

The End of Western Hegemonies?

Edited by

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Series in Politics



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To my father-in-law, Raymond Gérard

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Prologue: Hegemony and the West

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Abstract

This chapter provides a detailed theoretical assessment of hegemony, which is the organizing concept of the book, and surveys other key concepts like ‘the West’ and ‘modernity.’ It also discusses colonialism and imperialism due to their connection with hegemony. The chapter maps the main dimensions of hegemony and surveys its historiography and uses in various disciplines and areas of knowledge. The concept’s intersections with international relations, postcolonial theories, and cultural studies are also brought to light.

Keywords: hegemony; Western imperialism; postcolonial/decolonial studies; neocolonialism; informal imperialism; modernity; the West

Introduction

International relations, politics, and cultural issues are, by nature, historically evolving topics. Writing about them is challenging, but this task is even more difficult in times of crisis. The pandemic, which is ongoing for two years now, started a few months after the production process of this book was set into motion. Major overturns affect not only our reading of the present and visions of the future but also our understanding of the past. Since this book deals with past situations that, in many cases, still impact the present and with present issues that shape the future, some questions and analyses developed in this volume had to be modified regarding the original plan. Much has changed in the three years between the conference that inspired this volume, held at the University of Jyväskylä, Finland, in June 2019, which I organized with Jukka Jouhki for The West Network, and the publication of this book.

In times like ours, academic research, which is a long-term endeavor, is at risk of being outdated before going into print. Prognoses on the present, especially the future of American or Western hegemony, globalization, or democracy, for instance, are tentative in fast-evolving conditions. To take the example of democracy, we are witnessing contrasting trends and forces. The lockdowns

opened the door to unseen state infringements on rights and freedoms, to state centralization, and in some cases, to constitutional changes that only confirmed and reinforced authoritarian trends already on the rise. Simultaneously, however, millions worldwide have hit the streets since 2020, denouncing state violation of rights and freedoms, long institutionalized discrimination, and inequalities, besides sanitary measures perceived as repressive. They demand decent standards of living and dignity for all; they want to have a say in politics; they courageously defy their government and its repressive apparatus, in some cases, with impressive results. Such situations would have been unthinkable a few years ago; it looks like history, at last, has resumed its march. On which side will the balance tilt? It is hard to predict, as we are confronted with situations that make us revise our readings and analyses at an impressive speed. Acknowledging the peculiarities of our context of production, as historians say, is essential, and ours presents us with formidable challenges.

If the present shapes our visions of the future and depictions of the past, critical assessment of the past, conversely, enhances our self-understanding. The past does not provide us with formulas and recipes to replicate in the present; its (pragmatic) interest lies elsewhere. Digging into layers of human experience contributes to a better understanding of the present by uncovering its deepest roots and discovering connections between situations, trends, and developments that look singular. Revisiting the past also allows exploring different solutions to similar problems and learning from the tried avenues and choices made.

This impulse behind this volume is a will to map and analyze the forms, mechanisms, strategies, and effects, in the past, the present, and the future, of asymmetrical relations that bring advantages or, at least, secure the superiority of Western actors, state and non-state alike, in politics, economics, and culture broadly understood, in other words, Western hegemonies. Over the past decades and centuries, Westerners never ceased claiming supremacy in all these spheres. A host of these relations were initiated through colonialism and imperialism, but there are other channels: political interference, international economic inequalities, and attempts at affirming the supremacy of the so-called Western way of life was also secured through the military might and economic power of great Western actors. The latter have material assets fostering technical innovation and technological advance. The processes and situations encompassed by politics, economy, and culture are varied, and yet, they often involve analogous mechanisms, bring into play a similar logic, rely on kindred representations, and have comparable outcomes. Hegemony, when its theoretical potential is fully acknowledged, embraces this whole constellation of relations and situations; this is why it is the concept at the core of this book. Although often endowed with a narrower meaning, this chapter will show that hegemony is a

multidimensional concept whose specter of applications is very broad. By bringing together studies focusing on politics in national contexts, power relations and the international order, and soft power in the domain of culture, this volume wants to prove by the example the unique flexibility, multidimensionality, and manifold applicability of the concept of hegemony.

Acknowledging the multifaced character and malleability of the concept, however, does not go without difficulties. As Owen Worth points out, the range of its uses is so vast that articulating a comprehensive theory of hegemony is very difficult, and maybe illusory. Nonetheless, its different understandings and applications “point to the fact that hegemony is comprised of a relationship between the dominant and the dominated at a global level, and all point to the idea that it is this relationship, however universal or fragmented it might be, that is central to the fabric of power within global politics.”¹ Worth’s description is very close to hegemony as understood here; the relations regarded as sites of hegemony have an international character. In this book, the meaning of hegemony is further stretched in the direction of postcolonial studies. Worth’s conception contains a crucial keyword: power. Political and military might, economy, and culture—including beliefs, representations, and knowledge—can produce asymmetrical relations, that is, securing the superiority of or bringing advantages to one of the parties involved and imposing constraints on the other. Although these relations are primarily political, military, economic, or cultural, they often stretch into other domains. Since hegemony, as understood here, reveals the asymmetrical character of relations that are not always perceived as such, the concept is a critical tool. Asymmetrical relations produce and sustain hierarchies. Relations of power, here, are contemplated from a Foucauldian perspective. These relations are multiple, parallel, often overlapping, and they flourish in all domains.

This volume, which explores sites of Western hegemonies, contributes to understanding the mechanisms through which international—and in some cases, superimposed national hierarchies—are formed and maintained. The issue of the future of Western preponderance, a question timelier than ever, expressed in the title’s question mark, is raised throughout the volume through different contexts and situations. The prologue addresses the future of Western hegemony by sketching a few avenues of reflection. Today, discourses about the ‘decline of the West’ no more look like ruminations of a handful of cultural depressives and politically disillusioned; they sound realistic. Each contribution analyzes a form of asymmetrical relationship, in the past or the present (with impacts on the future), and the responses they generated. Indeed, hegemony involves at least two actors, and the sufferer is not passive. The chapters reveal how Western preponderance was, is, or could be challenged.

With an enlarged concept of hegemony like the one put forward in this book, uncovering overlooked connections between different instances of Western-induced asymmetries in order to paint a more comprehensive picture of Western hegemony becomes possible. Since the topics addressed in the following pages are usually studied within disciplinary boundaries, and the results of this research are published in separate journals or books, resemblances, and affinities between forms of asymmetrical relations and their mechanisms in politics and culture can remain unnoticed. Bringing together experts from various fields in the humanities and social sciences, namely, political science, international relations, political philosophy, sociology, history, postcolonial studies, linguistics, and criminology, this volume intends to make these connections visible.

Hegemony, as understood in this collection, has many affinities with the postcolonial framework. Most books on hegemony primarily deal with state-state international relations, and secondarily, with economic processes. Cultural representations, production, and reproduction are traditionally addressed by postcolonial studies, or 'area' and 'cultural' studies. 'Postcolonial' can be understood in different ways that can overlap. The concept can have a temporal meaning, referring to the trajectory of societies after the era of colonialism and formal imperialism came to a close. When included in the compound 'postcolonial theory,' the postcolonial is a critical concept, just like the decolonial. The contributions of this volume dealing with the postcolonial use it both ways, in its temporal meaning and as a critical tool, depicting a postcolonial condition characterized by the persistence of colonial patterns. Indeed, not only the starting point of the postcolonial era is debated in the field,² but the very reality of a period free of colonization and imperialism is put into question. For many theorists, colonialism is a historical sequence that unfolded uninterrupted from the end of the fifteenth century.³ Ania Loomba writes that

[...] [the] unequal relations of colonial rule are reinscribed in the contemporary imbalances between 'first' and 'third' world nations. The new global order does not depend upon direct rule. However, it does allow the economic, cultural and (to varying degrees) political penetration of some countries by others. This makes it debatable whether once-colonised countries can be seen as properly 'postcolonial.'⁴

Addressing the theoretical debates over the postcolonial and the decolonial is beyond the scope of this introduction. Still, our concept of hegemony includes situations and relations that can be labeled as 'neocolonial' or 'neoimperial,' that is, in which formerly subjected countries and peoples are still entangled in economic, political, and cultural unequal relations that either go back to their colonial past or were initiated by late 'successors' of Western colonial and

imperialist powers,⁵ especially the United States after 1945. This conception hypothesizes that the postcolonial condition is a prolongation of colonialism and formal imperialism. Thus, hegemony encompasses the re-enactment of past asymmetries described by Loomba. She also points out that because colonialism and formal imperialism encompass differentiated experiences, their legacies are varied and multiple, but they “produce comparable relations of inequity and domination.”⁶

Encounters between the field of international relations and postcolonial and cultural studies are rather recent and still have to be developed.⁷ Persistent tensions, according to Sankaran Krishna, are rooted in epistemological disparities:

postcolonialism radically disrupts the methodological nationalism of mainstream IR, that is, the tendency to view the world as populated exclusively by self-contained nation-states. It instead suggests that economic development, political movements, cultural productions, ideas and ideologies, everything about our material and social lives, have to be understood contrapuntally, that is, as results of global and interrelated processes that suffuse the entire world.⁸

Where traditional approaches in IR view the international arena as shaped by “equal states interacting in a competitive and anarchic world system,” the postcolonial perspective underscores the “highly unequal and deeply hierarchical nature of the world system.”⁹ The encounters between these fields are most fruitful: the introduction of the postcolonial framework in IR fostered investigations of historical processes associated with European colonialism, formal imperialism, and their legacies, and their impacts on contemporary politics in areas like immigration, globalization, nation-building, and foreign policy. An essential claim of postcolonial IR is that “colonialism and neo-colonialism, and imperialism and neo-imperialism, were and continue to be central forces in the making of the world order.”¹⁰ This claim is inherent to hegemony as understood in this volume.

This chapter will clarify key concepts the reader will encounter throughout the book. The contributors specify their contours according to the topic and context addressed. Also, the respective weight of the concepts introduced here in their analysis, like imperialism, colonialism, and modernity, varies, and their definitions can differ from those put forward in this introduction. Most of this chapter discusses hegemony, unveiling its multidimensionality and flexibility, thus justifying the choice of this notion as the organizing concept of this volume. Then, colonialism and imperialism—and their formal and informal variants—are considered because of their connections with hegemony. The last section tackles the second core concept of the book, ‘the West,’ exploring its spatial-temporal applications, and its close ties with modernity.

