THOSE ABOUT TO DIE SALUTE YOU:
SACRIFICE, THE WAR IN IRAQ, AND THE CRISIS OF THE AMERICAN IMPERIAL SOCIETY

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Abstract

This dissertation produces the first attempt to bring the work of sociologist Pierre Bourdieu and the political theory literature on citizenship into dialogue with the scholarship on American empire in the field of International Relations (IR). It explores how the United States’ quest for global pre-eminence, mirrored by the war in Iraq, reveals and exacerbates the social wounds at the seams of American society. To do this, it introduces three new concepts to the field of International Relations. It builds on historian Christophe Charle’s sociological framework of “imperial society” and “national habitus” (2001, 2004 and 2005) and introduces an original concept, the field of citizenship, to examine social conflict over the distribution of military sacrifice amongst citizens in the United States. Finally, it explores these tensions by looking at multiple documentary sources, including over 200 newspaper articles, 60 testimonies about the war from soldiers and their relatives, congressional documents, and military manpower policies.
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Introduction: Territory, Decline and the Exceptionalist Paradigm in IR Scholarship.

This dissertation produces the first attempt to bring the work of sociologist Pierre Bourdieu\(^1\) and the political theory literature on citizenship into dialogue with the scholarship on American empire in the field of International Relations (IR). It explores how the United States’ quest for global pre-eminence, mirrored by the war in Iraq, reveals and exacerbates the social wounds at the seams of American society. To do this, it introduces three new concepts to the field of International Relations. It builds on historian Christophe Charle’s sociological framework of “imperial society” and “national habitus” (2001, 2004 and 2005) and introduces an original concept, the field of citizenship, to examine social conflict over the distribution of military sacrifice amongst citizens in the United States. Finally, it explores these tensions by looking at multiple documentary sources, including over 200 newspaper articles, 60 testimonies about the war from soldiers and their relatives, congressional documents, and military manpower policies.

This project departs from the acknowledgment that the IR debate about whether the US can or cannot be considered an empire is an unproductive one that shows a scandalous disinterest for scholarship on the topic produced in other fields. More profoundly, however, it exhibits a shocking lack of conceptual rigor and seems content to mirror long-established cultural prejudices about American exceptionalism. Though the US had now occupied Iraq and Afghanistan for over two and three years respectively, at the time I began researching this dissertation in the fall of 2005, the quasi-consensus in IR remained that the US possessed no

\(^1\) For other scholars creating a bridge between the work of Pierre Bourdieu and International Relations see, for instance, Leander (2005); Neumann and Heika (2005) and Neunamm (2008); Williams (2007); Poulion and Mérand (2008), and Pouliot (2010). As Pouliot and Mérand (2008) state, however, these works rarely employ more than one or two concepts (i.e. field and capital) and remain far from Bourdieu’s critical sociology. This dissertation provides a more thorough introduction and presentation of the different facets of Bourdieu’s sociology.
‘formal colonies’ or ‘overseas’ territorial acquisitions, and therefore could not be considered an empire (e.g. Tonnesson 2004). Even for those critical scholars who accused America of imperial ambition, the US empire remained somehow ‘informal’ or different from past empires.

Over the decades, nationalist and patriotic minded intellectuals have laboriously painted a portrait of an America forged by revolution in defiance of tyranny and colonial rule (Lipset 1996). Like their pioneering ancestors who had fled religious persecution in Europe, they held dear to a vision of the United States as a promised land, a new Jerusalem founded on industriousness, labour and merit (Stephanson 1995): one that differed in every way from the kingdoms and empires of the old continent. With these founding trials, surely America could not be an empire (Williams 1955) any more than a class-based society (Lipset 1996). Positivist and scientifically-minded American scholars cemented the cultural dogma of American exceptionalism into an academic paradigm. They devoted themselves to this task with no less servility than pamphleteers, vulgar essayists, journalists and profane ideologues had constructed the nationalist mythologies which were ritually celebrated during anniversaries, commemorations and other national gatherings. The research programs of historians in the United States worked hard to identify which special characteristics had shaped a history so unique that America resembled no other nation (i.e. Hartz 1955; Lipset 1996). Was it geography, the absence of feudalism, the pioneering spirit, the Frontier, Manifest Destiny or the peculiar qualities which apparently endowed the “Anglo-Saxon race” with a gift for “free government” (see Horseman 1981)? Anne Laura Stoler adequately summarizes the common sense which prevailed in academia on the topic of empire:

Empire’s critics also have sought new modifiers for an empire whose architects and agents until recently refused to call it by that name. Michael Mann’s “incoherent empire” cannot “control occupied territories like the Europeans used to” because
practices in Afghanistan and Iraq are “too rudimentary to be considered imperial.” Others insist on the “invisible” qualities of U.S. empire and stress its new, more secretive manifestations. But less visible than what? Invisible to whom? “Humanitarian imperialism,” “the arrogant empire,” “the conceited empire,” “the quasi-empire,” “the invisible empire,” or alternately the “global” one implicitly and explicitly conjure comparisons with received accounts and tacit features of what European empires were known to be: coherent, full-blown, visible, blatantly coercive, overtly exploitative, territorially distinct, and decidedly not committed to humanitarian intervention. But were they? (Stoler 2006: 129).

Stoler probingly identifies that the historical mythologies and certitudes of American imperial denial are constructed by distinguishing the US from the caricatured accounts of other histories: in this case, a caricature of what European empires were. But Americans were not alone in this identity defining project. Similar concerns animated the intellectuals, academicians and scholars of the French, British and German “imperial societies,” with the exception that each of them also sought out which traits made their nations unique in contrast to neighboring states (Charle 2001). As Charle (2001: 34) points out, the “Sonderweg” or ‘special path’ thesis of which German historians were so proud, until the cataclysms of the Nazi era produced its “negative” mirror-image, has long served as the focal point against which French and British historians measured the success stories2 of their own nations. In the comparative process, each historian’s “secret complacency with his national path” whitewashed the failings3 of his own society which, when considered collectively, paradoxically brought them closer to the rival models they despised (Charle 2001: 34). Hubris, then, certainly wasn’t just an American trait. Yet in the wake


3. “... un faux universalisme français qui oublie la moitié du genre humain et les non citoyens de l’empire, la fraternité inscrite sur les frontons des édifices publics mais qui peine le seuil de la législation ; des libertés britanniques for inégales selon la position sociale de naissance et une exploitation sans scrupule de plusieurs continents et d’un prolétariat rural et urbain au profit d’une minorité qui s’estime d’essence supérieure et seule apte à diriger les « peuples de couleurs » comme les « basses classes »” Charle 2001: 34-35).
of the Second World War, imperial denial was en route to becoming a well established science in American academia. But as Michael Cox reminds us:

America has indeed done more than its fair share of land-grabbing. In fact, those who would claim that the United States is not an empire because it has never acquired other people’s territory seem to forget that the nation we now call the United States of America only became the Unites States of America because it annexed a great deal during the nineteenth century: from France and Russia (through purchase), from Spain and Mexico (by military conquest), from Britain (by agreement) and, most savagely, from those three million native Americans who were nearly eliminated in the process (Cox 2005 : 21).

The near-totality of IR scholarly works has mirrored equally poignant myths where the rise and fall of empires (Kennedy 1987) or “great powers” - to employ a more common and purportedly neutral euphemism - punctuate historical time. Then there are those who either regretfully await the decline of republican freedom and the rise of tyranny (i.e. Johnson 2006; and also Pocock 1975 on this), or their counterparts who await the dawn of the new American century (see Todd 2004).

But one does not need to read the likes of Chalmers Johnson to get such an elegiac reading of American history; one need only watch Star Wars or Gladiator to familiarize oneself with the age-old republican myths which have sedimented into the American and Western world’s self-image. An even cursory examination of IR scholarship on the topic of American empire reveals the degree to which scholars have gladly reproduced the same fantasies, dogma and narratives which fascinate their poets, novelists and filmmakers, albeit in a conceptual language and style that renders these ideas acceptable to the high-minded, purportedly unprejudiced academic audience. As Pierre Bourdieu (1988) argued in the case of philosophy, scholars of International Relations apprehend the object of their study (global politics) through the intermediary of a
number of consecrated objects of reflection and authors: territoriality, sovereignty, power and equilibrium; Thucydides, Machiavelli, Hobbes and Clausewitz. The mastery of this academic language and its obligatory references then separates the professionals of IR from ‘profane’ journalists and ‘vulgar’ commentators. As these practices close off the academic field of International Relations from the field of (ordinary, non-academic) politics, it then becomes possible for the practitioners of the discipline to claim that they think ‘outside of the box,’ their research somehow uncontaminated by the often ethnocentric, sexist and racist biases of their social position, society and epoch.

However, even enlightened critics of the debate on empire have fallen prey to other historical misconceptions. Anne Laura Stoler (2006), for instance, writes that the new apologists of American empire (see chapter 2) broke with past, overwhelmingly negative connotations of the concept. This is far from true. For the longer part of American history, the Founders, statesmen, and ideologues of American expansion, such as Washington, Jefferson, Madison and Hamilton, ascribed positive connotations to empire (i.e. Pocock 1975; Wilson 2002; Anderson and Crayton 2005 to name only a few). Though empire has always been contested by some, it has enjoyed excellent press for much of its history (see Armitage 2002). Rather, it is imperial denial and the critique of empire, reborn in post-war anti-colonialism, which has lived a short life. Viewed in this fashion, the polemists who advocate American empire are simply restating the centuries-old ethnocentric and racist vision by which certain peoples have believed themselves invested with the duty to rule over other, less capable or less developed societies.

These critiques and debates define the intellectual, cultural and academic context which informs this dissertation. In a large sense, this thesis pursues three major objectives. Like other scholars, I want to remove the analysis of American politics and history from the “tenacious
grasp of exceptionalism” (Kaplan 2004b) and reintegrate it into a larger account of other societies, thus normalizing US political development. Second, this work aims to de-center the debate on American empire from its axis on whether or not the US is or isn’t an empire. Rather, it asks what the concept of “empire” can help us understand about the American experience. Following this, I will argue that the theoretical debate on American empire in reality hinges on the meaning of citizenship in America, and that empire marks an extremely productive lens through which one can study the politics of citizenship in the US and their location at the border of the domestic and the international realms. To do this, and this is the third objective, my dissertation introduces three new concepts to the field of International Relations: “imperial society”, “national habitus” and “the field of citizenship”. By doing so it creates the first bourdieusian account of American empire.

Chapter 2 begins by reviewing some of the major literature published in recent decades on the topic of empire. Significantly, over-arching classical IR, political-economic accounts of empire and the work of postcolonial theorists, this section introduces two new bodies of literature rarely brought into this dialogue: the works of social, cultural and juridical historians and the political theory scholarship of the Cambridge School of the history of ideas.

Chapters 3 and 4 build on the analytical framework Christophe Charle has developed to study the French, German and British empires of the twentieth century, and transpose it to the American context. Chapter 3 completes my account of Charle’s argument developed in La crise des sociétés impériales, and later works, before introducing detailed notes on the sociology of Pierre Bourdieu and the structure of social classes in America. Imperial societies designate dominant societies: linguistically, culturally, economically, politically and scientifically - both internally and externally. While all “imperial formations” (Stoler 2006 and 2008) are dominant
internally – insofar as they rule over second-class citizens – imperial societies also enjoy the means to aggressively exercise their influence in the system of states. Chapter 4 argues that, like the three European imperial societies, the United States’ dominant position in the field of global politics engenders a particularly aggressive national habitus, which translates its unique view of the world into a violent principle of “vision and division” (the expression is Bourdieu’s, 1979) and symbolic competition against other nations. Indeed, contrary to “ordinary nations,” the imperial society claims “to be a universal cultural model with the vocation to draw into its orbit less autonomous nations and peoples” (Charle 2005: 125, author’s translation). The chapter also attempts to situate the concept of national habitus and distinguish it from similar analytical frameworks.

To get at the core of the analytical question of empire, chapter 5 introduces a new concept to IR, inspired from Bourdieusian sociology: *the field of citizenship*. This concept will designate an area where residents and non-residents of the US territory struggle for inclusion within the body politic of the American imperial society. It represents a continuum along which different degrees of inclusion and exclusion can be graded depending on the privileges, rights and obligations incumbent upon different categories of citizens. By the same measure, it will attempt to capture the fluidity, porousness and ambiguity of the border separating the domestic from the foreign, especially in the case of imperial rule. As such, this concept will have the immediate advantage of systematizing the obvious points we will highlight in chapter 2, such as recognizing that “liminal” populations (Campbell 1990), racial and ethnic minorities inhabiting the US territory and even enjoying nominal or legal citizenship, may be considered foreigners and prey to a form of domestic or internal colonialism. It will furthermore help us to highlight the borderline imperial dynamics of class relations, especially where the white male population is
concerned. It will enable us to ask the question: does second-class citizenship for some lower-class white males not correspond to a dynamic of imperial domination by the dominant classes that enjoys the benefits of full citizenship, or rather *privileges without obligations*, as opposed to the former? Chapter 5 also provides both theoretical and historical depth and scope to these questions by presenting an overview of the major literature on the political theory of citizenship, as well as a short history of citizenship laws in America. The chapter concludes by providing a historical overview of the complex relationship between citizenship and military service in America. Together chapters 3, 4 and 5 form the conceptual core of the dissertation.

Chapter 6 reviews the scholarship in military sociology which assesses the demographic, socioeconomic and educational characteristics of recruits and soldiers in the US armed forces. This complex empirical portrait reveals the fairly clear class and racially-structured profile of the active duty forces. It further presents data on how each racial group within the army has suffered casualties and mortality rates in Iraq and reviews possible sociological explanations for this distribution. Drawing on the concept of habitus, it asks whether it makes any sense at all to speak of a volunteer army or whether we should not fare better to speak of a structured or coerced volunteerism. I argue that, once military manpower policies and educational quotas are taken into account, the armed forces recruit their enlisted members from the lowest social strata *actually eligible for service*: the dominant fraction of the dominated class. Further, by deconstructing the commonsensical liberal illusion that makes sacrifice into a personal choice, I argue that the real social logic underlying the ‘neutral’ market processes feeding the armed forces’ ranks is not “who chooses to sacrifice” but rather “who *have we chosen* to sacrifice?” In this sense, I argue that self-selection for military sacrifice in reality corresponds to a form of social selection, a social reality that the soldiers are themselves complicit in obfuscating.
Chapter 7 introduces analytical and theoretical notes on the journalistic field, and the meaning of “social crisis”, to prepare the account developed in the four following chapters. I begin by arguing that the quest for global pre-eminence and symbolic superiority tears the American body politic, revealing “social wounds” (Charle 2005) at the seams. After an initial moment of euphoria, public debates in American newspapers (chapter 8) reveal a collective anxiety over the human and moral cost of the War in Iraq and the disproportionate burden borne by soldiers and military families. This sentiment is mirrored in many testimonies soldiers and their relatives themselves write about the conflict (chapter 9). Why is it that some choose to fight while others are content to shop? Should the draft be reintroduced to displace the burden of volunteer service members or should sacrifice remain a choice? And ultimately, what is the meaning of American citizenship? Does it entail a set of privileges or should it also entail duties and services to the larger community? As we will see these are only some of the questions which the War has brought to the fore of public debate. Slowly building on Bourdieu’s concept of the ‘homologies between the fields’, chapters 8 and 9, I highlight the contours of the crisis of the American imperial model of society. These chapters examine how the debate over the unequal distribution of military sacrifice spills out and awakens seemingly unrelated collective anxieties about consumerism, consumption, frivolity, austerity, the memory of the Second World War, and other aspects of American identity and culture.

Chapter 10 addresses the central question of this dissertation and asks whether and how we may speak of a crisis of the American imperial society? It begins by examining the legal authorities for mobilization with data on voluntary and involuntary mobilizations of members of the reserve forces and National Guards; and the unilateral extension of military contracts (stop-loss). I then review major findings by the Congressional Research Services, the Government
Accountability Office and the 2008 Congressional Commission on the Reserves and National Guards: all of which present an alarming portrait of the combat-readiness of the US armed forces. The chapter then examines the American state’s responses to the military manpower crises posed by the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. I build a bourdieusian account of ‘crisis’ which draws on the theory of political obligation and interrogates the meaning of the state’s refusal to seriously consider reintroducing the draft. I argue that it reveals a tacit admission or an unspoken social consensus that the US is in fact founded on unequal classes of citizenship and that winning a decisive victory in Iraq was not worth reintroducing universal military service and extending the burden of sacrifice to the higher echelons of the social pyramid.

Finally, chapter 11 concludes by stressing the ways in which the crisis I identified is in fact a crisis of the “imperial” form of society specifically. It argues that the crisis of the imperial society is a crisis brought on by the ongoing renegotiation of the relationship between soldiering and first class citizenship in America. This is especially the case as the rise of women, minorities and now migrants in the ranks of the armed forces transforms the demographics of military service and increasingly reflects the composition of the populations which occupy dominated positions in the field of citizenship. I argue that the collective anxieties brought on by the upheavals in the field of citizenship in the context of the war, mirror fears over the decline of America’s moral influence in the field of global politics, thus creating a homology of crises in the imperial society’s internal and external forms of rule.

As a closing note, I would like to specify a number of things this thesis will not attempt to do. First, it is not a thesis in comparative politics, and thus I will attempt no systematic comparison between the US experience and that of any other country. I wish to introduce “imperial society” as an analytical framework to produce a cross-sectional portrait of the
American experience of the war in Iraq. While I believe this choice to be worthwhile, I also recognize that it sets important limits on the depth and space with which I can address every question. Though “sacrifice” is a central component of my analysis, I recognize that the choice of the word is largely instrumental; it best summarized the problematic of unequal military service and provide an excellent keyword for research in newspaper databases in the early stages of the project. Other terms could have been considered: the “political economy of death,” for instance, but the latter lacks the emotional resonance of the word sacrifice. I decided to construct the concept of sacrifice keeping as much as possible with the understanding of the social actors who employed it (see chapters 8 and 9). It must be clear that I have no theoretical ambition to refine, comment or really deepen any anthropological understanding of this term or recommend its introduction into IR as a central component of future research agendas. Those who wish to follow this path can read Larry George (2002) and René Girard’s more fundamental La violence et le sacré (1972) - an extremely rich but too abstract and structuralist approach to really be useful for this study on war. This dissertation draws on the literature of the citizen-soldier tradition (see chapter 5) and the pioneering work of French polemologist Gaston Bouthoul (1991) to provide the minimal theorization necessary for the use I will make of the concept. In light of the methodological stance I will develop throughout this dissertation, I wish to reconstruct an empirical understanding of what the concepts I employ mean in their contexts rather than rolling-out universal templates such as “biopolitics,” “power/knowledge” or the “scapegoat.” The same note of caution holds for the first half of the central concept of this dissertation: “society.” The founding fathers of sociology: Karl Marx, August Comte, Emile Durkheim and Max Weber have already expounded on this concept at length. Scholars of IR interested in this question can turn to Hedley Bull’s classic The Anarchical Society (2002).
believe it is no more pertinent for me to provide elaborate theoretical explanation of this concept than it is necessary for political scientists to preface every research by noting Plato or Aristotle’s definitions of “politics.” Finally, when dealing with “political obligation,” I have privileged recent literature on military service as much as possible. This explains why a text such as Walzer’s (1970) is given less consideration than “classics”-minded scholars might expect.

Likewise, the journalistic analysis in chapter 8 is meant to illustrate the tensions over military sacrifice in American society rather than reconstruct a thorough portrait of the media’s coverage of the war. Chapter 7 presents a larger portrait of the media’s representations of the war and cites other studies that undertake this task. It is not the object of this dissertation. Also, rather than risk doing so too superficially, I choose to avoid addressing the important question of private military contractors and this privatized violence’s suspicious resemblance to the more ‘banal’ volunteerism of the armed forces’ economically motivated recruits. Furthermore, given the scope of this dissertation, I cannot reconstruct a detailed account of the political processes that lead Obama, his counsellors, and other political elites to embrace troop withdrawal from Iraq; I leave this detailed and important task to scholars of diplomatic and strategic analysis, and Presidential politics. I only consider the military outcome of the Iraq war in the general context of the problems raised by the conflict and political debates in American society. Finally, though this dissertation focuses on Iraq, it is impossible to ignore that this conflict and the cost it imposes on the American imperial society take place against the backdrop of another war, in Afghanistan. For this reason, I am often forced to refer to the cumulative impact the twin wars have exerted on the US, its military and civilian population. Indeed, I believe, as far as the impact of these wars on American society is concerned, it is not only analytically impossible but also frivolous to separate them. The rationale for treating these conflicts separately is determined
by a pragmatic sense of the limits of my subject matter. With these limitations in mind, I believe the more global portrait this dissertation proposes of the war’s impact on the US and the questions it raises, justifies its shortcomings. In the end, I believe the dissertation should be judged on the merits of the aims it sets for itself; not according to the fetish preoccupations of other subfields of political science and thus inevitably only on what it fails to achieve.

As a closing remark, Deleuze and Guattari (1980), and Hardt and Negri (2004) explain that books are not the products of individual authors; they are nodal points where ideas, concepts and intellectual legacies connect, and new avenues of interrogation and understanding emerge. It is impossible to precisely delimit the “added-value” of every author as ideas and “immaterial labor” in general (Hardt and Negri 2004) are more than the sum of their parts. Deleuze and Guattari’s understanding that cultural products are communal goods certainly grinds against academia’s and Western’s society’s contemporary obsession with intellectual property rights and the symbolic and material rewards that accompany intellectual enclosures. Thus I acknowledge that this dissertation has cumulated an immense intellectual debt to Pierre Bourdieu, Christophe Charle, Stuart Hall and other scholars beyond what the actual references in the following pages can recognize. Their thoughts, language and its syntax have colored my own. I have tried to give them credit for their words and ideas everywhere possible. But in thinking with them and through them, I have refrained from referencing certain recurring expressions or concepts every time I employ them such as Bourdieu’s “vision and division,” and “structured and structuring,” especially as these are the authors’ signatures, and may appear in multiple works. Finally, I cannot fully acknowledge the debts I have incurred to my supervisor Matthew Paterson for his direction, moral support and pragmatism throughout the five years I have spent at the school of Political Studies. I cannot imagine a better supervisor. The same goes for other advisors and
friends: Professors David Grondin, Jean-Pierre Couture and Dalie Giroux, and my colleagues and friends Andreas Krebs and Jean-François Bissonnette. Lastly I am indebted to my father, Maurice, who patiently read over and corrected the draft. To all of you, I can only say thank you.
Chapter 2 – Hegemony, Empires and Imperial Societies

Are the contemporary United States an empire stretching “from sea to shining sea”? Such has been the debate which has preoccupied the main literature in International Relations theory since September 11th, 2001. As we will see, for many scholars outside the field of global politics, this question is one barely worth asking. Their answer has been a resounding “yes” for nearly six decades. Why is it, then, that the field of International Relations can continue to debate the topic while ignoring the most probing work realized on the subject in the neighboring humanities? If the US are an empire and have always been an empire, what does the concept help us understand about the American experience that rival terms fail to capture? Though this chapter attempts to provide preliminary answers to these questions, answering them can only be the end result of this entire dissertation.

This chapter presents an overview of the major literature that has appeared on the theme of “empire” over the last few decades. As the US-led war on terrorism has brought this subject to the forefront of political analysis, scholarly publication on the topic has increased exponentially over the first decade of the twenty-first century, leading to an enormous diversity of works of very different quality. As a consequence, it is impossible for anyone to provide anything resembling an exhaustive portrait of the existing literature. For reasons imposed by the logic of the academic field, this dissertation first privileged the literature and debate on American empire that was published in International Relations journals in the wake of September 11, 2001. As I hope to show, International Relations scholarship and political science more largely debated the topic of empire in a closed circuit. They ignored much of the best and long established scholarship on the topic produced by historians, Americanists, historians of ideas and finally

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4. America the Beautiful by Katherine Lee Bates, 1893.
postcolonial theorists from a diversity of disciplines like geography, ecology as well as in literature departments.

Most of the literature I survey from the field of IR reflects the state of the debate as it existed up to the summer of 2007 when the prospectus for this dissertation was accepted by the School of Political Studies of the University of Ottawa. A cursory research conducted near the end of the drafting process early in 2010 suggested the debate in IR had not fundamentally evolved and even had lost steam, at least in ‘legitimate’ sectors of the discipline, judging by the number of entries that a keyword search on the topic turned up in the ISA’s 2010 program. Likewise, Alejandro Colas’ forthcoming article on the international political sociology of empire produced for the ISA’s compendium did not really cover literature published after the first half-decade of the 21st century. Though an excellent summary of the debate on empire appeared in International Relations, Colas’ review mirrored the field’s ignorance of the salient research accomplished by scholars outside of political science. This said, it is equally alarming to note that some postcolonial scholars show scant more awareness of the political science literature produced on their topic, any more than they show interest in debating it, despite their claim to multidisciplinarity.

This chapter begins to bridge the dialogue gap, but my decision to expand the literature review beyond the purview of the doxical texts of International Relations came at one expense. Work surveyed in most literature reviews such as Harvey’s (Arrighi 2006 for a long and sustained engagement with Harvey’s thesis, also Colas forthcoming), Ikenberry’s (see Tonnesson 2004), Todd’s (2003) and Johnson’s (2005) receive little to no attention here, nor do the classical Marxist texts on the political economy of imperialism such as Lenin’s, Kautsky’s, Luxemburg’s,

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5. A search for “American empire” returned only two entries from a 210 page program, while “empire” in general provided 10 results.
6. Professor Robert Vitalis pointed this out to me in a personal conversation on the subject.
Schumpeter’s and so on. All of these works have been reviewed elsewhere multiple times (see Colas forthcoming) and have spawned pertinent analytical offspring that figure in the following pages. In contrast, however, I believe this chapter produces an excellent portrait of the literature on empire in general, and American empire specifically in different fields. Contrary to most, it includes the classical works of Americanists, historians, political theorists and philosophers, historians of the Cambridge school of ideas and postcolonial theorists, some of whom are never brought into dialogue with one another. There remains the risk, of course, that these choices will please no one, but it is one I believe worth taking and capable of producing a more productive synthesis of the existing debates, as I will show in conclusion to this chapter.

This chapter first reviews some of the literature published by the polemists who advocated that America embrace her ‘imperial responsibilities.’ It then showcases some of the works of realist and liberal scholars of International Relations who either contested or denied America’s imperial impulsions. The third section examines the literature in political economy produced by Marxist scholars. Predominantly historical and chronological, the fourth section moves away from the discipline of International Relations. Rather, it draws primarily on the work of political philosophers and historians of ideas and presents an overview of the meanings of the terms “empires,” “republics” and “monarchies” from Antiquity to the American Revolution, significantly complicating the abstract definitions we will have examined thus far. The fifth section continues this historical exploration by showcasing the excellent scholarship of American social, as well as cultural and juridical historians. The sixth and final section presents the eclectic body of postcolonial scholarship which challenges all of the most fundamental assumptions that inform the political science literature examined at the onset. In conclusion, by drawing on the insights of these diverse traditions, I argue that the debate on the existence of the
American empire is in reality a debate on the nature and meaning of US citizenship, which has been misconstrued. Consequently, I call for a fundamental reformulation of the terms of the debate. This transformation of what has become an otherwise stale debate can only be accomplished on the condition I establish dialogue between International Relations theory and the political theory literature on citizenship, rights and political obligations. This is a long awaited development even for those segments of critical IR most oriented towards political theory, but which paradoxically show considerable ignorance of some of the basic preoccupations of classical political thought. I will argue that this can be accomplished by building on Christophe Charle’s concept of “imperial society” and developing a new concept: “the field of citizenship.” Both of these concepts draw on the sociology of Pierre Bourdieu and contribute to a burgeoning critical literature in recreating a sociological turn in the discipline.

Debating empire ...

For the glory of the empire! Polemists and apologetic intellectuals.

Apologists of the American empire are often credited with having awakened a new cycle of scholarly debate on the topic (Kaplan 2004 and Stoler 2006). For those polemists, the United States “have always been an empire” (Fergusson 2004: 2). In these interpretations the American model: liberal, democratic and capitalist, radiates with hope for those failed and rogue states on the margins of world order, caught in endemic cycles of civil or protracted wars. The “empire of liberty” resonates with order (Boot 2002: 352); it will work for peace by favoring stable markets, commerce and free trade (Fergusson 2004). Indeed, “empire represents the last hope for democracy and stability” writes Michael Ignatieff about Iraq (Ignatieff 2003). For Eliot Cohen, only an imperial peace can dissipate the threat that weapons of mass destruction pose for world
safety. The solution he advocates consists in “legitimizing colonialism by another name” (Cohen 2004: 61).

For some, to employ the term “empire” plainly to describe the United States, and prescribe political action in its name, already provides ample justification for the interrogations we, and others, have undertaken, as James Wilson (2002) argued in the case of eighteenth and nineteenth century America. Because critical scholars (namely Kaplan 2004 and Stoler 2006) have already provided probing analyses of the political baggage and wounds stirred by these interpretations, I will only restate the most salient points. First, the metaphors which these polemists privilege directly and unashamedly invoke the racist stereotypes of the past centuries. Calls to humanitarian intervention and nation-building barely disguise their pessimistic vision of non-white populations incapable of governing themselves without the enlightened and guiding hand of their white brethren. Thus the discourse on failed states appeals to Rudyard Kipling’s century-old vision of the “White man’s burden” (Kaplan 2004: 3 and 5). Second, these apologists of empire give the term a connotation that is at once positive and prescriptive. Such an exercise necessitates that the past of colonial empires be “whitewashed” (Pieterse 2004: 31). The debate on imperialism thus also finds itself ensnared in a political struggle over the collective memory of the relationship between Westerners and their former subjects. Though scholars like Anne Laura Stoler (2006) believe the positive connotation that apologetic intellectuals ascribe to empire marks a clear rift with past, overwhelmingly negative, representations of imperialism, in reality, it is the latter which has lived a rather short life, as I argued in chapter 1. Viewed in this fashion, the polemists are simply restating the centuries-old ethnocentric and racist vision by which certain peoples have believed themselves to be invested with a civilizing duty.
From cultural to academic ‘exceptionalism’: Classical IR and the question of American empire.

An Empire is a large, expansive polity that rules over, and economically exploits a culturally diverse and territorially dispersed population from and for a metropolitan centre. The first reason why Empires matter to our understanding of International Relations (IR) is quite simply that this form of political organisation has over the past century been replaced by juridically equal sovereign territorial states. There are today no more formal empires, and only one Head of State retains the title of Emperor (Japan’s Akihito). Conventionally, the origins and development of the modern international system of states are associated to the decline and disappearance of Empires (Colas forthcoming: 1).

Alejandro Colas’7 generic definition of empire can stand in for most. At the heart of it lay the core dimensions of the conceptual problem: a story of one community expanding to violently embrace another; a story about territory, presumably one which does not belong to the expansive state, mixed in with a story of power and subordination illustrated in terms like “exploitation,” “centre” and “periphery”; and finally a story about the disappearance of these political forms in a Westphalian age of nation-states (see Mann 2005 for instance). Take another definition. In contrast to those employed by mid-nineteenth century American statesmen, the great American historian Walter Lafeber (1998) defines the classical strategy of European colonial domination as “a policy which attempted to obtain both formal8 political and economic control over a given area and which especially used this area as source of direct economic benefits (that is, returns on capital investments or markets for surplus goods)” (Lafeber 1998: xxxii, emphasis added).

Based on this definition, some political theorists close to realist and liberal strands of International Relations theory believe that the breadth and scope of US power do not alone constitute sufficient criteria to call the US an empire. Stein Tonnesson, for example, argues that formal domination over foreign territory is the sine qua non condition of imperialism (Tonnesson

7. By no means do I make Colas out to be a realist scholar of International Relations.
8. This notion of “formal political and economic control” is seen by most as pivotal to the debate. I will argue the contrary in detail.
Irrespective of their global influence, the US do not possess formal colonies. This is the most frequent argument levelled against comparisons between the US and past empires.

Regardless of their position in this debate, other classical IR scholars condemn the unilateral tendencies of their polemical colleagues, scholars and journalists. For instance, in September 2002, thirty-two of them bought an advertisement in the *New York Times* to denounce the George W. Bush administration’s preparations to invade Iraq (Sept. 26, 2002). In true, realist fashion, they argued the war found little justification in American interests. Joseph Nye accused the White House of compromising American diplomacy by relying too much on brute force (“hard power”) rather than on hegemony (“soft power”) (Nye 2003: 70). For others, the presidency engaged in an evangelical crusade (Chace 2003), and succumbed to the strategic “myths” which had already brought innumerable empires to their knees (Snyder 2003).

If the realists’ ethical position is clear, its analytical merits seem equally strong, at least at first glance. Not only do the notions of empire and better yet of an American empire immediately raise the question of historical comparison with their Roman, British, French and Spanish predecessors to name only a few of the most common, it is not immediately clear what, if anything, separates or recommends the term as opposed to rival concepts. But International Relations theory has long had a blind spot for empire, preferring to employ such euphemisms as “great power” politics or “hegemony”. Needless to say most scholars of International Relations have placed the great powers of Europe at the center of their analyses of global politics: those empires which will face off in 1914 and 1945, and later the Soviet Union and United States. Great powers, generally, are those nations thought to be the most important, that is, the most powerful, in the international system (see Aron 1962, Morgenthau 1948; Waltz 1979 or Gilpin 1981). “Hegemony” is a more problematic term because two traditions of scholarship tend to
employ the concept with slightly different but often overlapping meanings. Realists and liberals designate “hegemony” as the dominant power in one international system, while for political economists it designates the great power which stabilizes and brings order to the international political economy.

An economic system, then, does not arise spontaneously owing to the operation of an invisible hand and in the absence of the exercise of power … (1996: 290). [Rather] the modern world economy has evolved through the emergence of great national economies that have successfully become dominant (Gilpin 1996: 291).

Scholars of international regimes and organizations, like Keohane (1984) and Nye (with Keohane 1989), believed that hegemonic powers shaped international regimes and imposed international norms through their exercise of material power and political leadership, as did the United States in the Post-war era. But for scholars of the Gramscian tradition (R. Cox 1986 and Gill 1986), hegemony is a form of class rule: at once political, economic and cultural. Hegemony marks the imposition, expansion and legitimization of a mode of production, generally capitalism, into foreign national spaces through the co-opting effect of international institutions, organizations, educational systems and cultural apparatuses. Importantly, the cultural dispositions which support this mode of production, infiltrate the subjectivities of the different communities with all of the appearances of necessity and inevitability.

First, hegemony sometimes seems to be in competition with empire as the proper conceptual term to describe dominance, especially that of the United States (see the collection of texts in Grondin and David 2006 for an excellent summary of these debates; also Grondin’s introduction). To be fair, an even cursory analysis of history will reveal empires and hegemonic powers tended to be one and the same; thus there is no reason to bog down in a fruitless either-
or-debate.\textsuperscript{9} Second, I believe the term hegemony is often uncautiously employed in a manner that only confuses its two meanings. The Gramscian sense of the term implies that, if a mode of production is internationalized, it is because the dominant classes in multiple countries have successfully forged a transnational coalition and “historical bloc” with subordinate classes (see Gill 1986 on the Trilateral Commission, or with David Law, 1989). Hegemony’s designation of a form of great power rule is not really encapsulated in Gramsci’s original meaning. Much of the literature I will survey will make obvious the fact that, though the United States (or its dominant class fractions) has very much exercised hegemony since 1945, the term does not come close to exhausting or capturing the diverse forms of power and relations of racial, gendered, cultural and symbolic domination and subordination both within and outside American society.

Quoting Michael Doyle, Alejandro Colas (2010) suggests that empire’s conceptual location at the intersection between two subfields of political science: comparative and international politics, has explained why the latter discipline has paid scant attention to the term. But I believe that Raymond Aron (1973) came closer to the truth decades ago by raising the point that empire is a term that bothers political scientists because of its polemical charge and the inevitable comparisons it raises. Indeed, many of the reasons invoked to recommend against employing the term, empire, as opposed to other, purportedly more ‘neutral,’ terms do not resist analysis (M. Cox 2003). There is little distinction indeed between imperialist policy and the more ‘banal’ power politics of the great powers, if only a question of “degrees” (Aron 1973: 262-263)? Great powers and imperial powers alike seek to maintain a distribution of power global which favors them (Aron 1973) or to carve out protectorates (M. Cox 2005). But what difference is there really between the seemingly ‘legitimate’ hegemonic power which guarantees sovereignty of the member states within the international system, and the imperial power whose domination

\textsuperscript{9} For instance Giovanni Arrighi (2006) makes little distinction between the two in the American case.
preserves the sovereignty of subjected states in name only (Walker 2002; see also Stoler 2006)? So Alejandro Colas (2010) is right in stating that, behind the debate on empire in International Relations, are questions about the sovereignty of the member states and the place of hierarchy in the world order. But there is another, perhaps more important, question about the politics of comparing and the presuppositions which feed into our analytical categories, as Anne Laura Stoler (2006) hammers home:

[C]olonial studies has predominantly focused on Northern European empires, with France, Britain, Belgium, and the Netherlands establishing the prototypes for what constitute the foundational strategies of rule. What Hannah Arendt called “continental imperialisms” or contiguous empires — the Hapsburg or Ottoman empires — have been treated both by students of these regions and by those who study colonial empires proper as incommensurate kinds ... European empires have been equated with their colonial variants and reduced to only certain features of them. Thus outright conquest, European settlement, and legalized property confiscation are taken as their defining attributes. Deviations from that norm become just that: aberrant, quasi-empires; exceptional cases; peripheral forms. Not least, prevailing vocabularies have long been misleading and inadequate. “Internal colonialism” already presupposes a form located apart from the real and dominant version. Elsewhere, scholarly vocabulary defers to the terms of empires themselves — “indirect rule” and “informal empire” are unhelpful euphemisms, not working concepts.” (Stoler 2006: 136-137).

The truth about imperial “denial” (Kaplan 2004) may have less to do with disciplinary separation, as Michael Doyle suggested (in Colas forthcoming), as with the deep-rooted mythologies in American culture which view the United States as an exceptional and benevolent nation; not one that employed the brutal methods of European conquerors (see Stephanson 1995; Kaplan 2004; McAllister 2005). As historian William Appleman Williams (1955) wrote, historians had consistently denied the existence of the American empire. In this sense, we may very well ask if the academic denial of empire in International Relations theory does not simply mirror the larger denial of empire in American culture through the process of what Bourdieu calls the “homologies” between the cultural field and the academic field of IR (see Bourdieu 1979 and 1988 in particular). This implies that negationists of empire, more or less
unconsciously, reproduce the more profane and common arguments used to deny empire in the political arena, albeit in a jargon adapted to their profession (see Bourdieu 1988). If this is the case, then classical scholars of International Relations have effectively transposed the cultural myths of exceptionalism into an academic and scientific paradigm as historians and Americanists (Kaplan and Pease 1993) had long done. In such a game, science no more than transparent political debate can profit. But if we do accept to view the US as an empire as the following traditions of scholars do, then different sets of considerations begin to emerge.

**The political economy of imperialism**

John A. Hobson, Rudolf Hilferding and Joseph Schumpeter can claim the paternity of the most influential theories on imperialism at the beginning of the 20th century. Hilferding and Hobson situate the origins of imperialism in the economic crisis of the 1870s and 1880s. Imperialism stems from capitalism’s need to find new, lucrative and productive markets for its investments (Arendt 1972a; Hobsbawm 1989 and Wood 2003). Austrian economist, Joseph Schumpeter (1951), adopted a contrary position. Capitalism did not so much propulse imperialism as did the old feudal and military castes which continued to exert their stranglehold on the modern state. War and expansion: these were the sad vestiges of traditions and social privileges of a bygone age. Interpreted in this light, imperialism and the two world wars that followed it, heralded the last gasp of the old regimes of Europe (Charle 2001).  

10 Decades later Schumpeter’s thesis survives under the guise of the theory of “social imperialism.” Most often credited to Johan Galtung (1971, 1976), it is commonly associated to many other scholars and contexts including Arendt’s (1972a) analysis of imperialism; that of the 1898 Spanish-American War (see Lafeber 1998 for the classical interpretation; Hoganson 2000 for a feminist revision; and Love 2004 for a counter-interpretation); as well as Fritz Fischer (1970) and Arno Maier’s (1983) two classic interpretations of the origins of World War I. In Schumpeters’ stead, imperialism is then said to exert a stabilizing effect on conflicting class relations in the metropole. See Charle (2001) for a historical critique of this thesis and Kershaw (1997) for an appraisal of its utility in analyzing the class dynamics of the Nazi context.
Marxist theoreticians of empire remain the most influential today even if they were inspired by the writings of the above radical economists. All of them repose on the simple premise that the militarisation of capital is inevitable, considering that it needs to survive by exploiting territories, outside of its sphere of influence, that are subordinated to other economic modes of production (Wood 2003; see also Bromley 2003). This is the hallmark of Lenin’s (1971) famous pamphlet *Imperialism: the Supreme Stage of Capitalism* (see Colas forthcoming for a longer presentation).

All Marxist interpretations\(^ {11}\) in the contemporary debate on imperialism situate themselves on a continuum between two major analytical poles represented by the classical interpretations of Lenin and Karl Kautsky. Lenin believes that the great European metropoles’ search for new commercial ventures in foreign territories excites inter-imperial rivalries leading them on the path to war. At the origin of this conflict: the emergence of capitalism in a world fragmented into different national territories (see Bromley 2003). In contrast to this position, Karl Kautsky believes that the principal capitalist powers share in the spoils of exploited economies of the periphery, a dynamic which he terms “ultra-imperialism” (Bromley 2003). This logic pushes capitalist states to cooperation rather than confrontation as Lenin believes.

Though scholars seem divided between Lenin and Kautsky’s lineage, all agree that capitalism and imperialism tend to coincide, both logically and empirically. Duménil and Lévy make imperialism “a general and permanent characteristic of capitalism” or still define it as the “research of profits outside of the capitalist metropoles by method of subjugation” (2002: 3). In many respects, it is to Hardt and Negri’s *Empire* (2000) that we owe the most radical formulation of this thesis. Situated at the crossroads between the Marxist and post-Marxist lineages of

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\(^ {11}\) See also the work of world Systems theorists Immanuel Wallerstein (1980, 1983 and 1990); Ira Gerstein (1983) and Samir Amin (2005) for a more recent interpretation.
Foucault, Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, Empire connotes a new form of supranational sovereignty that progressively erases the pristine borders of the Westphalian era. This postmodern Empire stretches out ever further and colonizes the entirety of social relations. It gradually absorbs the totality of political, cultural, economic and military relations and subordinates them to a “single logic of rule” (Hardt et Negri 2000: xii). This new process of biopolitical vassalisation, of which Empire is the “paradigmatic” manifestation, thus has little to do (Hardt et Negri 2000: xv) with the traditional forms of imperialism which remain firmly anchored in the nation-state.

Hardt and Negri finally revised their thesis in light of the US’ war on terrorism and in view of critiques levelled against their book. Like Empire, Multitude (2004), without a doubt, represented one of the most original and sweeping analyses of global politics when it was published. Permanent states of war and exception have now replaced peace and democracy, they argue. Under the new global sovereignty, interstate conflicts become civil wars calling for the domestic logic of police repression rather than international settlement. Through these upheavals, new political subjectivities are weaved in collective alienation and, guided by the political sentiment of love, the multitudes await their time to break the shackles of Empire.

To be sure, Hardt and Negri’s books remain confusing, however, and somewhat inconsistent especially where the US’ place in this theoretical framework is concerned. Though Empire has no territorial base, more frequently than not, the United States comes off as the enforcer of this new logic of global rule. Though the authors of Empire and Multitude swear to the contrary, judging from many of the examples provided, one comes away with the feeling that we are never

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12. The third installment volume of Hardt and Negri’s trilogy: Commonwealth (2009) has now been released. It further develops the political concept of “Love” and its importance for the Multitudes. I was satisfied that Hardt and Negri’s thesis had already received disproportionate space in this literature review, and that this summary would not fundamentally profit from reviewing yet another of their books.  

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really talking about anything *but* American empire. In fairness, Hardt and Negri do concede that the United States are “midway between imperialism and Empire” (Hardt and Negri 2004: 82, author’s translation). But here, they are already thus critically retreating on their initial claim that the postmodern of which they speak Empire is something different from American empire. For sure, most research in international historical sociology rejects a facile opposition between the allegedly well-defined borders of modernity and the smooth spaces of the contemporary era. In all honesty, the thesis of a globalisation without borders is virtually undefendable in light of most serious research on the topic. Furthermore, it seems clear enough that Empire is never anything but capitalism or globalisation under another name. As Hardt and Negri argue that, under Empire, the traditional great powers are akin to monarchs and princes vying for supremacy, it becomes obvious that what we are really dealing with here are the classic Marxist theses on imperialism – hedging between Kautsky and Lenin - with a new look tailored to the French theory fad. Their thesis no longer really differs from other Marxist interpretations except by a degrees, as well as the conceptual language which clearly situates them in the post-Marxist lineage of Deleuze and Foucault. With these critiques in mind, the theoretical effort undertaken by them and the dialogue it has created are both extremely commendable.

In the final analysis, the most probing reflections in the Marxist debate on empire have rejected the simplistic idea of automatic opposition or convergence between American interests and those of capitalism as a whole (see Pieterse 2004, and Stokes 2005). Like Hardt and Negri,

13 Bourdieu (1988) makes the point that the ‘examples’ employed by authors in reality encapsulate the substance of the entire argument or abstractions of which they are only supposed to be an illustration.
14 See Laffey and Barkawi (2002); Coward (2005); and Rosenberg (1994) and Teschke (2003) for powerful historical reflections on the evolution of sovereignty and territoriality.
15 Michael Storper (1997) and Linda Weiss (1998) force their readers to fundamentally reconsider the trendy idea that nation-states are disappearing or find themselves at the mercy of globalizing, economic forces. For realist positions on this question see also De Senareclens (1998), Waltz (1999) and Krasner (2001), which present rich empirical and theoretical arguments. Finally, like De Senareclens, Larner and Williams (2004) note that the ideological and cultural impact of the debate on globalisation is itself reconfiguring and engendering political subjectivities for a global age.
most participants in the discussion hesitate to employ the term, imperialism, in the sense it was used a century ago as a synonym of *colonialism*, preferring to employ many of the euphemisms we noted earlier such as informal domination. For most, the roots of the American empire date back not to the aftermath of September 11th 2001, nor to the Soviet Union’s collapse in 1991, but the to beginning of the Cold War. American hegemony lay in the Fordist model’s capacity to enchant the masses of a European continent which was barely arising from the rubble of the Second World War (Anderson 2002; Gowan 2004). It relied, also, on the US’ formidable military might which guaranteed security against the rival soviet model (Anderson 2002). The permanent socialist threat enabled the American empire to feudalize the principal capitalist powers: Japan and West Germany and make them into “protectorates” (Gowan 2004: 258). In contrast to the imperial rivalries of the preceding century, American power did not exacerbate conflict and jealousy between the main capitalist centers on condition that it serve the interests of capitalist domination as a whole.16 Today, in Lenin’s wake, most scholars believe that the fall of the Soviet Union and American unilateralism favor the resurgence of inter-imperialist rivalries. The war on terrorism that followed September 11th 2001 has speeded the critique of American hegemony which had begun a decade earlier. The George W. Bush administration took advantage of the war on terrorism to consolidate the US’ position vis-à-vis the rest of the capitalist world (Wood 2003). Paradoxically, the war in Iraq has revealed American dependence on foreign capital and the structural weakness of the dollar (Pieterse 2004; Beitel 2005; Arrighi 2006). Karl Beitel believes American strategy in Iraq aims to maintain the dollar’s pre-eminence as reserve currency of the world economy in the face of the “neo-imperial” defiance by the French and German elites (Beitel 2005: 182). The strong concentration of American currency

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16. This story is the most common one. See Anderson (2002); Bromley (2003); Gowan (2004); Stokes (2005); Beitel (2005); and Arrighi (2006).
reserves and obligations in Chinese hands (Arrighi 2006), and tighter economic partnerships between Southeast Asian economies seeking to attenuate dependence on American capital, has only increased this vulnerability. If this is the case, the American empire has engaged on a declining trajectory and may have to renegotiate a multi-polar world order with its principal allies and strategic competitors (Gowan 2004; Beitel 2005 and Arrighi 2006).

Opposite these analytical trends, Simon Bromley (2003) aligns himself with Karl Kautsky. While rejecting the idea of a harmony of interests between American and Western capital, Bromley believes that the spoils of collective exploitation of Second and Third World economies continue to provide powerful incentives for cooperation between the dominant centers (see also Stokes 2005). The bourgeoisies of the different capitalist states recognize their interest in following in America’s stead even if the “relative gains” of exploitation favour some metropoles more than others (Bromley 2003: 35). The stability of global capitalism will require for the US to achieve a successful balance between two distinct strategies. They must successfully coordinate the wants and needs of the dominant and deter the partially aligned such as China and Russia from challenging this hegemony (Bromley 2003: 65). Finally, like Bromley, Perry Anderson (2002) believes that the US can restore confidence to its principal partners if it moderates its unilateral propensity to use military force in the pursuit of its sole interests.

So at the heart of the political economic theory of imperialism lies an analysis of the relationships between modes of production and accumulation, social class, territory, and conflict dynamics. Along with this question, usually comes another asking whether economic globalisation and transnational capitalism mark a specific kind of American imperial project or a larger pattern of exploitation by industrialized states. But as Stokes (2005) argues, collective
exploitation of the periphery by the dominant capitalist metropoles is hardly an argument against the existence of an American empire or imperial project, even if it is one amongst many.

This said, Marxist interpretations raise a number of issues. First, despite appearances, the debate between disciples of Lenin and Kautsky is really nothing more than the the age-old discussion between realists and liberals, albeit in Marxist language; but with all of the classical problems of treating states as unitary actors: in this case, the apparatus of the dominant class fraction. In this debate, the barely less problematic category of “ruling-class interests” is substituted for the common “national interests” employed by classical IR scholars. Second, what is the specificity of imperialism if it is only a synonym of capitalism? As Pieterse (2004) asks, what are the conditions which push capitalism to engage in violent and militarized expropriation at times while employing peaceful methods in other contexts? And what of pre-capitalist imperialism? Like other political Marxists (Rosenberg 1994, Teschke 2003, Dufour 2005), Ellen Wood (2003) argues that premodern imperialism relied on direct, violent expropriation of land; military control over trade routes; or the redistribution of wealth, mediated by recourse to some other form of political power or ideology. In contrast, modern imperialism rests on capital’s capacity to expropriate surplus value, not through mediation by violence, but through the unfair exchange of merchandise. If we follow Wood’s analysis of pre-modern logics of violent rather than modern, indirect exploitation then we fast conclude that imperialism has been a permanent hallmark of all strategies of accumulation throughout history, be they seigneurial, absolutist or capitalist (see Teschke 2003 on these questions). If this is the case, then militarized capitalism responds to the “inherent contradictions” of its dynamics of accumulation and its incapacity to peacefully integrate all economies into its circuit, as Wood suggests (see also

\[17\] This is also purportedly the distinction between the “world-empires” of the past and the modern “world systems”: see Wallerstein (1990, 1983 and 1983).
Pieterse 2004 for a similar argument on globalisation). But if we accept the idea that the militarisation of capital is a foregone conclusion in light of its internal contradictions, then the distinction between formal and informal logics of domination given to distinguish modern and premodern imperialism does not really hold up to scrutiny.

Like Wood, and Stoler (2006), I agree that colonialism is not the only form of imperialism. But like Stoler, I believe that the clear-cut distinction between formal and informal control are aberrant historical and conceptual simplifications: a distinction which even Wood laboriously, and ultimately unsatisfactorily, defends. It is fair to view colonialism as one manifestation of imperialism rather than as its archetypical expression. The etymology of the word, empire, I will present in the next section will make obvious that the term has historically been employed in a much larger sense. Also Eric Hobsbawm (1989) has demonstrated that nineteenth century critics of colonialism contested what they perceived to be a completely original form of rule rather than a simple continuation of older forms of domination and expropriation: an argument which Arendt (1972a) and historian Charle (2001) both accept. Importantly, however, this is not meant to be interpreted as an argument against the endurance of imperialism today, no more than it is a valid objection in this sense.

Perhaps the most powerful, and most often, formulated critique of Marxist interpretations of empire is that they reduce reality to (often narrowly defined) economic and productive relations. They fail to grasp or deny the cultural, racial and gendered substance of the political economy and thus to see how these symbolic relationships are tantamount to modes of domination, exploitation and imperialism (see Peterson 2003 for an excellent and powerful presentation of these ideas, also the excellent collection of texts in Matthew Paterson and Jacqueline Best’s Cultural Political Economy, 2010). The sixth section of this chapter will tackle these questions in
detail, but for now we present a short history of the word empire in political thought and philosophy from Antiquity to the American Revolution. This section will provide an effective introduction to the works produced by historians of American empire which I will showcase in the following segment.

**Empire in Western political thought**

Historian James Wilson notes that “On a very broad level, as a derivative of the word “empirium,” the word [empire] signifies any form of legal or political power” (2002: 2). The historian of ideas, John Pocock (1975: 510), is more precise and notes that the term, empire, has long carried a double meaning. It captures first the moment when a republic is subjected to the tyranny of an “imperator” who has usurped it for personal glory, generally achieved through feats of arms. “Imperium,” the second sense of the word, empire, historically designated “power over other peoples”, which [the Roman people] had built up. Later, Machiavelli would characterize it as a ‘Commonwealth for expansion’” (Pocock 1975: 510). Political theorist Pierre Cordier (2006) abounds in the same direction, but notes that the term, Imperium, which signifies “supreme power” predates that of imperator, thus preceding the Caesarean empire and the conquest of Gaul.
In classical political theory, the story of empire is intimately wedded to a corollary story about sovereignty, citizenship and liberty, and especially the loss of liberty. In the annals of Roman history, military supremacy and conquest reduced conquered peoples to “subjects” and “slaves,” a condition which left them at the mercy of their conquerors (Cordier 2006: 67). As Cordier notes, according to the historian Salluste, “la perte de la liberté [des cités héléniques] – l’esclavage (seruitus) – résulte de la perte de la souveraineté politique (imperium)” (Ibid). As republican political theorists, influenced by the roman tradition and even early modern liberal theorists, associated human dignity to citizenship and freedom to self-rule, to surrender sovereignty over one’s political community was tantamount to symbolic suicide, indeed for “The freedom described by the Roman writers and their modern admirers alike ‘is not the Liberty of Particular men; it is merely ‘the Liberties of the Common-wealth’” (Skinner quoting Hobbes in 1998: 60). But many liberal theorists equally acquiesced that the loss of sovereignty would signify the loss of that most precious of prizes individual liberty.

Raymond Aron (1973) further remarked how fundamental the surrender of liberty by one people to another was central to defining the term, empire. The difference between monarchs and emperors, he argued, lay precisely in that, contrary to the former, the latter ruled over “foreign peoples” (1973: 260). For this reason, Aron adds, empires, kingdoms and republics also referred to distinct constitutions or forms of political organization. Indeed by the end of the nineteenth

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20. Though this is not universally the case -as Hobbes believed - that monarchy could very well preserve individual liberty (Skinner 1998 and Macpherson 2004).
century, empire had become a select club gathering the most glorious monarchs, those ruling vast expanses of lands and heterogeneous populations (Aron 1973; Hobsbawm 1989; Charle 2001). But the distinction between the constitutional forms of kingdoms, republics and empires is not nearly as straightforward.

Indeed, for republican political theorists, the loss of liberty could take on a second perhaps more insidious form. As freedom traditionally resided in collective self-government, liberty would disappear if the republic came under the domination of a tyrant or autocratic ruler (Skinner 1998). The military expansion of the Roman Republic over adjacent lands and the peoples who occupied them had once ushered in the rule of the imperators who had corrupted the freedoms of the republic. By this measure, tyrannical or imperial rule could also designate the loss of liberty or sovereignty for the very citizens to whom the republic belonged, and not only for those foreigners who came under their control. British Neo-Roman theorists and later their American disciples, were particularly sensitive to the risks of military expansion and territorial aggrandizement. As Quentin Skinner (1998) argues, the protectorate Cromwell established over England and the conquests of Scotland and Ireland resurrected the ghost of Roman conquerors who had turned their republic into a tyrannical state. British Neo-Roman theorists felt “[a] growing fear that the pursuit of glory abroad can lead to the collapse of liberty at home” (Skinner 1998: 65). For this reason, Edmund Burke became a powerful anti-imperialist advocate against British presence in India. He feared, as Arendt argues (1972a) that, as Britain and Britons became accustomed to the contempt of law and freedom so common of colonial administration in India, they would lose the love of liberty required to remain free at home.21

Indeed, one of the central arguments of Hannah Arendt’s work on *The Origins of Totalitarianism*

21. This British republican phobia that expansionism would drag the ‘polis’ into the mud of tyranny crossed the ocean and influenced American fears of a large standing army, preferring instead the employment of local, citizen militias to defend liberty (Commission on the National Guards and Reserves - COTNGAR 2008).
(1972a and 1972b) was that nazi and soviet totalitarianism marked the application to the European heartland of the methods of subjugation to which the great powers of the era of imperialism (1884-1914) had always relied on in governing the colonies (see Lindqvist 1998). As the European bourgeoisie took command of the state, power and expansion became not only the salient criteria of successful foreign policy but also its sole purpose. Imperialism subordinated foreign policy to the desire for national glory. Like racism, it promised to transcend class divisions by setting state power in pursuit of objectives which allegedly benefitted the nation as a whole. Europe only descended further into totalitarianism by abandoning the nation as the founding place of the social contract and espousing race in its stead. Inequality and exclusion no longer required justifications as they became expressions of natural law. The era of imperialism oversaw secret bureaucracy and police repression replace the rule of law on an unprecedented scale until the totalitarian cancer completely corroded the fabric of liberty at home. This is to say that for political theorists, empire not only signified the loss of liberty, sovereignty, and life abroad for those peoples conquered by the expanding state or polis, but potentially, the very citizens of the metropoles could share the same fate.

Yet even with these concerns in mind, the historical relationship between empire, republic and liberty was much more muddled. As the Roman Republic and Empire gradually expanded the borders of citizenship to include some of the empire’s subjects, these foreigners were no longer denied the liberty ordinarily suspended under imperial rule. However, as the citizenry itself grew, social conflict exploded within the body politic (Pocock 1988). It now

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22. I suggest that it is a more fruitful avenue to examine Hannah Arendt’s work on imperialism in the light of this republican tradition of political theory and, in particular, its link to the larger critic of the totalitarian forms of government developed in the third book of the trilogy (1972a and 1972b). An avenue which commentators on empire (such as Arrighi 2006 and Colas forthcoming), versed in political economy, have tended to ignore.

23. Contra Colas (2010) I believe that this is the real meaning of Arendt’s exposition about the alliance of capital and the masses of industrial society. On this point, it is fruitful to compare Arendt to Morgenthau’s view of imperialism and the thesis of the *Primat des Innenpolitik* privileged by many historians of German expansionism (Fischer 1970 or Maier 1983, see Kershaw 1997 and Charle 2001 for critical appraisals of this thesis).
appeared that the republican form of government could pose severe problems, especially in the
guise of aristocratic concerns about the very feasibility of popular democracy, against which
empires and kingdoms seemed to offer solutions (see Pocock 1975). Italian thinkers of the
Renaissance believed that republics, as opposed to empires (see also Lefort 2000 on this), were
classically transient, unstable and, sooner or later, they would succumb to the turbulences of
“Fortune” and its unforeseeable consequences. In particular, republics hinged on the struggles
between “virtue” and “corruption” (Pocock 1975 and 1988). Virtue and republican freedom
entertained a somewhat tautological relationship. The very essence of republican law and
institutions had been to cultivate freedom while the condition for the exercise of republican
freedom was premised on citizens leading virtuous lives through political participation; this
largely meant individual realisation through the pursuit of the common good (see Pocock 1975,
of aristocratic conviction believed that sovereignty may be vested in the political body, the
virtues that republican freedom required, such as “wisdom,” were not to be found amongst all
citizens (Skinner 1998: 35).24 The republic could fall as a result of corruption through expansion,
just as it could succumb to the very instability of politics and the diverse interests and needs of
the citizens (Pocock 1975, also Arendt 1998 on republican diversity). However, aristocracies
possessed the virtues of character which could preserve liberty by fending off both “the
absolutism of the monarchs and the excesses of the multitude” (1998: 35). Thus political
equilibrium could indeed be found in a mixed constitution which blended the monarchical,
republican and aristocratic forms of government. The republic could expand to new and
unimagined boundaries and escape the very transience to which it seemed condemned. In this

24. See also chapter 5 for an in depth discussion of the relationship between republicanism, citizenship, and political
exclusion in the US.
sense, a central component of British early modern political thought revolved around the problem of trying to wed the monarchical form of government to the republican constitution. This led Neo-Roman theorists to adopt a compromise with the “crown in parliament” formula. Using the “body politic” (1998: 26) as a metaphor for the relationship between the King and Parliament, Neo-Roman theorists concluded that, just as was the case of a biological individual, neither the head nor body could do its will without the support of the other (“King and Parliament “are firmly united to make one absolute power” (1998: 2-3)). Significantly, then, monarchies and republics were not mutually exclusive, as Pocock explains:

We are at a point where the meaning of the word “kingship” can draw apart from that of the word “monarchy,” “aristocracy,” and “democracy,” a single person, and elite council, and a popular assembly. It is further very important to remember that the three Greek-derived words just mentioned might be used either functionally, to denote a number of persons (one, few, many) exercising the powers (executive, judicial, legislative) proper to them; or - simultaneously but not inseparably - they might be used socially, to denote hereditary orders or estates exercising these several powers, as when a family inherited monarchy; a nobility, aristocracy, a property-owning commonalty, democracy … [Classical republican theory] could presuppose a natural, as well as a hereditary or otherwise constituted, aristocracy; what it must presuppose was a division of human political capacity into various aptitudes or virtues, variously distributed, which could be in some degree assigned to the exercise of functions or powers (Pocock 1988: 62-63).

At this juncture empire continued to define rule over territory one rightfully owned, thus the prerogative of sovereignty. This was the principle of «Imperator in regno suo, » ‘The Emperor is king in his own realm.’” (Pocock 1988). Empire will come to mean the extension of the king’s prerogatives beyond these holdings, but we are still far from the nineteenth century meaning of imperialism, as Pocock argues. Likewise, American political writers will frequently employ empire in a neutral sense to mean the land occupied by the colonies, like Alexander Hamilton, designating “territories more extensive than organized” (Pocock 1988: 68-69).
Mixed constitutions offered other solutions to republican concerns. Machiavelli had already stated that republics would have to reconcile two fundamental urges: the want for “liberty” and the desire for “greatness,” as writes Richard Armitage (2002: 29). Like the Roman theorists who preceded (Cordier 2006) and followed him, Machiavelli entertained no illusion that free government could ever survive the encroachment of foreign powers (Skinner 1998). The “commonwealth for expansion” (Armitage 2002), militarily organised, was the only sure way that republics would not succumb to the ambitions of their neighbours. Ultimately, however, defensive or offensive, republics were condemned to lose their freedoms.

Machiavelli’s [contribution was to show] it would be impossible for any state to avoid the compulsions of expansion, and hence to escape the loss of its liberty. Rome could never have achieved grandezza without instituting the practical measures [such as arming the plebs and admitting foreigners to citizenship] that had led to internal dissension and hence to the destruction of its republican liberty; likewise, those states that did not follow the expansionist policies of the Romans rendered themselves vulnerable to conquest by others and would lose their liberty as their competitors overran them in due course (Armitage 2002: 31).

Adam Smith and other British theorists believed that a republic could achieve greatness by building a maritime empire which would bring it wealth and commerce. As this empire would not have to hold landed possessions beyond the British isles neither would it require a standing army to defend them, thus eluding the specter of caesarism. Contra Machiavelli, Smith believed that a maritime republican empire could achieve both salient objectives: “offer greatness without endangering liberty” (Armitage 2002: 40).

Machiavelli’s dilemma still haunted the American Founding Fathers. At the time of Confederation, there was much debate about what kind of political entity the United States of America would become and what would be the relations of the former colonies to each other.
The risk of warfare, for one, between the neighboring republics made a solid argument for the Federalist clan and in favor of confederation (*The Federalist Papers*). Confederation posed another problem, however. French political theorist Montesquieu had always stated that republics must be small if they were to preserve cohesion and remain free. Would amalgamation into the United States signify for the founding republics the loss of their liberty? This harkened back to the problem of corruption through expansion. Pre-eminent among the sources of corruption, republican thinkers believed, were the interests of diverse “factions” – merchants and city-dwellers in Thomas Jefferson’s case - who privileged their personal interests over those of the republic (Pocock 1975). Jefferson for one believed that the only solution to fend off the expansion of industry and commerce would be a proportionate expansion of land, as the virtue of the American citizenry lay in the hearts of the landed farmers. Jefferson was thus the proponent of a great agrarian empire that would counteract the rise of “monied interests.” Like Jefferson, empire enabled James Madison to solve the problem of factions in a most ingenious fashion. In the *Federalist Papers*, he advocated that a large republican empire would pit so many factions against each other that none could clearly dominate the others. In this, freedom would be secure (Armitage 2002). Rather than advocating direct democracy, Madison solved Montesquieu’s

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25. Pocock argues that the apocalyptic fixation on the clash between corruption and virtue was inherent in the republican tradition, rather than in Protestantism, and shaped the American cultural obsession with the apocalypse. The fear of factions and conspiracies aiming to overthrow the republic survived into modern times in the propensity of politicians and intellectuals to guard their fellow citizens against the partisan interests of certain sectors of American society. Most famous among these, Pocock notes, was President Eisenhower’s farewell address warning his co-nationals against the “unwanted influence” of the “military-industrial complex.” Emmanuel Todd (2004) rightfully notes the salience of the theme of decline or of “the end of history” in contemporary debates about the future of world order in the Post-soviet era. Chalmers Johnson’s popular *Blowback* Trilogy (see 2000 and 2006) presents a modern iteration of the theme of the usurpation of liberty by the military-industrial complex and the imminent fall “of the American republic” (2006).

26. For example, “[Jefferson] justified the purchase [of Louisiana] because he believed that expanding into new lands could only lengthen the American republic’s existence; the alternative was population stagnation and concentration which would lead to anti-republican urbanization, misdistribution of wealth, corruption, and poverty. For Jefferson, republicanism and expansionism were completely intertwined … The threat was not empire per se, but urban and industrial empire. At that point, the Constitution’s structure could not prevent the average citizen, driven off the farm, from losing his independence and becoming a desperate pawn of the rich and powerful.” (Wilson 2002: 103).
republican-imperial dilemma by prescribing representative democracy. Citizens would elect representatives who would then travel to the seat of government, meet and run the affairs of state. Here, once more, the mixed aristocratic-monarchic-republican constitution preserved liberty while assuring the republic some measure of stability against the turbulences of republican politics and the multitudes (see Pocock’s (1988) remarks on the institution of the presidency as a disguised monarchical-republican constitution).

Madison agreed with Hume that democracies were naturally turbulent and factious, but that in a post-classical world of representative, rather than direct, democracy such collisions of interests might protect rather than threaten the stability of the republic. The very expansiveness of an extended republic would multiply, and thus ameliorate faction, so that empire itself would be the safeguard of liberty (Armitage 2002: 46).

In this sense as well, empire could become the salvation of the republic. Thus both British thinkers and their American successors saw empire and expansion as problems to be dealt with, but also increasingly as possible answers to the problems faced by republican politics. In the end, by instituting a federal government whose powers superseded those of the component republics, the confederation of the United States of America ushered in a political revolution: devising a republican empire for the modern ages (Pocock 1988). And so it remains that through the last years of the colonial era and at the turn of the nineteenth century, empire was far from a pejorative term. The Founding Fathers like Washington and Jefferson frequently employed the word, empire, to designate the dominion of the United States (Wilson 2002; Anderson and Crayton 2005). Though the War of Independence was a revolt against British colonial rule, the US’ relationship to empire and imperialism was much more ambivalent than is alleged. On the contrary, empire was too deeply embedded in republican political thought to be so easily dismissed even after Independence. Debates over whether the United States should be an empire
or not endured well into the next two centuries. But perhaps it is closer to the truth to say that the real debate was over what kind of empire the United States should be (Lafeber 1998; Wilson 2002).

Republics, monarchies and empires were not irreconcilable constitutional systems. Rather, as Wilson (2002) suggests, the United States can be very much thought of as an “imperial republic” (see also Aron 1973). This excavation of the historical meanings of the words empire, monarchy and republic leads us to see that we must be wary of the abstract typologies constructed by social scientists. The tendency to occlude the American experience of empire during the construction of these typologies is particularly worrisome. Historical amnesia is the precondition for one to even ask whether the United States are, or have been an empire. The occlusion of the process of imperial construction of the American republic then leads social scientists to always assess the imperial form of the United States in contrast to other allegedly, more pristine forms of empire; scholars thereby incessantly conclude that if it is an empire, the US is somehow an exceptional one. The premise is that the United States republican empire is not a legitimate historical experience from which one may construct a concept of empire. But it would certainly be a fruitful avenue for students of comparative politics and history to begin reversing the intellectual trend. They should begin by taking the United States as the ideal-type, or at least as a legitimate ideal-type, and then compare other historical experiences in contrast to it. Indeed, picking up chronologically where this section leaves off, the historical works in the coming section precisely consider the contemporary US experience as an imperial one, which effectively leaves most objections we have considered so far, in shambles.

27. But Aron himself comes to this conclusion.
The imperial synthesis of American political development

Political scientists have long studied the impact of liberal and republican political cultures on the development of American institutions, often termed republican or liberal “syntheses” of American history (i.e. Hartz 1955, and Pocock 1975; see Smith 1997; the term is Gibson’s Gibson 2007). Not unlike these works, critical historians of the cold war era and their successors have produced a rich and original body of scholarship examining how war, expansion and imperial rule were fundamental forces shaping the development of the US’ major social, political, cultural and juridical institutions. The best and most precise scholarship on American empire undoubtedly comes from these works. Though many of the classical works on empire and manifest destiny date from the cold war (Williams 1955, 1962 and 1969; Lafeber 1963; Young 1973; Horseman 1981), the post-cold war decades have generated a renewal of interest in the question, especially since September 11th 2001 (Stephanson 1995; Wilson 2002; Love 2004; Anderson and Crayton 2005). But because the authors of these works are historians, most of them limit the scope of their interrogations to the colonial era, outlining the detailed phases of the nineteenth century expansionary project which culminated in the 1898 Spanish-American War.29 These works of predominantly historical materialist inspiration situate the social origins of the American empire in the violent displacement of aboriginal peoples, the race to the Frontier, and the shift of American foreign policy from the colonial conquest of the continent to the informal maritime imperial policy of indirect, or economic, rule in Latin America and the Far East.30 Famous for having noted American historiography’s denial of empire (1955), William Appleman Williams (1962 and 1969) locates the first phase of American expansion in the need

29. This is, of course, their greatest limitation for our purpose.
30. Simon Bromley (2003), Laffey and Barkawi (2002) and Michael Cox (2005) formulate similar arguments in the IR debate, acknowledging that the construction of the United States was itself a process of imperial expansion and consolidation.
of the farming classes to acquire larger tracts of land. This in turn leads to a crisis of domestic production forcing the US to seek new markets abroad to offset its surplus goods in tobacco and grains. In The Roots of the Modern American Empire (1969), Williams argues that the interests of agrarian capitalists drove the westward push, manifest destiny, and support for the annexation of Canada. As the capital balance, strengthened by sales of agrarian products abroad, served to finance America’s industrial development, the interests of industrial capital favored the United States’ expansionary policy in the 1890s thus producing the conditions necessary for war against Spain.

In another classic work, Walter Lafeber (1998) argues that the roots of the 1898 phase of insular expansion over the Caribbean lay in the ascendancy of industrialists over landed, agrarian capitalists; the rise of a racist and elegiac, expansionary Anglo-Saxon ideology; and an ever-firmer belief that only imperialism could offset increasing class conflict at the turn of the century.³¹

The 1890s may correctly be called a major watershed in American history, but this decade cannot be understood without comprehending domestic and foreign policy in the 1850-1889 period. Spurred by a fantastic industrial revolution, which produced ever larger quantities of surplus goods, depressions, and violence, and warned by a growing radical literature that the system was not functioning properly, the United States prepared to solve its dilemmas with foreign expansion (Lafeber 1998: 60).

According to The New Empire, the succession of economic crises which destabilized the United States, in conjunction with concerns over foreign imperial competition for crucial Chinese and Asian markets, pushed US statesmen to covet naval bases in the Pacific. Simultaneously, the

³¹ Kristin Hoganson (2000) provides a feminist revision of this argument. She argues that the disappearance from politics of the generation that had fought the Civil War three decades earlier and the rise of the feminist movement in the US facilitated a crisis in American masculinity. The 1898 War marked an attempt for American men to reclaim the virility they believed had disappeared from republican politics.
phantasmagorical visions of romantic ideologues such as Reverend Josiah Strong, Brooks Adam, captain Alfred Thayer Mahan, and senator Henry Cabot Lodge, all of whom idealized expansionism as a sign of national or racial vitality, laid the intellectual groundwork for the policies of the “new empire” (Lafeber 1998). By the mid 1890s, fearing domestic revolution, American capital, and particularly industrial capital, supported an aggressive expansionist policy which led President McKinley to reject accommodation with Spain and engaged the US on the path to war. Lafeber’s contribution here was to note that the 1898 war did not simply mark an isolated episode of expansion in US history but one which had been long prepared and nurtured by changing social forces for over half a century.

In a contemporary effort, revisionist historian Eric Love (2004) challenges the classical Marxist formulation of the imperial synthesis. He accuses his predecessors of simplifying the historical accounts of the origins of the 1898 war, and in particular the complex relationship between class conflict, racism and imperialism. To say that the formulation of a racist ideology and expansionary vision served to offset domestic class conflict is not only a tremendously reductive argument, Love shows this racist vision failed to create popular support in favor of empire. In fact, racism actually created two kinds of obstacles that notably threatened popular support of the Open-Door policy and annexation of the Philippines. The fear of increased labor competition against Chinese migrants in California and the belief that the ‘alien races’ which populated the Philippines could never become American citizens ultimately pushed US statesmen to oppose annexation and empire.

Of course, one can ask whether Love’s formulation of the Marxist account of the 1898 war does not equally rest on reductive portraits of his predecessors’ arguments. Lafeber’s The New Empire clearly notes how, during the imperialist debates of the late nineteenth century,
racist fears played initially against the annexation of Hawaii. Again, as Lafeber (1998) sees it, debate did not so much center on whether or not the US should pursue an imperialist policy, but rather, whether it should seek to acquire formal colonies or indirect control over foreign markets and shipping lanes. As he puts it, the 1890s debate opposed not pro-imperialists and anti-imperialists but instead proponents and opponents of annexationist policies: a crucial nuance. Furthermore, the ambivalent relationship between American imperialism and racism is central to the study of empire in other contemporary historical works published before Love’s Race Against Empire, such as Wilson’s, and later Anderson and Crayton’s (see below).

Another classical historical work, Reginald Horseman’s Race and Manifest Destiny (1981) showcases the transformations in America’s providential ideology, that of an exceptional nation endowed with a virtuously English aptitude for free government from the time of the revolutionary generation to the late nineteenth century. Early American ethnocentrism may have been imbued with the benevolent Enlightenment belief that American republicanism could uplift foreign peoples and migrants to attain civilization and free government. However, by the mid-nineteenth century, American intellectuals had blended European racialist ideas with the domestic, empirical knowledge that their examinations of ‘degenerate races’ had provided them. Aided in this enterprise by the need to reconcile imperial, expansionary ambitions with the ideals of a free society, American theorists now cast the problems which confronted the US society of the 1850s in a starkly racialist, pseudoscientific, though incoherent, view of the world and society. A hierarchy of races existed in which members of an Anglo-Saxon brotherhood of Teutonic lineage were destined to lead and exterminate all others. Significantly, an unashamedly expansionary and exterminatory racist vision of foreign relations had replaced the benevolent
missionary outlook of the preceding generations and provided the intellectual justifications for both formal empire and economic expansion.

Like Horseman, in *Manifest Destiny* (1995), cultural historian Anders Stephanson turns away from the class interests of agrarian and industrial American capitalists and seeks out the roots of empire in the religious mythologies which harkened back to the settling of the continent. The first settlers to populate New England saw a promised land in America, a vision that shaped the ulterior theses on American exceptionalism and Manifest Destiny, an expression later coined in 1845 by journalist John O’ Sullivan. These providential national myths blended racist Anglo-Saxonism, Calvinist theology with republicanism and engendered a futuristic philosophy of history which held that the American experience possessed “regenerative qualities for Humanity as a whole” (Stephanson 1995: xi). Stephanson traces the persistence of this particular strain of protestant ideology through four centuries of American history, showing how it has been quintessential in shaping the historical world view of American statesmen and their faith in an uniquely American divine mission. In contrast to the doxa of International Relations theory, the author notes that most American political realists of the post-war era remained attached to the notions of American exceptionalism. Realism appears henceforth more as a science for managing global relations with the Soviet Union rather than a deeply rooted, or even popular view of global politics, such as the manichean and prophetic discourses of Ronald Reagan would again confirm.

More recently, other scholars have looked at how the US’ imperial policies shaped the development of American institutions from the onset of colonization and through the following centuries. In the *Imperial Republic*, James Wilson (2002) notes that expansive imperial rule was vital to the Founding Fathers’ vision of the burgeoning United States, how they viewed the

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32. The book’s complementarity with Campbell’s (1998) is striking.
constitution and ultimately some of America’s most fundamental juridical and political institutions. A mixed imperial and monarchical constitution solved many of the problems of republican politics by preserving free (representative) government all the while shielding it from the influence of factions and conferring on each of the republics (states of the US) the benefits of collective security. Furthermore, Wilson writes that the implicit consensus on imperial rule favored the development of a host of constitutional conventions which granted presidents, and even generals, discretionary powers in the conduct of foreign and military policy. This imperial constitution most centrally defined jurisprudence, citizenship rights in the US and the relationships of the federal government both to racial minorities and to the extensive territories organized under the imperial jurisdiction of the 1787 Northwest Ordinance or the insular conquests of the 1898 war.

Anderson and Crayton (2005) write that the expansion of the United States’ dominion over North America since colonization mirrored rather than differed from that of other great empires. Seeing imperialism as a determining force shaping American development enables scholars to break with the myths of exceptionalism: “To found a narrative of American development on the concept of dominion is to forego the exceptionalist traditions of American culture … in favor of a perspective more like the one from which historians routinely survey the long periods of European, African, or Asian history” (2005: xiv-xv). *The Dominion of War* focuses on five hundred years of American history as a long cycle of imperial wars pitting the emerging colonies, and eventually the United States, against aboriginals and the encroachments of rival empires. In an argument reminiscent of Wilson’s (above), Anderson and Crayton write that, as each war enlarged American territory, so too must the United States decide what to do with the conquered, often ‘alien,’ populations they now found under their jurisdiction and had to
amalgamate into the structures of the republican empire. This implies that the US’ imperial wars confronted it with many of the traditional problems posed by empire building we explored in the preceding section. Indeed, violent debates over the organization and integration of the new territories and their populations into the Union, tended to exacerbate latent sectional and political conflicts between the states, generating new cycles of war and social upheaval.

Indeed, we maintain that the American Revolution and the Civil War can best be understood as unanticipated consequences of decisive victories in the great imperial wars – the Seven Years’ War and the Mexican American War- that preceded each by a little more than a decade. In both cases, the acquisition of vast territories created severe, protracted, and ultimately violent debates over sovereignty and citizenship. Those bitter postwar disputes over the empire’s future led to civil wars and ultimately to revolutions that altered the fundamental meanings of rights and citizenship, and redefined the bases of imperial governance (2005: xiii).

Significantly, in these accounts, empire ceases to be a polemic label or something whose existence must be proven, as in most IR scholarship. Instead, it becomes an explanatory key capable of shedding light on the development of American institutions, culture and ultimately the major events of US political history. In other words, we are no longer asking the question “what is an empire and is the US one?”, but “what does empire help us understand about American history that other concepts do not?” What other experiences, conflicts or events does it highlight? One major normative contribution of this literature is to contradict or at least nuance the moralistic claims that exceptionalism has embedded into the official history of the country, as Anderson and Crayton note. By the same token, this literature begins to reinstate the American experience in the collective trajectory of its contemporaries. Scholarly work, in the next section, pursues this endeavor and brings the analysis of American empire into the 20th and 21st centuries whilst highlighting the gendered, racial, cultural and symbolic relations of imperial rule.
Imperial geographies: Poststructuralist and postcolonial accounts of empire

Other major theoretical contributions to the scholarship on American empire come from the cultural theorists of literary, anthropological and geographical disciplines, inspired by Edward Said’s *Orientalism* (1980), and the body of contemporary continental philosophy loosely known as “French Theory” (Butler 2006: x). Most often termed “postcolonial studies”, this scholarship probably represents the fastest growing academic literature on the topic. Work in this field examines the continuity of colonial and imperial forms of domination beyond the alleged disappearance of the great European empires of the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It stresses the social construction of territories and identity: the political and cultural inscription of political referents on the physical landscape and on the bodies of the populations who inhabit them (see Campbell 1998; McAllister 2005). Given this premise, race and identity - cultural, social and gendered, rather than territorial - become the central markers of imperial power relations and exploitation. Struggles against empire become revolts to decolonize racialized and gendered identities, territorial markers, language, cultural practices and even our most fundamental ontological and epistemological categories (see Peterson 2003; O Thuathail 1996). This literature thus operates a fundamental shift away from the ontological concerns which informed International Relations theory’s definitions of empire. Indeed, what exactly does it entail to conquer or rule foreign land or foreign peoples, as Raymond Aron presciently asked (1973)? Who comes to decide, all circumstances considered, what is foreign, and what is foreign to whom? These are some of the principal concerns that the following literature addresses.

