression from more bilateral to more multilateral relations as history progressed from the sixteenth century to the present. It is these relations which come to replace Hegel's modern 'West' as the dominant agent of history. The rise of a multilateralist world order in effect means the continuing development of complex political and economic inter-relations among states and dominant elements, a development essentially beyond the will of any one particular nation, a development less rooted in one particular region than in the self-interest of this group as a whole. Here the usage of terms will vary a bit from their usage in International Relations where multilateralism and bilateralism are looked at as normative terms more than they are descriptions of actual historical development. Here it is the reverse.

The term rise of the rich is also here to distinguish by extension modern world history from what came earlier. Specifically, their use is a way of distinguishing the increasingly aggressive behavior of dominant elements of the Euro-Afro-Asian market in the age of the rising nation state from that of the tributary stage of history, a stage with a greater propensity toward equilibrium than one tends to find later.

The article takes up the rise of the rich by presenting a sketch of the coming of the modern world from the sixteenth century to the present. It begins as a narrative with various asides, commenting on two major periods

of modern history, 1550–1850, and 1850 to the present. The period 1550–1850 was marked by a steady growth of bilateral relations all over the world; the period 1850 to the present saw a further evolution, one I term, multilateralism. From the tableau of these rather familiar events one can begin to sketch out a history of the world as the rise of the rich. The details of how the various hegemonies interrelate given their structural constraints and how counter-hegemonic movements threaten the rich is also briefly introduced.

Modern World History as the Rise of the Rich

A thousand years ago the world was in the midst of the tributary mode of production.⁶ Today we live in the age of the capitalist mode of production. Our age was born five hundred years ago. It matured about a century and a half ago with the emergence of the capitalist nation state. Eighty odd years ago our capitalist age began to go into crisis in the Russian Revolution. It survived that crisis and holds on until today, doing so thanks to the amazing resilience of the world's environment up to now, to the disorganization of oppositional movements, and to the evolving solidarity among the world's dominant classes, a solidarity shielding them thus far from real social, political, and ecological challenges. By another century, it will be necessary for them to confront these problems; many around the world predict we should then see socialism.

Several scholars inspired by this panorama set out to write histories of the world from a social history perspective.⁷ World history, however, as a genre was resistant; the Rise of the West model had too much legitimacy, social history as a result was made to adjust to it and not the reverse. This is unfortunate. World history without social history winds up overrating the power of any and all people in 'Western' countries and underrating the power of ruling classes of the Third World, underrating as well the importance of the dynamics these latter are caught up in.

Unfortunate perhaps, but this is what paradigms conflicts are all about. There is a challenge. The past achievements of the established paradigm is sometimes taken for granted. The challenge comes on the level of claims over whether historians will remain persuaded that the established paradigm can keep on accommodating new knowledge better than some other one can or whether it would be wiser to shift to something else, accepting a period of imperfection and lack of polish during the transition. In the present case, the discussion arises within a context in which social historical analysis is increasingly taken as the orthodoxy on the level of detail but not found to be useful in more synthetic work in modern world history. Herein lies the tension and perhaps the possibility to challenge. Social historians have excelled in demonstrating the historical agency of a wide segment of human society marginalized in earlier scholarship. And, while their work is clearly familiar to researchers and teachers in world history,

this makes no difference, here to repeat, on the level of the broader statement. On that level and despite all the variations the field has produced, one is still left to infer that since the Industrial Revolution only the Western male elite matters. Whatever the rest of the world does is understood to be a reaction to what this Western male elite is doing. At most, the human majority comes to constitute a set of demographic facts, a commercial sector, a certain fertility level, a particular technology, a certain disease profile or the crowd in the street. Yet, I don't believe this is the intention of researchers in the field – otherwise they would be in anthropology – but this is the outcome of using the Rise of the West.

*1550 as a Watershed in World History*⁸

The year 1550 is a watershed in world history and not just for the 'Rise of the Rich' interpretation of it but also for the 'Rise of the West' one as well. It is thus a part of the very traditional Western approach to characterizing the onset of modern history; the argument for its still useful potentialities, naturally, is not the traditional one. It comes from a social historical analysis of the birth of the capitalist mode of production, an event looked at simultaneously as societal, national, and global, an analysis somewhat at variance with familiar versions of the historiography *à la* liberalism and Marxism.⁹ Five main dimensions to such an analysis stand out validating the continual use of it as a watershed. These five dimensions, to which we now turn are (a) the rise world-wide of the strategy of accumulation on the part of ruling classes in many parts of the world as a part of the quest for power, (b) the strategy on the part of many ruling classes to that end of restructuring society to allow for participation in a Europe-centered market, (c) the resulting power that the capitalist mode of production as it evolved gave England, and, as the market evolved, (d) the dimension of 'strategic' consumerism domestically as well as internationally, and (e) highlights of the transformation, the coalescence of these various dimensions producing the modern world.

THE STRATEGY OF ACCUMULATION

The dimension termed here – the strategy of accumulation – is a phenomenon found among an increasing number of the dominant elements of the world from the sixteenth century onward. It has in this context a fairly particular meaning, one distinguishing it from the longer history of accumulation in world history, one which we also associate with trade, landownership, use of money, and of the wage from antiquity onward.

Modern capitalism – and modern history – witnessed a new single-minded drive among the dominant elements to accumulate surplus, this surplus now a tool related to acquiring power more than what it had been before when it was more a way to gain luxuries. This drive sometimes manifest in a

recourse to the proletarianization of labor, sometimes in the use of new technology, sometimes in colonial adventures and in looting, promised more rewards, but it carried with it more risks and expenses. Risks and costs were a part of every undertaking. Perhaps as a result an increasing expenditure on the part of England and of other wealthy countries was given over to the stabilization of the position of the rest of all the world's rulers. This stabilization, which was not the least bit cheap, was needed simply to keep the system going given such practices as looting. The costs of bolstering a ruler be it with weapons, bribes, development loans, or famine relief, however, all added up. So it is not surprising that from the outset of modern history, out of necessity, there had come into being collaborative arrangements needed to efficiently reap the new rewards. And, one can detect even in this early collaboration some hazy notion of the bilateralism and multilateralism to come. And, however infuriating it must have been for many Third World rulers their gain was clearly – starting to come at their own people's expense.¹⁰

The capitalist mode of production thereafter seemed to limp forward for several centuries as part plunder and as part proletarianized labor. Even in the case of England as late as the eighteenth century, as E. P. Thompson has shown in his classic text, proletarianization was not fully in place among the lower classes.¹¹ Thus while there is no doubt that proletarianization was crucial for capitalism eventually, there is a question of how much, when, and where this was the case. At least until the English Industrial Revolution of the eighteenth century, proletarianization, it seems, was not as obvious a marker of capitalism even in England as some have supposed it was. In other parts of the world, even the domestic market awaited the formation of the nation state in the nineteenth century or in some cases the twentieth century.