Hegemony: a multidimensional phenomenon

In social sciences and humanities, the concept of hegemony is as widespread as it is contested. Popularized through the prison writings of Antonio Gramsci from the 1970s, hegemony made its way into social, political, and cultural theory, and followed different trajectories. Marxist and 'post-Marxist' intellectuals and other political critiques contemplate hegemony as a critical tool to analyze the dominant social order, with a view to concrete social change. Such uses are faithful to Gramsci's, who used it to understand how one social class asserts its authority over another.¹¹ Stretching its field of application, Edward Said, in *Orientalism*, describes hegemony as a form of cultural leadership, a view that would be foundational to postcolonial and cultural studies. However, international relations were—and remain to a large extent—the most fertile field for studies and debates on hegemony. The concept was so closely associated with the discipline—and, for a time, with debates on American exceptionalism—that its other trajectories were obscured.¹² To make the boundaries of hegemony as understood in this volume more visible and situate this conception in regard to recent and parallel applications of the concept, I will provide an overview of its development and uses in past decades. Given the privilege accorded to hegemony in IR, this is the logical starting point.

In IR, the concept of hegemony is used to describe and analyze the world order and power relationships at the international and regional levels. After the demise of the Soviet Union and the Eastern bloc, debates on the nature and future of American international leadership were at the front stage.¹³ In the post-Cold War era, the reconfiguration of the international arena was expected to produce a unipolar order led by a global hegemon, the United States. This transformation fed much discussion.¹⁴ In this context, hegemony was routinely regarded as the primacy of a state “whose power is grossly disproportionate to that of other actors in the system,”¹⁵ but whose “capabilities are not so concentrated as to produce a global empire.”¹⁶ As an analytical tool, hegemony contributes to unpacking the mechanisms through which the leading state shapes the international arena according to its interests and plays a police role in it.¹⁷ For scholars like William C. Wohlforth and Joseph S. Nye, hegemony is beneficial to the international environment; the leading state, through a set of ‘hegemonic practices,’ orders the world arena, thus fostering stability and peace.¹⁸ Such analyzes had many contenders, such as proponents of the balance of power theories like Kenneth N. Waltz.¹⁹

Some scholars point out that the overemphasis on the American case has narrowed down hegemony to a single model and obscured its historical character.²⁰ Hegemony, they insisted, is a dynamic phenomenon whose contours, characteristics, and conditions change according to place and time.²¹ As the American exceptionalism thesis started to lose ground, the ties between

hegemony and 'primacy' lessened. On the one hand, this opening allowed situating the starting point of American hegemony back in 1945. Many scholars, thus, situated its high point during the Cold War rather than the post-1989 era and identify the 1970s as the origin of American hegemonic decline.²² The concept was also used in other contexts. Great Britain until the Great War—the interwar period and Second World War being a transitory phase—can be contemplated as the alter-ego of the United States, it was suggested; Great Britain was a single hegemon, albeit not a global one. Political scientists also proposed that groups of states can exercise hegemony. Group hegemony would have characterized the nineteenth century international environment, with the Concert of Europe and Bismarck's systems,²³ and the post-Cold war arena would also be suitable to collective hegemony.²⁴ Beyond this, the enlargement of the temporal and geographical scope of the concept in recent years fostered a broadening and diversification of its meaning. Hegemony conceived as the power—that is, influence and leadership—exercised by a state over others to impose its will was projected as far as Antiquity. Besides, the concept, routinely applied to Western countries, underwent a 'decolonization' process through its application to non-Western powers. Thus, the unipolar view of hegemony gave way to plural conceptions of international power relations in IR.

Most theories in this field acknowledge the contribution of economic power to hegemony, but some scholars view it as its primary vehicle. Economic power would be a crucial factor in hegemonic rise and decline, and thus, in the destiny of the United States' hegemony.²⁵ American preponderance is sometimes conflated with globalization, whose full unfolding followed the fall of the Berlin Wall. (For this reason, discussions on 'de-globalization'²⁶ could be seen as a further sign of the prophesized 'American decline.')

For theoreticians from different disciplines—who often share a Marxist outlook—capitalism itself is the founding stone of hegemony.²⁷ Such interpretations drag hegemony away from the field of state-state relations and pull it to the side of soft power.

Nonetheless, economic power on its own can no more provide a sufficient basis for hegemony than material power alone. Hegemonic stability theory—according to an economically-oriented rendering of the theory—conceives of hegemony as a situation in which "the most powerful country provides the necessary goods to create and maintain a liberal order complete with monetary, trade, and foreign investment systems."²⁸ This definition well captures the multidimensionality of American hegemony. The United States' economic power and political leadership are inseparable from the development of an ideological order whose foundations were laid by Wilson's famous Fourteen Points in 1918, but that was built after 1945 with the Bretton Woods system (including the IMF and the GATT), the United Nations, and NATO, namely, the liberal order.²⁹ The workings and policies of these internationally active institutions went with a package of values and civilizational features like

pluralism, individualism, democracy, capitalism, and modernity (see the discussion at the end of this chapter), promoted in their respective domains of intervention. While most commentators view the present ideological order as the continuation of the post-1945 liberal one, others argue that the promotion of the United States to the status of global hegemon went with an ideological shift. Liberal values were reasserted, but the global spread of political and economic neoliberal principles—implemented within national borders—and the promotion of international “free market” practices would have created a neoliberal order.³⁰

Awareness of the essential importance of ideology in the set-up and endurance of the international order and the crucial role of consent was at the core of Gramsci’s concept of hegemony, introduced in IR in the 1980s.³¹ Neo-Gramscian approaches also underscored the contribution of non-state actors like international and financial organizations³² and civil society in the constitution and maintenance of hegemony. Interest in the role of ideas in politics gained momentum in the 1990s. Discussions about the danger China and Russia would represent for American hegemony are an eloquent example. The threat to the liberal order and values they would embody is a recurrent motive. When hegemony is conceived as “an institutionalized practice of special rights and responsibilities” entrusted to states (or group of countries) endowed with the resources to lead³³—American hegemony was often described in such terms—, norms and values, and the legitimacy conferred on them, come at the forefront.

Beyond economic power and ideology, a few contributions in the last decades have lifted the veil over another dimension of hegemony, often overlooked in IR: culture (see the discussion below). Andrea Komlosy’s definition keeps hegemony in the field of relations between states while encompassing culture, thus stretching the horizon of the phenomenon. Hegemony can be “based on a state’s capacity to secure economic, military, political, and cultural leadership.”³⁴ This broad conception brings us closer to the conception at the heart of this volume.

At the turn of the twenty-first century, the debates in IR have moved from examining the possibility and desirability of a unipolar order to analyzing American primacy to making predictions on its viability.³⁵ Doubts over the ‘benevolence’ of the United States’ leadership and its will to preserve the status quo in the international arena were raised, especially from the 2003 invasion of Iraq.³⁶ As the legitimacy of American interventions was questioned, the relative consensus around the United States’ leadership started to erode. Critiques of the American hegemon revisited theories of empire and imperialism;³⁷ some suggest that hegemony, primacy, and preponderance were nothing but substitute names of an informal empire that did not dare tell its name.³⁸ Others

declared that American preponderance was illusory or, at best, that it would be short-lived. Suggestions that the international arena was already multipolar³⁹ or was experiencing such a transformation were heard but met with resistance.⁴⁰

Multipolarity, regionalism, and collective hegemony were popular topics in the last two decades. The prospect that the BRICS could undermine American hegemony by allowing the positioning of the “South” at the heart of a Western- or North-led international environment was fiercely debated.⁴¹ In recent years, a few targeted ‘threats’ came into focus, especially from China and Russia. Chinese growing economic weight, and China’s technological advance, matched by Russia; Russian renewed military might, and economic and military cooperation with China;⁴² Russian and Chinese consolidation of their respective areas of influence,⁴³ were contemplated with a mix of contempt and anxiety (see the prologue of this volume). However, regional dynamics were more often examined from the viewpoint of their potential to challenge American hegemony,⁴⁴ at least in Western academia, than for themselves. This neglect may be due to underestimation of or unwillingness to acknowledge these dynamics, which testify to the pluralism of the international arena.⁴⁵

If the invasion of Iraq has affected the perceptions of American hegemony, 2008 was another turning point. By then, the United States’ capacity to lead the global economic order was questioned.⁴⁶ These interrogations gave renewed strength to hypotheses about the American hegemonic decline, which, for many, was unavoidable:⁴⁷ only the timing was to guess. For others, the era of American hegemony was already past.⁴⁸ The diversity of explanations put into relief the complexity and multidimensionality of hegemony. As Komlosy observes, since hegemony invests many “fields of power,” hegemonic decline “rarely results in the loss” of all of them, “at least not at the same time.”⁴⁹ The demise is noticeable in some spheres earlier than in others. Without surprise, Trump’s presidency contributed to reinforcing prognoses of the end of American hegemony.⁵⁰ In 2020, many observers believed that the economic and political disorder brought about by the initial phase of the pandemic might be the last nail in the coffin.⁵¹ This period also witnessed centralizing and authoritarian moves by perceived contenders, China (in Hong Kong) and Russia (with Putin’s constitutional reform). It was feared that these initiatives would create a fertile ground for reinforcing these countries’ influence and power in the respective regions and maybe, at the international level.⁵² As the pandemic initially aggravated the United States’ rivalry with China⁵³ and heightened the competition between the great powers more broadly,⁵⁴ analysts anticipated that the order to come would be a plural one. It would either be a multipolar setting, a multilateral configuration of some kind, or a decentralized environment⁵⁵. Such prospects look even more plausible as the erosion of the European Union is expected to continue—maybe paralleled by further deterioration of EU–USA relations—while chauvinistic nationalism will likely grow further.⁵⁶

That disorder, rather than a new order, can result from these trends is also on the table of hypotheses.⁵⁷ Few Western theorists, as David B. Kanin, are ready to face such a possibility and declare altogether that we will witness the end of American hegemony and of “the universe of Western domination of an international system largely built on Western pillars.”⁵⁸ As the weakening of the Western core is taking place, the fact that most analysts cannot figure out the international configuration to come may be the symptom of a deeply entrenched Western-centrism, which—consciously or unconsciously—regards “the West” as the only possible pillar of order and stability. Such prejudice could also explain why non-Western groupings and institutions are often regarded with skepticism, suspicion, or condescendence.⁵⁹

Hegemony: from state-based leadership to the postcolonial/decolonial

Studies of power relations and hierarchies beyond material power were rather negligible in IR before the turn of the twenty-first century. The 2000s witnessed the emergence of ‘hierarchy studies,’ as a result of fruitful encounters with different theoretical frameworks that deal with power relations, like postcolonial studies. A few words on the hierarchy framework are needed here because it allows for a significant enlargement of the concept of hegemony within the IR field. Through this framework, hegemony can be understood as the outcome of a myriad of formal and informal relations.⁶⁰ Hierarchy studies have many affinities with world-system perspectives—see below—which explore international hierarchies and their mechanisms, thus allowing for a juncture between IR state-oriented approaches of hegemony and postcolonial ones.⁶¹ They also encompass analyzes of imperialism and imperial formations.⁶² World-system theories, postcolonial studies, and imperialism convey essential aspects of hegemony as understood in this volume. Their encounters through the hierarchy framework provide a first demonstration of the relevance of the relations sketched here. These threads will be considered in turn.