Amy Kaplan and Donald Pease (1993) are best known for bringing together scholars who employ the concept of empire to shed light on the study and development of US culture, and to
remediate its occlusion from the field of American studies (McAllister 2005). The disciplining of US identity and citizenship through rejection of the colonized “other,” foreign and domestic, defines the thread which runs through many of the texts in Cultures of US Imperialism. Kaplan’s The Anarchy of Empire in the Making of US Culture (2003a) further explored how myths about American civilization, which captivated the imagination of American writers, were stabilized by contrasting the United States with the “anarchy” of colonial spaces such as Africa and the Caribbean in order to domesticate the ambiguities of American identity. Her recent work (2003b, 2004a and 2004b) prolongs this line of interrogation to the post-9/11 context. It aims to show how the Bush administration has attempted to restabilise an American identity, threatened by terrorism, by appealing to a backward-looking, decisively more romantic and racialized, conception of Americanity and citizenship that rejected ambiguity and multiple allegiances to the margins of the “homeland” (see Chapter 5 for further elaboration on Kaplan’s work).

Reminiscent of Kaplan’s work, anthropologist Anne Laura Stoler (2006 and 2008) proposes the new concept of “imperial formation” to capture the shifting, multiple and “ambiguous” (2006: 139) spaces of empire. Indeed, the solid, well-defined typologies on which...
rest scholarly debates about empire (and in particular the “stale” IR debate we focus on here, Stoler 2006: 128) are mere caricatures of the historical experiences they purport to describe. Empires, she argues, are precisely ever-shifting formations of rule with ill-defined borders, both official and officious, which govern by imposing “states of exception” (2006: 127); by denying rights and the rule of law to entire regions and populations, while simultaneously placing themselves above the laws they claim to represent. Finally, they thrive on the exclusion of marginal populations, racial minorities or other categories of non- or quasi-citizens, at once bound by political obligations, all the while being denied commensurate rights and privileges.

[Imperial formations] are founded on gradated variations and degrees of sovereignty and disenfranchisement — on multiplex criteria for inclusions and sliding scales of basic rights. Each generated imperial conditions that required constant judicial and political reassessments of who was outside and who within at any particular time. Each required frequent redrawing of the categories of subject and citizen, fostering elaborate nomenclatures that distinguished between resident alien, naturalized citizen, national, immigrant, or U.S. citizen without federal voting rights — as in the case of Guam. All produced scales of differentiation and affiliation that exceeded the clear division between ruler and ruled. These sliding scales that placed both those born into Native American tribes and those in overseas territories as “owing allegiance to the United States but not entitled to political rights” define the common architecture of imperial rule. They represent enduring forms of empire, force fields of attraction and aversion, spaces of arrest and suspended time. In imperial discourse, they are framed as unique cases — but they are “exceptions” in a context in which such exceptions are a norm (Stoler 2006: 139).

Like Kaplan and other postcolonial theorists, Stoler turns our attention to the complexity of territorial arrangements within imperial forms of rule, showing that they are porous and shifting rather than fixed, “contiguous” (2006: 136) and clearly demarcated as alleged in many of the formal definitions of empire we examined at the onset of this chapter.

Hailing from a rather different tradition of scholarship, historian Christophe Charle’s *La crise des sociétés impériales* (2001) revisits the histories of the three main European empires of
the early 20th century: French, British, and German, by drawing on the scholarship of his
colleague, sociologist Pierre Bourdieu. Straddling the line between nation-states and empires,
Charle employs the term “imperial societies” to examine the collective trajectories of these three
societies whose bid for dominance in global politics twice unleashed havoc upon the world.
Charle develops the concept of “national habitus” to examine how the domestic structures of
each of the three imperial societies both reflected and structured their mutual antagonism, quest
for dominance, self-representations of their citizens and even their scientific, academic and
cultural fields. National habitus translates each imperial society’s dominant place at the forefront
of world politics into a unique horizon of cultural, political and material reference points
common to its citizenry, which simultaneously exacerbates international divisions with
neighbouring societies. National habitus also highlights methodological imperatives. Like the
critics of American exceptionalism, Charle argues that the dominant scholarly paradigms through
which historians hailing from each national space have examined the historical trajectory of his
own country in effect reified the national myths through which each imperial society attempted
to distinguish itself from its rivals by claiming some kind of symbolic or cultural superiority.
Finally, Charle analyses how the quest for global supremacy exacerbates the social fractures
between the class fractions in each of the three imperial societies, bringing France, Great-Britain
and especially Germany on the path to war and collapse. Yet, the imperial structures of all three
societies endured and survived the Second World War to a certain degree. Definitely moving in
the direction of postcolonial scholarship, Charle’s later work (2005) examined how the main
social structures of each of the three imperial societies survived the dismantling of their formal
empires, including their bids for cultural supremacy in a world they no longer politically
dominated. Importantly, Charle’s work remains to this point the only attempt at constructing a bourdieusian account of empire.

In the final analysis, scholars such as Kaplan, Stoler and Charle rightfully ask what we mean or imply when we say empires have disappeared. As Stoler (2008 and 2006) asks, what does that presuppose about what one believes empires were? It has become obvious that the relationships between populations, territories and domination are by far the most problematic in this debate. My examination of the literature on empire in political thought and American history has already revealed the complex etymologies of the main theoretical categories we employ (empire, monarchies, republics, states, commonwealths) and their frequent overlaps. Furthermore, these analyses show how different geopolitical, identity, and cultural arrangements, established in different territories throughout history, are likely to fall under one or multiple headings. What these literatures have in common is to cast a profound doubt on the merits of traditional definitions of empire developed by scholars of international and comparative politics.

Scholarship in critical geography (O Thuathail 1996) provides powerful analytical tools to further deepen these interrogations. It questions the historical and territorial presuppositions which feed into our categories. For instance, what of the fundamental distinction between nation-states and empires, which seems so self-evident (i.e. Mann 2005)? Is there really any nation-state on the planet which has not absorbed a ‘foreign’ population into its borders as a result of a treaty, diplomatic arrangement, or a more ‘banal’ process of state construction over the centuries spanning the Middle Ages to Modernity (see Rosenberg 1994; Teschke 2003), especially in contested or peripheral regions such as the French provinces of Alsace and Lorraine? This leads us to question how identity is constructed through territorial and geographical markers,
especially the distinctions between citizens and foreigners, and to reveal how this process of historical construction often disappears in the gloss of official histories.

Heavily influenced by poststructuralist theory, all scholarship in critical geography insists on the contingency of territorial and geopolitical spaces. For David Campbell (1998 and 1990) and Cynthia Weber (1995), for instance, sovereignty and foreign politics are “performative” acts that *trace out spaces*. They belie the genesis of national myths, claiming that there is no necessary link between geopolitical arrangements and the communities which inhabit them. These spaces have no ontological foundations apart from the political practices that (re)produce them and they legitimize themselves through acts of signification. It is a falsehood, as notes Cynthia Weber (1995), to believe that the state represents a political body or body politic which *pre-exists* it or that is *anterior* to its constitution. States and other sociopolitical arrangements (empires, kingdoms, duchies, fiefdoms, etc) define political bodies, not the contrary. The simulacrum of political identity operate principally through the means of foreign policy, as concerns David Campbell, and sovereignty, in Weber’s case. Foreign policy is first and foremost a process which differentiates the identity of an in-group from an out-group (*Others*), from which the former must be protected (Campbell 2005, 1998 and 1990). If foreign policy creates (geo)political spaces, more importantly, it also creates *distinct moral communities*, that is, *foreign* political communities that do not conform to the formal juridical, political and territorial borders of state sovereignty. Throughout American history the foreign policies of the different states and federal government have created a body politic of American citizens from which aboriginals, African-Americans, Hispanics, Asians and other indesirable minorities were excluded, though they inhabited the national territory. Foreign policy associated these “liminal groups” within the state with “foreign dangers” (2005: 948).

The common feature of the liminal groups in US society is that they threatened the subjectivities and social relations of production associated with liberal capitalism: family, property, and hence national identity. The strategy for dealing with liminal groups was to identify them with the foreign, usually the enemy (1990: 277).

Foreign policy thus becomes a mechanism to “discipline” the moral community sanctioned by the state. This securitisation of identity (Campbell 1998) was more recently emulated in the war on terrorism through the persecution of muslims, pacifists and opponents of the Bush administration (Campbell 2002). Similarly, Cynthia Weber (1995) illustrates the porousness between US domestic and foreign policies. Prefiguring Stoler’s “semblance of sovereignty” (2006: 138), Weber (1995) argues that the US has never hesitated to violate the sovereignty of Latin American countries, located in its own ‘backyard,’ when it considered the political turbulences within these states became issues of US domestic, not foreign, policy. The War on Drugs is an example.

The work of Geraoid O Thuathail (1996) is similar to David Campbell’s. Territorial and geographical landscapes determine no fixed political identities, he writes. Geography is a narrative process during which peoples and institutions dispute paternity over territories as a means to inscribe their moral referents upon them, and thus establish their legitimate right to occupy them (1996). No surprise then if modern geography burgeoned during the era of British imperialism in Ireland and the conquest of the New World. The great works of political geographers Rudolph Mackinder, Friederich Ratzel and Karl Haushofer at once mirrored and contributed to excite the imperial aspirations of their nations. Geography thus produces space and, inventories; it separates, categorizes and structures them for conquest.36 It reflects the point

36. The division of occupied Bagdad into military zones reflects this idea, especially the notion of the safe or “Green Zone” which houses the American embassy and main government buildings.
of view and discursive imaginary of its context, imposing and (re)producing its own racial, sexual, ethnic and national boundaries. Cartography codifies the territory all the while erasing former landmarks, names and the memories, histories and identities associated with them. As O Thuathail notes:

The decolonization struggle in Ireland was never only a struggle to decolonize physical space and territory but also to decolonize identity, history, and geographical knowledge … The struggle over geography is also a conflict between competing images and imaginings, a contest of power and resistance that involves not only struggles to represent the materiality of physical geographic objects and boundaries but also the equally powerful and in a different manner, the equally material force of discursive borders between an idealized Self and a demonized Other (O Thuathail 1996: 14-15).

All of these processes of constitution and occultation of space converge in our conceptual categories around what Steve Smith calls “methodological nationalism” (cited in Agnew 1994: 69). The nationalist reification and modern political thought treat the nation-state as the most accomplished and stable political form of universal history, rather than the transient geopolitical compromise of one era (Agnew 1994; Walker 1993). Indeed, the nation-state is only a recent geopolitical compromise to the problem of political community and belonging (see Teschke 2003). Despite this, Western political thought has solidified the myths of a linear philosophy of history. Modern historicism weaves a tale in which political subjects are bound by an organic destiny and evolve out of an era of social conflict into one of perpetual peace which marks the end of history. Outside the nation-state, the state of war persists in the anarchical void: a natural and apolitical condition of conflict in which history is bound to endlessly repeat itself as a one long bloody, cycle of violence (e.g. Gilpin 1981 for the classical position; also Walker 1993 and Wight 1995). This opposition between the time of the polis and the time of global politics spawns further derivative categories. It engenders the racist stereotypes in which a “civilized”
space clashes with a “primitive” space as if the latter stood outside of historical time (see Walker 2002; Agnew 1994: 62-63). Significantly, these geopolitical and geohistorical preconceptions retain privileged places within contemporary political commentary, just as surely as they traced the common thread of history’s different imperial contexts.

Environmental geographers and political ecologists such as Simon Dalby, Mike Davis and Matthew Paterson further reveal the imprints or “debris” (Stoler 2008) of imperialism which subsist upon the cultural and physical landscapes of our planet, long after the dismemberment of Europe’s formal empires. Davis’ (2003) *Late Victorian Holocausts* situates the origins of third world poverty and environmental degradation in the forced integration of Asia and Africa into the circuits of the global market during the second half of the 19th century. Meanwhile, Simon Dalby (2002 and 2004) sketches out how the geographies of environmental degradation follow the geographical scars of imperial domination. The transformation of the physical and ecological landscapes everywhere accompanies colonizers who irrigate plains and clear-cut forests, exploit the soil and integrate foreign animal and vegetable specimens in conquered spaces (2002). The contemporary world market follows these long-established patterns, as resources are extracted from former colonial dominions to be consumed in rich countries (Dalby 1998, 2002, and 2004). The ecological geography of imperialism also draws our attention to the interrelations between our consumption practices, geopolitics and the subjectivities they weave. Much like Orientalism, the ecological and cultural geographies of imperialism feeds into the West’s fascination with ecotourism: game reserves, ‘natural’ parks, spaces untamed, and the possibility to consume the pre-industrial customs, trophies and artefacts fashioned by primitive locals (Dalby 2004, see also Stoler 2008 on this). “As David Cannadine has shown, empire in the British experience at least, was to a substantial degree a matter of aesthetics related to social hierarchy, a matter of
‘ornamentalism’ in his telling terminology” (Dalby 2004 : 7). It is thus telling that advertisements for sports utility vehicles (SUVs) continue to exhibit their motor cars conquering spaces traditionally associated with colonialism: the American West, the Orient of the Crusades and the wild and expansive African spaces (Dalby and Paterson 2006). All of these myths of conquest continue to feed into the fetishization of past imperial glories and remain firmly anchored within the colonial imaginary. The same goes for the “material” needs which their satisfaction requires, such as the productive forces of “carboniferous capitalism” that continues to entrap the Middle-East in the Great Game played by Western empires (Dalby et Paterson 2006 : 15).

The critical literature we have examined reveals the degree to which our dominant geographical and geopolitical referents – nation-states – overdetermine, very much like a stacked deck of cards, the way in which we may think about the problem of empire. The meticulously constructed teleological histories of modern political thought masterfully mask the tortuous, contingent and violent processes by which different populations came to cohabit inside what we term, in hindsight, coherent political entities. This poses a most difficult question: what is really the difference between the historical construction of a nation-state and processes of imperial construction? Is the distinction ultimately not an arbitrary one a result of the very process through which nation-states have better cemented the web of meaning and belonging which ties different communities together? To fashion and impose certain mental and cultural categories which legitimize political domination in the longue durée? Do not our definitions of empire assume that political integration in imperial formations always remains a temporary and contested affair, subject to challenge and inevitable contradictions? In this sense, our conceptual debate would achieve no end but reproduce the teleological myth of modernity which
presupposes a historical rupture between a bygone “age of empires” and an “age of nation-states”; or better yet – of oncoming “globalisation”? Sociologist Michael Mann’s (2005 and 2004) argument on the “incoherent empire” certainly falls into this geohistorical trap. This historicism is all the more poignant that it had been institutionalized in the Versailles Treaty Process at the end of the First World War and the premises of the UN after the Second World War struck the fatal blow to Europe’s colonial empires. The nation-state here was not so much an analytical category and empirical reality waiting to emerge from the ruins of empire. It was a political ideal that statesmen, nationalist activists and romantic intellectuals hoped to achieve and laboriously constructed (see Anderson 1983). If we want to seriously debate the question of American empire we must first insure that our conceptual categories do not simply reproduce the dominant assumptions of a self-proclaimed postimperial era. Empires have not disappeared, as virtually all scholarship outside of classical IR currents show; their structures remain firmly entrenched in the cultural, political, and ecological, geographies of the contemporary world.

*From “empire” to “imperial society”*

If classical scholars of International Relations have been hesitant to acknowledge or to outright deny the possibility that America could be an empire, they seem virtually alone to hold this position. I have shown that imperial negationism is partially a result of the structures of the academic field of International Relations and political science, but not, as Michael Doyle (cited in Colas forthcoming) alleges, because of empire’s location at the intersection of two subfields of the discipline. International Relations theory has reproduced the age-old myth of American exceptionalism, stating that, unlike the old powers of Europe, the United States were founded in the spirit of democracy, revolution and anti-colonial revolt: there was no place for empire in
American history. America was an exceptional nation. Here, the theory of International Relations mirrored the larger social phantasms or cultural certitudes of American life but translated them into a language adapted to the exigencies of academic reasoning. Academically speaking, if America was not and could not be an empire, it was precisely because the United States possessed no colonies. In sum, it was a nation-state not an empire ruling over foreign territories.

In contrast to this position, we have examined vast bodies of literature for which the US without a doubt has always been an empire. The excellent scholarship of political theorists, historians of the Cambridge school, and American social historians, shows that imperial expansion, domination and conquest drove not only the development of American identity as a nation which felt entitled to an exceptional destiny. It also shaped the US’ most fundamental political, cultural and juridical institutions, and the major events of its political history. But as we have already seen, this literature is predominantly historical and fails to really engage with the recent past and the present.\(^3^{7}\) I believe it is important for International Relations theory to begin looking at the question of American empire with an eye to understanding what the concept can bring to our comprehension of American global politics in the first decade of the 21st century – and no longer simply as a question of absence or presence.

To be sure, Marxist scholars and political economists have analyzed how the internal contradictions of capitalism have reignited the dynamics of inter-imperial competition in the age of the war on terrorism, providing rich geopolitical accounts of American empire. But Marxist scholars have attained a quasi-consensus embracing the position that equates formal imperialism with colonialism, devaluing the significance of the American experience and contributing to the idea that it is an atypical or exceptional one, much as Stoler argues. This literature ultimately

\(^{37}\) For instance, Anderson and Crayton, and Stephanson’s incursions into the 20th century are nominal and exploratory at best, the same is true of Stephanson’s.
remains insensitive to most other forms of imperial domination that escape the narrow purview of economic and productive rapports: the cultural, racial, gendered, sexual and symbolic forms of domination which encode imperial meanings and hierarchies upon bodies, identities, landscapes, geographies, cultural and historical productions.

At least where accounts of the contemporary era are concerned, I believe postcolonial scholars present the richest accounts of imperial domination. Indeed, if we accept the idea that throughout history the (re)naming of the planet’s physical and political geographies has been one of the major theatres upon which imperial rule has operated, we must conclude that empire has much more to do with the location and production of identity than the simple location of territory (foreign or domestic). Raymond Aron asked four decades ago: “what populations must we hold to be foreign, and is it sufficient to officially respect state sovereignties to escape the accusation of imperialism” (1973: 265, author’s translation, emphasis added)? In my sense, the debate on American empire hinges on the first question. In reality, it is a debate on the nature and meaning of inclusion, exclusion and belonging, or, in the parlance of classical political theory, it is a debate on the meaning of citizenship in the US. Postcolonial scholars such as Amy Kaplan (2003a), Anne Laura Stoler (2006) and David Campbell (1998), for instance, recognize at least implicitly that this is a vital component of the problem. But to be frank, this scholarly tradition has disproportionately drawn its insights from French authors who, if they are excellent theoreticians of inclusion and exclusion, do not engage the question of citizenship more than superficially.\footnote{See Hindess (2004); Isin (2005) and Isin and Turner (2007); and Mbembe (2006) for some postcolonial texts on the question of citizenship. On this point Isin writes: “The relationship between orientalism and citizenship has not received the attention it deserves in either postcolonial or citizenship studies” (Isin 2005: 33). Insofar as a large proportion of postcolonial theory is influenced by Said and the study of Orientalism, I read this statement as indicating that little postcolonial theorization of citizenship exists.}

As a result, at least in this respect, postcolonial scholarship often at pains to bring its analysis or critique of imperialism beyond well-rehearsed and increasingly formulaic
assertions that “power” others certain populations and treats them as “foreign to the national community.” This problem stems from a second one which has to do with disciplinary separation. While much of the postcolonial scholarship we have examined herein is produced in geography and literature departments, the empirical focus of the works, more often than not, has rested almost exclusively on cultural productions: books (Kaplan), cinema and photography (McAllister 2005; Campbell 2004), and car advertisements (Dalby and Paterson 2006).

In contrast, the political theory literature on citizenship and forms of government is fundamentally centered on the relationships between citizens in the polis. This is not a blanket critique of postcolonial scholarship as much as an admonition that the questions raised by this tradition must be brought to scrutinize political reality beyond the exclusive and narrow purview of cultural analysis, and the study of representations. We must bring it into dialogue with some of the more fundamental interrogations of political science, including the meanings of freedom, belonging, community, obligation, rights and duties. Simultaneously, while critical segments of International Relations scholarship, following Rob Walker’s (1993) exhortations, have sought to reintegrate the concerns of political theory into the sub-field of IR, they have avoided tackling the question of citizenship seriously. Debates on citizenship in IR have been found in the literature on global governance, on Habermas, and in IR segments most influenced by postcolonial and poststructuralist scholarship, with the limits we exposed above. As citizenship really stands at the critical juncture between the “inside” and “outside” (Walker 1993) of political community, it presents one of the most promising angles to continue debating the

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39. This example is fairly typical of the postcolonial position. “I suggest that investigating Ottoman citizenship must avoid orientalist, reverse orientalist and occidentalist approaches. Understanding citizenship as a generalized problem of otherness would generate more useful theses by which to evaluate citizenship and to rethink its contemporary figurations” (Isin 2005: 44, emphasis added).

fluidity of the domestic and international, and ultimately fulfilling the project of reintegrating International Relations into political science (see Milner 1991 and Walker 1993).

I believe that the question of American empire can serve as a window to bring these literatures into dialogue with each other and further this disciplinary project. *This dissertation will attempt to ascertain what the concept of empire can help us understand about the nature and meaning of citizenship in the United States, especially in light of the concerns, struggles and debates over the duty, privileges and choice of American citizens and non-citizens to sacrifice in the War in Iraq.* I will argue that the US’ foreign imperial commitments to global supremacy and the mobilization process for war have simultaneously revealed and exacerbated the fault lines between dominant and dominated groups in America, as well as the gaps between republican and patriotic ideals, and the persistence of a class and racially structured society. The experience, length, and unpopularity of the war, linked to military manpower concerns, will lead to a “crisis” of the imperial model of society – of which one salient dimension is a recurring crisis of the relationship between first-class citizenship and military service in America. This case-study of citizenship through the lens of military sacrifice presents the advantage of linking the question of citizenship and empire to one of the more traditional concerns of International Relations: the study of war and peace.

What analytical framework can best help us realize this project? We have already examined the limits of postcolonial scholarship on the question of citizenship. Furthermore, this literature tends to show an inverse problem to the Marxist tradition: it downplays the importance of socioeconomic class in social and political analysis as opposed to the other forms of domination we outlined above.\(^4\) This is especially true of the borderline cases of outcase or

\(^{4}\) In this respect: the subtitle of Naeem Inayatullah and Robin Riley’s 2006 *Interrogating Imperialism: Conversations on Gender, Race and War* is telling.
lower-class white males whose domination by upper class women or racial, but wealthy and perhaps better-educated minorities in certain contexts is rarely if ever considered a real dynamic of imperial rule. But social class is a fundamental component of the political theory of citizenship and one which remains vital, as I hope to show over the next chapters, to understanding imperial dynamics within the US in the context of the war. This is a major blind-spot in postcolonial theory which needs to be addressed and which I hope to remedy.

Finally, the concept of empire employed by this scholarship is too extensive. For one, the generic term empire has become all the more confusing since it is increasingly employed in a manner which conserves some of the attributes of Hardt and Negri’s identically-named, postmodern concept, including their propensity to anthropomorphize Empire. Second, the territorial connotations of empire remain omnipresent in the term even if they are unwarranted. Stoler’s “imperial formation” presents the undoubted advantage of flexibility, but its definition is so large that practically any political relationship can be incouded in its definition. She writes:

... imperial states by definition operate as states of exception that vigilantly produce exceptions to their principles and exceptions to their laws. From this vantage point, the United States is not an aberrant empire but a quintessential one, a consummate producer of excepted populations, excepted spaces, and its own exception from international and domestic law (2006: 140).

While this is certainly true, to be clear, imperial formations hold no monopoly on states of exception; in Schmitt’s formulation, the state of exception is the prerogative of political power, sovereignty and thus of all states and perhaps their defining criteria (see Walker 2002). Second, Stoler misses a question of scope and size. That the US can both establish and rise above international law is a peculiar ability that stems from its dominant position in global politics; it is certainly not one which all imperial formations share in equally. Certainly my intention here is
not to develop a concept that places the US on par with all other exploiting nations. The United States remain the dominant force in global politics. Without going so far as embracing another narrative of exceptionalism, this is a specificity for which our concept must account.

Finally, one could also consider the term “imperial republic” employed by Aron (1973) and Wilson (2002). This second term certainly highlights the US’ mixed imperial and republican constitution, but it is too suggestive and reminiscent of the philosophical literature on the forms of government (see for instance, Arendt 1972b). It does not properly accentuate the social, societal, cultural, and symbolic dynamics which this study must explore beyond the formal constitution.

Christophe Charle’s concept of “imperial society” presents a number of advantages over competing terms and in particular the dialogue it can engage between the literatures on empire, citizenship and bourdieusian sociology. First, there is the question of size. Imperial societies designate dominant societies: linguistically, culturally, economically, politically and scientifically - both internally and externally. While all imperial formations are dominant internally – insofar as they rule over second-class citizens – imperial societies also enjoy the means to aggressively exercise their influence in the system of states. Furthermore, the three concepts of social space, field, and habitus enable the sociology of Pierre Bourdieu to link microsocial portraits (the fields of journalism or war narratives, for instance) to the analyses of the larger dynamics of relations between dominant and dominated class fractions, simultaneously sidestepping the pitfalls of the agent-structure debate. Charle’s national habitus further pursues

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42. I concede that in the final analysis the naming of the concept is somewhat arbitrary and becomes a matter of esthetic. What is important is that the concept be properly defined, delimited and that it be analytically productive.

43. This is not an argument objecting against looking at imperial formations or domination in any context. I am simply stating that the US’ influence is incommensurate to most other experiences likely to be captured by the heading.
Bourdieu’s work with the promise of effectively integrating domestic and international histories while avoiding reducing one to the other. In Charle’s words:

Operationalizing Charle’s concept and transposing it to the American context is certainly an ambitious undertaking especially when one considers the diverse literatures from which such a project must draw. But we have already begun to close the distance over the course of this chapter by presenting scholarship which tackles these different facets of social life. Of course, Charle’s work remains far from perfect. For one, most central concepts: national habitus, crisis, not least imperial society, remain under-theorized. I propose to continue Charle’s work by further expliciting the analytical tools he has begun to sketch out. Second, and this is most significant, I intend to fully exploit the possibilities contained within the conceptual model by building a new concept: the field of citizenship to enlarge and refine the imperial society framework.
This concept will designate an area in which residents and non-residents of the US territory struggle for inclusion within the body politic of the American imperial society. It represents a continuum along which different degrees of inclusion and exclusion can be graded depending on the privileges, rights and obligations incumbent upon different categories of citizens. In the same manner, it will attempt to capture the fluidity, porousness and ambiguity of the border separating the domestic from the foreign, especially in the case of imperial rule. As such, this concept will show the immediate advantage of systematizing the obvious points we have highlighted thus far, such as recognizing that “liminal” populations: racial and ethnic minorities inhabiting the US territory or even enjoying nominal/legal citizenship may be considered foreigners and prey to a form of domestic or internal colonialism. But it will also help us highlight the borderline imperial dynamics of class relations: especially where the white male population is concerned. It will enable us to ask the question: does second-class citizenship for some lower-class white males not correspond to a dynamic of imperial domination by dominant class fractions who alone enjoy the benefits of full citizenship, or rather privileges without incurring commensurate obligations as those required of other citizens? This concept will mark a fundamental contribution both to the International Relations debate on empire and to scholarship inspired by Pierre Bourdieu.

Conclusion

The next three chapters will specify the concepts, notions and analytical frameworks we have begun to sketch out here. Chapter 3 begins by presenting a longer account of Christophe Charle’s imperial society framework. It then presents some detailed notes on the sociology of Pierre Bourdieu and justifies the transposition of its main concepts into the American national space.
Chapter 4 develops the concept of “national habitus.” It focuses on the traditional or external dimension of American imperial rule and integrates it into an account of American political life which transcends foreign and domestic histories. It also seeks to situate the concept vis-à-vis similar analytical frameworks. Chapter 5 introduces the field of citizenship to the imperial society framework. It reviews some of the major political theory literature published on the question of citizenship, rights and political obligation before presenting a historical overview of citizenship laws in the US. It will then present an overview of the relationship between citizenship and military service in America and some of the major debates and political milestones in that complex history. Together, these three chapters represent the analytical core and historical background pertinent for this dissertation. Chapters 6, 7, 8 and 9 will present case-study material to illustrate the pertinence of the concept for the research question outlined earlier.
Chapter 3 – An American Imperial Society

Imperial Society: Constructing a bourdieusian account of empire

Constructing a bourdieusian account of empire is already an ambitious task, and even the tools with which we can begin, provide us with little more than sketches to follow, like an architect’s blueprint which must be given definite shape. While Christophe Charle’s *La crise des sociétés impériales* unmistakably draws on his colleague, Bourdieu’s, sociological framework, developing original concepts in the process such as *habitus national*, Charle reconstructs these concepts historically and immediately operationalizes them as they apply to the three imperial societies he studies: France, Germany and the United Kingdom, with only minimal effort at theorization. As a result, it is necessary for me to undertake the dual task of theoretical reconstruction of Bourdieu’s and Charle’s concepts, and their difficult transposition to the American context.

My ambition over the three next chapters will be threefold. Like Christophe Charle, this dissertation focuses on the “imperial society” as a lens through which to recast political, cultural and symbolic conflicts within US society in an international context. I begin by presenting a longer account of Christophe Charle’s analytical framework. As I stated in the previous chapters, the crisis of the imperial form of society results from the contradictory pressures exercised on a state with global aspirations and the impact of this *Weltpolitik* on the relationships between dominant and subordinate groups within the domestic society. A theory of social classes and social conflict is thus basic to the analysis of the political challenges with which the War in Iraq has confronted the American imperial society. As I stated previously, the entire argument of this dissertation will hinge on my presenting an account of empire that poses the question of imperial
domination not simply as one of sovereignty over geographic boundaries, as in classical accounts of the question, but by demonstrating that the debate on the meaning of empire is in reality a question on the meaning of citizenship.

The literatures in political theory and military sociology, upon which I will draw heavily, most often define citizenship as sets of rights, obligations, privileges and real-life opportunities which apply to members of a community. Evidently, citizenship is most often described juridically, and this effectively remains the dominant criterion that determines whether one belongs or not to a given community or national space. I, of course, intend to inform and deepen this understanding by drawing on the rich body of poststructuralist IR, postcolonial scholarship, and critical geography, all of which blur classical understanding of the inside and outside, inclusion and belonging. Presenting the questions of political, social and cultural inclusion as a field of struggle will enable me to think of the problem of belonging as a continuum along which one can identify very different gradations. In Antiquity, social classes and castes of citizenship constituted fundamental dimensions of political life. Universal voting rights in advanced liberal societies, and the disappearance of property requirements for voting, have pushed this question from the limelight of the scholarly agenda, which more commonly now focuses on struggles for recognition on the part of ‘new’ historical subjects: “marginal” groups: racial, ethnic and sexual minorities (see Peterson 2003 for instance). Like other scholars influenced by the Marxist tradition, I believe social class remains a fundamental political problem that must be understood as a part of the larger equation of social inclusion and exclusion. This entails that, in order to construct a viable field of citizenship, I must also reconstruct a portrait of social class relations in American imperial society. This theoretical and empirical enterprise constitutes the immediate objective of this chapter. In the following chapter, I will turn my attention to integrating social
class relations into a larger portrait of the historical and contemporary struggles within the field of citizenship. Finally, and this is the third objective, I will begin reconstructing Christophe Charle’s concept of national habitus to help grasp how the domestic history and politics of the United States fit into a larger, global social space and into the collective histories of other states, nations and peoples. However, I begin now by presenting the core elements of Bourdieu’s theory on social class relations, which I will then empirically reconstruct in the context of the American social space.

“The Crisis of Imperial Societies”

Christophe Charle’s definition of the imperial societies of the industrial era can give us a scope and size with which we may undertake the task of defining the American imperial society. Before they began to disintegrate in 1914, France, Germany and Great-Britain had, for over three hundred years imposed themselves as the dominant states of the European continent in virtually all respects. These three “imperial societies” differed fundamentally from the other empires that would take part in the First World War. Spanning centuries, the long cycle of wars pitting the three imperial societies against each other had shaped very distinct national identities within each of them. This process of national consolidation had pushed each nation to mobilize its resources and invent new sources of cultural cohesion that would enable them to survive the onslaught of the First World War, albeit with differing degrees of success, especially in the case of Germany and France.

Ces phases [d’affrontement] aiguës ont laissé des traces mémorielles (héros, lieux de culte, générations entretenant le souvenir militaire), des réflexes qu’on peut réactiver (événements fondateurs commémorés, réflexes sociaux de mobilisation : volontaires, stéréotypes de l’ennemi définissant l’identité interne), des innovations institutionnelles

The three imperial societies are at once Nation-states and empires. As Charle argues, each society had developed specific strategies to meet the obstacles to its unique position in global social space and the constraints of its rivalries with its imperial neighbours. Drawing on Bourdieu, Christophe Charle terms these adaptive mechanisms and strategies “national habitus.” National habitus is at once a “principle of vision and division,” Bourdieu (1979) would argue. It draws out the common experiences of the world and expectations of the citizens of each society, but also the profound divisions from one national space to the next. In each society, unified public school systems have been paramount in spreading a dominant language and hegemonic national myths. This shared history builds a feeling of community that cements the fissures which would otherwise divide the different class fractions within these societies. On the other side of the spectrum, the diverse populations, ethnic and linguistic groups that inhabit Russia, Austria-Hungary, and the Ottoman Empire remained feudal subjects of their imperial monarchies rather than citizens. These feudal assemblages lacked the cultural cohesion that tied together the citizens of the imperial societies. They were unable to sustain the shock and the unprecedented sacrifice and mobilisation effort imposed by total war. Though France, Germany and Great-Britain emerged badly bruised from the blood, mud and ruin that swallowed Europe in 1918, the traditional empires, Russia, Austria-Hungary, and the Ottoman Empire, all imploded.

Though the incredible cultural cohesion of the British, French and German imperial societies set them apart from the feudal empires in major ways, each also dominated « colonies
and/or allophone or allogene regions integrated within their borders” (Charle 2001: 18). German, French and English nationals imposed relations of domination over other linguistic, religious or racial groups who lived with them as second-class citizens, or co-existed with them in spatial or political segregation. However, imperial domination also cut across the national-state borders, imposing the cultural, economic and political structures of the metropoles either onto formal colonies, informal dominions or protectorates. Yet again, the imperial societies were unique insofar as they ruled over vast cultural empires beyond their formal borders and placed themselves at the “epicentre of Western cultural innovation at least since the XVIIth century” (Charle 2001: 17). This symbolic preeminence brought the imperial societies to exercise a “cultural imperialism unparalleled in history” (Charle 2001: 18). France, Germany, Great-Britain, all invoked a “manifest destiny” or a “civilising mission” to justify their will to dominate (Charle 2005: 125; 2001: 16-17). The national habitus of each society translated this unprecedented cultural supremacy into “xenophobic” and “racist” stereotypes about the outside world that were shared in some degree by all social groups inhabiting the metropoles. Christophe Charle argues that this is a form of “superlative” racism much more pronounced than the more common narcissism characteristic of European society (Charle 2001: 18).

But from its inception, empire became a profoundly divisive issue that gradually destabilized the three imperial societies. Opponents of imperialism condemn expansion as a reactionary project that wastes badly needed resources and national energies. Imperialism also raises issues over continuous wars and the unequal share of military sacrifice that is disproportionately borne by the lower and middle-classes, especially as the violence of the Great War revealed the real social fractures which had been forgotten in an initial moment of patriotic fervour. The shock of the First World War unleashed the “crisis of the imperial societies.” The
imperial project scarred the collective imaginary, but also the physical and cultural landscape, as memorials to fallen soldiers, weeping wives and mothers began to appear everywhere (Charle 2001 and 2004). “Social wounds” also came to light in violent debates over national identity and painful political struggles over historical memory (Charle 2005). Disrupted by the War, the transformed class, racial and gender hierarchies left an unrecognizable social landscape. This marked an especially traumatic experience for the elites and older generations of the civilian populations who had lived in these empires at their apex, before 1914, and who would refuse “the diagnostic of inevitable decline” (Charle 2001: 28). These collective experiences of moral anxiety generated deep-rooted apprehensions about what the future might hold and this angst only deepened after the final collapse of 1945.

But imperial societies do not disappear even if they are reshaped. The structures of imperial domination remain well in place in migration patterns which bring the citizens of former colonies and protectorates to seek work or education (for the elites) in the former metropoles (Charle 2005). Likewise, even today, Charle argues (2005) that the most divisive political and social issues in France, Germany and Great-Britain are directly rooted in the imperial “ruins” of these nations. To this day, the “crisis of imperial societies” endures in deeply divisive debates over multiculturalism in all three societies as they attempt to integrate the subjects of their former overseas empires. These tensions lead to political struggles over immigration and integration, religion, ghettoisation, violence and repression. As for Germany, it must deal with the moral scars of its Nazi past, as the sons and daughters of Germany make amends for the crimes of their forebears. In France, Germany, and Great-Britain, the imperial societies thus remain “entrenched at the heart of the social structures ... despite the apparent historical ruptures” (Charle 2005: 130).

44. The expression is Stoler’s (2008).
Notes on the sociology of Pierre Bourdieu

Like Christophe Charle’s own scholarship, this study draws extensively on Pierre Bourdieu’s\textsuperscript{45} concepts of capital, social space (espace social), field (champ) and habitus. Life is a struggle in which individuals, social classes and class fractions compete to reproduce or increase their share of resources, here termed capital, often at the expense of one another. Though resources are as diverse as the different spheres of life in which individuals and groups can operate, three forms of capital are most significant in shaping the real possibilities open to individuals. Economic capital represents material resources and access to those resources, whether in the form of salary, inheritance, stocks, bonds or any other source of income; or material possessions that can be transferred into economic value. Cultural capital\textsuperscript{46} follows, next and exists in two distinct fashions: as “incorporated” or embodied cultural capital (“capital incorporé”), and objectified cultural capital (“capital objectivé”). If the embodied form of cultural capital measures one’s practical education and know-how, erudition and knowledge; the objectified form of cultural capital resides in school, college and university diplomas which formalize and attest to one’s formal level of education. One also finds objectified cultural capital in objects or products of worldly and often aesthetic value: books, sculptures, paintings, music and video records, concerts, playhouses, and museums. Cultural capital confers upon a person the capacity to decode or appreciate the meaning or aesthetic value of an artistic object. One who possesses resources in cultural capital is not likely to stare blankly at an abstract painting or cringe at the very thought of one of John Cage’s works for ‘prepared’ piano. He can elaborate on the (absence

\textsuperscript{45} The main works upon which I draw are Bourdieu’s \textit{La distinction} (1979), \textit{L’ontologie politique de Martin Heidegger} (1988), “Raisons d’États,” published in \textit{Actes de recherche en sciences sociales} (1993) and \textit{Raisons pratiques} (1994). Also see the other works cited in the bibliography.

\textsuperscript{46}.
of) artistic merit inherent in one or the other because he is familiar with either the artistic intent behind the works specifically, or with the artistic field s and their history more generally. In Bourdieu’s words:

Du fait que leur appropriation suppose des dispositions et des compétences qui ne sont pas universellement distribuées (bien qu’elles aient l’apparence de l’innéité), les œuvres culturelles font l’objet d’une appropriation symbolique, et, fonctionnant comme capital culturel (objectivé ou incorporé) assurent un profit de distinction, proportionné à la rareté des instruments [compétences] nécessaires à leur appropriation, et un profit de légitimité, profit par excellence, consistant dans le fait de se sentir justifié d’exister (comme on existe), d’être comme il faut (être) (1979 : 252).

Furthermore, diplomas, like the more practical erudition or general knowledge that often accompanies them, are fundamental requirements to obtain or hold positions of social standing: in professional and social life. In addition, the erudition to which I have just alluded—one’s capacity to ‘talk culture,’ a very specific form of shop-talk inherent to intellectuals, yet masquerading as discourse on the universal – may be an unstated or auxiliary requirement of membership in certain social classes, especially amongst the elite.

Both of these resources, cultural and economic capital, give substance or credence to individuals and groups who hold them in significant amounts, and may designate them as the movers-and-shakers of society. Symbolic capital represents this third and most sought-after of assets. Symbolic capital approximates legitimacy or notoriety; however, like paper money it only holds weight if its value is accredited by others (Bourdieu 1994). Symbolic capital naturalizes the exercise of power. It attests to the fact that those who wield it possess the socially sanctioned competences required to rule, whether these are cultural, economic, scholarly or bureaucratic resources (Bourdieu 1979: 286). The state, other powerful entities, and dominant class fractions holding vast shares of symbolic capital predominate in the field of power and exercise the unique
capability of weighing in and modifying existing social hierarchies (Bourdieu 1994). Indeed, central banks hold the power to determine interest rates (when lending to other banks, for instance), increase or decrease liquidity and thus exert control over the global volume of economic capital or credit available to individuals. States also generally recognize the value of university diplomas or professional accreditations, and structure social norms through courts and education systems (Bourdieu 1993, 1994; see also chapter 4). Symbolic capital also lends itself to a most insidious exercise of power. While the words and speech of dominant members of society will influence public debate, policy, morality and even fashion trends (see Bourdieu 1979 - chapters 3, 4 and 8), the opinions or views of the lower classes will hold little weight in the world, thus consecrating not only their material but also their symbolic domination. This symbolic domination does not only mean that what one believes doesn’t matter in the eyes of others. More importantly, victims of symbolic domination come to believe that they, in fact, don’t matter. This particularly pernicious, but widespread self-deprecation - in reality an embodiment or interiorization of the social norms most often defined by the dominant classes- is called symbolic violence (see also Bourdieu 1977, 1979, 1986, 1988 and 1993). Though its effects are not necessarily visible, the effects of symbolic violence are unmistakable. Such violence is often manifest in confidence problems, psychological issues, and a propensity to self-censorship: that is, to exclude oneself before one is even asked to, such as in public debate or voting. As a mode of social exclusion and social control, symbolic violence operates most effectively because it is seen as legitimate and not recognized as violence per se. As Bourdieu writes: “… la violence proprement symbolique ne peut être exercée par celui qui l’exerce et subie par celui qui l’a subit que sous une forme telle qu’elle soit méconnue en tant que telle, c’est-à-dire reconnue comme légitime” (1988: 85, emphasis added).
In the final analysis, capital is not limited to its economic, cultural and symbolic forms. I will introduce further categories of assets and resources as needed, but these suffice for now to illustrate the principle of their functioning modes. A further note: forms of capital can be transferred and converted from one currency to the next (economic to cultural or vice-versa) but this process is never accomplished seamlessly, equally or without loss (Bourdieu 1979, 1994). The “exchange rate” (Bourdieu 1994: 56, 109) will vary according to the balance of power of class forces (and thus the hierarchy operating between the different fields) in a given society or in international society.

*Social space* draws out a “map” upon which the position of all social actors can be represented in relation to one another, thus enabling us to draw a portrait of the relationships between dominant and dominated groups in the most general sense (Bourdieu 1979: 189, author’s translation). The “global volume of capital” or wealth that individuals, social classes, class fractions and groups possess, as well as their relative shares of the more specific cultural, social, political and symbolic “assets,” determine their positions in social space (Bourdieu 1979: 128, author’s translation):

L’espace social … est une représentation abstraite … procurant, à la façon d’une carte, une vision en survol, un point de vue sur l’ensemble des points à partir desquels les agents ordinaires (dont le sociologue ou le lecteur lui-même dans leurs conduites ordinaires) portent leur vue sur le monde social (Bourdieu 1979: 89, emphasis added).

To this the sociologist adds:

Mais le plus important est sans doute que la question de cet espace est posée dans cet espace même, que les agents ont sur cet espace, dont on ne saurait nier l’objectivité, des points de vue qui dépendent de la position qu’ils y occupent et où s’exprime souvent leur volonté de le transformer ou de le conserver (Bourdieu 1979: 189, emphasis added).
Though social space represents the global relations of power, domination and subordination, in a national and international global space, the *field* represents narrower relations of dominance within more specific terrains of struggle upon which social actors, groups, classes and class fractions act and compete to augment or reproduce shares of influence or capital specific to one area life (Bourdieu 1979 and 1994). Like social space every field is shaped by different polarities of subordination and dominance defined by the weight of the most successful individuals and groups who operate within them, and who, for this reason, may also weigh in on setting (and rigging) the very “rules of the game” (Bourdieu 1979). Evidently the economic, cultural and political fields are among the most important in Bourdieu’s framework. This dissertation employs the notion of the cultural field\(^47\) in both a limited and extended sense. The limited sense of the term defines the cultural field as an area of struggle where individuals dominate and are dominated based on their level of education and cultural capital. The larger sense of the cultural field designates an area of struggle where social actors also attempt to impose a *legitimate culture*, republican, liberal, communitarian, individualistic on their adversaries, etc. Evidently, this struggle to define legitimate culture is also one about defining what books should be read, what TV programs and movies should be watched, what subjects should be taught in school and so on. This second meaning increasingly becomes the dominant one I employ after chapter 7.

Though fields are as diverse as the facets of social and professional life itself, this dissertation focuses on the *field of citizenship* which determines one’s status, rights and privileges within the geographical, juridical and cultural boundaries of the American imperial society. It will also focus on three additional fields: the *journalistic field of debate over the war*

\(^47\) Chapter 1 in *La distinction* (1979) provides the longest account of the cultural and artistic fields.
in Iraq, the field of war narratives in which soldiers and their relatives struggle with the experience of the conflict in Iraq, and finally the field of memory, in which social actors attempt to inscribe dominant significations upon the past.

Each field imposes specific logics of action upon the social actors who compete within them to augment their shares of capital. Each field thus calls upon social agents to mobilize different strengths and assets in order to be successful within them. Artistic talent (artistic capital) is likely to have little value in an engineering firm, and inversely a law degree per se (juridical capital) will be of little help to a jurist in a museum or in a fundraising event full of musicians. In short, one’s relative strength or success in one field provides no sure guarantee that it will be mirrored in other fields. To employ more common IR parlance, power is not necessarily fungible from one area of life to another (see Keohane and Nye 1989).

Because every field imposes different constraints upon the social struggles that take place within their borders, it will be necessary to empirically reconstruct each of the primary fields I noted above, as well as their modes of operation, censorship, punishment and reward. Though I have said that fields are partially autonomous from one another, they are also partially intertwined. As dominant class fractions possess more capital assets in general ("global volume of capital") than their subordinated co-nationals, they are also likely to dominate more fields. Destitute groups, possessing little assets or resources, will most likely find themselves dominated
in crucial areas of life: economically, professionally, educationally, and symbolically. This means that the polarities, dominant and dominated, in most fields will espouse the same contours. The interests of those fractions that dominate the field of social classes will most likely find themselves translated into the language, ideology and policy proposals which hold sway over the political field, the fields of culture and ideological production and the bureaucratic field. These partial correspondences between dominant and dominated positions from one field to the next are called *homologies*. I return to them later in this and in following chapters.

Individuals and groups try to cope as best they can with their particular standing in a society that confronts them with rivals equally bent on getting ahead. “Habitus” refers to the practical schemes through which individuals and groups order their lives, view the world around them, and orient the strategies they employ to meet the unique challenges that arise from their position in social space, whether it be one of dominance or subordination (Bourdieu 1979 and 1994).

[L’habitus, ce] système de classement qui est le produit de l’incorporation de la structure de l’espace social telle qu’elle s’impose à travers l’expérience d’une position déterminée est le produit dans cet espace est, dans les limites des possibilités et des impossibilités économiques (qu’il tend à reproduire dans sa logique), le principe de pratiques ajustées aux régularités inhérentes à une condition … (Bourdieu 1979: 195)

As Bourdieu explains, habitus is an embodied expression of the social structures of society and one’s position within them relative to other groups. Significantly it provides individuals and groups who occupy similar positions in social space and the class hierarchies, with similar coping mechanisms and thus, ways of interacting in society. It accounts for the consistency of habit, tastes, fashion sense, mind frames, social goals and strategies found among

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48. Bourdieu (1979, especially chapter 8) defines the field of ideological production as all those thoughts which social actors can think of at any given moment in time.
people of similar backgrounds. Importantly, habitus, like identity, is constituted through differentiation with other classes of habitus. As such, it is not an objective view on the field; it is always a point of view emanating from somewhere on the field, surveying its surroundings. It is thus only a partial representation of social space and the struggles within it, and as a creature of habit, it may become out of touch or unadapted to the changing realities of the social landscape (Bourdieu 1979). As Bourdieu further elaborates:

[L’habitus] opère continuellement la transfiguration des nécessités en stratégies, des contraintes en préférences, et engendre, en dehors de toute détermination mécanique, l’ensemble des « choix » constitutifs de styles de vie classés et classants qui tiennent leur sens, c’est-à-dire leur valeur, de leur position dans un système d’oppositions et de corrélations. Nécessité faite vertu, il incline continûment à des « choix » ajustées à la condition dont il est le produit […] Il est ce qui fait que l’on a ce que l’on aime parce que l’on aime ce que l’on a …” (Bourdieu 1979: 195).

Thus habitus accounts for the relative coherence between one’s objective position in the social hierarchies and one’s subjective experience of the world, sense of self, identity, preferences, likes and dislikes. It is immediately important to note two crucial contributions of the concept which will be paramount in this dissertation. First, there is the principle of ex post facto rationalization; in common parlance, it means that we choose only that which we are allowed to choose, desire that which we can desire and aspire to that which we can aspire. Importantly, this must not be understood as calculated cynicism – a sort of variation on rational choice modeling. It is an unconscious process that is the result of an extended process of socialization that has taught us, from childhood on, exactly where we belong; and in most cases has reconciled us with that condition. Of course, we can never truly be reconciled with that condition because hegemonic social images – those produced by the “cultural industry” (Adorno and Horkheimer 1974) or educational and other institutions (chapter 4) - constantly define for us what is most desirable. Humans attempt to become the ideal subjects or citizens of any given
society. But as Connolly (1988) explains, that end is basically impossible to achieve - apart for those members of the dominant class fractions whose dominance in symbolic capital allows them to define in their image, and naturalize, the very trends, aptitudes and qualities deemed most desirable by all others (Bourdieu 1979). The very knowledge of our infinite inadequacies (I am not smart enough, I am not beautiful enough, I am not rich enough, I am not successful enough, I am not funny enough) and the social neuroses they engender, stem from the gaps between these collective ideals and the shortfall we experience in seeking to obtain them. Neuroses are not necessarily personal dispositions but often effects of the symbolic violence mediated by our acceptance of the social structures of society. Furthermore, it is in this sense that habitus mediates between agency and structure. Habitus is an embodiment of the social structures. This is to say that structures do not exist solely outside of us, they exist also because they are within us and imprinted upon us. They are efficient, naturalized and reproduced precisely because of the thousands of unconscious legitimacies that our own conduct brings to them on a daily level. Habitus does not mean the pre-eminence of structure, but a practical principle of social action that is neither at the level of structure nor agency.

Reconstructing the social classes in America and policing social mobility

International Relations theory has produced an enormous array of both theoretical and empirical scholarly literature on “social classes” in both national and transnational contexts. World-system theorists and Neo-Gramscian scholars such as Immanuel Wallerstein, Robert Cox (1986) and Stephen Gill (1986) have played central roles in reintegrating the analysis of social class and productive forces into the analysis of international political and economic relations. These analytical moves have been mirrored by other Marxist scholars such as Mark Rupert (1995, 2000
and 2005) and post-Marxist theorists like Hardt and Negri (2000 and 2004); and feminists such as Ilene Feinman (2000) and Spike Peterson (2003) who employ triadic modes of analysis highlighting the imbrications of race, class and gender. More recently, the new school of the historical sociology of International Relations represented by Justin Rosenberg (1994), Benno Teschke (2003) and Frédéric-Guillaume Dufour (2005), have integrated the theory of social-property regimes into IR analysis, presenting rich and detailed historical reconstructions of the class relations in different national and historical contexts.49

Though all of these scholarly works provide rich theorizations of social class relations and detailed empirical reconstruction in different settings, one runs the risk of abstruse thinking and false translation if they simply transpose one model into the contemporary American context without verifying its empirical validity. What do the social classes in America actually look like? Class structure and capital are fundamental to understand both the different horizon of social action which presents itself to individuals and groups of different backgrounds, neighborhoods, cities, regions, gender, ethnicity (Bourdieu 1979); and take into account even those migrants who originate from other national spaces and must win access to that most cherished and guarded of places: citizenship. Additionally classes are logical groupings of individuals who have similar investments and holdings of capital (Bourdieu 1994). Habitus ensures that individuals and groups act in a manner conforming to their class position in social space, but they do not necessarily mobilize on the basis of class for collective action: “Les classes existent en quelque sorte à l’état virtuel, en pointillé, non comme un donné, mais comme quelque chose qu’il s’agit de faire” (Bourdieu 1994: 28). The class structure is both objective and inter-subjective: it

49. See also the works of historians Robert Brenner (1997), and political theorists Ellen Wood (1990, 1995 and 2003), and Serge Denis (2003) for extremely rich theorizations of social class relations. William Appleman Williams’ The Contours of American History (1962) and The Roots of the Modern American Empire (1969) also present classical Marxist interpretations of social conflict in American history.
represents the objective and unequal distribution of capital. At the same time, class structure is embodied both through the practical understanding that habitus confers to individuals. It informs them about where they stand in the global hierarchy of their society because of their practical awareness of the conventions overseeing perception and reference: the national habitus, a term to which I will return in chapter 4. Social stratification reflects this symbolic dimension of the social classes such as differences in prestige, that is, symbolic capital. Objective class differences are thus also retranslated and operationalized as “principles of vision and division,” or “schemes of classification,” that regulate interactions between members of a given society (Bourdieu 1979). This is not nearly as reductive or abstract a principle as is so often alleged by critics of Marxism. Sociologist Leonard Beeghley (2005) notes that asking an interlocutor what he or she “does in life” is often one of the first questions Americans ask in a conversation. Though a social icebreaker, the question reveals the degree to which we link identity to a socioprofessional occupation, and thus to “occupational prestige” (Beeghley 2005: 89). A classical study of class identification in the United States shows that four out of five Americans “feel strongly about their class identification” (Beeghley 2005: 98). Ascertaining our interlocutor’s class identity is one of the first ways through which we test to see whether or not we possess “elective affinities” (Bourdieu 1979), similar tastes, likes or dislikes, with them. Do we share a common view of the world, itself representing or rather reflecting a common experience of the social and symbolic structures of society (Bourdieu 1979)? For instance, in a 2003 national survey in which respondents were asked to classify different professions according to the prestige they accorded them (a measure of the symbolic capital associated with the occupation), physicians ranked the highest, followed by lawyers, registered nurses, and public grade school teachers. Electricians, followed by secretaries and automobile mechanics sat at the middle of the hierarchy, whilst sales
clerks, bartenders and janitors found themselves at the bottom three ranks (Beeghley 2005: 90, Table 90).

Members of similar social classes share a common experience of the world, or rather a common horizon of experiences. As Bourdieu shows, the global volume of capital an individual or social group possesses, and the number of generations (thus length of time or “age of capital”) it has been in their families, statistically measure the “modal trajectory” or “class trajectory” (Bourdieu 1979: 123) that members of a particular social group are most likely to follow, according to “the field of possibilities” open to them (Ibid). As we explored earlier, one’s place in the world significantly shapes one’s experience and view of the world. A social agent learns through it what he is, or better yet, what he is not. The interaction or “dialectic” (Ibid) between one’s objective position in social space and the vantage point it confers one, insures, in all likelihood, the construction of a harmony between occupation and perception, in one word: habitus. They insure a conformity of life-choices, desires and aspirations that reflect the field of possibilities open to the individual or group. Economic, social and educational assets thus strongly predict the horizon of real (virtual, though probable realities) rather than hypothetical choices (virtual and possible in the strictest sense, but improbable realities) which confront them. Indeed, as Bourdieu notes, the speed at which most adults come to mourn the dreams of their childhood – becoming a doctor, a professor, or the President of the United States - simply reflects the sadder, semi-conscious realization that they could never legitimately aspire to fulfill these positions; in other words, because the jobs were never really open to people of their social origins, unless they possessed some uncanny talent able to compensate for the head start that people with a better social pedigree enjoy in life.\footnote{L’homogénéité des dispositions associées à une position [dans l’espace social] et leur ajustement apparemment miraculeux aux exigences inscrites dans la position sont le produit d’une part des mécanismes qui orientent vers les}
According to Beeghley, sociological research on American society demonstrates clearly that, though citizens do climb the class ladder, the class structure as a whole does tend to reproduce itself. Citizens do tend to inherit the socioprofessional occupations of their fathers and, rather than any radical repositioning of individuals from the class they inherited, class mobility occurs over “short-distances” across social space (Beeghley 2005: 108). Class background and mobility are highly tied to education, with children of educated parents performing better in schools, showing better discipline, self-confidence, and a greater aspiration to enter college.

Ambitious parents encourage and prepare their children, who enter the schools ready to use their abilities. As a result, they receive encouragement from teachers, develop aspirations, and get tracked into a college preparatory curriculum. They become less likely to drop out of schools and more likely to attend college. And a college degree is often what separates those in the middle class from those in the working class (Beeghley 2005: 120).

Class background also determines social capital as measured through one’s network and the real sense of confidence individuals will develop. Thus, where social mobility and cultural capital are concerned, the US experience does not invalidate but rather confirms the general axioms of Bourdieu’s sociology.

On top of the explicit requirements most jobs or socio-professional categories ask of their applicants like diplomas, education, experience or demonstrated skills, aspirants to certain elite positions in the workforce, especially among dominant class fractions, are often also expected to

positions des individus d’avance ajustés, soit qu’ils se sentent faits pour des postes comme faits pour eux – c’est la « vocation » comme adhésion anticipée au destin objectif qui est imposé par la référence pratique à la trajectoire modale dans la classe d’origine-, soit qu’ils apparaissent comme tels aux occupants de ces postes- c’est la cooptation fondée sur l’harmonie immédiate des dispositions – et, d’autre part, de la dialectique qui s’établit, tout au long d’une existence, entre les dispositions et les positions, entre les aspirations et les réalisations. Le vieillissements social n’est pas autre chose que ce lent travail de deuil ou, si l’on préfère, de désinvestissement (socialement assisté et encouragé) qui porte les agents à ajuster leurs aspirations à leurs chances objectives, les conduisant ainsi à épouser leur condition, à devenir ce qu’ils sont, à se contenter de ce qu’ils ont, fût-ce en travaillant à se tromper eux-mêmes sur ce qu’ils sont et sur ce qu’ils ont, avec la complicité collective, à faire leur deuil de tous les possibles latéraux, peu à peu abandonnés sur le chemin, et de toutes les espérances reconnues comme irréalisables à force d’être restées irréalisées” (Bourdieu 1979 : 123).
conform to unstated requirements: gender, age group, social class of origin, access to certain social networks; racial, national or ethnic background. These attributes define the group’s “numerus clausus” (Bourdieu 1979: 181). A host of institutions in meritocratic societies naturally exclude individuals hailing from subordinated social positions, from acceding to such privileged places as: becoming partners in prestigious law offices, obtaining tenured professorships, joining the political class. Importantly, one can only view the patterns of exclusion which reproduce the class hierarchies through the statistical effects of social processes or existing structures. These exclusionary mechanisms rarely state their intent explicitly:

Importantly, however, principles of social exclusion and inclusion which remain tacit, hidden or disguised from what they are, retain one disadvantage in contrast to codified principles of exclusion, say in law. They rely, as Bourdieu (1979) explains, on the principle of a statistical rather than absolute exclusion. In most cases, for instance, African-Americans’ comparatively disadvantaged social conditions will prevent individuals from this group from becoming top law makers, politicians, professors at elite research institutions, major network television journalists (Kellner 2004 and chapter 7) or President of the United States. The compounded effects of difficult financial and family situations, deprived neighborhoods, and schools with fewer resources, render entry to college difficult, not only economically but academically (Beeghley
2005); especially entry to the elite, private universities which reproduce the dominant classes. These colleges owe their prestige not only to the diplomas they hand graduates (objective cultural capital), but also to the social rarity of those students who attend; and thus the value of the social networks and the social capital one is likely to take away from attending them. These networks, in turn, can become determining “assets” if one envisages a political career or sometimes even an artistic career (if one has had the opportunity to attend elite art schools: Julliard, Berkeley, etc.). Asking for letters of reference is another disguised manner to elucidate the social capital (or lack of it) possessed by an individual applicant, as any reputable referee writing on the beneficiary’s behalf will most likely be connected to a reputable institution. Here the reputable institution in effect becomes the guarantor of the letter’s ultimate beneficiary through the symbolic capital it confers upon the referee who pens it. In this sense, the explicit academic and financial criteria that these elite, accredited institutions ask of prospective students mask a *numerus clausus* founded on social origin.

For instance, studies of the class structure in the US show that if anything, before the civil rights movement, African Americans regressed down the social pyramid more often than they climbed it (Beeghley 2005). Despite the significant amelioration of the prospects for social mobility of African Americans after the 1960s, it remains that Blacks have a higher risk than their white counterparts of failing to reproduce their class situation and ultimately of slipping down the hierarchy. As of 2001, Blacks and Hispanics worked in “Blue collar jobs” (“Precision Production, Operators, Handlers and Laborers, Service”) at proportions of 48 percent and 57 percent, as opposed to 37 percent of whites. In “White collar” occupations (executives and managers, technicians, sales and “administrative support) the presence of Blacks was slightly
higher at 51 percent. Hispanics clocked in at 38 percent. Just over six out of ten White Americans worked in these professions (cited in Beeghley 2005: 110, Table 5.3). While Beeghley suggests that in some cases inequalities have dropped since the 1960s (Beeghley 2005: 97), a report by the Council of Economic Advisors to the President’s Initiative on Race (CEAPIR 1998) produced in the second term of the Clinton presidency concluded that racial minorities remained disadvantaged in virtually all respects (economically, educationally, politically, as well as in employment and access to health and physical safety, and harm from violence); and that in some cases the gaps between minorities and white Americans had grown throughout the last decades. Furthermore, most racial minorities (apart from Asian Americans) continue to see themselves as “working-class” (Beeghley 2005: 97), thus possessing less symbolic capital than their white peers.

These social obstacles do not mean that it is utterly unthinkable for a member of the dominated classes to scratch and fight his or her way into the higher echelons of society. No. It means that it is statistically less probable. But precisely because the real criteria for admission and accession remain disguised as other formal requirements, the rules do generate some “exceptions” (Bourdieu 1979: 114, note 8). This is because “the most selective groups … cannot control the whole of the properties of the “elected,” that is, the totality of the [applicant or aspiring member of the group’s] person” (Bourdieu 1979: 114, note 8, author’s translation) as they could hope to if the numerus clausus was explicit. Similar arguments can be made about the transformation of gender roles. Feminist political economists have long noted in particular that colored, or racialized women, find themselves in the most menial positions of all. They are concentrated in professions of the informal economy (Peterson 2003) with intensive reproductive labor, often with low wages, little job security and a high rate of turnover (see also Feinman 51. See Beeghley (2005: 92) for a more elaborate description of “white collar” and “blue collar” jobs.
Furthermore, approximately a fourth of the world’s GDP is unpaid labor performed by women (Peterson 2003).

Not solely a mirror of capital holdings and “ascriptive” characteristics (Smith 1997) such as race and gender, social classes are also stratified in geographic space, notably between rural and urban areas, between neighborhoods which promise very different prospects for employment, and increased exposure to violence and poor living conditions (see Wacquant 1992). Cities and especially metropolitan areas also facilitate the acquisition and consumption of elite cultural capital because of the presence of museums, art houses, operas, libraries and major universities (Bourdieu 1979, see also chapter 6 on this question). And as Deborah Cowen (2006, 2007) notes, since the 1970s, rural areas have been hard hit by de-industrialization, outsourcing and the larger market dislocations provoked by the neo-liberal, globalized economy, further accentuating inequalities between urban and rural spaces.

In sum, social class is a mirror not only of inherited capital (“capital patrimonial”, Bourdieu 1979), individual and family holdings, social networks, education, but also of race, gender and geographic location. All of these factors contribute to shape the real life possibilities to which individuals can aspire. However, it is more problematic to operationalize all of these social determinants in large scale analysis as I intend to do in the following chapters. To simplify, sociology and population studies propose a host of different statistical classifications according to which individuals may be ordered into groups. First and most popular among these is the method of dividing populations into quintiles, five brackets each representing 20 percent of the population (e.g. the 20 percent poorest to the 20 percent richest, see Beeghley 2005 chapter 6, and Kane 2005 and 2006). This method, as I will argue in chapter 6, lends itself poorly to a study of social class. It creates distortions in the social pyramid and important conflations among what
are arguably very heterogeneous populations, especially where income levels are concerned. Coleman and Rainwater have constructed a classical model of the “metropolitan class structure” divided between Upper, Middle and Lower Americans, with their respective subsets of categories or “class fractions”, to borrow from Bourdieu. These categories are ranked according to income levels and the educational levels required or typical of the socioprofessional occupations (in Gilbert & Kahl 1982: 36). Gilbert & Kahl (1982: 348) present a similar model comprising six classes based on “Education,” “Occupation,” “Income” and “Budget Level.” Beeghley employs two distinct models dividing socioprofessional occupations. The first distinguishes between White collar jobs, Blue collar jobs, and Farmers (Beeghley 2005: 104, Table 5.1). The other breaks the social pyramid in America society down to the Lower, Working, Middle and Upper classes. These four categories, defined through education, occupation and auxiliary characteristics (such as neighborhoods and access to certain social networks), mirror patterns of class identification used in surveys, and present the advantage of closely espousing common parlance, such that they more closely mirror the subjective class experiences in American society. Not only are these categories more parsimonious, thus facilitating classification and comparison, they also easily lend themselves to the class distinctions Bourdieu (1979) himself employs. Social space, like the fields in general, is thus divided between dominant and dominated classes, and their respective dominant and dominated class fractions.

The four social classes Beeghley identifies distinguish themselves through income levels, education, indirect benefits of work such as paid holidays and other “perks”: health insurance, 

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52. Evidently, the very categories used in surveys, in statistics and in the media contribute to objectify these hierarchies in the national consciousness, and thus for individuals to define themselves through them, giving the illusion that they spontaneously reflect the self-identification of individuals and their experiences of the world (see Bourdieu’s (1979) chapter in La Distinction on “dispossession”).
work conditions, the type of labor performed, and also through unique lifestyles. Middle-class office employees wear suits, and work in clean, generally safe environments with less intrusive supervision. They live in suburban neighborhoods, in larger, more spacious homes; they define themselves through unique, or customized preferences in artistic taste, interior decoration, the cars they drive (Holt 1997 and 1998; Gartman 1994), stylization of the body (Wacquant 1992; Halnon & Cohen 2006), and by driving their children to suburban soccer games (Swanson 2009a and 2009b). In contrast to this, working-class Americans work in “dirty” jobs, in much riskier environments where physical labor is intense and work-related fatalities and health problems are much more common, as Beeghley notes. They are also more vulnerable to losing their jobs and for longer periods than “white collar” workers. They also live in older homes than their well-to-do counterparts (Beeghley 2005: 232). To summarize, “the clean-dirty divide serves as a metaphor for the division between the middle class and working class” (Beeghley 2005: 213). Class divides are real, not only in terms of capital possessed by members of each group, perceived social standing, lifestyles, but also where real life opportunities and the ability to face unforeseen circumstances are at stake. The fable of the “plumber, the teamster, and even the garbage collector as members of a new well-to-do working class … reflects considerable misunderstanding” of the distribution of income, and by conflating white collar owners of small shops with those who actually work there (Beeghley 2005: 219). In short, though the United States has liked to think of itself as a classless society (Lipset 1996) or as one large middle-class, class differences remain very real in America and continue to shape not only the different political, economic, educational and occupational status of its citizens and residents but the horizon of their real-life opportunities.
Conclusion

This chapter began by sketching out the core elements of the sociology of Pierre Bourdieu. It then presented a theoretical elaboration of how capital assets and habitus function to structure the modal class trajectories of individuals, and thus the horizon of possibilities open to them in life. It has argued that class relations must not be understood simply as relations of production, but as an intersection of geographic, ethnic, gendered, sexual and racial identities. Finally, it has reconstructed an empirical portrait of the class relations in American society. Chapter 4 will begin operationalizing the concepts I have sketched out in this section of the dissertation and help us construct Charle’s concept of the national habitus – a tool to help capture how the American experience is itself bound up in the larger context of global social space. Chapter 5 will begin building a theoretical and empirical model of the field of citizenship, a terrain of struggle upon which social actors vie for privilege, inclusion, and recognition within their larger society.
Chapter 4 – Imperial Society and National Habitus

Chapter 3 presented a longer account of Christophe Charle’s imperial society framework and detailed notes on the sociology of Pierre Bourdieu to provide us with the conceptual tools to further refine the analytical core of this dissertation and its three central concepts: imperial society, national habitus and the field of citizenship. This chapter undertakes the task of expanding upon Christophe Charle’s brief notes on national habitus in *La crise des sociétés impériales*. Just as habitus mediates between individual and collective trajectories, national habitus mediates between the collective trajectories of one group of citizens and others in global space. It translates the imperial society’s position of dominance in global politics into the schemes of collective self-understanding and, to a large degree, it also shapes the contours, polarities and capital density within each field. Importantly, as I showed in Chapter 3, competition in the field of global politics has led different societies to organize their domestic social structures to adapt, and face the pressures of the international environment. Thus national habitus maintains the primary concept’s (habitus) emphasis on strategies and embodied dispositions to surmount the obstacles inherent to a position in global social space. Finally, insofar as the fields in a domestic national space are partially shielded from global politics – especially in the case of imperial societies and dominant states which maintain large measures of autonomy and forcefully contribute to shape the fields of global social space – we can safely say that every habitus is in fact a (*national*) *habitus*; every individual habitus is mediated by the national strand to which it belongs because its society’s place in global politics ultimately shapes the real-life trajectories open to them. This chapter attempts to situate the concept of national habitus in reference to similar frameworks and demonstrate its usefulness.
National habitus and symbolic competition

One cannot consider the domestic history common to members of the American population without looking at how it is itself embedded in the larger history of global politics, whether through war or economic and cultural exchanges. Though classical accounts of International Relations theory have long advocated that we study foreign and domestic politics separately (i.e. Waltz 1986; Mearsheimer 1990), some of the most important works in IR over the last three decades have contributed to recasting the study of global politics in the larger context of political science and the neighboring social sciences. Helen Milner (1991) presented a rationalist account of this argument which questions the sociological grounding of the anarchy / sovereignty divide, and thus the real merits of the IR / political science distinction. Robert Cox (1986) and Stephen Gill (1986) provided influential, Gramscian, accounts which stress the mutual constitution of domestic and international relations of production, state forms, “world orders” and hegemony-producing cultural institutions. Historical sociologists like Rosenberg (1994), Teschke (2003) and Dufour (2005) showed how even the events most associated to the domestic histories of nation-states like the French Revolution (Teschke 2003) or the rise of Nazism (Dufour 2005) must be recast in the context of global political-economic competition. Nye and Keohane’s (1989) early, pluralist model on relationships of “complex interdependence” between states also provided enabling schematics to think through transnational ties.

Like historians (Charle 2001, 2004 and 2005; Foner 2002), these scholars have strived to overcome the academic boundaries that bind the study of domestic and foreign policy to different sub-disciplines or areas of specialization; and that only consider the histories and destinies of nation-states in isolation from each other rather than as mutually constitutive, and
ongoing processes. Poststructuralist scholars such as Rob Walker (1993, and 2002 for a more recent and succinct account of the same argument) have contributed to blurring the line between the international and the domestic spheres of life. Walker has demonstrated how the modern division between domestic and global politics had created the entire framework through which modern political theorists conceived of two distinct moral philosophies. While the first, ethical view of politics applied to life within the nation-state, the other was no more than its distorted mirror image, a “moral condemnation of moralism” – in Raymond Aron’s words (1973: 11) – that governed the political netherworld of anarchy which lay between the states. At the heart of this conceptual division lay the roots of the twin academic disciplines of political science and International Relations.

More recently, the influence of cultural studies and French Theory on the discipline has generated an increased interest in identity politics. Drawing from the French poststructuralist critique of the metaphysics of presence (see Butler 2006), scholars such as David Campbell (1990 and 1998), and critical geographers like Simon Dalby (1998, 2002, 2004, and 2006 with Matthew Paterson), Gerard O Thuathail (1996) and John Agnew (1994) have shown how our practices of visual representation and cartography generate the “international,” and “national” spaces as discrete entities, all the while imprinting very distinct moral connotations upon them. David Campbell showed how United States foreign policy produced “liminal groups” within the ‘domestic’ population – Amerindians, Blacks and Union members, for instance – who became associated to foreign enemies such as the Soviet Union (1998). This process of moral exclusion in turn served to stabilize and “discipline” American identity, imposing coherence and homogeneity where none lay, through the rejection of its radical negative traits. Dalby and O Thuathail have shown how national boundaries and larger cartographic divisions between the

First and Third Worlds have contributed to shaping Western conceptions of developing countries as dangerous spaces, backward, forlorn and chaotic lands populated by savage “others,” all the while obfuscating the imperial processes of resource extraction which contributed to environmental degradation, insecurity and conflict dynamics. Lastly, in the stead of Edward Said’s seminal *Orientalism* (1980), postcolonial literary scholars and Americanists such as Amy Kaplan and Donald Pease (1993) and Melanie McAllister (2005) argued that American identity and culture have always been defined through the contacts of its nationals with foreign lands and cultures, and the stories they told of these far-away places: the Philippines (Kaplan 1993), Africa (Kaplan 2003a), and the Middle East (McAllister 2005).

Christophe Charle’s efforts have gone in a similar direction but, by drawing on the conceptual tools of a different reference from the Derridas and Foucaults who dominate the pages and reflections of English language cultural theorists. “National habitus” (Charle 2001) attempts to bridge the collective histories of citizens and residents of the United States. It aims to show how they as well, find themselves enmeshed and defined through their participation in the collective histories of other nations. Though I will construct the concept of national habitus by drawing on the insights of the rich body of literature I have just cited, rather than against it, I also believe that the bourdieusian framework provides some clear advantages over many of the looser theorizations I have presented above. For one, all of the poststructuralist scholarship I have noted reduces the scope of its analyses to processes of identity and cultural formation. While the message is essentially the same from one account to the next – otherness precedes the self - all of them fail to discuss how processes of identity formation are also shaped by the real, and largely unequal material and symbolic capabilities of certain states and social actors, and their disproportionate capacity to bear upon collective representations: either through military might,

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economic and financial means or the ability to diffuse hegemonic worldviews with the help of a dominant language and other tools of symbolic domination such as academic, cultural, artistic and scientific prestige (see Bourdieu and Wacquant 1999; Charle 2001 and 2005;). These shortcomings leave with us with an anti-sociological account of culture, one that I argue fails to ask how the processes it describes are possible. It also fails to reflect on the institutions which shape the conditions of discourse in the different fields: literary, cinematic, cartographic that produce them.55 On the one hand, we must be attentive to the ways in which asymmetric relations between symbolically dominant and subordinate states and societies, much like other social actors, contribute to decisively shape the principles of “vision and division” which they in turn espouse (Bourdieu 1979). On the other hand, we must reconstruct the conditions of discourse as they exist within the different fields, through an analysis of the institutions and conventions which regulate and provide them with definite shape (as I will do in chapters in 5, 7, 9 and 11). The following theorization begins to bridge these gaps.

Like its ‘domestic’ counterpart, national habitus captures how a state’s position in global space contributes to generate the “unity of lifestyle”56 and the social, symbolic, mental and affective structures common to members of that society.

[\textit{L’habitus national}] est le produit, historiquement et politiquement construit au sein de l’espace national, de l’insertion progressive de chaque individu, famille, communauté paysanne ou citadine, ou de chaque groupe dans un réseau de points de repère externes définis par les élites et les institutions (éducatives, administratives, religieuses, professionnelles, etc.) qui canalisent leurs lignes de réactions communes dans certaines circonstances où la survie dépasse les processus d’adaptation quotidiens ou les stratégies de courte portée (Charle 2001: 203-204).

55. This is especially the case with literary scholars, Said being much more thorough than his successors, but McAllister is an exception to this.
56. The quoted expression is Bourdieu’s (1994: 22), but relates to the domestic class of habitus.
In its most fundamental form, the imperial society’s national habitus takes the form of a series of “classificatory schemes” (Bourdieu 1979: 112), a wide set of intuitive binary oppositions which shape the primary principles of “vision and division” common to members of American society.\(^{57}\) It reflects both the privileged, dominant position the imperial society holds in social space and the common vantage point from which its citizens look upon themselves and other societies: nations or states that occupy equal or less prominent positions. Though Americans do not enjoy any perfect, or necessarily reflexive, knowledge of these dichotomies, life in America has nonetheless given United States citizens and residents a practical experience of these schemes.

By definition, imperial societies dominate most fields and can count on vast resources in symbolic, economic, military, human, scientific and cultural capital (Charle 2001). All hold sway over global affairs and institutions which other states with more meager resources in capital can only marginally affect. Perhaps then it should come as no surprise that an unusually assertive national habitus flows from imperial societies’ dominant position in global politics. Pre-eminence confers upon the imperial society what Christophe Charle calls “a superlative superiority complex,” (Charle 2001: 18, author’s translation). This particularly aggressive national habitus leads imperial societies into direct symbolic competition with each other as well as with other, less powerful entities (Charle 2001, 2005). Not only do they dominate most fields, they also claim a more efficient, humane, just, righteous or rational mode of organizing their respective domestic fields and hierarchies. They claim other societies should emulate their superior institutional and cultural structures. The dominant national habitus then pushes imperial societies to interact with other entities as if they were invested with a “civilizing duty” (Charle

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\(^{57}\) The theoretical work I achieve in this chapter is consistent with Bourdieu’s later works on the state (1993), the problem of *allodoxia* – of false translation between one national space and the next (1997) and on cultural imperialism (1999 with Wacquant).
As Christophe Charle (2001) and Hannah Arendt (1982a) have noted, these modern empires exercise cultural domination on a scale unparalleled in history.

As I showed in Chapter 2, in their nineteenth and early twentieth century variants, imperial societies mobilized philosophies of history that fused theological conceptions of national destiny with scientific, deterministic and biological racism (see for instance Arendt 1982a). The United States were no less seduced by myths of national destiny than their European counterparts. Early on, Puritan colonists conceived of the Thirteen Colonies as a promised land of religious freedom: a new Israel far removed from a European heartland torn by religious strife and civil war (Stephanson 1995; Campbell 1998). After the American Revolution, apologists of the young republic envisioned it as setting a unique example in the annals of history. America appeared as a classless society different in every way from the old and corrupt, aristocratic societies of Ancien Régime Europe (Lipset 1996). Already, the founding Fathers, Thomas Jefferson, George Washington, Alexander Hamilton and James Madison conceived of the American continent as the future space of a great empire (Armitage 2002; Wilson 2002; Anderson & Crayton 2005). By the nineteenth century, myths of Manifest Destiny blended American exceptionalism and biological racism with notions of secular republicanism and protestant theology (see Horseman 1981; Stephanson 1995; Lafeber 1998). Other statesmen such as President Andrew Jackson, Secretaries of State William Henry Seward and Thomas Bayard later mirrored this vision, just as did, by the mid to late-nineteenth century, ideologues of Manifest Destiny like journalist John O’ Sullivan, reverend Josiah Strong, historian Frederick Jackson Turner; navy men like Alfred Thayer Mahan; Presidents William McKinley and Theodor Roosevelt, and Senator Henry Cabot Lodge: all of whom prepared the “intellectual formulation” of the “New Empire” (Lafeber 1998; Zinn 2003). Anders Stephanson (1995) shows
convincingly that the protestant-influenced tropes of American exceptionalism and Manifest Destiny continued to structure a peculiarly American form of manichaeism well into the twentieth century and beyond the Cold War. This vision set the tone for the US’ geopolitical relations by organizing the world into a hemisphere of good – the West - and one of evil – the East. Though it was held to be exceptional, the American experience was nevertheless thought to possess “regenerative qualities for humanity as a whole” (Stephanson 1995: xi), which brings Amy Kaplan to note that exceptionalism is founded on paradoxical claims indeed. Like its European counterparts, the US voiced its claim to domination in the familiar rhetoric of the “White man’s burden,” a timed-tested metaphor which continues to structure the American imperial society’s outlook on Iraq, Afghanistan and other “failed states” (Boot 2002; Kaplan 2004a). The imperial society’s unique vantage point at once shapes its vision of dominated societies as inferior and, through that refracting lens, American collective self-representations of the United States as an exemplary power or moral force in global politics.

Here, I recommend a note of caution. The poststructuralist cannons in International Relations and even in political theory (see Connolly 1988 and Butler 2006) tend to reduce representational practices of identity to a simple self/other binary. On the one hand, the American imperial society’s national habitus reflects the practical experience of a dominant society in global social space. On the other, their self-image and the schemes of collective representations common to the American population are also mediated by the histories of the fields of culture, ideological production\(^{58}\) and identity specific to their society. The national habitus is not purely an epiphenomenal expression of the imperial society’s dominant reserves in symbolic, cultural, economic and political capital, any more than it is an empty signifier - a

\(^{58}\) Bourdieu (1979, see chapter 8 especially) defines the field of ideological production as all those thoughts which social actors can think of at any given moment in time.
second path that scholars, partaking in the American appropriation of French theory, often employ.  

59. I think Connolly (1988, 2002 and 2005) provides a much denser and thicker, institutionally situated account of these processes.

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Take Judith Butler’s reading of Nietzsche: “there is no ‘being’ behind doing, effecting, becoming; ‘the doer’ is merely a fiction added to the deed - the deed is everything” (Nietzsche cited in Butler 2006: 34).  

60. Butler is formulating the now well-rehearsed argument that identity is not natural, given or pre-defined. It is unstable, shifting, continually reconstituted through interaction with its environment and through ritualistic practices of reaffirmation which lend to it the appearance of stability and coherence: in short, “les apparences du naturel” (Bourdieu 1993: 51). Identity construction becomes something akin to a functional requirement of an abstract logic of power, so that the state can naturalize its existence (Weber 1995; Campbell 1998).  