THE DIMENSION OF SOCIAL RESTRUCTURING MADE BY DOMINANT ELEMENTS IN DIFFERENT HEGEMONIES IN ORDER TO JOIN THE WORLD MARKET

From the sixteenth century onward, here to continue from the previous point many ruling classes found some benefit in participating in a Europe-centered world market and they made efforts to do so. Of course the process by which this occurred stretched over a long period of time and varied from country to country.¹² Confronted by the arrival of European merchants in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Japanese and Chinese governments tended to close their markets to Europeans, while Gujaratis and Goans did not. Perhaps this could be explained by some rational short-term choice made fairly freely. Whatever the case, many other choices – some quite a bit less free – followed. And, while one cannot infer too much at this point about various national histories from such facts alone, the cumulative effect of a growing world market especially as regards late joiners – and as regards mass populations – needs no further comment. The earlier joiners had created such a power bloc, the rest with few exceptions

had no choice but to eventually join conforming to what was needed by the market at the time the joining occurred, however demeaning.

The choice on the part of rulers to join the market in many cases required restructuring. Not atypically, rulers had to create certain designated commercial groups whose behavior could not be generalized to the population at large. For the Ottomans, for example, this came to mean Greeks, Armenians, and Jews, in India, it came to mean Parsis, in South East Asia Chinese in Africa 'Arabs'. Once the designated commercial groups were in place then the artisans and urban dwellers of any of these countries could be sacrificed if the ruling class ties to the market so dictated. Other restructuring would follow. Rulers who wanted to import European goods and to export local ones had to create a timeless 'agrarian ideal' model type ideology suitable for their changing situation. Some social restructuring would be required as well. What would the ideal agrarian grouping be? Presumably, it would be one too small to allow for rebellion but one large enough to hold peoples' loyalty. The Russian Mir as ideology and reality comes to mind here as a successful example of one such.¹³ But what happens if one cannot create commercial minorities because wide segments were inevitably going to be close to the commercial sector? This would be a problem. In this case, one needed to invent tribal ideologies to create ironclad boundaries between the commercial sector, e.g. the slave trade, and the rest.¹⁴ Thus in some context there arose 'slaving' tribes.

THE POWER THE CAPITALIST MODE OF PRODUCTION GAVE ENGLAND

A series of changes occurred in sixteenth-century England, which made it the initial center of the capitalist mode of production. This gave the English ruling classes great power, power which they used to overtake close rivals on the continent and gradually to forge alliances worldwide, power which boded poorly for the English people.

Historical questions remain about what it was about English history that all this should have happened. A textbook will point to the fact that for the first time a state undertook to back its merchant sector with its navy and to allow for a rapid capitalist development emanating out from its political capital, in this case the city of London. While antiquity saw its share of mercantile city-states, and most countries had commercial sectors, their merchants rarely had the power that the English merchants did as a result of this state policy.

Yet, while these doubtless were conspicuous features and therefore textbook authors are not wrong to include them, the issue remains why did modern capitalism claim England as its home to the degree that it did, why didn't other states adopt similar practices and achieve similar outcomes?¹⁵ This remains an unresolved issue in scholarship for some time now. In recent years, the most illuminating observations on why England have been those offered by Samir Amin, James Blaut, and Robert Brenner.¹⁶ Amin, a political

economist, argued that Europe with its military style of feudalism was far less stable than the typical tributary states of the old Eurasian trade route. Highly armed, often at war, often as a result driving peasants off the land forcing them to flee as proletarians to the so-called 'free cities', European lords after AD 1000 gradually brought down feudalism, presumably doing so inadvertently. The Europe that they created in the process was highly proficient in the military arts and in conquest and more proletarianized than any other region of the world. Amin's argument fits to a degree with Brenner's argument of the uniqueness of English feudalism in relation to that of Continental Europe. Not all feudalisms were destined to easily make the transition to capitalism. This was the case in Europe and beyond Europe as well. For example, Japan and Ethiopia were also feudal but they were not so unstable as were England, Holland, and France, and did not make the transition to capitalism in this period.¹⁷ What Brenner ultimately is claiming is that English feudalism by way of contrast to the rest broke down the most rapidly giving way to market relations the most completely and that this was what was decisive. While this seems to have been the case, still one wonders why? Was it simply the random outcome of internecine wars? Why then the weakness of proletarianization as late as the eighteenth century? The geographer James Blaut took the 'uniqueness of England' argument in another direction suggesting that it was Britain's position in the North Atlantic that allowed it to best plunder the New World and thereafter to buy its way into the existing world market more than any other outsider from Europe possibly could. If so, why not hypothesize as well that wealth in the hands of the English upper classes in this period not only did that but also funded the costs of creating an English proletariat? Given the long history of failed transitions to capitalism this is a not uninteresting thought. Here was a country with an assured access to surplus and it succeeded in the transition where others less well endowed took much longer to do so.

THE DIMENSION OF STRATEGIC CONSUMERISM IN THE RISE OF CAPITALISM

Along with the market as a means of accumulation, along with the issue of how feudalism broke down in England and how and when proletarianization spread, and along with the restructuring of societies to allow for the market, the rise of modern capitalism rested on the development of a consumerist strategy on the part of the ruling classes. Without such a development, there would have been no wider market for the early capitalist to sell to and to expand into.¹⁸

Adam Smith, the famous eighteenth-century economist, was an early observer of the rise of this strategic consumerism. He detected an apparently symbiotic relation among rulers – some functioning more as producer of goods, some more as producer of markets for those goods. Smith doubtless saw the politics but thought the market was an expression of an iron law of marginal utility, a law that the rational ruler was bound to obey. Whatever

merits this may have had, it obscures the point that beneath the flow of goods all participants were concerned with statecraft, consumerism serving as a shared means to that end. Adam Smith, the economist Albert Hirschman noted, was a true believer that commerce civilized and moralized people to the point they became consumers.¹⁹