Hierarchy studies emerged in response to theoretical challenges brought about by the full unfolding of globalization in the 1990s. With the planetary deployment of a constellation of complex economic flows and processes, global governance grew in importance. These flows and processes bring into play a myriad of non-state actors, multinational corporations, and international institutions, which, due to their leading economic posture, are sites of decision and, thus, of power. As a consequence, categories of analysis, like boundaries, authority, and sovereignty, relevant to national framework and traditional relations between states, became increasingly problematic.⁶³ The hierarchy framework contributes to decentering the analysis of power relations in the world arena from state actors and leadership, military might and economic power. The international space is contemplated as a stratified environment,

shaped by different patterns of super- and subordination. These stratifications can have political-economic roots, but they can be shaped primarily by sociological factors like race and class. Neo-Gramscian perspectives, for instance, fully take into account such factors. Bringing the class perspective into focus, hegemony, according to some neo-Gramscian studies, is produced through the formation of a transnational capitalist class.⁶⁴ Class and race are standard units of analysis in postcolonial studies.

These factors are not the sole 'invisible' variables often neglected in IR: others are norm production and reproduction, a dimension also addressed by hierarchy studies.⁶⁵ Norms are also crucial to the building and maintaining hierarchies and are at the heart of colonial legacies. The hierarchy framework acknowledges the enduring impacts of colonialism and formal imperialism on knowledge, language, and culture in general (topics addressed in this collection) and the contribution of the latter to international hierarchies. Besides hierarchies structured around laws, there are hierarchies made up of "norms that rank actors according to some often implicit but broadly understood rule," as David A. Lake points out. These norms, in their early stages, could have been promoted by identifiable "norms makers,"⁶⁶ but once they make their way to the heart of societies, they are "enforced in a decentralized fashion by members of the community through social sanctions."⁶⁷ Once accepted and 'internalized,' norms are 'disembodied' and become autonomous, producing and reproducing themselves on their own. Not only does it become increasingly difficult, over time, to identify "who authored the norm," but some norms become "so deeply woven in the fabric of social life" that they "seem natural and are taken for granted."⁶⁸ Further development on the role of norms and cultural patterns as structuring features of international relations has to be postponed to provide a brief overview of Immanuel Wallerstein's world-system theory. This theory, which has many affinities with the hierarchy and the postcolonial frameworks, allows the enlargement of the parameters of hegemony within IR.

Wallerstein's four-volume masterpiece *The Modern World System* was initially published in 1974. Although world-system theories faced many critiques in the following decades, a host of recent studies build anew from Wallerstein's framework.⁶⁹ The fundamental impulse behind his work was an interest in the dissemination of the values of Western modernity. Wallerstein's theoretical venture started with his journey in Africa when many countries became (formally) independent and were engaged in the postcolonial nation-building process. Modernity was the key concept of development theories and policies put forward by then (see the discussion on modernity below). Wallerstein quickly concluded that addressing the whole history of colonialism and imperialism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries was essential to assess the dissemination of the modernity paradigm accurately. Thus doing, he was

dragged remoter in time, at the end of the fifteenth century, where he would set the starting point of the modern world system.⁷⁰

For Wallerstein, all relations and processes in the modern world system—throughout five centuries—are shaped by a central, all-encompassing logic—the endless accumulation of capital. For this reason, they are tightly interconnected.⁷¹ The modern world system is structured around a core and a periphery (with a semi-periphery between them), whose asymmetrical relations advantage the core. The extension of the world system followed the broad lines of European expansion. Integration in the system is first performed through the economy because it is a world economy, which is inherently capitalist. The inclusion of the different countries and regions in the system does not result from their own initiative: it occurs when at least one production process is dragged into the system.⁷²

The concept of hegemony plays a multifaced role in Wallerstein's world system theory. First, it addresses relations between states, whose primary impulse, for the countries of the core, is the never-ending competition for predominance in the system. But the countries of the periphery also rival to advance toward the core: integration in the semi-periphery is a common outcome for the successful ones (this is the case of the so-called emergent countries). Instances of non-Western countries joining the core are rare: Japan was such an exception. The stubborn use of the appellation 'the West'—even by scholars—as a synonym of the core obscures this inclusion and betrays skepticism around the possibility that 'non-Western' countries can be leaders. In Wallerstein's theory, thus, the shifts in the system result from the struggles of countries competing for advancement. Second, the state or group of states that accumulate the largest share of power—first rooted in economic advantage—dominates all others. This power is at once economic, political, military, and cultural.⁷³ Besides capital accumulation, the capacity to mobilize the material means—in large part, through the capture of resources and exploitation of the workforce from the periphery—needed for the development of the social bases of innovation, like education, research, production facilities, and infrastructures is fundamental to the core's economic advantage and political predominance. Wallerstein's conceptual framework, moreover, allows the acknowledgment of enduring asymmetrical relations and global inequalities after the colonial era came to a close. Indeed, the general logic that rules relations and processes within the modern world system remained the same throughout its lifespan: its disintegration would have started in the last third of the twentieth century, according to Wallerstein.

In *Law of Worldwide Value*, first published in 1978,⁷⁴ Samir Amin articulated the recognition of enduring economic relations of colonial-type into a theory. His law of globalized value unpacks hidden mechanisms of the "underdevelopment of contemporary Asian and African societies."⁷⁵ Amin identifies key factors in

the perpetuation of dependence relationships despite the colonizer's departure. Although there is an accumulation process going on in the periphery, this process is outward turned. This means that this accumulation process has to "adjust unilaterally to the dominant tendencies of the world system in which it is integrated," whose trends are dictated by the demands of accumulation at the core.⁷⁶ These conditions not only rule "accumulation on a world scale," they also "reproduce unequal development."⁷⁷ Samir Amin draws attention to two crucial vectors of dependence, which allow continuous transfers of value from the peripheries to the center: the cost of labor power—detrimental to the periphery in a globalized environment—and the access to and management of natural resources.⁷⁸

The penetration of the postcolonial framework in IR supported, reinforced, and refined the critical outlook of theories like those of Wallerstein and Amin. The specificity of modern European colonialism, which started with the first wave of European expansion, at the end of the fifteenth century, lies in the introduction of capitalism as the dominant mode of production, "which altered—with indelible and long-term consequences—the economic, social, cultural, and political dynamics of many societies around the world."⁷⁹ As the European colonial empires have turned what initially was "a local system of economic exchange [...] into a global economic system where virtually no territory or society has remained unaffected by its operations,"⁸⁰ the relations and processes induced by colonialism and imperialism are still fully effective in our time, even if they are not always plainly visible. If Wallerstein pointed to them, Amin's theory has unveiled the colonial and imperialist roots of the global inequalities reproduced and reinforced by globalization.⁸¹

The reproduction of asymmetrical relations inherited from colonialism and formal imperialism, thus of hegemonic relations, also encompasses features of social life like language, knowledge, values, beliefs, perceptions, and rules of behavior; therefore, culture broadly understood. At this point, let us go back to the hierarchy paradigm introduced earlier and to David Lakes' observation that hierarchies can be, first and foremost, the product of norms. Indeed, norms come from a diversity of sources, and they regulate behavior. They set the parameters of social inclusion and exclusion by determining what is socially desirable and acceptable and what is not. These boundaries change according to circumstances, time, and space, and each society has its own sets of norms. However, some sets of norms tend to prevail over the others, some produced outside the nation, like those conveyed by colonial and imperialist powers.

The actors of the European expansion were animated by a feeling of superiority that conditioned the perception of other peoples as inferior, thus, by racism. Thus, they denied any value to the cultures and traditions of the peoples they encountered. This phenomenon was no less characteristic of colonialism and

formal imperialism than the search for profit, as thinkers like Aimé Césaire and Frantz Fanon have shown. Racism has a dehumanizing effect; it instills a feeling of inadequacy, backwardness, and inferiority in subjected peoples and individuals. Depreciative comparisons between their cultures and the Western ones were also fostered by knowledge production. In the West, the nineteenth century was a high point for the accumulation and organization of knowledge into distinct academic disciplines. However, this body of knowledge supported the enterprise and discourse of the colonizer or imperialist⁸² and celebrated its culture and practices as the highest ones. The dissemination of this knowledge helped the dominant to “remap and order the world to fit in with [his] own consciousness” and allowed him “to consolidate difference and uphold the power of the West.”⁸³ The effort to “reassert the epistemological value and agency of the non-European world” over the “cultural hegemony of European knowledges” is one of the central undertakings of postcolonial studies.⁸⁴ Two chapters of this volume deal with Western privilege in knowledge production and reproduction and challenges to the latter. The “colonial discourse” was typically fed by binary oppositions like maturity and immaturity, civilization and barbarism, developed and underdeveloped or developing, and progressive and primitive.⁸⁵ The assertion of the colonizer’s discourse and its undermining of the “‘indigenous’ discourses that might challenge it,” is at the core of a conception of hegemony that became common in postcolonial studies.⁸⁶ From this perspective, hegemony acknowledges the hold of practices, knowledges, languages, beliefs, and values conveyed by the colonizer through its encounters with the colonized, and translated into norms. The colonized often resist and contest these norms, but their interiorization is a formidable impediment, as Fanon observes. Struggles to retrieve, revalorize, and disseminate oppressed knowledges are not a thing past, they are ongoing. Concepts put forward in postcolonial theory in the 1980 and 1990s to make sense of colonially constructed otherness, like subalternity, hybridity, and mimicry contribute to unveiling and examining the scars of colonialism and imperialism.⁸⁷