61. Every social process or event that needs to be explained can now be reduced to the logic of power trying to “discipline” the ambiguity of identity or reconstitute a “stable identity.” The contributions in Kaplan and Pease’s Cultures of US Imperialism (1993) are mired in this sort of analysis. For example, Kaplan (1993) writes that the Spanish-American War was deeply influenced by a desire to discipline the ambiguities of American racial identity at home. This is a major part of the logic that animates McAllister’s (2005) account of the Cold War politics which dictate cinematographic representations of the Middle East, or Kaplan’s (2003b and 2004a) accounts of the war on terrorism. For Kristin Hoganson (2000), the Spanish American War plunges its roots in a crisis of masculinity in American society. In the wake of the social mutations brought on by demographic transformations from the end of the Civil War to the 1890s, the death of the generation that had fought the War of Secession and defined republican...
political virtue; in the wake also of the changing composition of the elite classes and feminist affirmation, American males found themselves in need to reconstitute a more stable gender identity; a value they would achieve through war. Though extremely well-researched and thought provoking, David Campbell’s work (1990, 1998, 2005) also often seems to reduce foreign policy as a whole to processes of disciplining identity. As for Cynthia Weber (1995), she writes that the society of states reciprocally constitutes itself in the act of recognizing the sovereignty of each of its members. Thus identity and sovereignty appear in the act of becoming both the seer and the seen; nevermind four hundred years of institutional processes, treatises, conquests, territorial and geographic dislocations (Wilson 2002; Anderson and Crayton 2005) which sediment and naturalize these political processes into the physical and constitutional landscape and the subjectivities of resident populations. Historical and institutional complexities disappear in a one size fits all account of state institution as a performative practice.62

In contrast to the above accounts, Bourdieu63 provides a rich theorization which can situate the origins of common cultural structures in national spaces, within the practices of institution that have normalized them. The emergence of the modern state is first tied to the social destiny of the “noblesse d’État” (1993: 61). These juridical architects of state power institute the state as something existing first in title and in right (see for instance Wilson 2002; Heumann 2008 on the Northwest Ordinance as a vector for the expansion of federal power); in the same move, they constitute themselves as that class which holds a monopolistic right on the capacity to wield the power, or “state capital” (“capital étatique,” Bourdieu 1993), of this (still-temporarily) fictitious entity in the name of the universal interests of the populations under the state’s nominal authority. Jurists and public servants gradually (re)define law and custom in such

62. Furthermore, the generic process described by Weber must be examined in light of the very different capacities of strong and weak states to impose themselves either domestically or internationally.
63. Bourdieu still largely draws on Tilly.
a manner that the state (or states) becomes the sovereign decider, guarantor of order and legitimacy in a chain of near-infinite regression where the state becomes the final recourse to all contests, the final word in all discussions. The state not only exercises overwhelming violent force, it reserves a (juridically and symbolically theorized) monopoly right on fiscal matters (by collecting taxes) and also becomes the dominant depository of symbolic capital. In this manner, the state is instituted as a “fictio juris” (1993: 61) – a juridical fiction codifying violent practices of expropriation (see Wilson 2002; Anderson & Crayton 2005). While it exists first because of these practices of original violence; in time, its authority and the symbolic capital it has acquired become the guarantors of the legitimacy of these practices: now known as law, order and justice. Not simply recognized by an international community (which thus comes into being as that which recognizes and grants legitimacy) as alleges Weber (1995), at the domestic level, the state gradually builds a quasi-monopoly on the different forms of capital, securing international recognition as an état de fait or as a matter of fact. From thence, the state’s disproportionate concentration and power over the different forms of capital places it, through its representatives, in a unique position to shape the common social structures of a society. The state naturalizes itself through these practices and the practical experience citizens have of the structures it has imposed, not because France (following quote) says so.

À travers l’encadrement qu’il impose aux pratiques, l’État instaure et inculque des formes et des catégories de perception et de pensée communes, des cadres sociaux de la perception, de l’entendement ou de la mémoire, des structures mentales, des formes étatiques de classification. Par là, il crée les conditions d’une sorte d’orchestration immédiate des habitus qui est elle-même le fondement d’une sorte de consensus sur cet ensemble d’évidences partagées qui sont constitutives du sens commun (Bourdieu 1993: 59).

But it is not sufficient that we simply note the process through which social and symbolic structures are instituted. These common structures are sedimented or cemented in the
constitutional infrastructure of society and in masses of documents, texts and corollary practices which refer to each other like a circle with no point of origin, so as to prevent any lines of flight from pointing outwards from the raison d’État. Therein lies the real illusion of state necessity and thus legitimacy.

La Culture est unificatrice : l’État contribue à l’unification du marché culturel en unifiant tous les codes juridique, linguistique en opérant l’homogénéisation des formes de communication, bureaucratique notamment (par exemple les formulaires, les imprimés, etc.). À travers les systèmes de classement, selon l’âge et selon le sexe notamment qui sont inscrits dans le droit, les procédures bureaucratiques, les structures scolaires et les rituels sociaux, particulièrement remarquables dans le cas de l’Angleterre ou du Japon, l’État façonne les structures mentales et impose des principes de vision et de division communs, des formes de pensée qui sont à la pensée cultivée ce que les formes primitives de classification décrites par Durkheim et Mauss sont « à la pensée sauvage », contribuant par là, à construire ce que l’on désigne communément comme l’identité nationale (ou, dans le langage plus traditionnel, le caractère national) (1993: 54).

Christophe Charle’s contribution to bourdieusian sociology rests in restating how domestic social structures must be embedded in an account of the international environment, foreclosing the very possibility of a national history. Constructed and stabilized through the logic of differentiation and competition against other societies in global social space, national habitus expresses a shifting, collective historical and transnational construct. This history, intertwined in that of global society as a whole, provides the national habitus with a measure of autonomy and sets a horizon of possible trajectories and identities for that society and its citizens that will be renegotiated through contact with other societies and histories. National habitus, like identity and being, are horizons of both virtual and realized trajectories: not pure possibility and becoming. In this sense, any theorization of (collective) identity formation must take into account the particular history of the cultural and social institutions which shape and reinforce the principles of “vision
and division” common to one citizenry: in this case, the multicultural-republican-liberal heritage of the American imperial society.

Melani McAllister (2005) in particular has argued that postcolonial theorists have too easily transposed Edward Said’s (see 1980) template of analysis to the American context by leading scholars to conclude or rather presume that all relations and experiences of difference necessarily mirror Orientalism or orientalist representations. Rather, Orientalism, McAllister added, described a very specific set of characteristics which were ascribed by Europeans to symbolically or culturally dominated subjects.

The complexities of race and gender also highlight the fact that, too often, scholars and activists have used the term “Orientalism” to characterize everything from Madame Butterfly to television news accounts of the Viet Cong. Yet not all stereotypes, even those of Asians or Arabs, are Orientalist; they may be racist, imperialist, and exoticizing without engaging in the particular logic of Orientalism: binary, feminizing, and citational. When “Orientalism” is used to describe every Western image of every part of the Eastern half of the world, the definition has become too flexible for its own good (McAllister 2005: 12).

McAllister suggests that since the Cold War, American representations of the Middle East have been defined by “post-Orientalist” representations (2005: 13). US representations of the West and East were not nearly as monolithic as Said suggested they were in Europe. For one, the US national habitus defined itself in distinction to the colonizing logic of the former imperial powers. This is an important methodological note. The American imperial habitus constituted itself not purely in distinction to other, foreign societies (the strong, exclusionary sense of the term foreign), but also in distinction to those societies closest and most similar to it in culture and political values. As a consequence, the American imperial society defined its role in the Middle East by establishing a relationship of what McAllister calls “benevolent supremacy” with Arab nations. Furthermore, she notes, American foreign policy increasingly espoused a logic of
“military multiculturalism” (chapter 6). During the Gulf War, the US triumphantly presented an outward image of a melting pot society. The racially and sexually integrated US armed forces became the televised symbol of an imperial society which alleged to have transcended the social, racial and gendered fractures which divided it. This most-integrated society, primer inter pares amongst liberal nations, was precisely promised a leading role in world affairs because of the superior humanity of its domestic social structures.

Multiculturalism is not so much a contemporary development in American foreign policy and self-image as McAllister lets on. It has long competed and been in tension with more reclusive and exclusive definitions of American identity such as the biological and racist “anglo-saxonism” which prevailed in the second half of the nineteenth century (Horseman 1981) and at least into the twentieth.64 Kaplan (2004a) notes that the US originally envisaged itself as a melting pot society where Europeans of different nationalities would blend with each other and become as one people. The limits of this integration were set against peoples of colour: notably Hispanics, Blacks and Amerindians, and in the prohibition of miscegenation (see chapter 5). Michael Hunt (1987) also acknowledges that multiculturalism has been a defining trait of the American self-image of foreign policy. In one sense, this multiculturalism is an extension of the paradox of Manifest Destiny and exceptionalism we noted above. Apologists of the American imperial model of society presume it to be universal in its potential application although clearly, this universalism has a territorially, nationally, and thus particularly, defined source: the United States of America. The point is that if the national habitus’ logic of distinction operates through the exclusion and differentiation with the stereotyped image of other societies, it does not solely

64 At least as far as the ideological consensus amongst elites is concerned.
operate through ‘othering.’ While the logic of differentiation is fundamental to the national habitus, an important part of the way that the multicultural component in the collective self-image operates is to say that every culture is the same. Consequently, if a logic of exclusion operates in the act of noting that other cultures, societies or states are not the depositories of that social model which is destined to become universal, it is paralleled by an equally strong mechanism which negates cultural differences through absorption. The national habitus does not simply refer to “other”; it also absorbs otherness and makes it into “more of the same.” Thus the self/other template of identity-construction presents an aggravated risk of occluding the fundamentally homogenizing logic of multiculturalism. But as I have stated, the multicultural, universal and homogenizing logic of the national habitus is also seen as the outward extension of sets of practices and social structures which are culturally specific, yet somehow held to be desired by everyone else (see also Kaplan 2003b). As such, a form of racist or imperial ambivalence can exist as a superiority complex for citizens of a legitimate culture towards other cultures they may at once judge as inferior, derivative and thus ultimately absorbable.

The American imperial society’s “humanitarian mission” (Charle 2005: 126, author’s translation), then implies the express or even unexpressed intention of imprinting the social structures of the metropole onto these foreign societies. These structures are namely: Western managerial culture and practices, capitalist democracy, free trade, “market civilization” and individualism (Gill 2003), neo-classical economics (Gill 1986), governance and transparency (Best 2003), accounting methods (De Goede 2003), actuarial science and risk management (Amoore and De Goede 2005); but also the symbolic preeminence of university programs and diplomas which shape the minds of future leaders and ensure the necessary transfer of culture

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65. I am indebted to numerous conversations with my colleague Andreas Krebs on this point, though we discussed liberal societies more generally.
66. Here I draw more or less explicitly on Johann Galtung’s (1976) conception of “social imperialism.”
from metropole to periphery (Bourdieu 1997, 1999 with Loïc Wacquant; and Charle 2005). To impose one’s domestic social structures on another society or having other states emulate them has dual implications. First, it marks the paramount symbolic validation of the imperial society’s national habitus (Charle 2005). Second, by offering proof that other societies may only dream of imitating her and walking in her stead, imposition of the imperial society’s social structures increases the imperial society’s reserves of symbolic capital by strengthening its claim to exceptional leadership.

This said, exceptionalism and Manifest Destiny are not simply traditions of optimistic and imperial exuberance; they are also anxious ones. David Campbell (1998) shows that the Protestant tradition of the “jeremiad” and the corollary republican terror of the “end of days”67 tainted American discourse about the foreign world and the health of American society with elegiac overtones well into the late 20th century. In the wake of the Vietnam war, the Civil Rights movement, student protests, feminist and homosexual affirmation, neoconservatives and cultural cold-warriors imminently prophesized the decline of American power. Though it was outward looking, ever true to itself, the American vision nonetheless prophesized that the greatest nation on Earth would come to meet a fate and downfall of biblical proportions (see again Pocock 1975 on this).

The American national habitus does not simply translate into a self-image of omnipotence. Historically, this self-image of providential power, greatness and exceptional destiny is paradoxically mirrored by an equally strong anxiety about future decline, as we mentioned briefly in Chapter 2 and will further explore in chapters 5, 7 and 8. This secondary note of caution serves to remind readers that identity is also the result of a historical trajectory.

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67. Pocock’s (1975) interpretation of this relationship is to suggest that the elegiac obsession in American culture is an artefact of the Atlantic republican tradition not Protestantism, see chapters 2 and 5.
which circumscribes a horizon of possible meanings and developments. National habitus mediates between agency and global structure.

**National habitus as “ideology” or “Doxa”**

To live in a society that dominates others in most fields, not only shapes its citizens’ common outlook on the world, but defines a much wider field of life-choices and individual / collective life trajectories which are hypothetically open to them (“faisceau de trajectoires,” see Bourdieu 1979). As argues Charle (2001), populations of weaker, poorer states cannot claim or aspire to the same real-life possibilities that dominant, imperial societies can offer theirs. Material and economic supremacy provide many citizens with a safe enough distance from urgency, starvation, and absolute destitution⁶⁸, while easy, flexible credit paid for by foreign money (see Pieterse 2004; Arrighi 2006) opens the illusion of a wealthy, and luxurious lifestyle divorced from real earnings, even to poorer members of the population. Technical, academic and scientific expertise and a dominant language (Charle 2001) create the possibility for work in other countries, in development and assistance partnerships. As imperial societies assert themselves as models to be imitated, the unique embodied political, symbolic and cultural knowledge that citizens possess of the economic, industrial, informational or political structures of their society can also offer a horizon of employment opportunities in international organizations or bodies dedicated to harmonizing international norms and standards.

These factors all help to ground the common myths of superiority in the day-to-day experiences of the imperial citizenry, so that they are shared by large segments of the population (Charle 2001) and, paradoxically, even sometimes by its most outcast members (as I will

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⁶⁸ The same can certainly not be said of many resident, non-citizens and marginal or liminal outcasts.
elaborate further, see Arendt 1982a on racism in the “mass society”). In this sense, national habitus notably attempts to answer the timeless question that has preoccupied Marxist theoreticians: why will class tensions seem to disappear in waves of nationalist fervor at the outbreak of war, when only months earlier class conflict seemed inevitable? In Christophe Charle’s words:

À travers le refus de chaque stéréotype social national de l’ennemi représenté par la société impériale rivale, les classes opposées à l’intérieur de chaque espace national retrouvent le lieu commun minimal de leur alliance patriotique alors que peu auparavant elles paraissaient irréconciliables dans leurs luttes intestines. Ce lieu commun est analogue à une formation de compromis, au sens freudien : il refoule les conflits sous-jacents ou les contradictions des facteurs qu’elle censure, au profit du « surmoi » de l’habitus national […] Les questions gênantes […] disparaissent au profit d’une loyauté oubliée (Charle 2001: 203).

I have said above that the national habitus presents a field of possibilities. A country the size of, and as geographically, economically, culturally and ethnically diverse as the United States, incorporates a myriad of realities and lifestyles within its borders all of which can incarnate radically different ways of being American. The national habitus represents the most fundamental denominators of common life, that is the horizon of possibilities and individual / collective trajectories enclosed within the field. To keep things simple, I will build on the correspondence between Charle’s national habitus and Bourdieu’s account of doxa, the dominant relations of signification which prevail in society: common sense, “ideology,” “hegemony,” societal “images” (see Hall 1978) or affective traces as others would call it (Connolly 2002). As Stuart Hall writes of the British case:

“… images [of society] may be diffuse, quite untheorised in any elaborate sense; but they serve to condense and order the view of society in which the ideologies are active, and they constitute both its unquestioned substratum of truth – what carries conviction
– and the source of its emotional force or appeal. Together these images produce and sustain an uncodified but immensely powerful conservative sense of Englishness, of an English way of life, of an English viewpoint which – it also, by its very density of reference, asserts – everyone shares to some extent” (Hall 1978: 140).

The doxa outlines the broad parameters of the social consensus, the dominant systems of classification and distinctions from which its stems: right and wrong, truth and falsehood, high and low culture, virtue and vice. This dominant system of classification reflects most accurately the particular habitus of the dominant class fractions, which hold near-monopolies on the means of symbolic production: those institutions such as the state, courts, the university, churches, museums, and large media conglomerates, all most forcefully involved in the production of law, morality, esthetics, collective memory, information and role models (in the case of television, novels, movies, etc.). This does not mean that dominant classes simply secrete a worldview, a weltanschauung, or impose a particular habitus as a universal truth to which other classes adhere without reflection. It suggests that dominant class fractions find themselves in a position to set the parameters of the debate or define the dominant systems of classification, or what Stuart Hall defines as “primary signifiers” (see chapter 7), those meanings and practices which other social groups must either adhere to or contest. As Bourdieu suggests, the system of classification and the symbolic boundaries operating within society find themselves at the heart of social struggles.

Les limites sont ici des frontières qu’il faut attaquer ou défendre de vive lutte et les systèmes de classement qui les fixent sont moins des instruments de connaissance que des instruments de pouvoir, subordonnés à des fonctions sociales et orientés, plus ou moins ouvertement, vers la satisfaction des intérêts d’un groupe (Bourdieu 1979 : 556).

But the past bears heavily on the field of national habitus such that social groups can find it daunting to displace the dominant web of distinctions and significations of ages past because they leave sediments and traces that weigh on contemporary understanding. For instance, I will
later argue that neo-liberal various notions of “sacrifice” must continue to respect the republican heritage within American culture, and that many of these older meanings carry over into contemporary liberal understandings. As Stuart Hall explains: “These bits and pieces of [meaning] are really the fragments of other, often earlier, more coherent and consistent theoretical elaborations which have lost their consistency over time, fragmented, become sedimented in ordinary ‘common sense’. Gramsci calls them traces.” (Hall 1978: 166). To take another example, William Connolly notes that sediments and traces of Christian culture in the West continue to lay at the foundation of secular, rational conceptions “of free will, punishment, and public morality” (Connolly 2005: 28).

Accumulated over time, these different layers of meaning account for apparent discrepancies or contradictory dispositions within the doxa. The coexistence of secular and Christian cultures, republican and liberal ideologies, populist and elitist visions of society, isolationist and internationalist conceptions of Americanism, showcase only some of the possible facets of American identity. These neighboring threads do not necessarily coexist in any coherent fashion. Rather, it is more productive to think of political culture and identity as a field of possibilities which encapsulates different trajectories, positions, threads and roots. Rather than a unitary or monolithic account of identity, this suggests that identity is unstable and shifting, and encloses multiple selves (see Butler 2006; Deleuze & Guattari 1980). The field of national habitus encloses all of the possibilities of identity at any given time.

Meaning systems are thus contested. They vary according to the position that groups and class fractions occupy in social space. As Bourdieu (1979) points out, “youth” and “elderly” can denote very different meanings and qualities: some pejorative, others positive depending on the point of view from which it is observed. To a young entrepreneur, youth can represent
dynamism, ambition, strength and potential, while the elder statesman may very well simply reverse the traits and meanings he associates with young adulthood to arrive at radically different conclusions: lack of direction, absence of focus, boastfulness, ignorance and inexperience of the world. Words, situations and practices then can signify different meanings. The doxa or national habitus outlines the horizon of possible meanings – meanings that symbols can designate - in a given society and the dominant interpretations which prevail. But national habitus, like doxa, is not merely ideological or ideational; ideas flow and ebb out of and into practices and social rituals which sustain their truth and tangibility (Connolly 2005). For instance, as Judith Butler (2006) writes, masculine or feminine identity are sustained through the stylization of the body and the close worn: “I work out, wear a suit, tie and cut my hair short because I am a man.” But in reality, the stylization is everything; it is that which justifies a priori the idea of manhood. On a much larger scale, American identity is grounded in the observance of holidays and political rituals not necessarily celebrated or recognized even across the border in Canada: the American Thanksgiving in late November, Independence Day, or the act of voting for the President of the United States. The collective celebration or commemoration of these rituals and holidays stabilize and naturalize the notion an American identity which is logically anterior to these practices. The practices are concrete realizations of the idea of “America.” The ambivalence of meanings that different Americans can ascribe to their identity reflects the tremendous diversity of lifestyles lived in America. The high paced life of careerism and consumption in New York and the calm, tranquil life of the farmer in the vast spaces of Montana represent two very different accomplishments of the American dream (the pursuit of happiness). The “dream” represents the only common denominator between these two examples. From the cattle-farm to the New York subway, the national habitus signifies two drastically different ways of life or in
other terms, *habitus*. Importantly, the collective meanings of national habitus are always unconsciously referenced in distinction to other societies in global social space.

Stuart Hall (1978) writes that the habitus of the dominant class fractions is most likely to define the collective image of society. Ann Dummett illustrates, for instance, that the middle-class ritual of tea in the mid-afternoon came to define “tea time” for all Britons, though in practice, the *actual time* may greatly vary (in Hall 1978). “Something accepted both here and abroad as … characteristically English means, in fact, quite different things to different groups of people in England” (Ann Dummett cited in Hall 1978: 156). Thus, Hall argues, within certain limits, the self-image of subordinated social groups is encapsulated within the image of dominant class fractions. This further illustrates that national habitus represents a field of possibilities and trajectories rather than a fixed identity or experience, and the different actual lived lifestyles or realized lifestyles lend themselves to a *quid pro quo* of comedic proportions when two Americans muse on American identity. “This universalizing [of dominant class ideas] into common sense masks important differences between class experiences; but it also establishes a *false coincidence of ideas* between different classes. *This coincidence then becomes the basis for the myth of a single, English kind of thought*” (Hall 1978: 156, italics in original). Though I agree with Hall that dominant habituses will bear with disproportionate force on the collective image of identity – President Bush was more likely to refer to the American people as the churchgoing lot that formed an important part of his base, rather than the criminals, prisoners, the destitute and the gays and lesbians fighting for marriage, rights when he invoked identity – I believe that in the field of national habitus, the class images of dominant fractions are also encapsulated within the self-image of subordinate groups. President Bush, for instance, might also romantically envisage himself and draw pride as belonging to a class of people that worked the
land, raised cattle or were employed in department stores. I believe this resonance with the image of another class accounts for populist currents or tendencies that certain elites employ.⁶⁹ Though he was not one of them, Thomas Jefferson nonetheless idealized the hard-laboring worker of the land as a rampart of virtue that would hold in check the wave of corruption that cities and industry threatened to unleash upon America:

> Those who labor in the Earth are the chosen people of God, if ever he had a chosen people, whose breasts he has made his peculiar deposit for substantial and genuine virtue … Corruption of morals in the mass of cultivators is a phenomenon of which no age nor nation has furnished an example … The mobs of great cities add just as much to the support of pure government, as sores do to the strength of the human body (Jefferson 1784: 170).

Many a Marxist academic’s extolling of the working classes’ revolutionary fervor and historic mission can only really make sense as a case of false-identification with a subordinate group or, in other words, because they have partially interiorized the self-image of that other social group (see Bourdieu 1979 on the peculiar case of the false class identification of left-wing intellectuals). Importantly, it is the possibility of mutual identification, of each class simultaneously living within and outside of itself, which at once creates the powerful bonds of national habitus and paradoxically defines it as a field of struggle.

**Lost in translation: National habitus, homologies and illusions of symmetry**

In Chapter 3, I began to introduce the principle of the homology between the positions in different fields. In order to explain how the organization of the fields may vary from one national space to the next, it is necessary for me to summarize once more the symmetries which may exist

⁶⁹. See for instance Henri Troyat’s *Les Cent un coups de canon* on the Russian aristocracy’s flirtation with agrarian anarchism or Émile Zola’s *Germinal* and *La Débâcle*. 
between partially autonomous terrains of struggle. Note that I will also empirically reconstruct many of these homologies in later chapters. As Bourdieu (1979) writes, fields enact and set their own codes of action, their own laws and “rules of the game.” Different conventions hold sway over which forms of speech are appropriate and inappropriate. In reality, I added, the different positions, dominant and dominated, that social actors may come to occupy within the fields, and the polar oppositions that this logic creates, tend to correspond from one field to another. Simply put, members of the dominant class fractions are likely to dominate most fields, just as they have prevailed over larger global reserves of capital whatever their relative shares of each specific form of capital (economic, cultural, scientific, etc.). As Bourdieu notes, this will invariably affect the correspondence of the different positions from one field to the next.

Le principe de l’homologie fonctionnelle et structurale qui fait que la logique [de chaque champ est objectivement orchestrée] réside dans le fait que tous les autres champs spécialisés … tendent à s’organiser selon la même logique, c’est-à-dire selon le volume du capital spécifique possédé (et selon l’ancienneté, qui lui est souvent liée, de la possession), et que les oppositions qui tendent à s’établir en chaque cas entre les plus riches et les moins riches en capital spécifique, entre les dominants et les dominés, les tenants et les prétendants, les anciens et les nouveaux entrants, la distinction et la prétention, l’orthodoxie et l’hérésie, l’arrière-garde et l’avant-garde, l’ordre et le mouvement, etc. sont homologues entre elles (d’où toutes sortes d’invariants) et homologues des oppositions qui organisent le champ des classes sociales (entre dominants et dominés) ou le champ de la classe dominante (entre fraction dominante et fraction dominée) (Bourdieu 1979 : 257).

Habitus ordinarily guides social agents in day to day life by conferring to them a “practical sense” of how to find their way in the different fields, and in many cases giving them a working knowledge (as opposed to exact knowledge) of the homologies between them (Bourdieu 1979). Habitus will insure a correspondence between one’s station in life (field of social classes), style of dress (sense of fashion), and the stores were one shops (sense of consumption) such that one’s
position is homologous in the fields of social classes, fashion (as esthetic preference) and consumption (the clothe store’s brand name).

Homologies operate at the level of the larger society, ensuring a concordance between dominant ideals in the field of ideological and cultural production and the material landscape that citizens inhabit. Principles such as “freedom” and “peace of mind” decant into the concrete manifestations of a way of life: material affluence, social mobility and an existence altogether insulated from the bad news associated with the outside world as represented on television, for instance. As Marcuse and Adorno both argued, the “cultural industry” (Adorno and Horkheimer 1974) and the phenomenal productive capacity of “advanced industrial societies” (Marcuse 1968) have succeeded in reifying their esthetic and philosophical ideals by lending them the concrete, material forms displayed in cultural productions, merchandise catalogues and car commercials, as well as the lifestyles they offer (see Gartman 1994, also Patterson 2008). The absolute, intuitive and seemingly natural concordance between lifestyles, objects of consumption and the imperial society’s collective ideals are reinforced through the national habitus’ rejection of the lifestyles of other materially deprived, and thus less free societies. They are imposed domestically by the cultural industry’s quasi-monopoly on symbolic production and the practical experience citizens have of the relationships between shared ideals, objects of consumption and lifestyles. Together they account for the powerful appeal that principles like “freedom,” “rights” and “peace of mind” exert on the imperial society’s citizens. In short, the national habitus ensures a concordance, or “homology,” between the practical aspects of day to day life in the imperial society and the ‘superior’ symbolic principles they signify.

Positions in the different fields may very well coincide within national borders. But this will often not be the case when one travels abroad. Not only do the familiar homologies and
coincidences break down across borders; in many cases, the oppositions (left / right; dominant / dominated; right / wrong) which define polarities in one country are likely to diverge or be displaced in another. Symmetrical (identical) fields in two countries may operate according to different logics so that one loses one’s sense of place or one’s practical sense of orientation when navigating from one land to the next. Thus rather than symmetry, there is an illusion of symmetry between nearly-identical fields in different national spaces – this is what Bourdieu calls *allodoxia* or false translation (Bourdieu 1997).

Take the political fields in the USA and Canada for example. Political strands of similar designation (i.e. conservative, liberal) can signify markedly different political ideologies and policies depending on the parameters of the social consensus within either country. In Canada, no political party questions the central role of the provinces in providing government-paid health-care (“socialized medicine” in American parlance) without paying a tremendous political cost, as Stockwell Day’s now defunct Canadian Alliance discovered in the 2000 election. Subsequently, Canada’s ruling Conservative Party did not contest this basic premise. In the United States, vicious partisan debate over President Obama’s health-care reforms, shows the difficulty any left-leaning leaders face in proposing such a ‘socialist’ option to their constituencies. This false-symmetry between the conservatives of both countries sparked American political satirist Jon Stewart’s remark that what ‘conservative’ means in Canada would translate, in the United States, into something like “gays for Ralph Nader.”

While the ‘liberal’ Democratic party occupies the left-wing of the American political field (in relative terms), the Liberal Party of Canada holds a centrist position, flanked by the Conservatives on the right, and a host of formations on the left ranging from the separatist Bloc Québécois, to the Labor-type New Democratic Party and the Green Party. In the case of France,

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*Footnote*: A consumer-rights lawyer and former candidate of the Green Party.
the Parti Communiste Français has played an influential role on the electoral left over the last century, gaining the support of notable intellectuals such as Jean-Paul Sartre, and making headway in the late 1940s and 1970s – something unthinkable to the American left.

This is to say familiar words have different meanings in different places. Whereas the spaces of different fields may be homologous amongst themselves in one country, identical fields will not present the same characteristics in two different national spaces. Indeed, despite the illusion of symmetry, positions diverge within identical fields from one country to the next because the same doxa, the dominant system of classification in one country does not hold sway in the next. Ordinary habitus may very well guide a person across the different fields of his national space; more than likely, it will prove maladapted to a new environment. That is because he has no familiarity with the national habitus of the land into which he has entered; no sense of the dominant relations of signification, of classification and of the principles of “vision and division” which it sets. He lacks a sense of his place within the world, because he lacks a sense of the places in the world. Just as he may get lost in geographic space without a roadmap, he can count on no map to guide him across the positions of different fields and the homologies that exist between them. In the last instance, it is national habitus – all those bits and pieces of intuitive, practical knowledge about one’s society of origin which one has more or less consciously assimilated since birth - that furnishes the roadmap upon which our own, particular habitus marks but one path, street, highway, or given trajectory. In this sense again, habitus is always a (national) habitus, one trajectory enclosed within a field of possibility.

This breakdown of correspondence between the fields and positions of different national spaces explains the sense of dépaysement, of being uprooted, travelers often experience when visiting new lands and encountering different cultures. It is the feeling of perplexity one is left to
wrestle with when a common gesture (back home) is met with an unfamiliar answer (abroad). These situations are often most perplexing in countries with very similar cultures, those which lend themselves to an illusion of familiarity but which may produce discomforts or feelings of strangeness all the more troubling that they are ineffable – that is when one cannot positively identify what exactly is different but one only knows intuitively that it is. This rendez-vous manqué, a sense of missed correspondence, is but another result of the false coincidences of national habitus. It is the illusion of structuralism.

Of course, the problem of allodoxia, of false translation, from one national space to the next (Bourdieu 1997 and 1999 with Wacquant) can have more dramatic and practical effects, especially during the cross-cultural encounters between members of an imperial society and a vassal or dominated one. Hannah Arendt (1982a and 1982b) wrote that imperialism and totalitarianism remarkably facilitated the disappearance of class tensions within the societies they contaminated. Regimenting the most dominated class fractions – those “superfluous” classes created by industrialization and the “mass society” – into the social consensus around imperialism was all the easier as racist ideologies provided the means and justifications to create even lower classes by excluding other ethnic groups: Blacks and Jews, from society.\(^{71}\) Indeed, national habitus disseminates the dominant self-image of the imperial society even into the subjective experiences of the dominated class fractions. In cross-cultural encounters between two national spaces, the position, dominant or dominated, that each party’s society occupies in global social space is substituted for the particular position that each individual would occupy in his domestic field of social classes. Take, let us say, a typical encounter between a US national guardsman and an Iraqi civilian. The American soldier was a police officer in his civilian life and

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\(^{71}\) To be fair, Arendt (1982a) also notes that imperialism and conflict abroad will always aggravate social tensions within the imperialist society over the long run, even if it provides the illusion of mending them in the short term.
hails from the dominant fraction of the dominated class (see chapters 6 and 10) in the American field of social classes, whereas the Iraqi civilian was a doctor in the old regime, a member of the middle to upper-middle class. In the encounter, each party’s national habitus (thus the ways they act in the encounter) will take precedence over their class habitus – the way they would interact if the encounter took place between members of the same national space. Not in this case. The soldier carries a rifle and may be controlling a roadside checkpoint while the Iraqi doctor is trying to get to work on time. At this time, the soldier holds the right of life or death over the Iraqi civilian. Dominated in the American field of social classes, the soldier becomes dominant in the cross-cultural encounter through the embodied attributes of his imperial society, one which occupies Iraq militarily, and thus the principles of vision and division consonant with this position. In this encounter, the soldier is an American first and foremost. The encounter does not simply mark an ideational translation of the rapport de force that exists between the two societies. The imperial society’s dominance over Iraq decants into the very material aspects of the encounter: the roadside checkpoint, the rifle, the service-member’s arbitrary right over the life of the civilian. These are just as many immediate reminders and expressions of the structural inequality between the two societies in global politics, whatever the real class differences between the individuals taking part in the encounter.  

Of course, national habitus is not meant to be a mechanical concept, and I do not pretend that the dynamic I describe above will take place in every context or even in every encounter. It is rather meant to illustrate why and how the peculiar racist dynamics (or whatever one wants to term them) of cross-cultural encounters can take place when they do, and why it is that the very real differences between two members of one national space will tend to simply fade away in

72. To theorize the more ‘banal’ encounter between a white and black American, for instance, the practical sense of each group’s position in the field of citizenship with the homologies this may draw out in the field of social classes (and inversely) will serve as a guide for the interaction. See Chapter 5.
cross-cultural contexts. However, Chapter 5 will provide a powerful historical counterpoint to this rule.

In the final analysis, each particular stripe of habitus is branded with the mark of its national space of origin and the density of social referents which orient thought and behaviour. This goes to show that though there may be a “false coincidence” of ideas about national identity and what that means among members of different classes – the quid pro quo of which I spoke earlier - they nonetheless share a remarkable amount of intuitive knowledge about the social structures of the world they inhabit in common. It is this shared knowledge that renders communication possible among them and that can cement the social bond in the last instance, when extraordinary events, the specter of war or some other crisis, drives them to even greater difference than that which separates them usually, one that exists outside the familiar systems of classifications, “vision and division,” and the polar oppositions they set. So again, to be clear, national habitus like “national identity” in postcolonial frameworks is always constructed in distinction (absence) to the stereotyped image of other cultures or national habituses. It inherently retranslates the intricacies of one position in global social space into a field of possibilities enclosed within one national space.

**Conclusion**

Just as “habitus” provides a conceptual bridge which links an individual’s trajectory into the larger history of his national space, so does “national habitus” enmesh states in the turbulences of global politics. I have made the argument that dominant societies, imperial societies which dominate most fields, will aggressively compete to increase their share of symbolic capital and impose their model of social organization upon other societies. Their national habitus is animated by the sense of a messianic principle of vision and division that separates them from other,
presumably backward societies. This lays the groundwork for a bourdieusian account of empire which conceives imperialism as a symbolic contest between dominant and subordinate societies in the fields of global social space.

National habitus, like other concepts of identity I discussed in the introductory lines of this chapter, is performative (see Connolly 2002, Butler 2006). It operates through constant reinforcement, ritualization, iteration and exclusion of traits assumed to be different. Like other poststructuralist accounts of identity, national habitus is stabilized through difference. At the same time, national habitus is a field of meaning, a horizon of possibilities; not a monolithic signifier, but a web of signification. The solidity of this network of signification is reinforced through the practical homologies which dominant institutions can create between the symbolic, material and practical aspects of day to day life. It helps us understand that the sense of community experienced between the citizens and residents of one national space is also linked to a horizon of common trajectories which are open to them, trajectories and possible lifestyles which may not be realizable for members of other, presumably dominated, societies and states with different resources in capital. On the other hand, the experience of difference between (national) communities is experienced and reinforced through the practical experience of cultural barriers – that is the breakdown of the familiar system of homologies between the fields from one society to the next. National habitus thus provides a much denser account of identity consolidation than the more common arguments which limit analysis to simplistic processes of differentiation and othering, without providing any sufficient account of how these processes are made possible by the institutions within any one national space. As a result, those who critique the reification of identity are condemned to answer their detractors with no less a universal and essential account of identity formation as if humans naturally and instinctively rejected
difference as a functional requirement of identification. National habitus and the bourdieusian framework avoid this pitfall through careful case by case sociological reconstruction rather than a one-size-fits-all template of analysis.

In the following chapter, I turn to the internal dimension of imperial rule and explore how imperial social relations play out not only in the field of global politics proper but within the very boundaries of the United States. The field of citizenship will help us conceptualize contests for inclusion and participation between first and second-class citizens, between dominant populations and “liminal groups” (Campbell 1998) who remain “foreign in the domestic sense” (Kaplan 2003a); and Americans of different social classes. This will open the way for our analysis of the question of citizenship in the imperial society from a much narrower angle at the intersection of ‘domestic’ and ‘global’ politics: the patterns of enlistment in the army and the unequal distribution of military sacrifice amongst Americans of different racial, sexual and class origins.
Chapter 5 - Citizenship in the Imperial Society

Chapters 2 and 3 gave a cursory definition of the imperial model of society as one that simultaneously dominates other states in the field of global politics and second class citizens within its geographic boundaries. In Raymond Aron’s stead, I also noted that core elements of the debate on empire, defined as “rule over foreign peoples or territories”, ultimately hinged on how one defined “foreign.” As has become evident, much of the poststructuralist and postcolonial literature I have presented in chapter 2 has significantly problematized any simple understanding of the “foreign” and the “domestic” as spheres of life separated by the geographical boundaries of nation-states. Thus, question which remains consists in determining what exactly constitutes the meaning of “belonging” to a political community, that is, the meaning of citizenship.

Specifically, this chapter aims to present a bourdieusian account of the problematics of citizenship. It aims to construct a field of citizenship by drawing on the insights of three main types of literature. First among these is the body of work in both the republican and liberal traditions of political philosophy, which deals with citizenship through its focus on rights and obligations, including two defining interpretations of US political culture. The next part of the chapter will then turn to providing a historical summary of some of the watershed moments of the evolution of citizenship rights and obligations in the United States since the Founding. This process of historical reconstruction of the different meanings of citizenship will lay the groundwork for a working model of the field of citizenship and the struggles that exist within it. Lastly, I will examine the question of citizenship rights and obligations in the United States through the very specific lens of military service and military sacrifice. I have chosen this areaof
investigation because it bestrides domestic and foreign politics in the most traditional sense of both terms. Building on this, I will argue over the next chapters that the divides which tear at the field of political debate over the War in Iraq reproduce or mirror the more profound fault lines within the field of citizenship through the effects of the homologies between the fields.

**Liberal and republican economies of citizenship**

Why should one be interested by theoretical debates about the nature of citizenship? The political theory of citizenship in both its classical republican and liberal formulations evokes long standing concepts of the “good life” and extrapolate, from these principles, sets of rights, privileges and obligations citizens are to enjoy and respect (Sandel 1998; Mouffe 1987). In a just society, at least according to a liberal conception of justice, citizens should enjoy an equal or unbiased distribution of rights and obligations (Rawls 1999). If we take Rawls at his word, the principle of “distributive justice” states that no inequality should be tolerated as long as it does not profit society as a whole, and especially those most likely to pay its price. Like Rawls’ work on the “theory of justice,” the political theory of citizenship provides the means to understand the framework of the social contract of a given society and to see how relationships amongst citizens and institutions are to be organized and legitimized. It thus provides the tools to judge or critically reflect on the nature of citizenship within the American imperial society and how different groups of citizens compare to each other in terms of the rights and obligations they enjoy. In Wilson’s words:

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73. Rawls and Sandel conflict over their acceptance of the separation between the “good” and the “right” (see Sandel 1998). Whereas as Rawls believes this separation conceptually valid, Sandel believes that it already constitutes a resolution of the question of the “good” (Sandel 1998), insofar as a principle of justice can only be formulated through references to a question of the good life. Chantal Mouffe (1987) also rejects this separation.
“Who are full citizens,” defined as those who can participate in all the republican components of the constitution and have access to all elected positions? Are there barriers based upon such factors as sex, race, or class? Or does the constitution extend full, equal citizenship to all native-born and properly naturalized persons? Do these citizens have rights to “property” that cannot be taken away with “due process of law?” (2002: 65).

To this end, the study of American politics and especially that segment of scholars who study the Founding have long tried to ascertain whether the political culture and institutions of America were fundamentally inspired by a republican or liberal conception of citizenship. Republican theorists believed men were free when they engaged in self-government and wrote the laws to which they were subjected (Skinner 1998). The life of the republic may very well have rested on their constitutional documents, written or unwritten, but this constitution always harkened back to a more abstract “Spirit of the laws,” a set of ideals which organized common life, or more precisely, a conception of the “good life” (Strauss 1989, Arendt 1982b). In the United States this meant “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.” In turn, these ideals secreted the principles around which social life, human laws and political institutions in a society were organized. Because citizens could strive for individual realization through their pursuit of the common good, republican theory envisaged no contradiction between the individual and collective pursuit of virtue (Pocock 1975; Mouffe 1987). As Aristotle wrote: “… any polis which is truly so called, and is not merely one in name, must devote itself to the end of encouraging goodness … [A political community is more than] an association for residence on a common site, or for the sake of preventing mutual injustice and easing exchange” (Aristotle cited in Sandel 1998 : 7).

Of course the classical republican tradition rested on stringent hierarchies indeed between the spheres of labor, work and action, of which the third was by far the highest, as explains Arendt (1998). These conceptual divides mirrored larger breaks in Antiquity, between the public
and private spheres of life, or between economics and politics. Labor belonged to the sphere of reproduction, of the household and defined the activities of women. All that was produced through labor was to be immediately consumed and thus, produced no lasting product. In the sphere of labor man was an animal. Whereas the work of artisans produced tools and monuments, and ultimately built the physical landscape of the republic, only the sphere of action – the *vita activa* – enabled man to realize his highest calling as a political being and achieve immortality. Only *action*, defined as political activity, could produce *political communities*: “Action, in so far as it engages in founding and preserving political bodies, creates the condition for remembrance, that is, for history” (Arendt 1998: 9). The *vita activa*, or life in the public sphere, was the place of the citizen. Politics ruled over economics, the public over the private, man over woman, citizen over slave. As Sandel (1998) explains, because the life of republics relied on the civic virtue and participation of the citizens in the common government, historically, they routinely excluded slaves, women, racial minorities, paupers, immigrants and others from equal standing in the community74, because these were deemed “by nature or condition or conviction, incapable of the virtues good citizenship requires” (Sandel 1998: 318).

British liberal theorists of the modern era espoused rather different ideas. As Macpherson (2004) demonstrates, the “political theory of possessive individualism” which lay at the base of all major seventeenth and eighteenth century liberal thinkers, prescribed that citizens must first *possess* their persons. This liberal and possessive definition of “free men” excluded indentured servants and the disenfranchised from the body politic as imagined by the likes of Hobbes, Locke and even the Levelers. Macpherson writes:

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L’individu, pense-t-on, n’est libre que dans la mesure où il est propriétaire de sa personne et de ses capacités. Or, l’essence de l’homme, c’est d’être libre, indépendant de la volonté d’autrui, et cette liberté est fonction de ce qu’il possède. Dans cette perspective, la société se réduit à un ensemble d’individus libres et égaux, liés les uns aux autres en tant que propriétaires de leurs capacités et de ce que l’exercice de celles-ci leur a permis d’acquérir, bref, à des rapports d’échange entre propriétaires. Quant à la société politique, elle n’est qu’un artifice destiné à protéger cette propriété et à maintenir l’ordre dans les rapports d’échange (Macpherson 2004: 19).

It is significant that the requirement of citizens to possess property – and thus surmount their need to labor and devote themselves to the sphere of action (in Arendt’s terms of course) - remained a fundamental heritage which carried over from classical republican thought to liberal political philosophy. Macpherson also draws attention to the fact that liberal citizens pursued their self-interests first and foremost, and that the state, at least according to Hobbes, served to mediate between the conflicting interests of property owners. Rather than cherishing it, citizens tolerated the existence of the state as a tragic necessity. The state existed no longer to inculcate political values into members of the political body. This marked a fundamental departure from republican political thought. Arendt (1998, chapter 2) marvelously summed up the gulf that separated these two strands of political theory and argued that, by the modern era, private interests (the sphere of economic relations) had completely invested the public sphere; they now imposed themselves as the sole real link between individuals. Modern men were no longer citizens engaging in political community through common government of the public sphere; the public sphere had been colonized by the individual, economic and commercial exchanges so characteristic of the private sphere and the household. This emphasis on private life marked another doctrinal component of liberal thought. Just as the liberal subject was sovereign, autonomous and could choose his destiny freely, so too was he bound by no community of race, sex, or nationality prior to his choosing, or any other arbitrary social characteristics (Sandel 1998). “Freed from the sanctions of custom and tradition and inherited status antecedents,
Liberalism and republicanism split on the very meaning of liberty. Whereas republicanism envisaged liberty as a common good which lay in the act of collective self-government, liberalism defined liberty in essentially negative terms (Skinner 1998). Liberty resided in the freedom to choose, or rather in freedom from constraint. This was a freedom no republic could respect because republics were inherently homogenizing (Mouffe 1987). In Skinner’s words: “One might say that the neo-roman [republican] and classical liberal accounts of freedom embody rival understandings of autonomy. For the latter, the will is autonomous provided it is not coerced; for the former, the will can only be described as autonomous if it is independent of the danger of being coerced” (1998: 84-85, note 57). In liberal political theory, the individual was the subject of liberty rather than the political community as a whole (Skinner 1998). Of course, liberals did overcome the conceptual tension between the individual and the public good much in the same way that republican thinkers had. Just as the pursuit of the common good was conducive to personal realization, so too for liberals was the common good no more than an aggregation of individual happiness, as in Jeremy Bentham’s oft-quoted formula (Skinner 1998). Rawls adequately summarized this utilitarian philosophy: “The main idea is that society is rightly ordered, and therefore just, when its major institutions are arranged as to achieve the greatest net balance of satisfaction summed over all the individuals belonging to it” (1999: 20).

Perhaps unsurprisingly, these competing visions of positive, republican liberty and negative, liberal freedom carried over to the Thirteen Colonies and shaped competing visions of what the American republic would resemble and the kinds of institutions its founders would have to provide it with. They also defined the poles around which scholarly debates over the American
Founding would interpret the dominant political culture and heritage of the United States. Louis Hartz’s (1955) *The Liberal Tradition in America, and John Pocock’s (1975) The Machiavellian Moment* have long established the parameters of the debate between proponents of the liberal and republican syntheses of American political culture (Smith 1997, Gordon 2007). Hartz argued that Liberalism in America was a kind of “civil religion.” A Lockean conception of politics grounded in the respect of property, freedom of religion, individual liberty, the right to happiness, and representative institutions was so engrained in American culture that Americans did not view these cultural traits as properly ideological or cultural. Rather, the broad consensus over liberal values in America explained why socialism never developed as a viable alternative to either liberalism or conservatism in America. It also accounted for the intolerance and the persecution dissenters faced during the Cold War, perhaps most vividly illustrated by Senator Joseph McCarthy’s witch hunts at the time Louis Hartz wrote his treaty.

On the other hand, John Pocock argued that the Founding Fathers were republican thinkers inspired by the “Atlantic republican tradition” (see chapter 2). The influence of republicanism, he argued, accounted for peculiar dispositions in American political life. Italian thinkers of the Renaissance believed that republics, as opposed to empires (see also Lefort 2000 on this), were fundamentally transient, unstable, and sooner or later they would succumb to the turbulences of Fortune and its unforeseeable consequences. The lives of republics rested on the civic virtue of their citizens, their participation in republican politics and the pursuit of individual realization through the pursuit of the common good. But this virtuous citizenship was perpetually threatened by corruption and the vanity of men. American republicans in particular fixated on a struggle of biblical proportions which took place in the hearts of men. This was the conflict between virtue and corruption. This vision of a struggle to establish a stable government and
constitution also espoused a Christian philosophy of time that envisaged history in a “westward movement.” At this conceptual juncture, empire played an ambivalent role in republican political philosophy. Expansion had often been seen as a source of corruption. The expanding Roman legions had extended the borders of the republic and ushered in the rule of the Caesars. As citizens came under arms, and the citizenry itself expanded to foreigners, social conflict exploded (Pocock 1988). The republic became an empire. But if the imperial and republican forms of government could be wedded, the republic could expand to unimagined boundaries and escape the very transience to which it seemed condemned. The republic would escape history and the inevitable decline providence had decreed for it. Either corruption would level the republic, or the establishment of a new empire over the entire surface of the earth would grant it immortality. Irrespective of which of these two particular fates would ultimately befall the republic, the “millennial apocalyptic vision” (1975: 540) predicted that such an end of history must come.

Pre-eminent among the sources of corruption, Pocock continued, were the interests of diverse “factions” – merchants and city-dwellers in Thomas Jefferson’s case, who privileged their personal interests over those of the republic. Jefferson believed the only solution to fend off the expansion of industry and commerce would be a proportionate expansion of land, as the virtue of the American citizenry lay in the hearts of the landed farmers. Jefferson was thus the proponent of a great agrarian empire which would counteract the rise of “monied interests.” Pocock argues that the apocalyptic fixation on the clash between corruption and virtue was inherent in the republican tradition, rather than in Protestantism, and shaped the American cultural obsession with the end of times. The fear of factions and conspiracies aiming to overthrow the republic survived into modern times in the propensity of politicians and
intellectuals to guard their fellow citizens against the partisan interests of certain sectors of American society. Most famous among these, Pocock notes, was President Eisenhower’s farewell address warning his co-nationals against the “unwanted influence by the military-industrial complex.”

More recently, scholars of the “mixed tradition” have shown (i.e. see Smith 1997 and Gibson 2007) republican and liberal conceptions of citizenship have equally shaped American political life since the Founding. Gibson (2007) goes so far as to suggest that the “liberal-republican synthesis” has brought about a scholarly compromise. The oppositions we see, rather, are pristine abstractions artificially separated from each other, and from perhaps more diffused political undercurrents such as racism and sexism which cannot be reduced to simple by-products of either republicanism or liberalism. In effect, the weight of both of these traditions on the fields of citizenship, national habitus, and ideological production accounts for some contradictory dispositions in American political culture. Nevertheless, the republican / liberal debate does continue in contemporary exchanges more explicitly prescriptive about which tradition should guide American politics, thus validating the continued conceptual separation.76 Echoes of these discussions, as well as lasting tensions between the republican and liberal strands in American institutions, ripple into the debates over military sacrifice today, which we will present in chapters 8 and 9. As a consequence, it is fundamental to grasp the contradictory dispositions which lay at the heart of American political thought over the meanings of citizenship.

75. I am indebted to conversations with Rogers Smith on this point.
The imperial society and the field of citizenship

The *imperial* form of society uniquely structures the fields, classes of habitus and struggles taking place within its shifting borders, especially in the field of citizenship. Nowhere is this more evident than in the global distribution of political, economic, cultural and symbolic capital across racial and class hierarchies in the United States, which, from a very early time, has assured Americans of European descent the position of dominance over other racial groups. Because of the homologies between the fields and the struggles within them, groups dominated in one area of life tend to be marginalized in the next. As a result there are often direct links between one’s political, economic and cultural marginalization such that a subordinate populations cannot *in fact* expect to enjoy the same privileges and rights as do their co-nationals or co-citizens if they are subordinated in any of these fields. These inequalities are most evident in the *field of citizenship*, an area of life at the crossroads of the juridical, economic, political and cultural fields, where groups struggle for inclusion within the body politic of the American imperial society. The field of citizenship also bestrides the interstices of both a national social space and global social space. At the heart of the contests within this field lies the competition of individuals and groups to increase their respective shares of *citizenship capital*, or in other words, recognition or inclusion in the body politic.

Because of the global distribution of capital between dominated and dominant groups in American society, including the latter’s historical command over the juridical and bureaucratic capitals which generated the colonial structures guaranteeing and formalizing these inequalities, the field of citizenship has been dominated by white, male Anglo-Saxons of European descent. It follows from this, that these citizens have found themselves in the ideal position to regulate access, entry and movement in the field. This said, the relations of domination within the field of
citizenship have not always necessarily been linear. As Linda Kerber (1997: 837) writes citizenship is composed of different strands or components, like “braids”: threads that may overlap in curious manners.

To focus on the braidedness of the national narrative will place in the background, for the moment, the dream of an uninflected, ungraded citizenship and foreground the distinctions that were historically experienced: for example, that men and women gained rights such as suffrage and assumed obligations such as jury service on different timetables; that, although there have not been religious tests for office, there have been ethnic boundaries; and that people of European, African, and Asian descent have distinctive histories of assuming rights and obligations (Kerber 1997: 837).

Furthermore, US citizenship is not required for one to be considered a player in the field of citizenship. Non-citizens passing through American jurisdiction (and because of the US’ unique expansionary habits suddenly finding themselves within the control of American laws or its representatives) have a status: either as visitors, with a visa or a work / study permit. Arguably, a foreign national of high socio-economic status will enjoy deference in his stay that many citizens do not – though this may not be the case at the airport: one of the nodal points par excellence where the field of citizenship is policed. But the outer edges of the field of citizenship are definitely occupied by those groups who inhabit the United States illegally or who historically have been denied citizenship or some of its purviews: especially racial minorities. Nowhere is this hierarchy, at once real and symbolic, better reflected than in the very categories used by the U.S. Census Bureau and different governmental agencies.\(^\text{77}\) In a 1998 study

\(^{77}\) As Christophe Charle (2001) notes, surveys and census data are not so much objective representations of social trends and dynamics as they are windows through which we can peer at the social representations and categories operative in a sociohistorical context. As Charle remarks when analyzing socio-professional data from a 1907 German Census, these categories “mask social structures as much as they reveal them” (2001: 38). Census and other U.S. governmental publications acknowledge the “social-political” construction of race and ethnicity, and specify that as household members are free to identify to which racial group they belong, population data may vary as practices of representation change or evolve (CEAPIOR 1998; US Census Bureau 2000). Of course, racial self-identification is due in no small part to how members of a minority (or majority) group feel they are treated by other
published by The Council of Economic Advisers for the President’s Initiative on Race (CEAPIOR 1998), Blacks, Amerindians and Hispanics remained the most disadvantaged minority groups in American society according to diverse indicators of “well-being.” They remained significantly marginalized in terms of their real life chances and the expectations they could reasonably formulate. In some cases, their situation had worsened over the previous few decades (see also Beeghley 2005).

Of course, this marginalization is only the result of deep rooted practices of exclusion from participation in the body politic of the American imperial society, practices dating back to the first days of the republic. Political Scientist Rogers Smith argues that from the moment of the Founding, citizenship laws excluded just over four out of five Americans from participation in the body politic by alluding to racial and gender requirement for citizenship (1997: 512). This situation endured until the passing of the Civil Rights Acts of 1965, under President Lyndon Johnson. As Smith argues, modes of exclusion founded on “ascriptive Americanism” - gender and race – are perhaps just as important as republicanism and liberalism in shaping the political culture of the United States. Though the “imperial synthesis” of American history (as presented in chapter 2) has always figured prominently in the works of critical historians, recently, scholars like James Wilson (2002), and Anderson and Crayton (2005) have respectively shown how the imperial nature of American society has fundamentally shaped some its most important institutions, such as the US Supreme Court, and the development of citizenship laws.

One can argue that jurisprudence defines the basic framework determining how and to whom citizenship is granted, or revoked within the borders of a national space. This is certainly

members of their collectivity and society at large (CEAPIOR 1998). Though constructed they are, categories of racial classification are nonetheless charged with a long history. They become sedimented in collective identities, imaginaries, social structures and institutions, and can very well continue to operate on and imprison individuals and groups whether they choose to identify with them or not (see also Connolly 2002).
true in terms of policy and laws. As Linda Kerber (1997) writes, an 1823 Supreme Court
definition provided the following list of privileges of American citizenship:

“Protection by the government; the enjoyment of life and liberty, with the right to
acquire and possess property of every kind, and to pursue and obtain happiness and
safety . . . to claim the . . . writ of habeas corpus; to institute and maintain actions of
any kind in the courts of the state” (Justice Bushrod cited in Kerber 1997: 835).

These rights, she notes, are inherently tied to five fundamental political obligations some
of which must even be obeyed by non-citizens passing through US jurisdiction:

Some obligations are wide-ranging, applying not only to citizens and resident aliens but
to anyone on American territory; among these are the general obligation to obey
criminal and civil laws and administrative requirements (such as the requirement to pay
the minimum wage or not to discriminate on the basis of race). All citizens have five
specific obligations. Two are shared with all inhabitants: the obligations to pay taxes
and to avoid vagrancy (that is, to appear to be a respectable working person). Three are
incumbent on citizens specifically: the negative obligation to refrain from treason, the
obligation to serve on juries, and, most significant, the obligation to risk one's life in
military service, to submit to being placed in harm's way when the state chooses. This
last obligation has slipped out of common conversation since the advent of the all-
volunteer army in 1975 (sic), but it is a real one, and when we consider the meanings of
citizenship we ignore it at our peril.

These are of course juridical and formal definitions of the rights and privileges of
citizenship. Like Sandel and Mouffe, however, I believe that the question of “right” cannot be
divorced and taken separately from that of the “good.” In other words, to understand the laws of
citizenship we must also reconstruct the historical understanding of what it means to be a citizen
in the United States. We must understand the spirit of the laws that guides the constitution (see
Strauss 1989). Part of this endeavor leads us to delve into the cultural politics of citizenship. This
cultural and racial understanding of citizenship guided lawmakers in their most important
political and juridical considerations over the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Indeed, debates
over the acquisition, management of territories, the populations which inhabited them and ultimately their representation in Congress enflamed sectional tensions between North and South, slave states and free states, bringing the Union into Civil War and again near its brink when desegregation began (Anderson & Crayton 2005).

In 1787, Congress adopted the Northwest Ordinance. As Anderson and Crayton (2005) explain, the statute provided the framework which guided how future territories, conquered or purchased beyond the Ohio River, would be integrated into the Union. Territories, falling under the control of the government of the United States, but not being immediately elevated to the status of statehood. Resident populations in these territories did not necessarily enjoy congressional representation or the right to vote. Amerindian nations inhabiting these lands, for instance, did not even enjoy recourse to the US Supreme Court to settle their disputes with the encroaching settlers and the armies that protected them (Wilson 2002). What the Northwest Ordinance provided for was a blueprint which determined the steps territories organized under US jurisdiction would undertake to be admitted as states into the Union.

When Congress passed the northwest Ordinance in July 1787, it created another desirable precedent for the regulation of its colonies. The statute referred to the vast extent of land as a “territory,” not a “colony” or “plantation.” Congress would initially treat the lands like traditional colonies, appointing a territorial governor, a secretary and three judges. Once the Territory reached a population of 5, 000 [white, male, free] adults, it could select its own legislature to work with a council appointed by the governor and Congress. When the future state grew to 60 000 white adults, it could apply for Statehood to become an equal member of the Union (Wilson 2002: 73).

What is most significant however was the fact that territories and their resident populations must meet certain key cultural requirements before they could be considered for admission. Territories and the populations residing within their borders remained in a state of “tutelage” during which they had to cultivate the proper social, cultural and administrative
institutions which would eventually grant them entry into the United States (see also Heumann 2008).

It was only when the settlers had written a constitution modeled on those of the original thirteen states and when they had demonstrated their commitment to civilized republican (in practice, Protestant) forms of education, worship, and morality that the settlers of the territory would be permitted the full privileges of self-rule in a state equal in every way with the older states of the Union (Anderson & Crayton 2005: 190-191).

The civilizational process which must guide entry into the Union only gained in importance after the US Supreme Court’s 1857 landmark ruling in the Dred Scott case. Amongst many polemical decisions, Judge Taney’s court decided that all territories under control of the United States government must be integrated at one point or another into the Union. “Congress could not maintain perpetual colonies.” (Wilson 2002: 220).

The American imperial society’s victory in the 1846-1848 Mexican War had already significantly enlarged the territory of the US. “The United States acquired half of Mexico, including the present day States of California, Nevada, Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, and Colorado, and recognition of the Rio Grande as the border between Texas and Mexico” (Anderson & Crayton 2005: 284). The war and its outcome had dramatic consequences for the status of citizenship in the US. Along with these immense tracts of land, the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo brought under the control of the US significant numbers of Blacks and Hispanics. The conflict had already served to reinforce Americans’ sense of self as a race distinct from the Latinos they had encountered in Mexico. But could these populations become republican citizens? Nothing was less certain.

Visits to Aztec ruins and collections of souvenirs led [Americans] to reflect on the challenges of extending liberty to people whose race and religion seemed to inhibit their
ability to exercise its responsibility. They characterized Mexicans as dirty, ignorant, poor, and degraded … Conquest confirmed the soldiers’ sense of moral superiority, rooted in education, industry, technology, religion, and free government. “Many, very many years must pass before the common people, the public of this miscalled Republic, will be sufficiently enlightened to enjoy the blessings of independence,” lamented Captain Robert Anderson. To become true republicans, Mexicans would have to reject the superstitions Catholicism and the enormous power of the Church and the army” (Anderson & Crayton 2005: 282).

Indeed, Anderson & Crayton (2005) argue that the acquisition of the new territories, in conjunction with the Dred Scott decision ten years later, dramatically aggravated sectional tensions by raising again the question of balance between the number of Free and Slave states in the Union. Lawmakers enacted a series of compromises over the next decade leading up to the Civil War to restore equilibrium, but it remains that the imperial society’s expansion into new territories had aggravated longstanding debates about the nature of citizenship in the US and tensions within Congress.

The crisis generated by the threefold problem of race, citizenship and territorial expansion did not disappear with Civil War and Reconstruction. Eric Love (2004), like other historians such as Lafeber (1998), argues that racial considerations on citizenship structured debates between annexionists and anti-annexionists in the late nineteenth century. Significant members of the political class were averse to annexing the Philippines because of its extremely large population of racial aliens who could never meet the cultural requirements of republican citizenship. Indeed, not only did the Dred Scott decision block the US from maintaining territories under its control in a permanent state of dependence, the Postwar 14th Amendment had enshrined the principle of equality amongst US citizens. Altogether, Scott and the 14th amendment raised the alarming prospect that the integration of future territories with considerable non-white populations might weaken the republican fibre of the Union.
For those Americans with imperial ambitions, the Fourteenth Amendment created a serious legal obstacle. Conquering and absorbing as equals a country like Mexico would give all Mexican males the full rights of United States citizens. They would be able to vote, speak freely, have the right to a jury trial by their peers, and could move anywhere within the country. This sort of political/racial dilution was unacceptable (Wilson 2002: 237).

If the Philippines could not become a viable state, neither could it be organized into a territory for future integration into the Union. These considerations determinately shaped the nineteenth century US’ decision to eschew the colonial policies of other imperialist powers such as England and France, as Lafeber (1998) explains.

By the 1890s, American lawmakers fiercely debated over the future of American foreign policy in the Pacific, Far East, the Philippines and Cuba. As the prospect of war with Spain approached, a Californian Senator echoed the double republican fear that American imperialism would create a permanent military force which might eventually threaten the liberty of the Union and its member States; but also that conquest would bring into the hands of the United States territories populated by aliens it could never assimilate. “[In August 1897, Senator Stephen M. White of California] stressed that annexation would require a large military establishment, raise new racial problems, and propel the republic to a suicidal colonial policy” (Lafeber 1998: 363).

With respect to the concerns of this racist republican heritage, the outcome of the 1898 Spanish-American War landed the US in a peculiar place indeed (see Lafeber 1998, Wilson 2002; Love 2004; Anderson & Crayton 2005). The 1857 Dred Scott decision and its imperative that all territories must eventually become member states of the Union had decided against any permanent American venture in the Philippines. The 1901 Platt Amendment gave the US its naval base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and made the island into an American protectorate rather than a formal colony (Lafeber 1998). So that case was settled. But the conquest raised questions about the status of Puerto Rico. The island was annexed in 1898, but to solve the problem raised
by the question of its eventual integration into the territory, in *Downes v. Bidwell* the Supreme Court came up with a rather imaginative formula. It ruled that the people of Puerto Rico were “foreign in a domestic sense” (Kaplan 2003a). This statute revealed all the ambiguity inherent in the racial conception of citizenship and in the Court’s willingness to respect even its own jurisprudence. As Wilson explains:

> Although the Fourteenth Amendment said nothing about the colonies, the Court rejected that progressive aspect of *Dred Scott* holding that the Constitution must be applicable throughout the land. In fact, the *Downes* Court quoted the Fourteenth Amendment as another authority for imperialism: it only applies to “all persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States, and of the other States wherein they reside.” Because the colonies were neither in the United States nor States, their inhabitants had no constitutional rights (2002: 248).

Puerto Rico eventually became an “Associated Free State” but, where matters of sovereignty and voting rights were concerned, with some exceptions, Puerto Ricans retained the political status defined by the *Downes* Supreme Court, neither foreigners nor citizens. Significantly, the status of Puerto Rico and the process alike which guided imperial policy and territorial integration into the United States were determined by racial-republican concerns.

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“Puerto Rico is a self-governing commonwealth in association with the United States. The chief of state is the President of the United States of America. The head of government is an elected Governor. There are two legislative chambers: the House of Representatives, 51 seats, and the Senate, 27 seats ... Puerto Rico has authority over its internal affairs. United States controls: interstate trade, foreign relations and commerce, customs administration, control of air, land and sea, immigration and emigration, nationality and citizenship, currency, maritime laws, military service, military bases, army, navy and air force, declaration of war, constitutionality of laws, jurisdictions and legal procedures, treaties, radio and television—communications, agriculture, mining and minerals, highways, postal system; Social Security, and other areas generally controlled by the federal government in the United States. *Puerto Rican institutions control internal affairs unless U.S. law is involved*, as in matters of public health and pollution. The major differences between Puerto Rico and the 50 states are exemption from some aspects of the Internal Revenue Code, its lack of voting representation in either house of the U.S. Congress (Senate and House of Representatives), the ineligibility of Puerto Ricans to vote in Presidential elections, and its lack of assignment of some revenues reserved for the states” (emphasis added).
Juridical citizenship flowed from a cultural and political understanding of who could accede to citizenship and what characteristics Americans and aspiring Americans must possess.

As Linda Kerber (1997) argues, the great majority of the population residing in the American colonies at the dawn of the nineteenth century were denied citizenship if their skin color was other than white. Likewise, naturalization was a privilege reserved for white migrants and foreigners, at least until the close of the nineteenth century. Asians would only be granted this right after 1952. In the South, slaves fared little better. Because of the desire to maintain the sectional balance of power in Congress between Free states and Slave states, an early compromise provided that, for purposes of establishing a state’s delegation to Congress – the House of Representatives, which has representation proportional to the population of a state - Blacks would count as three-fourths of a white American (Wilson 2002: 200). Free Blacks counted as one person. This said, Rogers Smith does note that certain states made exceptions to the early political exclusion of Blacks, and that they could sometimes vote in places “as far south as North Carolina in the 1820s” (Smith 1997: 16). The Dred Scott ruling, however, deprived all Blacks of citizenship, a decision that was not to be reversed until the passing in 1865, 1868 and 1870 of the Post-Civil War Amendments to the Constitution: the 13th, 14th and 15th. Clever wording in the language of the amendments, however, provided sufficient slippage so that Blacks and women might be denied voting rights on other grounds, such as through literacy requirements for voting. Lastly, a series of decisions by the postbellum Supreme Court, culminating in the 1896 Plessy v. Ferguson ruling formalized the juridical framework of apartheid in the South. Juridically, the rights of African Americans would only be fully reinstated with the Supreme Court’s decision of 1954 in Brown v. Board of Education, and just as importantly, by the Voting Rights Act of 1965.
In a long history of exclusion and dispossession, another Supreme Court ruling in 1831 (Cherokee v. Georgia) formalized the subjugation of Amerindians (Wilson 2002). Having been deported from their land in Georgia, the Court found that the Cherokee Nation would not enjoy the right of other Americans to be protected by the courts. At the same time, they would be denied the recourse provided to other foreign nations or powers to voice their grievances before the highest court of the land. “Militarily defeated, the Indians were ‘in a state of ‘pupillage,’ dependent upon the federal government for protection and support’” (Anderson & Crayton 2005: 167). Citizenship for American Indians would only come in 1924.

Women enjoyed no better a situation, as Kerber (1997) writes. The early republic denied them voting rights and even went so far as to forbid them from possessing property, including that most fundamental property right, to dispose of their body. Insidiously, this also barred them from entering into contractual agreements. From the moment of wedlock, men’s rights “covered” their wives’ person and her personal property (Kerber 1997: 838). Women ultimately obtained the right to vote in 1920. Nevertheless, they had best choose American citizens as husbands, as the Naturalization Act of 1790 would still bar their children from the benefits of citizenship if they married foreigners, a statute reversed only in 1934. This condition was already a marked improvement over the former state of women. Since 1907 marriage to a foreigner had become sufficient cause to deprive women of American citizenship altogether.

Republican ethics were defined gradually in gendered and racialized terms through a series of oppositions: independence to dependence, productivity to domesticity, industry to servitude, martial vigor (sacrifice) to motherhood. Republicanism thus developed as a prescription for first-class white male citizenship, second-class white female citizenship (females could not hold property, vote, perform martial service, or keep their children in divorce or abandon), and exclusionary cultural / racial citizenship (Feinman 2000: 93).
In a word, citizenship, in the US, as in most states, has always been a fiercely guarded privilege. Rights and obligations have never been equal for all residents of the territories and often even for all citizens. Electoral franchises in many states barred the poor from voting, so that social exclusions were also based on class and not only race, gender and ethnicity. But many of the exclusionary dynamics of the imperial society have endured within the field of citizenship well into the present.

Distinguishing between “Foreign Policy” (the conduct of foreign affairs by states in the traditional sense), and “foreign policy,” David Campbell (1990, 1998) writes that, from the onset of colonization, Americans of European descent cemented their common identity by distancing themselves from Amerindians, Black slaves and later, Hispanics, who populated the continent. This process of identity formation through exclusion corresponded to an act of “foreign policy” (in lower case), of political relations between one group and the others it considered fundamentally different. “[F]oreign policy can be understood as referring to all relationships of otherness, practices of differentiation, or modes of exclusion that constitute their objects as foreign in the process of dealing with them” (1990: 270). As Campbell argues, the very process through which Americanism was defined in distinction to other groups and foreign states assured there was never any shortage of “liminal” populations who were pushed to the perimeters of the imperial society’s field of citizenship.

The demarcation of self and other is, however, not a simple process that establishes a dividing line between the inside and the outside. It is a process that involves the gray area of liminal groups in a society, those who can be simultaneously self and other—outsiders who exist on the inside. In the constitution of US society, women, American Indians, workers, Chinese, Japanese, and others have, at various historical junctures, been liminal and thus central to the creation of US political identity (Campbell 1990: 275).
As the conduct of the US state’s foreign relations (“Foreign Policy” per se) confronted the country with rival models of society, so too did it exercise stabilizing and exclusionary pressures on American citizens. The US government came to suspect US nationals and liminal populations which did not fall into the most conformist models of American citizenship. The rise of the national security state during the cold war criminalized Union members, Blacks, Gays among others, and viewed them as subversive elements, enemy fifth columns able to threaten the cohesion of the body politic. Significantly, Campbell argues, it was the very expansion of American influence in the field of global politics and the imperial society’s symbolic competition against rival models of society, notably the Soviet Union, that exacerbated disciplinary pressures on US nationals within the very borders of the security state.

The global inscription of danger was something that long preceded the cold war, but it was in the cold war, when numerous overseas obligations were constructed, that the identity of the United States became even more deeply implicated in the external reach of the state. What the Eisenhower security program reveals is that concomitant with its internal expansion was an internal magnification of the modes of existence that were to be interpreted as risks (Campbell 1998: 153).

Though the targeted populations could hypothetically possess citizenship, they were no less viewed as strangers, foreigners among their brethren. They could possess the same juridical rights and obligations as other citizens but faced an insidious, though an often outright persecution by the state and complicit employers and populations. Significantly, the American state and the logic of identity stabilization through the effects of foreign policy went far beyond the persecution and marginalization of the usual suspects: criminals and racial minorities with a long history of precarious access to citizenship rights. The state and society “othered” Americans
based on a host of political and cultural characteristics that were judged to be foreign to a rigid conception of Americanism.

The common feature of the liminal groups in US society is that they threatened the subjectivities and social relations of production associated with liberal capitalism: family, property, and hence national identity. The strategy for dealing with liminal groups was to identify them with the foreign, usually the enemy (1990: 277).

Importantly, the production of these forms of exclusion also produced stable American forms of identity, such as the nuclear family, as an ideal American rampart against Soviet identity (Campbell 1990 citing May). As in the republican antecedents of American society, these practices of exclusion mean that culture and identity are intimately linked to the definition of citizenship as a set of auxiliary and often unstated characteristics that groups must possess to be included or accepted into the social body.

On the other hand, Carillo Rowe (2004) maintains that the old racial terror of miscegenation continues to haunt the American imaginary, notably in California were the illegal immigration of Mexicans has continued to be viewed by Californians as a “major or moderate problem” (Kerber 1997: 849). In the mid to late 1990s, two voter initiatives, Propositions 187 and 209, pushed “for an end to both benefits for illegal immigrants [(Proposition 187)] and affirmative action within the University of California system [(Proposition 209)]” (cited in Rowe 2004: 121). Latino students who marched against the referendums were subjected, in the process, to the verbal abuse of other Californians. “Go back to Mexico” (Rowe 2004: 125), drivers shouted at the protesters, unequivocally telling the students that they were foreigners in their own land. The underlying presumption was unmistakable. Beyond any consideration of their legal status in the United States and the state of California, Hispanics were not Americans. Beneath Californians’ fear of immigration, Rowe believes residents likened migrants to rapists who
would violate the sanctity of their home, and all the while, enjoy state-sponsored benefits without restraint.

More recently, Amy Kaplan (2004a) and other scholars (Brasch 2006), have shown how the war on terrorism has lead to the resurgent criminalization of liminal populations in the US. Kaplan writes that the post-911 nationalist narrative of the “homeland” has evoked nativist tropes in American culture: a differentiation between real Americans of European ancestry and others who simply inhabit the territory (2003b, 2004a).

The entry on homeland in the [Oxford English Dictionary] starts with a delightfully deadpan definition: “The land which is one’s home; where one’s home is.” It shows that the term takes on its nationalist meanings of “one’s native land” only in the late nineteenth century. Other dictionaries define homeland as “Fatherland, motherland”; “a state, region or territory that is closely identified with a particular people or ethnic group”; “a state or area set aside for a people of a particular national, cultural or racial origin.” Homeland thus conveys a sense of native origins, of birthplace and birthright. It appeals to common bloodlines, ancient ancestry, and notions of racial and ethnic homogeneity (Kaplan 2003b: 86).

Kaplan notes that whereas America has traditionally been defined as an open and plural society, “a melting pot” (2003b: 86), the new vocabulary employed by the Bush administration had displaced the old meaning and replaced it with a far more exclusionary conception of belonging. Because the United States is a society of immigrants who hail from all corners of the globe, and are invested with many-faceted identities that cross borderlands, the narrow concept of “homeland” idealizes singular subjectivities, unencumbered by ties to other “foreign” communities.

At a time when the Patriot Act has attacked and abrogated the rights of so-called aliens and immigrants, when the U.S. government can detain and deport them in the name of homeland security, the notion of the homeland itself contributes to making the life of immigrants terribly insecure. It plays a role in policing and shoring up the boundaries between the domestic and the foreign. Yet it does this not simply by stopping foreigners
at the borders, but by continually redrawing those boundaries everywhere throughout the nation, between Americans who can somehow claim the United States as their native land, their birthright, and immigrants and those who look to homelands elsewhere, who can be rendered inexorably foreign. This distinction takes on a decidedly racialized cast through the identification of the homeland with a sense of racial purity and ethnic homogeneity, which even naturalization and citizenship cannot erase (Kaplan 2003b: 86-87, emphasis added).

Campbell, Rowe and Kaplan all present an extended understanding of citizenship not solely defined by geographic and juridical borders but rather one that espouses the contours of shifting cultural, linguistic and political boundaries. Even in a liberal society, the temptation to define citizenship with reference to a host of unstated, auxiliary characteristics - race, class, gender, sexual orientation, political opinions or professional occupation - never completely disappears. The status of citizens and non-citizens in the field of citizenship may have been defined through procedural and administrative measures since the dawn of the republic, but the concrete policies enacted by the legal bodies of the United States, Congress, State legislatures and the courts have mirrored deeply-engrained cultural and political notions of what citizenship means and what characteristics are central to it. Lastly, the sheer number of laws and considerations which have guided debates about citizenship and political compromise over the last centuries in the imperial society reveal to us, much as Kerber (1997) pointed out, that citizenship is a fluid category with different degrees along a continuum of belonging and exclusion. Voting rights laws in particular have testified to the fact that some categories of citizens, Women, Blacks and whites owning no property, for instance, remained second-class Americans pushed by their peers away from the dominant centerof the field of citizenship to that no-man’s land populated by migrants and illegal residents. Historian Adrian Lewis (2007) ironically noted that the 2001 World Trade Center terrorist attacks in New York had gone a long way in revealing the very different material values ascribed to the lives of different categories of
American citizens. One could objectively measure the different reserves in citizenship capital ascribed to lawyers, businesspeople and janitors, based on the insurance benefits their families received in compensation for the deaths of these loved ones in the attacks.

**Classes of citizenship**

As I noted in chapter 2, the classical republican tradition envisaged society as made up of organic classes of citizenship. Notwithstanding women and slaves who were altogether excluded from citizenship, classical republican thinkers conceived of a threefold division of society which corresponded to different classes of talent (Pocock 1975 and 1988). These classes were more or less innate and separated citizens into increasingly smaller pools of talent at the head of which sat only one man. The *one, the few and the many* typically designated a king, an aristocracy and the plebe, that is the mass of remaining citizens. In Pocock’s words:

> We are at a point where the meaning of the word “kingship” can draw apart from that of the word “monarchy,” “aristocracy,” and “democracy,” a single person, and elite council, and a popular assembly. It is further very important to remember that the three Greek-derived words just mentioned might be used either functionally, to denote a number of persons (one, few, many) exercising the powers (executive, judicial, legislative) proper to them; or-simultaneously but not inseparably-they might be used socially, to denote hereditary orders or estates exercising these several powers, as when a family inherited monarchy; a nobility, aristocracy, a property-owning commonalty, democracy … [Classical republican theory] could presuppose a natural, as well as a hereditary or otherwise constituted, aristocracy; what it must presuppose was a division of human political capacity into various aptitudes or virtues, variously distributed, which could be in some degree assigned to the exercise of functions or powers (Pocock 1988: 62-63).

This is to say that classical republican thought provides the tools to conceive of classes of *citizenship* distinct from *social* classes, which are a function of the unequal distribution of capital
Traditionally, belonging to a select club of citizens demarcates a higher position in the social hierarchy, the symbolic value of a position being assessed by its rarity (Bourdieu 1979). As I will show in later chapters, the all-volunteer army has attempted to retrieve these classical republican themes to underscore the symbolic prestige of volunteers and the rare qualities they possess. I will argue that this symbolic retrieval attempts to mask the real devaluation of the profession of soldiering and that to a degree, the pyramid comprising a threefold division of society has now been turned upside down. I will further explain these notions in chapters 6, 9 and 11.

One indicator for measuring whether citizens belong to different classes of citizenship is to compare their different sets of rights and obligations. In this way, populations most dominated in the field of citizenship such as foreigners may bound to respect obligations (as Kerber noted earlier) without enjoying any privileges or rights (i.e. respecting the laws and paying taxes without enjoying the protections of citizenship). In contrast, dominant citizens in all respects may very well enjoy privileges without incurring proportionate obligations or having obligations in name only; in short, privileges and rights without obligations. While middle class citizens like to think of themselves as enjoying proportional rights and obligations, “second-class citizens,” a term which will become vitally important in the remainder of the dissertation, find themselves in a position where they owe substantial obligations to the state in order to gain the privileges other citizens take for granted: this lower class contracts obligations without privileges. However, in an advanced capitalist and liberal society, inequalities of political obligation and privileges will rarely be codified into law. Rather, inequalities will appear as the natural results of market selection or economic processes. As defined in chapter 3, inequality of political obligation and

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79. As I have said these classes do tend to correspond to the degree that they are simultaneously structured by the system of homologies even though their logics of operation are not one and the same.
privilege will be manifest as drastically *unequal horizons of possible trajectories* in social space, such that the real choices open to lower-class individuals will be clearly unequal: professional, the ability to attend (which) university, to choose in which city or neighborhood they live, the choice to obtain health care, to develop their talent, etc. Finally, after considering the different modes of operations, rules and conventions in both fields, we can say that at least where American *citizens* (in the legal sense) are concerned, the different classes of citizenship correspond roughly to distinctions in the field of social classes (dominant and dominated classes with their respective fractions, see Table. 5.1). Chapters 6 and especially 10 and 11 will further build on these notions.

**Table 5.1. Homologies between the fields of social classes and citizenship**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field of citizenship</th>
<th>Field of social classes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The One</strong></td>
<td>NA - (President of the US)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Few</strong></td>
<td>Dominant fraction-dominant classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Few / Many</strong></td>
<td>Dominated fraction-dominant classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Many</strong></td>
<td>Dominant fraction-dominated classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NA / (Slaves)</strong></td>
<td>dominated in all respects</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Symbolic domination, the health of the body politic and imperial power

Like postcolonial theorists I make the case that juridical status conferred by an American passport or birth certificate remains an insufficient basis to judge whether members of a group are equal citizens. Beyond the acquisition of formal citizenship rights, racial minorities in the US or culturally and politically marginal Americans continue to be viewed and treated as foreigners,
lending to the presumption that they should not possess the same rights or the same opportunities as their peers. Citizenship defines a field of struggle in which individuals and groups vie for capital and the ultimate prize of the game: recognition and the privileges and rights which accompany it. Like the global volume of capital possessed by social classes and individuals, access to citizenship capital opens a larger horizon of real possibilities and thus, personal and professional trajectories, through the effect that inclusion in the field of citizenship has on homologies in other fields: political, professional and in the field of social classes. As we have seen, the original distribution of capital across the fields and racial, class and gender hierarchies corresponds to moments of “primitive accumulation” during the era of colonization and in the following centuries. The legacies of the imperial past leave profound scars on American identity, memory and politics today, especially in deeply polemical debates over the best means to integrate minorities within American society, or in the denial that there remains a problem to be addressed (New York Times, Aug. 25, 2008). Even after having received equal status under the law, many of these second-class citizens remain relegated to dominated positions in most fields, subject to scapegoating and racial discrimination (Council of Economic Advisors to the President’s Initiative on Race - CEAPIOR 1998). According to the extended definition of citizenship I have constructed here, I can successfully argue that still today the United States qualifies as an empire before we even begin to look at its “foreign relations” or its global politics in the traditional senses of these terms.