Consumerism, as I have also been trying to suggest, involves then making careful even somewhat political choices. Among such choices, rulers have to decide what was to be consumed and where it was to be procured.²⁰ By the eighteenth century, more and more ruling classes from around the world found it in their interest to buy new-style goods made in Western Europe as a part of their foreign policy. This meant in point of historical detail that more and more ruling classes chose to take the raw goods, which they had previously turned over to local artisans to generate local products, which they (the rulers) would then buy, and to sell these raw goods to Europe instead and then to buy finished goods from Europe doing so presumably more for political as opposed to purely economic reasons. European goods might be less expensive or more expensive as the case might be but the important point was that their purchase helped secure an alliance. And, this was done in full knowledge that abandoning the local artisanate meant beggaring it. In such moments, one sees how statecraft and global class loyalties intertwine and how by their pursuit a ruling class could bring about what one might otherwise call underdevelopment. Thus, for example, in eighteenth-century Egypt, clothes, which the Beys had previously bought locally, were now sometimes bought from Europe. Looked at from the vantage point of world history, the Egyptian case being generalized, the consequences of the rise of this modern capitalism was one thing for the dominant classes and quite another for society at large. Put another way, underdevelopment is not simply the outcome of the class war as it is of the class war in the context of the hierarchy of the world market.²¹ In countries such as Egypt, i.e. those not well placed in terms of international economic competition, the rise of modern capitalism brought not just rural misery, but de-industrialization, in effect an economic crisis for the urban masses as well. A number of African countries represent an even more extreme case of disruption than that of the Egypt. Following the rise of the slave trade, parts of Africa suffered depopulation.²² We know as well that all manner of movements in the world arose in opposition to these developments. Ought one to look at them as the antecedents of today's anti-globalist movements?

Whatever the case, everywhere, the new consumer strategies worked to solidify the relations of dominant classes separating them from the dominated national communities. And, whether the ruling classes were more capitalist or more feudal they gained in wealth through their collaboration with each other on this basis. Each hundred years that went by, the ruling classes appear richer and more aware of each other and more able as a result to impose the discipline of market relations on a greater part of the globe, whether in Western Europe or Eastern Europe or wherever.

Thus, we find that between 1550–1850 communications among rulers seemed to be bringing about a somewhat unified world ruling class, at least from the perspective of poor people.²³ From their perspective this meant that as modern history progressed, there was no longer a place for poor people to which to flee and to be left alone. Inter-elite communication and cooperation among rulers made this the case. What was emerging was a dual reality of a world of nation states and of a world in which a class or class-oriented group was developing solidarity on a world scale somewhat independently of these nation states.

THE RISE OF THE RICH: HIGHLIGHTS OF THE TRANSFORMATION

The evidence one might present in a brief essay cannot do justice to this subject given its size and complexity and given also how under-researched it is. What is attempted in the next few pages is a sketch of some of the highlights. Perhaps, for the purposes of a sketch, the rise of international law can be used as a kind of shorthand to characterize what was taking place providing it is understood that the subject of communications or dealings is actually much broader than simply that encoded in law.

By the early seventeenth century, international law was clarifying in some detail the rights of kings and nobles.²⁴ Such law was based on many understandings, and these in turn implied a great deal of serious communication among dominant elements over wide areas. Some of this communication doubtless dealt not just with the letter of the law but with such matters as how the law was to be upheld, upholding the law involving a great deal of collective action both active and passive. Historians, one could note, have not always made this matter very clear. Frequently what they present simply allows one to see the stronger party engaged in various acts, which often appear as a result rather unilateral. But, as is often noted as well, rarely do third parties take issue with these acts. Should this be interpreted then as truly unilateralist? Or is there something more? One suspects that there must have frequently been something more, that one might safely assume that most action on a global scale by one country or another was action which could be considered to imply prior delegation and that as a result, a great deal of what historians have tended to term ‘great power behavior’ following the ‘Rise of the West’ model presumably could also be looked at as pre-arranged behavior emerging out of a more multilateral context.

Historians are not to be criticized here; this point has been obscured by how communication was taking place and how such arrangements would have been possible. Often such communication must have involved the use of merchants or commercial minorities or other intermediaries, such as Masons or missionaries, i.e. groups or individuals functioning outside of official channels. Probably, much of this was altogether off the record. From a historian’s perspective, this creates documentation problems. That point noted. Records do show that formal treaties grew in number, as did evidence of informal understandings. Rulers began to share languages in common. The

languages of Europe became international languages as far as the ruling classes were concerned. Arabic, one of the dominant languages of the preceding world market, retreated and froze a bit.

One might chart the transition from the old Arab-centered world to the new European one as follows. It was Italian and Spanish diplomats, who pioneered the development of the embassy and of the office of the ambassador building on earlier Arabic foundations. These institutions are thus dated from the sixteenth century. Diplomatic historians point to an event in Europe, the Treaty of Westphalia in the seventeenth century, as a second great turning point for modern international relations. At this point state sovereignty starts to be recognized as a principle.

Historians of international relations also point to the mid-nineteenth century as a third important moment in the process of the development of the international relations. This point, actually a thirty-odd year time span extending from the 1850s–1880s, best known as the period of the birth of the capitalist nation state, was also a period when there was an explosion of treaty-signing. During this period, hundreds of treaties were signed among rulers. This was not simply more of the old bilateral treaties; multilateralism was developing. A system of consultation among the great powers evolved; inter-state arbitration arose. A number of international conferences were held in this period to resolve particular issues. Some of these conferences served to regulate the conduct of war; others took up shipping and maritime-related issues, such as fishing rights, still other conferences dealt with metrics, with telegraphy, with the Post, others with the plague and with sanitation issues, even with the creation of the Red Cross. Slightly thereafter, the General Act of the Brussels Conference of 1890 was agreed to. It was an important international step in trying to break the slave trade. In this period, the use of technical mediators arose. This allowed complicated work to go ahead and it freed diplomats to carry on diplomatic work for which they were better qualified. Finally, beginning somewhat earlier but continuing through this period, one finds an acceptance of the idea of a supreme military commander, an idea that allowed for collective struggle. This was necessary to combat Napoleon. And out of that struggle following from the Congress of 1814–15 came other far-reaching collective agreements, involving the devolution of power in various different contexts, agreements assuring among many other things the navigation of rivers and the protection of the rights of minorities.²⁵

By the end of the nineteenth century, the ruling classes of different countries started to congregate in public as in the Congress of Berlin in 1878 and in the League of Nations a few years thereafter. The rise of the rich was by this point out in the open. Tycoons, generals, and diplomats – the leading hegemony of the last century of various different countries – competed for attention in the media.