In *Orientalism*, Edward Said underscores that one cannot properly study and understand ideas, cultures, and histories without considering their “strength” and “dynamic configuration.”⁸⁸ “The Orient” was far more than a vague idea or a benign intellectual construction: it was a shaping force of relations with the West, characterized by power and domination. “The West has exercised complex hegemony to different degrees,”⁸⁹ observes Said. Based on Gramsci’s conception, Said defines hegemony as the cultural supremacy achieved by the dominant cultural forms and ideas in a given society. “It is hegemony, or rather the effects of cultural hegemony, which endows orientalism with its consistence and force.”⁹⁰ In fact, it is the idea of “a European cultural identity superior to all peoples and cultures which are not Europeans” which made European culture “hegemonic outside Europe.” Orientalism developed in this process. The “strategy

of orientalism” was a function of this “position superiority” of “the West,” and aimed at preserving it.⁹¹

Besides its colonial- and imperial rooted channels of dissemination, culture was and remains a powerful vehicle of soft power,⁹² for state or non-state actors alike. The concept of hegemony has varied and flexible meanings in the field of cultural studies, but it often retains the connection between the privilege of cultural diffusion, the production and reproduction of economic inequalities, and the social hierarchies underscored by postcolonial studies. Hegemony, for instance, is sometimes used as a critical tool to unpack material and cultural inequalities conveyed by media production,⁹³ or to analyze the role of education as a privileged site of diffusion of the dominant ideology.⁹⁴

This section has demonstrated the multidimensionality of hegemony, which operates in the field of culture broadly understood no less than through politics, military might, and economic power. If norms are essential in creating and maintaining asymmetrical relations, the latter have a material basis, bringing into play disparities in military, technical, economic, and social resources. These material disparities secure the preponderance of a state, a group of countries or actors which can shape the international arena according to their interests. The concentration of resources can result—at least partly—from direct or indirect control over foreign lands and is, in turn, reinforced and enhanced by such monitoring and supported by a normative order. The next section will distinguish forms of control; I will consider the concepts of colonialism, empire, and imperialism and explore their connections with hegemony.

Hegemony and imperialism

Hegemony, as suggested earlier, is sometimes used as a politically correct substitute name for imperialism and imperial formations. Niall Ferguson retells that in the 1990s when the United States became the global hegemon, the idea of empire sounded very suspicious to the American statesmen and the American people alike; the word was surrounded by taboo in the United States. For instance, Sandy Berger (President Clinton's adviser) in 1999 and George W. Bush in 2000 proudly declared that if the United States was a ‘global power,’ it was not an ‘imperial’ power or an empire; the country could have endorsed such a role but refused it.⁹⁵ ‘Leadership’ and ‘global power’ sounded better and nobler to them; the academia preferred the word “hegemony.”⁹⁶

This anecdote provides a point of entry for discussing the notions of empire and imperialism. The meaning of these concepts is almost as debated as hegemony, and for similar reasons: their historically specific, and thus, fluctuant character, does not allow for a single, static definition.⁹⁷ A detailed review of the positions and debates on these concepts is beyond the scope of this introduction. The conceptions proposed here rely on choices and are intended to clarify

further the contours of hegemony as understood in this book. In the literature, empire and imperialism often comes in pairs, with a 'formal' and 'informal' variant. Since their boundaries are porous, most authors choose one of these pairs: thus, definitions often overlap from one study to another. What some regard as formal imperialism can fall into the range of informal empire in other studies, for instance. Compounds like neoimperialism or neocolonialism further confuse the issue. For some scholars, imperialism and empire are more or less the same. The distinction between 'imperial' as an adjective describing empires and 'imperialism' as applicable to a broader range of experiences is not universally accepted. I regard this distinction as relevant and historically founded and articulate the concepts discussed here according to this demarcation line. It is essential to underscore that the word imperialism came into use only in the second half of the nineteenth century and was applied to the overseas expansion phase of this era. The outstanding trait of this phase was not the set-up of colonies, but the establishment of dependencies managed more flexibly.⁹⁸ The historical background suggests that empire and imperialism are not the same.⁹⁹

Let's go back to Ferguson's article. If American leadership can be described as hegemony, and if, according to him—who prefers the pair formal and informal empire—it would be more enlightening to call the United States an empire, "albeit one that has [...] generally preferred indirect and informal rule,"¹⁰⁰ this allows viewing hegemony as informal imperialism (in my preferred terminology). We can deduct from Ferguson's article a few landmarks for a definition. Informal imperialism does not entail open political and economic control over foreign countries. In respect to the American case, it may imply the deployment of military might, the endorsement of a police role, and political interference; it can rely heavily on trade and economic flows,¹⁰¹ and entail the dissemination of an ideology—broadly understood—, as I noted. Such influence, interference, and economic privilege work and are secured through indirect, subtle channels and means. I will sketch the contours of empire, colonialism, and formal imperialism to put into sharper relief the characteristics of informal imperialism.

Empire-building, from the end of the fifteenth century, went with the conquest of foreign lands through military might and subjection of peoples, bringing about economic—and sometimes strategic—advantages to the colonizer. The conqueror "occupies, imposes its will and law on its subjects, and fends off rivals."¹⁰² The empire provides him with the opportunity to increase his wealth "through a combination of trade, colonization, mining, taxation, and tribute."¹⁰³ direct capture of resources prevails. The subjected lands are usually ruled and managed by the conqueror or agents appointed by him, often with the help of local personnel. Local rulers may be maintained to preserve the façade of political sovereignty. Colonies—in modern times—are part of an empire; they usually entail a dense occupation of the conquered land with a significant influx of settlers beyond small groups of merchants, soldiers, and missionaries,

for instance. (In some areas, the need for land was a chief motivation of the foundation of colonies, but the metropolises still enjoy privileged access to resources.) These settlers formed new communities besides indigenous ones (but there were also mixed settlements): the relations between these groups were often uneasy and suffused with violence.¹⁰⁴ Although empire building was not a Western privilege, the Western enterprise, as mentioned, did have a specific character that many postcolonial, Marxist, and world-system theorists associate with capitalism.

Control over and exploitation of foreign countries and peoples do not always follow the pattern of colonialism. During the expansion phase of the second half of the nineteenth century, when the word imperialism came into use, the great powers established their grip over foreign lands and peoples, openly exploited their resources and labor force, and suspended their sovereignty more or less entirely without directly ruling them. The 'obligations' they retained toward controlled peoples and lands were not so constraining. Imperialist powers sent troops to reaffirm their grip whenever necessary, but their onsite presence, overall, was discrete. In an era characterized by the rise of nationalism and ever-increasing competition between the great powers, subjecting foreign lands became a crucial factor in asserting a country's prestige on the international scene: this would remain so until the unleashing of the Great War.¹⁰⁵ These situations fall into the specter of formal imperialism. Political control is more distant, but the economic advantages are similar—and in some cases, potentially more significant—than those provided by colonialism. Formal imperialism, however, did not substitute itself for colonialism: both forms of foreign control have coexisted. But in the late nineteenth century, expansionist powers increasingly wanted to enjoy all the benefits of control, like free access to resources and exploitation of labor power without paying the costs. The maintenance—and defense—of colonies was regarded as an unnecessary burden.¹⁰⁶ The character of this expansion phase puts into relief the connections with capitalism noted above. To the extent that "the growth of European industry and finance-capital was achieved through colonial domination in the first place," writes Ania Loomba, imperialism as described here is "the highest stage of colonialism."¹⁰⁷

In situations of informal imperialism, neither political control nor economic exploitation unfolds in the open. Such behavior is regarded as unacceptable, as these relations usually involve—at least—formally independent states. Indeed, informal imperialism won the day with the march of peoples toward flag independence, but it also coexisted alongside formal imperialism. In the informal variant, influence, interference—sometimes supported by military might—and exploitation has to work through subtler mechanisms and multiple channels. Informal imperialism encompasses relations and practices that some theorists call neoimperial or neocolonial. As the actors entering these relations

seem to act freely, and according to their interests, their asymmetrical nature may remain unnoticed. The exploitative nature of the global market, while unveiled by many studies, is nonetheless often denied.

This brings us back to Niall Ferguson's suggestion that the United States' leadership may be called an informal empire, rather than be depicted as hegemony. After 1945, the United States was the first power in the Western hemisphere in political, military, economic and cultural terms. As the lender of Western European countries and aid provider of many newly independent countries—either directly or through the international institutions it founded and led—, and head of NATO; as the most dynamic center of innovation and home country of most multinational corporations; and as the (Western) world leader of the cultural industry, the United States was in an ideal position to shape international and—to some extent—national destinies according to its ideological preferences and to its own profit. The United States earned this capacity without exercising direct and open control; this is why American leadership and influence are often called informal imperialism.¹⁰⁸

Beyond relations involving state or economic actors, informal imperialism can unfold through culture.¹⁰⁹ The globalization of Western or American values and norms, customs, and ways of life, the global dissemination of Western cultural productions—see the next section—, and languages (especially English) are often regarded as vectors of cultural imperialism, and, in recent decades, of American hegemony in particular.¹¹⁰ Colonialism and formal imperialism have created relationships involving “the interaction of economic, political, social, and cultural imperialism”.¹¹¹ Culture is also infused by colonial legacies and remains a domain invested by asymmetrical relations. And yet, cultural forms of soft power—outside the postcolonial and cultural studies—are often overlooked when attempting “to measure power.”¹¹²

Even if it unfolds in a decentralized and highly flexible fashion when compared with colonialism and formal imperialism, the informal variant produces comparable effects. There are still winners and losers, and the winners' benefits are often comparable to situations of formal control. True, they do not enjoy 'free' access to labor power and resources, but they do not have to support the financial burden—and obligations—of open domination. The disadvantaged still face limitations of and infringement on their sovereignty—broadly understood—, economic exploitation,¹¹³ and constricted trajectories of development.¹¹⁴ Loomba's observation quoted earlier perfectly captures the intimate ties between these situations. Although the current order does not rely on direct rule, it still allows the “economic, cultural and (to varying degrees) political penetration of some countries by others.”¹¹⁵ Thus, hegemony encompasses direct and indirect forms of foreign control, colonialism, formal imperialism, and informal imperialism. All are characterized by unequal relations mainly

beneficial to one of the parties involved, or at least securing its superiority. These relations can be primarily political, economic, cultural, or a mix of them. Although they unfold in various forms and involve a diversity of actors, they end up producing and reproducing global inequalities.

Hegemony, the West, and modernity

This volume is about Western hegemonies: the use of the plural, first, underscores the diversity of domains in which asymmetrical relations develop and the variety of forms they adopt. Second, the plural signals the plurality of actors who can assert their superiority through such relations or benefit from them. A few geographical, historical, and cultural applications of the concept of the West, another highly flexible and contested notion, were implicitly outlined thus far. Further clarification is needed, especially when one contemplates the West from the perspective of culture or through the prism of ideology.