Indeed, dominated minorities remain prey to a form of domestic colonialism. This is a specifically imperial form of subjugation in the field of citizenship because the dominated position in the field occupied by those whom it targets, sits at the interstice between the foreign

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80 This New York Times article showcased the fears of Civil Rights leaders that the Obama candidacy may obfuscate remaining racial inequalities in American life.
and the domestic. Second, it is an imperial logic of rule in the more traditional sense that the
process of othering operates through refraction: those liminal populations who are deemed to be
foreigners, are identified, as Kaplan pointed out, in relation to a “homeland elsewhere” (whether
or not this be true). A sort of imperial homology, this process of refraction is made possible by
the mediation of the national habitus which retranslates the imperial society’s dominant position
in global social space into the language and grammar of the American national space, one that is
adapted to the lifestyles and horizon of reference points common to American citizens. Thus
groups dominated by the American imperial society in global social space (IR proper) are also
dominated inside the field of citizenship, through the effect of refraction made possible by the
national habitus which mediates between the global and domestic.

The internal logic of imperial domination in the field of citizenship is especially strong in
the case of populations who can be identified to a homeland on the periphery of global politics or
in a rival imperial society, that is, those states which are the fiercest competitors of the United
States for global domination or symbolic pre-eminence (see chapter 2 for analyses of
contemporary geopolitics). Like David Campbell and other postcolonial theorists cited above, I
hold that, especially in limitcases such as war and foreign and domestic crises, the symbolic
domination of out-groups in the field of citizenship can come to signify the health or fibre of the
American political body to those classes of citizens most invested in the status quo. One must
remember that historically, the state, ideologues, dominant institutions and class fractions also
believed that the auxiliary characteristics of some populations, social classes, occupation, race
and religion designated them as depositories of certain symbolic virtues which were held to
stabilize the health of the greater society, whether this be manliness, whiteness, republican
liberty or capitalism. In particular, these symbolic virtues were seen as safeguards, deep-rooted
forces which protected the imperial society from the vicissitudes and turmoil of the foreign world. The domination of subordinate populations within the field of citizenship (and thus other fields through the effect of homologies), and by extension, the health of the body politic, made up a fundamental, symbolic dimension of the power of the imperial society in the eyes of some citizens. This was made possible through a rather insidious effect of the homologies between the field of citizenship and the fields of lifestyles. Culture and ideological production were symbolic values, such as lifestyles, ways of belonging (ways of being American), and ways of thinking were contested and negotiated. In effect, the homologies traced out correspondences between symbolic values and the populations associated with them (white/industrious; black/lazy, dangerous, violent/criminal; Latino/bandwagonner, etc.). Because of these significations, changes, renegotiations or upheavals in the hierarchy of the field of citizenship (or in other fields through the effect of the homologies) were frequently seen as attacks on the health of the political body or signs of its decomposition, decay and fermentation (see Table 5.2.).

**Table 5.2. The field of citizenship and symbolic attributes in the field of culture for select groups (examples)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Attributes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White male</td>
<td>Manliness, republican citizenship, abnegation, virtue, strength, duty,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>courage, honour, industriousness, life-taking, rational, “citizen-soldiers,”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘square’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White women</td>
<td>Dependant, fragile, nurturing, “citizen-mothers,” sexual objects,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>reproduction, life-giving, soft, emotional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blacks</td>
<td>Violent, sexual, slothful, lazy, deceitful, criminal, hip, instinctive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women of colour</td>
<td>Sexual, exotic, ‘amazon’, strong, affirmative, instinctive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanics</td>
<td>Rapists, free-riders, lazy, criminal, warm-blooded, instinctive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A hallmark of conservatives or traditionalists, this alarmist political position would gain greater credence in times of crisis when the referents of American society became increasingly contested or thrown into question. As Campbell shows (1990, 1998), history demonstrates that global competition may exacerbate domestic anxieties about the body politic and that, inversely, turbulences in the field of citizenship can trigger anxieties or latent fears about imminent imperial decline. These two logics of imperial rule, foreign and domestic are never far apart. In many cases, they become completely conflated through the imperial homology instituted by the national habitus which retranslates the specific viewpoint of one position in global social space into the horizon of reference points of a particular national space. This symbolic dimension of imperial rule will make up one of the fundamental dimensions of the crisis of the American imperial society I will explore beginning in chapter 7.

Citizenship and sacrifice in the imperial society

From this section on, I endeavor to consider social relations within the American imperial society’s field of citizenship from the narrow standpoint of military sacrifice.81 I have chosen to examine the question of citizenship through the lens of military sacrifice because military service stands at the border of the fields of domestic and global politics, traditionally defined. Though military action throws us back to the highest and most ingrained meaning of “high politics” (Meade 2002), those of international relations and diplomacy, conquest and defeat, at the same time, the organization of military sacrifice lies in a society’s domestic capacity to mobilize for

81. To avoid theoretical inflation, this dissertation will remain within the scope of the debates between citizenship and sacrifice primarily represented in the literature on military sociology and the political theory on citizenship I have already presented. See my comments on this question in the conclusion of chapter 1.
war, to draw upon its resources in manpower and materials, to deploy its web of symbolic legitimacy in order to project its power into the netherworld of global international competition (see Morgenthau 1948 on this). As I will demonstrate over the course of the next few chapters, the American imperial society’s mobilization effort to prosecute the war in Iraq reveals the underlying social fissures which continue to tear at the seams of the body politic.

In the Western tradition, military sacrifice constitutes one of the fundamental political obligations, but also one of the privileges, of membership in the republican community. The citizen-soldier devotes his life to the state because its fundamental law, or constitution, and the principles on which they are founded, help him to lead a life of virtue. As Gaston Bouthoul (1991) argues, belligerent societies risk the lives of soldiers, usually their young men, in exchange for national victory and whatever ideals they espouse. In doing so, sacrifice consecrates both the republic and the lives given to her. Sacrifice is intimately linked to the citizen’s love of the state and the ideals on which it is founded (see Strauss 1989 on the spirit of the republican constitution). Wars will be deemed just or unjust insofar as they espouse or betray the spirit of these ideals. This is what Shakespeare’s King Henry the Fifth means when he says: “Now, if these men do not die well, it will be a black matter for the king that led them to it.” To die well means that sacrifice will be in harmony with the ideals of the polis. For America, this means faith in freedom, equal opportunity and social mobility. In other words, the legitimacy of military sacrifice harkens back to the shared ideals and the collective investments members of

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82. Inversely, however, if military service constitutes a civic obligation, it is often tied to benefits enjoyed in the community and likely economic advantages as we will see in the following chapters.

the imperial society has held in the national habitus and its space of symbolic representation. As Anderson & Crayton eloquently state:

With great justification Americans also think of the United States as a refuge from tyranny, where those willing to bear the burdens of work and the obligations of citizenship can share equally in the blessings of liberty. Since Americans believe themselves to be a peace-loving people, it is an article of faith that their wars have been forced upon them by those who would destroy their freedom … Americans do not fight, therefore, except to fulfill a solemn obligation to defend their own-brothers’ liberty (Anderson & Crayton 2005: xii).

The symbolic dimensions of conflicts and the religious universe they invoke are not merely derivative justifications masking the ‘real interests’ of the warring parties, they constitute warfare as a social and cultural ritual, and are instrumental in rationalizing the circumstances under which the ordinary taboos which prohibit violence and destruction are suspended (Bouthoul 1991). Indeed, chapters 8 and 9 will illustrate how the web of homologies enacted by the American national habitus establishes powerful correspondences between the war aims in Iraq, for instance, and other symbolic values in the fields of lifestyles, culture, politics, memory and ideological production. In this sense, the meaning of sacrifice is also a contest over the lifestyles and ways of being American which the conflict in Iraq must make sacred (see Girard 1972 on the sacred dimension of sacrifice).

Encapsulating a fundamental duty of the citizen-soldier, the field of military service has been structured very closely by its homologies with the different positions within the field of citizenship. Excluded from the political body throughout the greater part of the American history, African Americans were barred also from fully participating in the army, especially in peacetime. In most cases though, when Blacks did fight, they were organized in segregated units (Krebs 2006). Claire Snyder (2003) points out that Military service and civic obligation in
American republicanism converged uneasily with the tradition of citizen militias and in the right to bear arms under the Second Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. The Militia Act of 1792 “fixed the principle of a universal military obligation in the statutory law of the new government, requiring the service of every able-bodied, white, male citizen, between the ages of eighteen and forty five, in his state’s militia” (Snyder 2003: 187, emphasis added).

Because of the fear of standing armies and the spectre of dictatorship in republican thought (see chapter 2), the permanent forces of the US army have usually been kept relatively small. They comprised a minor professional force of full-time soldiers which was to be augmented in time of war by calling up reserve forces and the National Guard. As Segal and Segal (2004: 4) write:

For most of U.S. history, less than 1 percent of the population served in the military, except for brief periods when the country was at war. There were notable surges in the relative size of the force during the first half of the 19th century for the War of 1812 and the Mexican War of 1846-1848, but the annual military participation ratio (MPR)—the percentage of the total resident population serving in the active-duty military—did not approach 3 percent of the population until the U.S. Civil War in the mid-1860s. More than 1 million men, mobilized largely by militia call-ups and conscription, served under arms between 1861 and 1865. The MPR then declined again until the First World War, when almost 3 percent of the population—almost 3 million men—served. Again, mobilization involved calling up the militia, supplemented by selective conscription. The pattern of surge and decline in the size of the armed forces changed when the country mobilized for World War II. About 16 million people were brought into the armed forces in the 1940s, including more than 200,000 women. The men were largely conscripts (10.1 million); women were not subject to the draft, and all women in uniform were volunteers. The World War II armed forces represented about 12 percent of the population and included about 56 percent of the men eligible for military service on the basis of age, health, and mental aptitude.

After the Second World War, a further 1.5 million Americans were drafted into the armies that fought in the Korean peninsula (1950-1953). During the Vietnam War, conscription brought just under 2 million men into the armed forces, between 1964 and 1973 (Selective Service System).
After the war in Indochina, the Gates Commission abolished the draft and instituted today’s volunteer army.

Because of its accent on male military service, the citizen-soldier tradition in the U.S. had profound cultural ramifications for the establishment of gender roles in the United States. As adolescents donned the military uniform, thus completing “a key rite of passage into manhood” (Snyder 2003: 192). Historically speaking, the forging of the male citizen and American masculine subjectivity have been melded with training or active service in the armed forces. The duality of the sacrifice the republican government was to ask of men and women was best illustrated in a Philadelphia tract dating from the War of Independence. The Philadelphia Broadside, The sentiments of an American woman (1780) exhorted women to sacrifice the luxuries of their daily lives, anything from teas to dress and “ornaments,” so that they may give their money to the war effort. “… if the weakness of our Constitution, if opinion and manners did not forbid us to march to glory by the same paths as the Men, we should at least equal and sometimes surpass them in our love of the public good” (1780: 109). The Broadside rationalized women’s sacrifice to the republic by appealing to the sense of security they will nurture from aiding continental forces:

If I live happy in the midst of my family, if my husband cultivates his field, and reaps his harvest in peace, if, surrounded with my children, I myself nourish the youngest, and press it to my bosom, without being afraid of feeling myself separated from it, by a ferocious enemy, if the house in which we dwell, if our barns, our orchards are safe in the present time from the hands of the incendiaries, it is to you that we owe it. And shall we hesitate to evidence to you our gratitude? (1780: 110-111).

In this case, the women should sacrifice out of republican virtue, because they too profit from the peace offered by the government, even if the constitution does not recognize them equal
rights. The unequal division of labor between gender roles was legitimized within the republican shrine of virtue. Sacrifice was a republican obligation in the name of the *polis*.

The 1948 Integration Act granted women the right to serve as permanent members of the armed forces, but carefully stipulated that their participation in the armed forces should not exceed a proportion of more than two percent of all service members. US policymakers only lifted this cap in 1967 (Titunik 2000: 243). Still the gendered division of labor endured. As Feinman (2000) writes: in 1968, the U.S. District Court, Southern District of New York in *U.S. v. St. Clair* upheld the cultural dispositions that subjected respective gender roles and citizenship duties to martial service and motherhood. “In providing for involuntary service for man and voluntary service for women, *Congress followed the teachings of history that if a nation is to survive, men must provide the first line of defense while women keep the home fires burning*” (cited in Feinman 2000: 135, italics in text). The decision illustrated the cultural assumptions that structured the sexes’ respective citizenship obligations. Through the effect of the homologies, the respective positions in the field of citizenship occupied by men and women, traced corresponding positions in the field of gender roles and culture (men/courage, martial virtues, public sphere; women/nurturing, private sphere).

The appeal to gender stereotypes during military training, and boot camp with its ritual harassment of young men, further reinforced the cultural linkage between soldiering, violence, heterosexuality and manliness (Snyder 2003; see also Feinman 2000: 38-39 on debates over the place of lesbians in the army). In military academies, young cadets, male and female, marched to the misogynist cadence of verses such as: “Rape, Maim, Kill Babies. Rape, Maim, Kill Babies, Oorah! and a parody of the song “Candy man”**: “Who can take chain saw / Cut the bitch in two / Fuck the bottom half / And give the upper half to you” (cited in Feinman 2000: 123-124). During
training, Vietnam-era recruits learned the warrior ethic through the sexist badgering of their Marine Corps drill instructors: “Girls-cunts-pussies.” Thus, basic training spat on women, traditionally using them to signify “the epitome of all that is cowardly, passive, untrustworthy, unclean, and undisciplined” (cited in Snyder 2003: 192). These stereotypes were obviously central to engendering what Judith Butler (2006) calls the hegemonic “heterosexist” subjectivity in the United States.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, conservatives, antifeminists and middle-classed housewives opposed the Equal Rights Amendment because, which legislated that women might enter the armed forces and military academies on an equal footing with men. This challenged the traditional notion that “[conceived] of womanhood as a sexual class in need of protection” (Feinman 2000: 119). As the debate over the integration of women in the army progressed, conservatives argued that biological, social, or psychological barriers prohibited women from participating in military service. Gender roles and the armed services thus intertwined at the heart of citizenship rights and obligations in the United States. Feinman concludes that:

The fear of women in combat that helped the ERA to falter [in 1982] and the military academies to hesitate in admitting women (but admit them nonetheless), were all acted out on a template of what kind of citizens women, should, or could, be. These points of resistance to women’s full inclusion in United States political life have in common a fear of gender norms being disrupted, and highlight long-standing expectations of women as citizen-mothers and not as citizen-soldiers. This reaffirms the gendered division of citizenship itself, and by its very nature of exclusion suggests a hierarchy of claims to citizenship, with martial service remaining at the pinnacle (Feinman 2000: 129-130).

Women’s further integration into the armed forces during the Persian Gulf War (they now numbered 12 percent of active duty forces, or 37 000 deployed) again illustrated the gendered division of citizenship rights and obligations in the United States (Feinman 2000). The
presence of women in war zones challenged the long-entrenched notion that the army fought to defend the nation’s women and children. The absence of deployed women from their homes generated an outcry from social conservatives. These opponents of gender integration in the armed forces decried the psychological hardships that husbands and children would suffer during their mothers’ deployments. But as Ilene Feinman argues, no such argument was made concerning the months during which the war would separate military fathers from their wives and children, as this was the cultural norm (Feinman 2000: 187-188).

As of 1993, policy continued to exclude women from “those positions that involved with direct ground combat and in small amphibious vessels” (Titunik 2000: 243). It was in this same year that President Clinton approved the controversial “Don’t ask. Don’t tell” policy which was supposed to represent a compromise for the role of Gays and Lesbians in the armed forces (see Feinman 2000 and Snyder 2003; chapter 11 further analyzes contemporary developments on this question).

*The rise of neo-liberalism and the transformation of the field of citizenship*

African American segregation in the armed forces ultimately collapsed as America faced war in Korea (Segal and Verdugo 1994). From the 1930s on, as the common story goes, the rise of liberalism provided the symbolic grounds on which African Americans could voice their refusal of the exclusionary regime of republican citizenship (Krebs 2006). In 1943, the US Supreme Court ruled that American citizens could no longer be forced to salute the star spangled banner. According to political theorist Michael Sandel (1998), this marked the decisive ascendancy of liberalism over American public life. Citizens had *rights* and *choices*, not only *duties*. Significantly, Ronald Krebs argued that the Black community appealed to universal human
rights to obtain equal opportunity in military service. But republicanism would rather have suggested that they claim citizenship by defending their acts of patriotism and sacrifice in the Second World War; in short, because they had fulfilled their duty. That strategy had failed decisively after the First World War, a fact that may effectively have favored the ascendancy of more radical Black leaders such as Marcus Garvey in the Interwar period. That African Americans now claimed citizenship based on rights rather than on having fulfilled their civic duties to the state marked a decisive break with the traditional framing of citizenship and sacrifice in the US (Krebs 2006)

In America, struggles within the political field, between Blacks and Whites, liberals and conservatives, had become so acute after the 1930s that the state was forced to enact fundamental changes in how it policed mobility within the field of citizenship. Over the course of those decades, the American imperial state decisively enacted laws, executive orders and Supreme Court decisions which reversed or invalidated most of the legal obstacles that had formalized the boundaries between American citizens of different racial backgrounds. This notably happened with respect to the access of African Americans to military service. Lastly, these domestic struggles took place against the backdrop of intense inter-imperial competition in the field of global politics.

The crisis of the American imperial society of the postwar era provides a first probing terrain upon which to explore the limits of some of the claims I formulated in chapter 4 concerning the national habitus’ capacity to cement social fissures. I claimed we should expect that in situations of cross-cultural encounter between different national spaces, each party’s national habitus should take precedence over their particular class habitus and the social location

84. The second half of chapter 7 will provide a thorough theorization of social crisis. Here, I have limited myself to an empirical reconstruction of the imperial crisis which facilitated desegregation based on some secondary literature.
these occupied in the field of social classes (defined in reference to the national space of origin). Thus during the 1961-1975 Vietnam War, faced with the cataclysmic images of a Communist takeover of South Vietnam, falling dominoes, and a militarized Asian, peasant under-class overrunning the heavily mechanized American forces, Black Americans in particular should have rallied behind the Stars and Stripes with fellow White conscripts. Clearly this did not happen. Instead of forgetting their political grievances, Black soldiers and African Americans increasingly contested the war in Vietnam, explicitly restating the divides which separated Americans of different races in the field of citizenship as motive to morally and politically defect from the war effort. In fact, the national habitus operated in much the opposite way one would have expected. African Americans, American Indians, and Hispanics all occupied a dominated position within the field of citizenship in the US, which was symmetrical, or homologous, to the dominated position occupied by nations and peoples whose opinions the United States desperately had to sway if it were to morally triumph over Communism. Boxer Muhammed Ali’s famous tirade against the Vietnam War perhaps best summed up this contradiction: “I ain’t got no quarrel with the Vietcong; no Vietcong ever called me nigger.” (New York Times Apr. 30, 2000). Paradoxically, African Americans and civil rights’ activists drew on the national habitus’ common principles of vision and division to mount their political contest against the Vietnam War. They appealed to “freedom,” the political value which held most credence in the domestic political field. This illustrates that even when the national habitus fails to rally all citizens to a common cause against an alleged enemy, political opponents nonetheless will rally to a common understanding of the political and moral values which must prevail in the conflict.

Global imperialist objectives in the field of global politics collided with domestic challenges of imperial rule in the field of citizenship. This means that a conflict between the
imperial society’s logic of external competition and its internal regime of citizenship catalyzed the change in the symbolic conventions that regulated military sacrifice. Importantly, the civil rights revolution coincided with, and was reinforced by, America’s political and ideological competition: first, against the “Nazi imperial society” (Charle 2001), then against the Soviet Union in the Cold War. Both of these rival imperial societies bore radically different national habituses from the US, and were equally set on achieving global hegemony. The first of these was premised on institutionalized, exterminatory racism, while the second advanced the egalitarian ideal of a classless society founded on collective property. Black civil rights activists linked their struggle in the domestic fields of politics and citizenship to the global field of political and symbolic competition where the United States clashed with the Soviet Union. African American and other civil rights activists pointed to the hypocrisy of persistent segregation in the South, within a country that characterized itself as a beacon of freedom in the struggle against communism. “[Civil] rights activists regularly noted that racial discrimination hampered U.S. foreign policy by impeding U.S. efforts to win the hearts and minds of “colored peoples” the world over” (Krebs 2006: 159). In effect, civil rights activists argued that an abyss separated the perceived American national habitus and the reality of exclusion from the political landscape in the United States. This meant that the schemes through which US leaders and citizens perceived their position in the field of global politics, framed their identity and voiced their claims – in other words, the national habitus - were dramatically maladapted to the changing exigencies of the domestic and international fields of politics, culture and citizenship. The symbolic and political battle created tremendous pressure for America to reform its exclusionary citizenship regime. If the United States were to remain a viable contender for the dominant position in the field of global politics, the structure of its political and social system
had to be reforged with the ideals with which they challenged the Nazi dystopia, and the Soviet
Union’s messianic ideology. In effect, this gap between ideals and reality created powerful
symbolic contradictions that the rival Soviet Union also exploited. The American imperial
society’s inward logic of rule collided with its logic of global political competition, and civil
rights activists were able to exploit this crisis and push for the liberalization of America’s
republican regime of imperial citizenship.  

Inter-imperial competition and the global field of ideological production

In Europe, as well as in America, inter-imperial competition also significantly shaped the
confines of the Cold War intellectual and cultural fields. Intellectuals of the Mont Pelerin
Society and later, the Chicago School, amassed intellectual and political capital by advancing
theories that explicitly linked freedom to economic deregulation (see Foucault 2004; Cowen
2006). Postwar Ordoliberal and neo-liberal thought explicitly defined themselves against those
aberrant regimes they named “totalitarian” (Foucault 2004). Friedrich Hayek (2002), for one,
wrote that both Soviet and Nazi totalitarianism shared common roots in socialism and planned
war economies. As Foucault explains, these postwar theorists believed that states followed an
internal drive to expand until they would swallow “civil society” as a whole; to such a degree
that the welfare state would naturally grow into a totalitarian cancer if left to its own devices.

85 However, inter-imperial competition with the Soviet Union also perverted the efforts of Black and other civil
rights activists at provoking societal change in the US. Too radical a program of reform, change or revolution
opened the way for their opponents to charge them with subversion, anti-Americanism and label them as Communists (Krebs 2006).
88 ORDO is the name of the German journal in which the doctrinal components of German “neo-liberal
governmentality” were sketched out. See Foucault (2004).
Thus, they believed, only a thin red line separated “social security” from the “concentration camps” (Foucault 2004: 193). So at the heart of postwar liberalism lay a fundamental critique of the rival imperial society’s national habitus. The dominant polarities within the field of ideological production, liberal and socialist, simply emulated, and retranslated in their own language, the oppositions between the Soviet Union and the United States within the field of global politics.

Michel Foucault argues that the American neo-liberal theorists of the Chicago school dramatically extended the use of the economic analogy of supply and demand to social issues which had hitherto been left outside of the realm of commoditization (Lemke 2001; Foucault 2004). Neoclassical economics argued that governments and markets fundamentally clashed and called for a striking reduction of what it termed arbitrary state influence in society (Willes 1981). Neo-liberalism increasingly encouraged individuals to envisage their own life choices in entrepreneurial terms, as “costs and benefits” analysis (Lemke 2001: 201). This also meant that their shoulders alone would bear the weight of these decisions. As a global vision of how society should operate, neo-liberalism had dramatic implications for the symbolic ordering of the relationship between citizens, states and their respective rights and obligations to each other. Not least of these was the manner in which military sacrifice would now be distributed across the field of citizenship and how it must be legitimized. The Gates Commission abolished conscription in 1973, and the all-volunteer army replaced the citizen army of old. From this moment on, military service became a career choice. The US armed forces would compete with other economic actors, businesses and firms to procure the labor force needed to fill its ranks (Moskos 2000). Military sacrifice was no longer a compulsory, patriotic duty. The soldier became an entrepreneur and sold his labor force on the open market, like other workers. In this
liberal sense, the distribution of sacrifice in American society would simply reflect the *supply and demand* for sacrifice and would conform to the specialization of labor inherent in any capitalist society. In Deborah Cowen’s words:

> … often overlooked in accounts of the shift to the All-Volunteer Force (AVF) is the powerful role that post-Keynesian economists and political-economic rationalities played in providing a new model of citizenship and voluntary service. The anti-authoritarianism of protesters found curious common ground with the anti-statism of the neoliberals. Early American neoliberal theorists framed the draft as an infringement on freedom in the 1960s, and attacked it with a vengeance. Through their work on conscription the neoliberals revisited and reworked a central and unresolved tension in the work of the classic liberal theorists: the relationship between individual freedom and the state. Conscription was, in fact, one of the earliest and most important problems through which the economists of the Chicago school and more populist libertarians practiced and defined neoliberal notions of freedom and models of political belonging. It was also a critical problem through which American neoliberals came to distinguish themselves from both contemporary alternatives and classic liberal thinkers (Cowen 2006: 169).

The liberalization of the regime of military sacrifice posed new and unforeseen problems for African Americans and for the regime of imperial citizenship. It is well known that civilian leaders during the Vietnam War reorganized the selective service pool around a liberal economy of sacrifice that disproportionately targeted the lower classes\(^89\) and thus, African Americans.\(^90\) It should be remembered that the republican political economy of sacrifice had led to Blacks being largely *under*represented, when not altogether excluded from the US army. Liberalization of the political economies of sacrifice and citizenship now meant that the draft would target soldiers by *socioeconomic* rather than *racial* characteristics (at least explicitly). This now led to African Americans being *over*represented in the Vietnam era army insofar as lower socioeconomic status

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\(^{89}\) For instance, Americans from “low-income” backgrounds were 40 percent more likely to be drafted in the armed forces. Of these, 15 percent were likely to see combat in Vietnam. For Americans of “high-income” backgrounds, the likelihood of military service stood at 24 percent, and the propensity to combat at 7 percent. See Lawrence M. Baskir and William A. Strauss (1978: 9).

\(^{90}\) Adrian Lewis (2007); D. Segal and M. Segal (2004); Baskir and Strauss (1978).
and poverty followed strong racial lines, because of the homologies between the field of citizenship and the field of social classes (Segal and Segal 2004; Gifford 2005). In 1965 and 1966, African Americans were killed at a rate twice as high as their proportion in the American population as a whole (Segal and Segal 2004: 19). As this slaughter took place against the backdrop of the civil rights movement, it quickly polarized the political field. Popular outcry was dramatic. The Pentagon reacted swiftly to curb the racialization of military sacrifice by relegating Blacks into positions where they would not be as vulnerable to enemy fire. This policy had the effect of cutting African American casualties down to “about 12 percent,” a proportion that better reflected “their share of the total U.S. population” (Segal and Segal 2004: 19).

Yet the institution of the all-volunteer force in 1973 has only reinforced many of the inequalities of racial and socioeconomic status it was supposed to correct (Feinman 2000; Moskos 2005). First, the horizon of possibilities and thus, the specific habituses of dominant and dominated groups in American society, largely determined whether they would consider service in the armed forces. Most affluent citizens could avoid military service. For one, neither political obligation nor legal requirement constrained them to fight (Moskos 2005). And their respective pools of cultural, economic and social capital opened a wider horizon of life choices and professional strategies than dominated groups who could not count on the same assets. Put short, one’s place in social space, or rather in the field of social classes, simply reproduced in economic and educational terms the boundaries that separated different castes of Americans within the field of citizenship. So each class’ modal trajectory, and more specifically each race’s

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91. Also the dramatic fall over the decades following the Vietnam War in members of the House of Representatives who are veterans would tend to reinforce this hypothesis. See Morgan (Summer 2001: 101).
92. As Segal and Segal explain: “Hispanics are more likely than blacks to be in combat specialties, and less likely than blacks to be in administrative or supply occupations … Hispanic officers in the Army, Navy, and Marine Corps are more likely than either white or black officers to be at the lowest officer grades.” See Segal and Segal (2004: 23). Also see Gifford (2005).
propensity to military service, was structured by their respective places in the field of citizenship and the specific obstacles this placed in their way. Deborah Cowen probingly summarizes the relationship between dislocations in the labor market, the institution of the all-volunteer force and the reconfiguration of citizenship:

The termination of conscription was furthermore a key element of the neoliberal project to reconstruct national citizenship … the AVF was a central element of the dismantling of ‘universalism’ in the realm of social policy, the introduction of workfare, the militarization of social welfare, and the reintroduction of notions of a deserving and undeserving poor. Gradually the military became an employer of last resort for the middle classes, although it continued to be a great source of upward mobility for working class Americans. The AVF also facilitated a dramatic social and geographical polarization of citizenship. With a market model of service and sacrifice, the US military became home to the poor and patriotic from the very places that were subject to the worst of economic restructuring and high unemployment. Social location was implicated alongside geographic location; with the AVF the numbers of women, people of colour, and working class people in the military soared (2007: 25).

As African Americans continued to face racial discrimination and bleak job prospects in civilian life, they enlisted in the all-volunteer army in disproportionately high numbers because their comparative real-life work and educational opportunities seemed much lower (Segal and Verdugo 1994; Segal and Segal 2004; and Moskos 2005). Fearing a new round of popular outcry, between 1980 and 1990, the Pentagon “deliberately” adopted recruitment policies that turned African Americans away from combat units and placed them into support roles (Segal and Segal 2004: 21-22). As a consequence, “the concentration of black soldiers in both [the 82nd and 101st airborne] divisions, and in their constituent combat elements, dropped dramatically during this period. This pattern was repeated throughout the army” (Segal and Verdugo: 628).

As I will show in the next chapter, these affirmative-action policies on military sacrifice account for much lower African American casualties in the Post-Vietnam army, and in Iraq
specifically, than their numbers in active forces would suggest. They equally account for why the American media has been largely silent on the sacrifice of racial minorities in the Iraq War.

**Conclusion**

In closing, it is important to nuance the historical narrative I have just presented in two major ways. Despite what I have shown, despite the distinction between the liberal and republican visions of military service, the two overlap significantly. Indeed, the notion of *volunteerism* is not an invention of liberal philosophy. The republican militias of the colonies, revolutionary war and early republic idealized citizen-soldiers who were also volunteers. One remembers, as I argued earlier, that classical republican thought envisaged a society divided into classes of *talent*. Plato argued that the Republic would be best defended by volunteer soldiers who possessed the especially rare and uncanny republican virtues of courage and *self-sacrifice* for the public good (Titunik 2000). Like many elements of liberal political theory, the idea of a *volunteer army* is not a modern invention. And in fact, the liberal vision of military sacrifice as *choice* significantly draws on the symbolic universe of the classical republican vision of volunteerism as *talent*, especially the recruiting advertisements of the Marine Corps (chapters 6 and 11). In this sense, the republican vision of an innate talent carries over relatively unchanged into the liberal idea of an individual *preference* for certain occupations. Thus the classical republican vision of volunteerism certainly goes a long way in clarifying the genesis of what I will call the *vocational* narrative of military service in chapter 9. And so it is important for the reader to bear in mind throughout the remainder of this dissertation, that republican and liberal ideologies overlap much more than my analysis may let on (see also my conclusions in chapter 11 on this point).
I must make another fundamental precision. The all-volunteer army has not completely dismantled the apparatus and armature of universal (male) military service. After being suspended in the years following American defeat in Vietnam, the compulsory registration of young men with the Selective Service System was reinstated in 1980.93 Presently, “[a]lmost all male U.S. citizens, and male aliens living in the U.S., who are 18 through 25, are required to register with Selective Service.”94 This means that over 95 percent of American men of age to be mobilized are presently registered with the Selective Service System. In effect, nearly 15 million male Americans could be called to military service if Congress so chose (see chapter 10 on the legal authorities for mobilization). Women remain exempt from registration, an exception upheld in 1981 by the US Supreme Court in Rostker v. Goldberg.95 No draft has been called since the Vietnam War. But the Selective Service System remains in place to augment the volunteer army in case of crisis. However, as I will show in chapters 8, 9 and especially chapter 10, an increasing number of political observers, service members and their relatives ask whether the mobilization policies presently in effect are not in fact a form of disguised draft disproportionately targeting reservists and National Guardsmen. So again, just as above, it is important to nuance the narrative I presented in this chapter which attempted to sketch out general transformations in American society and reflected a general scholarly consensus. It does not mean that the social mutations are as clean as I alleged. This must also be kept in mind.

This detailed overview of the relationship between military service and sacrifice goes to show that the distribution of sacrifice across the American imperial society has historically espoused the space of positions defined in the fields of citizenship, politics and culture. Domated minorities (and majorities) within the field of citizenship such as Blacks and Women

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were simultaneously cast to the edges of the field of military sacrifice. In the field of cultural relations, where norms and qualities attributed to men predominated over those ascribed to women, so too did the relationships between the dominant and dominated poles follow the relations of subordination and hierarchy defined in the fields of citizenship and gender roles. The imperial form of society, and its exclusionary regime of citizenship, generated, through the effect of the homologies with other fields, the fault lines and divisions along which the US mobilized for war. It also determined, however, the fault lines of the social and political conflicts which would ensue through the desire for access to military service, the desire to obtain citizenship in recognition of military service, and increasingly the resentment of those soldiers and families who disproportionately bore alone the brunt of the US’ imperial ambitions - as I will discuss in later chapters on the experience of the war in Iraq.

Chapter 6 will provide a detailed sociological insight into the demographics of the armed forces today and a composite picture of several classes of wartime recruits. It will contest the Heritage Foundation’s interpretation that the wartime active duty forces do not recruit from disadvantaged segments of society. I will also provide information on the casualties suffered by each racial group in the war in Iraq. Finally, I will challenge the notion of a volunteer army and begin arguing that recruitment patterns correspond to a disguised form of social (self-)selection for sacrifice. Chapter 7 will deepen the bourdieusian theory of fields and present a preliminary definition of ‘crisis’ to prepare for the discussions in chapters 8, 9, 10 and 11.
Chapter 6 - Social Class and the Propensity to Military Service.

The second issue seems more serious since it challenges the assumption that the obligation to die would be justified in a volunteer army because those who sign up freely chose to do so. What if this free choice is not really free? What about those who sign up because otherwise they cannot afford university, or because it is a way to stay out of jail or a way to secure food, clothing and shelter? The volunteer army argument might work if there is a level playing field among those who have the option to volunteer.


Together chapters 3, 4 and 5 presented the analytical core of this dissertation. While Chapter 3 showcased detailed notes on the sociology of social classes, chapter 5 provided a historical overview of the relationships between citizenship and military sacrifice in the American imperial society. Chronologically, this chapter picks up where the last one left off. It begins with a critique of two recent studies produced by the Heritage Foundation on the quality of wartime recruits, and argues, contra the documents cited, that the sociology of the military reveals a clear portrait of racial and class propensity to military service. Indeed, I would argue that though the Heritage Foundation is correct to suggest that military recruits do not originate from the most disadvantaged segments of society (those dominated in all respects), drawing on established scholarship and military manpower documents, I do make the case that in general, enlisted servicemembers hail from the class fraction directly above these undesirables. In other words, once manpower policies and educational quotas are taken into account, recruits (again, in general) correspond to the lowest social strata of American society eligible for service. Following this, I would argue that the notion of a volunteer army masks the real unequal market processes which select individuals and groups from the dominant fractions of the dominated classes for service. I argue that voluntary sacrifice is nothing but the rationalization of a more
insidious form of *social selection* for military service that the soldiers are themselves often complicit in obfuscating.

**Recruiting the active duty forces**

*Economic capital, cultural capital and military service*

The Heritage Foundation\(^\text{96}\) has recently conducted two extensive studies of the social origins of military recruits for the years 1999 and 2003, and later for the 2003-2005 cohorts. The author concluded he had made a strong case against the argument that the all-volunteer army relies exclusively on uneducated, poor, and racial minority enlistees (Kane 2005 and 2006):

In summary, the additional years of recruit data (2004–2005) support the [Heritage Foundation’s] previous finding that U.S. military recruits are more similar than dissimilar to the American youth population. The slight differences are that wartime U.S. military enlistees are better educated, wealthier, and more rural on average than their civilian peers. Recruits have a higher percentage of high school graduates and representation from Southern and rural areas. No evidence indicates exploitation of racial minorities (either by race or by race-weighted ZIP code areas). Finally, the distribution of household income of recruits is noticeably higher than that of the entire youth population … Demographic evidence discredits the argument that a draft is necessary to enforce representation from racial and socioeconomic groups … Our analysis using Pentagon data on wartime volunteers effectively shatters the case for reinstating the draft. (Kane 2006: 2).

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\(^{96}\) These two studies were influential and cited by scholarly works (i.e. Baron 2010) as evidence that the US armed forces were not an army of the poor. Furthermore, the Heritage Foundation is one of the most influential think tanks in the United States according to the journal *Foreign Policy* (McGann 2009).
The Heritage Foundation’s studies are misleading, however. At the very least, they found some conclusions on unreliable (though established) units of measurement that mask obvious social disparities within the target populations. Worse, they present an excessively optimistic reading of the data, often only highlighting those trends that reinforce their case. Finally, the Heritage Foundation presents long established facts as revelations and ultimately distorts their meaning because it fails to contextualize their findings both in a historical perspective and within the immense body of scholarship on military sociology. For instance, it is widely known that the army’s aptitude requirements and educational requirements (enlistees must possess high school education)\(^97\) effectively exclude the lowest class fractions from service\(^98\) (Moskos & Butler 1997). These manpower policies account for two important statistical trends within the army’s demographics. First, at 98 percent, the proportion of 1999 recruits who have completed high school education stands almost 20 percent higher than in the civilian population aged 18-24, whose average stands at 80% (Kane 2005: 7, note 5). The second point is intimately tied to the first. As a rule, individuals who possess larger assets in cultural capital (in the form of formal education) enjoy greater economic welfare. According to Census data, “Average earnings [in 2000] ranged from $18,900 for high school dropouts to $25,900 for high school graduates,\(^{97,98}\)

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\(^{97}\) “Almost all recruits are high school graduates—high school dropouts are essentially excluded from the military” (Segal & Segal 2004: 8).

\(^{98}\) US Census Bureau statistics for the year 1999 show that regions with high poverty rates are proportionally correlated with areas where larger segments of the population hold less than a high school diploma. This correlation is linear and gradual. The correlation between areas of high poverty and unemployment rates shows a similar pattern, suggesting that poverty and unemployment are most rampant in areas where large sections of the population hold less than a high school diploma. “Of the 131.8 million people who lived in tracts with poverty rates less than 12.4 percent (Category I), 27.5 percent had graduated from college or had more education. The corresponding proportions for tracts in categories II, III, and IV were 15.4 percent, 11.6 percent, and 8.6 percent, respectively. In contrast, of the 5.6 million people who lived in tracts with poverty rates of 40 percent or more (Category IV), 37.9 percent had not completed a high school education, higher than the proportions for the tracts in Categories III, II, and I, whose proportions were 35.5 percent, 25.9 percent, and 14.3 percent, respectively.”

$45,400 for college graduates, and $99,300 for workers with professional degrees (M.D., J.D., D.D.S., or D.V.M)” (See Table 6.1; reproduced from the US Census Bureau July 2002).
The relationship between education and earnings thus makes sense of the Heritage Foundation’s 2005 observation “that [the] largest percentage cohort of 1999 recruits (17.8 percent) came from neighborhoods with average household incomes of $35,000 to $40,000. Very few recruits—less than 5 percent—came from neighborhoods with average incomes below $20,000 per household.” (Kane 2005: 4). The Census data from Table 6.1 shows that the $20,000 threshold corresponds precisely to the income class to which high school dropouts can expect to belong. Thus, as a result of the homologies between the cultural field and the economic field the military’s educational requirements are likely to exclude most applicants from the lowest class fraction of society. However, the household median income quintiles employed in the study data – each of which comprises 20 percent of the total population - also mask large disparities within each of the brackets (see Table 6.2). These gaps are especially pronounced in the lower and higher salary classes employed to define the quintiles. The first bracket covers household incomes ranging anywhere from $0 to $29,375, while the next three quintiles respectively cover

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99. All other tables in the chapter are reproduced from Kane (2005 and 2006).
neighborhoods with household incomes of $29,382 to $35,462; $35,462 to $41,685; and $41,688 to $52,068. Together, these three middle quintiles effectively cover income differences of some $20,000, a third less than the first quintile alone. At the other end of the spectrum, the fifth and highest quintile comprises neighborhoods with median household incomes ranging from $52,000 to $200,000. This gap of $150,000 between the lowest and highest incomes within the bracket masks financial disparities between the households three times more important than all the four other quintiles combined ($0 to $52,000). The size of income disparities included within each of the lowest and highest quintile will then assuredly lead to a distorted portrait of the real social classes. For instance, while 18.6 percent of the 1999 recruits enlisted out of this fifth income bracket, keeping closely enough with its proportion of the population aged 18 to 24 (at 20 percent), the width of the income disparities within this bracket gives us no sense whatsoever of the actual distribution of the recruits between the poorer and the wealthiest households within the quintile (see Kane 2005: 5). Kane notes this problem, but fails to draw the conclusions he should.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household Income of U.S. Military Recruits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$0-$29,375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$29,382-$35,462</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$35,463-$41,685</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$41,688-$52,068</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$52,071-$200,001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 6.2, reproduced from Kane (2006: 4)
Thus by comparing the data he obtained for all the recruit cohorts, Kane concludes that the poorest neighborhoods have decreased their share of enlistees while the richest neighborhoods have increased theirs:

With the addition of data for the 2004 and 2005 recruits, the quintile trends noted in the previous report are even more striking [see table 6.3]. From 2003 to 2005, the representation of the highest income quintile rose 0.68 percentage point, from 22.17 percent to 22.85 percent. As conflict in Iraq continues, youth from wealthy areas continue to volunteer for duty despite increased risk. Additionally, over the course of these three recruit years, representation from the poorest quintile has decreased dramatically. The representation among recruits of the lowest-income quintile fell nearly a full percentage point, from 14.61 percent in 2003 to 13.66 percent in 2005 (Kane 2006: 3).

While the army’s education requirements explain why the lowest income brackets are all but excluded from service, Table 6.3 does show quite clearly that the first upward spike in the percentage of recruits per income branch takes place at the poverty threshold, somewhere in the area of $17,000 of annual income.

Table 6.3., cited in and reproduced from Kane (2005 : 6)
In effect, those households situated between the poverty line and immediately below the national median income of $US 41,994 provided the most recruits in 1999. The percentage of recruits then dropped significantly at the national median level and higher, of household income. Likewise, both the 2005 and 2006 studies’ “chart 2” and “chart 1” (see Table 6.4 overleaf) clearly suggest that most recruits from the fifth quintile in fact came from households at the lower end of the income bracket, thus nearer to $50,000. Both charts then show a constant and gradual drop in the number of recruits as one moves to the $100,000 level. This is to say the units of measurement and comparison -the income brackets in this case - mask the obvious disparities within each social class (expressed as quintile) output of recruits. They lead Kane to make misleading generalizations that the wealthiest areas are contributing more troops, while masking, at the same time, the obvious – and more telling - gap between the number of recruits that originated from the lower and higher ends of the quintile. This is also true of the lowest quintile where recruits originated from the wealthier households for reasons we have already stated.
This said, the statistical variations Kane observes over time in the economic capital of the recruits cannot be explained easily or straightforwardly, but I can begin to offer some answers. One must first understand the incentives that motivate soldiers to enlist. Passing judgment solely on the demographic evidence and the material conditions of life, the soldiers who bear the burden of the war in Iraq seek first and foremost for social mobility: “Recruits in the all-volunteer army are primary high-school graduates from working-class families … Today’s enlistees are economic recruits looking for educational benefits for college, a salary, a skill, and a veteran background to help them get jobs” (Tripp 2008: xvii; see also Cowen 2006 and 2007). Recruitment advertisements target all of these motivations prominently. In 2007, under the Montgomery GI Bill, soldiers could receive just under $40,000 for university and college tuition; living expenses would also be covered for three years, in exchange for an equal amount of service in active duty. Joining the army can warrant a signup bonus as high as $20,000: “Up
to [US] $70,000 for College ... Up to 100% Tuition Assistance.” (cited in Tripp 2008: xvii). The Navy, Marines and Air Force branches of the armed forces offer similar incentives (see Tripp 2008: xviii). More importantly perhaps, the Armed forces pay out vast sums of money to fill its ranks. “According to a USA Today investigation into military recruitment, the ‘Pentagon is using cash bonuses on an unprecedented scale to try to boost re-enlistments, recruiting and morale among active duty and reservist troops,’” some as high as $150,000 (Duggan & Korb 2007: 468, see also chapter 10).

The increased sizes of these payoffs combined with the prospect of educational compensation can explain why Americans from higher income brackets could come to see military service as a more attractive option than they formerly did. However, it is difficult to adequately explain the slight erosion of recruit numbers from the lowest end of the income pyramid except by suggesting that the increased incentives may have drawn recruits of higher social origin, thus curtailing the army’s need to rely somewhat on enlistments from the lowest quintile. Regardless, the evidence contradicts Kane’s understanding that the newest recruits are of “better quality.”

Where cultural capital stands as a proof of social class, Kane’s optimistic reading of the educational achievements of the recruits in comparison to those of the target population in civil society is probably most misleading. While his appraisal “that recruits are often better educated than the general population” (Kane 2005: 9) underscores a laudable achievement, it comes as no surprise once we know that the army near categorically excludes enlistees without a high school diploma. Kane does show that the educational level of the recruits modestly progressed from 1999 to 2004, before declining again the following year (Kane 2006: 6, Table 2). Though recruits scored higher on the Armed Forces Qualifying Test in 2003 and 2004, this number again

100. As of 2009, the New York Times reported that increased financial incentives coupled with the social and economic dislocations provoked by the financial meltdown the preceding fall has enabled the armed forces to meet and even exceed their targets for recruitment contrary to the trends of the preceding years (January 18, 2009).
dropped in 2005. Significantly, however, the number of recruits scoring in the lowest test category (IV) effectively quadrupled from 2003 to 2005, as “Congress accepted a revised policy [that would allow up to 4 percent of recruits to score in this category] to allow for flexibility in the current recruiting market” (Kane 2006: 6). As of 2007, the number of new recruits who had completed their high school education had fallen 11 percent to just under 80 percent from the Department of Defense’s instruction that 90 percent of recruits possess a diploma (COTNGAR 2008: 10).

Kane’s appraisal loses even more of its gloss once one compares the average educational achievements of recruits to a slightly different standard. Military personnel data for Fiscal Year 2005 shows that 89.62 percent of active duty enlistees in the Army belonged to the lowest of the three educational tiers the armed forces employ for measurement.¹⁰¹

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¹⁰¹. Defense Manpower Data Center (DMDC 2005).
Indeed, enlistment patterns based on the recruits’ shares of cultural capital draw a much sharper portrait of the patterns we just observed with their assets of economic capital - expressed as median household income. Take the 2005 study’s chart showing the distribution of 1999 recruits according to their level of education (Table 6.5). The proportion of recruits spikes at the “high school graduates” category then drops just as spectacularly. This shows that citizens are extremely unlikely to enlist if they hold more cultural capital than high school education. To highlight this point, an earlier, though monumental, study of the relationship between propensity to military service and enlistment for multiple senior-year high school cohorts found that:

… those expecting definitely to complete college show the lowest rates of propensity and enlistment, and those expecting not to get a college degree show the highest rates (Bachman et al. 2000: 17) … The lower an individual’s high school grade average, the more likely he or she is inclined toward military service (Bachman et all 2000: 18).

Though more enlistees may hold high school diplomas than their counterparts in the civilian population, it hardly marks an entry-point into the professional middle-class. As Ehrenreich (1989) and Beeghley (2005) note, undergraduate university education and increasingly Master’s degrees open the door to the middle-class and ensure its social reproduction. Potential enlistees who do hold diplomas or have college aspirations are more likely to find themselves drawn to the officer corps (Kane 2006) and thus to positions of leadership. In 2004, nine out of ten newly recruited officers could claim the equivalency of an undergraduate diploma or higher. In stark contrast to this, less than one in ten active duty recruits between 2003 and 2005 had

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102. “[The professional middle-class] can be defined, somewhat abstractly, as all those people whose economic and social status is based on education, rather than on the ownership of capital or property. Most professionals are included, and so are white-collar managers, whose positions require at least a college degree, and increasingly also a graduate degree. [It] includes such diverse types as school-teachers, anchorpersons, engineers, professors, government bureaucrats, corporate executives (at least up through the middle levels of management), scientists, advertising people, therapists, financial managers, architects” (Ehrenreich 1989:12).
“some college experience” (11 percent of recruits in 2004) (Kane 2006: 5-6). One way of looking at this disparity is to say that the sizable gulf of cultural capital between enlisted men and the officer class only *retranslates and formalizes into the military hierarchy the preexisting civilian class difference* separating the recruits who possess a high school diploma and those with college education, aspirations or aptitudes (see Segal & Segal 2004: 8). In effect, this caste system within the army has most obviously manifested itself through the very different contributions in blood that different segments of the armed forces have made to the war in Iraq. As of the fall of 2007, just one in ten American casualties in Iraq came from the ranks of commissioned officers. This number increased as we descend down the ranks. One in three casualties (32 percent) came from the huge body of the armed forces’ non-commissioned officers or NCOs. But enlisted men and women paid the highest price and accounted for near 60 percent of those who made the ultimate sacrifice (Tripp 2008: ix, citing a statistic from the Brookings Institute). It is suggestive in this sense as well then that even after the initial process of (self-)selection for service in the armed forces, class differences, to the degree that I have outlined how they carry over from civilian society to the military hierarchy, ultimately determine the likelihood of combat fatalities. This is because soldiers of all ranks are not equally exposed to enemy fire and the violence of the conflict.

**Race, geography and military service**

The impact that the racial origin of potential recruits plays on propensity to service, however, if historically clear, is the most complex to assess currently, as patterns seem to have undergone important changes over the last decade. The 2005 Heritage Foundation’s study demonstrated that the military had not recruited its 1999 and 2003 cohorts from ethnic ghettos. Its 2006 follow-up
positively noted that “in the past two years of military recruits, the proportion of blacks in the military approached the proportion of blacks in the population” (Kane 2006: 7). This ‘spin’ on the evidence disguises a number of social realities. First, it fails to mention that all the other data on racial minorities in the American military show that Blacks have always been disproportionately represented as a whole and especially in the lower enlisted and non-commissioned officer ranks (Segal & Verdugo 1994; Moskos & Butler 1997; Feinman 2000; Segal & Segal 2004). But more importantly, debates about the over-representation of Blacks and Hispanics in the military tend to mask the most salient racial inequalities of all. Though in the absolute Pacific Islanders only make up a small fraction of both the armed forces and the US population, there are almost 650 percent more Pacific Islanders serving in the military than there are in the US Population. This makes them the ethnic minority most over-represented in the services (Kane 2005 and 2006). American Indians trail them immediately, as they are proportionally twice as numerous in the army as they are in the civilian population (Kane 2006: 8). In stark contrast, Asians comprise the group most under-represented as a whole. But because these minorities weigh far less in the US population than Blacks and Hispanics, they tend to pass under the radar in discussions about racial sacrifice in the military. Sadly, I offer no more remedy to this shortcoming than studies conducted by my peers, but it should be followed as an important future avenue of research.

African Americans have historically joined the all-volunteer army in tremendous numbers. “In 2002, blacks\textsuperscript{103} made up about 22 percent of enlisted personnel in the armed forces

\textsuperscript{103}“Blacks are underrepresented in the officer ranks compared with their share of enlisted personnel or the civilian labor force ... Black officers are more likely than whites to be in the lowest officer ranks (Army second lieutenant to captain and their equivalents in the other services); this racial gap is especially pronounced among Naval officers (see Table 4, page 22). Black officers are also less likely than white officers to be in career-enhancing tactical operation specialties (25 percent versus 39 percent in fiscal year 2002), and more likely to be in administration,
… while blacks made up 13 percent of civilians ages 18 to 44)” (Segal & Segal 2004: 20). So for Kane to note that the number of 2004 and 2005 African American recruits came into line with their ratio of the civilian population was nothing but a euphemized way of saying that the number of Black recruits has in fact plummeted a striking “58 percent from 2000 to 2007.” (Denvir, Jan. 15, 2009). Deborah Dickerson further confirms that Black enlistment has begun to drop since the end of the 1990s (in Cowen 2007: 27).

To explain these trends, I must first recast them in their historical context. As African Americans continued to face racial discrimination and bleak job prospects in civilian life until recently, they enlisted in the all-volunteer army in disproportionately high numbers because their comparative real-life work and educational opportunities seemed much lower (Segal & Verdugo 1994; Segal & Segal 2004; Gifford 2005). Indeed, African American men and women find more equitable employment opportunities in the military than they do in civilian life, and generally experience higher job satisfaction than their counterparts do in the civilian labor market (Moskos & Butler 1997). For instance “[two] black women majors in the Air Force observed that: “‘It doesn’t take a rocket scientist to figure out that a black woman is not going to get the kind of responsibility’ that these military women have in the civilian world” (Titunik 2000: 245).

If Blacks are over-represented in the military it is only because military manpower policies draw them away from combat positions that the highest number of casualties of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan has not come from their ranks (see chapter 5). In all likelihood, this policy achieved its intended effect and attenuated the probability that African Americans’ disproportionate representation in the military would translate into an equally high and unacceptable number of Black fatalities. Military sociologist Brian Gifford (2005) finds that the supply, procurement, and allied occupations (26 percent versus 14 percent for white officers).” (Segal & Segal 2004: 20).
mortality rate amongst black soldiers falls short or matches their weight in the army overall, and this has been the case of all minorities (though with one dramatic exception, that of Hispanics, to which I will return).

Now let us return to the striking drop of Black recruits since the year 2000. Bourdieu (1979) argues that significant groups of individuals will only deviate from their class trajectory in the event of salient social disruptions such as wars or economic crises. In effect, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan seem to have exerted precisely this consequence on African Americans’ dispositions to military service. By the time 2,000 soldiers had been killed in Iraq (in the fall of 2005), The New York Times reported that Black enlistments were dwindling (Oct. 26, 2005). African-Americans opposed the war not only in majorities upward of 70 percent but at almost double the proportion of White Americans. For instance, an African-American outreach worker asserted that life on the streets of Baltimore was already a tough enough fight for Blacks to then consider joining the military (New York Times, Aug 22, 2007). “Nevermind the war,” a young African American exclaimed: “I’m not really into going overseas with guns and fighting other people’s wars” (Ibid). “President Bush should have taken care of the needs of his own people before going across the ocean to take care of someone else,” says the grieving mother of a black serviceman killed in Iraq (New York Times, Oct. 26, 2005). These comments not only suggest that Blacks are not sold on the war in Iraq, but that their individual and collective interests may conflict with the war aims in Iraq.

Though I can only speculate about the causes of the drop in Black recruits, they could nonetheless have significant consequences for the all-volunteer army over time; for it has been argued that the military could not meet its recruitment goals were it not for the vast pool of black enlistees on which it could traditionally count (Segal & Verdugo 1994; Segal & Segal 2004). It is
as yet unclear if this is one of the reasons why the Pentagon has had both to relax its recruitment policies to include individuals that the military would have formerly rejected, and also extend larger bonuses to target civilians from class fractions above those which traditionally contribute soldiers (see chapter 10).

Hispanics show a profile different from Blacks altogether. At first glance, they are under-represented in the military as a whole. At 11 percent of active duty forces (Amaya 2007: 18), they fall short of their weight in the US population aged 18-44 (16, 66 percent) (Defense Manpower Data Center - DMDC 2005: Table B-24). However, they are over-represented in the all-volunteer force when we consider the number of Hispanics actually eligible for service, as only 9.6 percent of “Latinos” hold “the educational and legal credentials to enlist (only citizen and green-card holders with high school can serve)” (Amaya 2007: 18). Now consider that they are more numerous in the Marine Corps (13.6 percent, Amaya 2007: 18) than in any other service and that they are assigned a much higher proportion of combat positions than Blacks¹⁰⁴ (Segal & Segal 2004). Hispanics effectively account for “17, 7 percent of all personnel that handles weapons” (Amaya 2007: 180). Sadly, Hispanics’ concentration in weapon duties has had foreseeable consequences for their service in Iraq. Combat-intensive phases of the war, such as the battle of Baghdad and the siege of Fallujah in the spring of 2004 claimed their lives in disproportionate numbers. Hispanic deaths (they made up 15.9 percent of military deaths in Iraq) surpass by 5 percent their representation in the Army and the Marine Corps combat arms (at 10.7 percent) (Gifford 2005: 214). This gap dramatically widens if we compare Hispanic mortalities to their overall proportion of the 2001 active duty forces, in which they represented 8.6 percent of all servicemembers (Gifford 2005: 214). According to Gifford:

¹⁰⁴ They also find themselves in lower ranks of the officer corps than Whites and even Blacks (Segal & Segal 2004).
The casualty rate among Hispanics during the war is 49 percent higher than their representation in the ground combat forces would suggest \( (p = .002) \), and 85 percent higher than Hispanics on active duty \( (p = .044) \). As expected, Hispanic war casualties fall below their portion of the US population (though this may reflect circumstances that effectively render many young, non-English-speaking Hispanics ineligible for military service) (Gifford 2005: 215).

As Hispanics are prone to pay a disproportionate price in combat intensive situations, they now seem to be filling the place once occupied by African Americans in the hierarchy of sacrifice. Indeed, of all the racial groups considered, “Latino/as have the highest active duty propensity” (Amaya 2007: 18).

Because Tim Kane’s recruitment data shows enlistees “are not, in fact, more heavily recruited from black neighborhoods” he immediately jumps to the conclusion that “there is no disproportionate share of minorities” serving in the military, as claimed by editorials around the nation in 2003” (Kane 2005: 11-12). He almost immediately adds that little evidence supports the case that black recruits and, by logical extension, the large black contingent in the military is “poorer, from poorer areas, from more urbanized areas, less educated, or from less educated areas” (Kane 2005: 12). While this may be the case, Kane ignores how racism in civilian society structures the propensity of minorities to enlist in military service by creating its own set of barriers and obstacles in the civilian labor market. Also, he makes no mention of the racial stratification within the army or of the racial stratification of sacrifice in combat-intensive situations. But perhaps, most importantly, he fails to mention and thus explain the most salient statistic in the recruitment demographics: the collapse in the number of black enlistees immediately prior to, and following, the beginning of the war in Afghanistan.

Finally, the Heritage Foundation assesses that recruits and servicemembers originate from Southern, rural rather than urban areas, where citizens generally face a less favorable labor
market. In these cases, Kane concludes, the military provides much needed employment opportunity to the communities (Kane 2005). These latest recruitment patterns mirror long-established trends (Segal & Segal 2004). While it is true in the absolute that the armed forces can bring employment to places with few options, a 2006 Carsey Institute study offers a sobering view of this benefit (see also Lutz 2002). The wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have exacted a terribly high price on small-town and rural areas, especially in the “rural South and rural West” (Tripp 2008: xvii). The former geographic region provided the armed forces with four out of every ten new servicemembers in the year 2000 (Cowen 2007: 28). One year after the invasion of Iraq, nearly one in two soldiers killed in the conflict hailed from small-town America, that is “communities with populations under 20,000” (Cowen 2007: 32). This brought the death toll of these communities “60 percent higher than the death rate for those soldiers from cities and suburbs” (Bishop and O’Hare 2006: 1). The much larger price paid by these communities reflects class divisions stratified in geographic space, notably between rural and urban areas, between neighborhoods which promise very different prospects for employment, and increased exposure to violence and poor living conditions (Wacquant 1992; Beeghley 2005). While the South is known by military sociologists for its “military tradition” (Segal and Segal 2004), rural areas have also been deeply affected by deindustrialization and outsourcing since the 1970s, further adding to those regions’ economic precariousness (Cowen 2006).

While both warfare and the global population are increasingly urban, the majority of soldiers who fight these wars from the national militaries of leading states of the 'coalition of the willing' are rural recruits. Military personnel are drawn overwhelmingly from rural areas, which are understood to have both the economic motivations for mass enlistment coupled with small-town culture of patriotic nationalism (Cowen 2007: 3).
However, these statistics do not simply reflect geographic inequalities in the labor market. They remind us that like “choice” in general, geographic mobility is a mark of privilege. “Many who stay, especially in poor areas, are those whose low level of education and skills give them little reason to anticipate better opportunities elsewhere as well” (Bishop & O’Hare 2006: 1). An anecdote told by the sister of an Army reservist mobilized to Iraq tells of the experience of the army in small towns:105

My husband, who works in a high school in Bath, Maine, the home of the Bath ironworks … invited regular dialogue with his students, many of whom were considering signing up [for the military]. Many of them come from military families. The town has a base. It’s very pro-military, a working-class area. A lot of his students have always planned to enter the military. College was maybe out of sight for them. (Furoh cited in Collins 2008: 41).

So rural Americans who can count only on minimal reserves of social and cultural capital find themselves doubly disadvantaged. The limited labor market in their hometowns and the difficulties they can expect to face if they seek work elsewhere, are two factors affecting their propensity to military service. To this degree, geographically and economically marginal communities and citizens also occupy borderline or dominated positions in the field of citizenship through the homologies in the American imperial society.

**The sacrificial classes and disguised social selection**

Overall, it appears that the Heritage Foundation’s studies opt for an most optimistic, and sometimes skewed, assessment of their data. It is too hasty to conclude that the all-volunteer army is a military ‘of the people’ simply because it does not recruit its rank-and-file from the

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105. See chapter 9 for a detailed portrait of these subjective experiences.
Lumpenproletariat - a fact undisputed by military sociologists. But as I have shown, Kane’s comparison of the recruits’ household income and education levels to national averages embellishes or altogether masks the rather obvious demographics that otherwise define the propensity to military service. Second, I have shown that the Census household-income quintiles do not provide an adequate measure to assess the equitable distribution of social classes in the military, especially as both extremes of the quintiles cover significant income disparities.

It is known that high school dropouts are excluded, explaining why the absolute poorest members of society are under-represented in the military. However, the data also shows that the propensity to service spikes to its highest peak, but below the national median income and plummets as soon as one approaches and passes this benchmark. Where education comes into play, the trend is much more dramatic. In effect, military service seems unlikely as soon as one possesses any amount of education superior to a high school diploma. Both as an indicator of class and as a tool for social mobility, objectified cultural capital in the form of educational achievement shows much more clearly that one is likely to choose military service when one has little hope of deploying one’s assets and skills in the civilian workforce. Contra the Heritage Foundation’s optimistic survey, Bachman et al.’s monumental study of the relation between propensity to military service and enlistment for multiple senior year high school cohorts paints a much more somber portrait of the social origins of those most likely to serve:

The factors that had influenced which men served in the military during the early years of the volunteer force, which in part were carryovers from the days of conscription, have persisted into the second decade of the volunteer force. Men who serve tend to come disproportionately from minority racial and ethnic groups, below-average socioeconomic background, nonsuburban residence, and regions other than the Northeast or West. They tend to have received mediocre grades in high school, to come from nonacademic high school programs, and to have low college aspirations (Bachman et al 2000: 28).
This is hardly the dazzling picture evoked by the Heritage Foundation’s study of early 21st century recruits. In effect, once we know that the very worst off in society are excluded from the army, this means that recruits tend to originate from the lowest socioeconomic, educational, racial and geographic strata of American society actually eligible for service. But the most recent data seems to suggest that the army has even relaxed the standards which traditionally excluded the ‘undesirables’ of American society from service:

The Army has made much of its ability to meet its fiscal year 2006 recruitment goals. Upon closer inspection, such self congratulation is not merited. In an effort to prevent the overstretched forces from breaking, the Army has not only raised its maximum age for enlistment ~from 35 to 42!, it has shortened the enlistment period for some recruits from four years to 15 months, and it has reduced basic training drop-out rates in the first six months of 2006 ~8% of recruits failed basic training, down from 18% in May 2005!. Further, other recruitment standards have been relaxed. The number of Army recruits who scored below average on the ASVAB aptitude test doubled in 2005, as did the number of high school drop-outs in the first half of 2006. According to a recent report ~New York Times 2007!, even with these relaxed standards, the Army still had to give more than 8,000 of its new recruits moral waivers, some for criminal convictions, including 900 for felons (Duggan & Korb 2007: 468).

The Commission on the National Guards and Reserves’ final report to Congress (COTNGAR) in 2008 painted an even grimmer picture of the recruitment challenges that faced the military. Apart from the dwindling educational standards of the recruits, a tenth of the 2007 recruit cohort received exemptions for their “criminal history” (COTNGAR 2008: 10). An earlier report by the Commission also observed that civilian attitudes toward military service were becoming more negative (COTNGAR 2007), and that one in five young Americans were too overweight to be considered for recruitment:

The propensity of our nation’s youth to enlist in the military was at a historical low of 9 percent in June 2007. At the same time, DOD estimates that more than half the youth in the U.S. population between the ages of 17 and 24 do not meet the minimum
requirements to enter military service. Approximately 22 percent of America’s youth exceed the limits set for enlistees’ body mass index (COTNGAR 2008: 10).

According to the liberal doxa, the mechanisms of social-military reproduction operate under the irreproachable guise of the natural balance between the supply of the labor force and the demand from military institutions; and the incentives in pay, training, educational opportunities and symbolic advantages they can offer. This study of the data on the social origins of the recruits and the demographic trends within the armed forces makes the case against the idea that military service should best be understood as something like choice rather than the more provocative notion of a statistically measurable “social destiny” (Bourdieu 1979; see also Amaya 2007). It reveals that cultural, economic and social assets, locations within geographic space, and one’s relative place in the field of citizenship, all define clear modal trajectories effectively leading some members of society into the armed forces and others away from them. Thus the stated criteria for enlistment – choice - masks the real attributes that define servicemembers based on their social origins. These genuine characteristics only become apparent through the statistical effects of the social processes that generate a greater supply of individuals ready to sacrifice, from the dominant fractions of the dominated class, and very little indeed from the dominant classes. Let us look then at the flip-side of Bourdieu’s argument. It would suggest that the sacrificial classes of society – those without which civilian society can function - possess their own numerus classus: minority status, and immigrants seeking naturalization (Amaya 2007, also chapter 10); Whites enjoying basic, but insufficient, reserves of cultural and economic capital, thereby unable to successfully convert their assets in the civilian workforce, or attend college and climb the echelons to the “professional middle-class” (Ehrenreich 1989: 12). In Cowen’s telling words:

200
The country has begun developing what could be called a warrior class or caste, often perpetuating itself from father or uncle to son or niece, whose political and cultural attitudes do not reflect the diversity found in civilian society—potentially foreshadowing a social schism between those who fight and those who ask them to”, argue Halbfinger and Holmes (2003; see also Moskos, 2000) (cited in Cowen 2006: 177).

These segments of society have developed a *habitus of sacrifice* to surmount the economic and social obstacles market conditions have imposed on them. Their assets in global volumes of capital would have traced out otherwise mundane existences, respectable – if difficult - lives no doubt, but far cries from the ‘success stories’ of the American dream. Military service then offers them a chance to gamble their relationships, health, limbs, minds, bodies: wagering their existences in exchange for the capital assets (in the form of money, skills, respectability) which might eventually earn them the right of passage into a higher order of society, or into society itself, for those migrants seeking the most fundamental of rewards: inclusion in the field of citizenship. This draws our attention to one of the most commonsensical meanings of sacrifice: (in)voluntary privation of the self, deferment and renunciation of the now in favor of a nobler existence in the future on this earth or in heaven (Hall 1978). As Tripp writes, “[The army fighting in Iraq] entices recruits with the promise of an education. This is an army of working-class enlistees looking for a way to pay for the next stage of their lives” (Tripp 2008: xxvi).

In addition to the material assets soldiers can hope to gain in future stages of their existence, military service brings its own symbolic rewards: social capital – if the war enjoys the support of the public. This social enhancement by military service often masks the option that induction into the military, in reality, represents the *abandonment*, or sacrifice, at least in the
immediate sense, of the recruit’s life projects. But this symbolic improved status comes to constitute an integral part of the sacrificial classes’ existence in at least two ways. First, in the citizen-soldier tradition, members of the military caste enjoy social, cultural and often sexual prestige through recognition of their service, courage, honor and virility by other members of society (Bouthoul 1991; Moskos 2005). Again, recruitment advertisements for the Marine Corps explicitly state that its servicemembers belong to a rare stock particularly through such slogans as “The Few. The Proud.” Recruitment ads for officers in the Marine Corps (such as the one on display in the Political Science building of the University of Pennsylvania in 2008-2009 (Stiteler Hall) accentuated that its candidates were of a particular rare and thus worthy extraction: “Few can be Marines. Even fewer can lead them.” Interestingly both of these adverts recuperate some of the classical republican tropes about the different orders that are believed to compose and order society: “the one, the few, and the many” (see Pocock 1975, 1988, also chapters 2, 5 and 11). In this three-part division of society, the ‘few’ designate an aristocracy of talent as opposed to the masses of plebeians. Also, it is of note that these symbolic properties make up the profile of traditional gentlemen - the monopoly that the traditional aristocracies of Europe held over representation and service in the officer corps. In this sense, the Marine Corps and military service offer symbolic redemption to members of the lower orders of society who are sociologically prone, because they lack equal opportunities elsewhere, to enlist.

But the habitus of sacrifice and the symbolic capital to which it is tied is built into the experience of the soldiering classes of society in a more fundamental way. Though their existences are often difficult, members of the sacrificial classes can pride themselves in the fact that they renounce the easy lifestyle: the shortcuts and handouts stereotypically representative of the social classes directly below them. Unlike the lowest classes of society, those precisely who

106. Charles Moskos argues that most college-bound youth forgo military service for this very reason (2005).
are unfit for military service because they lack even the minimal amount of cultural or physical capital required - the overweight, dropouts, criminals, ex-felons or convicts - the sacrificial classes enjoy the symbolic rewards associated with working for an honest living: the moral rectitude that comes from renouncing ‘the-easy-life‘ at least in the short term, of others who choose to transgress the accepted norms of society, like delving into crime. As Stuart Hall writes, the notion that one draws “respectability” from honest work lies at the core of the English working classes’ self-image.

[The idea of ‘respectability’] is connected with thrift, self-discipline, living the decent life, and thus with the observance of what is commonly held upright, decent conduct. It is strongly connected with ideas of self-help and self-reliance, and of ‘conformity’ to established social standards – standards set and embodied by ‘significant others’ (Hall 1978: 140) … Work is not only the guarantee of working-class respectability, it is also a powerful image in its own right. We know how much our social and indeed personal identities are caught up with our work, and how men (especially men, given the sexual division of labour) who are without work, feel not only materially abandoned but spiritually de-centred” (Hall 1978: 141).

Importantly, then, the virtues of hard work and growth through sacrifice set apart the dominant fractions of the dominated classes from the ‘detritus’ of society. These lower rungs of society come to represent the “foil” which signifies the outer-limits of the socially acceptable condition (Hall 1978; Bourdieu 1979: 280). Paradoxically, however, military service itself risks transforming soldiers into what they seek to escape becoming: rogues who murder for a living. Soldiers crystallize on their persons ambivalent and often contradictory social and cultural roles because they are at once heroes and executioners, insofar as cultural norms recognize them the right to use deadly force (Bouthoul 1991). However, sometimes public support for a war effort begins to wane, or the murder of innocent civilians comes under public scrutiny and threatens to reveal the cultural paradox at the center of which soldiers find themselves (see chapters 8 and 9).
These fringe instances or exceptional circumstances reveal the gap, or better yet, the arbitrary separation, of the social norms which prohibit the use of violence on the “home front” and the social norms which suspend this taboo in combat zones. This cultural dislocation can thrust into full view of civilians or loved ones the reality of what soldiering ultimately means to witnesses of war zones (see chapter 9): “Killing is my business … and business is good.”\(^\text{107}\) In the end, as much as members of the sacrificial classes of society seek to distinguish themselves from the lower orders – typically, the thugs, drug dealers, or petty criminals who cheat to get by –, the disposition to military service always risks transforming them into what they most wish to avoid becoming.

**Conclusion**

*Contra* the Heritage Foundation, this chapter has argued that military service corresponds to a disguised form of social selection for military sacrifice. It further argued that enlisted military recruits originate from the lowest social strata eligible for service: the dominant fraction of the dominated class. Building on the work presented here, chapter 8 will show how American newspapers have debated the inequality of military sacrifice between combatants and non-combatants. Chapter 9 will further explore the questions of enlistment, duty and sacrifice by presenting the accounts of veterans of the war in Iraq and members of their families. Finally, chapter 10 will explore how different class-propensities to military service in effect betray the different political obligations which are asked or rather implicitly expected of different classes of citizens. But to prepare for these accounts, chapter 7 will present a short literature review of the major methodologies and theoretical frameworks for discursive analysis in the social sciences.

\(^\text{107}\) The title of American trash metal band Megadeth’s first album.
and humanities. Drawing on diverse scholarship, but primarily the work of sociologist Stuart Hall, it will provide a detailed portrait of the field of journalism and the conventions, political economy, and professional ethics which shape the output and creation of news in America. Secondary literature will also provide an overview of different interpretations of the American media’s coverage of the war in Iraq. Finally, I will define the concept of “social crisis” to build the thread of the argument I will develop in the second half of the dissertation: that the war in Iraq has exacerbated the fault lines in the United States and provoked a crisis of the imperial form of society.
Chapter 7 - The American Press, the War in Iraq and Social Crisis

Iraq and the American Press

Chapter 6 showed how the demographics of military recruitment and military service in the United States were debated in some prominent academic literatures in military sociology as well as in a recent public intervention by the Heritage Foundation. As chapters 8 and 9 will focus on how the War in Iraq and the distribution of military sacrifice in American society have been debated in the public sphere in the United States, the present chapter begins laying the groundwork for this discussion. It explores some of the academic literature that has analyzed the media’s coverage of the conflict in Iraq, and highlights important theoretical considerations for dealing with the news media. As a field of struggle, journalistic debate over Iraq takes place within a set number of professional conventions and modes of (self-)censorship which reflect the social, economic and political forces at play in the news production environment. Is the news objective? How is it selected? Which forces or actors decide what is news and what isn’t? Does news adequately reflect the scope of significant and meaningful events which take place in the world? Does it adequately reflect the scope of debate taking place in society? How has the war in Iraq been debated in the American media? Finally, how does media coverage interact with public opinion and state power? I will first attempt to provide some answers to these questions in a more general fashion by presenting some of the major political theory and cultural theory literatures on discursive and textual analysis that suggest different ways of analyzing the nature and meaning of discourses and how we might interpret them. The second part of the chapter will reconstruct the mode of operation of the journalistic field specifically and present some analyses of the American media’s coverage of the war in Iraq. The third part of the chapter will consider
some of the theoretical literature on the concept of *crisis*. This literature will provide the theoretical tools to consider the nature and importance of the themes and tensions that appear in the major print media and the war testimony collections about the conflict in Iraq. More importantly they will help grasp what exactly these tensions signify.

*Does this mean what I think it does?* Texts, discourse, and cultural productions

The tradition of “careful” or “in-depth” reading has long passed as a substitute for theory and method in the analysis of texts, as Skinner argues (1989a and 1989b). In political philosophy, for instance, the work of Leo Strauss (1989) best represents this approach. Strauss calls upon his students to dialogue with the “great thinkers” (1989: 311-312), the canonical figures of the classical philosophical tradition by repeatedly reading their works. Such a view stressing that the *meaning* of the “ideas” and thoughts laid down in texts are directly accessible to the philosopher rests on the platonic vision of the “world of forms.” According to this view, ideas such as “freedom,” “truth,” “beauty” and “virtue” exist independently of their manifestations in social life. What we see and experience are only pale derivatives of the original, purer forms. But it is precisely because these forms exist independently of our existence and of our naming of them, that one can directly access the meaning of the words contained in philosophical texts, as they speak transparently.

Contrary to this approach, historians of ideas such as Quentin Skinner (1989a-d) and John Pocock (1975, 1988) believe political ideas and political writings must be treated *relationally*. For Skinner, to uncover the “meaning” of ideas supposes clarifying “the illocutionary force” or authorial intent behind the idea (1989b). What “effect” was the author trying to produce? According to Skinner, one can only ascertain this by examining a political statement in relation
to the horizon of other political statements and conventions of political discourse existing at one time. Speech and writing are thus acts through which social actors attempt to reinforce, renegotiate or destabilize existing meanings.

Other scholars such as C.B. Macpherson (2004) argue that one must be attentive to the “presuppositions of social order” implicit within texts and political discourse. Political writers and thinkers write with a specific audience in mind, usually their contemporaries. As writer and audience share a common set of reference points, the common world they inhabit, it is unnecessary for them to state a host of details about the society they inhabit. The task for the historian or political analyst rests in uncovering the material and social form of organization: agrarian, market-based or capitalist society, implied in the writings. It is not sufficient to simply ask what kind of implicit judgments the author is making about society and mankind. One must also ask in what kind of society their political reflection holds true. What kind of society presupposes or enables the moral and ethical judgments the author makes? These are the questions which must be answered. Though such a methodology is perhaps apt at exploring classical texts, as Macpherson does, it is less useful as a method to examine the present - at a time when one presumably shares with the authors being read, the practical understanding of most of the meaning and references implied the texts. Macpherson does remind his readers, however, that meaning is not transparent and that one must be clear about how texts are constructed.

In diverse ways, Ellen Wood’s historical materialism (1991) espouses a logic similar to Macpherson’s in searching for the coherence of texts and discourses in the concrete social structures and class interests that shape them. Adorno and Horkheimer’s (1974: 129-174) classic essay on the “cultural industry” displays similar logic. Cultural productions reflect the productive
logic of industrial society: mass production, repetition and multiplication and the subordination of esthetic criteria to cost efficiency and the cultural/symbolic profit acquired through the consumption of an artistic artifact. The meaning of the cultural production cannot be separated from the mode of production it legitimizes and the suffering it incurs. The relation of exploitation and domination between capital, reason and human subjects is the real or social meaning of the cultural production. Writing about a typical American film script, Adorno and Horkheimer state that its real meaning is “le triomphe du capital investi, dont le titre de maître tout-puissant est gravé en lettres de feu dans les cœurs de tous ceux que cette évolution a ruinés et sont candidats à un job ; tel est le contenu réel de tous les films, quelle que soit l’intrigue choisie par la direction de la production” (1974 : 133, emphasis added).

The work of Michel Foucault (1977) and foucauldian scholarship on “governmentality” (1989, 1994, 2004a, 2004b) has become a common staple in international relations scholarship. This approach aims to assess moments of “emergence” in history. This genealogical method examines points of major transformations in regimes of truth and discourse, moments during which new meanings imprint themselves on words, and new modes of thought, acting and being, displace older conventions. In many cases, “emergence” marks subtle, though no less historically significant, shifts in ways of understanding the relationships between rulers and ruled. Consequently, an historical “event,” in the foucauldian sense, is messy, and can be hard to locate precisely in time, unlike the dramatic markers of political and military history. This definition is significant because Foucault’s thought inextricably ties forms of knowledge to the creation and exercise of power, so much so that he refuses to dissociate the two concepts of

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108. “An event consequently, is not a decision, a treaty, a reign, or a battle, but the reversal of a relationship of forces, the usurpation of power, the appropriation of a vocabulary turned against those who had once used it” (Foucault 1977: 154).
knowledge and power. Furthermore, it is important to note that Foucault’s conception of power is nebulous. It flows and “passes” through humans such that one can never completely ascertain whom it serves (2004b: 501): “It is often difficult to say who holds power in a precise sense, but it is easy to see who lacks power” (1972, with Gilles Deleuze). One thing is certain, Foucault refuses to reduce power to the plaything of the ruling class as would many of his contemporaries.

Power subjects individuals and groups – but one must understand this act of subjection or subjugationsubjectification in relation to the French term of “assujetissement” (2004b). The wordplay on this concept in French at once designates the act by which one is subjected to power and the moment during which one defines himself as a subject, that is, as a conscious historical or social agent. As Judith Butler (2000: 24) sees it, power-knowledge defines a range of possibility in respect to which an individual will define their “ethical self.” Foucault’s work on the evolution of the European prison complex shows how over time the state shies away from exacting bodily punishment on the detainees. It prefers instead to rehabilitate those who have strayed, to “cure” them and heal their “soul” of the “perversions” which underlie the criminal act (2004b: 486, 491 and 492). Finally, Foucault creates the label of “governmentality” to designate the major techniques and modes through which power is legitimized in the modern era (1994). However, in his lectures on neoliberal governmentality he extends the use of this concept to designate a general framework: “What I have proposed to call governmentality […] is the way we conduct the conduct of men.” This theoretical tool for studying “relationships of power”

109 “Peut-être faut-il renoncer à croire que le pouvoir rend fou et qu’en retour la renonciation au pouvoir est une des conditions auxquelles on peut devenir savant. Il faut plutôt admettre que le pouvoir produit du savoir (et pas simplement en le favorisant parce qu’il sert ou en l’appliquant parce qu’il est utile) ; que pouvoir et savoir s’impliquent directement l’un l’autre ; qu’il n’y a pas de relation de pouvoir sans constitution corrélative d’un champ de savoir, ni de savoir qui ne suppose et ne constitue en même temps de relations de pouvoir” (Foucault 2004b : 503).
applies to a range of subjects as diverse as the mentoring the “insane, the sick, delinquents, children […] economic policy”; or even “the management of an entire social body” (lesson of 7th March 1979, author’s translation). Thus the establishment of social norms circumscribes a field of permitted and prohibited behavior or, putting it more harshly ‘normal’ and ‘deviant’ manners.