Looking back on all this today from an age that takes the United Nations and the World Bank for granted, one can discern clearly enough where the

world we live in came from. Communication, among rulers, was growing but then as now certainly not harmony. Each step along the way seemed to follow a crisis. Colonial rivalries could provide a number of examples of such crises. It would not be an exaggeration to claim that these rivalries and the crises they brought on threatened the viability of the international system forcing it to evolve or to fall apart and this continues. The Algeiras Conference of 1906 could serve as one such example. At that event, it became clear that the need to reach unanimity on an issue was completely unrealistic. What resulted from the need to create unanimity was the creation of blocs of countries. One such bloc would take one position, another bloc would take another position. As the crisis in the Balkans and World War I showed this was not a workable basis for international relations. After the war, we find the formation of the League of Nations and the rise of new mechanisms of global conflict resolution.

Before proceeding further, it is important to mention that from the late nineteenth century onward, one begins to find as well, the development of para-statal organizations, these adding another dimension to multilateralism. Thus we find, in the later nineteenth century, new international associations arising to regulate various issues of general interest to states and to ruling classes as well as to interested parties. These included the International Copyright Union, the International Institute for Agriculture, and the International Penitentiary Commission among others.²⁶

Let us now turn to the League of Nations. The League of Nations began in 1919. It was comprised of a council, a general assembly, and a permanent secretariat. It also had agencies and organizations attached to it. These agencies and organizations dealt with economic and financial issues, with health, refugee, and drug issues, and with certain specific social problems, e.g. the trafficking in women and children. As a result of the League, the Mandate System came into being. Dependent peoples and colonial peoples formerly controlled by the Germans and Ottomans, the defeated parties during World War I, were put under its care. To discharge these responsibilities, the League required a permanent staff of international civil servants and this it acquired. And, although historians with some justification have not always been kind to the League, one must admit that it actually resolved many disputes, introduced the concept of the aggressor and that it even tried to inaugurate collective sanctions. There were to be sure limitations. The countries represented were mainly European and Latin American. They were in effect democracies and for that reason certain issues, as for example those around racism, were never properly confronted. When Haile Selassie appealed to the League in June 1936 to stop Mussolini's use of chemical warfare against Ethiopian civilians, he received no help. That point noted, the vision of the League's members and its way of proceeding laid the groundwork for a future expansion of membership. The year 1945 saw the San Francisco Conference to write the charter for a UN, an organization that came to include most of the world's countries.

Multilateralism, Hegemony Types and Political Struggle on the National Level

We now turn to take a closer look at the national bases of modern multilateralism and at the struggles taking place on that level. As the publication of Jeremi Suri's recent work on détente underscores, this is a crucial level of analysis, one that arguably has suffered some neglect in academia in recent times, even in fields such as world history. Perhaps the case is that it has not been adequately appreciated in much scholarship of any sort how dependent our global economy is on the maintenance of stratification systems and how it is the state that primarily assumes the task of maintaining these systems. While capitalism can function comfortably in different kinds of stratification systems, it cannot function without one. This is one way to look at the continuing importance of the state.

And, no doubt because of the importance of the state, analysts frequently concern themselves with what makes states strong and what makes them weak. The power of the state, it is commonly thought and this is quite germane here, increases if the ruling class can outmaneuver its subject population. On the other hand, where mass struggle is strong, the state is likely to be weak. A weak state then is one in which the persuasion system is working poorly and rulers need to rely rather more heavily on coercion. A strong state is one in which large numbers identify with the interests of the dominant group. Such a state can risk imperialism and overseas adventures as it has little to fear at home. It is observable that of the four main types of hegemony made use of by today's national states, bourgeois democracy is the one which provides the most stable basis for a long-term imperialist policy, its citizenry reliably identifying with the interests of the state more than their counterparts in the other hegemonies do. Are democracies then the strongest states? Why shouldn't they be? The strategy of the hegemony after all is to solicit loyalty by granting everyone rights.

In my case consider the consequences. The strongest and most long-running alliance among states in the modern world is the one uniting the bourgeois democracies, most notably the US and the UK. Yet, few historians write in a questioning way about what ends this alliance might be made to serve. A war to defend a fellow democracy, such as England, is assumed by many American authors to automatically be a war to defend good against evil. A cynical person might imagine that under such conditions, if a politician in a democracy wanted a war, he/she would simply need to organize it according to these parameters. The way is prepared. All the politician would have to do is to allude to the fact that his fellow citizens are 'Westerners' or Chosen People while some others are not. Doesn't the rest of the world live in dictatorships? Do people in such countries respect freedom or the value of human life? Isn't it the case one must fight for one's values or risk their loss?²⁷

On occasion, however, counter-hegemonic struggle wells up even in the democracies, as Jeremi Suri showed in the case of the US in the 1960s. At that point the hegemony weakened; Presidents Johnson and Nixon then

had to do what they could to crush the struggle accepting détente and the end of the Vietnam War to simplify matters.

As is implied here as well, citizens in democracies, i.e. the 'chosen people', have long had difficulty accepting the legitimacy of other types of hegemony. Not only have rulers of democracies found that this lack of acceptance can be exploited at strategic moments, but so have the rulers of the other forms of hegemony as well. Consider state-centered regimes, such as one finds in 'Russian Road' states. Western public opinion regards the Russian Road system of rule by caste against class as totalitarian and thus beyond the pale. While behind the scenes there has been a century of generally amicable relations between American and Russian-type ruling classes at the same time on some occasions, politicians have chosen to seize on the animosity on the popular level when they desired confrontation. It takes little effort for an American politician to remind his constituencies that if the state assumes the responsibility for an individual then the individual can never develop as a moral and free person and this will have permanent political if not theological consequences. Statism is therefore something to be resisted as evil and not to be appeased. Remember Chechnya or Kuwait, the innocent victims of these statist regimes! Other examples where politicians mobilized such sentiment could be drawn from the conflicts between the US and Japan, the US and Russia, the US and Iraq, the US and Iran, and the US and Nicaragua. Russian Road politicians in these and other such regimes could evoke similar popular reactions to the threat posed by the US and could use such sentiments for their purposes and this too has happened.

Russian Road leaders create caste divisions and play them against class. In the celebrated case of the USSR, this system worked until finally the lower caste nationalities of the South found ways of claiming an 'intolerably' high percentage of the national budget of the Union. Leaders of these SSR's found that they could use the importance of the labor force of their regions as a form of leverage and this they did. This led to a major political crisis and to dissolution of the Union.