Labeling countries or cultures as Western entails viewing others as ‘non-Western’. Such categories were criticized as essentialist, and thus, as misleading rather than enlightening. They would foster fictional reconstructions rather than an accurate assessment of the diverse situations. The concept of colonialism inspired similar critiques.¹¹⁶ Some scholars point out that one can only retrieve these histories through fragments, which convey neglected experiences, repressed knowledges, and “silenced voices.”¹¹⁷ While there is truth in these criticisms, on the one hand, focusing on fragments may make one lose sight of the whole, that is, of the broader forces and processes at work in distinct situations. On the other hand, categories are shortcuts, useful landmarks to orient ourselves in the plurality and diversity of reality if they do not constraint the analysis within narrow boundaries and subject it to binary oppositions.

The West is a common concept in everyday and academic language alike, often used without definition or specifications, but non-Western is used with caution because it conflates under a single label peoples and countries that have very little in common. Since everyone has a vague idea of what the West refers to, explanations seem superfluous. The spontaneous associations triggered by the word are usually close to the meanings proposed in academic literature. Thus, the concept remains a valid category of thought when used as a neutral landmark or as a critical tool. But the West has had a peculiar ideological charge in the last two centuries, for those who identify themselves as Westerners and those who do not. Far from invalidating the concept, these uses and perceptions confirm its scientific relevance.

Indeed, from the end of the eighteenth century, when it started to be commonly used, the concept of “the West” contributed to defining national identities, shaping relations—many of them asymmetrical—between peoples and the perception of the Other, and determining the understanding of the

world, in short, it played a significant role in crafting modern history. In these early times, the concept already had connotations of power and modernity. The actors who identify themselves with the West perceived themselves as powerful and civilized and used the concept to project this image.¹¹⁸ Thus doing, they set themselves apart from other people, either overseas or in the Eastern part of Europe (where the features of modernity would develop later and unevenly). The idea of the West contributed to laying down the boundaries between the dominant and the dominated as they were experienced in history.

Let us map the historically evolving geopolitical landscapes of the West in the last two centuries. The latter, as David B. Kanin points out, is “a collective noun incorporating succeeding constellations of transatlantic powers that in recent centuries have imposed themselves on everyone else’s politics, economies, and cultures.”¹¹⁹ In the nineteenth century, the West could refer to a handful of European countries, like Great Britain, France (after it integrated the Concert of Europe), and in the last third of the century, Germany (which, however, did not fully perceive itself as part of the West), or Italy: all these countries were involved either in colonialism or imperialism.¹²⁰ The same etiquette could also be applied to a single powerful country, a hegemon, Great Britain, or the United States, according to the chronology of power shifts. When they reached their zenith, they were highly influential and powerful in political, military, and economic terms, and they concentrated extensive material and technical resources. They could spread practices, norms, values, and culture throughout the world: the American hegemon’s capacity in this respect exceeded his homolog’s. The balance started to tilt after the Great War, but it was only in the post-1945 era that the expression the West would routinely refer to the United States. However, given the Cold War antagonism between the Eastern and the Western bloc—the conventional etiquette ‘bipolar’ world neglects the non-aligned movement, mostly made up of developing countries—, the West could also describe the group composed of the United States and Western Europe, plus a few eastward countries not included in the Eastern bloc (as Greece, commonly depicted as the crucible of Western civilization). After the collapse of Communist regimes, the West could still refer to a set of transatlantic countries, or only to the United States, or the European Union. The set-up of the EU, at first, fostered a sense of belonging between European countries and, thus doing, a feeling of difference from the United States: today, they constitute two Wests.¹²¹

When contemplated from a cultural or ideological viewpoint, the boundaries of the West are even more fluctuant and malleable. The liberal and ‘neoliberal’ orders, despite their close association with the United States, can be regarded as Western, as mentioned. The contribution of culture to the spread and assertion of Western powers’ domination on foreign lands was also underscored. Even in the absence of deliberate strategies of dissemination or instrumentalization,

culture expresses itself and is communicated through one's thinking, feeling, and acting. Western expansion is inseparable from the spread of the practices, values, beliefs, and knowledges embraced by its agents. The dissemination and penetration of the latter outside Western Europe and North America—the home regions of most colonizers and imperialists—is often called Westernization. Many of these cultural features were part of the politico-cultural complex called modernity, which encompasses political, economic, social, cultural, scientific, and intellectual developments. The roots of these developments lay in European Enlightenment philosophy and the two revolutions of the end of the eighteenth century, the political ones in the United States and France, and the industrial revolution. Modernity encompasses industrialization, technical and scientific development—as experienced in industrialized countries—urbanization, capitalism, secularism, rationalism, liberalism, and later democracy. These trends were viewed as the backbone of human and social progress, which was the ideology of the time, and Westerners regarded themselves as its agents.

From the nineteenth century to the second half of the twentieth century, Westernization implied the promotion and dissemination of these features, whether they were explicitly associated with modernity or not.¹²² From the 1950s, Westernization would also have other meanings, describing, for instance, the spread of consumer society and American popular culture, or, in the 1990s, the dissemination of the democracy and free-market tandem. Since most of the developments associated with modernity cannot be attributed to specific actors and are most often viewed as parts of a whole than as autonomous features, modernity is not nationally specific. It refers to the group of countries where these components are the most fully developed (and are modern in this sense) in a given context. But modernity has had its champions: Great Britain and the United States, as Bush writes, have been each in their turn “Empires of modernity.”¹²³

Despite modernity's condemnation of religious faith as superstition and praise of human reason as the highest source of wisdom, religion retained a strong foothold in Europe throughout the nineteenth century and beyond. The century-long struggle of Christianity against Islam on European soil impacted the relations of the Ottoman Empire with Russia and the European powers, while Christianity periodically reinforced ties between competing European countries. As in earlier times, Christianity remained a vector of European expansion and an ideological tool justifying European domination of other peoples. As a feature still associated with the West, Christianity contributed to drawing the contours of otherness. The end of the Cold War left the enemy's seat empty: Islam would become again the great Other of the West.

The conventional depiction of modernity and its exclusive association with the West were contested. A host of studies questioned the Western self-attributed

privilege over modernity, especially in its connotations of progress, enlightenment, and civilization. Some unveiled the existence of other modernities, which emerged outside Western societies; others argued that some features of Western modernity appeared elsewhere, either in parallel or earlier than in the West, and unconnected to Western developments. These findings are important and relevant. The use of Western modernity as a universal standard to gauge societies and cultures is also rightly condemned. These criticisms, however, should not make us oblivious to the concrete historical role played by modernity. Western modernity provided colonization and imperialism with an ideological architecture, as suggested. Westerners did view modernity as Western and based their feeling of superiority on it. Modernity, thus, was a pillar of the establishment of foreign influence and control, and it did act as a standard of measure. Thus doing, (Western) modernity participated in the transformation of the economy, social relations, and cultures of subjected peoples.¹²⁴ As modernity was deployed as proof of unmatched Western advancement, it served to justify the colonizer's and imperialist's right to dominate other peoples and to 'sell' the idea of expansion in their homeland. In the late nineteenth century, European political classes and populations increasingly resented the economic and military burden of such enterprises; the discourse of 'civilization' was only half successful in attracting support. Therefore, Western modernity became normative and hegemonic and shaped history.

In *The Intimate Enemy. Loss and Recovery of Self Under Colonialism*, Ashis Nandy unveils the less visible but concrete effects of the modernity paradigm in the context of colonialism. Western practices, values, and knowledges were "internalized" by the subjected peoples as a result of a "psychological invasion from the West."¹²⁵

It is now time to turn to the second form of colonization, the one which at least six generations of the Third World have learned to view as a prerequisite for their liberation. This colonialism colonizes minds in addition to bodies and it releases forces within the colonized societies to alter their cultural priorities once for all. In the process, it helps generalize the concept of the modern West from a geographical and temporal entity to a psychological category. The West is now everywhere, within the West and outside; in structures and minds.¹²⁶

Postcolonialism, understood as the phase that followed the end of colonialism and formal imperialism has confronted subjected peoples to another version of the modernity paradigm. Development was supported by foreign, mostly Western aid, and modernity showed the trajectory. Based on the values, orientations, and experiences of industrialized countries in the West from the nineteenth century, modernity, it was believed, could drag all peoples on the road to success. Arturo Escobar, in *Encountering Development*, denounces the

“hegemonic” will to make these peoples embrace “the goal of material prosperity and economic progress.”¹²⁷ This orientation pushed forward by the United Nations ended up producing the very opposite effects.¹²⁸ Thus, Western modernity, through colonialism and imperialism alike, was hegemonic.

This chapter showed that hegemony, when contemplated as a concept that makes sense of asymmetrical relations advantageous to one of the parties involved, or, at the least, securing the superiority of a party over the other, embraces a wide range of situations, contexts, and domains, political, economic, scientific, technical, and cultural. Over the past centuries, countries of Western Europe, and later, North America, repeatedly claimed their superiority in these areas, and were able, to a large extent, to tilt the balance of international relations in their favor.

Critiques point out that the ideological impacts of Western modernity and Western values, practices, and culture more broadly were felt at the deepest possible level. Subjected peoples internalized them as ideals and pursued them and reproduced them, thus becoming unwilling agents of their repression. The battle against these norms and against material exploitation is a harsh one, and it is ongoing. Similar phenomena occurred in the political domain; the international order and political forms associated with the transatlantic powers became normative, especially in the twentieth century, for neighbors and newly independent countries alike. Just like the modernity ideology that fueled development policies, they bore the (unfulfilled) promise of unmatched well-being and progress.