The genealogical method, however, lacks a sociologically rigorous theory of production and mediation. It carries over, into its analysis, the Marxist reduction of ideology (discourse) to infrastructure (power-knowledge nexus) though in a disguised form. Discourse and textual artifacts have now become the superstructural manifestations of the power-knowledge infrastructure. This further supposes a coherence and homogeneity in social and ideological structures that they seldom have. The Foucauldian method also fails to account for the specific conventions or modes of operation of the different mediums through which discourse and cultural productions pass and which ultimately give them definite shape. It is insufficiently attentive to the institutional determinants of the creation of knowledge and power, and the major power brokers who control symbolic production, such as the state, the news media, universities, courts and bureaucratic institutions. I flatly disagree that it is “often difficult to say who holds power in a precise sense, but it is easy to see who lacks power” (Foucault 1972 with Gilles Deleuze, emphasis added). To say that the state does not simply express the interests of one social class is doubtlessly a solid move in the right direction; this, however, does not diminish the class profile of state managers, bureaucrats, and other employees of powerful institutions (see my comments on Bourdieu in the following section). Though power is more complex than class, it cannot be dissociated from it.

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110 See the conclusion to Dufour’s PhD thesis (2005) for a lengthy engagement with epochal categories of analysis, i.e. modernity. See also Skinner (1989a) for a very similar critique of the “mythology of doctrine.”
Cultural theorists of Marxist inspiration like Stuart Hall (1978), Colin Hay (1996) and Pierre Boudieu (1979, 1988, 1994) offer a much more rigorous sociological theory of cultural and discursive production. Hall observes how the news is shaped by the clock of the newsroom and, of course, the statements of important institutional actors such as judges, politicians, union leaders and police chiefs, as well as the ideologies that frame the implicit consensus on the parameters of accepted social debate. News content is mediated by political power and the unequal access of diverse actors to this mode of symbolic production. Additionally, like Hay, Hall stresses that one must be attentive to how news is received and decoded by those who consume it in such a manner that reflects their experiences of the social world.

For Bourdieu, competition in the field of news production constrains newspapers to distinguish themselves and their respective readerships from other news sources and the audiences to which these rivals cater. Journalists write for a specific audience, and they know how that audience thinks. Journalists, writers and editors share a common strand of habitus with their readers, thus accounting for the “elective affinity” (Bourdieu 1979: 267) between news source and news consumer. The affinity of each news source with its target audience organizes the fields of production (newspaper) and the field of consumption (readership) according to roughly the same polarities through the effect of the homologies between the positions in both fields. By extending this principle, national newspapers mirror the oppositions and polarities of the political field, between left, right and center; between liberal and conservative; by embracing

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111 “Le principe de l’homologie fonctionnelle et structurale qui fait que la logique [de chaque champ est objectivement orchestrée] réside dans le fait que tous les autres champs spécialisés … tendent à s’organiser selon la même logique, c’est-à-dire selon le volume du capital spécifique possédé (et selon l’ancienneté, qui lui est souvent liée, de la possession), et que les oppositions qui tendent à s’établir en chaque cas entre les plus riches et les moins riches en capital spécifique, entre les dominants et les dominés, les tenants et les prétendants, les anciens et les nouveaux entrants, la distinction et la prétention, l’orthodoxie et l’hérésie, l’arrière-garde et l’avant-garde, l’ordre et le mouvement, etc. sont homologues entre elles (d’où toutes sortes d’invariants) et homologies des oppositions qui organisent le champ des classes sociales (entre dominants et dominés) ou le champ de la classe dominante (entre fraction dominante et fraction dominée)” (Bourdieu 1979 : 257).
the political views of those actors (politicians, think-tanks, activist and advocacy groups) with which they, and their readers, share an affinity. The dialogue on public events, politics and other newsworthy topics is structured by the oppositions set by different political actors (field of political and ideological production), newspapers (field of news production) and different readers (field of news consumption) and the homologies among them.

Most major journalism and communications studies on the media in the US follow the main lines of this model with some variations emphasizing the structural effect that the political field exerts on the field of news production. Groseclose and Milyo’s (2005) study on liberal media-bias in major American magazines and evening shows indexes the political “slant” or “bias” of news organizations through the homologies they institute with actors in the political field. In short, they attribute political scores to members of Congress (left or right-leaning) based on which think tank or policy advocate groups they most commonly reference, and in turn compile the number of times that a news source cites these politicians. Groseclose and Milyo therefore rate a news source’s “bias” through the effect of homologies that trickle down from those think tanks and advocacy groups, which populate the field of ideological production (and the field of politics in a larger sense), by way of congressional debate (the political arena) and into news stories (the journalistic field).

Though I am not interested in the problem of “media bias,” it is nevertheless important to point out two major methodological issues which arise from Groseclose and Milyo’s study. First,

112 “It is useful to clarify our definition of bias. Most important, the definition has nothing to do with the honesty or accuracy of the news outlet. Instead, our notion is more like a taste or preference. For instance, we estimate that the centrist United States voter during the late 1990s had a left-right ideology approximately equal to that of Arlen Specter (R-PA) or Sam Nunn (D-GA). Meanwhile, we estimate that the average New York Times article is ideologically very similar to the average speech by Joe Lieberman (D-CT). Next, since vote scores show Lieberman to be more liberal than Specter or Nunn, our method concludes that the New York Times has a liberal bias. However, in no way does this imply that the New York Times is inaccurate or dishonest—just as the vote scores do not imply that Joe Lieberman is any less honest than Sam Nunn or Arlen Specter.” (Groseclose & Milyo 2005: 1204).
as the authors acknowledge, they only study news content, not editorials, op-eds or opinion letters, which may very well paint a more nuanced portrait of how the news media relates to the political spectrum. The second issue results from the near-exclusive use of quantitative methodology. Because they index discrete references in news stories to politicians, they can fail to recognize the larger “ethical-political” (Bourdieu 1988: 53) commitments that seemingly inoffensive language employed throughout the article, can conceal beyond the ‘relevant’ statements and authoritative sources newswriters reference. However, these biases become apparent if one analyzes the universe of reference points within which they resonate most strongly. When dealing with war journalism in particular, as I shall, heroic clichés of selfless sacrifice and tales of courage are not politically neutral statements. They evoke wider, deeper, often unconscious, conceptions of citizenship and commitments to masculinity and duty that enjoy the appearance of neutrality because they are conventions of the war narrative genre. But one can identify the hidden political commitments in this seemingly inoffensive imagery through the unique system of homologies that it institutes with ideologically marked actors in the political field or in the field of ideological production. To put this simply, one must seek to find which other social actors, operating in other fields, employ similar language or themes, and which systems of political, ideological, ethical and philosophical oppositions underscore their discourse. As Bourdieu demonstrates (1988), the relative concordance of the philosophical dichotomies, slightly adjusted from one system to the next to account for their particularities in each field (philosophy, political, war narratives) will place social actors in similar positions on their respective terrains of struggle. A qualitative analysis of the structural homologies among the fields can lead to a clearer portrait of the actual positions social actors occupy, say, in the

113 They exclude editorials and opinion letters from the study because “there is little controversy over the slant of editorial pages; e.g., few would disagree that Wall Street Journal editorials are conservative, while New York Times editorials are liberal.” (Groseclose & Milyo 2005: 1199).
political field or news sources in the field of journalism. Positivist methods may only reify “conventional wisdom” by failing to decipher the conventions which operate in the different fields and the larger biases and ethical commitments which are inherent in the conventions of the medium itself.

I must raise a more profound objection to the concern over ideological bias itself and ask whether that is even really the most important question? Sociological studies of the journalistic profession in the United States have shown them to be tilted to the left (that is toward liberalism) and are often cited to make the case to denounce a liberal bias in the media (Bennett et al. 2007). But this individualistic account completely obfuscates the structural constraints that the journalistic field and the struggles within other fields exert on journalists and thus new production itself.

What critics of “liberal bias” in the press typically miss, however, are the routines and norms that structure and constrain daily journalism … In other words, the news is not simply a product of individual journalists and their personal politics views, but the product of organizations that are intricately linked to and frequently depend on government actors and institutions (Bennett et al. 2007: 218, note 15).

In fact, Bennett et al. (2007) argue that the apparent bias in the media rather reflects the propensity of news organizations to report authoritative statements from the symbolically dominant actors in society to avoid accusations of bias. Paradoxical, yes. This simply means that it is the fear of bias which produces bias. To avoid these accusations, news organizations will always seek to cite information from the most authoritative sources: government and the major institutions. Media bias will reflect the viewpoints of the dominant actors in the political and symbolic landscape, especially in times when the political opposition is weak, as was the case under the Bush presidency. Journalists will reference competing stories or viewpoints only when
such viewpoints come from authoritative sources. This insidious mechanism through which the press simply “indexes” the statements of political actors, Bennet et al. argue, provoked the general collapse of ideological and journalistic opposition to the Iraq war during the first years of the Bush presidency.

**Constructing the journalistic field**

I will return to consider coverage of the war in Iraq in major media outlets, but first I want to present the source material I will be analyzing in chapter 8 and supply some systematic theoretical considerations on how it must be treated. This dissertation examines over two-hundred articles from *The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, USA Today, Newsweek* and *The Nation*, and focuses on the period extending between September 11, 2001 to November 4, 2008, the date of President Obama’s election. I generated the documentary mass of this study with search strings in the Gale Academic Onefile Database and ProQuest (for the *Wall Street Journal*) and searched these articles using the keywords “war” and “sacrifice”, which yielded both a manageable and pertinent amounts of documentation.

I chose these three newspapers because they ranked highest in circulation in the United States. As for the news magazines, I selected them based on a practical and theoretical understanding of the journalistic field in the United States. *Newsweek* enjoys significant circulation and was ranked by Groseclose and Mylio as the most “centrist” or unbiased of all news publications. I then further selected *The Nation* because of its reputation as a left-leaning, metropolitan publication. The object was to reconstruct an approximate sample of the different viewpoints and positions competing within the field of journalism. I considered other publications such as *Times, The Washington Post* and *The New York Post* but ultimately
abandoned them for practical reasons, namely to avoid having an unmanageable amount of primary sources, and to preserve distinctions between the journalistic sources and the political opinions they reflected.

As of 2009, USA Today had the top circulation numbers of all newspapers in the United States at 2,113,725 copies daily, the Wall Street Journal and the New York Times ranking in second and third place respectively.\textsuperscript{114} With respect to its coverage of the war in Iraq, USA Today occupied the most centrist position of all three.\textsuperscript{115} As a whole, its content was the least polemical, expressing support for the war, but also giving voice to those who criticized how unequally sacrifice fell on the shoulders of different segments of the American population. Second to USA Today in circulation, at 2,082,189 copies daily, the Wall Street Journal gave a dominant voice—though not exclusively—to those who most ardently supported the war. This means that on the question of sacrifice, the Wall Street Journal most aligned itself with the dominant fraction of the political class, members of the Republican administration and the ruling party. The New York Times comes in third place at 1,139,031 copies daily.\textsuperscript{116} Of all three newspapers, it most categorically opposed the war in Iraq, thus espousing the political position closest to the Democratic Party. Newsweek, publishing positions similar to USA Today in political tone, ranks at number 21 amongst the top 25 magazines (2,701,893 weekly) while The Nation—the most vocal and antiwar of all publications—fails to register among the top magazines.

As Bourdieu suggests, each newspaper’s position in the field of consumption (as circulation) closely resembles the homologous position to which one would most likely identify

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\item[\textsuperscript{114}] The data was retrieved from BurrellesLuce, a self-described “PR Professional”: 2009 Top Media Outlets: Newspapers, Blogs, Consumer Magazines & Social Networks, \url{http://www.burrellesluce.com/system/files/Top100Sheet6.24.09.pdf}, retrieved May 17, 2010.
\item[\textsuperscript{115}] My framing of the political orientation of the newspapers is supported by the evidence provided by Groseclose and Milyo (2005) in their study of “media bias.” I differ by looking at editorials, op-eds, and letters to the editor.
\item[\textsuperscript{116}] 1,451,233 newspapers are circulated on Sundays.
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\end{footnotesize}
it in the political field and thus the position of its readership in the corresponding field of habitus and social classes – though empirically speaking, this last point is speculative at best.\footnote{In the French case, Bourdieu writes: “… faute de pouvoir participer activement au jeu proprement politique qui est de facto réservé aux professionnels à plein temps (hommes politiques, permanents des appareils – mots adéquats en ce cas - de partis, journalistes politiques, idéologues professionnels), les profanes n’auraient quelques chances de reconnaître, dans l’univers des opinions toutes faites, celles qui leur conviennent, qui leur « vont », que si les produits offerts portaient toujours la marque de fabrique, le label qui est à la fois un repère et une garantie. En annonçant clairement la position dans le champ de production idéologique qui s’exprime en fait dans toute prise de position autorisée, le label qu’est la référence politique à une autorité (à une encyclique du pape, à une décision du comité central d’un parti, à un auteur canonique, etc.) permet au profane de « s’y retrouver », de retrouver la position à prendre soit sur la base de la délégation qu’il accorde explicitement ou tacitement aux occupants d’une position déterminée dans le champ de production idéologique, soit grâce à sa maîtrise pratique des homologies entre le champ politique … dans lequel il sait pratiquement se situer et s’orienter, et le champ de production idéologique qui en reproduit la structure selon sa logique propre” (Bourdieu 1979 : 505).} Ranking first, \textit{USA Today} leans toward what Stuart Hall would term the “consensual view” of politics – that closest to the dominant position in the field of national habitus. \textit{USA Today} does not significantly distinguish its readers from other members of the population; it refrains from coloring its audience with a certain political stripe as other papers could. To paraphrase Bourdieu, being the least “classified” (or distinguished) and thus least “classifying” (distinguishing) – the \textit{double entente} is intended – \textit{USA Today} can also draw upon the widest possible base of readership, which can account for its higher circulation.

However, among politically marked newspapers, the \textit{Wall Street Journal} surpasses the \textit{New York Times} in circulation, and it is most closely affiliated to the positions of the dominant class fraction within the political field; this is not only the party in power during the period I examine, but the one that has exercised the presidency fifty-six percent of the time since 1945 (thirty-six years out of the last sixty-four, as opposed to twenty-eight for the Democrats). Correspondingly, \textit{The New York Times’} level of circulation clearly situates it in the dominated position in the field of journalism, one that gives greater voice to the political positions of the dominated party or dominated political strand within the political field.\footnote{This can become a dominated-dominant strand if we take into account marginal electoral positions such as Ralph Nader’s unequivocally dominated Green Party.} Tentatively, there
appears to be a homology between the rank the newspaper occupies in the field of production, the position (dominant or dominated) of the party to which it is most associated in the political field and, in all likelihood, the median political strand of its readership. As Bourdieu explains, the homology of the struggles taking place within each of the fields of politics, news production and news consumption draws a near-perfect correspondence between the polarities, dominant or dominated, in all of these fields.

Conventions of the journalistic field

But the field of journalism does not simply transparently reflect the struggles taking place in other fields across American society: the field of politics, citizenship, national habitus and social classes. As I have already discussed, the laws of competition proper to every field change the manner in which competition takes place from one area of life to the next. The minor variations in the social rules that govern each field slightly distort the larger social struggles they mirror (which, however, are homologous from one field to the next, as in the struggle between social classes) such that they may take on a shape that is not immediately recognizable for what they are. To adapt an example Bourdieu uses elsewhere, one cannot take for granted that USA Today’s readership can be reduced to like-minded groups of individuals who choose that news...

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119. Bourdieu makes a compelling case for French newspapers: « … le Nouvel observateur permet à tous les dominants dominés sous l’un ou l’autre des rapports possibles, intellectuels, jeunes ou femmes, de vivre la somme de leurs contestations nécessairement partielles comme la mise en question la plus radicale de l’ordre établi. En renvoyant ainsi les « vieilles luttes » aux vieilles lunes, il leur offre par surcroît les instruments et les plaisirs d’un snobisme inséparablement éthique, esthétique et politique, capable de concilier dans une sorte de pessimisme anti-bourgeois les apparences de l’avant-gardisme politique, qui conduit au populisme. S’il apparaît que la plupart des jugements qu’il porte sur le monde social n’ont d’autre fondement que l’opposition entre le « vieux jeu » et le nouveau jeu, et si la contestation de l’ordre social s’y réduit à la contestation des formes – celles de la politesse, de la politique ou de l’art établis –, c’est que les stratégies de subversion symbolique qu’imposent à certains les luttes de concurrence pour la succession, trouvent leurs limites dans la reconnaissance du jeu et des enjeux qu’elles supposent et produisent, c’est, plus exactement que l’ordre interne de la classe dominante dépend très directement de tout ce qui règle la structure du temps social, c’est-à-dire l’ordre des successions, au double sens … » (Bourdieu 1979 : 525-526).
source because they spontaneously agree with its politics. As I have said, the paper’s relative political neutrality also makes it more widely acceptable. It will not as easily offend the sensibilities of readerships of different political strands as would politically marked newspapers. Bourdieu argues that centrist or unclassifying publications provide ideal reading material for hotels or businesses with waiting rooms: dentists, hospitals, hair salons which accommodate guests of many different political stripes. USA Today enjoys a higher circulation precisely because it has no particular taste, color or mark. Hypothetically, many readers could simply enjoy its sports pages or its classified ads, as Bourdieu argues in another case. Thus the struggle for financial survival also pushes newspapers to voice opinions and adopt a coverage style that does not confine them to a marginal audience. They must cultivate a readership beyond their core audience. The mechanisms of competition ensure that the tone of the debates laid out by major publications does not stray too far from the consensual center of politics and markedly overlap despite their respective niches. Importantly then, the imperatives which organize the field of news production and the field of news consumption, though homologous, cannot simply be reduced to another variable, such as the struggles within the political field or the field of social classes.

The pace of the newsroom and publication deadlines also exert their own pressures on news format, as Hall demonstrates (Hall 1978). Newspapers opt to cover news or events that

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120. “L’indépendance relative des opinions politiques des lecteurs par rapport aux prises de position politiques du journal tient ainsi au fait que, à la différence du parti politique, le journal propose une information qui n’est pas exclusivement politique (au sens restreint que l’on donne ordinairement à ce mot) et, produit multiple, offrant des proportions très variables, de la politique (internationale et intérieure), des faits divers et du sport, il peut faire l’objet d’un intérêt relativement indépendant des intérêts spécifiquement politiques. En outre, obéissant à la recherche consciente de la maximisation du nombre des lecteurs, précieux pour les profits qu’ils apportent par l’achat du journal mais aussi pour le surcroît de valeur qu’ils procurent aux yeux des annonceurs, les organes de presse que l’on peut appeler omnibus … se doivent d’éviter méthodiquement tout ce qui peut choquer et rejeter une fraction de leur public actuel ou potentiel, c’est-à-dire au premier chef les prises de position proprement politiques (écartées aussi, pour les mêmes raisons, de la conversation occasionnelle entre inconnus – au profit de topiques garantis, comme la pluie et le beau temps) ...” (Bourdieu 1979 : 516).
“merit the public’s attention” and exclude others which they deem unworthy of their consideration. In this sense, newspaper coverage shapes social reality and defines it. It determines what scandals, debates, social actors, political claims and struggles warrant the public’s attention and for how long. Newswriters confer particular attention to unusual events, those “which are ‘out of the ordinary’”; events presenting “primary or cardinal news value” (Hall 1978: 53, italics in original). Media pundits, like politicians, think tanks, intellectuals and those advocacy groups who enjoy the relevant symbolic resources (legitimacy generally expressed as a function of funding and access to the press) create “events,” give them meaning by inscribing them in a preexisting field of social, cultural, political or economic debate. Events have only virtual social meanings, horizons of possibilities which may or may not be realized depending on who appropriates them, and how social actors relate them to existing problems and concerns. Thus social actors encode events with relevant meanings by telling stories about them:

If the world is not simply to be represented as a jumble of random and chaotic events, then they must be identified (i.e. named, defined, related to other events known to the audience and assigned to a social context (i.e. placed within a frame of meaning familiar to the audience … This process of ‘making an event intelligible’ is a social process – constituted by a number of specific journalistic practices, which embody (often only implicitly) crucial assumptions about what society is and how it works (Hall 1978: 54-55).

In the process of production, each news source’s editorial policies intersect with the “availability” of news. The media needs news. This has never been truer than in the age of continuous information. Online sources and 24 hour news-channels such as CNN and Fox News strive to be the first to ‘break news’ to their audiences and thus require, in light of the competition, continual updates to their content. However, as a story lengthens over time, news editors are likely to judge that it will lose its cardinal news value. Entman et al.’s (2009) study of
the media’s “accountability gap” suggests that the American media moved news of American military casualties in Iraq away from the headlines as the war extended over time and, presumably, as the deaths of American service members became ‘old news.’

In 2003, a 6-month sample of page-1 stories in the [Washington] Post produced 27 reported combat deaths in Iraq. In 2004, 7 months of coverage produced 235 accounts of combat deaths, and in 2005, as the escalating insurgency created greater chaos and misery, 111 deaths were reported in 7 months of coverage. Finally, during the first 7 months of 2006, the Post noted 40 combat casualties in page-1 stories (Entmann et al. 2009: 692).

Significantly, the authors show a pattern of steady erosion of front page coverage of US deaths in Iraq from 2004 onwards even as the total fatalities continued to increase. Entman also argues that the news outlets over-reported “good news” - indicators that met the administration’s definition of “progress” in the war effort even while the total “costs of the war” accumulated and should have suggested a more critical evaluation (2009: 691). For instance, they only gave passing coverage and little follow up to the pessimistic conclusions of a report produced by sixteen intelligence agencies (NIE, National Intelligence Estimate) working for the administration which painted the alarming portrait of a steadily deteriorating security situation in Iraq.

Not content to fall prey to the race against the clock, the field of journalism also sets certain conventions that reporters feel obliged to follow such as the “distinction between ‘fact’ and ‘opinion’” which leads to the deontological standards “of impartiality and objectivity” (Hall 1978: 58). This professional ethic of the journalistic field insures that information relayed to the public is “whenever possible, grounded in ‘objective’ and ‘authoritative’ statements from ‘accredited sources’” (Hall 1978: 58). For this reason, the media continually accesses, interviews, interrogates and reports the statements of those social actors and institutions possessing vast resources of symbolic capital: that is, social actors who dominate their respective
fields such as politicians, high-level bureaucrats, think tanks, intellectuals, and advocacy groups. One study clearly reveals how the US news media over-accesses sources - individuals and organizations - who structurally dominate social space.

A 2002 study carried out [by a German firm: Media Tenor] indicated that the three major US network news operations at ABC, CBS, and NBC used news sources that were 92 percent white, 85 percent male, and, where party affiliation was identifiable, 75 percent Republican. Big business had thirty-five times more representatives than labor, and Latinos, Asian Americans, and Arab Americans were almost invisible; “experts” came from primarily elite institutions and rarely non-governmental organizations, and the established political party and executive branch were strongly favored. (cited in Kellner 2004: 54, note 25).

Not oblivious to the pressures of news production and the deontological conventions of the journalistic field, the state as well as actors in civil society have learned to take advantage of the media’s insatiable demand for news content. Government officials hold “pre-scheduled” press conferences and briefings, (Murdock cited in Hall 1978: 57), while NGOs and think tanks cater to the media with press releases on the conclusions of recent studies or to take a public position on an ongoing debate, crisis or event. Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International and Médecins sans frontières also frequently turn the press into a public platform, as do the Heritage Foundation in the US, and the Fraser Institute in Canada. “The result of this structured preference given the media to the opinions of the powerful is that these ‘spokesmen’ become what we call the primary definers of topics,” and in fact set the tone of further discussion on the issue (Hall 1978: 58). In so doing, the media most forcefully contributes to defining the “legitimate problematic” in society, that is the scope of meaningful debate (Bourdieu 1979: 465, author’s translation).

Lastly, the deontological conventions of the journalistic field may have impacted the debate on the War in Iraq in a more insidious way as journalists were not only content to cite
the powerful; it also seems that they may have tended to uncritically reproduce the elite’s culture of foreign policy analysis.\footnote{121} Embracing political realism’s rejection of moral considerations in global politics (see Aron’s critique in 1962, 1973, the legalistically inclined press gave scant attention to arguments which opposed the war in Iraq on moral grounds (Nikolaev & Porpora 2009).

The issue is that if the newspapers don’t really suggest alternative perspectives, or if criticism against the administration’s viewpoint and the war is not overwhelming, this is because the media do not translate or evoke a real picture of public opinion, as Hall suggests. News stories are “indexed” to “power blocs” within Congress and the major state institutions (Bennett, et al. 2007). So if terms like torture are seldom employed, the euphemized alternative terms like “scandal” and “abuse” reflect the political economy of discourse production and prohibition, from the political system through the media and into public opinion. As Bennett et al. write about press coverage of the Abu Ghraib photos aired on April 28, 2004 on CBS, the terms “abuse” and “mistreatment” appeared with “overwhelming” frequency over “torture” (Bennett et al. 2007: 92). Out of 895 news articles from major US news organizations “torture standing alone as a primary label”\footnote{122} appeared in only one percent of the articles. Six out of 10 articles eschewed this label altogether (Bennett et al. 2007: 94). Alarmingly, this investigation into the

\footnote{121} This is one very interesting conclusion which supports what critical scholars of IR have been arguing for decades about the ideological commitments of ‘realist’ analysis to reason of state. As realist theory of global politics is taught from generation to generation it becomes normalized in the press’ analysis of foreign policy and diplomacy. Now finding themselves in positions of power (in the press), the former students of realist scholars in turn ensure that the theories of their former masters remain academically dominant because they are the “most relevant” in public debate. See notably Zalewski (1996) and S. Smith (2004) for excellent summaries of the critique of reification in classical accounts of IR.

\footnote{122} “Scandal in and of itself connotes little of substance about the actions in question except that they have become controversial … Torture has a stronger connection in both common usage and legal terminology to intentional behavior, particularly interrogation policies and practices, than do the terms mistreatment and abuse. The label torture also more readily suggests an alternative account of causality highlighting policy initiatives up the chain of command to the secretary of defense and possibly even the President, who, as described above, reviewed legal briefings advising that domestic and international laws against torture might not apply to unconventional combatants” (Bennet 2007: 90).
media’s treatment of the use of torture by the US armed forces in the war on terrorism covered the very period when Alberto Gonzales – author of a memo rationalizing the legal use of torture on ‘illegal combatants’ to whom the provisions of the Geneva Convention on Prisoners of War did not extend - was being considered by the Senate for the job of US attorney general. It is no coincidence, then, that the word “torture” made a striking resurgence in the mainstream media in the fall of 2005 precisely at the moment when Republican Senator John McCain and other influential politicians challenged the administration to “support an amendment further limiting the cruel and inhuman treatment of war detainees” (Bennett et al. 2007: 105). Simply put, the administration quickly defined the primary signifiers of the debate around the events at Abu Ghraib, which would be echoed by the press, until a rival narrative championed by an individual with sufficient reserves of symbolic capital, Senator McCain, emerged to present a counter-frame. At this time, three-quarters (77 percent) of news articles appearing in the Washington Post discussing McCain’s crusade against torture began to substitute “torture” in lieu of the euphemisms they had employed up until that point to describe the scandal at Abu Ghraib (Bennett et al. 2007: 105).

The point here, according to Bennett et al. is that the media followed the administration’s lead and refrained from employing the word torture in any significant fashion or to challenge the White House’s account that the “mistreatment” had been carried out by a “few bad apples”123 “despite considerable evidence pointing to the evidence of a torture policy” (Bennett et al. 2007: 74). Evidence that existed not only in documentary form124 but was equally “available and known to journalists at the time” the stories ran (Bennett et al. 2007: 83).

124. Bennett et al. survey this evidence in some detail, 2007: 84-89.
In 2007, the Bush administration successfully imposed its plan to send an additional 28,000 troops to Iraq (Campbell & O’Hanlon 2007: 5) as the dominant issue around which debate over the war in Iraq would continue (Entman 2009). Fearing political retribution from voters, the political opposition within Congress failed to articulate a systematic line of attack with which to undermine the credibility of the White House’s solution to the problems posed by the occupation and the continuing attacks on civilians and troops, even though the Iraq Study Group and the NIE’s reports both severely criticized American efforts in Iraq. As a result, the media accepted the presidency’s framing of the political conjuncture, escalating sectarian violence, and its “remedy” - an increased troop presence - to restore order (Entman 2009). Far from any notion of equilibrium between points of view, news coverage simply reproduced the political balance of power that existed between the administration and Congress, Republicans and Democrats (Bennett et al. 2007).

Thus the three laws of distinction, the pressure the clock exerts on production, and the professional conventions of the journalistic field ultimately shape the output of news. The same principles contribute to shape what range of public opinion a newspaper is likely to reproduce, as Stuart Hall (1978) demonstrates. Careful screening filters comments from readers and assures preeminence to those letters- to- the- editor that most faithfully resemble that newspaper’s own voice and that of its readers. Once again, the elective affinity between journalists, editors, newswriters and publishers, and their readers determines the tone of this exchange between news source and its public (see Bourdieu 1979 and Hall 1978). But this does not mean that newspapers only publish letters that agree or reinforce their editorial positions; once again, the conventions of the field prevent such a blatant show of editorial bias from taking place. This said, “balance” between two or more sides of a debate “is notional. It is not a statistical balance between all the
letters received, and certainly not a true index of the balance of opinion in the country or in readership” (Hall 1978: 121). For this reason, letters to the editor no more adequately represent public opinion than the news, stories and features filling the pages of newspapers exhaust the scope of potentially meaningful events and debates in the political, cultural and social landscapes.

I hope to have shown in this section that one cannot treat newspaper information as an objective representation of events and social struggles taking place within society. No more than one can consider viewpoints expressed therein as the epiphenomenal expression of class interests. The journalistic field institutes its own rules, codes of conduct and deontological conventions which forcefully contribute to determining the tone, voice and content of published news. At the same time, the structural homology among the fields does dramatically institute a correspondence, a sort of harmony, between the interests of readers, news sources, and the social actors to whom they give voice. For this reason, news content does mirror, and contributes to shape, albeit in a slightly distorted fashion, the larger social struggles taking place in other fields. An analysis of news content offers a window from which one can begin to examine these struggles; nevertheless the vantage point they provide is anything but omniscient or completely faithful to reality. Newspapers are both “structured and structuring,” to borrow Bourdieu’s classic maxim. As such, they do contribute to the politicization of events, and struggles, by putting them in the public eye. This comprises the methodological standpoint from which I will examine debates taking place in American newspapers and magazines over the war in Iraq. In the next section, I will consider some of the theoretical literature on the concept of social crisis which will help further flesh out the relationship between opinion makers, the public and the state.
Crisis

Social Crisis

Already faced with the military occupation of Afghanistan, the war in Iraq confronts the American public with an enormous toll of military casualties now surpassing 4,000 killed and 30,000 wounded (Fischer 2008: 1). If the war in Iraq has forced the American imperial society to renegotiate its place of symbolic and political dominance in global politics, it has equally strained relations between army and society, first and second-class citizens, a fact reflected by how the burden of war has weighed very differently on both dominant and dominated class fractions. I call “crisis of the imperial model of society” this simultaneous renegotiation of the US’ place of dominance in global politics, and the debate over the relationship between military service and citizenship domestically. Geopolitical conflict between the US and subordinate societies is mirrored by political conflict between first and second-class Americans within the imperial society’s field of citizenship.

The idea of social crisis is commonly understood as a sort of critical mass, an “accumulation of contradictions” (Hay 1996) which breaks the existing social structures and replaces them with new forms of collective life. In the telelogical tradition of history defended by Marxists and Hegelians, new structures or modes of production reflected a more advanced stage of history and its evolution toward a predetermined outcome that was inscribed, at least virtually, in the previous social universe (Marx and Engels 1970; Hegel 1979). It is now more common to theorize crisis along both its subjective and symbolic dimensions and not simply as a contradiction within the objective fault lines which destabilize a social system at a given moment in time (Hall 1978; Hay 1996; Gray and Oliver 2004). This symbolic turn in the analysis of crisis
attempts to account for a large-scale rejection in social science literature of the theoretical divide between the material infrastructure and cultural superstructure of society as evidenced for instance in the Birmingham school of cultural materialism (Hall 1978), the Gramscian current in International Relations theory (R. Cox 1986, Gill 1986 and 2003), and the cultural turn in international political economy (i.e. De Goede 2003; Peterson 2003; Paterson 2008; Best and Paterson 2009). The burgeoning literature in the field of critical security studies also provides pertinent conceptual tools through which to think of crisis. These may be studies stressing how “risk” and risk-prone subjects are identified and politically constructed (see Campbell 1998; Dalby 2002; Rasmussen 2004; Amoore and De Goede 2005) through processes of governmentality or through bureaucratic struggles pitting security experts against each other (Bigo 2005). Other scholars in the field of European Security Studies have stressed the implementation of “states of exception” in which the ‘ordinary’ rules of the political game are suspended (see CASE collective 2006 for an in depth survey of these approaches).

Colin Hay (1996) and Stuart Hall, for instance, both write that crises result from discursive constructions which attempt to interpolate the experiences of individuals in order to bring about social change. Rather than simply reacting to phases of acute, objective class struggle, social actors are themselves the ones who institute the moment of conflict, the moment of consciousness. Social and political actors sow webs of meaning between disparate events creating narratives of causality which purportedly illuminate or explain deeper social unrest or anxieties (as I explained in the previous section). Significantly, appeals to crisis question the legitimacy of the social order and pretend to offer a solution to the problem. As Hay (1996) argues, political actors accuse their enemies (the ‘guilty’), deplore the misery of their ‘victims,’ and identify a new guard of social actors capable of redressing the situation, ‘the champions.’
Citizens are thus called upon to identify to one or the other of these three roles in relation to their experiences of the social world. Crises appear to social actors as decisive moments or turning points during which they can force, resist and renegotiate institutional transformations.

Crises threaten the reproduction of the social order, as well as the niche of the individual in a larger set of material and symbolic parameters they have interiorized (Charle 2001). In many cases, these experiences will build astride the gap between shared myths and political reality as it unfolds for certain groups of citizens whose experience can no longer be encapsulated in predominant understandings or cultural narratives. As I will argue in chapters 8 and 9, this upheaval of social roles and traditional reference points can translate into experiences of collective anxiety and lead to durable animosity between different social groups (Charle 2001).

Some social shocks attain such intensity that the collectivity can no longer look at itself in the same manner as it did before. As Edkins writes, “trauma” breaks with the “linear” course of history and seems to remodel the familiar landscape (2002: 246). Expectations or representations about day to day life break apart, explode and seem incapable of conferring meaning to the world as it is rediscovered (Edkins 2003 et 2002). One commentator wrote about September 11th that:

It had become clear that the metaphysical certainties that were normally taken for granted could be destroyed. Security was an illusion; we were all exceedingly vulnerable. All of a sudden people are disorientated and shaken, the ‘black and white narratives, clearly defined emotions, easy endings’ on which western culture thrives replaced by an exhausting complexity in which they ‘feel unmoored, some rock of permanence and safety having given way to shifting sands, the familiar now eerily unfamiliar. Sirens sound different, scary and consoling at the same time. Work feels irrelevant. Normalcy as yet undefined’ (cited in Edkins 2002: 248).

Some cultural theorists note that the feelings of trauma and catastrophe sometimes mirror no ‘objective’ social metamorphosis (Gray and Oliver 2004: 7-8). This definition is pertinent to question “why” the gap between subjective impression and objective structures, but it remains
conceptually shaky. It is also extremely difficult to implement; for instance, how does one define the threshold between “tensions” and “crisis,” the latter arguably being a much more loaded term?\textsuperscript{125} Furthermore, if crisis is followed by “change,” how significant must this change be?

By “crisis of the American imperial society,” I mean nothing like imminent revolutionary transformation but rather, as Stuart Hall (1978)\textsuperscript{126} argues, a social and political process through which social tensions in the form of class competition escalate to a point where the state must decisively intervene to mediate them. The crisis – to be sure, there is only one crisis – mirrors fundamental changes within the balance of class forces: between the state, labor and industry. “… conflicts between the fundamental class forces, which hitherto formed principally on the terrain of economic life and struggle, only gradually, at a point of extreme conflict escalating to the level of the state, are now precipitated on the terrain of the state itself, where all the critical political bargains are struck” (Hall 1978: 318-319). However, it reverberates and manifests in the ideological superstructure of society, first manifesting as cultural anxieties within the political, cultural and ideological spheres of life in the form of “moral panic.” It is thus a crisis in “hegemony”. “The mobilization of legal instruments against labour, political dissent and alternative life-styles, all seemed to be aimed at the same general purpose: to bring about by fiat what could no longer be won by consent” (Hall 1978: 284). Finally, the crisis in hegemony forces the state to break away from its nominal position of neutrality towards class struggle and resolve class conflict by implementing an authoritarian posture. Significantly, this means that crisis does not necessarily lead to revolutionary transformation, but that it is an open-ended

\textsuperscript{125} I am indebted to Professor Rogers Smith for pointing this out to me in response to a paper I presented at the Penn Program on Democracy, Constitutionality and Citizenship’s Graduate Workshop in October of 2008.

\textsuperscript{126} Bourdieu and Colin Hay also understand crisis as a social process culminating in an institutional, or better yet an “exceptional” response, by the state to mediate or resolve class conflict, often through authoritarian means. But this need not always be the outcome, as I argue.
process resulting in institutional change and the creation of a new equilibrium between the social classes.

Hall’s definition is perhaps most pertinent because of its threefold focus on the cultural manifestations of crisis, class struggle and finally state intervention. It provides a scope and size to gauge what a crisis of the American imperial society should look like. In keeping with the spirit of Hall’s definition, I argue that crisis occurs in multiple fields at once: as competition for mobility or recognition in the field of social classes and the field of citizenship; within the fields of culture, ideological production and lifestyles wherein established meanings and certitudes are contested; and finally in the political field proper, where political actors bargain and vie for power. The crisis of the imperial society reverberates to all aspects of life through the system of homologies between the fields.

To recapitulate, tensions within each field are “homologous” or symmetrical because the seams tend to break roughly along the same axes from one field to the next. Because of the relative symmetry of the positions social actors and class fractions occupy from one field to the next, discrete competitions within each field tend to mirror, to a certain degree, larger social struggles. This said, cultural and ideological struggles are not epiphenomenal manifestations of more deeply-rooted economic conflict. Each field contains different forms of capital. Different issues and different stakes are relevant to each of them. As a result, the fields are also partially autonomous from each other. For this reason, when social actors further the interests of their class in general it is always as an indirect result of narrower struggles within a specific field, such as the academic field, the field of ideological production, or the political field (Bourdieu 1977). The effects of bureaucratic or ideological struggles, for instance, will trickle down and affect the balance of class forces in the field of social classes through the effects of the
homologies between the different positions, dominant and dominated, from one field to the next. As such the struggles within the journalistic field of debate over the war in Iraq reflect the logic of political debate as it relates to journalistic actors competing for preeminence within a field of publication and influence. They are political partisans, but the political distinctions they espouse are defined first and foremost in relation to the other journalistic actors in their field. Competitions between pro-war and anti-war editorialists in the *Wall Street Journal* and *New York Times* are not primarily a conflict between republicans and democrats, for instance. The partisan support newspapers offer, is always a homological function of the relationships between the political field and the journalistic fields, two rationales which can neither be separated nor reduced to each other (contra Bennett et al. 2007). The same can be said about much of the academic work I have reviewed over the course of the previous chapters, such as the late Charles Moskos’ advocacy of a resurrected citizen’s army. This republican political position on military service may espouse the same rationale as political partisans about the draft, but it also mirrors struggles within the academic field of military sociology over which kind of army the US should have. The same is true of Titunik and Snyder’s liberal feminism, Feinman’s feminist antimilitarism and Amaya’s postcolonial posture. Their positions are relevant to the academic field more so than they are to the political field proper. They are politically engaged, but again partisanship is mediated by the homologies between the academic fields and the political field.

Finally, it is only through the process by which the state directly intervenes to bring an outcome in class conflict that we can see whether social tensions have escalated to or near the point of crisis. A state or regime may successfully contain a crisis, but this success will entail an institutional response of some kind, either meeting some of the demands that may be asked of it, or by imposing an authoritarian resolution. And it is also in this sense that one must understand
the meaning of state intervention. It does not entail that the state or its representatives – that is those who sociologically occupy administrative, policy, or legal positions within the bureaucracies or court systems, the “noblesse d’État” – are simply ‘looking out’ for their class interests as a whole (see Bourdieu 1993 and chapter 4). The state is not the decision-making committee of the ‘bourgeoisie’. The modern state’s pretension to “universality” is directly tied to the symbolic practices through which jurists and ‘public servants’ instituted the state as a “fictio juris” all the while constituting themselves as a class capable of wielding ‘state capital’ (“capital étatique”) in the name of the universal interests of the populations under the state’s authority. Nominal neutrality or apparent deference to universal interest is in fact an effect or convention of the “bureaucratic field” (Bourdieu 1993: 61). But because of their nominal neutrality, bureaucrats and public servants must sometimes decide against the larger interests of their social class, as Hall (1978) and Bourdieu (1993) both argue. Again, as previously discussed, any benefits gained by members of other class-fractions, arising from policy decisions are secured only through the effects of the homologies; not the implicit intention of decision-makers127 (Bourdieu 1977).

An ‘imperial’ crisis

The crisis of the American imperial society takes place against the backdrop of intense competition within the field of global politics - in the event of war, in the present case - in such a manner that this competition simultaneously pits first and second-class citizens against each other, thus corresponding to the dual nature of ‘imperial’ rule I have outlined throughout the

127 This point in Bourdieu’s theory is debatable insofar as policy decisions at least explicitly aim to generate political outcomes. It is important to note that Bourdieu’s insistence on the partial autonomy of the fields aims to rectify earlier Marxist theoreticians’ tendency to reduce all political outcomes to dominant class interests. It is possible that Bourdieu and other contemporary scholars, such as Foucault (see my earlier comments), perhaps sometimes go too far to distance themselves from these ‘reductive’ positions.
dissertation. In the context of the war in Iraq, the crisis of the American imperial society signifies a profound renegotiation of the United States’ moral leadership or symbolic domination in the field of global politics. It is thus an ‘external crisis’ in the traditional sense of international relations.

However, it is also a crisis of imperial rule within the field of citizenship. As I argued in chapter 5, postcolonial theorists consider dominated minorities and liminal populations at the edges of the field of citizenship to be foreigners to the American body politic. The renegotiations of American citizenship in the country during the civil rights movement and the Vietnam War also transformed the hierarchy of positions within the field of citizenship. It was a crisis of the imperial form of society in the most profound sense. But as I showed in chapter 6, and will further demonstrate in chapters 8 and 9, even if the structure of military casualties incurred by each racial group in Iraq has reflected salient inequalities in the United States, political mobilization and opposition to the war is no longer occurring along, or challenging, racial lines of division as it did decades earlier. This transformation of the form of protest also reflects the military services’ increasingly marginal relationship to civilian society, as will become apparent in chapters 9 and 10. But the contemporary crisis of the American imperial society does stem from these transformations. It reflects an ongoing renegotiation of the relationship between the profession of soldiering and the meaning of first-class citizenship. As the structure of the armed forces has changed, the volunteer army has increasingly accepted into its ranks the former undesirables of society who were both guarded from first-class citizenship and service in the military except in times of crisis. In the following chapters, I will argue that military service has increasingly become the hallmark and function of second-class citizens, who bear a disproportionate obligation to sacrifice in order to receive basic privileges other well-to-do
citizens take for granted. More profoundly, I will show that the war has yet again thrown this question of inequality into the limelight of public debate leading to a polarization of the struggles in different fields.

Following Stuart Hall, I argued above that crisis spills over into other fields and manifests itself as displaced anxieties that can seem to have little to do with the question of sacrifice. In reality, this shift is possible because the different positions in the field of citizenship and the social groups that have traditionally occupied them are also associated to other symbolic positions or attributes (in the fields of culture, lifestyles and ideological production, for instance); through the effect of the homologies between the fields, as shown in chapter 5. In this sense, the dominant white male population could also signify the attributes of industriousness, reason, merit, talent, courage and republican virtue. In contrast to this, women or racial minorities would represent all the opposite characteristics: passion, cowardice or frailty, selfishness and sloth. These symbolic attributes in the field of culture also mirror concrete ways of “being American” in the field of lifestyles as I showed in chapter 8. Because of these homologies, the question of which citizens society would sacrifice in the war also raises the question of which values and lifestyles the conflict is supposed to consecrate. This explains the spillover effect I discussed above. These questions will figure prominently in chapters 8, 9 and 11.

As I will show, the internal logic of each field and the homologies between them are also mediated by the national habitus which structures the attributes (and positions) of the American national space in conformity with the United States’ dominant place in global social space and the wide horizon of possible meanings or significances it creates in America. As I argued in chapters 4 and 5, and will explain in chapters 8 and 9, the national habitus mediates between the structure of positions in one national space and the larger web of positions within global politics.
Through this refracting effect that was explored in chapters 4 and 5, destabilizations and upheavals in the US’ position in the field of global politics will generate anxieties about the changing hierarchies in the US’ domestic fields. Inversely, transformations within the symbolic hierarchy of the body politic will exacerbate anxieties about the imminent decline of the US from its high position of moral and political leadership. Thus the crisis of the American form of society is at once a renegotiation of the US’ place in global politics and a renegotiation of the hierarchies in the field of citizenship. More importantly, the crisis reveals fluidity along the border between that which is considered to be domestic and that which is considered to be foreign.

**Conclusion**

I argued in this chapter that we cannot approach discourse and texts published in the news media without looking at how they are shaped by larger social forces: the pressure of the newsroom, the deontological conventions of the journalistic field, and the unequal access of different actors and institutions to this platform. I also reviewed some major interpretations of the coverage of the news media and the war in Iraq. This showed that good-news had been over-reported as opposed to the real dilemmas faced by the administration in successfully prosecuting the war; that journalists failed to provide real credence to actors and narratives opposing the administration’s framing of the war and failed to provide space to arguments opposing the invasion of Iraq on moral grounds. The third section reviewed some of the literature and approaches that conceptualize social crisis. I concluded that the cultural materialist approaches of Colin Hay and Stuart Hall best provided the conceptual tools to distinguish crisis from other forms of social tensions by accentuating the central role of state intervention and response as the
sine qua non condition for employing the term, “crisis.” By using Bourdieu, I also provided a framework which theorized how one must think of the actions of the different social actors involved in the process of crisis definition: academics, journalists and bureaucrats; and whether or not their actions correspond to a sort of class agenda. The theory of homologies specifies indeed that class gains are only indirect products of struggles more specific to the fields within which the relevant social actors we follow find themselves engaged in competition for supremacy. Hence the state and other dominant symbolic institutions like the news media and academia are not simply subordinated to the interests of the dominant class but are also objects of struggle in contests for power. However, just as I critiqued Foucault’s analysis of the relationship between power and the social actors who wield it, I provided a (foot)note of caution stating that Bourdieu – in an effort to distinguish himself from orthodox Marxists in the academic field - may also have understated the ‘class agenda’ inherent in decisions enacted in the bureaucratic field and other institutions.

The two following chapters underscore the fault lines that the war in Iraq has both revealed and exacerbated in American society by examining primary documentary sources. These two chapters will ask what kinds of tensions are arising out of the war, and what is the best way to think of them. Chapter 8 will look at how anxieties over the unequal distribution of military sacrifice amongst citizens and the legitimacy of imperial war aims in Iraq have spilled over into other fields and have been translated in the form of anxieties over different lifestyles, different ways of being American, and struggles over the memory of the Second World War. The chapter will show how the imperial society’s national habitus is central to understanding how the war in Iraq is debated, and will seek to define how the crisis of the American imperial society is specifically a crisis of the “imperial” form of society. Chapter 9 will look at how soldiers
themselves debate the issue of military sacrifice in Iraq, the major social tensions they identify within American society and how they view the sacrifice they are risking in the war. These two chapters will lay the groundwork for chapter 10 which will look at how the state has been forced to respond to political turmoil over the inequality of military sacrifice and how the manpower demands of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have pushed the imperial form of society to the brink of crisis.
Chapter 8 - “Have We Fallen From Grace”?

Iraq, Sacrifice, and the Memory of the Second World War in American Newspapers

“This, now, if these men do not die well, 
It will be a black matter for the king that led them to it.”

Chapter 5 looked at the relationship between military sacrifice and the field of citizenship, while chapter 6 considered the propensity to military service of different class fractions according to diverse indicators of economic and cultural capital, race and geographic location. Chapter 7 began exploring how the American media debated the war in Iraq through secondary literature. In doing so, it first aimed to provide a working sketch of the operation of the journalistic field – to reveal which forces structured the debates and the processes of “mise en forme” (Bourdieu 1988) for those “events” that became “news.” Second, it discussed the steps through which social tensions, mediated through the apparatuses of symbolic production, escalated to the point of social crisis, providing a working definition of this term. Following this, the next two chapters explored how the experience of the War in Iraq has affected social conflict in the US, notably by looking at primary source material that reveals the fault lines provoked by the war. Whereas chapter 9 will focus on the narratives of soldiers and their relatives about the war in Iraq, the present chapter looks at how major newspapers and magazines have debated the issue of sacrifice in the war in Iraq. It focuses on the period extending from September 11, 2001 to November 4, 2008 - date of President Obama’s election-, and examines over 200 articles from *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *USA Today*, *Newsweek* and *The Nation*.
In reading the news articles, I asked myself how was the term “sacrifice” framed, and what meanings, both literal and metaphorical, were attributed to it? Was the distribution of military sacrifice across the field of citizenship a contentious issue? If so, which groups were identified as bearing the burden? What kinds of social disparities were identified? Were some social groups said to be ‘passing the buck’? How was the war in Iraq debated more largely? Was the sacrifice of American lives worth it or not, and why? What larger fault lines did the war expose about the meaning of American identity and culture, and its place in the world? In short, what did it reveal about the American national habitus? Finally, I believe that, in order to understand the present war and the social conflict it has caused, one must develop a more profound understanding of the war Americans expected to fight (see Charle 2001), or wished they were fighting. How did social actors employ allegories of the past to put into perspective the dilemmas and problems raised by the conflict? In this last case, I chose to focus on memorial references to the Second World War and the significance accorded to this past event for the present. I chose to focus on metaphors about World War II rather than Vietnam because they were more numerous. I also believed they provided a tougher means to test the conceptual power of the homologies concept, especially for anti-war narratives, than the obvious references to the Vietnam anti-war movement.

As expected, the chapter vividly illustrates that the conflict in Iraq not only divides Americans along political lines – whether or not they support the war and how it is prosecuted – and also that the conflict reveals and exacerbates the deeper struggles in US society over the meaning of citizenship, the problematic relationship of the US to the shared places of memory its citizens inhabit, and collective anxieties about American identity as an exceptional force in the world. I begin to make the case that the social anxieties over the possible decline of the
American imperial society’s position of dominance in global politics and the distress over the legitimacy of American sacrifice in Iraq also mirror an ongoing and painful renegotiation of the place of soldiering in the field of citizenship.

The chapter thus sets into motion the twin concepts of “national habitus” and “imperial society” to demonstrate they are fundamental to grasping how the war in Iraq is debated in America. As the first section explores how the inequality of military sacrifice has been debated in op-eds, editorials and opinion letters, it directly touches on how the imperial society distributes political obligation among its citizens. It then extends the critical inquiry into the meaning of volunteerism I undertook in chapter 6. The chapter then looks at the way in which debates over sacrifice have spilled over into the field of culture and lifestyles, exposing tensions between different ways of being American. The chapter argues that the national habitus establishes a unique system of homologies (see chapters 3 and 4) or correspondences between the shared ideals of the American imperial society in the field of global politics and their concrete material, manifestations in other fields. The second section looks at how the “principles of vision and division” established by the national habitus shape the common tropes of both pro-war and anti-war arguments in the political field of debate on Iraq. The third part of the chapter introduces the “field of memory” and explores how social actors employ narratives about the Second World War to debate American sacrifice in Iraq. Finally, the fourth section elucidates how the homologies between the different positions in the political field and in the field of memory enable us to see how statements on past wars are only veiled comments about the war in Iraq.

128 I use the political field in the large sense as a place where politics are debated. I designate something larger than the field of “professional” politics – that is the political arena proper – one in which both “profane” and “professional” politicians can participate and debate societal issues, but nothing as large as the considerations of political philosophy, which is more specialized. The field does enclose debate about political ideas and values, of course. See Bourdieu (1979 and 1988).
Economies of sacrifice and social fissures

The war in Iraq has exposed the fissures at the heart of the field of citizenship in a manner not experienced in decades. Newspaper debates over military sacrifice in Iraq furnish excellent quantitative and qualitative evidence that testifies to this polarization of the political field. As I have already said, this chapter deals with over 200 articles from The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, USA Today, Newsweek and The Nation, and is focused on the period extending between September 11, 2001 to November 4, 2008 - date of President Obama’s election. A similar newspaper string search with the keywords “war” and “sacrifice” conducted for the period between 1st January 1992 and September 1, 2001 returned only 29 articles in the New York Times, USA Today, Newsweek and The Nation, barely one third of the documents returned in the original string search, excluding the Wall Street Journal.¹²⁹ A quick glance at the content of these articles showed that almost none of them had relevance in a debate over army-society relations in the US. “Sacrifice” was metaphorical, and related to feature films or ongoing conflicts in the world. The sample for the period between 2001 and 2008 showed significant polarization of the political field that directly touched the divisive relationship between sacrifice and citizenship.

To explain this, it must be remembered that the US has been at war for nearly eight years on two fronts. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan mark the imperial society’s longest military engagements since the Vietnam War, and is prosecuted three and a half decades after the fall of Saigon. In the aftermath of 9/11, support for reinstating conscription ran high in the American population. 76 percent of those interviewed, supported this option if “it [became] clear that more soldiers [were] needed in the war against terrorism.” By the summer of 2005, this support had

¹²⁹ There were 115 articles in the original search excluding the Wall Street Journal.
plummeted to 27 percent. (Kane 2005: 1). The prospect of continued sacrifice no longer appealed to the American population on a personal or collective level. Opinion over the war in Iraq has since steadily eroded, especially amongst African Americans (Bennett 2007: 79, see also Kreps 2009). Between 2000 and 2007, the number of Black recruits plummeted a striking “58 percent”, as well as their overall support of the war (Denvir Jan. 15, 2009: 8). The New York Times (Oct. 26 2005) reported that African Americans opposed the war not only in majorities upward of 70 percent, almost double the number of White Americans. Furthermore, debate over the continuation of the conflict figured prominently in the political field and set the tone in both the 2004 and 2008 Presidential elections, as well as in the mid-term, 2006 Congressional elections during which dissatisfaction over the war in Iraq enabled the Democrats to gain control over Congress (Botsdorff 2009). Not only was he the first Black Presidential candidate in US history, but Barack Obama was also one of the first politicians of major notoriety to have opposed the war from the onset (Randall 2008/9), setting him apart from both his democratic and republican contenders, Hillary Clinton and John McCain, and increasing his share of political capital. American politics of the last decade have been defined by Iraq, a war that still has no end in sight, over seven years after the invasion. By contrast, in the 1990s, the US was only at war briefly in 1991 and again in 1998, and still only in an extremely limited manner. In this fundamental sense, the political field has been shaped by polarization over the war in a way it could not have been a decade earlier.

While never a serious issue in Presidential politics, the question of reintroducing the draft remained, beyond the collapse of public opinion in favour of this option, the subject of great public debate in the political field in a wide sense: newspapers (New York Times Dec. 8, 2005),

130 By the late summer of 2007, the New York Times notes that black enlistment has dropped dramatically, from 20 percent “among active-duty recruits” in 2001 to 13 percent in 2006 (Aug. 22, 2007).
think tanks, within government and amongst politicians such as New York Congressman Charles Rangell. To a degree, it mirrored a larger divide in American society over the usefulness of the war in Iraq. It showed as well the fault lines over the meaning of citizenship and the respective obligations incumbent upon citizens. As early as 2003-2004, while soldiers began to resign themselves to serving multiple combat tours in Iraq, journalists, editorialists and readers argued that the conflict in Iraq had given birth to two Americas (New York Times August 28, 2003; Wall Street Journal Jun 3, 2004). Though casualties were still relatively low, a year and a half into the conflict, and one month away from the 2004 Presidential election, Congressman Charles Rangell, Democrat from New York, wrote that the extensive deployment of the reserve forces and National Guards resembled a ―backdoor draft‖ (Wall Street Journal Oct. 11 2004; New York Times Dec. 8, 2005). As the conflict lengthened nearly into its fourth year with both service members and civilian casualties mounting, a 2006 Christmas editorial in USA Today denounced the moral disengagement of the American public from the war effort. “In Iraq”, the editorial wrote, “the troops are surrounded by hardship and a frenzy of violence. Back home, the frenzy is one of excess: shoppers battling for parking spaces in malls, snapping up everything from flat-panel TVs to the latest video games” (Dec. 22, 2006). On Memorial Day 2007, a USA Today editorialist added his voice to other journalists asking for civilians to share a greater part of the burden of war: “The lives of soldiers fighting in Iraq – or headed there, or just returned – have become tapestries of sacrifice not easily fathomed by Americans preoccupied this weekend with barbecues and holiday sales” (May 25, 2007). In October of 2007, as President Bush’s nearly 30,000 strong troop surge was underway, an American soldier returning from Iraq denounced “the disparity between the lives of the few who are fighting and being killed, and the many who have
been asked for nothing more than to continue shopping.” “The city parties on” he wrote in the New York Times, “America has changed the channel” (Oct. 20, 2007).

By January 2008, the disproportionate toll that the war was exerting on small and rural American communities with few prospects was finding its way into the pages of USA Today. Small towns like Lee, Maine, numbering 1,000, were thrown into despair by the loss of even one, let alone two, young men (Jan 25, 2008). Newswriters and readers argued that American cities were comparatively spared the price of blood because they offered greater prospects for employment. They were filled with colleges and students, bankers, and children of the country’s more affluent classes, who felt little real repercussions from the war (USA Today, May 25, 2007). News articles and op-eds recognized that greater opportunities to obtain economic capital directly translated into different habituses: class-strategies leading away from military service. These articles thus denounced how the reality of the urban-rural divide of sacrifice was also one of class divisions across geographic space. In this sense, the imperial society’s ambition of geopolitical domination in world politics exacerbated concern over the geographic subordination of the South and rural areas (and the economically disfavoured citizens who inhabited them) to the privileged city-dwellers. They denounced the fact that the unequal obligations in the field of citizenship toward sacrifice were stratified by geography within the very borders of the American imperial society.

The Nation and Newsweek further accused “Chickenhawks” like Dick Cheney of calling for sacrifice though they once avoided the draft (The Nation, June 7, 2004; see also Letters to the Editor in the Wall Street Journal May 5, 2007 for a similar argument). While the war squandered America’s resources in economic and human capital (New York Times July 6, 2007) the imperial society’s ruling elite gave large tax cuts that benefited other members of the dominant
class fractions and taxed those already dominated in the economic and cultural fields (New York Times Jun. 17, 2002; July 6, 2007). That all Americans did not need to sacrifice then raised the question of whether the war was worth fighting at all (New York Times Sep. 9 2003). New York Times editorialist Bob Herbert drove this point home:

[W]inning the war in Iraq] would require implementing a draft. It’s easy to make the case for war when the fighting will be done by other people’s children … If most Americans are unwilling to send their children to fight in Iraq, it must mean that most Americans do not feel that winning the war is absolutely essential (New York Times May 29 2006).

But the apparent bipartisan support expressed across many of the newspapers for reintroducing the draft is misleading when taken at face value. It needs to be recast within the logic of debate existing at the time within the political field in the imperial society. As I argued in chapter 3, each field regulates competition differently, and actors competing within a field must respect a certain set of rules in order to be successful. These rules both reflect the history of the field and the interests of the dominant actors within it. In this case, the political field was dominated by political and social actors close to the George W. Bush administration and by those who espoused its rhetoric and values. This dominant position equated support of US troops and military families to support for the President’s policies in Iraq. Maximum political rewards (political capital) came to those who appealed to the nationalist logic which dominated the political field. So if, strategically speaking, both opponents and partisans of the war could call for reintroduction of the draft, they did so for dramatically different reasons. In the former group, repeated calls for the institution of conscription enabled opponents of the conflict to sap support for the war by threatening the serenity of Americans who lived in a “golden bubble” – that is, citizens who could continue to go about their daily routines unscathed by the conflict (The
Nation, June 7, 2004). Interestingly, *The Nation* cast this strategy as one fraught with political danger and categorically rejected calling for the draft in order to generate opposition to the war. But in fact, contributors to the *New York Times* paid only lip service to the republican themes of duty and shared sacrifice in order to trap their political opponents in the contradictions of their own rhetoric: the fact that they supported the war but refused to pay the price they asked of others. In reality, the antiwar discourse attempted to make its position more acceptable to the general public by appealing to patriotic themes. Again, we must understand this political move in the prevalent discursive context in the political field. The administration and supporters of the war had successfully equated domestic opposition to the conflict in Iraq to condemnation of the soldiers in Iraq and sometimes, even support for the ‘terrorists’:

I’ve spent a year in combat in Iraq and have firsthand knowledge of the facts. If you run from Iraq, the radical Islamists will take over that country, and it will become a base of operations for worldwide terror. Then the terrorists will return to Afghanistan in full force, and the casualty count there will increase … All the whining and complaining will not change the facts. We in the military are willing to face the challenges before us to win. *All we ask is that Democrats keep their mouths shut and stop encouraging the enemy to kill us.* (USA Today Jan 29, 2007, emphasis added).

But the republican side of the debate on sacrifice also counted in its midst supporters of the occupation of Iraq who called for conscription because they envisaged it as the only viable strategy for America to win. For example, an “inactive” marine corporal wrote in a *Newsweek* column that the draft needed to win in Iraq must be nothing like the Vietnam style draft, where men like the current vice President [former vice President Dick Cheney] could get five deferments … No, I am talking about a fair and universal, World War II-style draft, with the brothers and sons of future and former Presidents.

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131 I discuss this and similar rhetorical strategies at greater length in the concluding remarks to chapter 9 and present some relevant secondary literature on discourse analysis as conceived of by Bourdieu and the Cambridge School of historians of ideas. See also Krebs (2006).
answering the call (and unfortunately, dying, as a Roosevelt and a Kennedy once did) on the front line (Newsweek Sept. 10, 2007).

Partisans of this pro-war republican conception of sacrifice tied their political opponents’ lack of support for the war to the loss of traditional values and linked them to other upheavals in the fields of culture and citizenship. The most extreme partisans of American interventionism exclaimed that “affluence,” liberals, democrats, postmodernism and “white guilt” had made America soft to the point that the general population no longer had the courage to consent to the price of blood.\footnote{Wall Street Journal (Dec. 8, 2006 and May 2, 2006); USA Today (Jan. 29, 2007). In this article, a letter to the editor notes: “Jack Valenti's column asks, "Does the next generation value the sacrifice of war?" An equally important question we should be asking: Do our current and future leaders value the sacrifice of war and the importance of pursuing alternatives to war? … A high standard of living with rampant consumerism has pampered us all and softened our brains.”}

But this republican or traditionalist logic also set them apart from the liberal supporters of the war who reminded readers that military sacrifice today was a personal choice rather than a political obligation. These neo-liberals, or conservative liberals, defended a “voluntary” conception of sacrifice in line with a liberal ethic of individual action.\footnote{New York Times (Jun. 17, 2002; Feb. 16, 2003; Dec. 26, 2004).}

It seems there are some in the crowd who bemoan loudly that Americans are not sacrificing equitably in this war effort. My understanding of the concept of “sacrifice” implies a voluntary giving of oneself … Perhaps the administration can provide a list of worthy organizations and some inspiring words of encouragement to Americans to give a sacrificial monetary gift to show their support (Wall Street Journal May 21, 2007).

Beyond monetary donations and involvement in the “war of ideas,” The Wall Street Journal noted the involvement of NGO’s such as “the “Semper Fi fund, the Archdiocese (Catholic) of the military and the more well known USO[. They] are just a few of many privately funded groups helping the military serve the health, spiritual and entertainment needs of our
soldiers and their families” (May 21, 2007). An earlier article recounted a multitude of similar individual initiatives, ordinary citizens and business leaders who had spearheaded the construction of a military hospital like the Center for the Intrepid, adjacent the Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio, Texas. The Center was built with 50 million dollars donated by some 600 000 Americans, and now provided leading-edge rehabilitation treatment and care for mutilated soldiers. An additional 8.3 million dollars in donations saw the completion of the Fisher House residences. These homes now accommodated the families of wounded service members convalescing at the Brooke Center. Articles lauded other individuals who opted to establish programs and networks providing sports, recreation and emotional support for soldiers and their families (Wall Street Journal Feb 10, 2007). The point here is that articles in the Journal, USA Today and Newsweek stressed the individual choices made by service members to enrol in the armed forces\textsuperscript{134} and the advantages of a combat force composed of loyal, professional soldiers.

The opposition between republican and liberal conceptions of political obligation suggested that the debate over the war exposed the larger struggles taking place across the fields of social classes, culture and citizenship. Nowhere was this more evident than in debates over the politicization of grief - that is, debates over the merits of the soldiers’ sacrifice and thus, whether one could “support the troops” all the while opposing the war?

During the Vietnam War, Americans were very conscious of the inequalities inherent in the selective service pool, and these inequalities gave rise to powerful arguments against the war (Baskir & Strauss 1978). At first glance, in a liberal economy of sacrifice, the disproportionate sacrifice of any segment of society cannot as easily be construed into a pattern of institutional or worse yet, programmed, discrimination. This is true insofar as service in the armed forces is now

voluntary rather than compulsory. True or false, the distinction also affected how US war deserters seeking asylum in Canada were received by their neighbors up North: “Bob Rae, a Liberal member of [the Canadian] Parliament, acknowledged that the response of the Canadian public to the recent deserters’ cause was muted compared to its reaction at the time of the Vietnam War, partly because the current newcomers are volunteers, not conscripts” (New York Times July 13, 2008, emphasis added).

For grieving parents and relatives of dead service members the question had profound ramifications on how they were to make sense of their loss. Some combat veterans of Iraq and members of their families resented being construed as “victims” of an unjust system. They reaffirmed their commitments as “volunteer” soldiers, “privileged to serve,” dedicated to carrying out the “just cause” (USA Today, letters, Jan. 29, 2007, emphasis added). Many families who had lost loved ones in Iraq felt they would betray the memory of their sons or daughters if they were to condemn the war: “How do you decry that which someone has chosen to do with his life? How does a mother dishonor the sacrifice of her own son” (Wall Street Journal Aug. 18, 2005; also Newsweek Aug 15, 2005)? The high school guidance counsellor from Lee, Maine - a small town that had lost two young men to the carnage in Iraq - believed discussion over the legitimacy of the war was difficult “because [the] families [of fallen soldiers] want them to be heroes” (USA Today, Jan. 25, 2008). But The Nation put it more bluntly: “People naturally are reluctant to conclude that their country did the wrong thing, that young people died for a pointless cause” (Oct. 4, 2004). The point here was that the individualization of the ethic of sacrifice foreclosed the ability of opponents of the war to mobilize the traditional rhetoric of victimhood which takes the soldiers’ conduct in wartime and places it out of their hands, or, in other words deresponsibilizes them. And as military service becomes a choice
rather than a compulsory duty, criticizing the war can be more easily construed as an argument against the soldiers *personally*. As I stated earlier, making this equation is what many supporters of the war have done to silence critics (see letters in USA Today, Dec. 17, 2004).

This conceptualization of sacrifice as an individual choice, however, also operates by counteracting the social diagnostic of unequal enlistment patterns identified by opponents of the war or partisans of the draft. In this sense, pro-draft and anti-draft positions within the political field of debate over the war are intimately tied to homological positions, republican and liberal, in the field of ideological production. But supporters of the draft do not necessarily break along a democratic/republican line. Support for the draft is tied to political strategy, not necessarily to party affiliation. However, this strategy of appealing to patriotism and the ideal of shared sacrifice is dictated by the dominant argumentative logic of the political field in the context of the war. This also means that the republican/liberal divide over sacrifice does not completely mirror the progressive/conservative divide between the news sources themselves. *The New York Times* and *Wall Street Journal* opposition sets the tone here between liberalism and republicanism while *Newsweek* and *USA Today* both showcase a strong leaning toward the republican vision of sacrifice without questioning the war itself. If *The Nation* opposes both the war and the republican conception of sacrifice, one way to look at this is to suggest that the choice is dictated by the logic which pushes it to distinguish itself from the *New York Times*, the newspaper closest to its own political positioning within the journalistic field (at least amongst those presented here), and evidently the dominant progressive publication in the US field of journalism in terms of circulation.
Table 8.1. Homologies in the field of newspaper debate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Publication</th>
<th>Position in the journalistic field</th>
<th>Political field of debate</th>
<th>Field of ideological production on the issue of sacrifice</th>
<th>Field of support for the draft</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USA Today</td>
<td>1 (Dominant)</td>
<td>Generally favorable to the war</td>
<td>Ambivalent(^{135})</td>
<td>Ambivalent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wall Street Journal</td>
<td>2 (Dominant)</td>
<td>Generally favorable to the War</td>
<td>Liberal (choice)</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York Times</td>
<td>3 (Dominated-Dominant)</td>
<td>Opposes the War</td>
<td>Republican (should be shared)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newsweek</td>
<td>4 (Dominated-Dominant)</td>
<td>Generally favorable to the war</td>
<td>Republican (should be shared)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Nation</td>
<td>5 (Dominated-Dominated)</td>
<td>Opposes the war</td>
<td>Liberal (choice – a bad one)</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“Amor fati”: Volunteerism, national habitus and symbolic violence

The opposition between republican and liberal conceptions of political obligation certainly shapes the logical polarities of the debate, but as I argued in chapter 5, one cannot reduce the contest to a clean struggle between these two conceptions of citizenship. In effect, the weight of both of these traditions defines the polarities in the fields of citizenship and national habitus and accounts for some contradictory dispositions in the discourse on sacrifice (see chapter 4). For instance, the contemporary notion that soldiers *choose* to enrol in the military suggests an economic rationale at work rather than a concept of political obligation. At the same time, the commonly accepted idea that service men and women are still giving their lives to their country preserves the cultural prestige formerly associated with *duty* and the republican virtue of abnegation. However, the symbolic capital that heroic qualities formerly enjoyed are all but lost

\(^{135}\) See my remarks in chapter 7 on the specificity of *USA Today*’s dominant position and its non-classifying political positions.
if we are to suggest, as some do (Nation, 7 June 2004), that fighting, really, is simply about getting a job, that it expresses destitution and lack of opportunity rather than strength, courage and nobility of character.\textsuperscript{136} In effect, it is difficult to truly reconcile patriotic themes and heroism with a culture of liberalism founded on the implicit premise that one obeys the state and its laws simply out of fear and self-interest, rather than for the accomplishment of virtue (see Macpherson 2004).

The \textit{USA Today’s} 2006 Christmas editorial featuring the story of Captain Bodenhamer reveals what can only be described at first glance as the paradoxical cohabitation of republican high-mindedness with the \textit{insouciance} of liberal consumerism. It also thrusts into the limelight the paradox of volunteerism and how we think of military service as a choice. The editorial begins by running though the usual gamut of themes. It denounces the inequality of sacrifice, the frivolity and short-sightedness of Americans who feel no effect of the conflict and the administration’s sorry handling of the war:

\textit{In the Iraq war, the burden has been borne disproportionately by soldiers such as Bodenhamer and their families. \textit{Little sacrifice has been demanded of most Americans even as the casualties mount} (nearly 3,000 U.S. military personnel killed to date), along with the bills ($400 billion and counting). \textit{Like shoppers who go on plastic-fueled sprees in December and worry about the bills later}, the U.S. government is financing the war on credit and passing the bills to future generations (USA Today, Dec. 22, 2006, emphasis added).}

But two paragraphs later the editorial turns on its head seemingly satisfied that in the end, the soldiers’ sacrifices are perhaps fundamentally about fighting for a society that enables the ‘many’ to go about their shopping while the ‘few’ risk their lives:

\textsuperscript{136} The author refers to soldiers as: “\textit{In theory, the draft would give us an army of "citizen soldiers," young men--and probably women--drawn from all parts of society, instead of the current Army, which draws heavily on military families, poor people and--to judge by Charles Graner, accepted into the Army in his early 30s despite a long history of violence and instability--wife-beating losers.}” (emphasis added).
[Bodenhamer] says he and others are proud that their "fighting has helped protect the American way of life, allowing them to shop and live normally" (emphasis added). For all his pride, Bodenhamer believes that if the broader war on terror is to be pursued successfully, it will require Americans making more sacrifices. He's right. That will require more than a call to go Christmas shopping (emphasis added).

Following the editorial’s tacit acknowledgment that inequality is perhaps an integral part of what “normal life” means in America – something to be defended - it is no longer clear what “making more sacrifices” can actually mean for the rest of the population. It suggests that patriotic rhetoric - vague appeals to shared sacrifice - represents in fact nothing more than republican traces that have sedimented in the fields of culture and national habitus, in the schemes of collective self-understanding. They exercise a powerful emotional appeal, as the unceasing references to shared sacrifice suggest, though practically speaking, they seem to be devoid of both meaning and consequence.

Bodenhamer’s own statements mirror the contradictions that develop throughout the editorial. Take the first statement. It ultimately recognizes the disparity of duties that the imperial society calls upon Americans to perform: “[Bodenhamer] says he and others are proud that their ‘fighting has helped protect the American way of life, allowing them to shop and live normally’” (emphasis added). Almost immediately the second statement nuances the first, “For all his pride, Bodenhamer believes that if the broader war on terror is to be pursued successfully, it will require Americans making more sacrifices.”

Following Bourdieu, I want to explore the sociological underpinnings of these statements and see how the apparent contradictions between them throw into question how we think about military service as a choice. As I explained in chapter 3, Bourdieu argues that most opinions, actions and decisions are adjusted to one’s habitus: a view of the world tailored to one’s
condition or place in the world, rather than some desire or need tailored to one’s individual essence. Habitus reflects one’s working knowledge (rather than perfect knowledge) of how one fits into larger social structures, with their principles of division and signification, symbolic boundaries and the class hierarchies they institute; knowledge one has acquired through practical experience of these structures and the concrete obstacles they pose to oneself. These social boundaries are significant because they statistically determine the horizon of real possibilities open to individuals and groups. As such, many opinions and life-choices reflect little more than the tacit acceptance of one’s social destiny:

As Bourdieu further elaborates, though individuals like to tell stories about how they came to discover their vocations, they unconsciously gloss over all the constraints they encountered along the road which progressively reduced the range of possibilities opened to them. It is a common misconception that people make choices that transgress social boundaries; choices that would bring them outside of their world or away from their social condition of origin. In effect, if they decide between choices that ‘make sense’ and others that ‘don’t,’ it is because in reality the latter are inaccessible to them and their condition.

Les divisions sociales deviennent principes de division, qui organisent la vision du monde social. Les limites objectives deviennent sens des limites, anticipation pratique des limites objectives acquises par l’expérience des limites objectives, sense of one’s
Following the logic of “necessity made into virtue” (Bourdieu 1979: 195), I suggest that one must invert the order of Captain Bodenhamer’s two statements if one wants to grasp the social logic that is really operating behind his opinion on sacrifice. Reversed, the story goes like this: the captain feels that most Americans are not throwing their weight where their mouths are, and this general refusal of sacrifice undermines the possibility of success in Iraq. But at the same time he recognizes or accepts that this is the kind of society he is fighting to defend. Read in this order, the two-part statement which comprises Captain Bodenhamer’s opinion of the war on terror comes off for what I believe it really is: a typical case of “amor fati” (Bourdieu 1979: 195, note 7). The officer is not so much expressing a profound belief than he is tacitly acknowledging a social fact on which he has little control; he is proud to defend society the way it is, because no other choice is given to him. Pride is the only feeling he can realistically express without throwing into question the purpose of his social existence, the worth of his service, the dangers he faces, the trials his family and him must endure: the arbitrary social logic that makes sacrifice the necessary choice of some rather than others.

As I will further argue in chapter 9, this form of ex-post facto rationalization is typical of the self-discipline imposed by the forms of cultural and symbolic violence operating in American society. Because of the predominance of both republican and liberal worldviews in the fields of citizenship, culture, politics, and ideological production, they greatly bear down on individual identity and how one envisages their relationship to society at large. Operating at the level of individual habitus, as an embodied sense of the social structures of society, American citizens’

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137. Love of fate.
perceptions can reflexively adjust their own conduct and beliefs so that they better conform to social norms and in particular to shared ideals. Captain Bodenhammer’s unconsciously chooses to desire that which he must anyway suffer. In fact, Bodenhammer’s choice to accept the ‘dis-service’ of his fellow citizens closely relates to the wider theme of volunteerism and the place of the American imperial society in global politics. If the American brand of liberal republicanism which shapes the fields of citizenship and political culture carries such weight on individual and collective identity, that is also because it is directly tied to how American citizens conceive of the United States as an exceptional force or dominant society in the field of global politics. In other words, it relates to the national habitus.

As a reminder, chapter 4 argued at length that the national habitus translated the imperial society’s position of dominance in global politics into the schemes of collective self-understanding and, to a large degree, it also shaped the contours, polarities and capital density within each field. For instance, not only were the limits of the political field differently demarcated in both the US and France, to some degree this also occurred as a result of the larger law of distinction in global politics. As I showed in chapter 5, for instance, competition within the global sphere had led rival imperial societies to organize differently their domestic social structures to adapt and face the pressures of the international environment (see also Chapter 3, and Charle 2001). Remember that competition against the Nazi and Soviet imperial societies during the Second World War and the Cold War had fundamentally altered struggles within the field of politics, citizenship and cultural and ideological production in the US, facilitating the triumphant rise of neoliberalism. If I actualize this argument, I can argue that Captain Bodenhammer’s submission to the coercive effects of a liberal symbolic violence operates at the

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138 As I will argue in the concluding remarks of this chapter, the fields are also partially shielded from the effects of global politics, though they are all internationalized to a greater or lesser degree. Partially autonomous from each other, so too are the fields partially autonomous from their mirror-images in other societies.
immediate level, through the predominance of the discourse of “choice” in the field of culture. “I choose to serve”; “they choose not to serve”; “I choose to accept their choices.” One can also reformulate the third proposition to account for the republican element in liberal culture: “It is my (republican) duty to accept their (liberal) choices.” The very strength of “choice” also stems from its association to the presumed cultural and political superiority of the American imperial model of society over other nations, states and political entities. “Here, in the United States, We choose (whereas in Iraq they do not).” As such the national habitus retranslates the logic of global competition into principles of “vision and division” which define how members of the citizenry view themselves and other societies. Interestingly, then, Captain Bodenhammer’s decision to serve is a choice(/duty) to defend the choice(/duty) of his fellow citizens to “consume” (serve) - whether they be in line with his choice or not. Indeed, I advanced in chapter 5 that sacrifice means a religious offering to consecrate a principle. In this case, it is a way of life by which individuals choose “to shop and live normally.” In the editorial, to “live normally” presumably refers to a life “unburdened” by service to the state and community if citizens so chose. Interestingly then, the object of military sacrifice decants into a thousand different possible significations in the field of culture: a life of duty, as opposed to a life of choice; a life of service as opposed to one of consumerism. As debate over sacrifice is also a fundamental debate over which way of life must be consecrated, it spills over and exposes the larger fissures in the different fields in American society. Yet all the while dividing citizens, national habitus also delimits their common horizon of possible understandings on why the war is being fought.

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139. See the testimony of specialist Elen Gerhardt in chapter 9 for an example of the national habitus at work in precisely this fashion.
140. To “live normally” seems to mean to “live unburdened” of what was traditionally considered one of the paramount republican duties: military service. If citizens must now “shop” to live normal lives, would this mean that "Consumption" has replaced both the Vita Activa and Vita Contemplativa in the hierarchy of virtuous lives (see Arendt 1998)? Like labour which inhibited action, both action and contemplation are now considered burdens which prohibit consumption.
Years after the invasion of Iraq, a discussion between Jim Lehrer and President Bush over which sacrifices should be made for America to achieve its victory in Iraq, showed the intense connections between collective ideals (national habitus) and the field and spaces of lifestyles in America.

Later, Mr. Lehrer asked the President if Iraq is indeed part of a struggle for the future of America. "why have you not, as President of the United States, asked more Americans and more American interests to sacrifice something? The people who are now sacrificing are, you know, the volunteer military - the Army and the U.S. Marines and their families. They're the only people who are actually sacrificing anything at this point." President Bush: "Well, you know, I think a lot of people are in this fight. I mean, they sacrifice peace of mind when they see the terrible images of violence on TV every night. I mean, we've got a fantastic economy here in the United States, but yet, when you think about the psychology of the country, it is somewhat down because of this war. Now, here in Washington when I say, 'What do you mean by that?,' they say, 'Well, why don't you raise their taxes; that'll cause there to be a sacrifice.' I strongly oppose that. If that's the kind of sacrifice people are talking about, I'm not for it because raising taxes will hurt this growing economy. And one thing we want during this war on terror is for people to feel like their life's moving on, that they're able to make a living and send their kids to college and put more money on the table. (Wall Street Journal Jan 17, 2007).

Interestingly, the abstract principles that President Bush alleges that soldiers are sacrificing to secure such as “freedom” and “peace of mind” decant into the concrete manifestations of a way of life: material affluence, social mobility illustrated in the theme of sending “kids to college,” and an existence altogether insulated from the “bad news” associated with the outside world as represented on television. This is consistent with Captain Bodenhamer’s earlier assertion that he was fighting in Iraq to allow Americans to go about their shopping unburdened by the worry of service to country. As Marcuse and Adorno both argued, the “cultural industry” (Adorno and Horkheimer 1972) and the phenomenal productive capacity of “advanced industrial societies” (Marcuse 1968) have succeeded in reifying their esthetic and philosophical ideals by lending them the concrete, material forms displayed in cultural productions, merchandise catalogues and
car commercials, and the lifestyles they offer (see Gartman 1994, also Paterson 2007). The absolute, intuitive and seemingly natural concordance between lifestyles,\textsuperscript{141} objects of consumption and the imperial society’s collective ideals are reinforced through the national habitus’ rejection of the lifestyles of other materially deprived, and thus less free societies. They are imposed domestically by the cultural industry’s quasi-monopoly on symbolic production and the \textit{practical experience} citizens have of the relationships between shared ideals, objects of consumption and lifestyles. Together they account for the powerful appeal that principles like “freedom,” “rights” and “peace of mind” exert on the imperial society’s citizens. In short, the national habitus ensures a concordance, or homology, between the practical aspects of day to day life in the imperial society and the ‘superior’ symbolic principles they signify (see Table 8.2).