Another form of hegemony used by modern capitalist nation states is the tribal-ethnic state. The term in which the rulers play class against gender and convey an need for some other country to protect them and this too works. Tribal ethnic states from the perspective of democracies are primitive meaning not science-centered. And, while maybe in art, primitivism has its place, in politics and elsewhere primitivism has a somewhat negative connotation in the democratic imaginary. It tends to mean non-state, therefore non-people. Tribal-ethnic states are thus frequently barely states, always on the verge of collapsing into nothing. The West Bank Palestinians come to mind as a contemporary example.

The rulers of tribal ethnic states, for their part, benefit from appearing to be primitive and weak. It helps them disguise their class interests, as primitivism is compatible with their larger hegemonic cultural logic. And given that fact, it is not surprising to find that the commonest way that a

tribal-ethnic state enters international politics is the one in which its ruling class selects a great power and grants this great power unlimited access to its labor market and to its raw minerals in return for the protection and enrichment of this class. The 'weak and primitive' need protectors and guides. The emphasis in the local media in such a country however is not on the inter-class agreement but on the relations between the two rulers. It's a matter of two chiefs. In the case of powerful, tribal-ethnic states, the terms of the agreement give some space for local imperialism, an example of the latter might be the Saudi-US relationship. This relationship gives some space for Wahhabi imperialism throughout the Middle East along side American imperialism. When Americans live in Saudi Arabia, moreover they live all together as a tribe in their designated area thereby conforming to the local hegemonic logic. Other examples of tribal-ethnic states whose ruling classes have made such deals include the Congo in the era of King Leopold, the Zaire of Mobutu, the Sultan of Brunei, the rulers of South Korea and Malaysia, etc. Sometimes tribal states eschew alliances with any one great power and enter the international arena by proclaiming their neutrality. Examples of this approach include Switzerland and Finland. Lebanon tried this for a while. Sometimes the participation of tribal states in international relations inadvertently triggers crises and even wars. This might happen when a tribal ethnic state grows weak resulting in its ruling class coalition coming apart. At that point, rival segments seeking to assert their own power make overtures to different great powers, each of the latter receiving the impression that the country is going to be in their sphere of influence. The Balkans, the Congo, Vietnam, and Korea may serve as examples here of the locations of such crises as powerful states unexpectedly confronted each other.

In tribal-ethnic states, rulers deflect class conflict by playing it against gender. In those countries, the oppression of women is an obvious part of the political project. As a result, women's movements when successful as in South Korea and the Sudan in the 1980s are seen as bringing crisis to the regime.

A third form of capitalist nation state is the 'Italian Road'. Democracies tend to look at 'Italian Road' states, hegemonies which play off class against region, as corrupt and this the rulers of these countries find to be something they can put to use. They can present themselves as good bargainers and there is clearly some virtue ultimately in being a good bargainer. Italian Road states in fact appear to enter international politics very much in a bargaining way by dividing the world into three categories according to the type of hegemony with which they are dealing – those considered more backward and thus weaker, those more equal and those more powerful and thus more threatening. For each category, they have an approach. Examples of the former would tend to be on the paternalistic and colonizing side. One thinks of Italy in tribal Africa and in Albania, nineteenth-century France in Algeria and 'Annam', and Egypt in the Sudan as examples. Here, the

Italian Road type state, e.g. presents itself as if it was dealing with its own 'Southern Question'. By way of contrast, Italian Road states approach states following their own form of hegemony or that of the Russian Road as bilateral problems, problems for mediation, or for conferences or understandings. Bismarck's self-constructed image of himself as the Honest Broker comes to mind; the Arab League Building in down-town Cairo could serve as a symbol of Egyptian mediationism; the Vatican foreign policy could generally serve as another, the Mexican role in Pan Americanism equally comes to mind. India's 'Positive Neutralism' might be another. In this context, the Italian Road politician's appeal to mediation is a familiar one to the citizens as well given the regional question, given the extended family, given the interplay of heritage and modern science in the national culture, all of which are arenas of mediation.

Italian Road relations to the bourgeois-democracies is an ambivalent one, one of attraction and one of defensiveness. Not uncommonly, Italian Road politicians portray their countries as democratic but threatened by American imperialism. This serves domestically to unite the society. It is therefore adroit, because although these countries are often criticized for relying on mediation not principles, they are nonetheless generally successful in their dealings. They receive large numbers of Western tourists and considerable business investment and this too can be taken as success. They seem to be more able, than other rulers in the world, to make use of the fact that democracies need to project the idea of corruption on someone so someone can benefit by fulfilling this need.

Counter hegemonic struggle plays a role in 'Italian Road' regimes as it does elsewhere. Taking Mexico as an example, one may ask that until the rise of the Zapatista movement in the south of Mexico in recent years with its uncanny ability to gain support even from such holdouts as the Mexican working class of the North, the Mexican ruling party seemed as secure as any one could think of. Indeed it had ruled uninterruptedly for more than half a century. But then change came. These changes appear as much as anything to be the result of the appearance of a counter hegemonic alliance, the Zapatistas in the South and some popular support in the North. Whatever the case, the Mexican army now occupies the South and then this is a political crisis.

While hegemonic logic does not explain all features of multilateralism and multilateralism does not explain all features of international relations much less world history, hegemonic logic and the multilateralism arising from it are obviously important factors with which scholars of world history have yet to adequately conjure, and the reasons why are fairly obvious. We are living, so we are repeatedly told under globalism. We are witnessing the rise of new forms of politics, e.g. the EU. Under such conditions who wants to think about the national histories of the past?

Still one would think globalism or no globalism, EU or no EU, there is nonetheless a political and economic structure of the world of which the

political part is clearly made up of nation states. What after all is the EU? It is a consortium, made up of a group of nation states. Each nation's identity is alive and quite well. So far the EU has been able to progress largely along economic lines, as its founders had anticipated. Born in a period of prosperity, it has had fairly smooth sailing. Political decisions of a difficult sort keep getting deferred. One might say, this is fortunate as how would representatives of the four different hegemonic logics find it easy to agree to have their nations bound to the same kinds of politics or laws or culture in the same way?

Yet, of course, politics has always been close at hand. Turks as guest workers constitute the racial under caste for German democracy. Can one have Turkey as a full member of the EU equal to Germany and at the same time retain the prevailing race relations in Germany? If not, would Germany expect to change its form of hegemony? Is the Turkish membership question an isolated incident, if so how does one explain the debacle of Yugoslavia? Perhaps the EU is not so much moving beyond the nation state as globalists maintain but rather it is a part of the crisis in international relations in a world based on the nation state, a crisis that we have already seen appearing several times in the past century, one which will eventually bring change although not necessarily an end to the nation state.²⁸

Conclusion

This article set out to squarely confront the problem of Eurocentrism in the writing of world history. The problem and the solution were found to be in the choice of a dominant paradigm. If the traditional Hegelian model of Rise of the West served to perpetuate a view overvaluing all Westerners at the expense of everyone else, if the prevailing alternatives ignored the question of who has had power in the world why not modify the prevailing approach accordingly. Thus arose the idea of the Rise of the Rich.