Adopting political and economic practices, principles, and institutions replicating those of the leading Western countries, and joining in their sphere of influence or governance, can result from explicit or implicit pressures. Two sets of chapters deal with Western political hegemonies: the first focuses on politics in a national framework. Western interference or influence was a shaping force behind the intensive democratization phase of the 1990s, whose results were disappointing, as Marie-Josée Lavallée explains in her chapter. Within a few years, the new democratic regimes faced serious regress, many of them being democracies only by name. Democracy, as it developed in the West, does not exhaust the range of democratic experiences nor the meaning of democracy. According to Lavallée, while the West prided itself on being the cradle of democracy, a renewal of the latter is not likely to rely on the paradigmatic forms it assumed in the West and on the action and example of Western actors. Yavuz Yildirim’s chapter exposes how Turkey, since the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, responded to the appeal of the West in its nation-building enterprise. In this country, the equal attraction of Eastern and Western values, mores, and ways of life was a constant source of tension. During the Cold War, efforts to implement capitalism and liberal democracy were partly supported by the

United States, out of a will to drag Turkey away from the Soviet orbit. Later, aspirations to join the club of Western countries focus on membership in the European Union. As Yildirim shows, attempts at adopting and adapting some features of Western liberal democracy to the Turkish context did not have the expected results. In Egypt, informal American imperialism and colonial legacy constrained national development and impacted its political trajectory from its accession to independence, as Azza Harras shows in her chapter. The 2011 revolution and the political developments that ensued are intimately connected to the contestation of and resistance to Western cultural imperialism and neoliberalism, also associated with the West. Colonial legacy also weighed heavily on the postcolonial trajectories of other African countries. In their chapter, Moritz Mihatsch and Michael Mulligan show that the model of sovereignty promoted by the United Nations when African countries became independent was not only indebted to the Wilsonian paradigm but rooted in the colonial experience. Such a conception of sovereignty could hardly foster the self-determination of African peoples.

The second set of contributions on politics examines issues of international order. Juho Korhonen's chapter argues that the liberal order has roots in pre-1914 imperial formations. Analyzing the development of the latter during the last century through the case of Russia and post-socialist states, the author argues that the Soviet and American Empires were co-constitutive producers of the liberal order. The next chapter deals with American hegemony in Eurasia, which regresses according to Muhammet Koçak. The issue is analyzed through the evolution of the tripartite relations of Russia, Turkey, and the United States after the Iraq invasion. Pekka Korhonen takes us to East Asia. His chapter examines the complex and unique role of Japan in the international arena. Viewed as peripheral in the Western-led world system, Japan was regarded as central in East Asia. According to Japanese conceptualization, the country was a bridge between the East and the West, a position recently challenged by China's economic rise. The chapter contributes to the debates on hegemonic shifts by taking the issue at the level of representations and interrogating Japanese and Chinese sources.

The third part of the book explores Western hegemonies in the field of culture broadly understood. Also dealing with Japan, Jordi Serrano Muñoz's chapter underscores that despite its entry into the exclusive club of the core countries, the Westerners did not consider Japan on equal footing. Moreover, the United States deployed various strategies to ensure that the country would not be regarded as an equal or a challenger. Thus, American discourse extensively relied on mechanisms of subalternization to minimize Japan's power and achievements. Anouar El Younssi's chapter considers the West's relations with a century-long Other, namely, Islam. In the last decades, islamophobia has reactivated the West's fear and contempt for an old-perceived-contender to its

cultural and political hegemony. The Other is routinely regarded as a generic being devoid of identity, adorned with negative attributes, and sometimes depicted as the symmetric opposite of oneself. Thus, it appears as a menace. The chapter examines the assertion that Islam would be a threat to the West by interrogating Islamic thinkers. Addressing an aspect of colonial otherness, Mark Fraser Briskey assesses the impacts of mimicry in Pakistan. The chapter explains how the interiorization and reproduction of the British-Indian Army culture, practices, and ethnic prejudices contributed to ruining the unity of the country two decades after its formation.

The last two contributions tackle Western hegemonies in knowledge production and reproduction. Riikkamari Johanna Muhonen explores one of the channels of the Cold War cultural competition, higher education. The Soviet Union's policy of enrolling international students in its universities, especially from developing African countries, was motivated by the will to challenge the monopoly of Western universities in this respect. The chapter retells this experience and evaluates it with regard to Soviet ideological and foreign policy goals. The issue of knowledge production and reproduction in the area of language is explored by Samsondeen Ajagbe. The privilege of Western languages such as English in many spheres of social life in formerly subjected countries is an enduring colonial legacy. This chapter, which records the progress of Nigerian Pidgin in public life, signals an ongoing process of revalorization of local languages conducive to the emancipation of knowledge and beyond of the Nigerian people.

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Notes

- ¹ Owen Worth, *Rethinking Hegemony* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 17.
- ² Barbara Bush, *Imperialism and Postcolonialism* (London: Routledge, 2014), 50-51; Martin Thomas and Andrew S. Thompson, "Rethinking Decolonization: A New Research Agenda for the Twenty-First Century," in *The Oxford Handbook of the Ends of Empire*, eds. Martin Thomas and Andrew S. Thompson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 5, 7, <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780198713197.013.1>; Ania Loomba, *Colonialism/Postcolonialism* (London: Routledge, 1998), 8.
- ³ See for instance Sanjay Seth, "Introduction," in *Postcolonial Theory and International Relations. A Critical Introduction*, ed. Sanjay Seth (London: Routledge, 2013), 1; Bush, *Imperialism*, 59. On Africa, see Tatah Mentan, *Africa in the Age of Colonial Empire: Slavery, Capitalism, Racism, Colonialism, Decolonization, Independence as Recolonization* (Mankon, Bamenda: Langa Research and Publishing, 2017); on the Middle East, Fatemah Alzubairi, *Colonialism, Neo-Colonialism, and Anti-Terrorism Law in the Arab World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019). The applications and boundaries of the concept of neocolonialism are very flexible. A few chapters of *The Oxford Handbook of Postcolonial Studies* (Graham Huggan ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013) address colonialism as a phenomenon of the present. American military interventions and political interference in Iraq and Afghanistan, for instance, are depicted as colonial practices. Susan Koshy views the discourse of human rights as a vehicle of neocolonialism, because of its close association with asymmetrical liberal economic practices ("From Cold War to the Trade War: Neocolonialism and Human Rights," *Social Text* 58 (Spring, 1999): 1-32). Jessica Whyte attributes a similar function to the "responsibility to protect" ("Always on Top? The "Responsibility to Protect" and the persistence of Colonialism," in *The Postcolonial World*, eds. Jyotsna G. Singh and David D. Kim (London: Routledge, 2016), 308-324).
- ⁴ Loomba, *Colonialism*, 7; see also her discussion of "postcolonial" situations and meanings, 7-20.
- ⁵ *Ibid.*
- ⁶ *Ibid.*, 16.
- ⁷ Randolph Persaud and Alina Sajed, "Race, Gender, and Culture in International Relations," in *Gender and Culture in International Relations. Postcolonial Perspectives*, eds. Randolph Persaud and Alina Sajed (London: Routledge, 2018), 13-14; Sankaran Krishna, "Postcolonialism and its Relevance for International Relations in a Globalized World" (in the same volume). There are a few landmark books in IR that develop postcolonial

perspectives: for instance Geeta Chowdhry and Sheila Nair, *Power, Postcolonialism, and International Relations* (London: Routledge, 2004); Naeem Inayatullah and David L. Blaney, *International Relations and the Problem of Difference* (London: Routledge, 2004).

⁸ Krishna, "Postcolonialism and its Relevance", 22; see 24-26 for further points of critique.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 24.

¹⁰ Persaud and Sajed, "Race, Gender, and Culture", 2.

¹¹ Worth, *Rethinking Hegemony*, xvii.

¹² Craig Brandist, *The Dimensions of Hegemony: Language, Culture, and Politics in Revolutionary Russia* (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 1-7. Before Gramsci, the concept was part of Marxist and socialist theories and used in debates by figures like Lenin, Rosa Luxemburg, Karl Kautsky and Leon Trostky (Worth, *Rethinking Hegemony*, 63-66). For a detailed study, see Alan Shandro, *Political Practice and Theory in the Class Struggle: Lenin and the Logic of Hegemony* (Leiden, Brill, 2014). On the influence and uses of Gramsci's concept, see among others Marco Fonseca, *Gramsci's Critique of Civil Society: Towards a New Concept of Hegemony* (New York and London: Routledge, 2016); Mark McNally and John Schwarzmantel, ed., *Gramsci and Global Politics. Hegemony and Resistance* (London: Routledge, 2009); Richard Howson and Kylie Smith, eds, *Hegemony. Studies in Consensus and Coercion* (New York and London: Routledge, 2008).

¹³ For a synthetic review of the main models of interpretations from the Cold War era to today, see John G. Ikenberry and Daniel H. Nexon, "Hegemony Studies 3.0: The Dynamics of Hegemonic Orders," *Security Studies* 28, no. 3 (2009): 395-421, <https://doi.org/10.1080/09636412.2019.1604981>. For an overview of important realist debates from the 1990s to 2005, see William C. Wohlforth et al., "Realism, American Hegemony, and Soft Balancing," in *The Realism Reader*, ed. Colin Elman and Michael Jensen (London: Palgrave, 2014), 381-421.

¹⁴ Ian Clark, "Bringing Hegemony Back in: the United States and International Order," *International Affairs* 85, no. 1 (January 2009): 22; Christopher Layne, "The Unipolar Illusion Revisited. The Coming End of the United States' Unipolar Moment," in *The Realism Reader*, edited by Colin Elman and Michael Jensen (London: Palgrave, 2014), 396-398.

¹⁵ Simon Reich and Richard Ned Leblow, *Good-Bye Hegemony. Power and Influence in the Global System* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), 16.

¹⁶ William C. Wohlforth, "The Stability of a Unipolar World," in *The Realism Reader*, edited by Colin Elman and Michael Jensen (London: Palgrave, 2014), 384.

¹⁷ Worth, *Rethinking Hegemony*, xv.

¹⁸ Wohlforth, "Stability of a Unipolar World," 383-387. See Ikenberry and Nexon, "Hegemony Studies 3.0," 401-402; 404. This is the thrust of hegemonic stability theories.

¹⁹ Wohlforth, "Stability of a Unipolar World," 386 and Layne "The Unipolar Illusion," 396. See also Adam Watson, *Hegemony and History* (London: Routledge, 2007), 13: the author views 'collective hegemony' as ordering.

²⁰ Clark, "Bringing Hegemony Back in," 24.

²¹ Ikenberry and Nexon, "Hegemony Studies 3.0", 400. For broad historical surveys, see for instance Perry Anderson, *The H-Word: the Peripeteia of Hegemony* (London: Verso, 2017); Watson, *Hegemony and History*; Tai-Yoo Kim and Daeryoon Kim, *The Secrets of Hegemony* (Singapore: Springer, 2017); Jeremy Black, *Great Powers and the Quest for Hegemony: the World Order Since 1500* (Abingdon, Oxon, New York: Routledge, 2008).