\textit{Table 8.2. Homologies collective ideals, representations, politics and lifestyles}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Society</th>
<th>Field of national habitus</th>
<th>Field of support for the War</th>
<th>Field of Ideological Production</th>
<th>Field of Culture</th>
<th>Field of Lifestyles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Freedom</td>
<td>Support for the War</td>
<td>Liberal (volunteerism)</td>
<td>Consumerism and personal advancement</td>
<td>SUVs, shopping malls, flat-panel TVs, social mobility, going to college, piece of mind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Freedom</td>
<td>Support for the War</td>
<td>Republican (shared sacrifice)</td>
<td>Thriftiness, life of Duty and service to the republic</td>
<td>Consciousness about the War effort and for the sacrifices of service-members, volunteer work, duty towards historical memory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>Despotism</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Submission to</td>
<td>Cheat, lie, and</td>
<td>Material</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{141} See chapter 3 for a short list of some secondary literature on the space of lifestyles in the US.
| authority | destitution | destitution, torture chambers, acid baths, amputations, summary executions, Islamic veil |

It is in this manner that the turbulences of one society’s movement in global social space also generate the sorts of collective anxieties that editorialists and contributors express about the American way of life. As I have shown, legions of news articles link the theme of sacrifice to oppositions between shopping, frivolity, consumption, thrift and austerity. In doing so, the polarities of the debate in the field of lifestyles and culture mirror the divisions between republican and liberal arguments in the field of ideological production. This is the result of the homologies between the positions in both fields. They show, for instance, that thrift-minded news contributions (the field of culture) seem to be most aligned with a republican conception of citizenship which hails duty as the mark of a virtuous life as opposed to the more self-indulgent, liberal consuming-subject. Mediated through the national habitus and the system of homologies between the fields, the crisis of the American imperial society has begun to manifest itself as increased struggle in the field of lifestyles in American society (see chapter 3, and Bourdieu 1979). These different and competing visions of the ideal American way of life are also shaped by the national habitus’ competition in the field of global politics. As competition in the field of lifestyles is also a struggle to impose a dominant or virtuous way of life, it is simultaneously a judgment on the most virtuous form of citizenship, and that most likely to realize the individual and collective aspirations of freedom (service or choice). In sum, struggle between first and second second-class citizenship continues to be debated by “other means” in a contest over first
and second-class lifestyles. So even the struggles in American domestic life are directly tied to the global turbulences of war and peace. Social anxiety and its corollary moral panics over sacrifice not only mirror a crisis of American society, but a crisis of the *imperial* form of society in the dual sense I outlined in chapter 7: crisis as tensions at the heart of a field of citizenship and an intense renegotiation of a dominant society’s place in global social space.

**The political field of debate**

The understanding of the United States as a symbolically dominant society and the divisions which it instills in contrast to other nations underscores, to some degree, the common understanding of both partisans and opponents of the war in Iraq, and how they evaluate the worth of the sacrifice of American soldiers. Thus the common principles of the national habitus, and the dominant position it reflects, define the polarities at both ends of the political field. To illustrate, the following letter to the editor of *USA Today* can stand in for many other pro-war arguments.

Sept. 11, 2001, was a wake-up call for my generation, and the murder of American hostage Nick Berg was a reminder. In times of crisis, Americans have been able to summon a single-minded determination to overcome threats to freedom … Now, once again, our world is under siege by madmen. Our military is fighting a war against an enemy committed to the destruction of our way of life. Our enemy does not recognize borders or respect human life… Yet today, it seems that many people are unwilling to pay the price to defend our freedom. The politicizing of the 9/11 commission, the constant political name-calling and the partisan handwringing over the war on terror in an effort to win an election are disgraceful. The American people and the world deserve better. We must act to win the war on terror decisively. We must be prepared to sacrifice whatever is necessary to achieve this goal, and we should tolerate no less from our leaders on both sides of the aisle… (May 17, 2004).

Do note that the writer is not solely concerned with the threat that the “madmen” pose for American lives, but the threat they pose to “our way of life.” “We must be prepared to sacrifice
whatever is necessary to achieve this goal,” the reader adds (emphasis added). The call for nothing less than total war draws our attention to the religious significance (see Bouthou 1991) he confers upon the symbolic objectives of the conflict and thus to the sacrifice of the soldiers who offer their lives to secure them.

Another Memorial Day letter to USA Today reveals a similar logic at work: “May all Americans pause this Memorial Day to pay due homage to our military servicemembers who steadfastly defend our rights -- even when some of us choose to remain uninformed, disengaged and totally self-absorbed” (May 28, 2004). Soldiers are not fighting so much to protect the threatened lives of their countrymen as their abstract “rights.” Yet again the sacrifice of American lives is made in the name of a sacred way of life. Also note how the theme of decline looms over the excerpt. The lamentation that Americans have become disengaged from their republican, civic duty, marks yet another common staple of the pro-war position I shall expand on in detail in the next section.

Interestingly, antiwar activists engage their political opponents on very much the same principled grounds. Take another letter from USA Today.

Nick Berg's hooded killers have reminded us that we are not the only ones capable of perversion, torture and killing. So, now what shall we do? We can all join hands and follow the shrill voices of anger and revenge down the hellhole of retribution, or we can turn our attention to the values we stand for: truth, freedom and respect for human dignity. We can remove ourselves from the occupation of Iraq, which was foisted upon us under false pretenses (May 17, 2004, emphasis added).

The letter begins by inverting the “cardinal” oppositions (Bourdieu 1988) laid out by the national habitus’ doxa (Chapter 4). In doing so, it reflects back on the United States the barbarity...
usually associated with the enemy’s stereotyped national habitus, thus destabilizing the “common sense” narrative of exceptionalism in two major ways. In the obvious sense, it does so first by defining America in a fashion that fundamentally clashes with collective self-representations and their official myths. But the very form of the sentence: “we are not the only ones capable of…” drives this point home in a deeper way by insisting that US imperial violence is anything but an incidental occurrence. The US does not simply mimic, in exceptional circumstances, the brutality ‘so common’ of other societies. Here, the reader casts the US as the primary signifier of violence; in this case, by indulging bloodshed, Nick Berg’s assassins are emulating what is portrayed as a fundamentally American trait.

The letter also lays out another cardinal axiom of the anti-war position. The Bush administration abused the good faith, sorrow, and legitimate fears of the citizens and their soldiers when it claimed that Iraq possessed weapons of frightening power. Interestingly, the letter ends by appealing to the same conceptual universe from which supporters of the conflict infer their justifications. Only this reader argues that the war twists and corrodes the American values of “truth, freedom and respect for human dignity.” Opposition to the conflict does not necessarily proceed by rejecting the symbolic arguments of the war’s supporters, but by reaffirming them. The war and the sacrifices it entails are condemned because they fail to elevate or celebrate the collective ideals of the republic, the symbolic depositories of its virtue, which, in turn, ensure that its citizens can lead virtuous lives.

Take another anti-war letter published in the New York Times:

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143. Former supporters of the war who had become disenchanted either by the death toll of US soldiers or by the administration’s management of the conflict increasingly recuperated this argument to justify their reversal on the issue. For instance, the theme became increasingly frequent in USA Today and Newsweek features on the war as the conflict and the occupation lengthened.

144. In a survey conducted by the Program on International Policy Attitudes “large majorities [of respondents] regarded the United States as a “moral leader” that “should not lower itself by engaging in torture or cruel or degrading treatment” (Bennett et al. 2007: 84). These results were published in the summer of 2004, a year and a half after the U.S. invaded Iraq.
Thomas L. Friedman writes (column, Feb. 1), "Many Americans, including me, believe in their guts that removing Saddam was the right thing to do, even if the W.M.D. intel was wrong."

I would like to voice what I think many other Americans believe: that this country isn't supposed to sacrifice countless innocent civilians and hundreds of America's finest young men and women; lose the respect of the rest of the world; and abandon the moral high ground because of what anyone believes in his gut.

I believe that we are supposed to fight when attacked (we were not); when we are imminently threatened (no evidence for this); or to defend what's right (as the first President Bush did in the Persian Gulf war). The leadership of this country should question the wisdom of pre-emptive war. And Mr. Friedman should give more weight to facts and not his gut feeling (Feb. 5, 2004, emphasis added).

As in the previous statement, the letter takes up the theme that no threat justified the invasion of Iraq, though the rhetoric of its opposition to the war is not nearly as polemical as its USA Today counterpart. Beyond the wasted lives of patriotic young Americans, the author’s arguments against the occupation are also deeply invested in a sense of American identity as an exemplary force in the world.\textsuperscript{145} As in the previous example, one can suggest that some Americans reject the war because it perverts and compromises the standing of their society in the moral hierarchy of nations. In effect, the antiwar letters I have examined suggest that some opponents of the war fear that the immoral conflict will push the imperial society from its position of symbolic and moral dominance. The letter’s final assertion\textsuperscript{146} that Americans also fight to “defend what’s right,” is just as ambiguous. All the while rehabilitating the category of “just war,” the letter remains unclear on what exactly places the First Persian Gulf War in the former category and not its contemporary counterpart. These ambiguities only strengthen the sensation that anti-war positions share a suspicious resemblance with the axioms so characteristic of the pro-war positions.

\textsuperscript{145} “This country isn't supposed to … lose the respect of the rest of the world; and abandon the moral high ground.”

\textsuperscript{146} “I believe that we are supposed to fight when attacked (we were not); when we are imminently threatened (no evidence for this); or to defend what's right (as the first President Bush did in the Persian Gulf war).”
Table 8.3. Homologies. Debate over the war: ideals, representations, and support for the war

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Society</th>
<th>Field of national habitus</th>
<th>Political Field of Debate over the War</th>
<th>Representation of USA</th>
<th>Representations of Iraq</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Freedom</td>
<td>Supports the War</td>
<td>Morally dominant; humane, just society; freedom from cruel and unusual punishment, due process of law</td>
<td>Perverted, cruel, arbitrary,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Freedom</td>
<td>Opposes the War</td>
<td>Fallen, morally compromised, twists American values of freedom and human dignity, violent and perverted</td>
<td>Iraqi civilians are victims</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the final analysis, national habitus delimits a common horizon of “social reference points” (Charle 2001) that, each in their own way, partisans and opponents of the war are fighting to defend. Thus if arguments against the war often seem to bear a disturbing resemblance to their pro-war counterparts, it is precisely because they share in a common heredity: the schemes of collective identity and the principles of division consonant with the imperial society’s position of symbolic dominance in social space. Indeed, this position draws out the common space these social actors inhabit.

The next section further develops how the national habitus and the principles of division it instills underscore the common axioms of life in America by looking at the field of memory, a terrain upon which social actors contest the meaning of the Second World War. I argue that the same cardinal oppositions which shape the struggles in the field of political debate over the War in Iraq polarize the different narratives that clash in the field of memory. I will show how the national habitus underscores institutea unique system of correspondences, or homologies,
between the positions in different fields. This will illustrate how the imperial society’s position of dominance shapes even collective representations of the past.

**National habitus, the field of memory and the structural homology of spaces**

The shadow of the past weighs over the present with great force, either as an example to be repeated or as a tragedy that future generations must avoid as best they can. The common spaces of memory\(^{147}\) which citizens inhabit make up a fundamental element of their sense of self, their political culture and thus carry tremendous emotional weight. So important are these sources of primary understanding that the beaches of Iwo Jima, the plains of Normandy, and the jungles of Vietnam loom at every corner in the debate over the war in Iraq. They constitute powerful prisms or allegories through which one can view the conflict in Iraq and frame the public’s understanding of it. As historical precedents, we are told, set examples and confer lessons, the common places of memory secrete potent moral imperatives which social actors attempt to inscribe on the present. Thus the field of memory and the common places of memory within it become themselves objects of a symbolic struggle in the debate over America’s war in Iraq.

Recall one of the first letters to the editor of *USA Today* I examined earlier. In full, it read:

Sept. 11, 2001, was a wake-up call for my generation, and the murder of American hostage Nick Berg was a reminder. In times of crisis, Americans have been able to summon a single-minded determination to overcome threats to freedom. Nearly 60 years ago, Americans were asked to pay a heavy price in a place far more remote and desolate than Iraq: Iwo Jima. With a single voice and clarity of purpose, the

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\(^{147}\) On history and memory see Nora (1984) for the “common places of memory” of French history (author’s translation); Mosse (1990) presented the most influential account of “war culture” and memory of the First World War, also Charle (2001 and 2004); Kershaw (1997) on the memory of the Nazi past; Turner (2001) on collective “trauma” and the Vietnam War, see also Oliver (2006) on the memory of the My Lai Massacre; Edkins (2002 and 2003) presents an account of trauma and the politics of memory around September 11th 2001.
American people sacrificed more than 6,800 of our finest troops for an island in the Pacific a fraction of the size of Iraq. This was only one of many such sacrifices that the American people made to restore liberty to a world that was being threatened by madmen. Now, once again, our world is under siege by madmen. Our military is fighting a war against an enemy committed to the destruction of our way of life. Our enemy does not recognize borders or respect human life. So far, our sacrifice in money, material and, most importantly, lives has been much smaller than the cost of that one island in the Pacific. Yet today, it seems that many people are unwilling to pay the price to defend our freedom. The politicizing of the 9/11 commission, the constant political name-calling and the partisan handwringing over the war on terror in an effort to win an election are disgraceful. The American people and the world deserve better. We must act to win the war on terror decisively. We must be prepared to sacrifice whatever is necessary to achieve this goal, and we should tolerate no less from our leaders on both sides of the aisle. World War II is slipping into history. Will our leaders’ petty political differences allow freedom to join it? The souls of our fallen on Iwo Jima and in the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, Afghanistan and Iraq are watching (May 17, 2004, emphasis added).

Many of the themes in this letter are fairly typical of the memorial allegories of the pro-war position. Notice first how the Second World War serves as a moral baseline of just wars in general: “With a single voice and clarity of purpose, the American people sacrificed more than 6,800 of our finest troops for an island in the Pacific a fraction of the size of Iraq.” The link between Iraq and World War II is immediately stated, as is the implicit but unmistakable association of Saddam Hussein or Al Qaeda to Adolf Hitler, establishing continuity and thus justifying action: “This was only one of many such sacrifices that the American people made to restore liberty to a world that was being threatened by madmen. Now, once again, our world is under siege by madmen” (emphasis added). The justification for the present war is encapsulated as a call to action in the historical precedent which looms as a moral reproach over debate about the invasion and its ‘petty partisan-politics.’ Americans must resume the historical task on which they first embarked “sixty years ago,” of which defeating Iraq is but another avatar. The reading that Iraq and World War II are two episodes of the same story is laid out in the lament that the
values and lessons of former generations are “slipping into history”, with the bygone heroes of Iwo Jima reproachfully witnessing the decline.

In Peggy Noonan’s *Wall Street Journal* (Aug. 24, 2007) feature relating her encounter in the summer of 1991 with a Frenchman who had witnessed the Normandy invasion, the political recuperation of World War II to defend the occupation of Iraq is brought to new extremes.

He didn't welcome us because he knew us,” she writes. “He didn't treat us like royalty because we had done a New york Times thing for him. He honored us because we were related to, were the sons and daughters of, the men of the Normandy Invasion. The men who had fought their way through France hedgerow by hedgerow, who'd jumped from planes in the dark and climbed the cliffs and given France back to the French. He thought we were of their sort. And he knew they were good. He'd seen them, when he was young (emphasis added).

The reporter believes that like the French, one day Iraqis will fondly remember the sacrifice of American soldiers who gave their lives for their freedom. They will remember because of the “impression left by the character of our troops – by their nature and generosity, by their kindness. By their tradition of these things.” After invoking the “broad humanitarian aspects of the occupation”148 and the cliché of marines photographed with smiling children, she notes: “A funny thing. We're so used to thinking of American troops as good guys that we forget: They're good guys! They have American class.” The scandals at Abu Ghraib149 then bring

148. “We know of the broad humanitarian aspects of the occupation -- the hospitals being built, the schools restored, the services administered, the kids treated by armed forces doctors. But then there are all the stories that don't quite make it to the top of the heap, and that in a way tell you more. The lieutenant in the First Cavalry who was concerned about Iraqi kids in the countryside who didn't have shoes, so he wrote home, started a drive, and got 3,000 pairs sent over. The lieutenant colonel from California who spent his off-hours emailing hospitals back home to get a wheelchair for a girl with cerebral palsy. The Internet is littered with these stories. So is Iraq. I always notice the pictures from the wire services, pictures that have nothing to do with government propaganda. The Marine on patrol laughing with the local street kids; the nurse treating the sick mother.”

149. “Some say we're the Roman Empire, but I don't think the soldiers of Rome were known for their kindness, nor the people of Rome for their decency. Some speak of Abu Ghraib, but the humiliation of prisoners there was news
her to pause and reflect on the accusation that the US is but a new Rome, an argument she quickly dismisses: “The humiliation of prisoners [at Abu Ghraib] was news because it was American troops acting in a way that was out of the order of things, and apart from tradition. It was weird” (emphasis added). Immediately after, she notes the “stellar reputation” of American soldiers abroad, a far cry from the reputation of the Red Army soldiers who liberated (or perhaps imprisoned) the other half of Europe:

You could say soldiers of every country do some good in war beyond fighting, and that is true enough. But this makes me think of the statue I saw once in Vienna, a heroic casting of a Red Army soldier. Quite stirring. The man who showed it to me pleasantly said it had a local nickname, "The Unknown Rapist." There are similar memorials in Estonia and Berlin; they all have the same nickname. My point is not to insult Russian soldiers, who had been born into a world of communism, atheism, and Stalin's institutionalization of brutish ways of being. I only mean to note the stellar reputation of American troops in the same war at the same time. They were good guys... They're still good” (emphasis added).

The article carries a very strong message that American troops are moral, glorious or humane above and beyond the deeds they perform, and even against counterfactuals which it treats as mere exceptions to the rule. This provocative nationalism is best illustrated in the article’s closing statements. Rhetorically the author asks: “We should ponder, some day when this is over, what it is we do to grow such men, and women, what exactly goes into the making of them?” Americans, she believes, are bred from a particular stock (the image of growing suggests an organic process) which inherently provides them with the humanitarian virtues she lauds. In one word, they are exceptional. This affirmation is confirmed when she briefly ponders that the “soldiers of every country” may be capable of moral deeds, but immediately withdraws because it was American troops acting in a way that was out of the order of things, and apart from tradition. It was weird. And they were busted by other American troops.”
the concession by invoking the Soviet Army’s dark legacy in Eastern Europe. In the end, American troops are exceptional.

This article is doubly important in the way it contrasts the fallen soldiers of two armies, the Americans and the Russians, with appropriate symbolic roles: the unknown Liberator and the unknown Rapist. The national habitus instills a rigid symbolic barrier between the brutal deeds performed by the Russian Troops and the scandals at Abu Ghraib. In doing so, it avoids having to come to terms with the obvious realization that neither army’s soldiers could claim the monopoly on good and evil deeds. The torture scandals at Abu Ghraib appear so alien, so unthinkable to the journalist precisely because this un-American behavior should be expected of the enemy’s national habitus, not of American soldiers fighting and dying in the name of freedom and human rights. The symbolic boundary instituted by the national habitus in effect represses the actual and outstanding proximities between the armies of both Soviet and American imperial societies. One judgment remains in the end: Americans are the “good guys,” irrespective of context, policy of their government, or their actual deeds on the ground. American exceptionalism, grounded in the moral ancestry of the Second World War, has become the moral justification of the occupation of Iraq.

In these articles, World War II is constructed as a set reference for just wars to come, ones in which the ends justify the loss of American lives beyond the shadow of a doubt. Supporters of the war in Iraq transpose the categories of aggressors, victims and liberators from the consensual site of memory to the present conflict in order to suggest both generations, past and present, face similar moral dilemmas. Saddam Hussein is likened to Hitler and the Iraqis to the French while Americans reprise their former role. Table 8.4 synthesizes these symbolic relationships.
Table 8.4. The field of memory and memorial allegories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Society</th>
<th>National habitus</th>
<th>Image</th>
<th>Symbolic role</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>Freedom/ social mobility / merit / individual rights</td>
<td>Iwo Jima / Marine giving shoes to the kids / battle of Normandy</td>
<td>Liberator (not an empire)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nazi Imperial</td>
<td>Racial superiority/ birthright /</td>
<td>Auschwitz / death camps (implied through cultural over-determination)</td>
<td>Aggressor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Society</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imperial Japan</td>
<td>Racial Superiority/ birthright</td>
<td>The bloody defense of Iwo Jima</td>
<td>Aggressor (“no respect for borders or human lives”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soviet Imperial</td>
<td>Collective property/ no individual</td>
<td>“Unknown rapist”</td>
<td>Ambiguous ally/(enemy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Society</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>Despotism / inhumanity</td>
<td>“Beheading of hostage Nick Berg” / “barbaric”</td>
<td>“Madmen” / terrorism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the next section, I argue that the same cardinal oppositions which shape the struggles in the field of political debate over the war in Iraq polarize the different narratives that clash in the field of memory. I will examine how the national habitus institutes institutea unique system of correspondences, or homologies, between the positions in different fields. It will illustrate how the imperial society’s position of dominance shapes even collective representations of the past. More importantly, it will show how and why these debates about past conflicts are only transubstantiated narratives about Iraq, albeit in the form of a historical narrative.

Iraq by other means: national habitus and the structural homology of spaces

As I have shown, the imperial society’s national habitus retranslates the dominant position of America in global politics into the primary binaries or axioms that shape the struggles within the
field of memory as it did first in the political field. In the ideal-typical form, however, both of these fields impose distinctive objects of reflection and thus different logics of argument upon the social actors who engage within them (see chapters 3 and 4). The field of memory imposes the requirement that one thinks and argues in the historical form, over the merits of World War II, the worth of American sacrifice and the principles which underlay their victory against the Axis powers. In the strictest sense, this is not the place to debate 2004 democratic Presidential candidate John Kerry’s position on Iraq or 2008 republican Presidential candidate John McCain’s support of Bush’s troop “surge” (see chapters 7 and 10 on these questions); the refusal of professional historians to tackle the history of the present, thus arbitrarily casting it as a distinctive and separate object of reflection,\textsuperscript{150} best illustrates the different constraints imposed on argumentation in both fields. Yet the debates in the political field and in the field of memory employ sets of “cardinal” polarities defined by the national habitus and thus the American imperial society’s historical trajectory to dominance in global social space. The only difference lay in the fact that the different constraints and rules of engagement that both fields impose upon the contests within their borders may cast a shroud over the symmetry of the cardinal oppositions which define the polarities in both of them (Bourdieu 1988). But make no mistake: Hitler and other “madmen” who can stand in his place in the field of memory are nothing but Saddam Hussein under another name. These madmen occupy a homologous symbolic position in the field of memory to that which the former Baath leader held in the political field of debate over the war. As the overall structure of the cardinal oppositions defined by the national habitus remains relatively unchanged from one field to the next, they institute a unique system of correspondences between the positions in all fields so that one knows, for instance, how a

\textsuperscript{150} This distinction is reified in the academic separation of “History” from “Political Science” and the complementary diplomas those disciplines confer.
comment on the Second World War, or any other war, can closely mirror even an unstated position on the War in Iraq. Though some do, most of the examples I study in this case employ no such subtleties to disguise their positions on the invasion and occupation.

Two articles from Newsweek and USA Today can effectively illustrate not only how the primary signifiers are redundant from one field to the next, and thus the homologies they institute between them, but also how the cinematic imagery of past wars and contemporary war tales stabilize each other (see Couture 2010; Gagnon 2010 for contemporary works on these questions). For instance, Newsweek’s (Mar 18, 2002) early coverage of the invasion of Afghanistan entitled “Leave no man behind” chronicles the sacrifice of Sergeant John Chapman. Chapman and five other soldiers were killed when their squadron of American Special Forces was airlifted into the mountains of Afghanistan to secure the body of a Navy Seal petty officer “who had fallen from the chopper” when their Chinook helicopter had come under Afghan fire during a previous incursion:

Chapman laid down covering fire as his buddies tried to set up a defensive position behind some rocks. As he blasted away at the enemy, he was shot several times in the chest. He died fighting so his comrades would live … American soldiers do not abandon their dead and wounded on the battlefield. For Special Operators, the elite soldiers chosen to play the riskiest roles in combat, the warrior's code is a question of honor … Chapman's sense of commitment, while noble, was unsurprising in the band-of-brothers world of America's elite Special Forces … He gave his life for this man he was trying to save. It's beyond pride (emphasis added).

Historical analogies to great battles of the Second World War and overt references to Hollywood war films mentioned early in the article evoke the appropriate mental and cultural

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151. As Bourdieu writes, the “‘cardinal’ couples of antagonistic concepts” (1988: 52) within the field draw out the space in reference to which we recognize an author’s position. These points of reference will also delimit “through the intermediary of the homology (more or less consciously felt) …, for a determined thinker, the [very narrow] range of philosophical positions compatible with his ethico-political options” (Bourdieu 1988: 53, author’s translation).
universe on which the reader must draw. Though the references are more subtle throughout the remainder of the news feature?, the moral tale which the story weaves nonetheless draws its emotional appeal by alluding to director Steven Spielberg’s epic Second World War drama *Saving Private Ryan*. *Private Ryan* follows a squad of American soldiers sent on an impossible errand across German-occupied Normandy in 1944 to recover a young private who was separated from his unit during the Overlord air-drops. The wordplay in the article also mirrors the title of actor Tom Hanks’ follow-up to Spielberg’s success: *Band of Brothers*, a miniseries which chronicles a company of soldiers from the 101st Airborne Division’s experience of the war in the Battle of Normandy. In fact, as a news item, Sergeant Chapman’s story is worthy of the feature tv series? precisely because it evokes familiar themes in a familiar way.\(^{153}\) It will elicit strong emotional responses in readers because past cultural and media artifacts have already sensitized them to the themes of selfless sacrifice in times of war. The explicit references to *Black Hawk Down* and *We Were Soldiers*, and then the subtler references to *Private Ryan* and *Band of Brothers* also instruct the reader on how he should decode the text. This effect is possible because words and lexicon exist in multiple registers and universes of reference simultaneously\(^{154}\) (Bourdieu 1988). So the jargon of romantic militarism - words like “duty,” “honor,” and “noble” - carries, beyond the specific context in which it appears, the symbolism

\(^{152}\) “Operation Anaconda pales next to the bloodbaths of World War II like Tarawa and Iwo Jima, which cost thousands of GI lives. But for young Americans who know combat mostly from trips to the Cineplex, the battle scenes described last week by wounded soldiers were all too real, raw and shocking in their intensity. "Black Hawk Down" and "We Were Soldiers" are vivid, but fiction cannot begin to capture the true face of battle.”

\(^{153}\) Hall (1978) opposes this view as do Entman et al. (2009). Both argue that news value stems from the novelty of news items. Rather I suggest that a news product’s success will depend on its capacity to make a new story on a familiar theme, something that lends itself to the impression of being at once completely original all the while being perfectly redundant in the field of relevant references by restating at least part of the common tropes or themes which grant legitimacy; see Bourdieu’s critique of Heidegger’s “conservative revolutionary thought,” and how it draws legitimacy from the dominance of Kantian thought in the German philosophical field all the while giving the appearance of transcending neo-Kantianism, 1988. See also my methodological comments on these questions in conclusion to chapter 9.

\(^{154}\) “In fact, it is as naive to ask oneself what is the real meaning of words than to ponder, as with Austin’s expression, on ‘the true color of the chameleon’” (Bourdieu 1988: 87, author’s translation).
and emotional resonance it has acquired elsewhere, like in high-grossing war films. The polysemic word then more or less consciously transfers the universe of reference from the cultural catalogue of epic war stories to the particular war story appearing in the print media. This capacity of the word to resonate simultaneously in multiple contexts explains the puzzling sense that the reader already knows the story he is about to read before he even does.155 Because of the density of references to American triumph in WWII and the ennobling tales of sacrifice therein, it is hard to conceive of the Newsweek feature as anything but a veiled endorsement of the war. Albeit one that stems from cultural servility to the romantic conception of war (see chapter 9), perhaps more than a reflexive choice. This political position is structurally homologous with the one it occupies in the field of memory, as one can judge by comparing it to the other narratives I have already examined both in the field of memory and in the political field.

Take another example from USA Today (Dec. 21, 2006). Former World War II pilot and Chairman of the Motion Picture Association of America Jack Valenti’s piece, “Does the next generation value the sacrifice of war?”, laments that American youths are ignorant and ungrateful about the sacrifices of the Greatest Generation (his generation) and that they have paid little attention to Director Clint Eastwood’s 2006 Pacific War-era drama Flags of our Fathers.156

Watching this movie, watching ordinary young men performing extraordinary feats of heroism, broke my heart. They put to hazard their own lives not to win medals, but because their country was in danger. Why, then, a casual indifference to this story by

155. Thus the “great books” of Western culture do not so much speak to us because they tell of eternal truths but rather because they all tell the same story with minute variations, themes and different characters, and this because we are intimately familiar with the narrative before we have even read it. It is repetition which creates the illusion that the truth is eternal, as each student learns from the masters which have preceded him.
156. “The press has reported that Clint Eastwood’s Flags of Our Fathers, his masterly recreation of courage and fidelity to duty and country exhibited by young Marines in the bloodiest battle of World War II, has gone largely unattended by the youngsters of this day.”
so many young people? Maybe it's because we have been so benumbed by war, particularly this Iraq war, and because so few youngsters have worn a uniform.

Valenti then suggests that other readers concerned by the disaffection of the so-called “me” generation” from public duty educate their children by taking them on a war memorial tour. The author then reminisces once taking his then fourteen-year-old son to the Normandy American Cemetery and Memorial. To his boy, he says: "I wanted you to understand that these boys, who never knew you, nonetheless gave you the greatest gift one human can give another. They gave you the gift of freedom. They bought and paid for that gift in blood and bravery."

As they surveyed Omaha Beach from the cliffs above, Valenti added: “John it was very close, but remember those young boys never turned back, not one of them. They never turned back. They kept coming.” Finally he concluded: “My son seemed genuinely moved. We never spoke about this again until one day years later, he phoned me. ‘Dad, last night I saw Saving Private Ryan. You were right. They never turned back, not a one (sic). They kept coming.’ His voice trembled as he spoke” (emphasis added).157

While in Newsweek, the World War II film and TV references operate mainly at the level of the subtext, in Valenti’s USA Today article, the historical narrative’s reconstruction completely depends on the allegories provided by Flags of our Fathers and Private Ryan. Though it is not a piece about the War in Iraq, as an article celebrating the sacrifice of past soldiers, it nonetheless implicitly carries an “ethico-political position” (Bourdieu 1988: 53) on Iraq, even if the distorting effect of the field of memory veils it at first glance. However, the structure of the homologies among the fields provides the practical knowledge of how one’s

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157. Note that even Valenti’s account of the discussions with his son emulate the familiar narrative forms of Hollywood dialogue: repetition (“they kept coming”), the trembling voices of manly men who nonetheless manage to “remain in control,” and the reaction-shot of filming which is implied (even if we do not see it) in the awe expressed at the sacrifice of the US Rangers on Omaha Beach. See Couture (2010) on the reaction shot and fascist esthetics in American cinema.
positions in the field of memory complements a symmetrical position in the political field. As an ‘individual’ habitus assures the unity of one’s choices across different aspects of their lives, so too does it generate as sort of “theoretical line” directing the “choices one makes in the whole of the fields” assuring their relative consistency (Bourdieu 1988: 69).

Indeed, I have already come across those exact themes in pro-Iraq letters earlier in my cursory study of the political field. Valenti’s language is thus rife with clues: first his shock over the “lamentable detachment by the young among us to freedom's history,” then his use of romantic, nationalist, and virile imagery: “They bought and paid for that gift [of freedom] in blood and bravery,” and finally his exhortation that youths should remember that self-sacrifice is an edifying and “heroic” duty that needs to be remembered (and thus potentially emulated). The idealization of martial virility (heroism, bravery, selflessness), the importance of tradition and lineage; but also the sense of society’s decline, expressed in the ingratitude of youth toward the debt they have incurred with their forefathers - all evoke the most traditional conceptions of sacrifice as a civic duty, that I came across in other pro-war positions (see also chapters 5 and 7). This places Jack Valenti on the conservative edges of the field of memory and the political field. In the latter, he likely sides with supporters of the war in Iraq or with those conservative critics who believe they have been mislead by the President, though they sympathize with the ideological war aims of the conflict, such as “bringing freedom to the Middle East.” The national habitus and the relevant systems of oppositions, polarities and classification it generates provides a map of the homologies among the different fields, and thus enables one to predict with reasonable accuracy how a position in the field of memory mirrors a homologous “ethico-political position” in other fields.158

158 One Wall Street Journal’s (Jun 7, 2004) lucid, pro-war commentary on the political uses of the memory of World War II to justify the occupation of Iraq, breaks with many of the rhetorical tools typical of the political
If I can identify these homologies it is also because, in both the *Newsweek* and *USA Today* articles, the war on terrorism, historical conflicts, and their cinematic representations in movies about the Second World War become nearly interchangeable narratives. In the latter example, the author (and later his son) presents the *Flags of our Fathers*’ account of the battle of Iwo Jima, not as fiction, which it is, but as fact: “Watching this movie, watching ordinary young men performing extraordinary feats of heroism, broke my heart.” The same is true of the fictional *Saving Private Ryan*’ depictions of the Omaha landings which confirm the ‘reality’ of the tale the father had told his son: “You were right. [The soldiers] never turned back, not one” (emphasis added).

The point is not to dispute the factual correctness of the war film depictions but to illustrate the *mise en abîme* that occurs as the conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq are examined through the themes, clichés and moral lessons of the Second World. Because the dominant social representations of the past are themselves inextricably constructed and sustained by certain contemporary war films which depict World War II, looking to them for moral advice on Iraq, is position it espouses. Skeptics of the invasion of Iraq, he notes, quickly regret WWII as a moral enterprise unblemished by the doubts, considerations and second-guesses over the legitimacy of later wars, including Iraq. But when Americans of the ‘Greatest Generation’ entered the Second World War, he asks, could they really count on any more “stark moral clarity” of purpose than their descendants today, who wrestle over whether or not the invasion of Iraq was justified?: “Hmmm. Stark moral clarity about the Nazis and the Japanese? For the Chinese and British -- and Russians -- who had been fighting, respectively, the Japanese and Nazis for years, World War II had started long before the U.S. decided to enter it. Such was the "moral clarity" about Hitler in 1941 that we didn't declare war on him until after he declared war on us as a result of Pearl Harbor. Without that German declaration, there would have been many arguments about leaving Hitler to the Europeans and concentrating on those who actually attacked us’. The article concludes that the outcome of the War in Iraq will inevitably decide how historians will interpret the decision for war: whether they will gloss over the doubts, divisions, and protests over the recourse to military force to better romanticize the unity of purpose that brought Americans, and coalition members together to overthrow a brutal dictator, repeating the feat accomplished in the Second World War, or, if the coalition fails to achieve its political objectives, they will stress the contentious pretexts for invasion which engendered a house divided. This use of the Second World War narrative in fact serves to destabilize the moral genealogy created by anti-war partisans who seek to contrast the ‘good war’ against the Axis powers to the unjustified invasion of Iraq. By critically reexamining the past, he argues that like their forefathers, Americans today are faced with an *unclear moral dilemma*, and that they must choose which course of action they will embrace, not knowing how history will treat them. So in reality, this narrative restates the centrality of the World War II example as a tale of *moral courage* to be emulated: Americans must make a moral decision even when the stakes are not clear cut, as they never are. A reference all the more powerful that D-Day “will never be surpassed in courage.” This rhetoric places the article on the pro-war side both of the political field and in the field of memory.

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like standing between two mirrors and watching one’s image multiplied into infinity. In other words, we look to a contemporary movie about World War II for moral advice about a contemporary war. The historical fiction merely reflects the moral anxieties of the present, not lessons from the past. It is no longer a question of “art imitating life,” but also of life – as depicted in Newsweek and USA Today - imitating art, in Private Ryan and Flags of our Fathers. It is not enough to say that debate over sacrifice in Afghanistan and Iraq invariably builds on comparisons with past conflicts, and thus engages the field of memory. That field of memory is itself constituted through the simplified but hegemonic social representations of the salient historical events depicted in popular media. Because these past and present representations of war invariably cite one another as references, the historical romances they conspire to build over-determine the moral lessons which are to be drawn from both historical epochs, thus cementing the unity of signification between them, and closing the circle of interpretation. The national habitus, as a system of commonly held assumptions, reference points and classifications, underscores the density of intertextual references and the very ubiquity of the themes both in Hollywood war films and the representations of the war on terrorism disseminated by the print media. In another context, Bourdieu uses the image of a “house of cards” as a metaphor depicting how, in reality, each signifier in fact only refers to other signifiers rather than some essential, signified meaning. “It suffices to try to take one [of the cards] apart for the whole edifice to crumble” (Bourdieu 1988: 31).

The perfect collusion between the past and the present in these narratives, and their seemingly uncanny capacity to illuminate each other, stems from the fact that the present and the imagined past are in fact contemporaries. This is because the hegemonic schemes of historical

159. See Adorno’s discussion of this dialectical reinforcement between ‘real-life’ and the ‘cultural industry’: Adorno and Horkheimer (1974).
perception in the field of memory are in fact the products of the same historical period which has produced the current dilemmas they purport to illuminate; they are fashioned by the same set of assumptions, oppositions and reference points. The national habitus thus creates the illusion that the moral stakes in both the past and present are so perfectly attuned, and thus that eternal moral truths can be drawn from historical precedents to illuminate the present dilemmas that confront the imperial society.

Now allow me to examine a counter-example. As much as the Second World War becomes the central focus point for all wars which are just, it can also prove to be a powerful locus from which to launch a critical inquiry of self-awareness when the dominant symbolic paradigm is reversed. The October 14, 2007 *New York Times* op-ed, “The ‘Good Germans’ Among Us”, once again examines the conflict in Iraq through the prism of the Second World War, but completely turns the national habitus’ system of classification and division on its head to indict the American conduct of the War in Iraq. While the article runs through the litany of familiar themes – inequality of sacrifice asked of Americans, grievances against the better-equipped and lawless private military contractors – the column first presents a scathing indictment of the American recourse to torture in the War on terrorism:

By any legal standards except those rubber-stamped by [former attorney general] Alberto Gonzales, we are practicing torture, and we have known we are doing so ever since photographic proof emerged from Abu Ghraib more than three years ago. As Andrew Sullivan, once a Bush cheerleader, observed last weekend in The Sunday Times of London, America’s "enhanced interrogation" techniques have a grotesque provenance: "Verscharfte Vernehmung, enhanced or intensified interrogation, was the exact term innovated by the Gestapo to describe what became known as the 'third degree.' It left no marks. It included hypothermia, stress positions and long-time sleep deprivation.

The *Times* takes a huge political step by first rejecting both the administration’s claim
that the debate over the definition of what constitutes torture equals partisan semantics (see chapter 7), rather than a legitimate political issue at the heart both of legal and constitutional processes and American self-representations as a country fundamentally committed to the rule of law and the respect of human rights.\footnote{Still, the drill remains the same. The administration gives its alibi (Abu Ghraib was just a few bad apples). A few members of Congress squawk. The debate is labeled "politics." We turn the page."} The op-ed not only presents an unequivocal mea culpa by calling the "enhanced interrogation techniques" what they are, torture; but ventures further by condemning Americans’ attempts at self-delusion about how the war is really being prosecuted: “‘BUSH lies' doesn't cut it anymore. It's time to confront the darker reality that we are lying to ourselves,” the article opens.

But the op-ed builds its immense illocutionary force, and stands apart from the prevalent modes of framing the conflict in Iraq, by taking aim at the more fundamental structures of American society that permitted the war to happen in the first place: the failure of the social and political mechanisms which ‘ordinarily’ safeguard the democratic process, namely the media and the political elite.

I have always maintained that the American public was the least culpable of the players during the run-up to Iraq. The war was sold by a brilliant and fear-fueled White House propaganda campaign designed to stampede a nation still shellshocked by 9/11. Both Congress and the press -- the powerful institutions that should have provided the checks, balances and due diligence of the administration's case -- failed to do their job. Had they done so, more Americans might have raised more objections. This perfect storm of democratic failure began at the top.

However, it also eschews a common rhetorical device among opponents of the war and even among its supporters who have become critical of the administration’s conduct of the conflict.
As I have shown, this device opposes the deceitful cabinet members of the Bush administration to the devoted and selfless troops and the good people of America, who are only guilty of having been misled by their President. Here, the “people” are only guilty of patriotism. They are guilty of believing that Iraq posed a danger, that Saddam Hussein was part of Al-Qaeda’s terrorist plot, that he possessed massive stocks of armaments and was set on attacking the United States. In this evocation, only the institutions bear blame, but Americans remain unblemished as a whole. Significantly, the op-ed refuses this rhetorical exit strategy and calls on Americans to consider that they may bear collective moral responsibility for the conflict. “As the war has dragged on, it is hard to give Americans en masse a pass. We are too slow to notice, let alone protest, the calamities that have followed the original sin.”

Though the comparison is not spelled out in this context, the argument runs with familiar clarity for those who are versed in the history of the Second World War and the debates over the moral responsibility that “ordinary” Germans may have borne in being complicit to the Shoah. Both the article’s title and the allusions to the Gestapo in the article’s introduction and conclusion determine the possible ways in which we can decode its meaning. Between the lines is the tragic tale of the Weimar Republic’s collapse and its subsequent metamorphosis into the Nazi dictatorship; the failure of both the traditional elites and intellectuals to stem the tide because they had been seduced by Hitler’s promises of national regeneration through war and conservative revolution. It is the sad tale of the servility of all those who saw in Anti-Semitism and conquest a means to mend the social fissures which had ripped the German body politic at the seams. Ultimately, it is the tale of the fall from grace of all those “good” Germans who
watched and simply “did nothing.”\textsuperscript{161}

The article serves a powerful wake-up call to America by inverting the prism of memory through which newspapers view the moral dilemmas raised by the United States’ occupation of Iraq. The Second World War is no longer simply paradise lost, the “good war” that serves as a distant and nostalgic reminder of how far America has strayed from the Greatest Generation’s providential example, from the days of moral certitude and political unity. ‘This time, we are the Germans,’ the article seems to exclaim.

Our humanity has been compromised by those who use Gestapo tactics in our war. The longer we stand idly by while they do so, the more we resemble those “good Germans” who professed ignorance of their own Gestapo. It’s up to us to wake up our somnambulant Congress to challenge administration policy every day. Let the war’s last supporters filibuster all night if they want to. There is nothing left to lose except whatever remains of our country’s good name.

Even when employed as a moralizing tale to condemn the war in Iraq, victory against the Axis powers remains the “good” war and continues to operate as a moral beacon which will guide Americans in times of despair and uncertainty. Indeed, journalist Frank Rich continues to employ the same cardinal oppositions generated by the national habitus, used so effectively by supporters of the war. He has simply inverted how the relationship between the signifiers (Americans/Germans) and signified (liberators, freedom/aggressive war, tyranny) plays out when the historical analogy is \textit{transposed} from the field of memory to the field of politics. But he leaves their primary meanings unchanged as he finds them defined in the field of memory. The Germans ultimately remain the bad guys (the antithesis) and Americans the triumphant heroes

\textsuperscript{161} It is also the modern retelling of that most ancient of republican myths: how the collapse of the body politic’s civic virtue ushered in the fall of the Republic and opened the way for tyranny (see chapter 2).
(the thesis), as in the original story. And the moral analogy is effective precisely because of how strongly defined are the primary meanings of the narrative. Rich’s op-ed possesses shock value precisely because the symbolic roles of all the protagonists are so tailor-fitted to the actors of the drama and seem so natural in all other cases. This said, the symbolic reversal effectuated by Rich’s commentary, like previous antiwar allegories, is voiced in the familiar language of the imperial society’s fall from grace: “Our humanity has been compromised” and “There is nothing left to lose except whatever remains of our country's good name.” Like other opponents of the occupation, he condemns the war because of the injury it poses to American ideals, and the imperial society’s symbolic standing in global politics. In short, he surmises that this war has transformed the United States into a dystopian caricature of itself, as exemplified by the comparison to the Nazi imperial society (see Table 8.5).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Memorial Allegory</th>
<th>Image</th>
<th>Field of lexicon and cardinal binaries</th>
<th>Symbolic role of Americans</th>
<th>Symbolic role of Iraqis</th>
<th>Field of political debate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WWII - USA</td>
<td>Iwo Jima/ D-Day / Normandy</td>
<td>“Courage,” “honor,” “fidelity,” “band of brothers”/ “lamentable detachment by the young”, “World War II is slipping into history”; “single voice and clarity of purpose”/ “petty political differences”</td>
<td>Liberators</td>
<td>Victims of their dictator / French</td>
<td>Supports the war in Iraq</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WWII - Nazi imperial society</td>
<td>Waterboaring / “harsh interrogation techniques” / Abu Ghraib</td>
<td>President lied; “democratic failure began at the top” / The good-hearted American people have been duped; “we are practicing torture”; “nothing left to loose of our country’s good name”</td>
<td>Aggressors / “Good Germans” / “Gestapo” / Weimar Republic</td>
<td>Victims of Americans / Opposes the war in Iraq</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusion

This chapter has begun to show how “moral panic,” collective anxieties over the sacrifice of American lives in Iraq, and doubt over the vision of the American way of life as an exceptional force of good for mankind expresses a deeper crisis of the American imperial form of society. The roots of this crisis lie both in the ongoing transformation of the role of soldiering in American society, the ambiguities and contradictions of voluntary military service, and in their relationships to citizenship and political obligation. Because these themes will figure prominently in chapters 9 and 10, I leave them aside presently. Simultaneously, the crisis takes shape in the intense imperial renegotiation of the US’ place in global social space as the symbolically dominant society (see chapters 2, 7 and Bennett et al. 2007 for survey results on world opinion on the US). The invasion of Iraq under false pretexts and a now elusive or muddled victory have thrown this role of exceptional moral leadership into question. For now, I focus on this second, ‘international’ dimension of the crisis. To be clear, I am not arguing that we reduce social anxieties and struggles in the US to that society’s place in international relations. I am not arguing in favor of a reversed “second-image” analysis (see Waltz 1959), in which the social structures of states, political entities and communities can be reduced to their place in the international system. This crisis takes shape at the interstice between the domestic history of the US and the history of its place in the world, and I recognize that the border between these two spheres of life has changed historically – this is one of the main points of reflection of this dissertation (see chapters 4 and 5 on this question).

But the dilemmas confronting the American imperial society do share common roots in the United States’ historical trajectory to the fore of global social space. Indeed, the national
habitus translates the unique vantage point of the dominant position into a principle of violent symbolic division and competition against rival imperial societies and other nations. It first defines the “cardinal” binary between the dominant self and the dominated others into a host of derivative oppositions. As America takes on the symbolic role of the great liberator of Europe, in the same move its World War II rivals (and its ambiguous ally), Germany and the Soviet Union, become dystopian figures which stabilize the American imperial society’s identity as the exceptional nation. All of the national habitus’ other “principles of vision and division” (exceptional/banal; liberator/aggressor; moral/immoral; freedom/tyranny; progressive/civilized) are derivative transformations of the original statement. The dichotomies then define the possible polarities within the fields of struggle in domestic life, and the arguments social actors can produce in turn. These principles of division and the classificatory schemes they generate lie at the heart of debates about the legitimacy of the occupation of Iraq - struggles about the meaning of security, and contests over the way of life that the overthrow of Saddam Hussein is to secure. These axioms of division in turn trickle down and shape shock at the ingratitude of “today’s youth” over the sacrifice of their forefathers and debates about their hesitation to emulate the deeds of the Greatest Generation. Conservative supporters of the war are raising the specter of the imperial society’s decline if Americans abandon the values and traditions which have made its greatness. 162

So the problématique of the imperial society is distilled from its primary manifestation in the field of global politics and flows to the very heart of the social wounds that tear the fields of lifestyles, culture, memory, and citizenship at the seams. As Bourdieu (1988) argues, all social actors and the ideologies or political positions they espouse draw on a set number of binary

162. I return and further elaborate on this point in the general conclusion of chapter 11.
oppositions, which they in turn combine to produce “original positions” within the field. That social actors draw on the same set of meanings and oppositions provides both the basis for “a sociological definition of contemporaneity” (Bourdieu 1988: 31, author’s translation) and for the homologies which enable us to recognize how arguments on the Second World War closely mirror political positions on Iraq, even when they are unstated. Of another context, Bourdieu wrote:

None of the ideologues mobilize the totality of the available schemes, which never have, as a result, the same function nor the same weight in the different “systems” in which they inscribe themselves. Each of them can produce, with the unique combination of common schemes it mobilizes, a discourse that is perfectly irreducible to the others, though it is only a transformed form of all the others … a circle whose center is everywhere and nowhere (Bourdieu 1988: 36, author’s translation).

These “available schemes,” this primitive doxa (Bourdieu 1979), are generated by the national habitus corresponding to the American imperial society’s position of dominance in global social space. Even Frank Rich’s op-ed in the New York Times which compares the American context to Nazi Germany draws on the same sets of primary oppositions. But in transposing the historical analogy to the political field, he inverts the traditional relationships between the signifiers (Americans / Germans) and the signified (the symbolic roles of liberators and aggressors). This symbolic reversal, also commonly effected by the Vietnam / Iraq comparison, reflects back to America the distorted mirror-image of rival imperial societies, Nazi and Soviet, who, each in their own way, mirrored America’s claims to exception, but always as dystopian caricatures of her ideals (chapter 5). The war in Iraq, the torture of detainees at Abu

163 Music provides an interesting analogy to explain the concept. To write a song a musician employs a greater or lesser number of chords which he (re)arranges into an original progression, very much in the same way that seven and eight-tone musical scales are built by excluding notes at certain intervals from the chromatic scale (all of the twelve tones recognized in Western music) in order to produce distinctive progressions. Thus each song, scale or mode marks a unique variation built from the same sets of tones.
Ghraib, and the use of “harsh interrogation techniques” compromise the symbolic distance the national habitus carefully establishes between itself and rival nations. Frank Rich’s “German analogy” is simply a new combination of the familiar schemes of classification that make up the pro-war narratives. Like his political opponents, the New York Times’ columnist warns his fellow citizens that the United States’ conduct of the War in Iraq may lead to America’s symbolic decline as a political or moral force; in short, as an example to be emulated. Consequently the problem of empire, of the United States dominance of global social space underlies positions at both polarities of the political field and the field of memory. At the heart of these debates lie questions of symbolic dominance and, even for antiwar activists, how it can be preserved from “empire” itself.

Christophe Charle (2001, introduction) wrote that both the elite and large segments of the civilian populations of the French, German and British imperial societies of the 20th century, who had lived in these empires at their apex (before 1914), had to contend with the traumatic loss of prestige their countries underwent after 1945. The transformed class, racial and gender hierarchies, disrupted by both world wars, left them to grapple with a social landscape they no longer recognized. Those affected by this crisis of social representations looked on the future with anxiety, seemingly convinced that they could no longer hope to see better days on the horizon. Though these collective fears of decline may have mirrored the real fall of the European imperial societies from their dominant positions in global social space after 1914, it seems difficult to make the same argument in the American case (see the political economy literature on American empire presented in chapter 2 for a pessimistic vision of America’s continued prospects as the dominant society).
A debate about the American empire periodically reappears both in American academia and in popular literature (see chapters 1 and 2). Curiously, it is always accompanied by a corollary school of elegiac thought: “we are an empire / we are an empire in decline.” Bourdieu (1979) writes that nostalgic representations of the past generally accompany the individual and collective trajectories of social actors who have failed to readapt to the changing logic of the social market, and who, as a consequence, often have no choice but to violently contest the new social order in which they can no longer find a place for themselves. But the very constancy of these elegiac social representations at both ends of the political spectrum are striking and belie attempts to explain them away as a manifestation of conservative ideology. Does political elegy express the social fixation of ‘lost generations’ of Americans who no longer recognize a country transformed by the wars it has waged, especially when these have lead to defeats, or barely masked ones - as all evidence suggests will be the case with Iraq and Afghanistan (Gen. McChrystal Aug. 29. 2009)? If the twin wars have eroded the US’ reserves of symbolic influence in the global field of power, this declining historical trajectory, even if temporary, would explain both collective fears and their corollary idealization of the past, as exemplified by the fetishism of the Greatest Generation so prominent in contemporary debates about the war. This would reaffirm my thesis that collective representations inherently retranslate in their own specific language the principle of their society’s position in global social space, and thus my assertion that the concept of national habitus provides a critical tool to link the individual histories of citizens to the historical trajectory of their society in global politics. The common fear of symbolic decline which underscores both polarities in the field of ideological production would confirm that the American national habitus retranslates into the fields of

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164 For instance, the Post-Vietnam debate about the loss of American hegemony (Keohane 1984 and Strange 1987).
165 I am indebted to Professor Robert Vitalis for a series of discussions we had on the topic and reflections he communicated to me in a personal note.
culture, memory and politics the specific and unique dilemmas of an imperial society in crisis. If this is true, then the social wounds in American life and the culture wars would also find their explanation in the contradictory aspirations which arise from the United States’ dominant position in global social space rather than simply in some principle inherent to a domestic life and history artificially separated from the history of all other nations.

I must further qualify these remarks, however. I have argued consistently that the national habitus and the imperial society’s place in global politics contribute to delimit the fields and the US’ domestic social structures, but that the fields are also partially autonomous from each other and partially autonomous from the turbulences of global social space. If the fields in the US are not completely internationalized, it is because of the disproportionate capacity of the American state to bring its resources in symbolic capital to bear on them (see Bourdieu 1994). The state’s large autonomy to shape and reshape its domestic fields in this respect also reflects its dominant position in global politics. This said, any analysis of the collective representations must be mediated by the specific history and consecrated objects of reflection and reference that predominate in each field. Just as I argued that the field of memory imposed that one thinks and argues in the historical form and refer to fetish events of reflection: World War II, the Greatest Generation and Vietnam, I would suggest that the field of ideological production is heavily mediated by the weight of the US’ republican political mythology. As I argued in chapters 1, 2 and 5 the debate on empire in the US and in Western culture more largely has been intimately tied to cyclical and elegiac philosophies of history. As Pocock (1975) and Skinner (1998) show, Western political philosophy is obsessed with the rise and fall of empires and republics, and the corruption of civic virtue by vice, glory and conquest. These fetishistic objects of reflection are so ingrained in the fields of ideological production and Western philosophy that they have
crystallized into popular representations and schemes of perception. To use a few examples, one need only look at the story of George Lucas’ *Star Wars* prequel trilogy which tells the fall of the Galactic Republic with barely veiled analogies to the war on terrorism. “So this is how liberty dies,” notes Natalie Portman’s Senator Amidala in *Episode III*, “under a thunder of applause.” All of Chalmers Johnson’s books of the so-called “Blowback Trilogy” showcase similar titles that warn Americans against the rise of empire and the coming of “The last days of the American republic.” If these phrases resonate, it is precisely because they mirror the terror of the “end of days” that American republican thinkers had imported from the Atlantic and Florentine republican traditions (Pocock 1975). The point is that the field of ideological production is mediated by specific narrative constraints and modes of “*mise en forme,*” an important one of which is the republican political mythology in the US. To conclude, the salient elegiac social representations in the debate on the War in Iraq stem in part from these schemes of collective self-understanding. They are *simultaneously exacerbated* by the intense renegotiation of the American imperial society’s place in the symbolic hierarchy of global politics brought on by its failure to achieve a decisive victory in Iraq.

The following chapter builds on these reflections and looks at how the burden of the War in Iraq has been felt by those closest to the War: US servicemembers and their relatives. It pursues with the critical inquiry I have begun into the meaning of volunteerism and the renegotiation of the place of soldiering in the field of citizenship. Finally, it looks at how soldiers themselves view the worth of their sacrifice in the Iraq War and asks, like Shakespeare, whether they consider it a cause to “*die well*” for.
Chapter 9 - “Why Doesn’t Anybody Give a Shit?”

Testimonies From Iraq and the Home Front

“You go to the war you have. It’s not the war you might want or wish to have”
- Elise F. Tripp (2008: xvi)

This chapter deals with the narratives of soldiers and their families and their experiences of the war in Iraq. Our interest in them is twofold. As in chapter 8 which discussed newspaper coverage of the war in Iraq, we wish first to underscore the sources of political and social tension that transpire in these narratives, especially around the issues of volunteerism and sacrifice. How do servicemembers justify their decision to enlist in the Armed Forces of the United States? How do they and their relatives describe the burden they carry? What sentiments do they harbor for their fellow citizens? What are their views on the war in Iraq and the sacrifices they risk in prosecuting the conflict? Ultimately, what do the narratives say about the meaning of citizenship in the US, and how has the conflict transformed it? These are the general sets of questions I asked myself while researching the testimonies discussed in this chapter. The testimonies addressed a great number of social disparities and inequalities within the army and in American society more largely: soldierly resentment towards officers, private military contractors, the political-economic elite; resentment towards Iraqis; tensions between male and female servicemembers, sexual harassment, and rape. However, in the end, I decided to focus on three central themes: enlistment and volunteerism, the citizen-soldier divide in America, and the “grunts’” and officers’ views on the war in Iraq.

In chapters 6 and 8 I proposed that discourses on volunteerism masked the social destiny that drew recruits from the lower social classes for service in the military, an illusion of choice
that soldiers were complicit in upholding. This chapter gives soldiers a say on the question of their enlistment and thus will further flesh out the problematic relationship between citizenship, military service and its ideological or cultural modes of legitimacy: liberal and republican. Furthermore, the narratives explored will flesh out along what axes soldiers discuss the war in Iraq and the points of agreement and disagreement between them. How do the parameters of the debate relate to the national habitus, to the horizon of social, symbolic, political and cultural references common to members of American society? In particular, I wish to further explore how these points of reference are structured by the experiences of soldiers hailing from a dominant society in global politics. Finally, in exploring the social divisions revealed by the conflict, the chapter will deepen one’s understanding of the crisis of the imperial society as one that pits political subjects against each other in the field of citizenship and is brought on by a renegotiation of the role of soldiering in the US, and its relationship to first-class citizenship.

This first part of the chapter presents the field of war narratives and the specific literary conventions and modes of self-censorship that bear on the war stories told by soldiers and their relatives. The second part examines how soldiers and their relatives speak about the motives for their enlistment in the armed forces and explores the meaning of volunteerism by interrogating the relative silence of soldiers on the issues of involuntary mobilizations to active duty and stop-loss (see chapter 10 for full sets of data on these practices). The third part of the chapter, explores the resentment that soldiers and their relatives feel towards their civilian counterparts who have been largely unaffected by the conflict. The fourth section will analyze the discourse of soldiers on the aims of the war in Iraq and whether or not they believe it to be justified.
Narrating Iraq: Considerations on the field of war narratives

Before discussing the actual content of these individual and collective stories, it is necessary to present some notes on the documentation and the methods used to interview them. The sixty narratives retained for study in this chapter were drawn from a sampling of four collections of memoirs about the war in Iraq. The four collections considered here are *Operation Homecoming: Iraq, Afghanistan, and the Home Front in the Words of U.S. Troops and Their Families* (Carroll 2006, ed.), *What Was Asked of Us: An Oral History of the Iraq war by the Soldiers Who Fought It* (Wood 2006, ed.), *Surviving Iraq: Soldiers’ Stories* (Tripp 2008, ed.), and finally *For Love of a Soldier: Interviews with Military Families Taking Action Against the war* (Collins 2008, ed.).

A number of criteria guided the selection process of these collections. Foremost among these concerns were theoretical considerations on the nature of the *field of war narrative collections* and the specific constraints it imposes on the gathering and publication of testimonies. Evidently, as all of the war testimonies analyzed throughout the following pages came from collections published in edited books about the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, one immediately questions by what standards and means the texts were selected and edited. Which questions were asked during the interviews? Which soldiers and which military families were selected to participate? When were the narratives collected? Would stories about the war undergo important transformations as the nature of the conflict itself shifted? Would subsequent events color or darken the stories? As when the initial euphoria surrounding the toppling of Saddam Hussein’s regime made way for military operations against the nascent insurgency, and as sectarian violence and terrorist attacks became part of daily life in Iraq? As when the torture scandals in the military prison of Abu Ghraib exploded in the international and American press.

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166. I sometimes use the abbreviations OH for *Operation Homecoming* and WWAU for *What Was Asked of Us*.
(see Bennett et al. 2007)? As when US and civilian casualties rose and waned, and the conflict lengthened? As when public opinion in the US slipped and shifted against the war? Did the publisher, publishers or editors have a political or social agenda? In other words, how were the stories given form? And through them, how is the larger story about US military involvement in Iraq constructed?

The first issue arises from the political economy of the publishing industry\textsuperscript{167} and the subsector of this field that specializes in war testimonies, as Vernon notes (2005). Alternatively coined a subgenre of the military autobiography, of military literature, memoir, autobiography, personal narrative, and so on, the very identity of the documentation at hand is a polemical subject amongst literary critics. Classifying literary genres and the texts that fall into those categories already is based on a host of political presuppositions. Who are the legitimate subjects or protagonists of the genre: combatants, soldiers, officers, those mobilized to the front? And what of women who serve in supply positions, who are formally excluded from combat positions? What are we to make of family members who ‘fight’ or suffer the war on the home front? What are we to make of the civilian populations, such as ordinary Americans who simply suffer, watch or ignore the two wars from afar, as so many soldiers resent them for doing (Woodward 2008; Tripp 2008; Collins 2008)? Though these subjects may be far removed from the theater of operations, war no less colors their identities, culture, opportunities, politics, outlook on the world and individual and collective trajectories (Vernon 2005). Ignorance of the very existence of the war is just as symptomatic and revealing of the American culture of warfare and contemporary warfare, especially in the age of the all-volunteer army, as debate and engagement on the subject. This chapter takes a mid-range view of the term “war narrative” and

\textsuperscript{167} As previously, this chapter builds on Bourdieu’s (1979) account of the intersections and homologies between the fields of production and the fields of consumption as explained in chapters 3, 4, 7 and 8.
deals with the testimonies of both soldiers and their families on the “home front.” Both Operation Homecoming and Surviving Iraq included testimonies from the mothers, fathers, brothers and the sisters of service members. In the latter case, relatives related the stories of two of the more than 4,000 soldiers who have already died fighting in Iraq. Collins’ (2008) For Love of a Soldier exclusively dedicated its pages to telling the stories of military families who opposed the conflict. All four of these collections included testimonies of female soldiers, and servicemembers from different cross-sections of American life.¹⁶⁸

One central working assumption guided the selection process of the considered collections. I assumed that the homologies between the fields, notably homologies with the political field of debate over the war in Iraq, would structure the sorts of narratives available to readers. Because of the intersections between the different products available in the field of literary publication, on the one hand (the field of production), and the preferences and personal tastes of consumers in the field of literary consumption (field of consumption), on the other, readers of different political sensibilities could hypothetically find their narrative of the war in Iraq, or that narrative most attuned to their habitus. Supporters of the war could find endearing tales of heroism, camaraderie and friendship, travel narratives, action and adventure, and courage under fire. Likewise, opponents of the conflict would find justification for their protests in the words of soldiers and their families. Some of the editors (Caroll 2006; Wood 2006) prefaced their books with claims to neutrality, stating they wished only to let the soldiers speak. Andrew Caroll (2006), for instance, noted that the viewpoints on the war in Iraq (and Afghanistan) enclosed within Operation Homecoming were as diverse as the experiences of the soldiers who fought it. As one female sergeant from the Ohio National Guard wrote in Operation

¹⁶⁸ All four collections delineate their editorial guidelines in the introduction and preface, including the selection process of the testimonies which were selected for inclusion in the book; the time during which they were recorded and the period of the war they reflect. It is too long to summarize them here.
Homecoming: “My company has 170-some soldiers, and 170-some opinions [on the war in Iraq and why we’re there]” (Allen cited in Carroll 2006: 155). In the end, it is up to the reader to make up his or her mind about the war. In the preface to What Was Asked of Us, Vietnam Veteran Bobby Muller made a similar point:

This is not an antiwar book or a prowar book. It is a book of stories about people who have been in combat, who have served their country. Some of those here are confident that the war they fought was just. Others are not. But these accounts are not about the politics of this war instead they are a simple recounting of experiences that are very personal (Muller in Wood 2006: xv-xvi).

Operation Homecoming was first selected for study in the fall of 2007, as it advertised itself as “the first book of its kind” (Carroll 2006, inside jacket). A cursory examination of the narratives contained within this, and later other collections, quickly belied editors’ assertions to

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169 Together, the four volumes collected 171 testimonies. OH was by far the largest, with nearly 100. Though some books contained testimonies dealing both with Afghanistan and Iraq, to limit the breadth of the study, only narratives dealing with Iraq were retained. Second, only the narratives of men and women serving in the Army and in the Marine Corps, and their respective reserve components, were included, thus excluding accounts of Coast Guard and Navy sailors, and members of the US Air Force. These were practical choices. After elaborating an initial list of codes and attributes according to which the narratives would be indexed, I conducted a first reading of 25 testimonies from all four collections, during which I adjusted the coding scheme. I then read and coded a further 35 testimonies from all four collections, drawing as evenly as possible from every section of the volumes considered to most faithfully represent its content. As I reached 40 testimonies, clear trends had already emerged within the narratives found in each volume and especially clear differences within the accounts found from one collection to the next (again belying claims to editorial neutrality). I finally concluded that 60 testimonies would prove a sufficient sample size to illustrate the main themes and tensions that arose out of the US war experience in Iraq, and that additional reading would not fundamentally alter the results of the analysis. As 15 testimonies have been drawn from every collection of memoirs, this means that all of the volumes except OH were sampled at a proportion of or exceeding 50 percent. Though I coded the narratives of OH at 15 percent, my preliminary reading of the book’s first 12 testimonies prior to designing the coding scheme (for a total of 27, thus over 25 percent of the material) led me to believe that the tone of the narratives would not fundamentally change over the rest of the book. An “unscientific” (Der Derian 2001), cursory glance at some of the later material found in the volume confirmed this hypothesis. Finally, as in the newspaper case, I decided against providing descriptive statistics of the war testimonies. I wanted to establish the rules of the discourse, not a statistical representation of the different trends. Furthermore, because of the number of primary documentary sources in the dissertation as a whole (well over 260) and their respective place in the dissertation (100 pages approximately, thus only one fourth) I decided that the additional work and calculations required were not justified by the relative weight the statistics would add to the argument as a whole. As I do not produce the statistics, I do not produce the coding scheme either.
Based on the assumption outlined above, three more volumes were selected from a cursory survey of the existing collections. Based on a narrowed list of narrative collections and on my cursory examination of the content of *Operation Homecoming*, I selected three further books which contained later accounts of the war. One, *What Was Asked of Us*, mirrored OH’s claim to neutrality, while *For Love of a Soldier* explained its position as anti-war, and reflecting the views of the members of one anti-war organization. *Military Families Speak Out*. Finally, *Surviving Iraq* described itself as “non-partisan”; however, the editor noted “If [the veterans] asked me what I personally thought about the war, I answered at the end of the interview that I did not think it could be won. Most veterans I spoke to agreed” (Tripp 2008: ix). The objective in selecting these volumes was to reconstruct a micro portrait of the field of debate over the war by retaining memoir collections with contrasting views and editorial guidelines. To make a comparison with motion pictures, I would say that, viewers of different political persuasions could hail *Born on the 4th of July, Platoon, We Were Soldiers* or *Saving Private Ryan* as the most faithful account of war. The field of representations of American warfare encompasses all of these.

As a literary field, the field of war narratives imposed further methodological considerations I must note. First, there is no transparent experience or narrative of the war (Muller in Wood 2006). As all esthetic and literary genres (Bourdieu 1979 and 1988), the narratives found within the pages of the collections studied fall within certain conventions or

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170. In its defense, published in 2006, *Operation Homecoming* does present an early picture of the war. Most tours of duty take place within the initial phase of the war. Secondly, stories about the war were written by the servicemembers themselves and collected during a series of literary workshops given by prominent American writers on military bases. Of 2000 manuscripts, 5 percent made the final cut. Narratives were essentially chosen for their literary value, a criteria which raises further questions about the esthetic expectations of editors and the book’s potential readers and how these are structured - a theme I will return to shortly.

171. Considered collections had to have been written by soldiers and their families or had to be oral histories of the war in Iraq, interviews and recorded conversations. No second-hand accounts of the war – such as unit memoirs (e.g. *Patrolling Bagdad*, DePue 2007) - written by journalists – were considered.
modes of storytelling (Vernon 2005; Woodward 2008). These notably include modes of cultural censorship and self-censorship: ways of talking about the war, about how the experience of the conflict fits into one’s larger existence (Vernon 2005), about the atrocities witnessed, about one’s role in the action, and one’s reasons for being there in the first place. As Rachel Woodward (2008) remarks, British soldier narratives tend to operate within very specific modes of storytelling. Publishers destine them for predominantly (and unsurprisingly) male audiences. Many of these stories, for instance, continue to operate within the confines of the British imperial genre, staging heroic tales set in the far-off realms of the empire. This “action”-literature leaves little place indeed for the more personal questions that can interest the sociologist or philosopher: 172

The relative silence about motivations for enlistment is significant in terms of what the narratives tell us about citizenship. One could explain this with reference to the conventions and expectations of the genre. Soldier narratives of the action-adventure type are marketed as stories of action, heroism, and bravery, where an individual’s actions are driven through his or her response to events unfolding (often very rapidly) around them. These action narratives are not sold as introspective meditations on the meaning of military action … The genre demands that these stories are told using specific conventions, and personal insight into motivations for big questions, such as: “Why am I doing this? Why am I in the army?” is not one of them (Woodward 2008: 373).

Authors rarely deal with the question of enlistment in any straightforward manner, as Woodward explains. In the action-war genre, soldiers invoke long-standing physical or psychological dispositions to account for their induction into the armed forces - physical endurance, strength, or a love of sports and the outdoors - if any at all. British soldiers rarely hint at the economic motives that may have swayed their career choices though, just as in the American case, the statistics on enlistment patterns (see chapter 6) tend to belie or provide a

172. Elise F. Tripp also notes the existence of this convention,
contrasting view to the memorialists’ affirmations. In other cases, and quite the opposite, Samuel Hynes established that “war memoirs frequently treat the war as a discontinuity in the author’s life, an episode disconnected from what came before and what followed after” (Vernon 2005: 18). Vernon also notes that war memorialists tend to present their participation in warfare in a passive voice; war is suffered by those who must fight it, as if they were not actors in the conflict but individuals swept up in a maddening fury. Finally, Woodward (2008) cautions, one must note that the soldiers who do speak are also engaging the public. Explicit or not, their texts are political interventions and possess illocutionary force (see Skinner 1988a-d); they are trying to communicate something to those who will listen.

In using these narratives as a textual source, we have to be alert to the claims about “truth” that are inherent in a genre that is aware of its role in speaking to a wider readership, whilst remembering that, like all memoirs, they are inherently partial and selective. They tell us what their writers consider important that we should know (Woodward 2008: 368).

If this analysis is correct, then it will be necessary to deconstruct the conventions, euphemisms, distortions, inversions and modes of self-censorship which the authors or narrators employ, often unconsciously and reflexively, to mask (often from themselves) certain sociological truths about their experience. As Elise Forbes Tripp writes:

…I could appreciate why veterans often avoid discussing the war, and do not easily share their stories with civilians. Part of their reluctance comes from their perception of what civilians do and do not want to hear from a veteran … Some soldiers develop a few typically “military” stories to use as needed” (2008: viii).
She adds: “As I conducted the interviews, it became clear that veterans had many more interesting things to say than the action and anecdote-filled war stories they believed civilians wanted to hear” (Tripp 2008: ix, emphasis added).

This means that self-censorship is integral to war testimonies as veterans also consciously try to satisfy the expectations of their interlocutors (Woodward 2008 has a different point of view on this question). But Andrew Carroll (2006) notes that self-censorship also flows from the warrior ethos, the soldiers’ habitus:

[Many veterans] do not want to burden friends or relatives with their memories, and others question whether their loved ones would even be able to comprehend the harsh realities of life on the front lines. Some are unwilling to confide in their fellow troops for fear of appearing weak or unstable … military tradition has fostered a culture that ultimately values silent forbearance – not individual self-expression – in the face of adversity (2006: xix).

All these cautionary notes confirm Bourdieu’s (1988) analysis that artistic, literary and scientific fields impose a process of “mise en forme” in which an “expressive intention” is negotiated according to the conventions which regulate permissible forms of speech within the field. If it is true that soldiers speak in part to communicate a message about their profession or the experiences of war, as Woodward suggested. At the same time, the analysis of literary conventions of the field of war narratives also warns that the message is mediated by the authors’ expectations about the potential audience, and the professional culture the former have interiorized.173

173 This may go a long way in helping to understand the esthetic expectations of OH’s editors and thus the selection criteria for those memoirs published in the collection.
Perhaps unsurprisingly, the above literary conventions were felt most strongly in the two collections that claimed to present an objective view of the war: *Operation Homecoming* and *What Was Asked Us*. Judgments and comments on the war itself were sparse and often inexistent. The same went for motives of enlistment and tensions within the army and society itself. If many memoirs in OH were classical war stories, only some were tales of combat and bloodshed. Many appeared as musings or snapshots of the writer’s consciousness at a moment in time. Others were akin to travel stories where one place, event or friendship with an Iraqi inspired the writer, moved or changed him. As a general rule, none of these testimonies were political or polemical. They fell within a clearly accepted range of permissible discourses about war in western culture, with few being outright critical. *What Was Asked of Us* was much less poetic. Scenes of combat and action were the norm, and they spared no detail of the horrors of war: melting skin, shrapnel wounds, mutilations, burning corpses, friendly-fire casualties, disembodied soldiers, mangled bodies. Still, some of the memoirs in *What Was Asked of Us* did discuss political themes. The two volumes most associated to the antiwar poll of the field: *For Love of a Soldier* and *Surviving Iraq* addressed dramatically different themes compared to OH and WWAU. Most servicemembers or members of their families regularly discussed the motivations which brought them or their relatives into the army. They freely discussed their views on the war in Iraq, opinions on the pretexts given for American intervention and they identified sources of tension within the army, between US forces and Iraqi locals, as well as the shortcomings and successes of postwar reconstruction. Perhaps most significantly, they by and large addressed social disparities between combatants and noncombatants, US military and civilian societies, American armed forces and private contractors, and soldiers of different sexes. Combat narratives are

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174 Arguably, then, the “literary” quality of the testimonies selected for publication in OH would flow precisely from their recourse to a certain number of narrative conventions on warfare, thus fitting into the mold of a specific set of esthetic expectations about war.
sparse or illustrative. Ultimately, much more than anecdotes or snapshots of that war, as is the case in the two previous collections, these stories are reflections on the war in Iraq, on the costs and benefits of military service to those who volunteer for it, and the impact on their families and loved ones. In short, they are political testimonies (see Table 9.1).

**Table 9.1. The field of war testimonies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collection</th>
<th>Stated editorial position</th>
<th>Themes discussed</th>
<th>Esthetically similar war films</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Operation Homecoming</em></td>
<td>Neutral / diverse</td>
<td>Poetic/literary tone, travel narratives, endearing friendships, surmounting cultural divides, difficult deployments, emotional homecomings, stream of consciousness, (transcending) the horror of war, the boredom of daily life in theater</td>
<td>Saving Private Ryan, We Were Solders, The Thin Red Line</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>What Was Asked of Us</em></td>
<td>Neutral / diverse</td>
<td>Combat and graphic violence / the horror of the Iraq war, resentment towards civilians, some motives for enlistment</td>
<td>Black Hawk Down, Jarhead, Full Metal Jacket</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Surviving Iraq</em></td>
<td>Diverse/ leaning heavily on anti-war</td>
<td>Violence, psychological repercussions of combat, PTSD, motives for enlistment, soldiers’ views of the war, social disparities and inequalities, sexism, racism, coping with loss, resentment towards civilians, the human cost of the war</td>
<td>Platoon, Three Kings, Redacted, Full Metal Jacket, The Deer Hunter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>For Love of a Soldier</em></td>
<td>Anti-war</td>
<td>PTSD, psychological devastation of families and servicemembers, suicides, depression, coping with loss, stop-loss, social class and motives for enlistment, resentment towards civilians and supporters of</td>
<td>Born on the Fourth of July, Stop-Loss, The Deer Hunter</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Why we fight?

Patriotism often ranks highest among the myriad justifications for military service found in popular culture, war films, and populist histories.\textsuperscript{175} But as Rachel Woodward (2008) wrote of British soldier narratives, few testimonies examined there evoked grand patriotic narratives about fighting for God and country.\textsuperscript{176} Most soldiers were silent about the reasons for their enlistment, and the availability of this information incredibly varied from one collection of memoirs to the next. As suggested in the British case, a number of US soldiers pointed to a sort of vocational predisposition to military life, eschewing idealistic, patriotic, or economic motivations. One soldier from the 2\textsuperscript{nd} Battalion, 2\textsuperscript{nd} Marine Regiment, mobilized to Iraq in October of 2004 writes: “I've always wanted to be a Marine. I wanted to be active and get out and do something. I can't sit down and be inside for too long” (Winn cited in Wood 2006: 146). He adds: “Combat was just something I wanted to do, and I enjoyed doing that. I had adrenaline - I guess I'm an adrenaline junkie, but it was fun” (Winn cited in Wood 2006: 148).

Tim Kahlor the father of a soldier in the Army explains his son’s similar dispositions for military life: “Ever since Ryan was little, he was an outdoor kid. He had all the army toys, he was always into the military thing. My dad called him "Sarge." Our street is all retired Navy and Marines. We're right behind Camp Pendleton ... He wanted some adventure, some travel” (Kahlor cited in Collins 2008: 179, emphasis added).

\textsuperscript{175} By this I understand a sort of practical sense of history that most citizens possess about their country of origin, great events, figures, dates such as the American Revolution, in short: national habitus.

\textsuperscript{176} A marked break from many of the pro-war narratives in American newspapers in chapter 8.
Consider yet another testimony. Says specialist Lydia Rodriguez, a Puerto Rican mother in the Army National Guard: “[Joining the military] was something I always wanted to do ... Once I got divorced, it was like I needed to do something with my life -something exciting, something challenging, and something fun. And I got interested in the National Guard” (Rodriguez cited in Tripp 2008: 169).

Sharon D. Allen, a Sergeant in the Ohio Army National Guard was deployed to Iraq in 2003 with the 216th Engineering Battalion as a fuel truck driver. Allen tells a similar story. She recounts joining the Guard after being “Bored with college and tired of working construction ... along with wanting a challenge in life” (Carroll 2006: 153).

Military life also attracted extremely gifted young men and women of excellent background, who struggled to adapt to the norms of civilian life. Consider the narrative of Sarah Tyler, an army mother working in pharmaceuticals whose son became a photojournalist for the army. As her ex-husband was a lawyer, her children were born into a "fairly affluent background" (cited in Collins 2008: 26), and had a chance to go to "the best schools" (cited in Collins 2008: 25). But outdoorsy and adventurous, her son camped on mountain slopes an entire winter’s time, before dropping out of college. Sarah Tyler’s son was seemingly made for the army, and the rugged lifestyle it could provide.

Vocational testimonies exhibit certain trends. They begin by highlighting personal dispositions for military life (“he was an outdoor kid”, see Woodward 2008) before invoking secondary factors that structured the horizon of opportunities open to them: immersion in military culture from a very young age, divorce, the desire for valorization beyond those means to which servicemembers could reasonably aspire in civilian life; or difficulty adapting to the tempo of a banal existence, to college, for instance. The story of army wife and teacher Jessica
White’s husband, a mental health counselor in the Army Reserve, who was twice deployed in 2003 and 2005, illustrates this ambiguity of vocational narratives. Enlisting at the age of 27, years before the war broke out, her husband was “patriotic; he wanted to pay off student loans; he’d been out of college, working at lower paying jobs, and didn’t have a direction” (Lisa White cited in Collins 2008: 15, emphasis added). Patriotism is cited as the nominal cause of enlistment, but the great mass of motivations given, hint at the real economic difficulties and limited life opportunities open to enlisting servicemembers. Even Sarah Tyler’s photojournalist son joined the army to get training, skill sets, and the sort of experience he did not believe he would obtain from college.

Reasons for service are often very individualistic and personal. Sacrifice for the greater good appears as a distant preoccupation, or a reflexive afterthought, more like a well-learned mantra, or *ex post facto* rationalization, a hazard of the profession and its gravest outcome. Young, lower-ranking commissioned officers of good background came off as the most idealistic. For instance Marine Corps Lieutenant Seth Moulton graduated from Harvard without help from the ROTC, a factor suggesting his family possessed reasonable financial means. The young man who saw action against Moqtada Al Sadr’s Army of the Medhi in Najaf in 2004 “always thought about joining the military.” “For me it really was just that I have a tremendous respect for the kids who serve in the military, especially the eighteen and nineteen-year-old guys in the infantry, and I really believe that college kids should do their part too. (Moulton cited in Wood 2006: 205-206).

177. The testimony of Army Reservist Adrian Cavazos who served with the 3rd Infantry Division in 2003, and later in 2005 is a notable exception to this rule. He sees sacrifice in war as an edifying death: “Those men they died ... they gave the ultimate sacrifice and they died beautifully because they died fighting for our country. They died fighting for us ... if I’m going to die, let me do it serving my country or let me do it doing something heroic, something where they can say, He died doing something for someone else, not something selfish or not in some freak accident” (cited in Wood 2006: 36).
It remains that many narratives of soldiers who do discuss their reasons for enlistment make little effort to hide unashamedly economic or professional motivations. For instance, the sister of an Army reservist’s description of the socioeconomic situation of her small town illustrates many of the familiar enlistment patterns I explored in chapter 6:

My husband, who works in a high school in Bath, Maine, the home of the Bath ironworks invited regular dialogue with his students, many of whom were considering signing up. Many of them come from military families. The town has a base. It’s very pro-military, a working-class area. A lot of his students have always planned to enter the military. College was may be out of sight for them (Tiki Furoh cited in Collins 2008: 41).