The historiographical implications of this proposal are considerable. If found to be viable it would call into question the need to present modern world history as the conventional story of Western great powers ruling the roost, kicking others around. By looking at world history as greatpowerism, as we have commonly done, one is missing the woods for the trees. Looking at the same material through the lens of multilateralism, what appears is a dense network of international agreements, laws, and organizations, one protecting the existing ruling classes, giving them a rather predictable life-style and when need arises – as indicated above – considerable assistance to maintain that life-style. Thus, while there are some noteworthy examples of imperialism (understood as truly unilateral exploitation by one country of another), these are the exceptions to the rule. Most world historical development comes about rather as a result of the collective power of dominant elements, a power which may of course seem to be being expressed simply as that of one country alone.²⁹ What one may then infer is that the

broad historical change of the sort Marx anticipated from his analysis of capitalism has gotten deferred a century or so because of multilateralism and the hegemony system. The student of world history today could shed some light on this. This would be useful work.

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Short Biography

Peter Gran received his Ph.D. at the University of Chicago, and is currently Professor of History at Temple. His research and teaching interests include modern Arab studies, comparative Third World history, and political economy theory. Having recently completed a book about world history, he is refocusing on modern Egyptian history and hopes to carry on with the long-term project of comparing Egyptian and Italian history. Some of Peter's representative publications include: *Beyond Eurocentrism: A New View of Modern World History* (1996); *Islamic Roots of Capitalism: Egypt, 1760–1840* (1979); and 'Medical Pluralism in Arab and Egyptian History', *Social Science and Medicine* (1979).

Notes

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¹ Overcoming Hegel today will, in addition to much else, require someone to work out a 'Chinese Road', one not stereotypably as 'Oriental' nor one in which the motor of change comes through the impact of the West. Maoism started in this direction. In recent years, Maoism has given way to a resurgent Hegelianism at the hands of the 'New Class' intellectuals, see the articles in a trend-setting book, Tani E. Barlow (ed.), *New Asian Marxisms* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002). To discover that Hegel is no stranger to modern Chinese thought, see Martin Muller's work beginning with his bibliography, *Die Chinesischsprachige Hegel-Rezeption von 1902–2000* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2002), 450; for the geo-political side of the current Chinese Hegel revival, Shuxun Chen and Charles Wolf, Jr. (eds.), *China, The United States and the Global Economy* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation, 2001).

² Recently Hegel has come under scrutiny and practically for the first time, Susan Buck-Morss, 'Hegel and Haiti', *Critical Inquiry*, 26 (Summer 2000): 821–65. The original text presenting the theory of an Orient, of Greece, and of a Germanic world is Georg Hegel, *The Philosophy of History* (New York, NY: Dover Publ., 1956). For commentary on Von Ranke, Peter Novick, 'That Noble Dream': *The Objectivity Question and the American Historical Profession* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988). Over the past twenty years or more in Europe and the United States, the left and the right defended Eurocentrism with the attacks coming from the center of academia. It might also be noted that this academic center alone welcomed the work of social history. I think there is a connection between these two points. Defending Eurocentrism from the romantic right is Bernard Lewis, 'Eurocentrism Revisited', *Commentary*, 98/6 (December 1994): 47ff; from the

left is Slavoj Žižek, 'A Leftist Plea for Eurocentrism', *Critical Inquiry*, 24/4 (Summer 1998): 988–1010; Immanuel Wallerstein, 'Eurocentrism and its Avatars: The Dilemma of Social Science', *New Left Review*, 226 (November/December, 1997): 93–108. Criticizing Eurocentrism from a more centrist position are a number of historians with different approaches associated with the field of World History, see for example, Jerry H. Bentley, 'Cross-Cultural Interaction and Periodization in World History', *The American Historical Review*, 101/3 (June 1996): 749–70.

³ A considerable number of articles in the *Journal of World History* address the question of Eurocentrism and serve as an indication of the considerable reflection on this matter up to now. Jack Goldstone, 'Efflorescences and Economic Growth in World History: Rethinking the Rise of the West and the Industrial Revolution', *Journal of World History*, 13/2 (Fall 2002): 323ff argues that economic history as a discipline cannot support the Eurocentric narrative of the Rise of the West as its criteria of success would lead it to acknowledge the success of eighteenth-century China. Goldstone thinks that industrial revolutions of one sort or another were not that rare, that if one discerns some uniqueness about the case of the UK it would come only in the nineteenth century and be related to the systematic application of new sources of power to production. This in turn cannot be closely tied to the West or Europe or even necessarily to earlier English history. Goldstone builds on Jan de Vries and Ad van der Woude, *The First Modern Economy: Success, Failure and Perseverance of the Dutch Economy, 1500–1815* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997). A critique of de Vries, one closer to the orthodoxy of the 'Rise of the West' from a Marxist perspective is Ellen Wood, 'The Question of Market Dependence', *Journal of Agrarian Change*, 2/1 (January 2002): 50–87. An argument basically sympathetic to Goldstone is Elise S. Brezis, 'Foreign Capital Flows in the Century of Britain's Industrial Revolution: New Estimates, Controlled Conjectures', *The Economic History Review*, n.s., 48/1 (Feb 1995): 46–67, disputes the idea that savings played a particularly decisive role in capital formation for the British industrial revolution emphasizing instead the role played by foreign capital flow. On the problems with the Annales School approach, Francois Dosse, *l'Histoire en Miettes: Des Annales à la Nouvelle Histoire* (Paris: Ed. La Découverte, 1987), 193ff, 207. A recent attempt to sustain the Annaliste methodology is Victor Lieberman (ed.), *Beyond Binary Histories, Reimagining Eurasia to c. 1830* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 1999).

⁴ Mark Bevir and Frank Trentmann, 'Social Justice and Modern Capitalism: Historiographical Problems, Theoretical Perspectives', *The European Legacy*, 6/2 (2001): 141–58 shrewdly surveys the development of recent historiography placing their emphasis on the importance of the influence of populism and of continuity in recent work. The 'Rise of the Rich' might serve as such an example of a 'populism and continuity' model.