²² Clark, "Bringing Hegemony Back in", 23-25; Andrea Komlosy, "Prospects of Decline and Hegemonic Shifts for the West", *Journal of World-Systems Research* 22, no. 2 (2016): 464, <https://doi.org/10.5195/JWSR.2016.627>. According to Bailin, the G7 took the lead from the 1970s (Alison Bailin, *From Traditional to Group Hegemony. The G7, the Liberal Economic Order and the Core-Periphery Gap* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), 9-11, 17-18, 34).

²³ Ian Clark's distinction between three historical instances of hegemony in nineteenth and twentieth centuries' international relations, the Concert of Europe, Pax Britannica, and American hegemony is problematic, as the first and the second ones overlap (Ian Clark, *Hegemony in International Society* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 8; he discusses each of them at length in separate chapters). Collective hegemony is as an alternative to the balance of power paradigm, put forward for instance in Paul Schroeder's famous studies on nineteenth century international relations: see Paul W. Schroeder, "A.J.P. Taylor's International System," *The International History Review*, 33, no. 1 (March 2001): 1-27; "The Nineteenth Century System: Balance of Power or Political Equilibrium?," *Review of International Studies* 15, no. 2, (April 1989): 135-153; "The 19th-Century International System: Changes in the Structure", *World Politics*, 39, no. 1, (October 1986): 1-26.

²⁴ Watson, *Hegemony and History*, 12-13. Alison Bailin views hegemony as a feature of groups, but she roots it in economy (*From Traditional to Group Hegemony*). Ian Clark puts forward a collective and hierarchical conception of hegemony inspired by international society interpretations (Clark, "Bringing Hegemony Back in," 24). Although Komlosy does not use this concept, he insists that hegemony relies on multidimensional cooperation with core allies (Komlosy, "Prospects of Decline," 466).

²⁵ Bailin, *From Traditional to Group Hegemony*, 2-6, 9, 17, 28-30, 33-34.

²⁶ See for instance the Economist Intelligence Unit's analysis of the impacts of the pandemics on global trade and chain supplies and short-term prospects (The Economist Intelligence Unit, "Down But Not Out ? Globalisation and the Threat of Covid-19", 2020, <http://www.eiu.com/Handlers/WhitepaperHandler.ashx?fi=Globalisation-and-the-threat-of-Covid-19.pdf&mode=wp&campaignid=globalisation-covid>).

²⁷ System-world theories are based on such analysis (see our discussion of Immanuel Wallerstein's work in the text). A recent instance is Ian Taylor, *Global Governance and Transnationalizing Capitalist Hegemony. The Myth of the "Emerging Powers"* (London and New York: Routledge, 2017). Similar perspectives can be found in the work of critiques of culture: a recent example is Burton Lee Artz, "Global Media Practices and Cultural Hegemony: Growing, Harvesting, and Marketing the Consuming Audience," in *Media, Ideology, and Hegemony*, ed. Savas Coban (Leiden: Brill, 2018) p.7 sq.

²⁸ Bailin, *From Traditional to Group Hegemony*, 1.

²⁹ Alexander Cooley and Daniel Nexon, *Exit from Hegemony: The Unravelling of the American Global Order* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020), 2. The United States' economic interventionism in the wake of WWII was decisive: for a quick overview of these well-known facts, see Greg Bankoff, "The "Three R's" and the Making of a New World Order. Reparation, Reconstruction, Relief and U.S. Policy, 1945-1952," in *Endless Empires. Spain's Retreat, Europe's Eclipse, America's Decline*, eds. Alfred W. McCoy, Josep M. Fradera, and Stephen Jacobson (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2012), 321-333.

³⁰ Worth, *Rethinking Hegemony*, 14, 71-72, 93-108.

- ³¹ Worth, *Rethinking Hegemony*, 13, 69-70. Robert W. Cox is credited with having introduced Gramsci's concept in the field. For an overview of applications in IR, see p.69-85.
- ³² Worth, *Rethinking Hegemony*, 71-72.
- ³³ Clark, *Hegemony in International Society*, 4-5.
- ³⁴ Komlosy, "Prospects of Decline," 464.
- ³⁵ For instance Layne "The Unipolar Illusion," 396-405.
- ³⁶ Layne "The Unipolar Illusion," 399.
- ³⁷ Ikenberry and Nexon, "Hegemony Studies 3.0," 405-406, 409.
- ³⁸ For Julian Go, for instance, American domination substituted itself for formal imperial relations and colonization during the decolonization process (Julian Go, "Entangled Empires. The United States and the Imperial Foundations in the Mid-Twentieth-Century," in *Endless Empires. Spain's Retreat, Europe's Eclipse, America's Decline*, eds. Alfred W. McCoy, Josep M. Fradera, and Stephen Jacobson (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2012), 334-343). On the same topic, see Brett Reilly, "Cold War Transitions. Europe's Decolonization and Eisenhower's System of Subordinate Elites," in the same volume, 344-359. See also the references in note 3.
- ³⁹ Layne "The Unipolar Illusion," 401. Robert A. Pape, for instance, coined the concept of "soft balancing" to describe what he interpreted as actual, but unusual mechanisms to challenge a unipolar leader ("Soft Balancing Against the United States", in *The Realism Reader*, eds. Elman and Jensen (London: Palgrave, 2014), 406-407.
- ⁴⁰ For instance, Keir A. Lieber and Gerard Alexander, "Waiting for Balancing. Why the World is Not Pushing Back," in *The Realism Reader*, eds. Elman and Jensen (London: Palgrave, 2014), 414-421.
- ⁴¹ Komlosy, "Prospects of Decline," 464, 471; Worth, *Rethinking Hegemony*, 117, 126-127.
- ⁴² Makhura Benjamin Rapanyane, "The New World[Dis]order in the Complexity of Multipolarity: United States of America's Hegemonic Decline and the Configuration of New Power Patterns," *Journal of Public Affairs* (March 2020): 4-5, <https://doi.org/10.1002/pa.2114>; Komlosy, "Prospects of Decline," 473. Richard Sokolsky and Eugene Rumer, *U.S. Goals and Priorities. U.S.-Russian Relations in 2030*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, June 15, 2020, 15, <https://carnegieendowment.org/2020/06/15/u.s.-russian-relations-in-2030-pub-8205615>. Russia, however, is not a challenger on the economic level (Jeffrey Cimmino, Matthew Kroenig, and Barry Pavel, *Where Are Geopolitics Headed in the Covid-19 Era? Strategy Papers*, June 2020, Washington, Atlantic Council. Scowcroft Center for Strategy and Security, 10, 12, <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Taking-Stock-Where-Are-Geopolitics-Headed-in-the-COVID-19-Era.pdf>.)
- ⁴³ Jeffrey, D. Sachs, "Covid-19 and Multilateralism," in *Horizons*, 16 (Spring 2020): 34, 36, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/48573747>; Komlosy, "Prospects of Decline," 465-466. The crisis in Ukraine, that triggered renewed tensions and military competition between Russia and the United States in the post-Cold war era, confirmed Russian military recovery (Moniz Bandeira, Luiz Alberto, *The World Disorder. US Hegemony, Proxy Wars, Terrorism, and Humanitarian Catastrophes* (Cham: Springer, 2014), 3-7. On Russia, see Sokolsky and Rumer, *U.S.-Russian Relations in 2030*. Jeffrey Kaplan suggests that the Cold War—opposing the United States and Russia—never ended. The collection explores the threats Russia still poses to the world order (*The 21st Century Cold War. A New World Order?* (London and New York: Routledge)).

⁴⁴ Thus, much scholarly interest in East Asian powers was prompted by the prospect that China undermines American influence in East Asia and American global leadership (Evelyn Goh, *The Struggle for Order: Hegemony, Hierarchy, and Transition in Post-Cold War Asia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 1-3). The strategic landscape of post-Cold War Asia accommodated both the rise of China and US preponderance (8-9, 13).

⁴⁵ There are many studies that plea for such a perspective. For instance, Stuenkel, *Emerging Powers* and Sandra Destradi, "Regional Powers and their Strategies: Empire, Hegemony, and Leadership," *Review of International Studies* 36 (2010): 903-930, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210510001361>

⁴⁶ Goh, *The Struggle for Order*, 3.

⁴⁷ For instance David B. Kanin, "The Wests: Decline Management and Geopolitics," in *The 21st Century Cold War: A New World Order?*, ed. Kaplan, Chap. 1. The explanations are numerous and varied. Some insist either on internal or international structural factors and circumstances, others propose a mix of both. For instance, Tozzo gives much weight to the heightened domestic political tensions that resulted from the 2008 crisis (Brandon Tozzo, *American Hegemony After the Great Recession. A Transformation of World Order* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 2-3 and Chapter 6, 93-126). Rapanyane underscores domestic political divisions, privatization policies, and the economic impacts of outsourcing the manufacturing sector (Rapanyane, "The New World[Dis]order," 3). For Moniz Bandeira, the combination of inner structural factors (like the alleged corruption inherent to American capitalism) and circumstances like the post-September-11 war on terror have accelerated the "decay" of domestic political institutions and American democracy (*The World Disorder*, especially chapters 4 and 5, 35-59). For Ian Clark, hegemony relies heavily on "consensual legitimacy." This consensus was based on the acceptance of, and adhesion to the institutions and norms set up by the United States from 1945. The willingness of states to accept such circumstances has steadily eroded, especially in the post-Cold War era (Clark, "Bringing Hegemony Back in," 22-23, 27, 34-35). The proliferation of nuclear weapons is viewed as another important challenge (Rapanyane, "The New World[Dis]order," 3).

⁴⁸ Ikenberry and Nexon, "Hegemony Studies 3.0," 396. See for instance Rapanyane, "The New World[Dis]order" and Kanin, "The Wests."

⁴⁹ Komlosy, "Prospects of Decline," 464.

⁵⁰ See for instance Cooley and Nexon, *Exit from Hegemony*.

⁵¹ Sachs, "Covid-19 and Multilateralism," 30, 32-33, 35, 37. Sachs writes that none of the two possible avenues for a successful way out of a global crisis, that is, a global hegemon or global cooperation through the UN multilateral framework, are available today. Mat Burrows and Peter Engelke still believe in the endurance of American hegemony, but view the situation created by the pandemic as a "test in leadership" that may lead to "a severe decline" in American "soft power" (*What World Post-Covid-19? Three Scenarios. Strategy Papers*, July 2020, Washington, Atlantic Council. Scowcroft Center for Strategy and Security, 6, <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/What-World-Post-COVID-19.pdf>).