Forty-eight year-old, Richard Riley, an African-American Staff Sergeant of the Massachusetts Army National Guard, descended from a Virginian slave family (in Tripp 2008: 33-40). He remembers signing up for the same reasons the boys from Maine were contemplating: “I joined in 1978. I am from Virginia in the Chesapeake Bay area. There are no jobs there except for a couple of chicken factories, and I wasn't working there.” (cited in Tripp 2008: 34, emphasis in original). Specialist Benjamin Shrier of the Massachusetts Army Reserve agrees: [The Army] is one of the few opportunities if you’re living in a city like Springfield [Massachusetts]-there’s not too many job opportunities out there ... You can flip burgers at Burger King or you could join the army and “Be All You Can Be” (cited in Tripp 2008: 111).

Joseph Hatcher served in the 1st Infantry Division in Iraq. He describes himself as utterly poor and destitute before joining the Army, which provided him with a second chance in life:

[I was] homeless for five years with a heavy drug problem ... I tried to make money - that didn't work. Tried to get a job - that didn't work, you know? You get a job but you can't put any money in the bank because you're paying for a hotel room every night and there's no way to get a place. You've got no references. You've got nothing ... So I found a way out, and that was the easy way out. I had no options, so that was the problem (Hatcher cited in Wood 2006: 120-121).
Others enlisted to enjoy the most fundamental of benefits: becoming Americans “par le sang versé” – through military service that is - a phenomenon more and more mediatized. An immigrant from Portugal, Corporal André Queiroga served with the 1st Battalion, 2nd Marine Regiment on two tours in Iraq. The US granted him citizenship two months into his first deployment in conformity with a law pledging accelerated naturalization for migrants in the armed forces (in Tripp 2008: 25-32). Queiroga enthusiastically cherished the opportunities, friendships and the “brotherhood” the army had given him: “It’s a bond forever” (cited in Tripp 2008: 30).

Judging from the testimonies which discuss motives for enlistment, the armed forces have drawn men and women in search of money for college, better life opportunities, skill training, a sense of direction, purpose or camaraderie, and, frequently, for women, a chance “to prove” themselves (Tripp 2008, see Table 9.2).

Table 9.2. Field of war narratives and motives for enlistment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collection</th>
<th>Motives For enlistment</th>
<th>General themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Operation Homecoming</td>
<td>Extremely sparse to non-existent:</td>
<td>Travel narratives, endearing friendships, surmounting cultural divides, difficult deployments, emotional homecomings, stream of consciousness, (transcending) the horror of war, the boredom of daily life in theater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Bored with college and tired of working construction ... along with wanting a challenge in life”</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Here was Ernesto, a guy who was homeless and</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

179 Take the testimony of Army Reservist Sergeant Nicholas A. Morton: “The great thing about the army is that the army doesn't care who you were or what you did before you joined ... So you can join the army and turn your life around if your life is going bad ... That is obviously why the army has a disproportionate number of poor people from lower-income parts of America” (cited in Tripp 2008: 123-124).
shunned by the rest of civilized society. And in the end, he turned out to have more of a heart and guts than most”

**What Was Asked of US**

“always wanted to be a Marine”; “be active and get out and do something. I can't sit down and be inside for too long”; “Combat was just something I wanted to do, and I enjoyed doing that. I had adrenaline - I guess I'm an adrenaline junkie, but it was fun”; “homeless for five years with a heavy drug problem”;

“I had no options so that was the problem”

“Those men they died ... they gave the ultimate sacrifice and they died beautifully because they died fighting for our country. They died fighting for us ... if I'm going to die, let me do it serving my country or let me do it doing something heroic, something where they can say, He died doing something for someone else, not something selfish or not in some freak accident”

**Surviving Iraq**

“You can flip burgers at Burger King or you could join the army and “Be All You Can Be””

“[Joining the military] was something I always wanted to do ... Once I got divorced, it was like I needed to do something with my life -something exciting, something challenging, and something fun. And I got interested in the National Guard”

- Some reenlistments are disguised stop-loss

**For Love of a Soldier**

“Many of them come from military families. The town has a base. It’s very pro-military, a working-class area. A lot of his students have always planned to enter the military. College was maybe out of sight for them”

“Ever since Ryan was little, he was an outdoor kid. He had all the army toys, he was always into the military thing. My dad called him "Sarge." Our street is all retired Navy and Marines. We're right behind Camp Pendleton ... He wanted some adventure, some travel”

- Some reenlistments are disguised stop-loss

Combat and graphic violence / the horror of the Iraq war, resentment towards civilians, some motives for enlistment

Violence, psychological repercussions of combat, PTSD, motives for enlistment, soldiers’ views of the war, social disparities and inequalities, sexism, racism, coping with loss, resentment towards civilians, the human cost of the war

PTSD, psychological devastation of families and servicemembers, suicides, depression, coping with loss, stop-loss, social class and motives for enlistment, resentment towards civilians and supporters of the wars, the human and emotional toll of the war

The US military *is* very much an army of volunteers. At the same time, it is a *structured volunteerism*, as I argued in chapter 6. Much seems to be made by the soldiers themselves to
preserve the façade of “choice” that has guided them into service. For instance, no soldiers from the reserve components of the Army, Marine Corps or the Army National Guard mentioned they were serving under involuntary mobilization orders, though some had been stop-lossed. The first trend is especially surprising based on the statistical information at hand. By early 2005, nearly half a million reservists (thus over one in four) had been involuntarily mobilized to active duty under Operations Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom (Kapp Feb 16, 2005). As of March 2009, nearly 90,000 reservists from all components of the armed forces continued to operate under involuntary activation orders (see DMPDC 2009b). This means that of the nearly 1.8 million reservists of the US armed forces, just over 5 percent of them, were still under involuntary activation orders in March of 2009.

The discrepancy between the silence of testimonies on involuntary activations and stop-loss orders, on the one hand, and the actual practice (see chapter 10), on the other, further fleshes out the ambiguity of volunteerism. As the COTNGAR (2008) noted, members of the reserve components of the armed forces can reasonably expect to be mobilized to active duty when they sign up. Again in this sense, involuntary activation remains an ethical gray zone as a soldier voluntarily signs a military contract with the risk of being involuntarily mobilized at a later date. The situation is slightly different for members of the individual ready reserve, often retired or

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180. As data on involuntary mobilizations is imprecise (see next footnote) it would be difficult to measure the proportion of memorialists who speak of their involuntary mobilizations against the statistics for the whole army to see if their experiences are typical or representative of larger patterns.

181. Reservists who have been remobilized are counted more than once so the figures are not entirely accurate (Kapp Feb. 16, 2005).

182. As of 2009, active duty forces (enlisted and officers) numbered 1.4 million men and women, while as of 2007 the Ready Reserve counted 1,088,587 service members (excluding members of the Standby and Retired Reserves). The total number of reservists rises to some 1.765,000 service members in all components if one also counts those soldiers in the Retired Reserves (656, 114) and the Standby Reserves (21, 218). See Defense Manpower Data Center (2009b) and Kapp (March 14, 2008: 4) for data on the Reserves.

183. Though most collections provided information on the service component of individual soldiers, i.e. Army Reserve or National Guard, no information specified from which pool of reservists they were drawn, such as the select reserves or the individual ready reserve.
inactive, former members of the armed forces whose real ties to the army are all but severed, and many of whom expected to ‘move on’ with their lives (Baldrate 2008, chapter 24).

Anecdotal evidence from the testimonies further complicates the ethical and moral dilemma surrounding the issue of volunteerism and enlistment beyond the simple notion of a class-based disposition to military service. Is volunteerism really what it appears to be? Soldiers and members of their families mention that the practice of pressured reenlistments is widespread in the field. In the words of one relative of a service member:

But what mothers are telling us is happening to their sons is that officers go up to them in Iraq and they say, ‘Okay, now you have a choice: you can re-enlist right now for the next four to six years and you'll get a cash bonus. If you're going to stay with us, you're going to be stop-lossed, and you aren't going to get the cash bonus [bonuses paid in theater are not taxed-ed.], but you're still with us-so what would you like to do? (Jeffrey Lucy in Tripp 2008: 256).

Linda Waste wrote the following of her military son’s experience:

The military has dropped their quota and added high-pressure recruiting in the field—you need to sign within twenty-four hours or you don't get a bonus. In Iraq, Shon [her son] signed for bonus pay of ten thousand dollars for six more years. Even Wes—he was on stop/loss; Dustin was going to be stop/lossed so he signed up for another year so he'd get a bonus. If you're stop/lossed, you get nothing [The DoD in 2009 announced that retroactive pay would be given to soldiers who were stop-lossed (Henning 2009: summary) – author’s note] (Waste cited in Collins 2008: 152).

But this final commentary is perhaps the most damning, and most eloquent in capturing the ambiguities of service and enlistment: “[Military counselors knocked on my daughter's] door and threatened with Iraq until she agreed to sign up for the Reserves. This is one reason I can't call it an ‘all-volunteer’ Army. It's a partially stop-lossed, partially coerced, and partially volunteer Army” (Denis Thomas cited in Collins 2008: 107). Though this evidence is anecdotal, a
document produced by Veterans for America destined for servicemembers and their families suggested that recruiters frequently pressured and mislead soldiers into reenlisting in the reserves or National Guards to avoid a new deployment to combat.\footnote{While not an actual recall, military recruiters have led servicemembers to reenlist under the pretense that a “call-up” was imminent. For example, in the summer of 2003, IRR [individual ready reserve] members received letters from reserve recruiters stating that a call-up was imminent for IRR. The letters stated that IRR soldiers who “voluntarily” joined a National Guard unit could pick one with the “help” of the recruiter that would not be called up, but IRR members who did not “voluntarily” join a National Guard unit by mid-June would be placed in a unit that was going to be called up immediately.

Thousands of IRR members joined the National Guard prior to the June deadline trying to find the units that were not on the short list to be deployed. Later, the new reservists were notified that the recruiters had “misunderstood” an order from the Pentagon and the letters were a mistake.” (Baldrate 2008: 489-490).}

These practices then beg the question of how many reenlistments which seem voluntary at face value, in fact hide disguised or involuntary remobilizations?

It is difficult to understand why regular soldiers, reservists and guardsmen and women are so silent on the issue of involuntary mobilization and stop-loss, even as the occurrence of these practices, especially the latter, have been widely reported in the media and even in cinema\footnote{Such as director Kimberly Peirce’s 2008 Iraq war soldiers’ tale Stop-Loss starring Ryan Philippe.}? Cultural self-censorship, flowing from a warrior ethos, provides one interesting avenue of examination. It is simply possible that soldiers fear being treated as cowards, traitors or perhaps worse: victims if they denounce their situation. And in a culture which idealizes choice, self-determination and self-realization, victimization is nothing but antithetic to the doxa and national habitus (see chapter 8). Culturally, soldiers are required to see their duty through, to serve whether or not they believe in the war they are fighting, as the epigraph at the beginning of this chapter so eloquently illustrated: “You go to the war you have. It’s not the war you might want or wish to have” (Tripp 2008: 16). I have already shown in the newspaper analysis presented in chapter 8 the rhetorical disparagement to which opponents of the war could be subjected. Relatives of soldiers who oppose the conflict in Iraq have also forcefully stated being accused of betraying the troops or their country. Newspaper accounts pointed to the deep
divisions which could arise among military families who found themselves separated by their support for, or activism against the war. The figure of army mother Cindy Sheehan perhaps best symbolizing these tensions. Army wife Jessica White was accused of being a traitor by members of other military families when she became active in the anti-war movement (White cited in Collins 2008). For his part, Army father Tim Khalor was verbally abused by crowds of war supporters outside a Veterans Affairs hospital because he opposed the war in which his son fought.

This patriotic badgering relies principally on a moral imperative of political obligation stating that in times of crisis citizens are to provide unconditional support for their fellow countrymen and women in arms. Consider the opposite argument. War resisters sometimes state that they oppose the war (see Collins 2008) because they support the troops, because they believe the war being fought is immoral.\textsuperscript{186} This harkens back to another notion of political obligation: the republican duty to dissent against immoral government or immoral acts. However, when advancing this argument against the war, opponents of the conflict are often answered that the troops who signed up for duty must see it through: “We hear all the time they volunteered so shut up,” says Charley, the father of a sergeant who served in Iraq at the beginning of the war, who later founded the antiwar group Military Families Speak Out with his wife Nancy (Lessin and Richardson cited in Collins 2008: 6).

The rhetorical entrapment now operates by grounding the imperative to support and fight the war in a liberal-contractual conception of political obligation (see chapters 5 and 8). The soldiers are bound to their prior choices like a borrower who must repay a debt though his

\textsuperscript{186} See for instance the narratives of Pat Alviso, and Bob Watada, the father of conscientious objector Lt. Watada (in Collins 2008). Pat Alviso, teacher, is the mother of a marine who served in Iraq. She was fined for protesting; a fine she challenged in court: “Our defence was like the Nuremberg trial: if your government is doing evil, you have to protest” (Alviso cited in Collins 2008: 117). As for, Lieutenant Watada, he is the first US officer to refuse deployment orders to Iraq on the grounds of conscientious objection.
financial situation may have dramatically impoverished from that which he anticipated. In the latter instance, this demonstrates a tacit acceptance that economic motives for enlistment provide the real grounds for the political obligation to service. Does this not suggest that republican justifications for military sacrifice – service for nation and fellow man – have become little more than cultural artefacts, a sort of gloss, or symbolic prestige accorded to the profession of soldiering, which masks the fall of its real social standing?

As I mentioned in chapter 8, service as personal choice seems to preclude arguments which would attempt to make victims of soldiers. As in the banking analogy, soldiers must accept their choices despite the conditions that pushed them to make them in the first place. Soldiers who question why they must serve, or in which war they must risk their lives, are thus subjected to a twofold symbolic violence: a republican argument denouncing their cowardice to face sacrifice or to serve with resignation; and a liberal argument which accuses them of reneging on their commitments, or walking away from a job for which they have already been paid. The truth is that these twin forms of cultural coercion can, and often do, operate simultaneously. Thus if soldiers refuse to denounce or speak of, involuntary mobilizations or stop-lossing, it is perhaps because they partially accept these practices as legitimate constraints that are integral to their identity as volunteer soldiers, in the very same way that structured propensity to class and race-based military service and involuntary remobilizations belie the notion of a volunteer army. Consequently, partial silence on the illiberal practices of stop-loss and contractual extensions can mirror a form of cultural self-censorship.

OH’s narrative of Colorado Army National Guard Sgt. Michael Thomas’ homecoming from Iraq is partially illustrative of the soldiers’ capacities to rationalize resentment by reaffirming the doxic conception of self-sacrifice (in Carroll 2006: 320-322). Though not
involuntarily mobilized (his testimony as in the case of many others, is silent on this question), the NCO’s tour of duty in Iraq was extended as he was approaching the moment of his anticipated return. In the end, the homecoming soldiers were met with a warm reception in Maine. Virtually a whole platoon of Vietnam veterans waited hours upon hours for Sergeant Thomas and his comrades to arrive. These veterans of the last dirty war made a point to receive the Iraqi veterans and give them the greeting they had been denied. This experience changed Thomas’ view of his service and of those who would benefit from his sacrifice.

Looking back on my year in Iraq, I can honestly say that my perception of the experience was changed; not so much by the soldiers with whom I served - though I consider them my saving grace - but by the soldiers who welcomed us home. For it is those men who reminded me what serving my country is truly about (cited in Carroll 2006: 322).

Thus the issue of involuntary duty extension and any resentment associated with it disappeared in the greater cultural narrative of selfless service and personal sacrifice, reaffirmed through the social bond with the veterans of past generations. In this sense, silence does not so much signify indifference to remobilization as it can testify to the power of cultural norms to impose discipline upon the self – the very definition of symbolic violence (Bourdieu 1994). As Bourdieu writes: “la violence proprement symbolique ne peut être exercée par celui qui l’exerce et subie par celui qui l’a subi que sous une forme telle qu’elle soit méconnue en tant que telle, c’est-à-dire reconnue comme légitime” (1988: 85, emphasis added). Symbolic violence, Bourdieu argues, operates upon the self because it is deemed to be natural and perfectly legitimate (1979 and 1988). For this reason, those upon whom it is imposed do not feel as though

187 Bourdieu explains that in the French school system the superior symbolic prestige accorded to scholarly and academic success in mathematics and sciences has the effect of causing psychological distress in those students who perform poorly in these branches of study.
they are being subjected to violence. As symbolic violence reflects the dominance of certain social and cultural norms in the fields of culture and ideological production, the victims of symbolic violence believe *that they are wrong or weak or inadequate* for failing to measure up to the stated social criteria rather than questioning the legitimacy of the very same criteria (see chapter 3).

This does not mean, however, that soldiers meekly accept or cope with the effects of extended mobilizations and the unpredictability of a work environment in which ‘work hours’ can be arbitrarily extended without appeal. In 2003, Lt. Col. Dan Moriarty served in Iraq as part of the army reserve’s medical corps, counselling troops who suffered from the stresses of deployment (in Tripp 2008: 200-206). Far from leaving the soldiers indifferent to their fate, a 2003 order by the Department of Defense to prolong deployments in Iraq provoked important psychological repercussions on many soldiers:

… instead of troops only being on six month tours, they were going to place people on indefinite tours. So people’s orders were changed to these fictitious dates in the future. At that point there were a lot of mental health issues and a lot of distraught individuals who could see no end to their time in the desert (cited in Tripp 2008: 204).

Even after the order was nominally reversed the following autumn, some soldiers saw their tours extended at the very moment they were about to board their flight home: “You could actually see the planes that you were going to lift off [in], and your orders are reversed and they would be sent north again [to Iraq – author’s note] because there was just nobody to replace them” (Moriarty cited in Tripp 2008: 204). Moriarty adds that repeated deployments and difficult assignments like policing and mortuary work, amongst others, had taken a great toll on the relatives and dependents of the reserve and guard components of the armed forces, who lacked a suitable “support system” (cited in Tripp 2008: 201). The ethos of soldiering, volunteerism,
republican duty and the symbolic power exercised through them - habitus - embodied in the form of psychological dispositions ("I am a volunteer"), may help soldiers interiorize or censor negative feelings about the sacrifices asked of them. But the onset of mental health problems lead one to ask: to what extent is the ethos of sacrifice and abnegation really accepted and, most important, suffered?

Civilian and military divides

One of the greatest sources of tension evident in the war testimonies arises out of the different nature of sacrifice asked or expected of civilians and members of the military and their families who alone bear the brunt of the war.\footnote{188} As mentioned previously, soldiers and their relatives feel abandoned, misunderstood by a population that treats or lives the war in Iraq like a distant nightmare they would prefer to forget altogether. The sister of Army Reservist Sarah Fuhro, Tiki Fuhro, remembers being shocked at gatherings she attended because her friends seemed completely oblivious to the event of the war in Iraq and the hardships endured by the soldiers. “Sometimes I'd bring up the war in social situations because I felt like, hey, someone needs to bring this up. Sometimes I felt people were annoyed by it” (Tiki Fuhro cited in Collins 2008: 41). The war jars the carefree day-to-day life and its simple worries, generating neither enthusiasm nor condemnation (Moskos 2005), an apathy soldiers and their relatives deeply resent: “People need to wake up in this country. I'm so ashamed and astounded that people don't even think about it. It's not affecting them directly, they just don't worry about it. Americans are just so comfortable” (Waste cited in Collins 2008: 153). Army reservist wife Jessica White adds

\footnote{188} Trish Wood, the editor of What Was Asked Us, notes the commonplace of this theme: “In Oceanside, California ... I spoke mostly to Marines from Camp Pendleton ... More than any other interviews, those highlighted for me the inequities of the Iraq war: young marine grunts vividly described their hellish tours of the Sunni Triangle while their surfer-dude peers hung out on the beach outside my window” (Wood 2006: xix).
“It won't be until the draft is reinstalled that people will get involved against the war. Now it's not personal enough ... The apathy is mind-blowing” (White cited in Collins 2008: 18). White’s anti-war commentary mirrors republican arguments I have already examined, in *The New York Times* and *The Nation*, echoing the warning that the very threat of conscription, and thus induction into the military of those social classes spared the burden of war, would rapidly escalate as opposition to the conflict.

But opponents of the war hold no monopoly on frustration with civilian apathy. A 2004 veteran of Iraq, Marine Matthew Winn – a supporter of the war - believes the American population to be frivolous and that it ignores the positive contributions its comrades in arms have made to Iraq. After the terrorist attacks of September 11th, 2001, the country basked in the euphoria of patriotism, he notes, but that now seems like a distant memory. “Now time's passed and no one cares anymore. There's other reasons besides WMD why we’re there [in Iraq]. We're still doing good there ... and think it's good that we have the military there” (Winn in Wood 2006: 152).

Other narratives indirectly tackle the civilian-soldier divide by praising the qualities of the men and women who join the army. Sgt. Richard Acevedo, a soldier of the New York Army National Guard, recounts the touching story of an infantryman under his command. Ernesto Manuel (an alias) was a maladapted soldier who Acevedo believed was unfit for combat. But Manuel’s very dedication to service and to the army, his willingness to play his part in the war even if it meant collecting the bodies of his fallen comrades, earned him the respect of his superior. Manuel, it is revealed, was a vagrant who joined the army, the reason for his enlistment unexplained; but one can safely conjecture it was for a second chance in life. He was willing to serve and give his life for a society that ultimately let him slip through the cracks surrounding the
American dream: “Here was Ernesto, a guy who was homeless and shunned by the rest of civilized society. And in the end, he turned out to have more of a heart and guts than most” (Acevedo cited in Carroll 2006: 183).

This story plays into two interesting conventions. First, it places the vocational account of enlistment at the forefront of the story rather than potential, perhaps obvious, economic motivations for enlistment. The reader carries away the sentiment that the army attracts men of heart and courage, not the destitute of American society. Acevedo’s account of Ernesto Manuel is one of personal redemption through hard work, service and devotion. It is not to say that this is false, that Manuel did not possess the qualities his superior admired in him. Rather, I suggest that the narrative operates through a republican narrative of citizenship, and edification through virtue; in short, it is the Army narrative: “Be all you can be.” But in adopting a vocational-republican account of Manuel’s service, it fails to draw the full conclusions on the nature of volunteerism. It fails to ask why it is that a man like Ernesto must serve, why it is that he shows the heart that civilian members of society fail to manifest. The republican narrative presented here reveals socioeconomic and political disparities in the larger society, all the while hiding them by explaining them away under the guise of a functional-vocational account of volunteerism that treats aptitude as the first criteria for enlistment. Again necessity made into virtue. At the same time, and this is the second element, the testimony does reveal once more the divide between the good-hearted and brave soldiers and the cowardly civilians who only support the war with words.

Other veterans denounce the hypocrisy of war supporters who are generous with words but not with deeds. Marine Dominick King, twice deployed to Iraq, never imagined his return to the

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189 It follows the vision of republican military service defended by the late Charles Moskos (see 1997 with Butler, and 2005) in which the Army provides an environment which levels the class differences of civilian society – as is the case with racial tensions.
United States would unfold the way it did. The young soldier describes the hardships of trying to re-adapt to civilian life and to overcome the gulf of life experience that separated him from those who had lived sheltered existences:

When I first got back, I felt lucky to ... to have a story that no one else does. But then there was the whole resentment for me having to bear this whole burden for everyone else back home who, you know, just wants to go to school and get drunk and party. Actually the toughest thing is trying to pick up girls. Because I thought going in there that it'd be great because I'm this older guy and everything. But I intimidate a lot of the younger girls who are the same grade as me ... And they can't seem to get past the fact that I've been to war. I've never really been able to experience college life (King cited in Wood 2008: 229).

To this, King adds: “People are supportive of the troops as long as it doesn't take any sacrifice from them” (cited in Wood 2008: 231). Anecdotes are telling. Back from duty, the Marine recounts taking a stroll in his vehicle with a fellow soldier. They came across another vehicle sporting a “Freedom ain’t free” logo. The veterans immediately asked each other what sacrifices the occupants of the other vehicle had consented to. Indeed, Dominick King seems to be suggesting that supporters of the war ask of their fellow citizens sacrifices they would never be willing to make.

Nancy Lessin and Charley Richardson, parents of Iraq veteran Sergeant Joe Richardson (deployed to the Middle East in 2003), were the driving force behind the creation of Military Families Speak Out (MFSO), a grouping of military families opposed to the war. They express similar sentiments:

What this nation has decided to do is to sacrifice a tiny percentage, and to ignore that sacrifice because they’re disconnected from it. What we’re seeing is that only a few are forced to really bear the burden of this war, and that’s why people have gone along with it, and allowed it to continue. It’s not because they think it’s right but that it doesn’t affect them … A friend of ours from the Steelworkers Union once told me, “A just war is one you'd send your own kids off to fight.” That's the bar you should have
Lt. Col. Moriarty agrees: “Somewhere down the line, whether or not people realize it, we’re going to have to go back to conscription and the draft .... Not a chance [that we have enough troops in Iraq] and that’s the feeling of our troops on the ground, too.” (cited in Tripp 2008: 206).

The resentment that soldiers and their relatives feel toward the civilian population is a byproduct of the neoliberal economy of sacrifice in the United States. As the neoliberal volunteer army replaced the citizens army of old, the population serving in the armed forces has considerably diminished since the Vietnam War (see chapters 5 and 10). This has only deepened the gulf separating servicemembers from civilians as chapter 8 suggested. That only a minority of the population is called to arms is perhaps the greatest legacy of the post-Vietnam era, but it decidedly leaves a sentiment to those concerned that those who do fight are being abused by their fellow civilians:

It seems to me now that the troops know there's a lack of mission in the war. They're being sacrificed and they don't know why. It's not clear to them why they're fighting, who they're fighting, and their leaders are not helping them with that. They're not getting medical help, psychological help, when they come home. People are sent over and over. It's a horrible way to treat people who have volunteered for their country (Tiki Fuhro cited in Wood 2006: 43).

The emotional toll of warfare on both those who experience it first hand and on their relatives has become a new subject of academic interest and much wider political concern, with more and more books being written on post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and trauma. Though these subjects per se reach far beyond the boundaries of this dissertation, I believe it is necessary to

\[190\] See chapter 8 for references on the subject of trauma and war in general.
contextualize the resentment that military families and soldiers feel toward some segments of the civilian population, by fleshing out the emotional toll the war has exerted on them.

Indeed, while George W. Bush claimed that Americans “sacrificed peace of mind” when they watched news on television, for some military families even this activity had become practically unbearable; each report on American fatalities in Iraq sent relatives to hell and back as they awaited the names of those killed. Having met numerous relatives of service members and veterans of the Iraq war, the founders of MFSO recount the myriad personal tragedies brought on by the war: sons who returned from Iraq broken and distant, substance or alcohol abusers, attending family functions like ghosts and zombies, not humans. The mental disruptions the war provoked in the psyche of veterans also shattered marriages and relationships - spouses, partners and veterans both being unable to cope with the stress of combat. “The biggest single issue for those of us lucky enough to get our loved ones home is post-traumatic stress disorder [PTSD]. We have gotten emails from mothers who have taken the gun out of their son’s mouth to stop them from blowing their brains out (Nancy Lessin cited in Collins 2008: 5).”

Without compare, suicides of veterans of the Iraq war are the most dramatic stories to be found in the testimonies. Kevin and Joyce Lucy’s son, Jeffrey, a promising young marine reservist full of life was mobilized to Iraq in 2003. To say he came back changed from the war was an understatement. “He saw sights and had experiences which compromised his humanity,” says his father (Kevin Lucy cited in Tripp 2008: 121-127). Jeffrey became distant, depressive and would ask to be cradled in his father’s arms. Jeffrey hung himself a year after his return. The family readily admitted not having recovered from the shock, their son’s dramatic death leaving them to grapple with PTSD.
Laura Kent, the mother of Army Reservist First Lieutenant Philip Kent, barely survived a similar tragedy (Kent in Collins: 121-127). After serving with the 720th Military Police Battalion in 2003, Philip returned home, his marriage in shambles. He became suicidal. Honorably discharged, Lt. Kent lost his sense of self-esteem, withdrew from his family, cut communications with all his loved ones and eventually turned a shotgun on himself. His mother, Laura, questioned whether she believed it to be worth it for her to go on after the tragedy.

Denis Thomas (in Collins 2008: 99-107), an African American army wife and mother of a daughter in the army, recounts restless nights, her incapacity to think of anything but her deployed child and her inability to communicate with her. Insomnia and depression eventually led her to attempt suicide. Linda Waste, mother and grandmother, had five children and grandchildren serve in Iraq, a source of constant worry with which she had to cope using antidepressants (in Collins 2008: 149-154). As for army mother Jo-Anne Gross, her relationship with her unsupportive partner was destroyed by the emotional toll of the war which led her to experience a nervous breakdown (in Collins 2008: 129-135). The wait and uncertainty exacted the same strain on Sarah Fuhro, the mother of a 36 year-old mental-health technician in the US Army reserve: “It just tears your body apart. You think you're not thinking about it ... I lost fifteen pounds. I couldn't sleep. I was completely whacky” (cited in Collins 2008: 35).

Collins’ *For Love of a Soldier* is filled with such stories. Though anecdotal, they go a long way in humanizing what the conflict meant and cost those who had to live through it first hand or with vicarious proximity. The divide between the civilian and military experiences of the war take on a completely new face and help understand the two solitudes which coexist in America: those who shop and those who fight and die. But discrepancies between the collections of testimonies on this question are striking. Compare one narrative from *Operation Homecoming*
which tells the story of Captain Montgomery Granger’s 2003 deployment. In contrast to those we have already examined, it paints a rather soft portrait of the long-distance relationship between soldiers and their families (Granger in Carroll 2006: 322-326). In contrast to the depressions, nervous breakdowns and attempted suicides of *Surviving Iraq* and *For Love of a Soldier*, OH’s story is one of hugs and kisses. Granger laughs with his young children and reminisces about himself reading with them their favorite book before deploying off to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. It is not to suggest that this is a false account of relationships in military life; it is to illustrate *Operation Homecoming*’s esthetic, editorial preference for feel-good narratives, and unproblematic accounts of the war and happy endings.

Soldierly resentment toward civilians is certainly a dominant theme in the American experience of the war in Iraq. Rachel Woodward (2008) notes similar tensions in the way that British war veterans relate to their fellow citizens, describing the ambivalent bond that soldiers experience as “mateship” rather than “citizenship.” She writes:

> The celebration of group cohesion, of mateship, is also a strategy of self-affirmation, used in these narratives as a counter to popular public discourses ambivalent or outright critical of the pursuit of military violence for political ends … The wider nation or civilian society may be perceived by the soldier-writer as *uninterested or resistant* to the offer of service and sacrifice by the enlisted soldier; many of these narratives, in effect “Other” civilian society, talk in derogatory tones about civvy street. The soldier-writer who perceive themselves to be marginalized by civilian society, despite the possibility of supreme sacrifice, identify instead the mates, the unit, and the group as the recipient of their citizen-soldier service” (Woodward 2008: 377, emphasis added).

Earlier, in chapter 8, I recounted Captain Bodenhammer’s paradoxical statements on the role of US troops, which fought in order that civilians could shop and live “normal” lives. This ambivalence mirrored comments made by President George W. Bush in the TV interview with Jim Lehrer, who affirmed that soldiers were also sacrificing to secure the peace of mind of their
fellow citizens. Resentment is the inevitable outcome of unequal political(-economic) obligation to military sacrifice in a society that wants to maintain its political commitments worldwide without asking that the citizens preoccupy themselves with the cost and burden of this global influence: “empire without tears” in Warren Cohen’s eloquent words on early twentieth century America (cited in Sherry 1995: 10). On the flip-side one is entitled to ask whether this resentment does not tell something more profound about the cultural significance of sacrifice and what it expresses about the social bonds within American society. Can a soldier’s sacrifice be forced upon fellow citizens: especially those who oppose the war? If members of the civilian population have not asked for others to sacrifice in their name, is it not irrational or senseless for soldiers to then feel frustration or resentment towards those do not accept their ‘gift’? My point here runs counter to the commonsensical understanding that sacrifice is free: “None of [the veterans interviewed in What Was Asked of Us] asks for recognition, but rather just to be understood a little better by the nation that sent them off to fight. I think all Americans have an obligation to hear them” (Wood 2006: xxi, emphasis added). But does the sentiment of anger not express the more profound notion that the sacrifice of oneself is not a gift to the altar of freedom, to the common good of the republic; it is also a symbolic exchange (see Bourdieu 1994 on this notion) in which soldiers expect recognition for their service. Of this Tripp writes: “…while [some veterans] may not want to be recognized in passing (they do not count the “‘support our troops” decals on cars), they do want their service to be recognized” (2008: ix). Indeed, if the sociology of the military and enlistment patterns reveals that many soldiers cannot expect the same opportunities in life as their civilian peers, nevertheless they do expect to enter into a certain class of prestige expressed by the very themes used to recruit them: “the few, the proud.” That both civilians and soldiers misunderstand each others’ expectations hints once more at the
fact that there may be an underlying discrepancy between the *prestige* professed to soldiers *publicly* and an unstated understanding that courage and devotion are not really the driving forces behind sacrifice, but rather unequal social conditions creating different incentives for military service. Dying for country, the ultimate dimension of sacrifice appears as the proverbial elephant in the room. In this, soldierly resentment towards the civilian population is an affective translation of the inequality of political obligation amongst social classes and political obligation to sacrifice under unequal economic compulsion. Both of these inequalities are misrecognized for what they are mistaken because of the cultural hegemony of the liberal discourse on choice in the United States. In unusual situations, unpopular or prolonged wars, where the state has renounced to extend sacrifice to the higher echelons of the social pyramid, the frustration of soldiers stems from the realization that they are in fact treated as second class citizens – sacrificial classes who can be sent back to service multiple times while their peers shop, party and drink the war away.

**Evaluating the war**

As in the other chapters in which I discussed newspaper, editorial and opinion letter coverage of the sacrifice of American troops in Iraq, it is essential to understand the competing visions of the war that divide soldiers. This in turn will help grasp how the polarities in the field of debate over the war in Iraq is structured. Again, it is beyond my intention to provide any objective measure of servicemembers’ opinions on the war in Iraq in general. As a one soldier previously stated “My company has 170-some soldiers, and 170-some opinions" (Allen cited in Carroll 2006: 155). What interests me rather, is to look at the points of disagreement, the fault lines that divide soldiers about the pretexts given for war and how they justify their service and the sacrifice they
risk in Iraq. In other words, I wish to reconstruct a sub-segment of the field of political debate over the war in Iraq as it relates to the positions of servicemembers.

I was surprised to discover how lucid soldiers were about the limits of their efforts in Iraq, and often, ambivalent about the conflict. Again, as I already stated, many of the testimonies were apolitical, straightforward action-adventure stories and give little indication of the author’s true feelings. Unsurprisingly, the overwhelming majority of anti-war narratives come from the pages of Collins’ *For Love of a Soldier*.

Narratives most sympathetic to the war effort mirror many of the themes and justifications I explored in chapter 8, reaffirming the administration’s war aims. Echoing the president, Corporal Queiroga believed that the war made the streets of America safer from terrorism:

> Because of those 2,000 lives [lost by November 2005], we don’t get other attacks like the Twin Towers. We don’t get attacks on Miami, Los Angeles, or Chicago, Houston or Dallas. Imagine if we didn’t go to war how many more of those attacks would have been done to our cities, how many more lives would have been taken (cited in Tripp 2008: 32).

Others agree, like Lt. Col. David Vacchi (in Tripp 2008). But this position ultimately remains marginal in the field of debate. In reality, most justifications in favor of the war revolve around the reconstruction efforts undertaken by US troops, or evoke the overthrow of Saddam Hussein’s despotic regime. Specialist Elen Gerhardt, a soldier in the Missouri Army National Guard’s 1221st Transportation Company, was deployed to Iraq in 2003 (in Carroll 2006: 56-59). Though

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191 To be fair to both the testimonies and the editors, I do not suggest that the memoirs discussed along the following pages whitewash the problematic aspects of the invasion. Many of these narratives also tell of the US Army’s blunders: hummers driving over Iraqi children, the torture scandals at Abu Ghraib, friendly-fire incidents, and the racism or resentment of some US troops towards the Iraqis. It is impossible to do justice to all the testimonies considered. As a result, certain themes and generalities are highlighted at the risk of downplaying contradictory depositions within any single narrative.
Gerhardt expressed reservations about the war, her contact with Iraqi culture and the vestiges of Hussein’s Baathist regime led her to appreciate what the US may be accomplishing. She described strolling through the deserted barracks of the Iraqi army in Mosul: “Here the poor draftees of the years past may have shared coffee and cigarettes, read letters from home, told each other the news of the families we knew they had not volunteered to leave ... I had freely chosen” (cited in Carroll 2006: 58, emphasis added). In contrast to this freedom, Gerhardt described the more dramatic sights of the torture chambers on the base, chains and hooks dangling freely next to power outlets used to electrocute former detainees. An Iraqi child thanked her as she left the dismal sight: “Despite all my reservations about this war I could not help but wonder if [the Iraqi boy ] was thanking me for freeing father, uncle, or brother from some cell like that I'd walked so easily out of” (cited in Carroll 2006: 59).

The disturbing images are echoed in the account of lt.col. John Brens’, marine reservist with the 2nd Marine Expeditionary Force. His unit endeavoured to clean a local cemetery turned trash yard with the help of the local population. After befriending a destitute mathematics professor, he was introduced to a victim of the brutality of Saddam’s regime. Torturers had severed the former detainee’s thumbs when he had refused to falsely incriminate his friends.

Colonel Brens makes a considerable point of surmounting cultural divide, and showing his clear appreciation of Iraqi culture and the admirable work ethic displayed by the locals. As in many OH narratives, the reader is ultimately served an optimistic account of post-invasion Iraq which showcases personal growth through friendship and contact with members of another culture: a hopeful vision for the future of Iraqi society:

Despite my skepticism, the best thing that we brought with our big machines, our loud talk, and our American money … was hope. I think now they [the Iraqi villagers] believed we were truly here to help, and they were then free to hope for better lives …
My biggest contribution to the wars was, in the end, healing, not killing. But now I had to leave. I had been allowed to see into the lives of ordinary Iraqis, and I knew there was so much more to be done. I would not be here to see the men make plans to marry, have children, regain their lives, or simply be able to flip on a light switch. I had, in three weeks, become close to these men. They, not the cemetery, had become my mission (cited in Carroll 2006: 107).

Colonel Brens’s friendship with the Iraqis suggests that the cultural gulf is not insurmountable between reasonable men such as him and the former Iraqi professor, resonating with a cosmopolitan sense that human understanding is indeed universal and possible. The sentiments expressed for Iraq and its inhabitants are sincere if paternalistic, as evidenced by the sense of responsibility the officer feels for the population he has learned to know (“They … had become my mission”). For all its good intents, the communication does mirror colonial discourses of uplifting or tutelage. The noble savages will emerge from the chaos of their forlorn society after their encounter with the Western man (see McAllister 2005 on the theme of US benevolence), though the traveler cannot stay to help them see the process to its final conclusion. Brens’s account is ultimately reminiscent of the White Man’s Burden theme so common in colonial literature at the beginning of the previous century (Kaplan 2004a).

Another interesting theme is evidenced in the sentiment the colonel takes away from his experience. The war will return life to Iraq (“My biggest contribution to the war was, in the end, healing, not killing”). This assessment of the American troops’ efforts in the Middle East mirrors the humanitarian justifications often presented for the invasion, increasingly frequent because

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192. One can find a similar anecdote in the memoirs of Captain James Sosnicky of the Army Reserve’s 354th Civil Affairs Brigade, which accords a large place to his friendship with an unemployed Iraqi dentist (a Christian) named Mariam (in Carroll 2006: 126-131). The cosmopolitan theme surfaces once more as he remembers watching Michael Moore’s anti-war film *Farenheit 9/11* in a Jordanian movie theatre. Beyond accusations of a biased portrayal, which obfuscates the reconstruction efforts of the US Army in Iraq, the most poignant moment comes when the captain sees an Arab woman cry, echoing the grief of an American war mother whose son was killed in Iraq. “The pain of a mother grieving for her dead son cut through national and religious boundaries and touched on an emotion common to us all” (cited in Carroll 2006: 128).

193. I owe this point to my colleague Andreas Krebs in a personal note.

194. Stoler (2006) shows this is a fixation of colonial self-representations.
no WMD’s were found after the invasion. But as Hardt and Negri (2004) argue, such an account distorts the very meaning of war, transforming it into a biopolitical process of life-giving rather than life-taking. Though, as Hardt and Negri explain, this account of war is bound up in a larger cultural shift on the view of war to a productive rather than destructive activity, one must also contextualize it in the myth of American exceptionalism (see chapters 2 and 4). Both Hunt (1987) and Stephanson (1995) make the case that the principles which animate American foreign policy are believed to possess “regenerative virtues for humanity as a whole” (Hunt 1987, Stephanson 1995: 11).

The February 2005 testimony of Specialist Kristina “Ski” Kolodziejski of the Kentucky Army National Guard’s 617th Military Police Company (in Carroll 2006: 112-113) showcases the same clichés seen in other pro-war narratives, but it fleshes out a number of the national habitus’ characteristics and its mode of operation. Hungry for candy, Iraqi schoolchildren chased after American Hummers skidding by the outskirts of the capital, a common vision in occupied Iraq. In the crowd, Specialist Kolodziejski locked gaze with a young girl, just under 10 years of age:

We finally made eye contact. As she was looking at me, I pointed to the blond hair pulled up into a small bun at the back of my head, trying to make her realize that I too was a girl. A smile suddenly came to her face. In that moment I remembered that females of this culture do not have the freedoms that we American women possess (cited in Carroll 2006: 113).

The anecdote illustrates the national habitus’ capacity to instill in the citizens of the imperial society a superiority complex toward members of other national spaces irrespective of their real position of subordination or dominance in global social space. This ties in to the

195 Compare the above vision against the ironic image of this anti-war, American folk song: “Well the soldiers make a bid / Giving candy to the kids / Their teeth are gleaming / The Marines have landed on the shores of Santo Domingo” (Phil Ochs “The Marine have landed on the shores of Santo Domingo”).
American national habitus’ simultaneous capacity to repress experiences of social conflict which contradict collective understandings about gender and sex relations in the US. As a woman, Specialist Kolodziejski invariably occupies a position dominated in some respect within the field of citizenship, the field of social classes, and within this category, the narrower field of social classes in the armed forces as far as promotion and advancement are concerned. As in specialist Gerhardt’s narrative, the Iraqi girl encountered by the protagonist serves as a refracting lens through which the American soldier reaffirms the superiority of her culture. In this case, the colonial relationship is constructed through the medium of the stereotyped gender roles in both Iraq and the United States. Dominated in her domestic national space, Ski Kolodziejski nevertheless enters into the cross-cultural encounter with the Iraqi girl, armed with the principles of vision and division of her national habitus. In America, and in the armed forces, gender equality is at best a publicly maintained façade. Never mind rampant heterosexism (Butler 2006); never mind the stories of sexism, rape and sexual harassment women endure from their male comrades in the armed forces (see chapter 5). While “friendly-fire” rape in the armed forces is well-documented (Feinman 2000), a New York Times’ op-ed (May 26, 2008) suggested that 70 to 90 percent of women soldiers who have served in the war on terrorism have suffered sexual harassment from their male colleagues. Illustrating the sexist climate in the US armed forces, Army Reservist Specialist Danielle Morin tells that women in the Army are made out to be either a “dyke or slut, and [their male colleagues are] trying to figure out which one. We find ourselves in that spot because you're either going to sleep with them or you're not” (cited in Tripp: 166). It calls for little stretch of the imagination to reassert the dominated position of women in American society when one sees that in the armed forces the gender location of a woman either designates her as a sex object (“slut”) or a male in disguise (“dyke”). But in the encounter cited
above, Ski ignores all of the discrepancies between the publicly professed notion that America is a feminist society and the history of institutionalized sexism in the armed forces. She mechanically reaffirms the national habitus’ common principle of vision and division that all Arab (Muslim) women are prevented from exercising a professional life whereas in the US, American women enjoy rights and privileges equal to their male peers. The short narrative speaks volumes about American preconceptions of Iraqi culture and society and the US propensity to amalgamate it immediately into a larger vision of the East. Indeed, one aspect that did set apart Saddam Hussein’s regime from other Arab states in the region, most notably the Saudi Kingdom, was precisely its secularism and the professional opportunities open to women. Though Ski relates to the Iraqi girl through their common gender, Ski remains an American woman first and foremost. If the superiority complex stemming from the national habitus then operates through Ski’s subject position as a woman, it is because her understanding of what it means to be a woman is mediated by her practical (and imagined) experience of womanhood in America: her right to serve in the armed forces (though she is denied the right to engage in combat), and her right to show her hair, long and flowing. If the national habitus outlines such a large space of commonalities between members of one society, the sense of belonging is also always experienced through the more immediate identity: class, gender or racial position of the subject and the practical experience they have of Americanism through it. In cross-cultural encounters, the national habitus instills in individuals and groups a sense of superiority which is more commensurate with the imperial society’s place of dominance in global social space than with their particular class position. Furthermore, the common principles of vision and division repress contradictory experiences and dispositions which would arguably generate affinity and solidarity between members of different national spaces: in this case, Ski’s subjected position as
a dominated member of her society because of her sex.

A common thread then runs across the testimonies as they are ultimately produced through the mediation of the schemes of collective American identity defined by the national habitus. This common horizon of experiences is reinforced and stabilized through the soldiers’ practical experiences and confrontations with cultural differences in Iraq. Despite reservations expressed about the war, the justification for American sacrifice in Iraq is contained in the good soldiers belief that US reconstruction efforts can accomplish much for the country; or in the belief that Iraq without Saddam Hussein is ultimately better for the Iraqis. As corporal Queiroga expounds: “After a while they [Iraqis, FO] started liking us because they noticed that [the Americans] are not here to take over their country but to take that person [Saddam, FO] out of power so we can live free.” (cited in Tripp 2008: 29).

Traces of both colonial discourse and exceptionalist narratives litter all of the above testimonies in one form or another. All of them are invested with a sense of the superiority of American “freedom”, a value which is mediated through the subject’s immediate experience of the war. For Gerhardt, it is the freedom to choose to serve, freedom from cruel and unusual punishment, themes mirrored in Colonel Brens’s narrative of hope, friendship and multicultural becoming. The notion that the American experience and melting pot can transcend cultural differences and integrate foreign cultures has long been a doctrinal component of US imperial ideologies, as shows Hunt (1987); one that has only gained in importance since the First Gulf War and the 1990s (McAlllister 2005). Indeed, these narratives showcase the multicultural component of the national habitus by first insisting on the otherness of the colonial subject (the principle of (di)vision), and then on his ultimate potential to be reshaped and molded into a mirror-image of the colonizer and thus absorbed into his culture – an act which is none other than
the erasure of difference.

In Ski’s Kolodziejski’s case, the national habitus’ principle of superiority surfaces in the greater status she enjoys as a woman in America vis-à-vis her male colleagues and fellow citizens, a condition she believes Iraqi girls will not enjoy. “Freedom” is an extremely dense signifier as I argued in chapter 4. As a central component of the national mythology common to Americans – the national habitus – the idea of freedom, of America, decants into a thousand concrete manifestations and lends itself to the illusion that all subjects speak of the same experience: “freedom,” when they in fact describe multiple realities. Significantly, all of these symbols of freedom and thus of national identity are stabilized through their negative mirror-images, like one’s distorted reflection in a maze of mirrors: barracks, torture chambers, unemployment, the child whose culture hypothetically denies her the “right to the pursuit of happiness” – at least in the American sense. As in newspaper narratives, the national habitus obfuscates the real proximities that may exist between the occupation forces and Hussein’s regime: aggressive warfare, torture at Abu Ghraib, raids on Iraqi homes in the middle of the night and the disrespect of life as evidenced in the rule which prohibits military convoys from stopping to prevent ambushes, even if this means running over the Iraqi children which flock around US vehicles. At the same time, domestically, the abstract understandings of freedoms and other American values are stabilized through the homologies generated instantiated by the national habitus, between the fields of ideological production, cultures, consumption and lifestyles, where these symbolic principles are given concrete forms. Thus it is also Ski’s right to wear sunglasses and carry a rifle as opposed to the Iraqi child who presumably wears a veil, contrasting behaviors which give definite shape to the principle of division contained in the national habitus, as I argued in chapter 8.
It is evident by now that the above war memoirs employ much of the familiar language, images and primary oppositions I already explored in newspaper articles that supported the war: the children who are the hope and future of the new Iraq, colonial themes, exceptionalist and linear narratives about American society and other-world backwardness; and a fundamental belief in the humanism of the American culture of warfare even in the face of contradictory evidence. Thus even when the soldiers do not explain their political positions on the war in the most obvious terms, one can unmask political statements through the effects of the homologies first observed in the field of newspaper debate (chapter 8). Table 9.3 sketches out and summarizes these correspondences where they exist.

But I must be fair. The soldiers’ positions on the war are not nearly as black and white as many of those encountered in the print media. Testimonies are often ambivalent as is Sergeant Sharon Allen’s. Like others, she voices the moral complexity of the US’ predicament and weighs whether the numerous pretexts that were given to support the invasion hold true. Did President Bush lie about Iraq possessing WMDs? “Several of us have no problem if [Bush] was just staying on the safe side” (cited in Carroll 2006: 158). She then nuances the previous statement: “Things would be a lot less complicated if our government was totally innocent and Saddam's was totally guilty” (cited in Carroll 2006: 158). But even the desire to find positive results for the hardships US troops and Iraqi society have endured raises more difficult questions: “I personally believe that living conditions are better now in Iraq than before we were here. I just don't know if they are safer. It seems to change from day to day. And even I wonder if one country can impose political stability and democracy on another” (cited in Carroll 2006: 157).

The ambivalence of certain soldiers can be outright shocking and reveal the full complexity of rationalizing a war for which false pretexts were given to free a country and population that

196. See the testimony of Specialist Danielle Morin in Tripp 2008: 160-167.
one ultimately does not respect. This is the case of Lance corporal Nathan Murphy, a reservist in
the Marine Corps:

At the time we were in Iraq, it was a good thing that we had liberated this country from
Saddam Hussein. He was a bad guy ... but it was more appealing because of oil ... I
justified it that we're going in there if maybe there's a chance that this country is going
to develop a stable government, and eventually be an example for a new way in the
Middle East ... That's a little far-fetched maybe [because of the huge cultural gap], but it
is still a possible outcome of this war. And if all of this happens, maybe it was worth it
for all these men and women to be killed. I'm not going to lie. My heart does not go out
to [Iraqis (in text)] as much and that's part of the problems of war. This is creating a
whole new racism. We call them hajjis. We don't much care about them. I ran them off
the road at 60 [mph]. I would have thought it a blast to have crushed one of their
donkeys into the truck. Other people think it's a blast to light them up. Quite a few have
been killed (cited in Tripp 2008: 69).

Other soldiers provide much more straightforward justifications for the US’ continued
engagement. While retrieving some of the threads I discussed earlier (Saddam and his family are
evil and posed a danger to America), Lt.Col. David Vacchi also believes that the sacrifices
already consented to thus far mandate the continuation of US military presence in Iraq (Tripp
2008: 81-88). Another officer believes that the US must remain in Iraq if only to mend the
problems the invasion has created in Iraqi society (Allan King cited in Wood 2006: 55-65).
Interestingly this vision is also mirrored by soldiers who oppose the war. Sergeant Morton, an
army reservist from Massachusetts, openly abhors President Bush and buys none of the pretexts
given for the invasion of Iraq:

I don't think the Iraq war is justified at all. First it was for weapons of mass
destruction, now the pitch is we're bringing these guys democracy. It's supposed to be
a noble cause. If you want a noble cause, we should have 130,000 soldiers in Sudan
right now preventing genocide. That would be a much more noble cause (cited in
Tripp 2008: 120).

Despite his reservations, Morton finds himself in an ethical catch-22. The consequences
of the US occupation forces leaving Iraq would be disastrous, he believes, unleashing civil war, and generating the proper conditions for terrorism to flourish. So he is forced to continue to support the military presence in Iraq though he opposes the war.

The anti-war themes discussed by Morton resonate with many other soldiers who believe the war was conducted by profit-hungry elites, for big business, for oil; that it was managed by incompetents, and squandered America’s resources, overshadowed infinitely more pressing humanitarian dilemmas; and ultimately led to the demise of America’s good name – themes I explored already in the newspaper debate on the war. Sarah Tyler, the mother of a two-time veteran writes of the war:

So much money, almost four hundred and twenty billion dollars so far, could be going into healthcare, health insurance for people who don't have it. We could house the homeless; we could feed the hungry, we could upgrade our schools we could develop and expand all kinds of youth programs... (cited in Collins 2008: 32).

Father Tim Khalor agrees: “It's craziness. There are schools in America that need funding. There is gang violence. We have horrors going on in LA that need to addressed. Instead we're pouring money into Iraq” (cited in Collins 2008: 183). Another soldier, Joseph Hatcher, exclaims that Iraq is a “meaningless conflict” and that though many officers opposed the war, they were forced to prosecute military operations regardless:

We're in a country for the oil. There was no weapons of mass destruction. There's no connection to 9/11 [The terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 on New York’s World Trade Center and the Pentagon] ... It's hard to understand killing people [insurgents] who think the way you do...” (cited in Wood 2008: 134) ... “We just need to stop driving so many SUVs. You know, American's dependency on fossil fuels is an embarrassment” (cited in Wood 2008: 135).

197. Nobel Economics Prize winner Joseph Stiglitz evaluates the total costs of the war will rise to 3 trillion dollars (Stiglitz and Bilmes 2008).
The narrative of reconstruction defended by soldiers such as Brens, Gerhardt and others does not carry unanimity. To others, like Staff Sergeant Richard Riley, “reconstruction” is something of an oxymoron:

You could talk about the good stuff we are doing all you want to-it doesn’t overshadow the bad that is going on. When you are talking about electricity and you are talking about running water, you are talking about schools – you are talking about one or two towns. *Come on, we just demolished* Kirkuk, Tikrit, all those places have been destroyed, the whole of Iraq, the Euphrates River is just littered (cited in Tripp 2008: 39-40).

Riley’s verdict on the US’ war in Iraq is without appeal: “It’s like we’re a nation of murderers and bullies-and that is what we are turning out to be” (cited in Tripp 2008: 39).

In 2006, John Fenton’s son served with the Marines in Fallujah, before succumbing to a head injury suffered in combat. Beginning in the spring of 2004, Marines had reconquered the city from insurgents after US private military contractors were killed and publicly dragged through the streets by an angry mob. The Marines had shelled the city for days; it lay in ruins. Fenton described to his parents a dismal sight indeed: “[Fallujah] was in shambles, dirty, just a big mess. I believe we did that: levelled Fallujah. It was a disaster area. They say Fallujah is under control now, but there's nothing to control” (John Fenton cited in Collins 2008: 20).

For others, sacrifice does not beget further sacrifice. Unlike lt. Col. Vacchi and Soldier Allan King (see above), Fenton doesn’t agree that the US should chase after the jackpot in Iraq like a gambler who hunkers down to win back money lost in a poker game. “I've been asked, do I think we need to stay in Iraq to honor my son's memory. That's the biggest bunch of hooey I ever...
heard. I need more kids to die to make me feel better? I don't get that” (cited in Collins 2008: 24).

The most potent threads in the anti-war narratives subvert the doxic understandings of American culture, both the myths of choice and American benevolence. Soldiers like Richard Riley, Nicholas Morton and army relatives like John Fenton destabilize the administration and pro-war positions that the US troops are effectively bringing freedom and democracy to Iraq; that they have improved life for the civilian population. They further destabilize the notion that any of the reasons stated for the invasion can resist even superficial analysis. In protest they state all of the shortcomings of American military efforts: civilian massacres in Haditha, reminiscent of the liquidation of the village of My Lai in Vietnam (Riley cited in Tripp 2008); and the physical destruction of an ancient civilisation. As in newspaper editorials, op-eds and opinion letters that opposed the conflict, the political interventions of these soldiers and officers invert the dominant relationships of signification that have been used to argue in favor of the war. In their view, the US is no longer the great liberator, or the benevolent colonizer; rather it is portrayed as an imperialist, belligerent, and inhuman power. This refers back to a theme I have been developing throughout this dissertation, that of the link between war aims in Iraq and their consonance with the “spirit” of American identity; and the parallel meaning of sacrifice as a religious offering to make sacred a way of life.

Americans have deep affective investments in the principles of the national habitus, as I previously argued. Wars are prosecuted not simply to protect the lives of fellow Americans; they believe their wars should also be fought to elevate the higher principles of American culture (Hunt 1987; Anderson & Crayton 2005), those of freedom, democracy, the right to the pursuit of happiness - principles which decant, through the systems of homologies between the fields of homologies between the fields of

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ideological and cultural production, into everyday consumer goods (in the field of consumption). As a consequence, in prosecuting the war, some of these testimonies go a long way in condemning the American way of life, its frivolity, materialism and consumerism. One may recall Joseph Hatcher’s exclamation that Americans’ dependency on SUVs created a need for foreign oil, very much in the same way that republican critics of the war argued in newspapers in favor of a thriftier lifestyle for America. As previously shown, political debate over the war in Iraq spills over into peripheral fields, such as the field of culture and the space of lifestyles in America (see chapter 8, and Table 9.3 at the end of the chapter). It also spills over into the fields of social classes and citizenship, as expressed in the resentment that soldiers feel toward the elite class of American society, such as commissioned officers, private military companies, political leaders, business tycoons and members of the Bush administration and defense department.

Support for the conflict is destabilized and more difficult to maintain as discrepancies are revealed between American expectations about the war and its purpose, on the one hand; and the actual conduct of military field operations, on the other. Opinion research has already demonstrated that support for the conflict has ebbed and flowed with the revelation of torture scandals, as the aims of the war became murkier and that it lengthened in time (see chapters 7 and 10). As Father Tim Kahlor exclaimed: “People need to think when the U.S. does something, it's for a good cause. When you tell them the facts, it kills them. They don't want to see” (cited in Collins 2008: 183).

Significantly then, the national habitus – understood as the horizon of cultural and practical references common to US citizens and residents - continues to define and delimit the parameters of the debate on the conflict in Iraq. This means that both pro-war and anti-war narratives share, much despite their very real differences: a common, practical, though not
necessarily reflexive, understanding of the rules of the discursive game in which they are engaged. Both pro-war and anti-war narratives root their arguments in the common horizon of cultural references and commonplaces of American identity that serve as sources of legitimacy - in this case, an affective investment in the symbolic superiority of the American model of society.

Bourdieu (1988), like Quentin Skinner (1989a-d), argues that statements operating within a field of discourse only partially subvert the dominant narratives or references which are most fundamental to that universe. If subversion most often occurs by transforming established meanings, or creating new meanings and webs of signification, the effect is most effectively realized when new meanings continue to resonate with those principles most fundamental to the field in question. Heidegger contested the philosophical precepts of his neo-Kantian contemporaries through a wholesale rejection of their interpretation of Immanuel Kant’s texts, as argues Bourdieu (1988). Yet Heidegger rooted his counter-revolutionary philosophy in the metaphysical teachings of his German predecessor, thus making Kant into an opponent of the Aufklärung (Enlightenment) and a most potent critique of Heidegger’s contemporaries and adversaries in the philosophical field. These lessons hold true for the field of political debate on Iraq where arguments against the war are also voiced and rooted in the names of freedom, patriotism and American democracy.

The issue remains that the conflict in the field of debate on the war and military service destabilizes the narratives of volunteerism in significant ways. As I have shown many soldiers readily admit that they enlisted not out of patriotism but rather from a desire to improve their life conditions beyond the horizon of real-life choices that presented themselves at that time. This lends credence to the notion discussed in earlier chapters
that soldiers followed established patterns of recruitment into the army, and that the
demographic, like the qualitative, evidence confirms the notion of a structured volunteerism.
This volunteerism presents itself as individual choice rather than as the result of a statistically
measurable social destiny.

The consequences of these trends in enlistment explain in turn the resentment that many
soldiers and members of their families feel about the disengagement of mainstream American
society which essentially takes their service and sacrifice for granted. Even when soldiers are
silent on the questions of stop-loss and involuntary mobilizations to active duty, the
psychological consequences of these deployment practices are palpable if only in the
depressions, mental health problems and sometimes suicides of service members. In the end,
soldiers are in fact treated like second-class citizens, and, to some extent, many soldiers and their
relatives cannot help but feel that way.

The tensions around the issues of volunteerism and resentment towards civilians that
transpire in the field of political debate over the war in Iraq, and in the field of narratives about
the war, both mirror the larger fault lines that fracture American society within the field of
citizenship. This means that the conditions of discourse about the war in Iraq are also structured
along, and mirror in the specific language of each field, the larger divisions in American society
between dominant and dominated class fractions through the system of homologies or
correspondences that exist between the positions and polarities from one field to the next. The
imperial form of society, its foreign ambitions, and the mobilization process for war thus at once
reveals and exacerbates larger fractures in the field of citizenship between first and second class
citizens. Though cultural conventions in American society may express a public admiration for
the role of servicemembers and their devotion to their fellow citizens, the class stratification of
military service tells a rather different story about the political-economic obligations incumbent upon different classes of citizens in the United States.

Like newspaper debates about the war in Iraq, the testimonies of soldiers and their families reveal the growing crisis of the American imperial form of society. This crisis expresses itself both in anxieties over what the aims are, of the war the soldiers are fighting and through it, the principles they are sacrificing their lives (or health) to edify. Second, it now becomes increasingly apparent that the crisis is destabilizing the dominant liberal and republican discourses’ capacity to enable soldiers to rationalize both their social selection into military service and the prolonged duty they must accept. I say that these forms of symbolic violence are destabilized because the war testimonies, and the newspaper debates they echo alike, show that they are increasingly challenged and called into question. This means that the forms of cultural domination at the heart of the discourses on volunteerism and duty, and the symbolic legitimacy they offer are increasingly being revealed for what they are: social illusions produced by unequal social processes and thus, symbolic violence. Third, the crisis is manifest as a growing polarization in the political field, in the field of social classes and in the field of war narratives, and cumulatively, in the field of citizenship, even as soldiers, relatives, ordinary citizens, and other media actors denounce or delineate the social hierarchies within American society and the unequal burden of service incumbent upon different classes of citizens. It is a crisis in all the senses I outlined in chapter 7.

Conclusion

Chapter 10 will address the central question of this dissertation and asks whether and how one may speak of a crisis of the American imperial society. It begins by examining the legal
authorities for mobilization as well as data on the voluntary and involuntary mobilizations of members of the reserve forces and national guards, and the unilateral extension of military contracts (stop-loss). I then review major findings by the Congressional Research Services, the Government Accountability Office and the 2008 Congressional Commission on the Reserves and National Guards, all of which present alarming portraits of the combat readiness of the US armed forces. The chapter then goes on to examine the American state’s responses to the military manpower crises posed by the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. I build a bourdieusian account of crisis that draws on the theory of political obligation and puts in question the meaning of the state’s refusal to seriously consider reintroducing the draft. I would argue that it reveals a tacit admission or *an unspoken social consensus* that the US is in fact founded on unequal classes of citizenship and that winning a decisive victory in Iraq is not worth reintroducing universal military service and extending the burden of sacrifice to the higher echelons of the social pyramid.

Finally, chapter 11 closes this dissertation by stressing the ways in which the crisis I identified is in fact a crisis of the “imperial” form of society specifically. It argues that the crisis of the imperial society is a crisis brought on by the ongoing renegotiation of the relationship between soldiering and first class citizenship in America. This is especially the case because the rise of women, minorities and migrants within the ranks of the armed forces transforms the demographics of military service, thereby increasingly reflecting the composition of population segments that are in dominated positions within the field of citizenship. I argue that the collective anxieties brought on by upheavals in the field of citizenship, in the context of the war, mirror fears over the decline of America’s moral influence in the field of global politics, thus creating a homology of crises in the imperial society’s internal and external forms of rule.
Table 9.3. The field of war testimonies and homologies with the journalistic field and political fields

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collection</th>
<th>View of the war</th>
<th>Field of lifestyles and images</th>
<th>Field of (political) culture</th>
<th>Newspapers and the political field</th>
<th>The political field proper</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Operation Homecoming</td>
<td>“My biggest contribution to the wars was, in the end, healing, not killing”</td>
<td>Iraqi cemeteries become trash yards/ American “big machines”</td>
<td>Volunteerism / liberalism</td>
<td>“sacrifice” implies a voluntary giving of oneself …” (WSJ)</td>
<td>Generally supports the war through esthetic complacency</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“In that moment I remembered that females of this culture do not have the freedoms that we American women possess”</td>
<td>Torture chambers, amputations/ freedom from cruel and unusual punishment</td>
<td>American material affluence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“For it is [the soldiers who welcomed us home] who reminded me what serving my country is truly about”</td>
<td>Sunglasses, pony tail / Islamic veil</td>
<td>Better living conditions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The American right to volunteer / Iraqi draftees</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>What Was Asked of Us</td>
<td>It is too late to pull out / Stay the course of the war</td>
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<tr>
<td>“For me it really was just that I have a tremendous respect for the kids who serve in the military, especially the eighteen and nineteen-year-old guys in the infantry, and I really believe that college kids should do their part too.”</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>“Combat was just something I wanted to do, and I enjoyed doing that. I had adrenaline - I guess I'm an adrenaline junkie, but it was fun”</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>“There was no weapons of mass destruction”; “There's no connection to 9/11...”; “We just need to stop driving so many SUVs ... American's dependency on fossil fuels is an embarrassment”</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- SUVs
- Combat of soldiers / college kids getting drunk and partying
- Grueling, graphic scenes of horrific violence on the banks of the Euphrates, and Najaf
- Support-our-troops stickers on pick-up trucks (‘plastic’ support for the war)

- Thriftiness/ resentful republicanism; universal military service/ affluence, ‘me generation’
- “The disparity between the lives of the few who are fighting and being killed, and the many who have been asked for nothing more than to continue shopping.” (NYT)
- “The lives of soldiers fighting in Iraq – or headed there, or just returned – have become tapestries of sacrifice not easily fathomed by Americans preoccupied this weekend with barbecues and holiday sales” (USA Today)

- Ambivalent but generally supports the war, though highly critical of how it is handled and how the burden of sacrifice is shared
| **Surviving Iraq** | “It’s like we’re a nation of murderers and bullies—and that is what we are turning out to be” | “Surfer-dudes” / combat veterans |
| | “My heart does not go out to [Iraqis (in text)] … We call them hajjis … I ran them off the road at 60 [mph]. I would have thought it a blast to have crushed one of their donkeys into the truck. Other people think it’s a blast to light them up. Quite a few have been killed” | Generally liberal/voluntary sacrifice is a choice, but an unfair one |
| | “Somewhere down the line, whether or not people realize it, we’re going to have to go back to conscription and the draft …. Not a chance [that we have enough troops in Iraq] and that’s the feeling of our troops on the ground, too” | “We are not the only ones capable of perversion, torture and killing … We can remove ourselves from the occupation of Iraq, which was foisted upon us under false pretenses” |
| | | (USA Today) |
| For Love of a Soldier | “So much money, almost four hundred and twenty billion dollars so far, could be going into healthcare, health insurance for people who don’t have it. We could house the homeless; we could feed the hungry, we could upgrade our schools we could develop and expand all kinds of youth” | Thriftiness / republicanism |
| | “[Fallujah] was in shambles, dirty, just a big mess. I believe we did that: levelled Fallujah. It was a disaster area.” | “It’s easy to make the case for war when the fighting will be done by other people’s children …” |
| | Small towns with no opportunities | (NYT) |
| | Destitute military families | “People naturally are reluctant to conclude that their country did the wrong |

unfortunately, dying ... on the front line”
(Newsweek)
programs...”

“A just war is one you'd send your own kids off to fight.” That's the bar you should have to get over to send someone else's kid off to war”

thing, that young people died for a pointless cause” (The Nation)

“we are supposed to fight when attacked … when we are imminently threatened … or to defend what's right … The leadership of this country should question the wisdom of pre-emptive war” (NYT)
Chapter 10 – Above and Beyond Consent:

Stop-loss, Involuntary Mobilization, and the Crisis of the American Imperial Society

The preceding chapters have incrementally established the strain that the war in Iraq was exerting on both the armed forces of the United States and its domestic society, particularly in the resentment of different sacrificial classes toward their civilian peers. I have argued that through the unique system of homologies between the fields, debates in the field of politics, as well as memory and war testimonies have mirrored more profound fault lines in the field of citizenship at the heart of the American imperial society. Drawing primarily on Stuart Hall, Pierre Bourdieu, and Colin Hay, this chapter now makes the case that the escalation of tensions amongst social classes and class fractions in the different fields has brought the imperial model of society, in its post-civil-rights and post-Vietnam structures, to the brink of crisis. This crisis has constrained the state to decisively intervene through a diverse set of policies and political decisions to mediate tensions between the social classes.

The first part of the chapter will examine the three principal legal authorities under which the state may mobilize troops for war and the effects of mobilization on the structure of the armed forces, with a particular focus on the reserve components of the Army and Marine Corps. Building on considerations developed in chapter 9, the third section theorizes what the extensive use of involuntary mobilizations and stop-loss orders suggests about the notion of voluntary military service in the US. Following Bourdieu, I advance the idea that the state’s exceptional wartime measures reveal an underlying crisis of the liberal doxa, the myths of choice and social mobility which provide the symbolic ordering of class and race relations in peacetime. I suggest
that stop-loss policies enacted to contain the crisis codified into an explicit practice of exploitative enlistment patterns which had only been visible as statistical consequences of subtler, but no less exclusionary social processes. This solidification of the symbolic structure of society in fact thrusts into the limelight the very different sets of political obligations that citizens of different socioeconomic and racial backgrounds have always been tacitly expected to fulfill, and thus marks their passage into orthodoxy. I argue the measures enacted to contain the crisis (with the help of the economic turbulence that has shaken the labor market) suggest that the liberal illusion of choice and juridical equality in America masks the perpetuation of a “société d’ordres,” founded on different categories of citizens with very different sets of political obligations. Finally, I review some of the major policy decisions concerning manpower and personnel in order to look at how the state has faced the crisis. Here I consider that the decision to withdraw American troops from Iraq by “the summer of 2010” marked a moment of decisive intervention in a series of institutional responses through which the American state attempted to balance its manpower needs in two wars, mindful of public opinion and increasing tensions over how the burden of military sacrifice is shared amongst citizens and residents.

The reserve and National Guards: Stop-loss and involuntary mobilization.

The debates in newspapers over sacrifice in the war in Iraq and the testimonies of soldiers and their families revealed profound grief, sorrow, anger and division over the human cost of the war in Iraq and how it was distributed across the fields of social classes, citizenship and across geographical space. This distress was mirrored in three different ways. It manifested itself first as a return of the quarrel between a republican conception of military service as a civic duty and a liberal conception of voluntary sacrifice founded on individual preference. This
marked the cultural or moral manifestation of the crisis in the fields of culture and ideological production. Second, following Hay’s model of crisis, social actors sowed narratives of abuse and victimhood. They identified rival social and political groups as those bearing responsibility for society’s ills. Kreps (2009) shows that as public support melted away over George W. Bush’s grand strategy, public opinion increasingly looked to political leaders who could offer an alternative to the failing war effort. These tensions also took shape through the denunciation of the political leaders, elites and ordinary citizens who shied away from military service at a time when their country needed them. Meanwhile these very citizens deplored the unfair burden borne by soldiers and military families. As I noted earlier, this republican denunciation echoed across the political spectrum: both supporters and opponents of the war decried the inequality of sacrifice that has been asked of Americans hailing from disfavored class fractions. This political line of critique was not limited to democrats or opponents of the war. Nevertheless, the analysis of republican critics of the volunteer army was vigorously rejected by those apologists of liberalism and voluntary military service who refused a social diagnostic of military service and sacrifice. Proponents of the war went so far as to suggest that opponents of the war in Iraq were in league with the enemies of America outside of its borders. As David Campbell argued, “liminal populations” within the American imperial society were identified as foreigners and denied the moral presumption of citizenship. This showed once more that the logics of imperial domination and citizenship did not flow from simple residence within the borders of the US or even from nominal citizenship. Some supporters of the war at least associated citizenship to a moral and cultural community that supported the imperial society’s geopolitical domination of Iraq. A similar logic was at play when partisans of the war suggested that cultural transformations in America - white guilt and the decline of traditional values - had weakened the
moral fiber of citizenship and thus the imperial society’s resolve. Again in this case, the success of the imperial society’s geopolitical domination seemed to presuppose that her citizens possessed a certain ethos of sacrifice and faith in the superiority of the American model of society. Thus if debates over sacrifice were polarizing the political field in these two fundamental senses they were also polarizing the field of citizenship and exposing tensions between the first and second-class citizens of the imperial society.

Third, concern over recruitment and sacrifice dominated not only newspaper articles and editorials, but think-tank papers,199 Congressional reports, findings by the Government Accountability Office (St-Laurent 2006) and academic analyses. The 2008 Congressional Commission on the National Guards and the Reserves, the GAO and the Center for American Progress all painted the alarming picture of a worn army, exhausted troops, the melting away of the US’ operational military reserve (Kreps 2009), depleted equipment, bleak long-term recruitment prospects - both in the enlisted and lower officer ranks (Kreps 2009), and in overstretched reserve forces. As Moskos (2005: 669) wrote: “Mobilization on the scale needed for Iraq (and, to a lesser degree, Afghanistan) reveals that relying on the reserves for such missions is not a long-term option, both because of the unpredictable disruptions they cause in personal life and the increased likelihood of casualties.”

If the crisis of the American imperial society was first manifested in the acute intellectual, cultural and political polarization over the burden of military sacrifice that we examined through the lens of newspaper articles, it also began to appear in the pattern of institutional responses to concern over the incapacity of the armed forces, especially the reserves, to prolong their mission. As Hall (1978: 318-319) wrote, “conflicts between the fundamental

class forces, which hitherto formed principally on the terrain of economic life and struggle, only gradually, at point of extreme conflict escalating to the level of the state, are now precipitated on the terrain of the state itself, where all the critical political bargains are struck.”

Though the imperial society is in crisis, it does not follow that the US faces imminent revolutionary transformation. It means that the unpopularity of the Iraq war, in the context of another conflict in Afghanistan, depleted manpower and equipment levels; political grievances over the continuation of the occupation, and the inequality of military sacrifice forced the Department of Defense (DoD) and political leaders to take action. A state or regime may successfully contain a crisis, but this success will entail an institutional response of some kind, either in meeting some of the demands that may be asked of it, or by forcing an authoritarian resolution. As hegemony weakens, in this case the liberal doxa of volunteerism, the state will attempt “to bring about by fiat what [can] no longer be won by consent” (Hall 1978: 284). This was the first form of response to the crisis of the American imperial society that was manifested as depletion of both citizens’ and soldiers’ consent over prolonged sacrifice.

If the American state preserved most of the American people from feeling more directly the effects of the war - by avoiding the return to the draft for instance - this was only accomplished by imposing an extra levy on those who had already served. That policy marked the state’s authoritarian response to the manpower crisis of the imperial society.

So far I have shown that the sacrificial classes of society possess their own numerus clausus. It categorically excludes the lowest orders of society and explicitly defines them in contrast to these ‘failures.’ In most instances, the sacrificial classes also exclude members of the higher echelons of society; or rather, individuals hailing from those social groups show a great propensity to exclude themselves from a profession ‘not tailor-fitted’ for people of their social
origins. Under normal circumstances, the social processes that statistically drew members of the sacrificial classes into the army and excluded others could operate under the guise of a perfect supply-and-demand mode of sacrifice, one that made personal choice, patriotism or some other individual attribute or taste, the dominant criteria for enlistment.

However, the sociology of the sacrificial classes of the American imperial society tells only half the story, that of active duty enlistees, men and women who’s full-time job is to serve in the armed forces. As the US Federal Government ended the draft and downsized the military over the last few decades, it increasingly relied on the reserve components\(^{200}\) of the armed forces to help to carry out its missions (COTNGAR 2008; Kapp 2008).\(^{201}\) Typically, these citizen-soldiers hold jobs in the civilian workforce and serve in their military capacity “one weekend a month and two weeks a year” (Kapp 2008: 5). In wartime, reservists can either volunteer for active duty service in their respective branch of the military, or they can be called up against their will under Title 10, chapter 12, of the US Code. This is called “involuntary mobilization.” Each of the three mobilization authorities can be invoked in graded response to the severity of a particular threat which grants the executive branch the power to activate a corresponding number of reservist categories for extended durations (see Figure 10.1).

The “Presidential Reserve Call-up” under 10 U.S.C. §12304 authorizes the mobilization of up to 200,000 reservists for a period not exceeding 365 days (Kapp 2008: note 43).\(^{202}\) If the president deems a threat particularly severe he is entitled to activate up to one million members of the reserve forces for up to “24 consecutive months” under the 10 U.S.C. §12302 statute of

\(^{200}\) The seven reserve components mirror their active-duty branches and include the Army, Air Force, Navy, and Coast Guard Reserves, as well as the Army and Air National Guards. The reserve components are subdivided into a virtual labyrinth of duty statuses, the most important of which are the “select reserves,” the first to be mobilized; and the “ready reserves,” which comprise a much larger pool of troops. See Kapp (2008) for definitions of all reservist categories and their corresponding duty statuses.


\(^{202}\) This length of time has recently been extended from 270 days.
“Partial Mobilization.” In the direst circumstances, U.S.C. §12301(a) provides that Congress (and not the president) can declare the “Full Mobilization” of the reserves, conferring the government with unlimited power to call up troops until six months after the conflict has expired (COTNGAR 2008: 232). Needless to say, Congress has backed away from invoking this most extensive power ever since its victory against the Axis powers in 1945 (COTNGAR2008: 232).

Figure 10.1 (copied from St-Laurent 2006: 232).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statute</th>
<th>Provisions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 U.S.C. 12301(a) “Full Mobilization”</td>
<td>Declared by Congress: In time of war or national emergency No limit on numbers of soldiers called to active duty For duration of war plus 6 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 U.S.C. 12302 “Partial Mobilization”</td>
<td>Declared by the President: In time of national emergency No more than 1,000,000 reservists can be on active duty No more than 24 consecutive months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 U.S.C. 12304 “Presidential Reserve Call-up”</td>
<td>Determined by the President: To augment the active duty force for operational missions No more than 200,000 reservists can be on active duty No more than 270 days</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


During the Cold War, the president made sparing use of his power to activate the reserves, relying on it only four times over most of the second half of the twentieth century (Kapp 2008: iii). However, the American imperial society has sought to maintain an equal amount of influence over world affairs since the demise of the rival Soviet imperial society, despite reduced troop numbers (COTNGAR 2008). As a consequence, it has activated reservists without their consent six times over the two decades since 1989, thus “an average of once every three years” (Kapp 2008: iii). In fact, the Department of Defense has made the activation of the
reserve components a cornerstone of its operational plans to supplement the active army in any major conflict:

For planning and programming purposes, it is DoD policy that when Reserve component augmentation of the active forces is required for major regional conflicts and national emergencies, access to the Reserve components and individuals through an order to active duty without their consent will be assumed. For lesser regional conflicts, domestic emergencies, and other missions, where capabilities of the Reserve components could be required, maximum consideration will be given to accessing volunteer Reserve component units and individuals before seeking authority to order members of the Reserve components to active duty without their consent (DOD Directive 1235.12, January 19, 1996: 2).

In the First Gulf War, reservists and national guardsmen represented just under 15 percent of mobilized service members (Moskos 2005: 666). By contrast, in the context of the ongoing war in Iraq this number has risen to over 40 percent of US troop levels. In 2005, reservists and guardsmen accounted for one out of every four American soldiers who died in Iraq. “This widespread utilization of reserve forces in combat theaters is unprecedented in American military history” (Moskos 2005: 665), and will ultimately prove “unsustainable.”\footnote{“Mobilization on the scale needed for Iraq (and, to a lesser degree, Afghanistan) reveals that relying on the reserves for such missions is not a long term option, both because of the unpredictable disruptions they cause in personal life and the increased likelihood of casualties” (Moskos 2005: 669).} Regardless, in early 2007, President Bush was mobilizing 30,000 additional troops to Iraq to stabilize a deteriorating military situation. This raised American troop levels in Iraq up to 165 000 soldiers, further increasing the strain on the reserves (Korb 2007: 1). Late into the war, reservists and guardsmen continued to supply over half of the troops in Iraq (Tripp 2008: xxiii). As of March 2009, just under 90,000 servicemembers from all seven components of the armed forces continued to operate under involuntary activation orders. A further 34,000 had volunteered to active duty, a ratio of involuntary-to-voluntary activations standing at nearly three to one (see DMPDC 2009a).
Widespread and overwhelming evidence now supports the conclusion that the reserves and guards cannot indefinitely fulfill the role to which the military and civilian leadership is committing them. Ranking generals, the US Government Accountability Office, the Center for American Progress and the Commission on the National Guards and Reserves which submitted its final of three reports to Congress in 2008 all assert that the “operational tempo” of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and the present mobilization policies have exhausted the reserves and risk pushing them to the breaking point (Korb 2007; St-Laurent 2006; COTNGAR 2008). All of these reports focus on multiple dimensions of this strain and paint a frightening portrait of the level of troop readiness. Multiple deployments have depleted equipment levels sometimes as low as 50 percent of operational requirements (St-Laurent 2006: 6), and reserves have been sent back into combat without receiving appropriate leaves to rest, dwell time and retraining time. Though it is necessary to take into account all of these facts to assess the ‘readiness’ of the reserves for service, to be clear, the discussion in this section is meant to illustrate the strain the wars are exerting on service members, not to evaluate ongoing policy discussions and issues with respect to the reform of the armed forces (on this see Feickert 2005, St-Laurent 2006 and COTNGAR 2008). It is not meant to evaluate whether the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan prevent the armed forces from meeting all the other strategic objectives of the American imperial society. This said, however, evidence clearly demonstrates that the extensive use of the reserves in support of operations in the war on terrorism violates the Department of Defense’s own strategic guidelines (see also Kreps 2009):

Army doctrine also dictates that for every unit deployed there must be two in reserve in order to respond to other emerging contingencies or crises in the world as well as provide sufficient dwell time. This means that, absent a war of necessity, no more than one-third of the active Army should be deployed in combat in any given year … [As of
2006], 20 of the active Army’s 44 combat brigades and cavalry regiments [were] currently deployed or deploying to Iraq and Afghanistan (Korb 2007: 10).