I share with R. Bin Wong an appreciation of 'horizontal' or parallel history over 'vertical' history and like him regret the low status of contributions from historical sociology and comparative social history. Cf. his 'Integrating China into World Economic History', *Journal of Asian Studies*, website accessed in 2003. The late Joseph Fletcher, whom Bin Wong drew on notes such features in my work in a review he once wrote, 'Peter Gran: *Islamic Roots of Capitalism, Egypt 1760–1840 – A Review*', *Journal of Asian History*, 15/1 (1981): 74–7. In presenting the idea of the Rise of the Rich in Gramsci circles, I have termed the approach – world history through the 'Southern Question', hegemony implying counter hegemonic struggle. The main presentation of these theses up to now is *Beyond Eurocentrism: A New View of Modern World History* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1996). More recently an attempt to show the world historical event of Détente to be the outcome of national struggles between various rulers and ruled has appeared and holds my attention from a methodological point of view, Jeremi Suri, *Power and Protest – Global Revolution and the Rise of Détente* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003).

The Rise of the Rich is an established genre of writing in economic history. While there the term rich is defined in a sense quite different from the one intended here, one might do worse than to acknowledge a few debts, e.g. Stanley Lebergott, 'Are the Rich Getting Richer? Trends in U.S. Wealth Concentration', *The Journal of Economic History*, 36/1 (1976): 147–62. The term used here has connotations closer to the idea of power than simply to just that of wealth. Given such an approach to the use of the term rich my debts as a researcher are to writers in a number of different fields of which economics is only one.

From contemporary international political economy, the work on the transnational ruling class if a bit narrow for my purposes still is quite interesting, see for example, 'The Transnational Ruling Class Formation Thesis: A Symposium', *Science and Society*, 65/4 (Winter 2001–02): 414–508. See

in particular pp.428ff for the remarks of Ricardo Duchesne, 'Between Sinocentrism and Eurocentrism: Debating Andre Gunder Frank's *Re-Orient: Global Economy in the Asian Age*.' Here one sees the tug of war ongoing in the field between China and Europe in world history.

In addition to debts to political economy, one must also acknowledge the work of the 'Cambridge School' on decolonization, for example, Ronald Robinson, 'Non-European Foundations of European Imperialism: Sketch for a Theory of Collaboration', in Roger Owen and Bob Sutcliffe (eds.), *Studies in the Theory of Imperialism* (London: Longman, 1972), ch. 5; John Darwin, 'Imperialism and the Victorians: The Dynamics of Territorial Expansion', *The Economic History Review*, 112 (June 1997): 614–42. Such work is certainly implied here, although it is worrisome that the Cambridge School writers let one suppose that countries join the periphery and do what else they do because their rulers chose those options as if in a vacuum, as if free from constraints. This extreme polycentrism – which is how I would characterize such a view of history – reduces the value of their line of thought. I am also indebted to globalism literature. One finds there some interesting ideas as for example in Frederic Jameson, 'Globalization as Philosophical Issue', in Frederic Jameson and Masao Miyoshi (eds.), *The Cultures of Globalization* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1998), 54–80; here Jameson takes the view that history, meaning national history, is over, that there is now a global Americanization through the market, through consumption, through the media, through the use of the English language, all these being interrelated, and while this transition in the world system no doubt hurt some people in the Third world it opens up new vistas of hope for many others for a new future. What are now behind us are the nation state and the study of traditional history. Jameson limits the utility of his work by his dependence on Hegel and by neglecting questions of politics. This leaves his rather good insights in a Eurocentric mold. Some debts must be registered as well to the coevalist and cyclicalist work of writers such as Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe-Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000); Kenneth Pomeranz, *The Great Divergence* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000). Pomeranz creates an image of East Asia on a par with Europe up until the nineteenth century, thereafter suggesting complementarity. The idea of empires rising and falling like the waves, the West being simply the most recent example, pervades the interesting if somewhat Darwinian and cyclicalist account by A. G. Frank, *ReOrient: Global Economy in the Asian Age* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1998). Complementarity here by way of contrast is explained in terms of the way hegemonic strategies interrelate. Cyclicalism arises in terms of the shifts within global capitalism.

⁵ Expressions of frustration at the inability of those doing class analysis to assimilate social history include Eugene D. Genovese, 'The Political Crisis of Social History: Class Struggle as Subject and Object', in Elizabeth Fox Genovese and Eugene D. Genovese (eds.), *Fruits of Merchant Capital* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1983); Keith Nield, 'A Symptomatic Dispute? Notes on the Relation between Marxian Theory and Historical Practice in Britain', *Social Research*, 47 (1980): 479–506. For a discussion of how such Eurocentrism of political economy – the result of the above – hampers the study of world history, see Lauren Benton, 'From the World-Systems Perspective to Institutional World History: Culture and Economy in Global Theory', *Journal of World History*, 7/2 (1996): 261–95. Benton's critique could be extended to cover even more recently appearing works, Stephen Gill, *Power and Resistance in the New World Order* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002); Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000).

⁶ For Samir Amin on the tributary mode, *Class and Nation, Historically and in the Current Crisis* (New York, NY: Monthly Review Press, 1980), chs. 3–4. Here he addresses a world historical theme in a way changing a paradigm. The global nature of what Amin terms the tributary age and the exceptional nature of feudalism as a subordinate part of the tributary model make for a non-Eurocentric approach to world history for the era prior to the capitalist mode of production.

⁷ Eric Wolf, *Europe and the People Without History* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1982). What Wolf – and a few others – have been able to achieve was the inclusion of social history as a dynamic part of world history. In so doing, they bucked the trend. See the comments on the rigidity of Marxism and political economy theory by Genovese and Nield in note 4 above.

⁸ Starting out from 1550 in the dominant paradigm, Shaun O'L. Higgins and Pamela Gilberd, *Leadership Secrets of Elizabeth I* (Cambridge: Perseus Publishing, 2000) identify the new state practices of the era, i.e. of early mercantilism among others. This book has the virtue of treating state and

ruling class as power-seizing actors and the creation of the market more or less as a strategy. More representative of works on mercantilism are those treating the market as autonomous: Bruce Masters, *The Origins of Western Economic Dominance in the Middle East – Mercantilism and the Islamic Economy in Aleppo, 1600–1750* (New York, NY: New York University Press, 1988); Alan K. Smith, *Creating a World Economy – Merchant Capital, Colonialism, and World Trade, 1400–1825* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1991); for a historical analysis of the term multilateralism in I.R., John Gerard Ruggie, 'Multilateralism: The Anatomy of an Institution', *Multilateralism Matters* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1993), ch. 1, pp. 14ff. In his usage the term has a free-will quality, standing in opposition to unilateralism. For a contemporary characterization of multilateralism à la Ruggie, Don Babai, 'Waiting for the "Vision Thing": International Organizations in the 1990s', *Harvard International Review*, 12/2 (Winter 1990): 4–9.