⁵² See Burrows and Engelke, *What World Post-Covid-19?*, 8; Cimmino, Kroenig, and Pavel, *Where Are Geopolitics Headed*, 10-11; Ikenberry and Nexon, "Hegemony Studies 3.0," 396. In recent years, China challenged the United States-led global lending system based on the World Bank and the FMI with the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, the creation

of multinational corporations, acquisitions of European companies (and control of commodity chains commanded by them), and projects like the “New Silk Road” (Komlosy, “Prospects of Decline,” 472-473). Relations between the United States and Russia in the Cold War period have evolved from a “mix of competition and cooperation” to a resolute shift toward the former since 2014. The Carnegie Institute warns against risks of a conflict, maybe a nuclear one (and maybe “accidental”). Bilateral relations should aim at avoiding such a conflict (Sokolsky and Rumer, *U.S.-Russian Relations in 2030*, 2, 17).

⁵³ Sachs, “Covid-19 and Multilateralism,” 34, 36; Burrows and Engelke, *What World Post-Covid-19?*, 6; Cimmino, Kroenig, and Pavel, *Where Are Geopolitics Headed*, 2, 6-7, 10.

⁵⁴ Burrows and Engelke, *What World Post-Covid-19?*, 3; Cimmino, Kroenig, and Pavel, *Where Are Geopolitics Headed*, 1-2.

⁵⁵ Such configuration may be based on international institutions according to Sachs, made of a few ones born of the post-1945 liberal order (as the UN and the Declaration of Human Rights) and of new ones (Sachs, “Covid-19 and Multilateralism,” 38). World system theorists believe that the decline of U.S. hegemonic power may lead to a transfer of power to a group of successors, and that such a transition will change the character of the world-system (Komlosy, “Prospects of Decline,” 466).

⁵⁶ Burrows and Engelke, *What World Post-Covid-19?*, 6, 8, 12; Cimmino, Kroenig, and Pavel, *Where Are Geopolitics Headed*, 12-13. On USA–China, USA–EU tensions and Chinese relations with EU, see Ortega, Andrés, *The US-China Race and the Fate of Transatlantic Relations. Part II: Bridging Differing Geopolitical Views*, April 2020, Center for Strategic and International Studies, https://csis-website-prod.s3.amazonaws.com/s3fs-public/publication/200423_Ortega_ChinaRace_v4_WEB%20FINAL.pdf?crUMPSmDL1hkWm1NkgiF0d6rTmexGBeZ.

⁵⁷ Duran, Burhanettin, “The Future of Global Great Power After the Coronavirus,” *Insight Turkey* 22, no. 2 (Spring 2020), 81-82, 90. <https://doi.org/10.25253/99.2020222.06>

⁵⁸ Kanin, “The Wests.”

⁵⁹ Stuenkel, *Emerging Powers* 4-9.

⁶⁰ Ikenberry and Nexon, “Hegemony Studies 3.0,” 407-409, 415.

⁶¹ Ayşe Zarakol, “Theorising Hierarchies,” in *Hierarchies in World Politics*, ed. Ayşe Zarakol (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 8.

⁶² Ikenberry and Nexon, “Hegemony Studies 3.0,” 409.

⁶³ Zarakol, “Theorising Hierarchies,” 1-3. See the full chapter for an overview of the development of this framework.

⁶⁴ Worth, *Rethinking Hegemony*, 73.

⁶⁵ David A. Lake, “Laws and Norms in the Making of International Hierarchies,” Zarakol, *Hierarchies in World Politics*, 17.

⁶⁶ Lake, “Laws and Norms,” 17, 23.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 21.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 17, 22. Lake points out that hierarchies are made up of a mix of laws and norms (18).

⁶⁹ Bailin, *From Traditional to Group Hegemony*.

⁷⁰ Wallerstein, *The Modern-World System I*, 5-6.

⁷¹ Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System. I. Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of European World-Economy in the Sixteenth-Century* (Berkeley: University of

California Press, 2011 (1974), xviii; Immanuel Wallerstein, *Historical Capitalism* (London: Verso, 2011), 18.

⁷² Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System. III. The Second Era of Great Expansion of the Capitalist World Economy, 1730s-1840s* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011 (1974)), 189.

⁷³ Immanuel Wallerstein, *World-System Analysis: An Introduction* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), 94.

⁷⁴ His study was updated in the 2010s and published separately (see the note below) and with other essays in 2018 (Samir Amin, *Modern Imperialism, Monopoly Finance Capital and Marx's Theory of Value* (New York: Monthly Press Review, 2018)).

⁷⁵ Samir Amin, *The Law of Worldwide Value* (New York: Monthly Press Review, 2010 (1978)), 11. Amin prolonged Marx's theory of value, hardly adaptable to the "global dimension of capitalism". He explains that "the passage from the law of value to the law of globalized value [is] based on the hierarchical structuring – itself globalized – of the prices of labor-power around its value. Linked to the management practices governing access to natural resources, this globalization of value constitutes the basis for imperialist rent" (11), which is "at the origin of the polarization deepened and reproduction by the globalized unfolding of capitalism" (13).

⁷⁶ Amin, *Law of Worldwide Value*, 89.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*; 89-90.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 84-85, 94-95, 105-107.

⁷⁹ Persaud and Sajed, "Race, Gender, and Culture", 3; also Krishna, "Postcolonialism and its Relevance", 21-24; Loomba, *Colonialism*, 3-4; 20.

⁸⁰ Persaud and Sajed, "Race, Gender, and Culture," 3.

⁸¹ On the reproduction of inequalities through global commodity chains, Intan Suwandi, *Value Chains. The New Economic Imperialism* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2019). On the decisive contribution of outsourcing to the accumulation process in the core from the second half of the 20th century, see John Smith, *Imperialism in the Twenty-First Century. Globalization, Super-Exploitation, and Capitalism's Final Crisis* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2016).

⁸² Persaud and Sajed, "Race, Gender, and Culture," 3-4.

⁸³ Bush, *Imperialism*, 54.

⁸⁴ Leela Gandhi, *Postcolonial Theory. A Critical Introduction* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 44.

⁸⁵ Gandhi, *Postcolonial Theory*, 32.

⁸⁶ Worth, *Rethinking Hegemony*, xvii.

⁸⁷ Bush, *Imperialism*, 57.

⁸⁸ Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1978), 35.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 37-38.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 38.

⁹² A few IR theorists like Joseph Nye have acknowledged the potential of culture as a vehicle of soft power decades ago (Reich and Ned Leblow, *Good-Bye Hegemony*, 28, 33-34).

⁹³ Burton Lee Artz, "Global Media Practices and Cultural Hegemony: Growing, Harvesting, and Marketing the Consuming Audience", in *Media, Ideology, and Hegemony*, ed. Savas Coban (Leiden, Brill, 2018), 4-5. In this specific context, cultural hegemony is viewed within the framework of "a broader political economy approach that stresses not just structures of production, but social relations that organize human actions and socialize and educate participants to norms and practices necessary for the smooth functioning of transnational capitalism" (6).

⁹⁴ See Peter Mayo. *Hegemony and Education Under Neoliberalism: Insights from Gramsci* (New York: Routledge, 2015).

⁹⁵ Niall Ferguson, "Hegemony or Empire? Review Essay," *Foreign Affairs* 82, no. 5 (Sept-Oct 2003): 155, 160.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ Emanuele Saccarelli and Latha Varadarajan, *Imperialism Past and Present* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 20.

⁹⁸ Saccarelli and Varadarajan, *Imperialism Past and Present*, 7, 20-21.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 19.

¹⁰⁰ Ferguson, "Hegemony or Empire? 161.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 160-161.

¹⁰² Saccarelli and Varadarajan, *Imperialism Past and Present*, 19. Settings to which we refer as formal empires may overlap with situations of informal empire, according to terminology used in some studies (see for instance Thomas and Thompson, "Rethinking Decolonization," 3).

¹⁰³ Bush, *Imperialism*, 9. See her synthetic discussion of early empires (9-13) and modern empires (13-17).

¹⁰⁴ Loomba, *Colonialism*, 1-2.

¹⁰⁵ Saccarelli and Varadarajan, *Imperialism Past and Present*, 8.

¹⁰⁶ Loomba, *Colonialism*, 5-7.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 6.

¹⁰⁸ Worth, *Rethinking Hegemony*, 55-56.

¹⁰⁹ See Saccarelli and Varadarajan, *Imperialism Past and Present*, 6.

¹¹⁰ Artz, "Global Media Practices," 6; Worth, *Rethinking Hegemony*, 57-58.

¹¹¹ Bush, *Imperialism*, 44.

¹¹² Worth, *Rethinking Hegemony*, 58.

¹¹³ See Saccarelli and Varadarajan, *Imperialism Past and Present*, 11.

¹¹⁴ In the 2012's introduction of his *Encountering Development. The Making and Unmaking of the Third World* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2012 (1995)) Arturo Escobar denounces the endurance of the 'ideology' of development: "(...) as I see it, development continues to play a role in strategies of cultural and social domination" (vi). He adds that while "it might well be the case that development economics is nearly dead [...] the economic imaginary in terms of individuals transacting in markets, production, growth, capital, progress, scarcity, and consumption goes on unhindered" (xii). He put forward the category of 'postdevelopment,' intended to contemplate the 'end of development,' that is, "to identify alternatives to development,

rather than development alternatives, as a concrete possibility". It "emphasized the importance of transforming the 'political economy of truth,' that is, development's order of expert knowledge and power" (xiii).

¹¹⁵ Loomba, *Colonialism*, 7.

¹¹⁶ On this issue, see for instance Gandhi, *Postcolonial Theory*, 167-169. Ashis Nandy, in *The Intimate Enemy*, observes that "in spite of the presence of paramount power which acted as the central authority, the country was culturally fragmented and politically heterogeneous. It could, thus, partly confine the cultural impact of imperialism to its urban centers, to its Westernized and semi-Westernized upper and middle classes, and to some extent to its traditional elites" (*The Intimate Enemy. Loss and Recovery of Self Under Colonialism* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1983), 31-32).

¹¹⁷ See Gandhi, *Postcolonial Theory*, 167-169.

¹¹⁸ See Kanin, "The Wests."

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹²⁰ *Ibid.* Kanin proposes a spatial-temporal (and associated ideological) classification of many "Wests" from Napoleon's time.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*

¹²² For instance, see Bush's discussion (*Imperialism*, 78-87).

¹²³ Bush, *Imperialism*, 86. The United States was the successor of Britain in this respect according to her. These "Empires of modernity" were endowed with a civilizing mission to spread progress throughout the world.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 78.

¹²⁵ Nandy, *The Intimate Enemy*, 24.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, xi.

¹²⁷ Escobar, *Encountering Development*, 4.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*

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