Sarah Kreps paints an equally alarming portrait of the depletion of the US military’s operational capacity:

In principle, the Army's goal is to have a rotation ratio of 2.0, which means that combat brigades have two years at home for every year deployed. That ratio reached a low of less than 0.75 in 2004 when every active duty Army unit had deployed to Iraq or replaced a unit that had deployed. The ratio recovered to about 1.5 in 2005 and then declined again during the 2007 and 2008 surge. In his confirmation hearings for Chairman of the Joint Chiefs in the summer of 2007, Admiral Mike Mullen predicted that it would take three to four years before the military could reach that ratio and one to two years even for a 1:1 ratio of 15 months at home and 15 months in theatre. The practical implication of those ratios is that Army readiness is considerably lower as a result of activities in Iraq and Afghanistan, with only about five brigades able to respond to other contingencies compared to about 25 if forces were withdrawn from Iraq (Kreps 2009: 636).

By the fall of 2007, the president had mobilized just under 600,000 selected reservists and 16,000 individual ready reservists (COTNGAR 2008: 236) to face the state of “national emergency”204 he had declared after September 11th 2001 (Operation Noble Eagle), and to prosecute the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq (respectively operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom). Now, the Department of Defense has not made use of a significant portion of the total reserve forces. According to the Commission on the National Guards and Reserves, the plethora of categories employed to assess manpower capabilities do not accurately reflect the real pool of troops that can be mobilized, and many of these categories are simply mismanaged and thus not utilized. As a consequence, selected reservists have disproportionately borne the weight of mobilization.

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204 He declared a “national emergency” on 14th September 2001 and invoked “partial mobilization” on the 20th (St-Laurent 2006: 6).
The “partial mobilization” authority the president invoked on September 20th, 2001 granted him the power to involuntarily activate reservists for up to 24 months. Despite this broad power, according to 2007 DoD policy, mobilized reservists are called upon to serve one year in every six (COTNGAR 2008: 34). As of 2006, however, the real average of deployments lay somewhere in the area of 18 months (Korb et al. March 2007: 6). Over 70,000 National guards and reserves have been deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan on more than one tour, but the Center for American Progress suggests as many as 84,000 of these soldiers have been redeployed (Korb March 2007: 6). Of these, 10,000 have returned to combat no less than five times (COTNGAR 2008: 82). Active duty soldiers, on the other hand, serve one year in combat theater with two years of rest and recuperation. However, some units have been redeployed “with less than even nine months” of dwell time (Korb March 2007: 10). If one quarter of the nearly 1.5 million servicemembers who have fought in Iraq and Afghanistan have been activated on more than one occasion, almost one third of the marines have been redeployed to combat zones (Korb March 2007: 10). The cadence at which the Department of Defense has cycled through its units, imposing extended tours on at least 10 combat brigades, confers a strong sense of the strain the twin wars are exerting on the US’ reserves of men and women (Korb March 2007). For instance, “[an independent study commissioned by the Marine Corps] concluded that if the DOD policy of allowing only a single 12-month mobilization and no further involuntary remobilization continued, the Marine Corps would simply run out of units to mobilize.” (COTNGAR 2008: 237). The military has also served its soldiers deployment notices far short of official policy. Almost half of surveyed reservists in 2003 had been alerted of their involuntary mobilization “one to seven days” in advance, while just over 15 percent of reservist received “less than 24
hours’ advance notice of mobilization‖ (2008: 241, emphasis added). Worst of all, DoD has invoked its power to extend military enlistment contracts beyond their date of expiration, effectively forcing soldiers to continue serving with their units.

Perhaps the most questionable of the tactics [to keep soldiers in uniform] has been the Army’s Stop-Loss policy; essentially a “back-door draft” practice which has prevented more than 70,000 soldiers from retiring or leaving the Army when their enlistment contract expires! Were it not for the Stop-Loss policy, which even high-ranking officials admit is inconsistent with the principles of voluntary service, the all-volunteer army would be in even more jeopardy than it already is. There simply would not be enough personnel for the Army to complete its missions. For example, one infantry battalion commander deployed in Kuwait and headed for Iraq commented that he would have lost a quarter of his unit at the time if were it not for the order (Duggan and Korb 2007: 469).

By the spring of 2009, The New York Times (March 21, 2009) reported that the total number stopped-loss troops had risen to “an estimated 120,000 … since 2001.” But Charles Henning, a “specialist in military manpower policy” for the Congressional Research Services writes that as many as 185,000 members of all branches of the armed forces have been involuntarily retained since 2001 (2009: 14). As the tally of forces deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan at any given time has approximated 120,000 soldiers, then around one in 10 soldiers fighting overseas has been involuntarily retained (Henning 2009: 11). Henning also notes, however, that stop-loss orders have targeted the upper echelons of the non-commissioned officer corps aggressively, preventing sergeants from retiring.

205 Congress corrected the policy of insufficient alert notice between deployments in 2008, “requiring advance notification of “not less than 30 days before the mobilization date, but with a goal of 90 days before the mobilization date” (COTNGAR 2008: 242).

206 “5.1.8.4. Stop Loss. Under Section 12305 of reference (b), the Secretary of Defense, under a delegation of the President's authority as per E.O. 12728 (reference (q)), may suspend any law relating to promotions, retirement, or separation of any member of the Armed Forces during any period members of a Reserve component are serving on active duty under Section 12304, 12302, or 12301 of reference (b). When such suspensions are authorized by the President, the Secretary of Defense may direct the Secretaries of the Military Departments to suspend promotions, retirements, and separations of all members or categories of members determined essential for national security.” DOD Directive 1235.12 (January 19, 1996: 9). However, in 2007, Donald Rumsfeld’s successor issued an order for commanders to “minimize” the recourse to these orders (COTNGAR 2008: 238).
A more serious dimension of the readiness problem is that approximately 45% of the Stop Loss cohort are non-commissioned officers (NCOs) in grades E5 (Sergeant) through E9 (Sergeant Major) who have declined to reenlist or submitted voluntary retirement requests, if eligible. These NCOs are the leadership backbone of small units and a key to the unit’s tactical success. Observers note that deploying without these key NCOs at squad, platoon and company level or losing them immediately prior to deployment would likely have a substantial adverse impact on unit training, cohesion, and stability” (Henning 2009: 11).

Though Henning fails to acknowledge this, it is important to mention that African Americans and African-American women comprise the great majority of non-commissioned officers in the Army, leading Charles Moskos and John Butler (1997) to remark that Black sergeants make up the spine of the US armed forces. This means that a significant portion of stop-loss orders effectively targets Black non-commissioned officers. This trend gives stop-loss an alarming racial profile that suggests again a pattern of statistical exclusion and increased burden for African Americans.

These extended deployments have taken a dramatic toll on the health of soldiers. The Journal of The American Medical Association estimated that just under one in two veterans of the second gulf war “requir[ed] mental health treatment,” (Milliken cited by COTNGAR 2008: 82). Also suicide and divorce rates have spiked in the military (Korb March 2007).

Sometimes the trigger is news of a second or third deployment. Last Christmas, for example, Army Reservist James Dean, who had already served in Afghanistan for 18 months and had been diagnosed with PTSD, was notified that his unit would be sent to Iraq in three weeks on January 14. According to news reports, Dean barricaded himself in his father’s home with several weapons and threatened to kill himself. After a 14-hour standoff with authorities, Dean was killed by a police officer after he aimed a gun at another officer. As Steve Robinson the Director of Veterans Affairs at Veterans for America explained, “We call that suicide by cop” (Korb March 2007: 11).
A story in the *New York Times* (Feb. 5, 2009) revealed that for the month of January 2009 more US soldiers may have claimed their own lives than roadside bombs and enemy fire. The 17 suspicious deaths under investigation could bring the suicide count up to 24 for the first month of the year alone, as “the vast majority of suspicious deaths typically turn out to be suicide.”

If these examples only serve to illustrate the stress that combat operations are exerting upon the military’s manpower reserves and on individual soldiers, the picture is clear. Many observers conclude that the president’s partial mobilization authority, in effect, fails to really limit his use of the reserve forces. Section 12302 of Title 10 US Code that deals with the “Partial Mobilization” authority prohibits soldiers from serving more than 24 months *in a row*. It places no cap on the total number of months for which they can be mobilized (Kapp 2008: note 48). An ambiguity, the Congressional Commission on the National Guards and Reserves clearly raised in its final report:

> There is no end in statute to a partial mobilization once it is in effect. Presumably, a partial mobilization ends when the national emergency is resolved or when terminated by the President (2008: 233) … The Commission believes that the mobilization statutes provide no effective limitation on the number and duration of mobilizations under a partial mobilization. The cap on the number of reservists that can be mobilized under a partial mobilization is now a meaningless threshold, given the size of the Ready Reserve (CONTGAR 2008: 235, emphasis added).

This would suggest that by indefinitely resending the same soldiers in harm’s way, the president and the Department of Defense have bypassed the spirit and intent of the limit the partial mobilization authority is supposed to impose on the use of the reserves. Faced with these challenges, and if the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are worth dying for, it remains unclear why the Bush administration failed to petition Congress to declare “Full Mobilization” or to consider reinstituting the draft. Indeed, since the elimination of conscription, American citizens have nonetheless continued to register for selective service (see chapter 5). The Congressional
Commission on the National Guards and Reserves has in fact suggested that the nation consider the draft to meet its manpower needs: “The Selective Service System, and the possible need to reinstitute the draft, must be considered when planning the management of the total force manpower pool” (COTNGAR 2008: 339). Why has this not happened? I discuss this question at length and evaluate its implications beyond the limits of the current debate.

Crisis and political obligation

The debates in newspapers over sacrifice in the war in Iraq reveal at once the persistence and growing number of class, racial and symbolic fissures within American society. One is awed by the sheer production of newspaper articles, editorials, think-tank papers, congressional reports, findings by the Government Accountability Office and academic analyses devoted to apportionment of military sacrifice in American society, or to studying wartime fatalities. These masses of documents and hearings testify to the continued politicization of this question and its capacity to polarize the political, intellectual and even academic fields in spite of the liberal doxa that would reduce sacrifice to individual choice. This acute intellectual, cultural and political polarization over the burden of military sacrifice I have examined in chapters 7, 8, and 9 through the lens of newspaper articles and war testimonies; and it is the first sign or manifestation of crisis.

Activists, journalists, and political commentators have often compared the twin wars in Afghanistan and Iraq to Vietnam. The reality is, despite the resemblances (that I will not enumerate here), the social structures of the US military and civilian populations, and their relationship to one another, both have undergone dramatic transformations over the three and half decades since the end of the Vietnam War. As such, it would be misleading to expect that by
“crisis of the American imperial society” I meant that the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan would generate political unrest on the scale of the social disruptions brought about by the Vietnam War. Consequently, I wish to consider the social changes within American society that help understand why the crisis arising out of the wars in the Middle East has not played out as dramatically as it did during the Cold War.

Apart from the changing role of African Americans I explored earlier (in chapters 5 and 6), the most important differences between Vietnam and the war on terrorism have to do with the significantly different ratios of the population involved in warfare. Just over 50 million men and women reached the age of military service over the decade that separated the 1964 declaration (the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution) and the withdrawal of the remaining US forces in 1973 (Baskir and Strauss 1978: 3). Though the American culture and history of warfare ensured that half of this number, women, would not serve, “as sisters, girl friends, and wives, millions of draft-age women paid a heavy share of the emotional cost of the war” (Ibid). Of the nearly 27 million men “who came of age” during that time, just over 8.5 million saw service in one respect or another (Ibid). This indicates that 16 percent of the draft-age population, both sexes included, served in the military over this decade, though not necessarily in Vietnam. The war hit home, and it hit hard.

The professionalization of the military after 1973 has significantly narrowed the proportion of citizens directly involved in warfare. As of 2009, nearly 2.5 million Americans were serving in the active and reserve components of the United States armed forces.207 This means that less than one percent of the American population is serving under the Flag (DMDC

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207 As of 2009, active duty forces (enlisted and officers) numbered 1.4 million men and women, while as of 2007 the ready reserve counted 1,088,587 service members (excluding members of the standby and retired reserves, see chapter 9).
This ratio increases to 3.87 percent if one were to compare the number of service members to the 64.5 million men and women aged 17 to 39 years old in the civilian population - all those of age to be mobilized. This indicates that five times fewer draft-age citizens are involved in the armed forces than was the case during the Vietnam War. In effect, an overwhelming majority of the population feels no direct consequence of the war, and thus has no personal stake in victory or defeat. At worse, they will eventually awake from a nightmare. Echoing the feeling of many troops and their relatives, the late military sociologist Charles Moskos keenly noted in 2005:

> The mass mobilization of the reserves and the National Guard has created neither widespread public support nor opposition to the war. This is because the troops who have borne the burden of the Iraq War have been disproportionately drawn from small-town America and the inner cities, not from those social groups who shape national policy (Moskos 2005: 669).

But the war in Iraq seems to have caught with America, however, as opinion over the conflicts, especially Iraq, has steadily eroded (Bennett et al. 2007: 79). As Kreps (2009: 642) summarizes:

> In general terms, the U.S. public clearly became dissatisfied with the status quo after events soured in Iraq. In November 2002, only 26 percent of Americans thought the government was mismanaging U.S. foreign policy; in that same month, only 25 percent disagreed with the management of terrorism-related issues. Just four years later, dissatisfaction with Bush’s handling of the Iraq War reversed that result. Only 26 percent supported the current approach to the way current leaders were handling American interests abroad and 71 percent were seeking leaders who would pursue a new strategy.

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208. Compared to a population of 304 million citizens according to the 2008 estimates. US Census Bureau (September 8, 2009).
209. This age bracket is sometimes used as a target comparison group in data on the select reserves. See for instance DMDC (2005) Table C-13 in Appendix C.
Over time, the narrowing of the pool of combatants to select groups of citizens appears to have increased their sense of isolation as well as that of their families and friends, as I explored in chapters 8 and 9. Though patriots they may be, soldiers and their social circles take note that little sacrifice has been asked of other citizens. This appears especially painful to them as they must return to Iraq for multiple tours, increasing the likelihood that fate will eventually deal them a bad hand. Despite its claim to being the land of opportunity, American imperial society has been painfully reminded by a new war that it remains founded on two classes of citizenship: those who shop, and those who fight and die.

The toll the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are exacting on the US military’s manpower reserves suggests that the imperial society’s objectives in the sphere of global politics are in conflict with the American population’s readiness to make the sacrifices necessary to meet these goals, or with the elites’ willingness to force their fellow citizens’ consent to bear the burden of their leadership’s strategic aspirations. Faced with this problem, and considering the refusal of America’s major allies to commit additional, if any, troop numbers to Iraq, the imperial society’s civilian and military leadership could choose from two possible options. First, they could accept defeat in either Iraq or Afghanistan, or decide to withdraw from both theaters, dealing the United States a foreign policy and military defeat arguably even more crippling than that suffered in Vietnam. Second, they could reinstate the draft (see the conclusion to chapter 5) and extend the burden of sacrifice to social groups who have so far contributed little to the war effort, as some politicians, commentators, scholars, policy advocates and even the Commission on the National Guards have recommended. As I stated in chapter 5, nearly 15 million American men are presently registered with the Selective Service (also see Cowen 2006 on this).
In the end, the administration has chosen neither of these options. This was understandable as neither of them were attractive. If accepting defeat was unacceptable on its own terms, and because of long-term implications for the credibility of American foreign policy, reinstating the draft would have thrown into question the prevailing liberal *doxa* that America was a society founded on choice rather than duty, on individual rights rather than subservience to political authority. In the context of an already unpopular war, the reinstatement of the draft might very well have triggered social unrest as it did during Vietnam. This would have been especially likely as more families would risk losing loved ones. And social groups higher in the class hierarchy – now directly affected by the conflict – might call for abandoning the war, as many of the news articles, soldiers and their relatives suggested … and hoped.

As the wars strained the social processes that ordinarily assured the regeneration or renewal of the all-volunteer force, the Bush administration renounced both options: that of admitting defeat and that of reinstating the draft. It chose instead to modify the *numerus clausus* of the sacrificial class in three major ways that I suggest indicate to us a more pronounced crisis of the imperial model of society. These exceptional war time measures betray the principles of the all-volunteer army in two important senses of the term. Before clarifying this statement, I must refer back to Bourdieu.

Bourdieu argues that in times of crisis, the implicit social attributes, race, gender, age and class which formerly served as the tacit basis for exclusion from certain social positions can be made explicit, for instance when social developments such as war or extraordinary class struggle challenge the ‘natural’ reproduction of the social order. In these cases, formerly subtle and invisible criteria for inclusion and exclusion become codified into law:

210 And it remains to be seen whether President Obama’s phasing out of the troops from Iraq does not in fact amount to a disguised acceptance of defeat, very much in the manner of Nixon’s Peace with Honor platform in 1968.
Les détenteurs des titres [scolaires et professionnels] les plus rares peuvent aussi se mettre en quelque sorte hors course, hors concours, hors concurrence en instaurant un *numerus clausus*. Le recours à des mesures de ce type s'impose, en général, lorsque se révèlent insuffisants les mécanismes statistiques qui assurent « normalement » la protection de la rareté du groupe privilégié et dont l’efficacité discrète et la logique vraie (en particulier le critère réel de l’élimination) ne peuvent être saisies que par l’analyse statistique : au laisser-faire qui convient aussi longtemps que la protection des intérêts du groupe privilégié est assurée se substitue une sorte de *protectionnisme* conscient, qui demande à des institutions de faire à découvert ce que faisaient de manière invisible des mécanismes présentant toutes les apparences d’une nécessité naturelle (Bourdieu 1979 : 181).

In order to respond to the manpower crisis, the state first began lowering the standards, the institutionally required attributes of soldiering so that formerly excluded members of the lower classes of society could now enlist. Second, the state increasingly relied on foreigners, Hispanics and Latinos, hoping to become citizens by risking their lives on the altar of sacrifice. These aspiring Americans would take on a burden that most American citizens eschewed because they deemed themselves *unfit for it*, which is a roundabout way of saying they deemed it *unfit for them* in one way or another. To do this, the state began accelerating the naturalization process of these foreign-born soldiers and their families (see the narratives in chapter 9). Third, the Department of Defense enacted stop-loss policies that effectively bound some tens of thousands of soldiers to their military obligations beyond the expiration of their contracts. This means that the US military and civilian leaders chose to bind soldiers to the choices they had freely made at an earlier point in time. The stop-loss orders thus violate, on the surface, both the principle of volunteerism and the military’s established recruitment policies and quotas. But they also *betray* volunteerism in the second sense of the word; they *unmasked* the real social criteria according to which individuals ordinarily selected themselves to serve in the armed forces. Although this is only another way of saying the new policy betrayed the hidden criteria that
informed the social consensus on which individuals are really expected to serve in the armed forces. The state made clear that the matter of choice for certain categories of citizens, whose lack of material and symbolic resources realistically excluded them from many other avenues, was in fact nothing more than disguised political obligation. In this sense, the political economy of military sacrifice re-instituted different categories of citizens based on their social origin. Why has the “backdoor draft” targeted already-serving soldiers, reservists and National Guards, rather than classes of the population who have yet to pay the price of blood? What does this mean?

Like the shadow of an unseen object, the real meaning of stop-loss and multiple, extended involuntary mobilizations must be understood as the state’s categorical refusal to reinstitute universal military service. It revealed in fact that sacrifice did not fit into the unstated sets of political obligations of the other citizens, those spared this insidious and hidden draft that further taxed the underprivileged. The involuntary mobilization orders revealed the true social processes that had been operating all along in the all-volunteer army. If the ideal of universal military service prevailed from the eighteenth century onwards, nevertheless, classical republicanism had long suggested that the political obligation to sacrifice did not necessarily fall equally upon all citizens, as I argued in chapter 5. Indeed, Cowen shows that it had carried over with few modifications into classical liberalism:

This “universal” citizenship was in fact the citizenship of the male propertied classes, which meant that [classical liberal thinkers] never really encountered a sharp conflict between military service and individual freedom. It was the propertied classes who were extended formal political power, and who were the assumed subjects of liberal freedom … These were in fact different expectations for different classes even while framed in a language of universals. Indeed, the assumption that the classes who did not quite qualify for classic liberal (propertied) freedom should provide the necessary military manpower to sustain the commonwealth is a recurring feature of the work of a host of classic
liberal thinkers. As Carter argues, “. . . Locke is implicitly assuming the propertied classes (the only ones then represented in Parliament) consent to pay for the maintenance of an armed force, but the unpropertied are expected to fight without giving express consent . . .” (1998, p. 74). Or, as Michael Walzer has put it, Locke surely “accepted contemporary recruitment practices” of conscripting the poor, and that Locke envisaged “a kind of moral proletariat” who give their lives to the state” (quoted in Carter, 1998, p. 74, cited in Cowen 2006: 174).

That the state chose to stop-loss units rather than extend military sacrifice to the hitherto unaffected, higher orders of the American population: the upper-middle class, the professional middle-class and the dominant class fraction reveals the real bias in military service that the liberal doxa on choice and voluntarism had always hidden. The sacrificial classes of society would bear the burden of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq whether or not they wanted to. Whereas the lower-end of the numerus clausus of the sacrificial classes had always been categorized now, the state’s refusal to reinstate a full draft showed that, in reality, the numerus clausus also possessed a glass ceiling. When the crisis pushed the state to a decision on how to meet its manpower challenges, the government ultimately decided that it would not force Americans of privileged social birthright to sacrifice as it did those who were already serving. The logic suggested that the state deemed that these dominant class fractions were unexpendable. They would not risk their lives for the state because sacrifice was not inscribed in their political and social duties. They had other duties: shopping, working, reporting, teaching, leading the nation, and making the economy function. Overqualified as they were, well-to-do Americans excluded themselves from military service just as naturally as in reality the job description excluded them. Yet the growing class struggle in the newspapers and the attrition of the sacrificial classes of society pushed the state to formalize and clarify the different sets of political obligations it expected of its citizens. As segments of the sacrificial classes legitimately refused to consent to further sacrifice by refusing to re-enlist, the state now forced them to do what society had always forced them to do under the guise of voluntarism and patriotism: serve. The
following passage from Bourdieu explains how seamlessly an informal class structure can become a formal one.

Bourdieu’s last sentence points to the fact that the real differences between social classes are “gradual” and fluid rather than sharp barriers. The differences do exist as statistical “gaps” in the riches of economic and cultural capital, but they only become unscalable walls when the state solidifies the existing symbolic divisions among the classes by encoding them into law.211 It is the prior existence of these symbolic divisions or gaps, no less real than their legal counterparts,

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211. One can argue that these symbolic divisions are already objectified to the degree that college and university diplomas formalize gaps in cultural capital. This objectification takes the shape, for instance, of the division between formal titles attesting one’s command of “legitimate knowledge,” and the simple erudition of the “profane,” who, self-taught, will not be entitled to exercise professions calling for diplomas, though such erudites may very well have accumulated the actual knowledge and skill-sets the title is said to guarantee (Bourdieu 1979, chapter 1). Another example of how university diplomas ennable arbitrary differences of scale between competencies, such as can be appreciated in the process of attributing university marks, as Bourdieu (1994) argues. The University of Ottawa in Canada sets the passing mark at 50 percent. The symbolic threshold between students who score 50 percent (D-) and 49 percent (E) is immense, as it represents the difference between failure and success. However, the real difference between both grades is equal to 1 percent, a negligible gap by any stretch of the imagination. Yet this gap becomes the arbitrary cut-off point which demarcates the loser, who must repeat the class and pay tuition fees, from the “passable” student who will enjoy credits.
if not so categorical, which then justifies the more rigid fences law institutes between the classes. This would be the case of the glass ceiling between the sacrificial classes and the upper echelons of society that the refusal to reinstitute universal compulsory military service has transformed into a solid roof.

But the border between the sacrificial classes and those just below them shifted according to a different dynamic. The military’s manpower policies had always explicitly stated the existence of this class division. Now, in a move that ran counter to the above logic, the wartime manpower recruitment policies relaxed the border the state had previously instituted between the dominant fraction of the dominated class and those who were dominated in all respects. This symbolic displacement reestablished, so to speak, the actual proximity that had always existed between these classes, minus the statistical, but fluid gap. That the state removed the sharp distinction that had existed between the sacrificial classes and the bottom-rungs hurt the higher of these groups in a very personal way, because of their affective investment in this separation. Affiliation with members of a group they despised did not only compromise the symbolic standing of the sacrificial classes. It further strengthened the argument that civilian and military leaders would seek to induct the bottom of society for military service before forcing military service on the upper-middle class and the dominant class fractions, assuming they would contemplate this possibility at all. That the measures enacted to contain the social-military crisis now put the downward logic of sacrifice as a political obligation into full view further reinforced the arguments that volunteerism amounted to amor fati. This then also eroded the symbolic rewards that the sacrificial classes felt entitled to obtain from their careers, as the illusion of choice was revealed for what it was: disguised political obligation, unequal political obligation. Stop-loss and wartime recruitment policies unveiled the société d’ordres that continued to
function under the guise of the free market. So either the imperial society’s elites deemed some social classes unexpendable for sacrifice and chose to redeploy those who had already put themselves in harm’s way, or it deemed that the liberal illusion of volunteerism was an unexpendable value. Indeed, liberalism marked one of the symbolic cornerstones of the war aims being fought for in Iraq and Afghanistan. To compromise volunteerism by reinstating universal military service would have conflicted with the imperial society’s national habitus and its goals of symbolic competition in the global sphere; remember some of the soldiers’ testimonies in chapter 9.

The state’s first response to the unequal distribution of military sacrifice amongst the social classes and thus at the heart of the field of citizenship was to formalize the different sets of political obligations expected of respective groups of citizens. That posture marked the authoritarian response to the manpower crisis of the imperial society.

In 2008, the balance of forces shifted in the imperial society’s political field. President Barrack Obama was elected on a platform which entailed removing US troops out of Iraq “within 16 months,” thus by the end of the “summer of 2010” (CNN.com). Of course, this strategy needs to be evaluated in light of a much wider geopolitical context both in international relations, (Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan), and domestic politics in the US – another topic in itself.\footnote{For a detailed discussion of these questions and American grand strategy in the context of the Obama presidency see: Randall (Fall and Winter 2008/9); Nagl and Burton (Winter 2008-09); Haass and Indyk (January 2009); Bostdorff (2009); Kreps (Fall 2009); and Goldgeier (January 2010).} I do not presume that it is a direct response to the narrow question of unequal military sacrifice. Domestically, I do advance it is an answer to the much larger pattern of opposition and concern over the continuation and the handling of the war, the elusive perspective of a short or even mid-term political victory, the treatment of veterans and servicemembers, and a tarnished international image. Domestically, Obama’s platform sought to campaign on his early opposition.
to the invasion of Iraq in 2002 all the while appearing as a leader who would not shy away from the use of military force (Botsdorff 2009). The defeat of 2004 Democratic Presidential candidate John Kerry illustrated the danger candidates risked if they could be made to appear weak or afraid of military engagement, and thus the importance of martial qualities for any presidential candidate in the political field. Though the Afghanistan-not-Iraq plan had long been an integral part of Obama’s grand strategy, the logic of the political field dictated that the candidate distinguish himself from his adversaries, rival Democrat Hillary Clinton and Republican candidate John McCain; this imperative further determined Obama’s political strategy. One must also consider the fact that Obama inherited two wars from the previous administration, a legacy that also constrained the strategic options that confronted a diminished military capacity and a wide variety of possible commitments: concerns over China, Iran, North Korea, and of course, Afghanistan and Pakistan (Kreps 2009). In this sense, the strategy of disengagement from Iraq is the crown jewel amongst many institutional and political responses that the American state (electoral politics are still an extremely regulated state process) has implemented to contain the crisis posed by the cumulative effects of dwindling public support for the conflict in Iraq even as the public rediscovered the “Forgotten War” (Ricchiardi Aug./Sept 2006) in Afghanistan, torture scandals, and the erosion of the all-volunteer army. The phased withdrawal of American troops from Iraq is not evidence that the crisis was not serious or decisive. President Nixon slowly pulled out troops from Vietnam between 1973 and 1975, yet the outcome of the conflict in Indochina as a decisive political defeat, domestically and internationally, and the notion that both the president and the war faced a crisis of legitimacy domestically is unquestioned. Democrats, like most opinion makers, hesitantly conceded that the troop “surge” in 2007 was a success and that the military situation in Iraq was in process of stabilizing (Botsdorff 2009; Entmann 2009).
Like Vietnam, Iraq is not a military defeat in the sense of conventional warfare. The US does not run the imminent risk of having most of its units overrun or destroyed in the short term by adverse forces as did its forces at Pusan in Korea (1950), or the French Expeditionary Corps at Dien Bien Phù (1954), or the Allies at Dunkirk (1940). Like the “Peace with Honour” strategy embraced by Nixon, phased withdrawal from Iraq illustrates that Obama has accepted to forego a decisive or even partial victory in Iraq. But he cannot risk seeming politically weak by ‘cutting and running’ or by advocating immediate retreat that, strategically, would arguably compromise the political and military gains of the surge - or at least those alleged to have been made by the White House and reported by the media (Botsdorff 2009; Entmann 2009). He would not compromise his image as a leader capable of employing military force if necessary. The point is that the war in Iraq faced a sufficient crisis of legitimacy that a black presidential candidate could be elected on a platform that notably involved ending the conflict.

Simultaneously, as protests over the war aims in Iraq and the clear abuse of soldiers’ patriotism polarized the political field, the state responded by deciding to phase out and end stop-loss by 2011, as announced by the DoD (18 March 2009). Like the decision to withdraw from Iraq, this corresponded to a second phase of the crisis in which the state begins to make concessions and transform its personnel policies to meet its manpower requirements. In order to achieve this, the Defense Department has in one stroke relaxed its recruitment standards (as I demonstrated in chapter 6) and recruited immigrants in exchange for naturalization, thus relaxing the borders that guard access to that most sacred of places: the field of citizenship. As of 2006, nearly 40,000 foreign nationals were fighting in the US armed forces (Cowen 2006: 178) hoping for a fast track to citizenship through the Armed Forces Naturalization Act of 2003 (H.R. 1954). For instance, the New York Times (Feb. 14, 2009) reported that after residing in America for two
or more years, skilled immigrants in certain categories who enlisted in the armed forces would be eligible for citizenship “in as little as six months.” This opening of the field of citizenship to those who ordinarily resided on its very margins, those very ones dominated in all respects, showed that most Americans saw military service as a duty unbecoming of them. It also confirms my thesis that the logic of military service is to induct at the very bottom of the social hierarchy before moving upwards. In exchange for meeting its manpower services, while sparing its most privileged children, the state in effect increased its reserves of second-class citizens. This is another major concession of the imperial society policies opening access to the field of citizenship.

However, by 2008 the economic crisis gave the military services the opportunity to attempt a new strategy. With lowered recruitment standards, they doubled the enlistment and reenlistment bonuses they offered potential recruits in order to meet their targets (Henning 2009: 10). As Americans lost their jobs (New York Times, Jan. 19, 2009), the increased financial incentives provided the motivation for hitherto un-sacrificial populations to select themselves for service. Finally, the Gates Defense Department obtained from Congress an increase in the Army’s authorized end-strength by nearly 65,000 soldiers to 547,000 soldiers in the active duty component with significant increases in the total size of the Marine Corps (Henning 2009: 12). This marked another important departure from the authoritarian response of the state to face the crisis at the heart of the field of citizenship.213 Thus the state has met the crisis provoked by the twin wars in Afghanistan and Iraq by directly mediating social relations between the classes and

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213. This point is complex. If one looks at military service and the economic crisis in the larger picture of a crisis of American capitalism and thus a socialization of the costs of the disaster, then one can argue that the increased financial incentives (in the event of a work-market economic crisis) do not mark a fundamental departure from the authoritarian posture of the state. It then appears as a sort-of authoritarian neo-liberalism in which new recruits of higher social origin are forced out of work and into the armed forces. See Cowen (2006) and (2007) on the notion of “workfare.”
expanding sacrifice upward on the social pyramid by way of larger financial incentives, by promising to reduce the strain on those already serving - and ultimately, by putting an end to the American mission in the war in Iraq.

Conclusion

Faced with insufficient military manpower to meet the requirements of its grand strategy in Iraq and Afghanistan, as victory receded and seemed ever more elusive, DoD multiplied the involuntary mobilizations of the reserves and National Guards, multiplied redeployments to combat zones, and ultimately extended the service durations of units and individual combatants. The presidency’s refusal to seriously consider reinstituting the draft (as suggested by the COTNGAR 2008) has not been clearly seen by analysts for what it really is: a tacit endorsement by the state, and civil society more largely, of the different sets of duties and political obligations that citizens of different social origins are expected to carry out, despite what may be said publicly. All sociological evidence considered, the real question is not so much “who chooses to sacrifice?” but rather “whom have we chosen to sacrifice?” These different sets of political obligations in fact point to different classes of citizenship disguised as individual choices or vocations. Interestingly, those who are the presumed authors of these choices fail to recognize the inequality of opportunity that often draws to military service. The sacrificial classes are just that. They are classes of individuals who are willing to sacrifice. They are simultaneously classes of citizens that are expandable, that is, whose death will not hinder the proper functioning of civil society. Stop-loss orders, involuntary mobilizations, and the recruitment campaign going down along the social pyramid reveal the auxiliary social characteristics of the imperial society’s candidates for sacrifice and quasi-formalize the unequal political obligation of
different classes of citizens. Such is the crisis both of the liberal doxa which holds military service to be voluntary and the crisis of the ordinary mechanisms of social exclusion and regeneration which populated, under normal circumstances, the armed forces’ brigades.

It is in this light that one must examine the political and social anxieties I showed in chapters 8 and 9. Debates over individualism and rampant consumerism, inequalities of political obligation and socioeconomic cleavages between combatants and non-combatants, divisions between republicans and liberals, between opponents and proponents of the war; over the correct distribution of military sacrifice amongst American citizens - all of these disruptions are manifestations of the same crisis of the American imperial model of society. The crisis espouses the contours and specific logic of each field so that even semi-political rants about teeming shopping malls, in fact, express displaced anxieties about the crisis. Finally, it is an *imperial crisis* in the dual sense of a social disruption that results from imperial ambition abroad while gradually pitting first and second-class citizens against each other. Indeed, this intense activity of the state takes place in the context of two foreign wars in which over 5,100 American soldiers have died and over 35,000 have been wounded (DoD Sept. 3, 2009). Relaxing recruitment standards to induct those the military deemed the undesirables of society (COTNGAR 2008), imposing multiple involuntary mobilizations of the reserve forces, stop-loss orders, increased sign-up and reenlistment bonuses (Henning 2009), and accelerated naturalization for immigrants are only some of the measures the state has adopted to face the impasse caused by the twin wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. As Hall suggested: “…conflicts between the fundamental class forces

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214. In the academic sense of these terms.
215. In these cases the fields of culture, citizenship, social classes, politics and ideological production respectively.
… are now immediately precipitated on the terrain of the state itself, where all critical bargains are struck” (Hall 1978: 322).

If the crisis did not threaten social upheaval or mass demonstrations as occurred during the Vietnam War, it was nevertheless serious in two important ways. Institutionally, the crisis was serious enough that the Defense Department intervened in civil society by mediating social relations between the class fractions. After using multiple involuntary mobilizations of the reserve forces and stop-loss orders, DoD relaxed recruitment standards to induct those the military deemed the undesirables of society; and increased sign-up and reenlistment bonuses. It also directly intervened in the imperial society’s field of citizenship. Migrants would receive fast-tracked citizenship, and the armed forces now seemed ready to let homosexuals serve openly in the army (see chapter 11). By increasing the rewards in economic capital, in exchange for military service the DoD also potentially expanded sacrifice upward on the social pyramid through larger financial incentives and promises to reduce the strain on those already serving. Finally, the cumulative effects of the crisis brought by the war in Iraq were serious enough that they escalated to the political level in such a way that the American public elected the first Black Presidential candidate on a platform which, economic considerations aside, promised disengagement from Iraq. This is not to suggest that Obama was elected because he opposed the war. Early opposition to the war however distinguished him from his two primary opponents Senators John McCain and Hillary Clinton and had been instrumental in gaining him great notoriety with opponents of the war. In conclusion, chapter 11 will further examine and specify the “imperial dimension” of the crisis.

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216. See my remarks on this in chapter 7.
Chapter 11 - Conclusion:

A Crisis of the “Imperial” Form of Society

Following Stuart Hall, chapter 7 defined “crisis” as the escalation of class competition in the field of social classes amongst others, through the effect of the homologies between them, to a degree where the state could no longer be content to observe from afar. It had to decisively intervene to mediate social relations either by meeting some of the demands asked of it or by imposing an authoritarian resolution to social conflict. Chapters 8 and 9 then painted a qualitative picture of the ways in which social conflict over the war in Iraq and the unequal distribution of military sacrifice spilled over into public space: as debates in the journalistic field, the field of lifestyles and ideological production; the field of memory, and finally the field of narratives about the war in Iraq. These chapters argued that the moral crisis over the legitimacy of American sacrifice in Iraq also exacerbated deeper anxieties about America’s place as an exceptional nation at the forefront of global politics. Chapter 9 showed that far from remaining entrenched in elite newspaper debates, the inequality of military sacrifice reverberated into the subjective experiences of many soldiers who fought the war and the resentment they felt toward their civilian counterparts. I also deconstructed the ways through which servicemembers attempted to rationalize different forms of economic, legal or symbolic violence they suffered (and attempted to repress) at the heart of their experience of soldiering. These policies included differentiated recruitment patterns, involuntary mobilizations and stop-loss; extended tours, and disguised remobilizations through coerced reenlistment. Finally, chapter 10 explored the military manpower policies of the American state and the strain that repeated mobilizations and insufficient troop levels had exerted on the armed forces. After exploring measures by which the
state had intervened to transform manpower policies and ultimately set a timetable for withdrawal from Iraq, the chapter further qualified the nature of the crisis that I had defined earlier. Following Bourdieu, I argued that in times of crisis the state could formalize, solidify and explain the discreet social hierarchies that were ordinarily only visible through the statistical effects of market processes. I argued that the American state’s decision to forego a serious examination of the possibility of reinstating universal military service to successfully prosecute the two wars it faced, and thus extend sacrifice upward on the social pyramid, marked a tacit admission of the social hierarchy of political obligation that underlies the myths of formal equality, and equality of opportunity in American society.

But how is that, by nature, a crisis of the imperial form of society?

According to the theory of justice (Rawls 1999) and the political theory of citizenship outlined in chapter 5, citizens and equal citizens in particular will enjoy similar privileges and bear commensurate obligations to the state and to each other. Over the course of chapters 6, 9 and 10, I argued that soldiering in the United States corresponds to a structured volunteerism. Citizens select themselves for military service under economic compulsion; this, I argued, is a roundabout way of saying that self-selection for military sacrifice, in reality, corresponds to a disguised form of social selection for soldiering. The illusions of individualism and volunteerism in American culture operate by individualizing the choice to sacrifice whereas in reality the decision – or rather the range of decision-making opportunities - is structured by the unequal social processes in American society. To a degree, even soldiers were complicit in obfuscating these processes of social selection.

The state’s refusal to truly extend sacrifice up the social pyramid, and instead remobilize the already mobilized, further revealed the political logic that underlies patterns of class-
propensity to military service. Military service is structured according to the unequal reserves of economic and cultural capital of individuals hailing from different class fractions. The system of homologies shows that dominated positions within the economic field, the cultural field and thus the field of social classes also correspond to dominated positions in the field of citizenship. Americans, residents or migrants with lesser, or no, concentrations of citizenship capital incur disproportionate political obligations, measured as the horizon of choice/duty to personal sacrifice - without commensurate or only deferred privileges. Distinct classes of political obligation under economic compulsion to risk sacrifice are nothing but distinct classes of citizenship.

Political theorist Michael Sandel (1998) argues that laissez-faire liberalism falls far short of realizing the autonomous subject its proponents envisage. Constrained by economic compulsion, how is the Kantian-liberal subject to choose according to his preferences and thus realize himself? In effect, laissez-faire liberalism is itself illiberal insofar as it fails to provide the conditions for liberal citizen-subjects to enjoy any true autonomy. What choice subjects do have is revealed for what it is – an illusion - as the range of real possibilities open to them dramatically narrows once we consider the economic coercion which weighs in on them. This leads Sandel (1998: 51) to argue that “[a] market economy constrained by a democratic process in which citizens are represented as equals comes closer to realizing the conception of persons as free moral agents than does a scheme of contract unconstrained.” Sandel confirms Bourdieu’s general argument that choice under conditions of intense constraint – insofar as these constraints are socially structured by the unequal distribution of capital and thus opportunity – is tantamount to social destiny. What choice exists under these conditions has little to do with the realization of individual preferences. If one accepts the notion that individuals are dealing with a form of
structured volunteerism for military service and thus a form of social selection for sacrifice (and not simply patriotism), one must also accept the idea that repeated involuntary mobilizations and stop-loss are not policies which blindly target people who have made “bad choices” – decision to serve in the military, in this case. These policies target a specific class and racial profile\textsuperscript{217} of American citizens whom unequal opportunity has already funneled into the military. Again, unequal economic opportunity is tied to unequal political obligation and thus, more fundamentally, to unequal citizenship. But this does not mean that servicemembers are dominated in all respects. As I showed in chapter 6, the dominant fraction of the dominated class, from whose ranks the services recruit most heavily, sits in a semi-peripheral position in the field of citizenship.

The position of enlisted men and women in the field of citizenship is defined first through the effect of the homologies between the cultural field, the economic field and the field of social classes. As traditionally, the armed forces excludes those citizens dominated \textit{in all respects} (the dominated fraction of the dominated class), they also exclude those fractions of Americans most dominated in the field of citizenship after one accounts for foreigners, migrants, illegal residents, the poor, racial minorities and racialized-destitute women who are disadvantaged in all respects. Traditionally, military service marked the gateway to first class citizenship in the United States, and it remained a guarded prerogative for White males, as I showed in chapter 5. Furthermore, soldiers have traditionally enjoyed a cherished symbolic and sexual position in society because of their devotion to the public good (Hoganson 2000) and in the eyes of the opposite sex (in the case of male soldiers), because of their monopoly (shared only with other officers of the state) on the right to take life (Bouthoul 1991). The exclusion of the bottom rungs of society, those citizens dominated in all respects, from military service in the era of the all-volunteer army,

\textsuperscript{217} Insofar as stop-loss disproportionately targets the Black majority of higher NCO-class of soldiers (chapter 10).
increased the prestige of the common soldiers. After the experience of intense social conflict within the armed forces during the Vietnam War, the volunteer soldier was envisaged as a much more reliable agent of warfare for America, fighting freely because he has chosen to serve. Marine recruitment ads testify to the symbolic prestige accorded to the profession of soldiering. With recruiting catch-phrases like: “The few. The proud,” and “Only few can be marines. Even fewer can lead them,” for candidates to the officer corps, marines belong to a select club of citizens, and it appears difficult to merit inclusion within this force. Instinctively, one may think that self-selection for military service – volunteerism – is a hallmark of the triumph of a liberal culture of citizenship and soldiering. But, as I argued in chapter 5 to highlight the societal transformations brought on by the Vietnam War, this is only partially true. The principle of self-selection or vocational selection for sacrifice already existed in classical republican thought.

The traditional threefold division of social function in classical political thought between the one, the few and the many stresses that classes of professions should correspond to classes of talent (Pocock 1975, 1988). Each member of the polity must give himself to the polis and serve it in the manner in which he or she is best able. That some citizens were made to be soldiers and serve the polis through their unique and uncanny capacity to face sacrifice is not a new idea; Plato thought so in the Republic (see Titunik 2000). With regards to this heritage, soldiering occupies a contradictory position in American culture. It is at once a traditional mark of symbolic prestige but increasingly also one of racial and economic destitution. Today, the profession seems to have lost much of the symbolic prestige it held decades ago. One may retort that the ever-present “Support our troops” banners, logos, license-plates or pronouncements paint a rather different portrait than what I suggest. But in many cases, these are only easy slogans, as even soldiers acknowledge (chapter 9). In the 1940s, when 16 million Americans, or nearly 10
percent of the population, served in the armed forces in one capacity or another (Segal and Segal 2004: 4), it would have been completely unnecessary to sport “Support the troops” because such a large cross-section of American society was mobilized. The need for such exuberant shows of patriotism only highlights the growing distance between the common American and the servicemember (see Morgan 2001 and Moskos 2005 on this gap) as well as the fact that military deployments now increasingly face a form of public criticism that they did not decades ago.

The contradictory dynamic I highlighted above and the social devaluation of the symbolic prestige of soldiering has been abetted by the changing social composition of the sacrificial classes. One need only look at the very small number of members of Congress who are veterans of the armed forces, or who have served in the military, as opposed to one generation ago, as Morgan (2001) argues. In contrast, one can consider the tide of racial minorities that flooded the ranks of the armed forces after the Second World War and military desegregation. Like Blacks, women now join the military in ever greater numbers. As Bourdieu (1979) argues, the opening of hitherto guarded professions to women and other members of dominated class fractions is the surest way to measure its objective loss of influence and prestige in society. In fact, I believe that civil rights activists (see Krebs 2006) and liberal feminists (Titunik 2000, Snyder 2003) have alike mistaken themselves on the true meaning of racial and gender integration in the armed forces. Though inclusion testifies to the real gains these second-class citizens have made in the field of citizenship, just as importantly, it testifies to the decline of social prestige formerly accorded to military service and sacrifice. Integration has been allowed precisely because of the loss of symbolic and citizenship capital formerly associated with the profession of soldiering.

The case of gays in the armed forces is just as puzzling and testifies to the ambivalence of soldiering in American culture. The continued exclusion of “outed”-gays from service
demonstrates that the logic of preserving military service from ‘dilution’ by the ‘basest’ members of society remains in effect. It also shows the continued link between soldiering and the construction of manliness in American culture, insofar as homosexuality is generally identified with a gender role more appropriate for the opposite sex (see Butler 2006 on “heterosexism”; Feinman 2000; Titunik 2000; and Snyder 2003 on gender, sexual orientation and military service). As of 2010, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff now publicly supports ending the “Don’t ask don’t tell policy” initiated under Bill Clinton. The US’ ranking commander exclaimed before the Senate Armed Services Committee: “No matter how I look at the issue, I cannot escape being troubled by the fact that we have in place a policy which forces young men and women to lie about who they are in order to defend their fellow citizens” (Admiral Mike Mullen cited in the New York Times, Feb. 2, 2010). Mullen’s words hold historic significance for the place of gays in American society insofar as access to military service has usually been taken to mean access to first-class citizenship. However, I believe that it further testifies to the erosion of the symbolic prestige of the role of soldiering in American society; consider that this recent discussion about opening military service to gays takes place while only recently (see chapter 6) the profession was being opened to ex-criminals, to recruits who fell short of the educational requirements generally expected, and to migrants looking for a fast-track to citizenship. As they hail from the most disadvantaged class fractions, these other candidates for military service certainly suggest that if the armed forces comes to accept gays in their ranks, it is not only because homosexuals have realized overwhelming gains in citizenship capital, but perhaps also out of the military’s desperation for recruits.

Though the economic crisis and increased financial incentives (chapters 6 and 10) have enabled the armed forces to easily meet their recruiting targets these last three years (Henning
2009), the transformation of the armed forces’ personnel policies took place in the context where most observers agreed that the twin wars in Iraq and Afghanistan were pushing the armed forces to the breaking point, as I argued in chapter 10. Opening military service to outed-gays reflects cultural changes in America toward homosexuality. But these societal transformations must be assessed in the context of the overall difficulty of integration gays face in society at large and especially in certain states, like California.\textsuperscript{218} It also partially reflects the devaluation of the position of soldiering in the field of citizenship and its fall to a place much closer to that occupied by gays - that is, on the periphery. To be clear, I do not suggest that the position of soldiering is devalued because of the presence of gays in the military; I do suggest that that is the social logic underpinning the extension of military service to formerly excluded groups. The fact that a profession that formerly defined first class citizenship is now accessible to formerly outcast members of society shows that it is no longer a guarded symbol. It is thus a devalued one.

**Imperial homologies: the field of citizenship and global politics**

I have argued in this dissertation that the imperial form of society structured the different fields and in particular the historical distribution of capital across them. I departed from the postcolonial analysis of cultural geographers, historians and literary theorists by positing that significant categories of minority US citizens over the course of the last centuries of American history were “othered” by larger society or made into foreigners. I further argued that the US could be considered an “imperial society” before one even began to look at its ‘foreign’ relations in “global politics.” I also argued extensively that this process of differentiation between self-and-other falls far too short of exhausting the discussion of citizenship, inclusion and belonging.

\textsuperscript{218} In 2008, the notorious voter-initiative Proposition 8 was adopted by the California legislature and reversed the state Supreme Court’s decision to allow same-sex marriage.
In particular, it ignores different gradations and especially class relations as an important component of citizenship. “Citizenship” and “otherness” are culturally determined, politically and institutionally engineered categories. The persistent fear of opening military service to minorities who are dominated in the field of citizenship shows how strongly the citizen-soldier tradition is a powerful hallmark of citizenship in the American imaginary, an image that remains poignant despite the profession’s real loss of prestige. If the access to soldiering was reserved for only those who possessed the qualities of republican citizenship, it is also because citizenship, and those who possessed it, were also the depositories of certain symbolic virtues said or believed to preserve the American way of life: an aptitude for freedom, democracy, industriousness, morality, religion, etc (see Sandel 1998; Campbell 1998, for instance; or Feinman 2000 on the debate over the ERA). These virtues could not be watered down if America was to maintain her standing in global politics. In chapter 8, I showed that preoccupation with the moral fiber of the average citizen was evidenced in newspaper debates over the inevitable decline of the US that must follow the unwillingness of younger Americans to accept sacrifice and emulate the deeds of the “Greatest Generation.” The loss of the martial qualities that traditionally defined citizenship in America prefigured the imperial society’s fall from grace.

Here, at the borders of the field of citizenship, one reaches the point where the inside and the outside, the foreign and the domestic, become conflated and porous. Though the imperial society dominates global politics in most fields, its power is also closely associated to the composition of its political and social body; in particular, this power was traditionally ‘guaranteed’ through the exclusion of groups who did not possess the virtues of citizenship and were cast to the margins of the field of citizenship. Traditionally, this homogeneity was maintained through the rarity of access to the profession of soldiering. American imperial power
was secured by expanding and dominating regions outside of its political borders proper (see chapter 2), but, just as importantly, by dominating domestic “others” within its field of citizenship (see chapter 5). The logics of imperial rule, foreign and domestic, have thus been historically conflated. In essence, patterns of domination and exclusion trace out a system of homologies between the domestic, imperial subjugation of certain groups within the field of citizenship, and rule over other groups or societies in the field of global politics, economics and cultures. These are imperial homologies.

Contemporary transformations suggest that the position of soldiering has edged toward the periphery of the field of citizenship, suggesting that it is no longer central to the cohesion of the body politic and the symbolic virtues once said to reside within it. As the armed forces are increasingly composed of racial minorities and migrants in particular (see chapter 6), it appears that the logic of imperial rule increasingly sends dominated populations to face sacrifice instead of full citizens, those dominant class fractions spared the burden of war. First-class citizenship is no longer tied to sacrifice; on the contrary, first-class citizenship is now defined as overqualification for the duty of sacrifice (chapter 10). Soldiers, and especially white male soldiers, find themselves enmeshed in a web of borderline-imperial exclusion. I say borderline-imperial exclusion because these soldiers enjoy some of the symbolic attributes of first-class citizenship traditionally defined as whiteness and access to military service; at the same time, even these white soldiers become second-class citizens when one considers the disproportionate political obligation they must fulfill towards the state and thus to other social groups for whom sacrifice is not an economic (political) obligation. Can one go so far as to say they are “othered” simply because they are second-class citizens and thus also “foreign in a domestic sense” (see

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219. These full citizens enjoy tremendous privileges if only in life-opportunities without incurring commensurate obligations toward the rest of society, e.g., they may engage in financial speculation and bankrupt the country, and obtain millions of dollars in severance packages rather than face jail-time as would a petty thief.
chapter 5)? Though it is tempting to simply “roll out” the postcolonial template of analysis, it would be an unfortunate lack of nuance. This is the other reason I speak of a borderline imperial dynamic. While the historic rules of the field of citizenship continue to prevent soldiering from signifying domination in all respects, the new class, race, gender and geographic-based dispositions to military sacrifice reflect the changing conventions and operations of imperial rule within the field of citizenship. Interestingly, one is faced here with a sort of inverted homology. Whereas traditionally, the division between the one, the few and the many demarcated a continuum of classes of citizenship from the highest to the basest, it now seems that this relationship is inverted. As the “few” are sacrificed and the “many” are spared, it appears that the symbolic relationship between first-class citizenship and soldiering has been reversed. The few are now dominated and the many dominant. Thus the homology I identified in chapter 5 between dominance in the field of social classes and dominance in the field of citizenship has partially broken down - at least in the manner it was defined traditionally. Members of the plebe, the dominant fraction of the dominated class, have now stepped into the old-aristocratic position of the “few”; of course, this has only been accomplished after this position has been emptied of much of its meaning. But while their publicly professed social prestige and the powerful emotional appeal tied to it remains intact, overwhelming evidence suggests that soldering is an increasingly empty symbol as an indicator of class and real prestige, measured as deference and opportunity. The symbolic qualities associated to soldiering: abnegation, courage, bravery, and thrift, remain powerful markers in the field of culture as debates in newspapers and war narratives revealed. Yet they are increasingly subordinated to other symbolic qualities such as individualism, careerism, cynicism and credit-card patriotism. If parents may profess at war rallies that they want their children to be born with soldierly qualities; secretly, they probably
hope that their offspring are born with enough intelligence to enter Harvard or other elite schools. In the final analysis, one could summarize the symbolic role of soldiering in American society by saying: “Soldiers are great for America. I just hope it’s not my child…”

The crisis of the imperial form of society is thus also a fundamental crisis of the social, symbolic and cultural prestige of soldiering in American society and in particular the power of sacrifice to define first-class citizenship. It is thus a crisis of the imperial form of society in the internal sense of the term.

I have repeated throughout the dissertation that the crisis of the American imperial society takes place in the context of imperial engagement abroad, in the context of the two wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. This means that the cultural renegotiation of the link between imperial citizenship and sacrifice is intrinsically tied to a renegotiation of the imperial society’s place in the sphere of global politics. The concept of national habitus powerfully ties in the individual and collective experiences of American citizens and residents into a larger account of the imperial society’s place of dominance in global social space. I have argued at length that the national habitus retranslates the experience of a society, with its particular capital reserves, into principles of “vision and division” through the practical experience of the material, geographic but also social, cultural and symbolic landscape these citizens inhabit. The national habitus is thus an embodied sense of where individuals and groups fit in the larger (global) society. Because the state to which they belong dominates most others in international society, citizens of the imperial society are disposed to suffer from a “superlative superiority complex”. This sense of superiority reflects the practical experience of political, economic, cultural, symbolic and material

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220 Michael Moore’s 2004 Fahrenheit 9/11 powerfully illustrated this idea as filmmaker Moore tracks down a Congressman and offers the bewildered politician enlistment papers to sign-up his children for the armed forces and Iraq, exposing his duplicity. In that scene, Moore lays bare the hypocrisy that fills servicemembers with resentment for their fellow citizens who ‘talk the talk’ but refuse to ‘walk the walk.’
dominance that American citizens enjoy. This ethnocentrism is re-diffused and stabilized by the stereotyped images of other societies notably in the mass media. Drawing on secondary literature, chapters 2, 4 and 5 provided examples that this ethnocentrism most forcefully appears in the enduring tradition of American exceptionalism. Primary sources in chapters 8 and 9 further demonstrated that those who debated the merits of sacrifice in Iraq share a common understanding of the parameters of the discussion in which they are involved. The lieu commun minimal in the debate on the war rests on the assumption that America is a symbolically dominant society and, even for the opponents of the conflict in Iraq, the political challenge lies in preserving America’s good name from the perversions or contradictions of empire itself – and thus its dominant position at the pinnacle of the moral hierarchy of nations. One is reminded New York Times editorialist Frank Rich provocatively compared the US to its former rival, the Nazi imperial society. Antiwar US soldiers also denounced the destruction and inhumanity of the military occupation of Iraq in which they participated, as well as the suffering of Iraqi civilians.

The national habitus highlights a further important point. The definition I gave of “sacrifice” in chapter 5 specified that it traditionally meant a religious act or offering through which an object or person and the principle it symbolized was made sacred. As Gaston Bouthoul (1991: 349-350, author’s translation) noted, war becomes “a process of demonstration”, ritualized in official and informal commemorations of government and media productions. Tantamount to “necrolatry” (Bouthoul 1991: 345, author’s translation), this “cult of the dead” is held to edify the collective ideals of their society for which so many young men and women have “given their lives” in Iraq. Remember that in classical republican thought, the constitution of the polis reflects the spirit of a more abstract law, a notion of the good life and virtues whose principles rest in the platonic world of forms. If republican freedom is consummated by living a
life of virtue, sacrifice for the republic then mandates that the aims of a conflict must resonate with these higher principles:

Since Americans believe themselves to be a peace-loving people, it is an article of faith that their wars have been forced upon them by those who would destroy their freedom ... Americans do not fight, therefore, except to fulfill a solemn obligation to defend their own-brothers’-liberty” (Anderson & Crayton 2005: xii).

It is because of this religious significance accorded to military sacrifice that a military conflict deemed unworthy of the lives of young Americans can provoke such turmoil. Undoubtedly there exists a juridical definition of “just war” (see Baron 2010). But there is a more profound cultural understanding of what exactly that might be. Wars will be deemed just and unjust insofar as they espouse the spirit of America’s republican ideals. To die well means that sacrifice will conform to, and advance, the ideals of the Republic. For America, this means faith in freedom, equality of opportunity and social mobility. Of course, the power of these ideals and their capacity to mobilize a population in their defense operates through the homologies instituted by the national habitus, as I explained in chapters 4, 8 and 9. These homologies link a horizon of symbolic positions in the fields of culture and ideological production to their concrete, material realizations in the field of lifestyles. Simultaneously, they are further stabilized through distinction with the lifestyles of other societies. For one veteran of the Iraq war, wearing sunglasses, letting her hair loose and choosing a military career were all symbols that demonstrated the superior freedom and social mobility her society offered her in distinction to the veiled, Iraqi child that stood before her, and most likely would grow up without enjoying such choices. For President George W. Bush, freedom meant access to college, and a life spared from the threat of violence and terrorism, in other words the bad news on TV. The national
habitus operates primarily through the practical experience Americans have of the relationships between ideals, their concrete manifestations and their negative mirror-images. This is why discrepancies or gaps between the stated ideals of the conflict in Iraq and their realization on the ground can be made into such potent symbols against the war. Opponents of the war have all vigorously denounced the unequal social processes that constituted the armies fighting in Iraq, the torture scandals at Abu Ghraib, Guantanamo and debates over waterboarding, and civilian massacres at Haditha. These are respectively the negative mirror-images of social mobility, due process of law, safety from cruel and unusual punishment, while the Haditha massacre, compared to its counterpart at My Lai in Vietnam, evokes the distorted mirror-image of the Second World War. The practical mastery of the homologies that citizens enjoy, further explains why discussion about the war spills over into debates in the fields of culture and lifestyles. Soldiers who condemn the war also denounce America’s SUV culture, its material dependence on the primary resources of other countries and nations. The sacrificed lives of soldiers become stand-ins for other principles or lifestyles that the war and the conflict are said to further. As Gaston Bouthoul argues. “Le sacrifice comme toutes les choses sociales, comporte une hiérarchie : les vies les plus nobles sont les mieux agréées” (1991: 342). Logically, then, this leads back to the all-important question of who can serve in the armed forces, but at this juncture, this chapter has come full circle. If the impact of the war powerfully affects debate over the distribution of military sacrifice in the field of citizenship, the social crisis of the imperial society also powerfully challenges the larger space of positions in reference to which Americans live – especially the quasi-messianic certitude of a society imbued with a humanitarian mission.
The imperial society framework and political science

In the final analysis, imperial society is not simply a concept contending with others: (postmodern) Empire, (classical) empire, imperialism, republican empire or imperial republic, imperial formation, hegemony or great power to tell a story about US power, or world order. It is a multidisciplinary, analytical framework that mobilizes the bourdieusian sociological method: the analysis of class, culture, fields, capital and habitus. Furthermore, the loosely employed notion of society evokes a shifting “field of forces” (see chapter 2) rather than a fixed historical, institutional, constitutional or geographic entity such as is the case with some of the other concepts. The bourdieusian framework allows us to tell a multifaceted story of domination embedded in transnational relations of power but entrenched also in domestic relations of class, race, gender and sexuality. The imperial society framework ties in media accounts of the war, with first-hand narratives of the conflict, class-based economic and educational strategies, representations of class and classes of representation, the processes of social reproduction that feed the ranks of the armed forces and collective understandings about the meanings of freedom, duty, rights, obligation, choice and Americanism. It weaves these different analytical analyses of the American experience into stories about institutional acts, manpower policies, congressional hearings and the mobilization process for war. This cross-sectional account of the American experience offers a much denser, more layered approach to both the war in Iraq and empire. In particular, and this was central to the research question defined in chapter 2, imperial society shows what empire can help understand about the politics of citizenship in the US and the impact of the conflict on America’s relationships to military service, the war and to the imperial society’s global ambitions. It thus significantly contributes to IR by displacing both the
dominant axis of investigation in the debate on empire away from an “is or is not” question; and also by providing the first bourdieusian account of this problem.

The field of citizenship marks an important development for the way International Relations scholars and theoreticians of empire think about imperial relations. The bourdieusian framework organized around the principles of capital and field provides a much more subtle account of the politics of belonging; it contributes significantly to the ongoing discussion in International Relations concerning cross-border, transnational and not simply interstate, relations, and thus the more global reconceptualization of the discipline’s subject matter that has taken place over recent decades. I first argued that the debate between hegemony and empire is a false one which partially rests on the analytical presupposition that one must distinguish between territorial rule and class-based, cultural-economic rule. Contrary to Michael Doyle or Alejandro Colas, I further made the case that though it exists, one must not primarily search for an academic justification for the relative silence of IR on the question of empire. Doing so only reproduces the illusion of scientific autonomy generated by the academic field (Bourdieu 1988). This illusion, Bourdieu argues, allegedly closes off scientific reflection and its practitioners from the intrusion of “real-world” political preferences into their scholarly work. If scholars have preferred to employ aseptic terms like great powers or hegemony, it is precisely because the notion of an American empire is polemical; it challenges an entire cultural and academic apparatus’ representation of the US as a benevolent power or ideal model of society, as well as the personal and collective investments of many researchers in the cultural, moral and thus academic certitudes that this vision provides and the material rewards that accompany it. This cultural hegemony is reinforced through the symbolic dominance of the American university

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221. Comparative politics and history (Charle 2001) have elevated this into a science through their fixation on shedding light on the variables that lead some societies on the ‘pathological’ path away from liberalism.
system and its capacity to disseminate the imperial society’s principles of vision and division amongst the educated elites of vassal and partner societies (see Bourdieu 1997, and 1999 with Wacquant). As a result, scholars of political science have fallen prey just as easily to the academic paradigm of American exceptionalism as historians once did.

Of course, in keeping with the spirit of Bourdieu’s (1988) method, I owe it to the field of International Relations to also provide an internal critique of the debate on empire. This critique must seek to unravel how the myth of exceptionalism operates in properly academic terms. Whereas traditional debates over empire define imperial power as economic or political rule over foreign populations or territories, the imperial society framework highlights the fact that foreignness and thus imperial relations are first and foremost defined through citizenship, only partially determined by one’s geographical position within or outside the state’s territorial borders. As I argued in chapters 1 and 2, this traditional definition of imperialism in political science, understood as geopolitical domination, rests on the modern political practices and understandings that tie citizenship primarily to territory, and in particular to the nation-state form that marks the modern resolution of the problematic relationship between community and territory. Drawing on the insights of postcolonial scholarship and critical geography, I have further shown in chapter 2 that the definition of empire reified the organic and historicist accounts of the rise of the nation-state. This historicism is mirrored in academic narratives that stress the divides between the alleged end of the “age of empire” and the beginning of the “age of nationalities”; globalization or the rise of the postmodern Empire. International Relations scholars most tellingly exhibited the limits of their discipline by failing to consider the US an empire from the standpoint of its internal borders – arguably not a subject of consideration for those who consider interstate relations to make up the true subject matter of global politics. In
doing so, the interstate definition of empire completely obfuscates the process of state expansion and dispossession through which thirteen British colonies became one of the contemporary world’s largest empires. Once it has reached this point, IR is doomed to reproduce the myth of American exceptionalism in denying the imperial experience of the American republic.

In contrast to these positions, I argued that the study of imperial relations must also be brought upon the terrain of domestic politics and citizenship. Insofar as geopolitical borders are uncritically held to define community in International Relations, I argued that the question of citizenship delimited the arbitrary border between political science – the study of domestic politics - and International Relations (see Walker 1993). Identifying this barrier enables one to bring the study of American politics, American political development, or political science – as many subfields – into the purview of global politics. Rather than being closed off by a territorial demarcation, citizenship is a continuum of exclusion and inclusion that can be measured against one’s possession of different quantities of cultural, economic and symbolic capital; and the real life-opportunities but also obligations that these institute. Imperial domination like citizenship cannot be simply reduced to a self/other binary but rather should be conceived of as a graded set of rights, opportunities and obligations in a field of struggle. In this sense, the “foreign” is delimited by the outer-border of the field of citizenship, a shifting cultural and political construct only partially tied to geography. Geography does remain fundamental as one of the most powerful political and symbolic markers that constructs and polices belonging to a particular community. It produces in doing so, the illusion that sustains contemporary understandings of citizenship as an ethical attachment to a group defined by a common territory. Geography is fundamental in the second sense that one’s geographical position can favor or hinder the
acquisition and possession of cultural and economic capital and thus lead to radically different opportunities and life chances: in this case a life of sacrifice or one of shopping.

All the while drawing on its insights, my dissertation also sought to overcome some major limitations in the critical literature I examined in chapter 2. While postcolonial scholars recognize at least implicitly that citizenship is a vital component of how one must think about imperial relations, this scholarly tradition has disproportionately drawn its insights from French authors who do not engage the question of citizenship more than superficially. At least in this respect, postcolonial scholarship is often at pains to bring its analysis or critique of imperialism beyond well-rehearsed and increasingly formulaic assertions that power others certain populations and treats them as “foreign to the national community.” This problem stemmed from a second one that, yet again, arises from disciplinary separations. Because much of the postcolonial scholarship I have examined herein is produced in geography and literature departments, the empirical focus of the works, more often than not, has rested almost exclusively on cultural productions. Furthermore, the dominance of poststructuralist “French Theory” in critical IR and academia has tended to relinquish the question of class to the margin by trying to bring struggles for recognition on the part of women, and racial and sexual minorities into the limelight of scholarly research (Peterson 2003).

In contrast, I have shown that the republican and liberal political theory literatures on the body politic, citizenship, rights and political obligation provide powerful analytical tools to construct a field of citizenship and to conceive of imperial relations. It provides substantive discussions on the meanings of freedom, liberty and constraint in different social and historical contexts, and it also fundamentally clarifies the conceptual separations between the different forms of government: monarchical, republican and imperial. For instance, Pocock showed that
republican and liberal thinkers had long sought to transcend the problems of republican politics by writing a mixed-constitution that blended the republican, aristocratic, monarchical and imperial constitutions. This conceptualization further provided the means to conceive of *classes of citizenship* that were partially autonomous from social classes. Found in the traditional republican division of society between “the one, the few and the many,” the different classes of citizenship mirrored unequal rights and obligations that passed off as differences in talent or potential. However, these divisions of *caste* in the field of citizenship mirrored, to a degree, homological positions in the field of social classes, economics and culture. Radically unequal reserves of capital would lead to very different ranges of possible social trajectories for the groups concerned (habitus) and thus to unequal life opportunities. This belied the presumption of equality of opportunity so dear to liberalism and the imperial society in particular. Interestingly, elements of the republican conceptualization of an ordered society or *société d’ordres* carried over into the classical liberal conception of political obligation. This view of military service accepted the notion that some classes of propertied citizens would lead the nation while others would redeem their servitude or dependence through sacrifice. Though any such notion has certainly disappeared from public and official pronouncements, the narratives of soldiers and the resentment they felt toward civilians were powerful illustrations that the US remained a caste or class-based society. Thus in retrospect, the imperial society framework shows that it can also contribute to discussions in American politics or political theory on the character of citizenship and the notions of rights and obligations. While I have already demonstrated what this conceptualization could bring to scholars of postcolonialism, the bourdieusian logic that holds fields to be partially autonomous from each other, my work rehabilitates social class and its
importance for discussions about inclusion, citizenship and empire; at the same time, it shuns the reduction of citizenship to social class in the narrow, socio-economic sense of the term.

To conceive of citizenship as a field of struggle marked with different positions of dominance and subordination further enables one to mobilize the bourdieusian theory of the homologies between the fields. It enabled me to focus on the symbolic dimensions of the crisis of the American imperial society by analyzing the hierarchies of select groups within the body politic of the American imperial society and the symbolic values ascribed to them. Struggles to define first-class citizenship mirrored larger struggles over what kinds of lifestyles and cultures and thus, which populations could be held to constitute legitimate citizens. Two of the major struggles I examined focused on the ideological opposition between a liberal conception of sacrifice that favored volunteerism, and a republican one that envisaged sacrifice as a collective duty. This opposition further decanted into one in the political field between opponents and proponents of the draft, into the field of lifestyles between thriftiness and consumerism, and in the historical field of struggle over the memory of the Second World War. For instance, one nostalgic veteran of WWII lamented the disappearance of the martial qualities of courage, heroism, selfless sacrifice, brotherhood, virility and respect for past generations from American youth. Not solely a narrative about the Second World War, the comment provided further indications, through the effect of the homologies, of what was an ideal citizen (manly, military men), of ideal lifestyles (abnegation), ideal culture (communitarianism or republicanism) and political opinion: support for the troops and thus the war in Iraq. Remember Bourdieu wrote that the “‘cardinal’ couples of antagonistic concepts” (1988: 52) within each field draw out the space in reference to which one recognizes an author’s position. These points of reference will also delimit “through the intermediary of the homology (more or less consciously felt) …, for a
determined thinker, the [very narrow] range of philosophical positions compatible with his ethico-political options” (Bourdieu 1988: 53, author’s translation). Thus the sociological concept of the field offers a more systematic reconstruction of how actual positions in the field of citizenship are inherently tied to a vision of the body politic as a whole, and a symbolic ordering of society with ramifications for how one will perceive and organize different aspects of one’s life. As symbolic and cultural upheavals in different fields (legitimate lifestyles, legitimate culture, dominant ideological outlook) inevitably challenge the symbolic hierarchies they loosely mirror in the field of citizenship, experiences of intense and sometimes discreet symbolic mutations and renegotiation could lead to experiences of collective anxiety about the imperial society’s place of dominance in global politics. These experiences of social anxiety are especially pronounced when symbolic renegotiations or upheavals affected the positions of groups most on the margin of the body politic (foreigners), or those central to its reproduction (women and soldiers). In this sense as well, the imperial society framework forcefully proposes a flexible sociological method to conceptualize grey areas where the inside and the outside become completely conflated.

This said, it is important for me to conclude on a note of caution about the notion of homologies. While scholars of the America Founding have already shown that the separation between a republican and liberal synthesis of American history is an arbitrary one at best, likewise, the homologies and divisions between a republican vision of sacrifice as a collective duty, and a liberal view of sacrifice as a choice determined by talent or personal preferences, does not completely hold up to scrutiny. For instance, both liberal and republican political cultures and ideologies could justify political economies of sacrifice based on talent rather than universal obligation. These conceptual separations exist as polar opposite forces in American
life, but forces that are not entirely separable. In the dialectical tradition, I am forced to repeat the cliché that social formations are ultimately complex, partially undetermined, fleeting and ambivalent. Perhaps a more satisfying way of deepening understanding of the (false) separation between liberalism and republicanism is to suggest that it is also a product of the struggles within the fields of culture, politics and academia. As Bourdieu argues (1994), academic positions are rarely truly irreconcilable, but a researcher risks ceasing to exist as a legitimate figure (becoming irrelevant) if their *academic or scholarly position as an expert* becomes melded into another’s. In this sense, social actors are interested in accentuating political, scientific or cultural differences separating them.

Soldiering provides another example of the limits of the homologies. The increasingly ambiguous relationship between soldiering and first-class citizenship casts doubt on the homology between dominance in the field of citizenship and dominance of other symbolic qualities in the field of lifestyles or cultures: bravery, courage or other martial qualities. In some cases, these symbolic attributes retain much power in the field of culture though the position of soldiering itself seems increasingly relegated toward the dominated pole of the field of citizenship. I further conceded that the homologies are not always clearcut between positions in the newspaper field, in support of the war, support for the draft, in the field of war narratives, and in one’s general view of the war in Iraq. This is because each field enclosing the space of positions within it generates its own rules and exceptions. Homologies are powerful general guidelines to illustrate and understand the coherence of the social rationales inscribed in different social positions and the relationships that exist between them; it is not an absolute and all-explanatory guideline. Homology is nevertheless a solid and extremely *useful and probing concept*. To be sure, while it is true that political and social relationships are often “complex,”
“ambiguous” and “undetermined,” when used repeatedly, remarks such as these become facile rhetoric aimed at giving an intellectual varnish to simplistic reflections or worse, seeking to mask the absence of reflection.

*National habitus* is presented as a means to bridge the gap between national and collective histories. In distinction to other concepts of collective identity, national habitus forcefully transcends traditional divisions between materialist and symbolic approaches, agent and structure, and perhaps most importantly the domestic and the international realm. To be sure, other concepts such as Gramscian scholars’ “hegemony” or the looser postcolonial “identity” do this, but they usually display one of two important limitations. Hegemony remains a *class* relation and most often fails to take into account other fundamental vectors of identity such as race and gender. As I have alleged earlier, many accounts of identity that draw on Derrida’s and other scholars’ critique of the metaphysics of presence (see Butler 2006) remain thin analyses of culture (e.g. Kaplan and Pease 1993; Kaplan 2003a), linked more closely to images and representations, much less to institutions, political economy and the representational *conventions* each medium engenders. Identity construction becomes something akin to a functional requirement so that the state or some other abstract logic of power can naturalize its existence (e.g. Weber 1995; Campbell 1998). Every social process or event that needs to be explained can now be reduced to the logic of power trying to “discipline” the ambiguity of identity or trying to “reconstitute a stable identity” (the contributions in Kaplan and Pease’s 1993 edited volume are mired in this sort of analysis). Though Marxism may be reductive, inversely, accounts inspired by French Theory often fail to take grasp how social class modulates cultures of race, gender, sexuality and age. For instance, though lower and middle class women share a common sex, they are also embedded in different *classes of womanhood*, different expectations about
femininity that can become obvious in different matrimonial strategies or strategies of child rearing. Put short, they are different genders. Not reductions to class, these nuances are fundamental vectors that affect our understanding of the politics of gender. Indeed, they point to very different ways of *being a woman*, as Bourdieu notes (1979).

National habitus transcends these analytical divides, because it is committed to a multifaceted understanding of identity constituted through both symbolic and material practices. Identities are practices embedded both in classes of culture and class *cultures* (Bourdieu 1979), actualized in specific fields and limited by the capital distribution and conventions that shape them. For example, the system of homologies enables us to explore the penetration of the international all the way into the local, the intimate, and inversely. By stressing that national habitus is a practical experience or embodiment of social structures reaffirms the notion, as Marx noted, that the human condition is traced out in relation to a world that is not solely shaped by the individuals and groups who inhabit it. This inherited world traces out both objective and subjective limits that trace out a range of possible and realized trajectories upon which individuals and groups will embark according to a statistical measure of probability that, in Bourdieu’s stead, I have called earlier a “social destiny.” This explains how the position of one’s society in the hierarchy of global social space sets out the concrete expectations and life possibilities one will enjoy, and also one’s own expectations about life. National habitus further highlights the fact that identity is embodied as a practical sense of the limits of one’s horizon of action. Chapter 9 showed that national habitus enables us to grasp very different ways of being a woman and expectations about womanhood, differences visible in the perceptions that an American female soldier had of the Iraqi child she encountered. As a guideline of social action, in cross-cultural encounters national habitus can also become a substitute for one’s particular
class habitus. Thus a member of the dominated groups of an imperial society will *act*, feel and think as though he occupies a social position much higher than his own when faced with an individual from a society of lower standing. But again, I must recommend a note of caution against treating this trend as an absolute, as chapter 5 showed.

In contrast to accounts that reaffirm how “identity is constituted through difference” - even in the “telling silence” or “absence” of its negative referent -, national habitus focuses on identity as a practice stabilized through homologies, that highlight cultural *quid pro quos*. The concept of national habitus forces one to carefully reconstruct and specify the horizon of expectations that shapes the baggage individuals and groups bring into transnational or international encounters. It provides an operational concept to theorize culture shocks. *La crise des sociétés impériales* notably relates how the national habitus, embodied as the cultural and social baggage each diplomat hailing from the different European empires brought into formal and informal encounters with their counterparts, precipitated misunderstandings at a personal level and aggravated diplomatic tensions at a crucial juncture in the summer of 1914. Embodied social (class) and (national) cultural structures mediated relations between individuals and contributed significantly to shaping (in this context) not only incomprehension in individual encounters but the very dynamics of war and peace. In other words, the ‘personal’ disagreements between individual diplomats attempting to negotiate an exit to the crisis of 1914 were generated and aggravated by the gap between the different social structures in their respective societies. National habitus thus powerfully mediates between large-scale accounts of social structures and the micro-sociologies of situated studies (Charle 2001).

In this light, future studies employing the concept of national habitus can successfully be brought to bear on diplomatic accounts of IR, to analyze difficulties in building transnational
partnerships or transnational class alliances. Indeed, Marxist work on empire I presented in chapter 2 fell far short of theorizing exactly why national divisions between Europe, the USA, Russia and China had prevailed over transnational class consciousness in the context of the war on terrorism. Why did disciples of Karl Kautsky believe that nationalistic fractures within the transnational capitalist class were temporary and would ultimately disappear in the midterm? Why did others like Beitel and Arrighi seem to suggest they would endure? Nationalistic reflexes often seemed to hinder the formation of transnational class consciousness, thus pitting American elites against the French, German, Russian or Chinese dominant classes. But Marxist scholars never really seemed to provide an answer as to why the nationalist reflexes of the American elites prevailed over transnational class interests in the context of the war on terrorism. Answering these questions substantially, remains far beyond the purview of this conclusion, but the interrogation itself illustrates the pertinence of a concept such as national habitus to theorize about fractures between the social and class structures of different national spaces. National habitus presents not only the possibility for one to conduct such an analysis in a general sense; but by combining careful sociological and cultural research with first-hand accounts of cultural exchanges, it can enable one to reconstruct the specific empirical obstacles that engender these dynamics. The role and place of women in different cultural settings; received notions about gender roles, sexuality and age; attitudes toward class and social mobility; different social processes of elite recruitment and class reproduction; material expectations; body language and corporal expression; personal space; communal or individualistic understandings of property; cultural relationships to time and punctuality: these are only some of the practical and inoffensive manifestations of the embodied social structures individuals and groups bring into cross-cultural and transnational encounters. Yet through the effect of the homologies between
different fields, these practical aspects of day to day life translate into different collective ideals, symbols and values. This is not a recommendation to ignore the research accomplished by Gramscians, scholars of hegemony and by liberal internationalists on the harmonization of international norms and elite classes (see chapters 2 and 4). National habitus is a counterpoint to this analysis and a reminder that nationalist and other local reflexes remain powerful vectors of identity, ethical attachment and principles of action.

Following from this, a richer analysis of cross-cultural encounters can de-center its analysis from practices of representation that depict ‘foreign cultures’ say in cinema, literature and photography. These are the sorts of analysis most often found in cultural studies scholarship, at least that cited in chapter 2. Perhaps future research involving the resources of multiple scholars could produce work that analyze the effects of these depictions in concrete, face to face encounters between citizens, soldiers, diplomats, aid-workers, bartenders, travelers, photographers, sex-workers, and transnational business elites of different cultural or national origins. For instance, future research should endeavor to render a postcolonial story of the Iraq war employing the imperial society framework and focus on the struggles for integration of Iraqi refugees in the US. Such an analysis can employ primary documentation such as the testimonies or interviews of representatives of both the migrant and host cultures. Importantly, this would lead cultural sociology to stop focusing on one-sided narratives of cross-cultural encounters. Indeed, it is hard for me to think of interesting examples of works that present in one study the mutual and changing representations say of Americans and Iraqis. It is difficult indeed to find a major work showcasing the Iraqi view of the American occupation of their country. The hypothetical research on the integration of Iraqi refugees in the US, such as translators who worked with the American military, would show how identities are perpetually in flux. They are
transformed through the concrete experiences of interaction with representatives of the other group. Of course, there is a more classical account of cultural representations to be told in tandem with this one. For instance, in the above example, the research can also show how media images of the conflict reinforce the stereotypes each group entertains about the other during the actual encounter, and inversely. My guess is that larger, collaborative studies with more multifaceted empirical research and richer theorizing will show that there is a lot more going on in the dynamics of the hypothetical encounters I have envisaged than a mere depiction of cultural differences. What are these differences? Which are deemed significant? Why? Do the protagonists believe they can or need to be overcome? Or do they come to accept them? And, finally, if they cannot be overcome (on both sides), why is that? These are some of the questions I believe that the concept of national habitus and the bourdieusian framework can highlight and answer in future research.

Of course, in the final analysis, this dissertation is also limited in its capacity to develop a number of related aspects I identified at the outset. It does not attempt to pass the “test of comparison” the only “real” measure of “legitimate” research for comparativists. Some concepts remain undertheorized or taken for granted: society and sacrifice, for instance. The survey of many literatures is incomplete or partial. Other important viewpoints or stories of the war are set aside; those of private military contractors are not dealt with, for instance. Finally, there is no Iraqi point of view in what I have written. This is perhaps the most important avenue for future research to follow. With this limitation in mind, I believe that the more global portrait this dissertation provides on a number of questions, the original combination of diverse methodologies, primary sources and secondary sources, and diverse scholarly literatures attenuate its shortcomings.
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