⁹ The interpretation of the transition to capitalism is the subject of a long unresolved debate in history, one with several strands. The one of concern here divides those who think the Third World plays a role given the international nature of capitalism and those who take it to be exclusively English or European. A recent statement of the latter position is Ellen Meiksins Wood, 'Eurocentric Anti-Eurocentrism', *Against the Current*, 92 (May–June 2001): 29–35; the opposite view appears in the writings of Eric Williams, Samir Amin, Eduardo Galeano, James Blaut, and others. For recent work in the Williams tradition: Barbara L. Solow, 'Caribbean Slavery and British Growth', *Journal of Development Economics*, 17/1–2 (January–February 1985): 99–116; David Eltis and Stanley Engermann, 'The Importance of Slavery and the Slave Trade to Industrializing Britain', *Journal of Economic History*, 60/1 (March 2000): 123–45. The British-centered view can be found in Sara Horrell, 'Home Demand and British Industrialization', *Journal of Economic History*, 56/3 (September 1996): 561ff. On the newness of modern slavery, Robin Blackburn, 'The Old World Background to European Colonial Slavery', *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 54 (January 1997): 65–102.

¹⁰ James Blaut, *The Colonizer's Model of the World* (New York, NY: The Guilford Press, 1993), ch. 4 on the 1492 watershed.

¹¹ E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York, NY: Vintage Press, 1963).

¹² Geoffrey Parker and Lesley M. Smith (eds.), *The General Crisis of the Seventeenth Century* (New York, NY: Routledge, 1997).

¹³ Most of the work in historical sociology has been concentrated here in the early modern period from Fernand Braudel, Barrington Moore, to Haim Gerber and Jack Goldstone.

¹⁴ Eventually, the desire for control forced the landlords to try to Christianize the former slaves and to marginalize their Islam, Richard Brent Turner, *Islam in the African-American Experience* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1997).

¹⁵ Ellen Wood, *The Retreat from Class: A New 'True' Socialism* (London: Verso Press, 1986).

¹⁶ Amin, *Class and Nation*; Blaut, *Colonizer's Model*; for Robert Brenner, a synthesis of his articles and books appears in Ellen Meiksins Wood, *The Origin of Capitalism – A Longer View* (London: Verso Press, 2002). For a critique, Wong, 'Integrating China'.

¹⁷ Teshale Tibebu, 'On the Question of Feudalism, Absolutism and Bourgeois Revolution', *Review*, 13/1 (Winter 1990): 49–152.

¹⁸ What follows about hegemonic forms is drawn from *Beyond Eurocentrism: A New View of Modern World History* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1996). The argument is that the modern world only produced four successful types of hegemony.

¹⁹ Fanna Forman-Barzilai, 'Adam Smith as Globalization Theorist', *Critical Review*, 14/4 (2003). As for Albert Hirschman, he termed Smith's theory of the role of commerce the 'Doux Commerce Thesis'. See 'Rival Views of Market Society', in *Rival Views of Market Society and Other Recent Essays* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992), 105–41. In this essay, Hirschman introduced four hypotheses capable of explaining the relation of commerce to the state and to history. One could read this as a cautionary against writing a too simple account of history as the story of the market.

²⁰ Peter Stearns, *Consumerism in World History: The Great Transformation of Desire* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2002); this was true at least in many areas. As a growing literature on the Silk Road suggests, Asia was involved in this long-distance luxury trade, see Vadime Elisseeff (ed.), *The Silk Roads – Highways of Culture and Commerce* (New York, NY: Berghahn Books, 2000). See also, S. A. M. Adhead, *Europe and China, 1400–1800, The Rise of Consumerism* (London: Macmillan, 1997).

- ²¹ P. Gran, *Islamic Roots of Capitalism: Egypt 1760–1840* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1998), ch. 1, 6.
- ²² Daniel R. Headrick, *The Tools of Empire: Technology and European Imperialism in the Nineteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1981) argues the European technology dimension as an explanation. For the depopulation of Africa as a result of the slave trade, Patrick Manning, *Slavery and African Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).
- ²³ Implied in this is a discussion about development. Such a discussion is harder and harder to have as one can see from the disillusionment so prevalent in current academic thought with any idea of development, Jan Nederveen Pieterse, 'After Post-Development', *Third World Quarterly*, 21/2 (2000): 175–192 surveys this landscape.
- ²⁴ Law here serves as a shorthand for general communication. The most important attempt until now of working with law, takes the clash of legal systems as a building block of modern world history, Lauren Benton, *Law and Colonial Cultures – Legal Regimes in World History 1400–1900* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).
- ²⁵ Gerald Mangone, *A Short History of International Organization* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1975).
- ²⁶ John Boli and George M. Thomas (eds.), *Constructing World Culture: International Non-Governmental Organizations since 1875* (Stanford, CT: Stanford University Press, 1999).
- ²⁷ For a discussion of the hegemonism of democratic alliances, Andreas Bieler and Adam David Morton, 'Theoretical and Methodological Challenges of Neo-Gramscian Perspectives in International Political Economy', *International Gramsci Society Newsletter*, 13 (May 2003): 9–18. See also Suri, *Power and Protest*.
- ²⁸ Regarding the EU there is a vast amount of academic writing projecting hopes about getting beyond the nation state. Works closer to the level of contemporary journalism contain, however, much which would not support such writing, e.g. The *Economist*, 367/8321: 43, April 26, 2003 comments on the division between large and small nations in the EU, the larger states benefiting from a more pan-EU position, the smaller ones not. *Ibid.*, 364/8287: 43, August 24, 2002 notes Papal disdain for the liberal nature of the politics and mores of the EU; *ibid.*, 366/8312: 45, February 22, 2003 a division emerging among EU members on the War in Iraq. For a discussion of Turkish membership in the EU, see Cui Hongjian, 'The European Union's Headache', *Beijing Review*, 46/1 (January 2003): 13–15.
- ²⁹ William McNeill wrote the well-known *The Rise of the West* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1963) but has long since abandoned parts of it for a position closer to the Annales School, see most recently, e.g. 'World History and the Rise and Fall of the West', *Journal of World History*, 9/2 (1998): 215–36.

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